



16th Australasian **Botanic Guides Conference**

Beauty rich and rare
Kings Park and Botanic Garden Western Australia

16 - 20 September 2019

WALK SUMMARY: A WALK ON THE QUIET SIDE Roe Garden and the Place of Reflection

Roe Garden:

John Septimus Roe (1797-1878) was the Swan River Colony's first Surveyor-General. He was influential in setting aside land for public use in the area we now know as Kings Park. He designed the towns of Perth and Fremantle and mapped major routes such as the Albany Highway. He was responsible for the allocation of land to the settlers of Perth. His contribution to WA was commemorated in this section of the Botanic Garden in 1956.

A map of Perth showing the city's fresh water lakes (now much deeper, beneath the CBD) was prepared by Roe and is shown here.

Place of Reflection:

There is a growing body of research producing evidence that being in nature nurtures human beings. Health benefits are wide-ranging. Today, therapeutic landscape design is an emerging field within landscape architecture, and there is growing interest in the benefits of walking meditation for people overcoming illness and trauma. The Place of Reflection, launched in 2011, is a contemplative space that is available to everyone in the community. It is a beautiful and tranquil site providing a place of commemoration and healing for people coping with loss in everyday life. It is a precious resource for the Western Australian community: a protected space where loss is felt and acknowledged, where loved ones are remembered and where nature encourages the seeking of understanding, healing, hope and renewal. Walking paths, contemplation decks and seating provide opportunities for individual reflection and quiet discussion, while the Marlee Pavilion provides a sheltered and inspirational space where groups can hold organised events. In the evening the soft light creates a beautiful effect.

Botanic features:

The Kings Park horticulturalists were adamant that three large – and old – tuart trees must be conserved at the site, not only because of their intrinsic value, but also because they impart a sense of timelessness to the garden. It was also important the root systems were not disturbed too much, so there was no digging into the landscape, and the pavilion rests on vertical pylons rather than on a pad.

Around the Place of Reflection are Eastern States plantings on one side, (approximately 1% of the 17 hectare Botanic Garden) and plants from the Northwest of WA on the other. The trees in this site provide a shady environment in which tree ferns – not native to WA – flourish.

Planting is planned to be inclusive, inspiring and nurturing. A number of indigenous food plants are establishing as part of this symbolism.

Plants to look out for on this walk:

Brachychiton rupestris (Queensland Bottle tree) – successfully transplanted from a local suburban garden; ***Cyathea cooperia*** (Australian Tree Fern); ***Banksia ericifolia*** (Heath-Leaved Banksia); ***Banksia serrata*** (Saw Banksia); ***Banksia spinulosa*** (Hairpin Banksia); ***Banksia integrifolia*** (Coastal Banksia); ***Casuarina glauca*** (Prostrate Swamp Oak 'Cousin It'); ***Eucalyptus obliqua*** (Messmate Stringybark); ***Eucalyptus gongylocarpa*** (Marble Gum); ***Albizia lebeck*** (Woman's tongue tree); ***Capparis mitchellii*** (Wild orange) with high Vitamin C levels; ***Ficus racemosa*** (Stem fig); ***Adansonia gregorii*** (boab): the first boabs that the Park successfully transplanted from the Kimberley, now approx. 50 years old.