

The Cycad – a true story.

The cycad palm struggled to survive, confined in its tub, without nutrition, seldom watered and ignored in a darkened corner of a fenced courtyard of a Maylands cafe. After years in this heartless prison, apparently dead, the cycad was dragged into a back lane, tipped from its tub and left to lie baking in the scorching summer heat without soil, shade or protection. For months the cycad lay forgotten amongst the garbage and broken bottles. Then one day a passing gardener remembered that in their indigenous environment cycad palms are ancient survivors which can withstand seasons of scorching fire and withering drought.

With much difficulty, two rescuers lifted the cycad on to a cart from where it lay, and relocated it to a new home.

By-standers mocked, “The plant is dead, and it cannot be revived,” but ignoring the taunts of the faithless the rescuers dug a hole, fertilised the earth and soaked the ground where the cycad was to be transplanted. Each day the faithful looked for signs of life. Could any living thing survive such callous treatment and neglect? As hopes began to fade, advice was sought from the Master Gardener. More water was applied, until a miracle occurred - a crown of fresh, thorny green leaves burst forth from the blackened and abused trunk. If cycads could speak, the rescued palm seemed to be saying, “Thank you for having faith in me.”

Bill Day, December 2018.



Above: Kyle Horace (left) and Bill Day & cycad at 15 Tenth Ave, Maylands, December 2018.