



Melbourne Opera's Opera in the Gardens



Edition 72
February 2024

FRONT DESK

It is always wonderful to return to the peace and sanctuary of Beleura even after a summer break. The peace, the quiet and the unbroken tranq- BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM! That is the sound of a pneumatic concrete jackhammer attached to a mobile earth mover. We have two of them. Both working at once. All day.

We are removing the original swimming pool that belonged to the Gatehouse in the seventies when it was a family home. It was not part of the original property and nothing to do with John Tallis. There were attempts to make it an attractive water

feature. Unfortunately it became home to clouds of mosquitoes and marauding kookaburras who fished out the goldfish. Sometimes volunteers at our concerts have had to make everyone line up Indian file to squeeze past the glass pool fencing on a narrow path to get to the Pavilion.

Well, when you come back to Beleura you will see in its place an attractive courtyard that links the Gatehouse to the Pavilion through a new set of Gatehouse doors and a wonderful new pathway to the Pavilion.



Removal of the old swimming pool



New Courtyard between Gatehouse & Pavilion



Raymond Lawrence, Caitlin Weal, Asher Reichmann

Opera in the Garden

In the week that included a heat wave, and a wild storm that brought down powerlines, we decided to run an outdoor event – Opera in the Gardens – in Beleura’s Palm Garden with Melbourne Opera.

Two of Melbourne Opera’s talented emerging singers – Asher Reichman and Caitlin Weal – performed a marvellous series of arias in a varied opera program against the garden backdrop. Our team put together a staging backdrop using just a bolt of fabric and lots of bulldog clips.

Our hospitality ladies – Jan Hibbert, Jan Biggs, Sarah, Pam and Carolyn – did a marvellous job serving Afternoon Tea in the Main Courtyard on a hot day.

One patron left these comments. “Very talented artists, beautiful setting, perfectly managed and wonderful afternoon tea. Beleura is a magic place and we are very fortunate to have such a facility on the Peninsula.”



Asher Reichmann and Caitlin Weal share a duet.

Carol Hunt Volunteer House Guide Coordinator

Carol Hunt has decided to retire as House Guide Coordinator. Carol has done a tireless job over five years managing the guides’ rosters, recruiting new guides and writing a regular newsletter.

The only reason we can deliver tours with the constantly changing numbers of visitors and bookings is through the work of our Guide Coordinators like Carol and Sue Shergold who roster our volunteer guides and oversee training and issues in the role.

Carol has been instrumental in developing the training of guides with Iain Buckland’s extensive guide notes. And she writes a wonderful newsletter for the guides. If you really want to get an insight into the Tallis family I recommend taking a tour of the house with Carol.

Thanks, Carol, for all your hard work. I think your years as a teacher helped you corral the guests.



Carol Hunt viewing the Just Visiting Exhibition



Wendy Brack - New Guide Coordinator



Dugald Noyes - and the white maize

Wendy Brack – our new Volunteer House Guide Coordinator

We are delighted to have Wendy Brack take over from Carol as the new House Guide Coordinator. Wendy has been a House Guide for over five years. Wendy is a bundle of enthusiasm and energy and will carry on the great work that Carol has done. Welcome Wendy!

Pauline Vincent – Office Coordinator retirement

From the moment Beleura opened to the public Pauline Vincent volunteered as a bookings and administration officer with office manager Faye Crews right from the start. Faye and Pauline used to take phone bookings, write entries in pencil in a huge diary and make changes, send confirmation letters and make sure they had the correct cheque from the right person for each booking. It was a demanding job and Pauline worked hard for Beleura for many years in the office. Pauline has a wonderful precise mind and extraordinary attention to detail as well as being a gifted linguist and excellent proofreader.

Things and processes in the office have changed since the first public days of Beleura. Now we have online bookings, online credit card transactions and bookings software. Over the past few years Pauline has come in and answered our phones all day on Fridays. We are really going to miss Pauline for her presence of mind, dedication and thoroughness.

Martin Green

GARDEN GUIDES

Happy New Year to our garden guides and I am sure you are all looking forward to another great year in Beleura's glorious gardens. Fortunately, the garden survived the crazy storm last Tuesday. However, the hedges provided excellent protection throughout. Blooms in the main rose garden are diminishing but the new flush will not be too far away. The veggie garden is always stunning – like all the gardens! Dugald takes a huge amount of pride in this area! His maize is not to be missed! It is on the opposite side to the hens. Opera in the Palm Garden was a delightful experience last Thursday. This garden is perfect as there is plenty of shade and a gentle breeze to make everyone comfortable. What a lovely way to begin 2024. John Tallis would have been delighted to see so many guests enjoying music in his garden. Our garden tours are reaching higher numbers now. Even on the warmer days there is plenty of dense shade to keep everyone happy. I am keen to start our afternoon chats and strolls with Richard. It is a very pleasant afternoon with our buddies and then to catch up on the latest in the garden with Richard. A Monday is the most suitable day for all concerned. I will keep you posted. I think we have a few more people interested in joining our ranks. The more the merrier!

Sue Shergold



Paul Gribble removes the Orval window



Ganymede by John Orval (Gatehouse)

Archives

Now and then Beleura receives requests from other museums or galleries for loans from our collection. Last year, for example, Hamilton Gallery held an exhibition called *John Orval: Stained Glass*, for which we lent our lovely panel called *Ganymede* (1972). You may have noticed how its clever composition of coloured glass refracts rich shards of red and violet light around the Gatehouse stairwell. After some months in Hamilton, this work of art from Beleura's collection would have been widely admired by new audiences.

Recently we sent the military quilt – normally displayed on a newer Gatehouse wall – to an exhibition at The David Roche Foundation in Adelaide. The Annette Gero collection of quilts made from military fabrics is on display there until May 18, featuring remarkable and extremely rare works of textile artistry. The fact Beleura's contribution was researched in great historic detail by Annette Gero herself was a boon for us; when Patsy Kirk gifted her family's quilt in 2020, it came with practically no provenance but now there are eight pages in the lavish exhibition catalogue covering the key themes of its fascinating origins!

The major contributions made by Archives volunteers in cataloguing and researching Beleura's collections are now winding down to a natural ending. Recent retirements included Jeanine Barnden, Bronwyn and Wallen Mills, Sue Wearne and Louise Pratt, whose hard work Beleura gratefully acknowledges here once again. Specialist volunteers will remain on call to contribute their skills for projects as they arise in future.



Beleura's military quilt on display



1970s Evening coat from Just Visiting



Highlights from Just Visiting Exhibition



Ingrid Hoffmann at Just Visiting launch



1960s gown from Just Visiting

Just Visiting Fashion Exhibition

On 27 October the Just Visiting Exhibition was launched. The exhibition explored the changes in the way people wore fashion over eight decades.

Borrowing a range of vintage ladies' apparel from the Brighton Historical Society for display on mannequins in the House made possible a playful conceit: these garments epitomised the Bayside style sported by past visitors to Beleura. It was all fashion fun, and well supported by tour visitors and certainly our guests at last October's opening party.

The exhibition has been a great success and our past month has been fully booked with visitors seeing the show before it finishes this month.

Ingrid Hoffmann

Coming up at Beleura

Concerts

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| Ensemble Liaison | Friday 1 March |
| Big Fiddle Little Fiddle and harpist Claire Patti | Thursday 14 March |
| ANAM Classical #1 | Thursday 21 March |
| Singer / Songwriter & Cellist Monique Clare | Friday 5 April |
| Peninsula Chamber Music / Opera | Friday 12 April |

Our first concerts have sold out so I recommend booking tickets soon if you do not want to miss out.