

# Australian Garden History Society ACT Monaro Riverina Branch



Newsletter February 2017 No 2

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

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## BRANCH DIARY

**22 APRIL, 10AM – 3PM**  
NT Heritage Open Day

**26 APRIL**  
Montague Island Branch  
Working Party

**30 APRIL, 2.30 – 4.30PM**  
Belconnen Ramble

**12 MAY**  
Visit to Bundarbo Station,  
Jugiong . **POSTPONED**

**12 MAY**  
Visit to The Gallery of  
Gardens, National  
Arboretum Canberra

**15 JUNE**  
Lecture: *The Garden in the  
Ancient Roman World*

**6 JULY**  
Lecture: *Visionary or  
Vandal? Lancelot  
"Capability" Brown and the  
English Landscape*

**27-29 OCTOBER**  
AGHS National Conference  
*Marvellous Melbourne in  
Constant Change*

## NEXT EVENTS

### ***National Trust Open Day at Gungahlin Homestead*** **SATURDAY 22 APRIL 10AM – 3PM**

The Heritage Festival opens with the National Trust **Open Day at Gungahlin Homestead**, a grand former residence and later wildlife research station which is rarely open to the public. This event will be co-hosted by the National Trust with Soldier On and is courtesy of CSIRO, the lessee of the site. AGHS will hold a 'stall' in the grounds along with other like-minded organisations. There will be tours of the Homestead, entertainment, classic cars, stalls and refreshments. This is a rare opportunity to visit this site - with its grand 19th Century buildings (William Davis) extended by Edward Grace. The rear courtyard, garden areas, carriage loop etc are still visible. A great opportunity to visit an early Canberra cultural landscape, and to meet friends from AGHS and other organisations . see attached flyer.

### ***Living and Working in Canberra in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*** ***Two Heritage Sites in Belconnen*** **SUNDAY 30 APRIL, 2.30 – 4.30PM**

Join a guided ramble to discover what we know about life on two early settlements on the Limestone Plains - the Charnwood Homestead site in Fraser, and Palmerville in McKellar.

We tend to think of European settlement in Canberra as centred on great pastoral stations like Duntroon and Yarralumla, but there was also much activity in what are now the Belconnen and Gungahlin areas, with land grants made to George Thomas Palmer on Ginninderra Creek in 1826, and to Henry Hall who in 1833 became the first resident landholder in the region. The sites of their settlements have fascinating histories that we have the opportunity to explore. Nothing visible remains of the built structures at Henry Hall's Charnwood but there are a number of heritage trees, including olives that still bear fruit and an osage orange; at Palmerville Heritage Park there is more evidence of the many buildings in what became a substantial settlement, as well as what are thought to be the oldest living European trees in the ACT.

This is a joint event between the Australian Garden History Society ACT Monaro Riverina Branch and the National Trust ACT, and will form part of the Canberra and Region Heritage Festival /Australian Heritage Festival.

**Cost:** \$10 including light refreshments. Please wear closed shoes. Numbers are limited.

**Places are still available - BOOKINGS are essential  
and will be taken by the National Trust ACT.  
Ring 6230 0533 or email [info@nationaltrustact.org.au](mailto:info@nationaltrustact.org.au)**

**BRANCH  
COMMITTEE**

**Sue Byrne**, Chair  
**Judy Pearce**, Dpt Chair &  
 Newsletter Editor  
**Helen Elliot**, Treasurer  
**Nancy Clarke**, Secretary

**Bronwyn Blake** (also on  
 NMC)  
**Wendy Dodd**  
**Greg Johnson**  
**Kay Johnston**, State  
 NMC Representative  
**Helen Wilson**  
**Marie Wood**

**POSTPONED*****Visit to Bundarbo Station, Jugiong*****FRIDAY 12 MAY**

Due to the most unforeseen circumstances the trip we had planned for May been postponed. Sue Chisholm has put a lot of work into our visit and we thank her very much for this. We very much look forward to being able to visit in the near future. As a replacement for this event we have organised:

***A Visit to The Gallery of Gardens at the  
National Arboretum Canberra*****FRIDAY 12 MAY, 10AM**

Each garden has a unique design with a variety of trees, plants, landscape features and welcoming spaces for people to sit and enjoy the inspiring surrounds. The features include a labyrinth, reflective pond, sculpture and stone walls. Opened last weekend are four of the gardens -The Open Gardens Australia Celebration Garden, The Labyrinth Garden, The AIDS Garden of Reflection and Mununja the Butterfly Garden. The Gallery of Gardens has been created through the generous donations and fundraising efforts of many individuals and organisations.

Paulene Cornish, well know 2CC radio presenter, horticulturalist and current Chair of the First Canberra Garden Club, has agreed to talk to us. She was involved in the selection panel for the Open Gardens Australia Garden and understands the concepts and plant selection behind the other gardens.

- Meet** Outside the Bonsai and Penjing Collection at 10am . the café will be open if you want to grab a coffee before we start.
- Cost** Free to members and non-members
- Bookings** Booking form page 7 . although the event is free it would be great to get an idea of numbers so please complete the booking form or let Helen Elliot know you are coming, [ellioth@bigpond.net.au](mailto:ellioth@bigpond.net.au) (phone 6284 4749 home).

***Lecture: The Garden in the Ancient Roman World: what  
we can learn from Pompeii and Herculaneum?***

**SPEAKER: PROFESSOR ELIZABETH MINCHIN**  
**THURSDAY 15 JUNE, 6.15 FOR 6.30PM**

**Joint event with the Friends of the Classics Museum ANU**

The title says it all! Professor Minchin will open our eyes to the knowledge and sophistication of gardening in the ancient world. The Friends are a non-profit group who raise funds for the Museum (no other funding is available). They will have some merchandise for sale, and as the event is free we suggest our members make a small donation on the night (say \$5).

- Venue** The lecture will be held in the Larry Sitsky Room, behind Llewellyn Hall in the ANU School of Music, Childers Street, City West. After, we will walk a short distance for drinks and nibbles in the Classics Museum, A D Hope Building Ellery Circuit.
- Bookings** Booking form page 7 . although the event is free we do need to know numbers for catering.

## **Lecture: Visionary or Vandal? Lancelot “Capability” Brown and the English Landscape**

**SPEAKER: SUE EBURY  
THURSDAY 6 JULY, 6.00 PM**

On Thursday 6 July AGHS members and Friends of the National Library have the opportunity to hear what promises to be a wonderful talk by the Patron of AGHS, Sue Ebury. This is our eleventh annual joint event with Friends, and we think it will be exceptional.



Lancelot “Capability” Brown is famous for transforming the English landscape. Was he a genius, this fashionable gardener/architect who re-contoured the Georgian gentry’s estates and great country houses? On the tercentenary of his birth, Sue Ebury spent summer days exploring his work and pondering his heritage; gardens, once regular and contained, embraced surrounding

hills and valleys; marshes were drained; streams became sinuous rivers and serpentine lakes; wild countryside . *la belle nature* . encroached on domestic surroundings. Through photographs, paintings and archives we gain insights into how the Georgian gentry used this omnipotent magician’s landscapes to enhance life in the country.

**SUE EBURY** was a founding committee member of AGHS, the honorary editor of the proceedings which established the society and one of the honorary editors of the journal. She is also a Patron of the NLA and was a member of the Library Foundation Board for seven years.

Sue is incapable of going on holiday without a project, and multiple visits to England, Italy and Japan over the past thirty years have resulted in a number of papers and lectures reflecting the garden aesthetic of these countries. In 2015 we were privileged to hear her presentation on Three Medici Gardens. We now have the opportunity of her insights into the role of one man in creating what we think of as the great English garden.

*Photo: Gardens at Blenheim Palace, image courtesy of Sue Ebury.*

**Venue** Theatre, National Library of Australia  
**Cost** \$15 for AGHS members and Friends of the NLA, \$20 for non-members includes refreshments.  
**Booking** Bookings through the NLA at <http://tix.yt/capability>  
**NO** bookings to be made through AGHS.

## **NEW MEMBERS**

The committee would like to welcome the following new member who has joined since the last newsletter.

- Sonja Robinson, Deniliquin

## PAST EVENTS

### *Versailles. Treasures from the Palace*

THURSDAY 2 FEBRUARY

Gardens were integral to Versailles from its inception, and the splendid gardens are well represented in the current Versailles exhibition at the National Gallery of Australia. So it was with great interest that AGHS members gathered on the afternoon of 2nd February to tour the exhibition with Kay Johnson (Committee member and NGA volunteer guide) and her colleague Pam Harris.

Kay and Pam gave us a comprehensive overview of the importance of the gardens to the development and history of the palace complex, then walked us through the exhibition focussing our attention on some of the beautiful ways in which plants and the gardens themselves are represented in the splendid objects displayed. Our guides also drew our attention to the remarkably complex plumbing essential to the gardens, and to the constantly evolving garden design represented by beautiful garden plans and vistas showing the development of the gardens throughout the reigns of Louis XIV, XV and Louis XVI. The exhibition ends with Marie Antoinette and her simple garden and of course the coming of the Revolution and its consequences.

We finished the tour excited about the complexity and beauty of the gardens and continued discussions with our guides over refreshments in the quiet shade of the Sculpture Garden. Many thanks to Kay and Pam for such a wonderful afternoon.

**Marie Wood**

### *Visit to the Harris Hobbs Garden*

THURSDAY 9 MARCH



Peep behind the hedge of 16 Robe Street Deakin and will you see a garden or a gallery or a potpourri of visual delights? You will see all three or at least aspects of all three. On a perfect Autumn evening members of the Branch gathered at the front entrance beside the hedge to be greeted by Karina Harris and Neil Hobbs, principal architects of Harris Hobbs Landscapes, a design consultancy firm which has been practising in Canberra since 1991. In 2006 this garden won the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects Edna Walling award for Residential Designed Landscapes.

The John Scollay designed home, built in 1968, was purchased by Neil and Karina almost 30 years ago and the house and surrounds have been in a state of transformation ever since. A crabapple (*Malus floribunda*) and cypress (*Cupresses sempervirens*) are all that remain of the original plantings. The geometrical rectangular spaces throughout the garden complement the postwar Melbourne regional architecture of the house, which has been extended over the years in a style sympathetic to the original. This brings a sense of the house and garden being unified as one flows easily from the other.

Within the garden there is a mixture of both native and exotic species. Changes in the garden over the years reflect both personal lifestyle eras and current climatic conditions. Recently more native plants have become incorporated into the garden, often planted in the modernist manner such as the row of birthday candle banksias

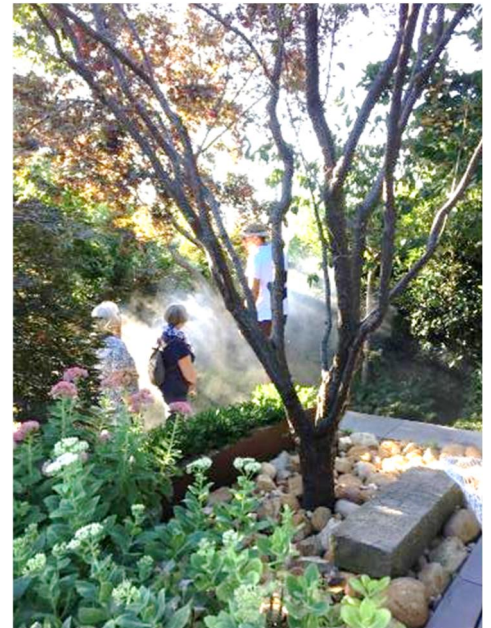
(*Banksia spinulosa*) growing atop a dividing wall. A striking group of mahonia (l) beside the wall of the latest extension to the house emphasises this design feature whilst hedges, low walls and rows of terracotta pots of different sizes create strong lines to define spaces.

Neil is a passionate believer in placing art within the landscape. Our visit to Contour 556 late last year emphasised his philosophy that placing art within the landscape adds an extra dimension to spaces that otherwise would be solely dependent on plants. Neil and Karina proudly support local and emerging artists and have artistically placed throughout the garden or attached to walls, a variety of sculptures both object and text based.

We were visually delighted by the fog sculpture inspired after a visit to New York, the shallow bowls of water providing not only refreshment for the birds but also the bees and the combination of artificial and natural materials thus mixing the different textures of stone, pavers, timber and imported artificial grass.

How very pleasant it was to sip and sup in a very special place . garden and gallery, full of visual delight. Many thanks to Neil and Karina to allow us to wander and enjoy their very special landscape.

**Sue Byrne**



*Photos: Neil Hobbs with Thistle, Mist from the fog garden*

## NEWS FROM THE BRANCH

### BRANCH COMMITTEE

Lainie Lawson who we featured in the February Newsletter has resigned from the committee for personal reasons. We are very sorry about this as her contributions to our branch activities have been very much appreciated. She is hoping to join us at future events.

If any members would like to join the committee please could they contact our Secretary, Nancy Clarke, [clarkenancy624@gmail.com](mailto:clarkenancy624@gmail.com), phone 6248 6549, who is able to advise you on what is involved.

## FROM THE NATIONAL OFFICE

### AGHS NATIONAL CONFERENCE

You should all have received the disappointing news that the much anticipated AGHS New Zealand Conference has been cancelled. This is to be replaced by a conference in Melbourne, **Marvellous Melbourne in Constant Change**.

- Friday 27 October (all day lectures) . State Library of Victoria
- Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 October. (Garden Tours)
- Monday Optional Day Tour.

The program is currently being finalisedō more to come.

**NEW ZEALAND SOUTH ISLAND TOUR**

Lynne Walker will be leading a tour to the South Island (approx. 14 days) for the Society as a post conference tour. It will depart Melbourne Tuesday 31 October; full details of the itinerary and costs will be released shortly.

**AGHS WEB SITE**

The AGHS website has been revamped . take a look at <https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/>

**AGHS NEO**

The Branch has been advised that Phoebe LaGerche-Wijsman will step down from the role of National Executive Officer later in the month . we wish her well.

**OF INTEREST****LAKE BURLEY GRIFFIN GUARDIANS (LBGG)**

<http://lakeburleygriffinguardians.org.au/>

**NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF AUSTRALIA**

[www.naa.gov.au/visit-us/exhibitions](http://www.naa.gov.au/visit-us/exhibitions)

**AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS**

[WWW.ANBG.GOV.AU/GARDENS](http://WWW.ANBG.GOV.AU/GARDENS)

**NATIONAL ARBORETUM CANBERRA**

[www.arboretumcanberra.org.au](http://www.arboretumcanberra.org.au)

**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 or EFT please send the booking slip or email to Helen Elliot at [ellieth@bigpond.net.au](mailto:ellieth@bigpond.net.au) (phone 6284 4749 home).

**Names** \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Tick	Event	Cost	Numbers attending	Amount Incl \$
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>12 May</b> - Visit to <i>The Gallery of Gardens</i>	Free . but numbers required	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>15 June</b> – Lecture: The Garden in the Ancient Roman World	Free, small donation on night suggested	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>6 July</b> . Lecture: %Capability+ Brown, NLA	Book through NLA <a href="http://tix.yt/capability">http://tix.yt/capability</a> <b>NO</b> bookings to be made through AGHS.		