

Farm Gate Trail Round Up – 6th November, 2004

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IN SEASON ON THE TRAIL

Good Morning Simon,

Heading up along the Mountain Run you'll come to one of the most spectacular gardens in Australia - our very own Mt. Tomah Botanic Garden and this week I spoke with Kate Faithorn who is the Marketing Manager of Mt. Tomah

A bit of background....

Covering an area of 28 hectares, it was opened to the public in 1987 and is home to over 5000 species of plants from the cooler parts of the world - many from the wild and not previously grown in Australia. It was originally named Fern Tree Hill by George Caley but later renamed Mt. Tomah as this was what the local Aboriginals had called the area which of course meant 'place of fern trees'.

The garden site has a bit of history ...

Yes, it was part of the first land grant made at Mount Tomah in 1836. After various changes in ownership, in 1934 a portion of this was sold to Mrs Effie Jane Brunet, who with her husband, the French-born Alfred Louis Brunet, established a farm for the production of cool-climate flowers. Following Mr Brunet's death, Mrs Brunet gave the property to the N.S.W. Government in 1970 as a cool-climate annex of the Royal Botanic Gardens.

And 200 hundred years later

Apart from plants being grouped according to their geographical origin, which is very different from many other botanic gardens, they also are concerned with waterwise plantings, currently some of magnificent lawns are being replaced with more waterwise groundcovers. **And there is a whole host of** happenings in the coming months, including this Sunday's 'welcome' of the modern day adventurers who have repeated George Caley's expedition. He of course, was one of Australia's leading naturalists and besides collecting plant specimens and identifying new bird life, he named areas in the Blue Mountains which are still used today.

Scientific Name: *Olearia argophylla* (Labill.) F. Muell. ex Benth.

Common Name: Native Musk, Silver Shrub

Plant Family: ASTERACEAE

A fog of white daisy flowers covers a low spreading shrub at the entrance to the garden. As fluffy mist it settles between bushes below the Visitor Centre viewing deck. This is *Olearia argophylla* and it may be one of the plants collected by George Caley in 1804 on his trip to the Carmarthen peak he named Mount Banks.

George Caley, a keen 19th century naturalist with a passion for botany, was talent spotted by Sir Joseph Banks who sent him to Sydney as a collector in 1800.

Events

Mt Tomah

1. **Sunset Jazz Dinner** at is coming up on Friday 12 November. Watch the sun set from the balcony of the Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens and enjoy delicious canapes and champagne before settling down to a wonderful three course menu using the finest local produce while listening to smooth jazz from “In Full Swing”, with sensational vocalist Colleen Spillane.

VENUE: Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens Restaurant

Bells Line of Road Mount Tomah

Friday 12 November 7.00pm

Cost \$80.00 per head including canapes and champagne

Licensed or BYO

Bookings essential, Ph (02) 4567 2060

1. **Louisa Atkinson Day**, Sunday 28 November 2004 – well known 18th century novelist and naturalist, Mt Tomah
2. **Exploring Collectors** Exhibition, Visitor Centre, Mt. Tomah, November to January
3. **Curly Caley** Quercus Quest, December to February, – Calling all adventurers to solve the clues hidden around the garden so explorer Curly Caley Quercus can find his way!

Dianna Lee Gobbitt Exhibition. A well known local artist has an exhibition on at Breewood Gallery on Windsor Street Richmond. Open all week plus Sat Only

Fruits of the Figure Exhibition at the Richmond Squash Courts (Maximum Fitness). Celebrating the nude. Sat Night and Sun.

Londonderry Rural Fire Brigade Festival. Country, Blues, Folk plus plenty of stall. On both Sat and Sun.

Update on fruit and veges in season

We have juicy – yellow and white flesh **nectarines** & the yellow and white **peaches** and **Valencia oranges** and of course those delicious **strawberries**.

In the way of veges – There are capsicums, bok choy, lettuce, spring onions, cauliflowers, silverbeet, cabbages, rhubarb, fresh olives, cucumbers, beetroot, mushrooms and tomatoes.

You can also pick up some native bush foods, duck & eggs, meat from the butcher, wine, fresh flowers, crepe myrtles, geraniums and of course all the associated products like honey, jams, pickles and preserves.

Now is a great time to start or add to your **herb garden** and there are plenty available in pots as well.

For the latest update of fruit and veges in season from our farms and to download any of the seasonal itineraries as well as the whole map, go to the website www.hawkesburyharvest.com.au

If your listeners haven't been able to download the map from the website they can call into the Visitor Centre at Clarendon (opposite the RAAF Base) and pick up a copy.

All the information on the Farm Gate Trail will be on the website or from Hawkesbury Valley Tourism Office at Clarendon on **4588 5895**, where along with the Farm Gate map, your listeners can pick up the notes of today's roundup. Or **visit our website go to www.hawkesburyharvest.com.au**

Best Days to Drive the Trail

Friday or Saturday are the recommended days for self-drive tours of the Farm Gate Trail or, if you prefer not to drive, take a guided tour, all the details are on the back of the map.

Vegetables on the Trail

Tomatoes, lettuce, beetroot and rhubarb, sweet potato, leek, green capsicums, cauliflower, broccoli, zucchini, cabbage (savoy & plain), silverbeet, bok choy, Lebanese & gherkin cucumbers; parsnips, butternut, jap & Qld blue pumpkins, both red and white radishes, potatoes, flat and swiss brown mushrooms

Fruit on the Trail

Valencia Oranges, Nectarines, Peaches – Penrith Valley Oranges, Enniskillen, Orange Spot Seville Oranges – Hawkesbury Estate
Pajeros Strawberries – fresh and frozen – Strawberry Farm, Vineyard
Macadamias - Enniskillen Orchard

Other Produce – Food & Wine

Wine, port including white port, aleatico; Verjus; Goat cheese & yoghurt; baked crisp breads including lavosh, honey, apple juice, free range eggs, ice cream with real fruit, fruit rollups with fruit fresh from the orchard. Jams, pickles and sauces and the range from the native bush tucker foods. Peking ducks, also sausages, breast fillet, Maryland & whole ducks; abattoir and butcher – large range of beef, pork and lamb, goat, venison and ostrich. Spring Water and Silver Perch.

Other Produce – Fibre & Flora

Koi and Goldfish, silver perch, field roses, pelargoniums and geraniums, alpacas & alpaca products such as jumpers, scarves etc. Open gardens and galleries with pottery, paintings and bowls and platters.
