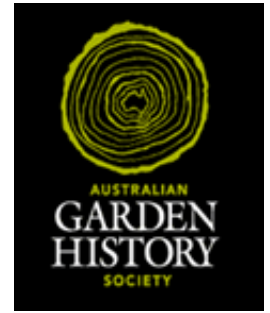


# Australian Garden History Society ACT Monaro Riverina Branch

Newsletter January 2011 No 1



Australian Garden History Society  
[www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au](http://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au)

ACT Monaro Riverina Branch, PO Box 5008, LYNEHAM ACT 2602  
For an e-copy of the newsletter email [expertco@ozemail.com.au](mailto:expertco@ozemail.com.au)

## BRANCH DIARY

### 18 FEBRUARY

Southern Highlands  
Branch picnic

### 25 FEBRUARY

Visit to the National  
Arboretum

## For your diaries

### 3 APRIL

Visit to the Yass region

## 2011 LECTURE SERIES

12 May

8 June

13 July

## 19-22 AUGUST 2011

AGHS National  
Conference,  
Maryborough

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### VISIT TO THE NATIONAL ARBORETUM CANBERRA

FRIDAY 25 FEBRUARY

In 2004 the ACT Government held a nation-wide competition for the design of an arboretum and gardens, as part of the recovery program following the 2003 bushfires.

The winning design by Landscape Architects Taylor Cullity Lethlean and Architects Tonkin Zulaikha Greer, proposed the 100 Forests/100 Gardens design concept focusing on the establishment of forests of rare, threatened and symbolic trees from around the world. It completes an aspect of Walter Burley Griffin's design for Canberra which included a continental international arboretum at the western end of the Lake. The Arboretum will be one of the centre pieces of Canberra's centenary in 2013.

AGHS members have the opportunity to visit the Arboretum in February. We will be welcomed by Jocelyn Plovits, Chair, Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc. And then Branch member and Deputy Chair of Friends of NAC, Max Bourke, will speak to us about the Arboretum and lead the visit. The visit will conclude with refreshments on the Events Terrace.

Wear sturdy shoes as the Arboretum is a construction site and we want to walk across the plots not necessarily following the road. If it rains the visit will have to be postponed, as the site is exposed.

**Time:** 5.15 for 5.30 – 7pm

Visitors should meet at the entrance of the Arboretum at 5.15 for a 5.30 start (**The front gate will be locked** and people not present by 5.30pm will have to do it another time!)

**Cost:** \$10 members, \$15 non-members including refreshments - booking form page 5.

In the case of bad weather - if you are uncertain if the event will go ahead call 6257 6970 on the day.

### FRIDAY 18 FEBRUARY, 5.30-7.30PM

A picnic organised by the Southern Highlands Branch of the AGHS to include a visit to *Whare Tau*, a National Trust Federation house classified in 1903 – details and a booking form are attached – our Branch members would be very welcome.

### SUNDAY 3 APRIL

A visit to the Yass district, including the AOGS Plant Fair at Bellevale, a property of great historic significance, established in the early 1800s, and named after Hamilton Hume's sister Isabella, the first mistress of the property. – **More details in the next newsletter**

BRANCH  
COMMITTEE

**Tony Byrne**, Chair  
**Margaret Bourke**  
**Nancy Clarke**,  
 Secretary & NMC  
 Representative  
**Helen Elliot**, Vice  
 Chair  
**Robbie Henderson**,  
 Treasurer  
**Rod Holesgrove**  
**Julia Nicholls**  
**Judy Pearce**,  
 Newsletter Editor  
**Linda Spinaze**  
**Marie Wood**

## 2011 LECTURE SERIES

More details in the next newsletter

**Thursday 12 May**, 6pm, Richard Aitkin talking on his new book *The Garden of Ideas*

**Wednesday 8 June**, 6pm, Di Firth talking on *Cabbages and roses: the Canberra Garden* - looking at the changing nature of the Canberra garden from 1926 to the present.

**Wednesday 13 July**, 6pm, Kay Johnston talking on her recent trip to visit the Suzhou gardens in China

## RECENT EVENTS

*THE VISION SPLENDID*

AGHS 31<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE  
 LAUNCESTON, TASMANIA  
 5 – 7 NOVEMBER 2010

The 31<sup>st</sup> Annual National AGHS Conference was held in the stately Albert Hall situated in the picturesque Launceston City Park. Albert Hall was built in 1891 and although undertaking renovations still provided a most wonderful atmosphere to meet acquaintances and hear about 'The Vision Splendid' a phrase coined by William Wordsworth in his ode 'Intimations of Immortality' (1807).

The Conference was once again fully booked and friends were treated to three mornings of various speakers and topics, a boxed lunch sitting out in the 200 year old City Park, then three afternoons of garden visits.

### FOR SALE

Early Ainslie Gardens,  
 \$15  
 Fifield Garden, \$10  
 Durham Hall Garden,  
 \$10  
 Recording Gardens,  
 \$10  
 Planting the Nation,  
 \$20  
 Studies in Australian  
 Garden History, Vol 2,  
 \$20

Friday morning, Professor Henry Reynolds, treated us to a history lesson encapsulating the aboriginality of Tasmania before Europeans arrived, the influence of fire-stick farming and the ensuing early European settlement of Tasmania. He spoke about the early use of fences by European settlers to be the "control factor over nature" both to control cropping and stock management.

John Dent, a land surveyor and president of the West Tamar Historical Society provided a rich tapestry of history from 1804 when William Patterson established the first vegetable garden, to fruit trees being planted at York Town in 1807, to the pear tree planted in 1847 which still survives in City Park today.

It was interesting to hear Gwenda Sheridan speak about the conifer connection with the widespread planting of conifers by the Europeans in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. England has no indigenous pine trees (apart from a Scottish pinus) and the exotic conifers they planted are integral to estate properties and complement Tasmania's beautiful indigenous conifers.

After lunch on Friday, we boarded one of five allocated buses and drove to *Quamby* and *Exton*. *Quamby* was originally settled in the early 1800's with an area of 30,000 acres. The extensive landholding was progressively sold off and now hosts a golf course but many of the old trees, including fruit trees, Himalayan cedars and conifers still remain. *Exton* was settled in 1820 and has a main drive of 2 kms. It boasts predominately a mix of elms, English box and horse chestnut trees. The feature of *Exton* has to be the extensive hedge rows which take one month to trim each winter, ready for the spring growth.

Saturday's session began with Sarah Lloyd's talk on bird life and the effects that the clearing and degradation of original vegetation is having on their population. Her talk was accompanied by music from Ron Nagorcka, playing an electronic keyboard of manipulated birdsong recordings.

The feature of the conference for me was the superb history presentation by Kenneth von Bibra AM. He gave a spell binding, theatrical performance about the Reed family, their houses and gardens, commencing in 1874 with his great grandfather Henry Reed. It was

an oration of history with delicate humour. Thank you Kenneth, for your performance and for revealing how Mrs Reed detested the 'familiarity' of the Australian way so much she had her home, *Mount Pleasant*, enclosed so "nothing could creep in".

Mention must also go to Hamish Maxwell Stewart and Eleanor for an enthralling presentation on William Buelow Gould's book of plants.

The garden visits did not disappoint and their selection was diverse from historical gardens and huge hedge rows to restored gardens surrounding Georgian homes. *Wesley Dale* and *Old Wesley Dale* properties were inspiring, especially the elephant hedge and vegetable garden. Afternoon tea at John and Robyn Hawkins property *Bentley* was a sumptuous feast as was Sunday's afternoon tea at the Perth Tabernacle Hall. John Hawkins gave two talks; topics included the plight of the Tasmanian Aborigines once they were exposed to European diseases, the Chudleigh Valley, the history of the area and the *Vision Splendid*. From his talks, John left no doubt about his passion for the landscape and his desire to maintain the forests. Visits to the large historical gardens of *Eskleigh* (1870) and the smaller garden of *The Jolly Farmer* (built in 1826) were vastly different and Michael McWilliams, owner of *The Jolly Farmer* provided an insight into how much garden can be created in a small space; a garden of iris, aquilegia, lupins, roses, climbers, etc.

This article does not do justice to all the speakers, gardens and events at the conference, of which they are too numerous to mention in detail. It was truly a wonderful time, capped off by a performance at the Conference Dinner on the newly restored, historic Brindley organ and water engine, situated in the Great Hall. "Nearly 2000 pipes, 30 pedals, 27 stops and a million parts seemed like a lot of trouble to go to create a single musical instrument".

The conference explored the layers of landscapes, designed gardens and inhabitants from the many generations of Aboriginal people, to the European settlers and the cultural significance they have had on Northern Tasmania.

Thank you to all the participants for your friendship and to the conference organisers for a well presented and informative forum. Well done.

**Helen Elliot, Branch Vice Chair**



## VISIT TO LAMBRIGG & END OF YEAR DRINKS

SUNDAY 5 DECEMBER

A good turn up of members and friends attended our end of year event, and the afternoon turned out to be very pleasant despite the shocking weather for most of the week. Peter had graded the road prior to our arriving. It had been severely eroded with the floods a day or so before. Peter and Kate Gullett were generous hosts, and after talking to us we were able to wander at will around the property, before enjoying the usual high standard of catering supplied by the committee. The Branch Chair Tony Byrne thanked the committee for all their support during the year and wished members the best for Christmas and the New Year.

**Judy Pearce**



**Photo:** Tony Byrne with Peter and Kate Gullett



## OF INTEREST

AUSTRALIAN OPEN GARDEN SCHEME

The program and guidebook are available for 2010-2011. For more information go to <http://www.opengarden.org.au/>

**FRIENDS OF THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS**

Lectures on a variety of topics are offered at 12.30pm on most Thursdays. Details on all the lectures can be found at <http://www.anbg.gov.au/friends/calendar.html>. Of particular interest to our members:

**10 February**, Ray Brown, *An Ellis Rowen tragic*

**24 February**, Rosemary Purdie, *Plants of Mongolia – south to the Gobi desert*

**WESTBOURNE WOODS ARBORETUM WALKS**

Free guided two hour walks through the grounds of the Royal Canberra Golf Club are held every second Sunday of the month, starting at 9.30am at the entrance to Royal Canberra Golf Club, Bentham Street, Yarralumla

For further information on the program of Friends of ACT Arboreta, phone 6288 7656 or 6281 1587

**AGHS BOOKING SLIP**

Booking slips need to be returned no later than one week prior to the event to assist committee with planning. It is easier for your voluntary committee to get payment in advance but if you have difficulties paying by cheque please send the booking slip or email [nclarke@grapevine.com.au](mailto:nclarke@grapevine.com.au) and pay on the day.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Those booking by email need to pay if they cancel at the last minute. Entry Tickets will not be sent – your name will be on the attendance list

**Names**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Contact phone:** (Evening/W/E) \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

Tick	Event	Cost	Numbers attending	Amount Incl \$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Visit to the National Aboretum (25 February)	Members of AGHS \$10 Non-members \$15		\$ _____

**Return with payment to: AGHS, P O Box 5008, Lyneham ACT 2602**  
 Make cheques out to **Australian Garden History Society**