

Farm Gate Trail Round Up – 22 May, 2004

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IN SEASON ON THE TRAIL

Good Morning Simon,

There are still apples around , fuji's, pink lady and granny smiths; there are pears & persimmons, & in the way of veges there are snow white caulis, leafy spinach, pumpkins and getting close to the end of the grammas. We'll have oranges and mandarins soon but for the latest update of the fruit and veges in season from our farms, check out the website. Reminder that the vege farm is closed for another two weeks.

An interview.... This week we I spoke with Elaine Musgrave from Fernbrook Garden & Gallery

Les and Elaine moved to their 24 acre property at Kurrajong Heights 26 years ago – a huge move as it was definitely country back then! Les, who is a horticulturalist and garden designer, wanted to grow flowers for the cut flower trade. Elaine was a freelance greeting card artist. So Les proceeded to plant with specimens such as proteas, waratahs, lilacs, lots of bulbs, kalmia (which is mountain laurel) and once a week would take the flowers directly to florists.

Elaine joined a botanical art class at Colo School which she decided looked interesting and that's when her botanical painting really took off – resulting in the very prestigious Royal Horticultural Society London Gold Medal in Jan. 2003. At the end of this year she is one of 62 artists from 12 countries exhibiting at the Hunt Institute Gallery in Philadelphia, US.

Did they know what the acreage had originally been used for?

Yes, originally, it was a mixed farm with a milking shed, and when the Musgraves took it over the property was very much overgrown with blackberries, lantana etc. and you could barely make out the shed. So when they cut all this down they decided that the milking shed would make a great studio for Elaine to work from.

How big is the actual garden?

The garden is 12 acres in total and it is a woodland garden with a beautiful rainforest and there's a good mix of native and exotic plants.

This is a great weekend to visit as it is their Open Weekend – they are members of the Open Garden Scheme – they joined about 9 years ago when it first came to NSW.

Events

22nd - 23rd of May. Fernbrook Garden and Botanical Gallery Open Garden Weekend
Ph 4567 7330

Mt Tomah Botanic Garden – Plant of the week

Common Name: Roblé - a Chilean Beech
Plant Family: NOTHOFAGACEAE [FAGACEAE]

In 1986 wild collected seed of Roblé, *Nothofagus obliqua*, arrived from Chile. A few years later the resulting seedlings were planted as an avenue on the front entrance driveway and also in the Chilean section of the Gondwana Walk. Usually noted for their rapid growth, some have

struggled with drought and others with compacted soil near the entrance gate. Those that have survived have joined in the spectacular Autumn display this year by showing their best colour yet.

Nothofagus obliqua is the most widespread of the 9 South American *Nothofagus* species and is valued for its timber.

Nothofagus species are collectively known as the “Southern Beeches” as they occur in Australia (*Nothofagus moorei*, the Queensland/NSW border region and *Nothofagus gunnii* and *Nothofagus cunninghamii* in Tasmania), New Zealand (4 species), South America (9 species), Papua New Guinea (5 species) and New Caledonia (5 species) and they once inhabited Antarctica, hence the Gondwanan link.

“There is an extensive fossil record of *Nothofagus* pollen, with three different pollen types known. The oldest pollen type in the fossil record is now found only in the *Nothofagus* of Papua New Guinea and New Caledonia, leading some to call the plants in these areas “living fossils”.” <http://www.anbg.gov.au/fungi/mycogeography-nearby.html>

The River Drive: Strawberry Farm at Vineyard, Tizzana Winery and The Orange Spot, (**Grammas & Honeycomb**) & M & N Butchery at Wilberforce, Pepe’s Ducks at South Windsor, Tanglin Lodge Alpacas at Tennyson. Then cross the River - Basha’s Orchard (**persimmons** & advanced trees), Galston Strawberries, Berry Good Farms, and Nati Roses, Geranium Cottage, The Bay Road Gallery & Charltons Creek Studio Gallery at Arcadia, Kenthurst Fish & Filters, Butterfly Café all at the Hills & Hornsby end of the trail.

Along the **Mountain Drive** - Enniskillen Orchard, Blue Mountains Natural Spring Water at Grose Vale, Heavenly Belle Café at Kurrajong Heights, Tutti Frutti (also sells cut roses) The Local Harvest, Bell’s Line of Road, at Bilpin;

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

Beans, corn, tomatoes, beetroot and rhubarb, leek, green capsicums, cauliflower, broccoli, zucchini, cabbage, silverbeet, lettuce – cos, butter, greenoak, red oak, iceberg; bok choy, Lebanese & gherkin, cucumbers; butternut, jap & Qld blue pumpkins, grammas, both red and white radishes, potatoes, flat and swiss brown mushrooms.

Fruit on the Trail

Persimmons
Apples - Granny smiths, pink lady, Fuji
Strawberries – fresh and frozen
Pears – Packham
Pecan nuts

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.