



EDITION 59

IMPORTANT DATES



DECEMBER 2019

STAY TUNED

FROM ANTHONY

Perhaps it's a generational thing, make and make do. Bonbons this year was just that, a remake of the first in the G & S nonsense saga with set and costumes remade. The background by Keith Peake and maybe a little more glitter on costumes by Heather Peake. A triumph of re-glamorised curtains, bedspreads and cushions, possibly the best yet, a real silver service event.

After each I like to think which line most sticks in the mind, this year, "sufficiently decayed". So when next asked how I am, I have a perfect answer!

Which raises the question, am I "sufficiently decayed"? I suspect the answer may well be, almost. Hence we have Martin and maybe I confess I am

having withdrawal symptoms. I would be worried if I was not. I am happy to take a step or two back and hand over.

I have watched Martin for some years and often thought, could be, might work, but felt that the National Trust needed him more than I. Martin contacted me and told me he had resigned (after 12 years). So I seized the opportunity and fortunately (after a little hesitation) he accepted.

And so Beleura will move on.

The new building is progressing well and it is possible to see how it will work. Bonbons rained one night and proved we need more space. The upstairs Archives wing will also give enough space for some years to come.

We even have space for a Library! We

have an ever growing collection of books relating to Theatre, Art, Gardens and Historic Buildings, many are gifts and should you need to find a happy home for suitable additions we would be happy to talk.

The shelves will be made from two Bunga Bunga pines we had to remove over the last few years. Alan Gray is getting his head around this project.

There will also be a gallery area where some of the unseen treasures we hold can be seen.

In all, an exciting project which should see completion mid-2020.

So as the year draws to an end, thank you all! Especially the amazing Beleura volunteer brigade. I suspect you know you are what makes Beleura. In the words of a Bonbons guest, "I speak for all my group when I say we really look forward to coming each year, we are never disappointed."

I, on behalf of Roger and Bill, wish you a very Happy Christmas and a "never better" New Year.

Anthony Knight OAM
Director & Trustee

GENERAL MANAGEMENT

For me the past two months has been a whirlwind meeting all the remarkable volunteers that make up Beleura. It is a village full of vital people and everyone has an intriguing story and personal connection to Beleura that they treasure.

I have really enjoyed working with Carol and Kate and meeting as many of the house and garden guides who provide memorable experiences for all our visitors. We are planning a combined information day early next year. We are also working on new programs for the Pavilion to entice new visitors and to make connections with local schools next year. Our new Gatehouse building is growing and now surfaced in insulation

ominously made by the Watergate insulation company and will open much later next year.

In fact speaking of a cast of characters I was thrilled to see just what a Christmas Bon Bons Season entailed with performances by a talented cast who annually assemble their Gilbert-and-Sullivan inspired original Christmas pantomime. The creative talents of the irrepressible Heather Peake and stoic partner Keith combined with the formidable Opera Su Presto to create an extraordinary stage show filled with Byzantine plotlines, charming love songs, not-very-scary pirates and ukulele playing Opera stars.

Behind the scenes I saw the full Beleura volunteer team in action working like a well-oiled Singer sewing machine with our bus drivers making innumerable trips as Jan, Gwen and Lorraine (who I will greatly miss) ensured everyone was royally welcomed. Our amazing hospitality team worked furiously serving champagne, seating guests, serving paella, dessert, wine, coffee and cheeses to almost 400 people over the four performances. Every single guest I met made a point of congratulating us on such a wonderful event.

We are all looking forward to the New Year. I wish everyone a wonderful festive season and many thanks for all the energy and effort you have put into making Beleura such a success this year.

Martin | General Manager

FROM ADMINISTRATION

The end of another year is rolling around and this year has seen some real change at Beleura. Of course most obviously, our new John Tallis Research Wing has risen from the ground and now, although not complete stands, an imposing edifice! Secondly, the positive addition of Martin to our team with a strong focus of taking Beleura into the future and thirdly (as they say things come in threes) we face

the departure of our beloved Lorraine Perrysmith from the team here at Beleura.

Lorraine began her time at Beleura in April of 2005. She was recruited by Anthony from the National Trust to serve as an Administration Manager and promptly plonked into an upstairs bedroom/office of the not yet fully renovated Gatehouse with a table, computer and telephone! She had previously held roles with the National Trust in property management, membership recruitment, bushland management and reception, as she loved people, which put her in good stead for all that her role at Beleura would encapsulate.

Those early years involved long days and late nights being involved in much more than just typing up Anthony's letters as was first proposed. Recruiting and management of volunteers, office and business management, programming, liaising with tourism organisations, publicity and marketing even creating and printing up tickets and taking bookings!

After a short hiatus Lorraine moved from office duties to hostessing and management of the Beleura gift shop and has done so for many years but now feels she is ready to embrace, in her words... "the next chapter of my life".

I would like to take this opportunity to wish my amazing predecessor all the best for her future. Her happy smiling face, her warm embrace and her incredible ability to always remain positive in the face of any challenge will be sorely missed not just by myself but by all of us at Beleura.

Lorraine – Goodbye for now but please make sure you come back and visit!

With that said I would like to say thank you to all of our hardworking, faithful volunteers here at Beleura. I hope with sincerity that your summer is happy, restful and filled with laughter as you spend precious time with your loved ones.

See you in 2020!

Monique | Administration

FROM ARCHIVES

In an end-of-year flurry, researchers and cataloguers are wrapping up their long-term projects or pausing these for the break. My last report of the year is a snapshot of our feats in 2019.

Sue Wearne read and logged the correspondence of John Tallis – letters in the hundreds – with multitudes still ahead.

Jan Dayton, Judy Turner, Judy Shearman and Miriam Clark continued to sort through the Sydney Morning Herald photograph archive and to categorise images of exceptional musicals, operas and other stage performances of the twentieth century.

The Klytie Pate Collection is tended by honorary curator Kate Moffatt with Robyn Randles' assistance. Ongoing they refine our growing register of works.

Cataloguing theatre programmes and music manuscripts falls to Betty Clark, Jeanine Barnden and Louise Pratt, while Noel Payze puts a new broom through the electronic database, correcting many glitches.

Despite health challenges, Barb Rollinson with Bronwyn and Warren Mills made an excellent start cleaning hundreds of store-room objects packed into the Small Flat earlier this year. Now with the Small Flat back to normal, House Guides can happily resume that part of the tour again.

Librarian Sue Martin covered and catalogued a mountain of reference books.

Finally, Iain Buckland's deep dives into the John Tallis diaries yielded rich material which he crafted into regular Insight Articles, much valued by Guides. Taking hold of Iain's research, Archives will welcome House Guides to an information-sharing afternoon on Thursday 20 February.

The John Tallis Research Centre offered so

many fascinating discoveries this year which we want to share with the wider Beleura Family in 2020.

Thank you to each volunteer for your dedication and support. Wishing you all a peaceful Season.

Ingrid | Curator

FROM HOSPITALITY

A very welcome end of the year 'Stay-Tuned'!! Welcome only because it is the end of the year and we are all a bit slower than the start...where the heck did 2019 go? It has been another busy year of events and tours. All in hospitality know just how busy we can and have been. We have culminated the year with large numbers in our House and Garden Tours and our ever-popular Bonbon Opera events. I am hesitant to mention names because there are just so many of you lovely volunteers who work with Nicole (aka Beatrice) and myself in hospitality that complement us to become a team. A team of happy, willing and supportive volunteers that have become a very special part of my life and life here at Beleura.

Special thanks to those who supported Nicole during the week Monique and I were absent. For our glammed up runners and washer-uppers at the Opera events, a huge thank-you! For us in Hospitality the Bonbons was no re-make, no two events or guests are ever the same! Still, we avoided the rain sufficiently during service and even though I (yes me!) managed to knock one of our unsuspecting guests with a hot cup of coffee, we managed the squish-up with style and grace!

I am glad Anthony is able to see at last how the new building will work... I am definitely on a 'wait and see' with how we will perform in Hospitality, one suspects it may change our *modus operandi* somewhat. But whatever happens, be assured our treasured Volunteers will

always be part of this amazing place and will morph into whatever changes lay ahead.

Nikki | Hospitality Manager

FROM THE GARDEN

Unfortunately the biggest project undertaken in the garden this year is so boring to those not involved yet really exciting to me, that my wife now dreads dinner time for fear of me broaching the topic, so I'll be brief. It was water tanks, plumbing and an irrigation overhaul. Basically, we linked up all the various water tanks including the bell wells. We installed numerous pumps in order to move water from here to there and make the taps in the garden run off tanks as well. We have to wait for the roof to go on the new building so we can capture the water then we as close to being off mains water in the garden as possible. Just so long as it rains. That's a big 'just so long as....'

I need to mention Ash, the plumber who we could not have done this without.

The new chooks are going great. I was advised by the breeder not to go with Rhode Island reds anymore because of their aggressive nature so we went with her recommendation and got High Line browns and rather than beating each other up, they're actually laying eggs and being nice to each other.

Thanks to all the garden volunteers who have helped this year, we couldn't do without you all, especially with me being taken out of the team in order to spend hours and hours scratching my head trying to work out where this pipe and that pipe go.....

Happy holidays to all.

Richard | Head Gardener