



Australian Garden History Society  
Tasmanian Branch

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## Newsletter No. 118

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**Newsletter:** Our newsletter is published periodically. Send contributions by email to Jennifer Stackhouse.

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## Autumn 2018

### From the Chairman

Welcome to the autumn edition of *Blue Gum* and a special welcome to new members; I hope you enjoy the variety of events that are planned for 2018 (*outlined on page 2*) and I look forward to seeing you at future events. Our recent visit to small Hobart gardens was inspiring (*see page 3 for information and images*).

At the recent AGHS National Management and Planning days, we agreed to engage an editor for the draft document *Recording Gardens*. This new document, when available, will provide updated methods for surveying gardens and recording their features.

A booklet was compiled for the 2017 AGHS conference with summaries of, and extracts from, a dozen interviews from the AGHS Oral History Collection.

The Oral History Committee is keen to add to it with recollections of gardeners and garden owners in each region. Let me know of any significant Tasmanian people whom we might approach to be interviewed.

At our AGM in August we will be looking for two new Branch Committee members including one to become treasurer. Please consider volunteering for a most rewarding task. We meet about every eight weeks for about half a day.

I'm hoping to be swamped with nominations for our next Committee!

*Lynne Paul, Chairman*

## Events and activities coming up

**Three events are coming up: a visit to the French garden at Government House; our winter lecture which focuses on the role of trees to combat rising temperatures in cities visiting lecturer Ian Shears; and our AGM and lecture.**



**Government House, Hobart. Adobe Stock Photos**

### Government House garden tour

**(Friday May 4, 2018 from 10.30am)**

The AGHS has secured a special treat for members and guests with a private tour of the gardens of Government House, Hobart. Our group will take a guided tour of the garden with a special focus on the French vegetable garden, Lahaye's Garden. It was inspired by the French exploration of Tasmania in 1792 when vegetables and fruiting trees were planted in Recherche Bay. Gardener Tara Edmondson, who researched the early links

and French vegetable varieties of the period, will also talk about her work.

Bring a picnic to enjoy in the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Garden, which is celebrating its bicentenary this year (see more details on page 4), or make a lunch booking at the Succulent restaurant in the Gardens.

**Details** There is no charge for the visit but those who are attending are asked to complete the booking form emailed soon.

### Winter lecture

**(Saturday July 21, 2018)**

Ian Shears, Manager Urban Sustainability at the City of Melbourne, is visiting Hobart in July and has agreed to give two lectures. The first is in conjunction with the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) Tasmanian Branch on July 20, and the second will be given for the AGHS. AGHS members are invited to both talks.

Ian is one of Australia's leading experts in urban landscapes and urban forestry. He has specialised in urban landscapes for more than 25 years and worked for over a decade with the City of Melbourne.

Ian was a very well received speaker at the AGHS conference in 2017 when he spoke about the importance of trees to mitigate heat in cities and the work underway to increase Melbourne's tree canopy.

**Details** Time, cost and venue will be notified by email on the booking form.

### AGM and lecture

**(Sunday August 26, 2018)**

Join us for our Annual General Meeting and lecture on the restoration of Dame Enid Lyons' garden, Home Hill at Devonport.

Landscape architects Sue Small and Prue Slatyer have researched the garden and are preparing recommendations for its ongoing care following funding from the AGHS.>

“We’re recommending reinstating the character of the garden as it was during the Lyons’ period, developing an interpretive walk through the garden, reworking the enclosed garden, replanting the front garden beds with species from the Lyons’ period, restoring the pond and stone walls, and incrementally removing and replanting trees to use species from the Lyons’ time,” says Prue.

Other recommendations include rationalising vehicle circulation to reduce large areas of bitumen and recreate the sense of entering a haven through dense planting and improving access to the house. Prue and Sue reveal aerial views of the garden since the 1940s.

**Details** There is no charge but those who are attending are asked to complete the booking form emailed soon.

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## *Past events and visits*

**A cold, wet but highly enjoyable Christmas party and garden visit, and a tour of two of Hobart’s garden gems have been recent highlights for the Tasmanian branch of the Australian Garden History Society. Jennifer Stackhouse reports.**



**Snowy prospect: Committee member Tom Lyons found the road blocked by snow as he headed towards Hamilton from Deloraine for the AGHS Christmas Party on December 5 last year.**

### **Christmas party and Prospect House garden viewing**

In December 2017 we braved inclement weather for our Christmas Party at Hamilton. Despite it being the beginning of summer, it was a cold, wet and windy day with snow in the Highlands. While the wet conditions deterred a few, committee member Tom Lyons battled through encountering heavy snow on his route from Deloraine across the

Central Highlands to Hamilton and being forced back on to the Midlands Highway (see photograph above). The wet conditions also meant a late change of lunch venue from the Italian-style garden terrace at Prospect House to the community hall in Hamilton.

Despite the rain, the event was a huge success. Many thanks are due to all helpers and volunteers especially to Ann Burnett, Kim Dudson, Liz Kerry and Prue Slatyer, who >



prepared the delicious lunch. A special thanks too to garden owners and AGHS members Doug Neale and John Jones, who made us so welcome at Prospect House despite the rain.

### Suburban gems of Hobart

In March AGHS members explored two small and inspirational private gardens at Moonah and West Hobart.



**Susan and Cameron McKinnon's Moonah garden.**  
*Photo Susan McKinnon*

**Moonah garden** This garden (*shown above*) is the work of garden designer Susan McKinnon and her husband Cameron, a horticulture teacher. They started the garden in 1997 and

20 years on it's packed with detail and makes the most of its suburban site. Features include small shady trees, luscious vegetables, perennials, grasses, climbers, espaliered fruit trees, topiary, water features, quirky sculptures, brick paving, a chook dome and an outdoor fireplace.

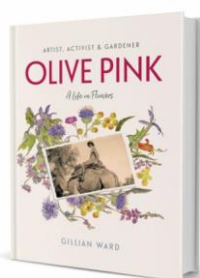
**West Hobart garden** The second gem for the day was Bobbie O'Brien's compact garden, which she began in 2005. Bobbie O'Brien has a long association with Blooming Tasmania and is a keen plants woman with a passion for exotics. Distinctly planted areas surround the house, some quite formal and capturing the stunning views afforded by the elevated site. The garden features an elegant sunken walled garden with box-hedged rose beds and bountiful espaliered fruit trees.

We enjoyed lines of single rugosa roses with their colourful hips, clematis, irises, dainty herbaceous treasures and potted specimens. The garden has colour and interest in every season and when members visited in early March it was sporting colourful autumn hues and was a beautiful place to spend time with a cup of tea at the end of the visit.

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## News & updates

### ***Olive Pink book to be launched in May at Narryna***



When Gillian Ward spoke to Society members about the life and work of Tasmanian-born artist Olive Pink in June 2016 she mentioned she was bringing out a book about the artist. That

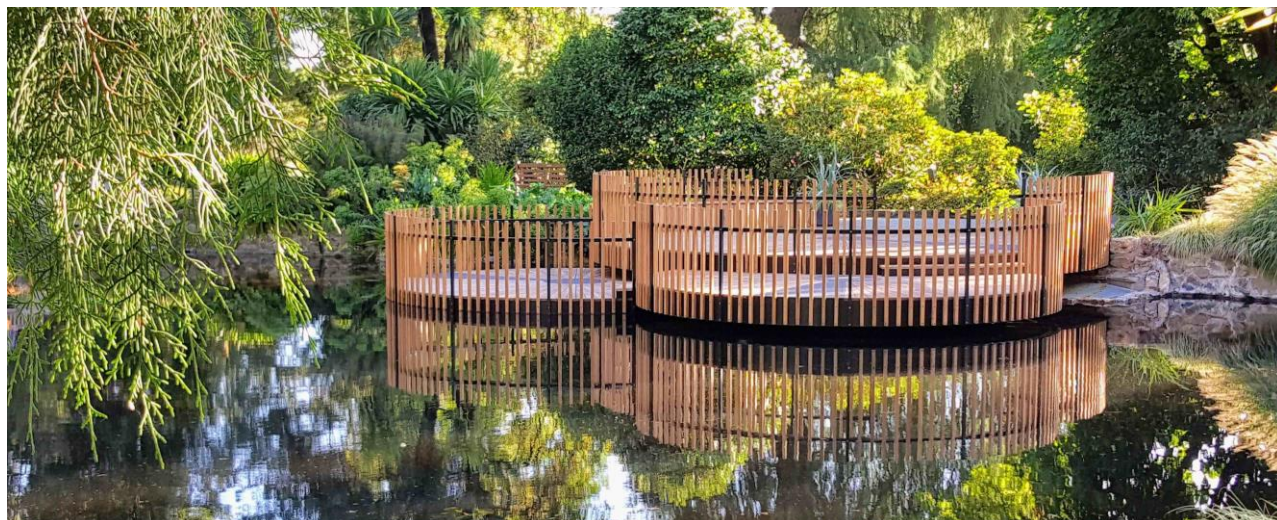
book is now published and will be launched at Narryna, 103 Hampden Road, Battery Point on May 1 at 5pm.

*Olive Pink: Artist, Activist & Gardener* combines Olive's exquisite flower paintings with the story of her unconventional life,

which took her from Hobart to Alice Springs, where a flora reserve is named the Olive Pink Botanic Garden in her memory.

Olive Pink, who was born in Tasmania in 1884, is best known for her staunch support of the Aboriginal people of Central Australia and for her often-feisty encounters with anthropologists, missionaries and pastoralists. She fought not only for the rights of the local Arrernte and Warlpiri people, with whom she forged a strong connection, but also for the recognition and protection of the diversity of the local flora about which she was so passionate. To attend the free event register at [fullersbookshop.com.au](http://fullersbookshop.com.au).

## *Australia's second oldest botanic garden turns 200*



**The new Lily Pads deck at the RTBG was built for the Garden's bicentenary and opened by HRH Prince Edward on April 10. Photo Marcus Ragus**

**T**he Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens is marking its 200th birthday this year, two years after the bicentenary of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney. What was once known as Hangan's Farm where wheat, barley and potatoes were grown, is now a world-class botanic garden.

The original land grant was made to John and Jane Hangan's in 1805 and encompassed 20 hectares (50 acres) beside the River Derwent between Macquarie Point and New Town.

By 1818 the Hangans had moved their farm further up river and the original grant area was fenced off as the Government Gardens and Grounds. The appointment of J Faber as Superintendent of the land is taken as the date the Gardens was established.

Two hundred years on there's a lot to celebrate. Not only is this land now a beautifully planted, matured and highly maintained green space on the city's edge, the Gardens is also an important place of education and for the preservation and study of Tasmania's native flora.

### **Lily Pads opened**

On April 10 His Royal Highness Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex KG GCVO, opened an addition to the Gardens that was

commissioned for the bicentenary. Prince Edward also unveiled a plaque.

The tier of three beautifully balanced circular timber platforms has been built over the edge of the Gardens' much-loved Lily Pond.

Known as the Lily Pads and designed by Edwina Hughes of Inspiring Place Pty Ltd, these platforms offer an improved vantage point to enjoy the pond with its water lilies and birds as well as the surrounding gardens, which include many plants from China and Japan.

The Lily Pads will be popular with visitors and as a venue for special events.

### **Bicentennial gin and more**

Bicentenary mementos are available at the Gardens. Drop into the Gardens Shop to find a bottle of Bicentennial Release Gin flavoured with botanicals distilled from plants collected in the Gardens or to buy a copy of the recently released book *The Gardens: Celebrating Tasmania's Botanical Treasure 1818-2018*.

This book celebrates the colourful 200-year history of the RTBG and includes historical photographs, maps and stories from the archives as well as photos and anecdotes sourced from the community and reflecting that Gardens important place in Tasmania.



## *Vale Suzanne Ebury*



**I**t is with much sadness that we announce the death of Suzanne Ebury, Countess of Wilton, who was the Patron of the Australian Garden History Society. Suzanne is well known to many Tasmanian members for

her passionate support of the Society and of Australia's garden heritage, as well as her work as an editor and publisher. She died peacefully on April 12 in Melbourne after a short illness.

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## *Changes at head office in Melbourne*

**L**isa Tuck has been appointed as the National Executive Officer for the AGHS. She has replaced Phoebe La Gerche-Wijsman and was responsible for

pulling together 'Marvellous Melbourne', last year's AGHS conference, after its late relocation to Melbourne. Lindy Neylan will assist one day a week.

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## *AGHS membership drive at Blooming Tasmania*

**T**he AGHS (Tasmanian Branch) will be represented at Blooming Tasmania's Flower & Garden Festival at Albert Hall, Launceston on September 22-23. Members Dot and Mike Evans are managing the AGHS stand aiming to attract new members and offer information about Tasmania's garden history.

They again plan to sell secondhand gardening and botanical books. Mike says having books

on the stand was a great draw card last year and attracted lots of interest from visitors to the show, which helped to secure several new members for the Society.

Set aside good quality secondhand garden-related books to donate to the AGHS to sell at Blooming Tasmania, or sell on commission. Closer to the event drop-off points will be arranged in the north and south of the state.