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Electronic version



Newsletter - June 2011

WEST AUSTRALIAN BRANCH

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to new members who have joined our branch. We hope to see you at an event soon.

UPCOMING EVENTS

**Annual General Meeting: Gooseberry Hill Hall, Ledger Road, Gooseberry Hill
2pm Sunday 7 August - nomination form will be posted with notice of AGM**

Presentation: *The Restoration of the Gardens at Biddulph Grange* by Richard Offen

Cost: \$10 members, \$15 non-members. RSVP to Carmel O'Halloran or Caroline Grant

The WA Branch is looking for new committee members, in particular a treasurer. Our current treasurer, Gillian Lilleyman, has held the position for five years, for which we are very thankful. Gillian is retiring from the committee, so we need someone to keep the accounts. If you are interested in the position please let either Caroline or Carmel know (see contact details above).

Following the formalities of the AGM, we are delighted to announce that Richard Offen of Heritage Perth has agreed to give a presentation on his involvement in the restoration of the Victorian garden at Biddulph Grange in Staffordshire, England. The gardens were developed by James Bateman and include a Chinese-inspired garden, a wonderful collection of dahlias, and conifers including the oldest surviving golden larch in Britain, brought from China by the plant hunter Robert Fortune. Richard will also share some tales of plant collectors.

As a matter of interest to members who may be travelling to England soon, there will be an excursion to Biddulph Grange on Thursday 21 July as part of the Garden History Society's annual conference at Keele University in Staffordshire. Visit www.gardenhistorysociety.org for more information.

Following Richard's presentation we will enjoy some afternoon tea together.

RECENT EVENTS

***Historic Gardens of Perth* exhibition: Perth Town Hall 13-23 May**

The opening of the exhibition on 13th May by the Lord Mayor Lisa Scaffidi was well attended. The committee would like to thank Sue Monger for donating her excellent catering skills which helped to make the event so enjoyable.

Well done to the exhibition subcommittee whose superb effort in producing the exhibition has attracted a lot of positive remarks. Importantly, many people commented that they found the panels informative and evidently their curiosity was roused about which gardens were where. Around 1400 people visited the display over the 11 days of the exhibition. Many thanks to the AGHS volunteers who helped manage the exhibition. When the subcommittee has had a rest, we look forward to producing a written publication which will allow the parks and gardens presented in the exhibition to be examined in greater detail.

Bayswater Library presentation *Gardens of Galicia*: Tuesday 12 April

Caroline Grant gave a talk on her recent tour of Galicia, in the north western corner of Spain. The gardens are famous for their large camellias and also their bluegums! The tour started at La Coruna, where the Englishman Sir Francis Drake, known as the English pirate, besieged the city, and where the Spanish Armada set sail in 1588. Later, it was famous in British history as the site of the Battle of Corunna during the Peninsular War when the British troops fought against the French to cover the embarkation of British troops after their retreat. As we proceeded towards Portugal, we passed by Bishop Rosendo Salvado's home town of Tuy. Many of the gardens visited showed an eclectic mix of tastes. These included box hedging in the French style, often surrounding masses of hydrangeas or canna lilies. Chestnut trees thrive in Galicia, and in the parks Tasmanian bluegums (*Eucalyptus globulus*) were planted alongside a range of conifers. There were many apocryphal stories about the age of various bluegums and paperbark trees which kept us entertained.

Conservation Analysis: Cottesloe Civic Centre: Sunday 10 April

On Sunday 10 April landscape architect and AGHS member Ann Forma, working with the landscape management plan, showed us over the recent conservation works at the Cottesloe Civic Centre, including the impressive limestone walling. The property was known as Overton Lodge and belonged to Judge Pennefather from 1897 until he sold it to Claude de Bernales in 1911. The colourful mining entrepreneur imbued the property with a Spanish mission style, employing a gardener, Arthur Kay, who remained on staff after Cottesloe Council purchased the property in 1950, altering the buildings and renaming it the Cottesloe Memorial Town Hall and Civic Centre.

After Kay's retirement, and with changes in council staff and tastes, a confusion of garden styles and design elements prevailed. The conservation plan of 1996 started a program of restoration. The 2008 landscape masterplan awaits funding for new plants for the gardens, and the Australian Garden History Society may play a role in this.

NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Sydney meeting Sunday 19 June

John Viska (elected member) and Caroline Grant (WA Branch representative) attended a face to face meeting in Sydney where many budget items were raised. Besides the annual conference and garden tour activities, the AGHS has undertaken many activities. These include:

- significant financial support given for specific historic garden conservation projects
- discussion about the proportion of AGHS funds allocated to the journal: if you have strong opinions about the journal please let either John or Caroline know
- historic gardens of Australia register
- adding entries about Australian gardens to Wikipedia (new project officer role)
- revamping AGHS website
- development of a research register
- anthology of the best journal articles
- memorial avenues – add to list, discussion about the Avenue of Honour at Bacchus Marsh
- new products for sale to promote the society, including a new range of cards

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

Review of the Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990

Western Australia's heritage legislation is up for review. The date for public submissions closed on 10 June, and a questionnaire is available until 30 June. See <http://www.heritage.wa.gov.au> for more information. The Phase 2 discussion paper will be open for public comment from August. We would encourage members to become involved in this process, as the Heritage Council is becoming more aware of the importance of conserving landscapes, at least in part due to the landscape forum and *Historic Gardens of Perth* exhibition. Any advocacy on our part could improve the protection available for trees, parks and gardens, and overall amenity.

Rose pruning demonstration by WA Rose Society at Samson House, Fremantle, 17 July 2011

More information from the National Trust will be forwarded when available.

Australian Landscape Conference 9-13 September 2011

Members should receive more information about this conference in their next journals. These conferences are very well attended.

The botany behind the garden forum, University of Melbourne, October 2011

Due to the early date of the annual conference in Maryborough, the AGM and forum will be held in Melbourne on 22 October with an optional trip to Cranbourne Botanic Gardens on 23 October.

WA Branch committee: Caroline Grant (chair), Theresa Putland (minute secretary), Joy Hill (membership secretary), Gillian Lilleyman (retiring treasurer), John Viska (chair of exhibition subcommittee), Ruth Morgan, Carmel O'Halloran and Lisa Williams.

To catch up on what other branches are doing, and on National Office information, visit the Australian Garden History Society web site at www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au.