

BRANCH CUTTINGS

Issue 47 - June 2015

This branch is affiliated with the Royal Australian Historical Society & National Trust of Australia (NSW)



The Evolution of a Garden:

The AGHS–Northern NSW Sub-branch Heritage Rose Project at Saumarez Homestead

The evolution of this garden began with one woman's passion for roses and her generosity in sharing them with the public. Miss Catherine MacLean has been a gardener all her life but it wasn't until later in life that collecting members of the rose family began and she filled her small city block with over one thousand roses.

Catherine says,

A friend brought me a rugosa and that's when it started. I became aware that there were roses other than hybrid teas. Then Rumsey's Rose Nursery in Sydney, which was actually closing, sent me a "mystery box" of roses that they thought I might be interested in and so my fascination began.

Over the years she has continued to build her collections of roses and her garden became an amazing mix of all the members of the rose family. Catherine explains,

It was my natural instinct to make each family as complete as I can make it – to have a complete collection, much like stamp collecting. Each one is different and has its particular endearing properties and I love to see them happy, healthy and flowering.

When it got to the point that there was just no more room it was suggested to Catherine that she might like to have her collection housed in a public



place where it could be admired and learnt from and she readily agreed. Catherine's generous donation of heritage roses led to liaison between the AGHS and the National Trust of Australia to provide a home in the former orchard at *Saumarez Homestead*. Ian Telford's design for the garden,

comprising a series of concentric beds divided by both radial and concentric paths were marked out to form the basis of a garden of 44 beds. A series of well-attended weekend working bees saw a representational 'orchard' planted with flowering fruit trees, donated by members, to recognise past use of the land at *Saumarez*. Rose garden beds were spade-edged from the original lime marking and many loads of mulch provided by Armidale Dumaresq Council were spread.

Roses began to be relocated from Catherine MacLean's garden after the layout of the beds was finalised. An enthusiastic group of AGHS 'rosebuds' worked tirelessly identifying, lifting and re-locating roses to *Saumarez*. Unseasonal heat in 2013, brought a premature halt to further relocation. Nevertheless, working bees continued coping with weeds, rabbits and very dry conditions

and, by the end of spring, the garden was about 30% planted. A Heritage Rose Garden Sub-committee was formed at the end of 2013. This committee's first



Rose Garden panorama

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Our next Sydney event is 21st June - a walk looking at tree renewal and management in our oldest park, *Hyde Park*, in a fascinating ½ day tour with Susan Lymbery, Sydney City Council Tree Management Coordinator.

Richard (Dick) Clough RIP was for a long time an AGHS member, educator and landscape architect. The Institute of Landscape Architects, NSW have posted a video of his last interview with Adrian Pilton of Johnson Pilton Walker on 26th November 2014 (he passed away on the 4th December). You can see it online at:

<http://aila.informz.net/z/cjUucD9taT0xMjY3OTIzJnA9MSZ1PTUwNzg1MjQ1MCZsaT04Mzg4NDk5/index.html>

Colleen Morris will be giving a very personal view of the contribution of Richard Clough to Australian garden history when she speaks at the AGM in August in her talk *A love of landscape and libraries*.

In April Sydney members enjoyed a great wander sampling pleasures of *Ashfield Park* and Haberfield in the inner west. Great to see the park pulsing with Punjabi rhythms of a wedding in full swing! Subdivided estates became the garden suburb Haberfield retaining traces of early spaciousness and plantings. Some of the rarities of Yasmarr's shrubberies impressed and we were lucky to have Richard Stanton, grandson of Haberfield's mentor and developer namesake and his daughter, landscape architect & AGHS member, Annabel Murray, along with us.

The National Management Committee and our Branch are sponsoring publications to accompany two exciting 2016 exhibitions planned for Sydney. One is in late 2016 at the State Library of NSW, *Garden Making in Australia*, featuring the library's rich collections and celebrating 200 years of the *Royal Botanic Garden Sydney*. Richard Aitken is curating the exhibition and parallel publication.

Equally anticipated is the early-mid 2016 exhibition at the Museum of Sydney and its publication that Colleen Morris is curating, of botanical artworks from *The Florilegium* at the *Royal Botanic Garden Sydney*, celebrating this same bicentenary. These are works by invited botanical artists highlighting key plants from that garden's collection, arranged to tell its history. Both exhibitions note the development of RBG Sydney, its influence on gardens, parks and landscapes. The branch will partner in garden-themed activities with *Sydney Living Museums* and the Library. We relish the opportunities to present great talks and guided tours for members and all who might be interested: block out your diaries.

Recent NSW State Heritage Register listings and proposals include some gardens /landscapes:

Lyons House (the sole Robin Boyd-designed house in NSW, with (equally rare) 1967 Bruce Mackenzie-designed landscape setting, in Port Hacking (Dolan's Bay);

Oran Park Estate (part), Oran Park Drive (former Cobbitty Road), Oran Park;

St. Mary & St. Joseph Roman Catholic Cathedral group, Armidale (facing *Central Park* and including 2 Himalayan cedars with bishops buried beneath them and a large Bunya pine);

Waratah Park, Duffys Forest, Warringah where TV show '*Skippy the Bush Kangaroo*' was set and filmed 1967-1969;

Also proposed for state-listing is a view-shed: *Brett Whiteley house and studio* (and their harbour view/vista), Lavender Bay – the source of so many of his paintings and inspiration.

The Branch maintains advocacy, recently writing:

Objecting to rezoning the former 1810s farm of *Varroville*, Campbelltown – with owners negotiating with the Catholic Church to rezone for a new cemetery to completely surround Varroville house and garden – in an urban landscape of marble and granite;

Objecting to the North Parramatta Urban Activation Precinct master plan, which will wrap *Cumberland Hospital*, the *Norma Parker Centre*, *Kamballa*, the *Roman Catholic Orphan School* and *Parramatta Park's* north-east with towers to 30 storeys and scant detail on integrated management;

Liaising with the National Trust (NSW) and others on a proposed 'Chelsea Flower Show' scale event in *Wistaria Gardens* or adjacent *Parramatta Park*;

Critiquing a master plan to grow *University of Sydney* Darlington & Camperdown campus;

Opposing aspects of the *Royal Botanic Garden Sydney & Domain's* first Master Plan;

Providing information on *Paul Sorensen nursery* site, Leura to a fledgling friends' group;

Encouraging heritage listing of a war memorial planting of cypress pines at Brunswick Heads.

A recent discovery is Darlington micro-cafe near Sydney University, *28 Acres Cafe* - named after the grant given Thomas Shepherd, our first nurseryman, and his *Darling Nursery*. On the corner of Boundary St. and Ivy Lane (local streets take plant names commemorating this nursery) - it's well worth seeking out: www.twenty8acres.com.au

This is my last Chair's report (before the AGM) after a 3rd and an exceptional, sanctioned 4th term: 12 years all-up. It's been a pleasure working with the 2 committees' members with diverse skills and backgrounds. Great to help organise, influence and enjoy events of all kinds, all over mid & northern NSW. I've enjoyed putting out feelers to partner bodies and groups, giving talks on AGHS to university students, garden clubs, professional and other groups like the 20th Century Heritage Society of NSW. Fun to see members exploring country gardens (Hunter, Bathurst, Wentworth Falls), embarking on oral histories of key garden makers, starting a new heritage rose garden (open this spring!) at *Saumarez*, Armidale. Proud to enjoy a stand-out conference in Armidale in 2013 (thanks northerners!), to put some seed money to see good conservation projects happen, including the two 2016 exhibition publications to come. There's more to do of course. I'll remain a keen member but am relishing a bit of potential spare time. The committee is in strong, capable hands and I encourage you to get in touch: we are stronger and better with your feedback and ideas: don't be shy! Ways of involving potential new members, widening our reach and message are welcome. Let us know. Thanks to all!

Stuart Read. Tel: 9326 9468 or email: stuart1962@bigpond.com

NEW MEMBERS

The Branch would like to extend a warm welcome to the following new local members: Janet Bate, Kerry Klemens, Cathy Offord, Gary Palmer, Susan Rushforth, Ann Snape, Yolande Stone and Tony Walker

AGHS FORTHCOMING EVENTS

JUNE

Date: Sunday 21st June - 1.30 pm - 4 pm

Event: *Hyde Park* walk looking at the history and management of its significant trees with Susan Lymbery, Sydney City Council Tree Management Coordinator

Venue: Address and directions to be advised on booking

Cost: Members \$20 Guests \$25 includes light refreshments. Bookings essential. More details on Page 6

JULY

Date: Thursday 30th July - 6pm for 7pm - 8.30pm.

Event: Illustrated talk *War Grave Gardens in Perpetuity* by Andrew Prowse and Kim Morris

Venue: Annie Wyatt Room, National Trust Centre, Observatory Hill.

Cost: Members \$20 Guests \$30 includes light refreshments. Bookings essential. More details on Page 5

AUGUST

Date: Wednesday 19th August - 6pm for 7pm - 8.30pm

Event: AGM followed by a talk *A love of landscape and libraries -Richard Clough (1921-2014), collector and historian* by Colleen Morris which will be a very personal view of the contribution of Richard Clough to Australian garden history through his love of books and history.

Venue: Annie Wyatt Room, National Trust Centre, Observatory Hill.

Cost: Members \$20 Guests \$30 includes light refreshments. Bookings essential



Colleen with Richard, 2000
Photo Richard Aitken

SEPTEMBER

Date: Wednesday 9th September 6pm for 7pm - 8.30pm.

Event: Illustrated talk by Leonie Norton on botanical artist and settler, Marianne Collinson Campbell of Duntroon

Venue: Annie Wyatt Room, National Trust Centre, Observatory Hill.

Cost: Members \$20 Guests \$30 includes light refreshments. Bookings essential.

NOVEMBER

Date: Saturday 14th November - 11.30 pm - 4 pm

Event: Lithgow self-drive tour visiting *Hoskins Memorial Church, Eskbank House and Neubeck House* at Lidsdale.

Bookings & enquiries for all events above: Email: Jeanne@Villani.com (Just a reply to this email)

NOTE: Please book before transferring money to the account - the event may be booked out. Payment confirms Booking. BOOKINGS CLOSE 24 HOURS PRIOR TO EVENT.

Payments for all events must be made **prior** to the event by cheque to:

Australian Garden History Society and mailed to: Jeanne Villani, 90 Cabbage Tree Road, Bayview, NSW, 2104 **or**

by **Internet** bank transfer to: Australian Garden History Society Sydney & Northern NSW Branch, ANZ Bank, Centrepont Branch. BSB 012040 Account 101762565 Payment must include your **name** and the **function** you are booking for.

An Individual Membership entitles only that member to the Members Rate.

Household Membership entitles Members Rate for 2 adults & 2 children living within that household.

Corporate memberships entitle anyone working in that organisation to Members Rates.

Refunds for cancellations will not be made if less than 48 hrs notice is given.

COMING EVENTS FOR THE NORTHERN NSW BRANCH

Sunday 28th June. Lunch at Rafter's Restaurant, Guyra. Lynne Walker will speak on Glorious Gardens of Britain & NZ.

Saturday 31st October: Opening of the Heritage rose garden at *Saumarez Homestead*

Friday 13th November: Book launch - *Celebrate the Seasons: garden memoirs from New England* by Liz Chappell

Cost, RSVP & details to be confirmed soon. Enquiries for all events: Liz Chappell Tel.67 344143 liz.chappell3@gmail.com

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

Thursday 18th June 6-8pm, Royal Automobile Club, Macquarie Street, talk: Michael McCoy - The Gardenist

Foundation & Friends members: \$60 /others \$75, bookings: www.rbg Syd.nsw.gov.au/foundationandfriends/ / ph: 9231 8182.

Monday 6th July 2-3.30pm, Hoskins Memorial Church Hall, Bridge Street, Lithgow, talk by Stuart Read on Paul Sorensen's NSW career 1930s-80. Lithgow & District Garden Club. Bookings: ph: 6351 3353 email: robbyndacosta@bigpond.com

Thursday 16th July 6-7pm, NSW Government Architect's Office, 2-24 Rawson Place, Sydney, two talks by Stuart Read *Landscapes as Heritage* and Steve Brown of ICOMOS-IFLA* International Scientific Committee on *Cultural Landscapes – its operation, current projects*. Australia ICOMOS members.

Enq: Kate Higgins, khiggins@internode.on.net / mary.knaggs@commerce.nsw.gov.au

Wednesday 29th July 10am-3pm, Garden Seminar, Lindesay, Carthona Avenue, Darling Point. Speakers Stuart Pittendrigh on building the headland park at Barangaroo North, Paul Urquhart on 'The Land as a Canvas' & Peggy Muntz on *A garden tour of Sicily*. NT (NSW) members \$70 non-members \$80. incl morning tea & lunch. Info/enq. ph:9363 2401 -10am-1pm/M-F.

Congratulations to Colleen Morris and Laurel Cheetham pictured right with their awards At the Annual NSW National Trust Heritage Awards, 'The Reinstatement of the Kitchen Garden, Montague Island' (Colleen Morris and ACT, Monaro and Riverina Branch) won the Conservation Landscape Award and the 'Berrima Bridge Nursery Conservation Management Plan' won the Research and Documentation category (Southern Highlands Branch).



RECRUITING MARCHES LED TO AVENUES OF HONOUR



Helen Draper's
Kangaroo March
Re-enactment Banner

The Kangaroo March, a century ago in the aftermath of Gallipoli, kicked off events that gave us the avenues of honour that make up some of our best Australian garden history.

Recruitment for the Australian Imperial Force had slowed up in the second half of 1915, particularly from NSW. Recruiting committees were formed in rural towns, with young men determined to march to Sydney to enlist for Flanders Fields. First was the *Cooee March*, longest the *Kangaroo March*, Wagga Wagga to Sydney. Other banners included *Waratahs*, *Wallabies*, *Dungarees*, *Men from Snowy River*, *Kurrajongs*, *Kookaburras*, *Central West Boomerangs*, *North Coast Boomerangs*.

Recruiting marches also were known as snowball marches. Thank God that name did not stick, given that many recruits did not have a snowball's chance in hell.

John Ryan from Tumut marched with the Kangaroos to Sydney. He sailed for France in 1916 and was awarded the Victoria Cross for his part in the 55th Battalion's attack on the Hindenburg Line in September 1918. Ryan's entry on the *Australian War Memorial* site notes that, after the war, he struggled to find employment. Tragically, he died a tramp at 51, then was buried with military honours.

With Dr Brendan Nelson, Director of the *Australian War Memorial*, as Patron, the *Kangaroo March* is being re-enacted a century on, to commemorate the 1915 march. Exeter quilter Helen Draper has re-created the banner for the march.

In 1915 the *Kangaroo March* came through our village, Bundanoon, in the NSW Southern Highlands. Bundanoon is 150 years old in 2015, and the re-enactment will spend two days in Bundanoon in September. With education a key theme, school will be recalled so that our young students can touch a piece of history. Bundanoon turned out in February for a mini-march to rehearse the September re-enactment, showing off the new banner.

Avenues of Honour were sparse before 1915. Horsham in Victoria planted 80 oaks in 1901 to commemorate the success of British and Australian troops in the Boer War. A little further west, Apsley planted a pair of oaks as its Mafeking Trees in 1902. From Arbor Day in July 1916, there was a will to *commemorate the great achievements of our boys* through the planting of avenues of trees. Rather than a statue or an obelisk, an avenue was seen as a living memorial of greater community benefit. More pragmatically, as an incentive to recruitment, the names of enlistees would be memorialised in an Avenue of Honour Ballarat, venue of our Australian Garden History Society Conference in 2012, is an excellent example of an avenue of honour. Ballarat's *Avenue of Honour* and *Arch of Victory* also are superbly documented.

Ballarat's avenue was laid out between June 1917 and August 1919 with 3,771 trees planted over 22 kilometres. The *Avenue of Honour* and *Arch of Victory* were opened in June 1920 by the Prince of Wales, later Edward VIII.

Treenet at the Waite Arboretum at *The University of Adelaide* has counted 570 known Avenues of Honour in Australia. More than half are in Victoria. Of course, AGHS itself is active in updating, and complementing, Treenet's research and database.

Pamela Bennett and Alan Olsen

FLORILEGIUM SOCIETY PUBLICATION

TO CELEBRATE AUSTRALIA'S OLDEST BOTANIC GARDEN

The Florilegium Society at the *Royal Botanic Garden Sydney* is creating a florilegium, a collection of contemporary botanical paintings of selected plants that illustrate the history of the *Royal Botanic Garden Sydney*.

The Society will publish the Florilegium in 2016 to celebrate the bicentenary of Australia's first botanic garden and oldest scientific institution. This publication will document its botanical and horticultural development in a very accessible manner. Established botanical artists have been invited to join the Society. The paintings accepted are of the highest standard, botanically accurate and painted as individual responses to the subject. The artists very generously have gifted these original botanical paintings and their copyright to the *Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust*.

The hardback book will be of the highest quality. It will include an historical overview of the Gardens and brief biographies of the artists. Each of the eighty paintings will have a full colour plate and be accompanied by the plant's description and text relating it to the history of the Gardens. Louisa Murray, *Flora of NSW* botanist will contribute the botanical text and noted garden historian, Colleen Morris will write the historical text.

It will accompany a major exhibition at the *Museum of Sydney* to be held from July to November 2016. The paintings will be showcased in this exhibition which will explore the development of the Gardens and its influence on private gardens, public parks and landscapes of NSW since 1816. Colleen Morris will be the guest curator, working with *Sydney Living Museums*.

The Society is offering an opportunity to support the artists in this landmark project by subscribing to the publication. All donations would be most welcome and subscribers of \$500 and above would be acknowledged in this beautifully illustrated book and receive a copy. Any profits arising from the book sales will contribute to funding future exhibitions and conservation. Discussion is underway with the *Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew* to exhibit the Florilegium at the *Shirley Sherwood Gallery of Botanical Art* at Kew in 2017/18.

The Society is grateful for the support already received from the AGHS. It has received a grant from the *Kindred Spirits Fund* for editing costs, a generous subscription from the Sydney and Northern NSW Branch and the Southern Highlands Branch has also subscribed. The Board of the *Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust* endorsed the Society in 2007 and supports its work. The Society is incorporated in NSW under the Associations Incorporation Act, 1984. The ATO has granted income tax exempt status as a charitable institution. Please note that donations to the Society are not tax deductible. We welcome any enquiries and also suggestions of those people who appreciate botanical art, gardens and garden history who may also be interested in supporting the project.

For more information contact: AGHS member, Beverly Allen on 9879 4038 or email: beverly@beverlyallen.com.au or Angela Lober on 9552 1169 or email: karskenslober@bigpond.com

WAR GRAVE GARDENS IN PERPETUITY by Andrew Prowse & Kim Morris

The War Cemeteries of PNG, Queensland and the NT are the final resting place of Commonwealth soldiers from India, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Britain and South Africa (the member countries of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission- CWGC) and are some of the 1.7 million burials honoured and managed by the CWGC. Soldier burials have no hierarchy. Burials with full military honours continue to take place when soldiers' remains are still being found in the field. Many are identified through a special forensic process after families usually track their last known locations. (The average age of fallen soldiers is 22!) In 2010 the Office of Australian War Graves which manages the interests of the CWGC invited our company Garden City Design Co to review each of the three large war cemeteries in PNG and others in Queensland and the NT. The blend of Andrew Prowse in Landscape Architecture and Kim Morris in horticulture and training was one of the strong points of winning the international tender. The purpose was to revisit and apply the Commonwealth War Graves Horticultural Standard with the combination of design and horticulture. Also, to get each site into digital format (as most were hand drawings from the late 1940s). Horticulturally, the challenge of the project is based on the work of the well known garden colourist and designer, Gertrude Jekyll, and her architect friend, Sir Edwin Lutyens, who designed many of the war cemeteries and great war memorials after WW1. The Cenotaph in London is one of his many triumphs. Together they were known as the 'dream team' for their collaborative work on many significant architectural and horticultural projects mostly but not all, in Europe. They were active exponents of the Arts and Crafts movement. In their early war graves work, Jekyll decreed that each plot or grave should be a reminder of the soldier's home or village with a set of principal, accent and lesser plants. These form the base of the standard in use today.

Included in the PNG work of Garden City Design Co. is the design of horticulture training units for the local men who are the gardeners at each cemetery. They are all employed by the Australian High Commission and kitted out accordingly. Many have been with the Office of Australian War Graves for some time and others are just starting. The training units help to understand amongst other things, the soils of each war cemetery. Lae, (2818 burials) which has up to eight metres of rain each year and Bitia Paka, Rabaul (1120 burials) is affected by constant volcanic dust from the eruptions of surrounding volcanoes and Bomana, Port Moresby (3,819 burials) has volatile soil. Training as a gardener is a highly prized job for its various benefits and social standing. These are dedicated gardeners who detail headstone borders using string lines and hand trimmers (no mechanicals allowed except lawn mowers) and an absolute commitment to our fallen heroes.

Garden City Design Co has recently completed the design of the Centenary of ANZAC Bitia Paka Rabaul WW1 Memorial, the complete renovation of the Brisbane and Rockhampton War Cemeteries and ongoing renovation of the Bomana PNG War Cemetery.

The result is a place here on earth where a soldier lays at peace in a beautiful garden, constantly remembered and acknowledged for their supreme and absolute sacrifice forever. Their resting place is tended in perpetuity, just as it should be. We are humbled to have a part to play.

Kim Morris FAIH

Kim is a Director of the design studio Garden City Design Co. based in Cairns and has worked in the Australian tropics, Asia and the south west Pacific for 27 years. He is a Fellow and Registered Horticulturist (#0002) of the Australian Institute of Horticulture and is a past National President of AIH and holder of the prestigious AIH Silver Gum Award. He was co-designer with Andrew Prowse of the 37ha Sino Australian Friendship Garden at Zhanjiang China and partnered the design of the new Chinese Garden at Cairns Botanic Gardens. Current work includes projects with the Office of Australian War Graves (Commonwealth War Graves Commission), the design of the ANZAC Centenary Bitia Paka WW1 Memorial at Rabaul

Andrew Prowse MAIH, AILA, ASLA

Andrew is also a Director of Garden City Design Co and principal of Andrew Prowse Landscape Architects Pty Ltd, Cairns for 25 years. He is a member and Registered Horticulturist (#0025) of the Australian Institute of Horticulture and is currently National Vice President. He co-designed with Kim Morris of the 37ha Sino Australian Friendship Garden at Zhanjiang China and partnered the design of the Chinese Garden at Cairns Botanic Gardens. Current work includes projects with the Office of Australian War Graves (Commonwealth War Graves), and the design of the ANZAC Centenary Bitia Paka WW1 Memorial at Rabaul.



Gertrude Jekyll & Edwin Lutyens, *The Huts War Cemetery, Belgium, circa 1920*
Source: K.Morris



Bomana War Cemetery PNG
Photo K Morris 2010



Lutwyche (Brisbane) War Cemetery
prior to renovation in 2013
Photo A.Prowse 2012



Bronze metal work design forms
part of the *Bitia Paka War Cemetery*
Registry Pavilion -photo by
K.Morris (2012)



Kim Morris



Andrew Prowse

HYDE PARK'S SIGNIFICANT TREES by Tempe Beaven



Hyde Park circa. 1880

(Source: Hyde Park State Library of NSW – Small Pictures Files (Parks & Gardens)).

Hyde Park was gazetted in 1810 by Governor Lachlan Macquarie for 'the recreation and amusement of the inhabitants of Sydney' and is Australia's oldest park. Tree planting did not commence till the 1830s, however the palette of principally Australian rainforest trees and Norfolk Island pines was established by Charles Moore, the then Director of the Botanic Gardens, when he was appointed to the Hyde Park Improvement Committee in 1854. In addition to boundary plantings, a central avenue of *Ficus macrophylla* (Moreton Bay fig) was planted 'stretching from Queens Square to Liverpool Street', creating a shaded promenade and was often referred to as 'Lovers Walk'. Sadly this avenue was removed for the construction of the underground railway in 1922. A design competition held to restore the park was won by engineer, Norman Weekes, who incorporated the planning principles of the City Beautiful Movement to

emphasise important buildings and vistas through the use of a radial layout in combination with a strong central axis.

Today, *Hyde Park* is 16.2 hectares (40 acres) and supports over 500 trees. The central avenue of *Ficus microcarpa* var *Hillii* (Hill's fig) planted c1930 and its spectacular vista is 'the main feature of the park and is its most significant element historically'. However it also has many older individual trees planted prior to 1928. The oldest known plantings of Moreton Bay figs are around the perimeter, dating from c1857.

The health and well-being of its trees continues to be a principal concern for the City of Sydney who is responsible for the park's care, control and management. The adverse effects of poorly drained soils, disease and overcrowding, has highlighted the need for a strategic approach to removal and replacement. In 2000, a woman suffered a serious brain injury when a small branch (c.150mm in diameter, and about 1.5 metres long) fell from a Hill's fig. In 2004, a Tree Management Plan was proposed by Council following the failure and removal of several large trees. This plan aims to balance Council's desire to preserve the Park's amenity and significance with the requirement for public safety. Strategies for removal and replacement are complex and controversial. Many figs in the central avenue in 2004 were declining in health due to soil pathogens – shown after extensive testing. Their removal caused public outcry. The removal of declining *Populus alba* 'Fastigiata' (silver poplar) that line the Pool of Reflection near the ANZAC memorial raises a debate over the choice of replacements, a discussion that commenced with the original planting of the Lombardy poplars in 1932!

In 2011 *Hyde Park* was listed on the State Heritage Register and in 2013, over 100 trees in the park were scheduled in the City of Sydney's Register of Significant Trees. This recognition ensures that in addition to the guidance of qualified arborists, consultation with the community and stakeholders is an integral part of ongoing management of the park's significant trees.

THROUGH THE GATE IN THE BACK FENCE by Helen Bryant



Molineria capitulata is currently planted on the north-eastern side of Experiment Farm lawn

I have finally found some weevil lily – *Molineria capitulata* and know its name. This plant was growing beside the house next door to my folks home in Hurlstone Park in the 1940s and 50s and I have been looking for it ever since.

Osbourne next door was built early 1900s and our Federation house, *Wallacia* was built about 1914. I remember much more of the back yard garden next door because there was constant traffic between the two households via a small gate in the back fence between the two houses. There were regular exchanges of dishes of macaroni cheese and mock fish (grated potato cakes) etc. and innumerable cups of tea and chat.

Osbourne had a lovely old shade house in the back garden. Its timbers were thick hardwood slats and were constructed to form a herringbone pattern. There were two brick benches running down the long sides creating a type of plinth-a bit like the floor and sides of the sunken garden at *Yasmar* at Haberfield and I can imagine a similar type of roof covering at *Yasmar*.

By the time I was popping in and out there were not many plants in the shade house. As I stepped through the gate there was a big clump of rock lilies on one side with these unnamed weevil lilies running up the side the house. Along the back fence was a wonderful weatherboard garden shed, which is still for me the holiest of grails. Its gum nut-brown painted door had a shiny brass door handle. Running across the yard there were two long beds hemmed with bricks full of gerberas and snapdragons all on Ashfield shale soil. There were two clothes lines with a clothes prop strung across the buffalo lawn.

The old (to me) ladies still regularly used the mangle on their latticed-in back verandah. Apart from the mangle on the back verandah at the end there was a little cupboard with an amber glass doorknob, which held another holy grail. This was a small polished Kendrick cast iron saucepan used regularly to boil the morning eggs (from chooks in our backyard). From both our back verandahs you could see the distant Blue Mountains.

Just inside *Osbourne's* back door, the kitchen had a lovely old dresser, two concrete laundry tubs topped by polished cold-water brass taps, and a terrazzo and cast iron enamel sink. The fuel stove was not used but the Early Kooka gas stove was. There was a kitchen table with a marble top.

The rather grander houses behind our houses facing west also had those distant mountain views. Their houses were not visited so regularly but one of them had an intriguing suit of armour in the hall. Another old lady across from us told me of the dairy farm that used to be at the bottom of the street before both our 1914 houses were built.

NOVEMBER VISIT TO LITHGOW: HOSKINS, SORENSEN AND MORE



Best known for industrial heritage, Lithgow is also a beautiful area with six national parks and varied terrain. The tour is on Saturday 14th November but you might want to combine this day with a longer stay, to explore the Capertee Valley and Mudgee to the north, Jenolan Caves and Oberon to the south, Bathurst to west and Blue Mountains to east. There's plenty to explore in Lithgow itself.

We will enjoy two gardens with connections to landscape designer Paul Sorensen and another older garden - all due to coal mining, early smelting of iron and (two) with public philanthropy. We hope to also visit an early country garden at Bowenfels. *Eskbank House* dates from 1842 - built for Thomas Brown, an ambitious Scot who acquired 295 acres. He farmed and laid out gardens to enjoy valley views. The house is on a north-facing knoll, once with a long eastern drive lined with conifers. The estate had a tennis court, hexagonal garden pavilion, a huge pin oak, kitchen garden, orchard and livestock. By the 1870s collieries and smelters surrounded it. In 1869 with the railway (for which Brown lobbied), he established the first siding and first colliery. Eskbank was Lithgow's social and political hub. Brown left a considerable legacy in Eskbank. In 1908 it was bought by Charles Hoskins, manager of the future Australian Iron & Steel. 'The Grange' served as estate centre and manager's home, for 90 years supporting entrepreneurs and workers who changed Lithgow from a sylvan glade to a version of England's Black (Coal) Country. The Hoskins defined the local steel industry: clear-sighted with business acumen, but success came along with industrial strikes at a time of a nascent Labour party.

The furnace, too far from ore and ports, was dismantled. Eskbank on a remnant hectare was converted to flats in the 1930s for workers pouring into Lithgow. Retailer Eric Bracey bought it in 1948, renovating and willing it to Council. Lithgow City Council took it over in 2003, opening for exhibitions and concerts.

Hoskins Memorial Church is a good example of this family's philanthropy, beliefs and love of gardens. In Charles and Emily's time in Lithgow they lost a son and two daughters. Hoskins converted a brickworks site, intending a Presbyterian church for 1000 in memory of his son. Charles died before it was finished in 1926, construction being overseen by widow Emily and two surviving sons. Architect John Barr changed the plan to seat 450 – larger foundations remain underground. A parish hall was included. Landscape designer Paul Sorensen was commissioned to landscape the grounds. It opened on 24-25/11/1926, five days after Emily's death. Stained glass windows commemorate Charles, Guildford and 18 year old Hilda, who had died at Eskroy in 1912. The pulpit and font were donated by Mr. & Mrs Sidney Hoskins, in memory of their infant children Eric (d.1922 aged 4) and Charles (d.1922 aged 2). Sadly Sorensen lost his two eldest sons in World War II and they are commemorated by a druidic dolmen tomb in the grounds.

Neubeck House at Lidsdale was built for Francis (Frank) Neubeck. Grandsons of a Bavarian immigrant, he and his brother William were proprietors of a coal mine and sawmill. In 1940 they opened the first black coal open cut mine in Australia, (later called the Commonwealth Colliery No.2). It was resumed by the Government as a war time measure but Neubeck was already wealthy. In 1941 he began extending the 1920 house. It is leavened by two acres of gardens by Paul Sorensen. It was Sorensen's largest commission until 1950. Designed just after 1945, the garden later suffered neglect. Bought by Centennial Coal in the late 2000s the house is now their Central Western offices with the garden undergoing gradual restoration. A wide platform of lawn surrounds its east, edged with a row of pin oaks above a fine stone retaining wall. Stone paths, a fine staircase and a stone-paved circle feature along with sloping lawns, shrubberies and woodland areas. A cascade and columned bridge topped with roof-planted prostrate conifers is a striking feature.

Stuart Read



Hoskins Memorial Church Lithgow
(photo Gina Plate)



Eskbank House, Lithgow – hosting a visiting group'
(photo: Kate Gluskie)

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task was meeting with representatives from the National Trust to discuss developing a *Memorandum of Understanding* to clearly delineate roles and responsibilities of the two groups. A document was agreed and signed in April 2014 - the first of its kind between the two organisations.

Early decisions had to be made concerning the nature of the edging to be used for beds as well as a suitable surface for paths. While spaded edges were used initially it was clear that their maintenance over time would prove a burden so the decision was made to install steel edging. This had the advantage of longevity and provided ideal definition of beds as well as allowing paths to be clearly defined. Naturally, materials and installation of steel edging came at a considerable cost. Paths in the garden were originally planned to be grassed but prolonged dry spells, unseasonal hot weather and the need to eliminate ongoing mowing maintenance forced a reconsideration. The rich basalt soil on the site had a high clay content - ideal for rose growing but presenting challenges for foot traffic in wet weather. The decision was made to source gravel with a consistency that allowed solid compaction but robust enough to withstand erosion that plagues decomposed granite during the occasional deluge accompanying summer storms. Once more, this decision placed further funding burdens on the development of the garden.

The Northern NSW Sub-branch have been fortunate to have the financial resources generated from the Optional Day Tour following the 2013 AGHS Conference held in Armidale. To that, funding applications to AGHS, HRIA as well as local groups and service clubs have enabled us to fund the major works of edging and paving as well as a drip irrigation system to ease the burden of watering newly planted roses. Generous donations from individual members, both financially and with voluntary labour and materials, have enabled fences to be rabbit-proofed. They have also allowed the construction of entrance pergolas, self-closing gates and a central structure in the garden that is in keeping with the rural setting of *Saumarez* and of an appropriate scale to the garden. Members have been very generous in donating a variety of material goods (timber, spray, hoses and fittings, spray units, wire, wheelbarrows and the like). Winter 2014 saw the lifting, transport and relocation of more roses from Catherine MacLean's collection.



A group of trusty volunteers dishing the dirt

This enormous task was made more manageable by the labour of many members and by spring 2014 the garden was more than 70% planted. There is still a considerable cost to be outlaid in completing the collection as some key representatives from each rose "family" are missing. Local garden clubs are being approached to provide funding for these roses which will be purchased in winter 2015.

The garden is on track for a formal opening in late spring 2015 when the roses will be in full bloom. However, not being content with a garden illustrating the heritage cultivars that were

important in the development of modern shrub roses, the Northern NSW Sub-branch plans to have an additional area of garden beds which are not strictly "heritage" but important nevertheless. These beds will include hybrid musk roses and roses introduced by noted Australian breeders, Alister Clark, Frank Reithmüller and Olive Fitzhardinge. While these beds will not be established at the time of the opening they constitute the next phase of the developing garden.

To conclude, we are encouraged by the very positive feedback we received from the National Management Committee responding to our bid for funding. They referred to the *Memorandum of Understanding* as impressive and a possible "model to be followed" for the future. And in case you are wondering what has happened to Catherine's garden – although the majority of the heritage roses have been relocated to *Saumarez*, she is now devoting herself to replacing them with as many modern hybrid teas as she can!

John Maurer (Photographs by Stuart Read)

Don't forget to have a look at our website - www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au
It can now be used to check for updated details of events, conference bookings
& membership renewals including by direct debit, gift purchases and routine enquiries.

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