

BRANCH CUTTINGS



Issue 53 - June 2017

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

A VISIT TO *GREAT CHALFIELD MANOR*, MELKSHAM, WILTSHIRE, UK by Anne Smith



Great Chalfield Manor house & rose garden

When you enter the garden at *Great Chalfield Manor* in rural Wiltshire you are transported into another time where the modern world seems to disappear. Surrounded by peaceful countryside and overlooked by the manor house the gardens have a great sense of tranquility and charm and are a perfect setting for the buildings.

During the 1400s the manor was rebuilt except for parts of the great hall section of the house. The house fell into disrepair from the late 17th century. It was then restored between 1905 and 1912. During this time the gardens were designed on Arts and Crafts principles by Alfred Parsons RA, an artist, and Captain Partridge for the owner, Robert Fuller, who donated the property to the National Trust in 1943. Now his grandson, Robert Floyd, and his family live in the house. A guided tour of the house reveals a fascinating world.

When you cross the bridge over the moat and enter the gravelled forecourt through the gatehouse archway the stone walls of the lovely medieval manor greet you to the south with magnificently decorated oriel windows, gargoyles and gables. To the west the adjoining wing of the house has walls draped with climbing roses. Opposite stands the small parish church of All Saints with the upper moat running alongside. An ancient Norman bastion juts into the moat here. The stained glass window of the church features local plants. Close to the house the more formal areas of the garden can be seen. If you enter the garden to the east through the gate in the stone wall you find broad flagstone pathways leading across the large enclosed lawn. Here extraordinary topiary houses have been pruned out of huge yews. Now over 100 years old these living pavilions lure the visitor to enter their dark interiors. A lovely fountain plays into a four-lobed stone lily pond between the yew pavilions. Against the house wall a border features euphorbias.



The four-lobed stone lily pond between the yew pavilions.



The manor walls draped with climbing roses..

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Our third event of the year was very well attended! Richard Heathcote, National Chair of our Society and Director of the *Carrick Hill* historic house and garden in Adelaide, shared with us the garden and house at *Malmaison*, the country house outside Paris that Empress Josephine shared with Napoleon. The name may be imbued with unfortunate connotations of ‘bad house’ and not an auspicious place to create a garden perhaps, however, Richard’s talk was beautifully illustrated and enlightening. I enjoyed the room decorated for Napoleon - festooned with the most elegant pale grey silk. According to Richard the interior decorators were given, by the Emperor Napoleon, a much-abbreviated timeframe to complete the works with a non-negotiable deadline that they met by thinking creatively – they decked it out as one might a tent. As for roses - I think Richard was somewhat disenchanted and he found the lack of interpretation of the rich history of the collection of flora and fauna from Australia, at the bidding of Josephine, poor. Nonetheless – a place worth visiting!

The committee continue to update the Landscapes at Risk Register – advocacy is a focus for the AGHS. A garden included recently and being watched is *Fernhill*, Mulgoa. The *Fernhill* estate comprises an extensive area of modified and natural landscape that provides the setting for a house completed c1845 for Edward Cox. The listing on the State Heritage Register identifies the item as a landscape; a cultural landscape and a historic landscape. The estate is primarily significant for its landscape which is a rare Australian example of the English landscape school’s practice of modifying the natural landscape to create a romanticised natural appearance embellished by a richness of cultural features: for the house which is a fine example of Greek Revival architecture, exceptionally well crafted. William Hardy Wilson included an image of the handsome bow fronted sitting room in his 1925 compendium of collotypes depicting selected colonial houses from New South Wales and Tasmania. Wilson’s exquisite drawing includes the usual potted hydrangeas between each bay of Doric columns, the huge hydrangeas serve to manipulate the scale and enhance the architecture. The sky is heavy with cloud that portends a bleak future for our colonial treasures, many of them in a poor state in the early 20th century and now threatened by the insensitive and poorly informed sprawl of development. *Varroville*, just 30 kilometres south of *Fernhill*, continues to face similar fate – that of being enshrouded by a cemetery development. Ironically it seems our undervalued cultural heritage is being desecrated by the churches. Once gone, it is gone forever.

Another garden that warrants a watchful eye is *Markdale*, at Binda near Crookwell. Like *Fernhill*, the house is not as significant as its garden setting, unfortunately the place does not have the protection of a state heritage listing. In 1951 Professor Leslie Wilkinson refashioned the 1920s farmhouse, while the garden was re-designed by Edna Walling between 1947/9. I believe it is just one of the few of her gardens in New South Wales that, by being held by one family for three generations, has been safe. Now the estate has been sold it enters a new phase.

I am a keen follower of a few blogs, one by Deirdre called iGarden has a focus on plants suitable for Sydney gardens. Now the Society has sponsored a blog by Georgina Reid called The Planthunter. This month’s issue 43 has as its subject ‘Heritage’ and features an interview with Dr Jessica Hood, Vice-Chair of the AGHS national management committee. I found it thought provoking, splendidly illustrated and engaging. While on the Internet you might enjoy visiting the Society’s upgraded website – so much improved, congratulations to those involved!

In conclusion this month I would like to note that April was a very sad time for members of the Sydney and NNSW Branch of the AGHS - Bill (William) Clarke and Anne Kaleski, both very engaged members, died. We will miss them greatly and send heart felt condolences to their families and friends.

If you have any suggestions you would like the committee to consider, please feel free to contact me – we do appreciate the feedback.

James Quoyle. Tel: (02) 95195250 or email: james@qanda.com.au

At the National Trust Heritage Awards 2017, held in Sydney on Friday 28 April, Colleen Morris was awarded a prize for the exhibition she curated at the Museum of Sydney titled ‘*Florilegium: Sydney’s Painted Garden*’.

In her acceptance speech and on behalf of the citizens of New South Wales, Colleen thanked the many artists who generously contributed their works to the exhibition and the Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney. Colleen acknowledged the publication ‘*Florilegium*’, for which the Australian Garden History Society was a major sponsor and Beverly Allen, the founding chair of the Florilegium Society. We congratulate Colleen Morris on her award and thank her for her zeal in promoting garden history.



Colleen - photo by James Quoyle taken at the opening of the exhibition.

NEW MEMBERS

The Branch would like to extend a warm welcome to the following new local members:

Judith Manion, Julie McRae, Georgina Reid, Belinda Smith

AGHS FORTHCOMING EVENTS

JUNE

Date: Wednesday 21st June - 6pm for 7pm - 8.30pm.

Event: Illustrated talk by Dr Geoffrey Hull – *Exploring Phytonymy: what flower names tell us*

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

Cost: Members \$20 Guests \$30 includes light refreshments. Bookings essential. More details on page 7

JULY

Date: Saturday 15th July - 2pm - 4.30pm.

Event: Guided walk & talk with Roslyn Burge & Stuart Read in *Callan Park - grand trees & gardens*.

Venue: Meeting place to be confirmed on booking.

Cost: Members \$20 Guests \$30 includes light refreshments. Bookings essential. More details on page 7

AUGUST

Date: Wednesday 16th August - 6pm for 7pm - 8.30pm.

Event: Short AGM / Illustrated talk by Tanya Hoolihan - *Beyond exploration - the botanical legacy of Ludwig Leichhardt*

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

Cost: Members \$20 Guests \$30 includes light refreshments. Bookings essential. More details on page 7

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

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

Monday 10th July at 6pm. Our National Chair, Richard Heathcote, will speak on the subject of *Pets and Plants fit for a French Empress's Garden at Malmaison*.

To be held at National Trust property, *Saumarez* in the Function Centre. Cost \$25. Raffle.

Bookings: email gwilson42@bigpond.com



OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

June 10-11th Open weekend *Eryldene historic house and garden* \$8/family \$18, free for Nat.Trust /HHA members; guided tours - bookings: 9498 2271; high teas, 17 McIntosh Street, Gordon, www.eryldene.org.au

June 15th 6.15-8.15pm, **Garden Design Series - Joanne Neylon** - behind-the-scenes look at projects \$75/\$60 RBG members, Royal Automobile Club, 89 Macquarie Street, Sydney, bookings: 9231 8182 / e-mail: foundation.friends@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au

June 27th 10.30-12pm, **Maureen Phelan talks on Longwood Gardens' Chrysanthemum Festival**, Maiden Theatre, RBG. \$25, Bookings: 9231 8182, e-mail: foundation.friends@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au

July 8th 2-4.30pm, **S. Highlands AGHS Winter Seminar** - 2 talks: Stuart Read on Capability Brown and contemporaries & Richard Heathcote on Josephine Bonaparte's garden at *Malmaison*. Bradman Museum, Bowral, afternoon tea in the Pavilion. Info/bookings: 0419 275 402 / e-mail: aghs.sh.info@gmail.com.

July Daily 12 noon-12.45pm: Chinese Garden of Friendship – garden tours, Pier Street, Darling Harbour, tours free with garden entry. Gardens date from 1988. \$6 / family \$15, children under 12: \$3. Gardens open 9.30am-5pm.

July Saturdays, 10am-4pm, **Meroogal, Nowra**, house museum & garden, entry by guided tour \$12/family \$30, under 5: free. 1 hour tours - 11am, 12noon, 1, 2 & 3pm., BYO picnic to enjoy in garden. Info: 4421 8150. www.sydneylivingmuseums.com.au.

July 30th National Tree Planting Day event, Southern Highlands Botanic Garden, cnr. Kangaloon & Old South Roads, enter off Old South Road, Bowral, info: 4861 4899 / e-mail: info@shbg.com.au.

August every Wed-Sun 10am-4pm, Elizabeth Farm, 70 Alice Street, Rosehill. Tearoom open weekends, 10am-4pm. Entry: \$8/family \$30, children under 5: free. Info: 9635 9488. www.sydneylivingmuseums.com.au.

August 19th, 10-11am or 11.30-12.30pm Daffodil Discovery Walk with a horticulturist enjoying spring bulbs at the *Blue Mountains Botanic Garden*, Mnt Tomah, \$15, bookings: 4567 3000. Meet outside visitors' centre. Info: www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au.

September 1st 10-11am, Stuart Read talks about nurseryman and landscape designer, Michael Guilfoyle and his better-known son, William, garden designer, RHS of NSW, Beecroft Bowling Club, info: e-mail: lvdephoff@iprimus.com.au

September 2nd-10th, History Week: range of events across NSW, information/bookings: www.historycouncilnsw.org.au/history-week

September 12th-24th, 9am-4pm Bowral Tulip Festival. Info: 4346 4059/6171 4032 e-mail: tuliptime@wsc.nsw.gov.au.

September every Wed-Sun. open 10am-4pm, Rouse Hill house and garden, Rouse Hill, country garden dating back to 1810s. Entry by 45 min.guided tour: Wed.-Fri 11am & 2pm. Weekends: 11am, noon, 1, 2 & 3pm, \$12 / family \$30, under 5: free.

Info: 9627 6777 / 9635 9488. www.sydneylivingmuseums.com.au.

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 & membership renewals
including by direct debit, gift purchases and routine enquiries.

ORAL HISTORY: PROGRESS IN NORTHERN NSW

by Graham Wilson and John Maurer

A recent article in the Saturday press was titled, “*The one question I wish I could have asked my grandfather*”. The question presupposes regret for the opportunity to ask the question when someone no longer exists. The question also puts the AGHS Oral History program into context - that is, these questions need to be asked while there is still the opportunity to do so.

Already there exist a number of AGHS recorded interviews with noted gardeners, authors and designers with these records mostly held in Sydney and Melbourne state libraries. However, most of us can identify individuals who would make ideal subjects for interview because of the depth of their knowledge and experience. Unless they have written detailed memoirs that include the things they have learned through a lifetime of practice, learning from mistakes as well as successes, eventually risk becoming lost. Some, like wise grandparents in all cultures, pass on family stories. Hopefully, some wise descendants will remember and reflect upon that which they find useful and interesting, especially now that tracing one’s family tree occupies the hours of dedicated family researchers. It is in this context that regret is often expressed that it is not possible to question family members that are long deceased.

The genesis of the Northern NSW Sub-branch oral history project began in September - October 2016 following some informal meetings at the Sydney AGM and then at the national conference in Canberra. In late October a meeting of interested members met in Armidale and agreed to formally embark on a program to record the many significant histories of which we were aware. The meeting agreed to engage Assoc. Prof. Janis Wilton to conduct a two-day workshop in Armidale on the first weekend in March 2017. The workshop had 10 members participate from Armidale, Tamworth, north of Glenn Innes with two travelling from Sydney. Janis Wilton has an impressive reputation as a facilitator and is recognised for her contributions in recording oral histories.

The workshop covered numerous topics including: preparing for an interview, the interview structure, interviewing skills and questions, using sketches, ‘mud-maps’, photographs and memorabilia as aides mémoires, processing the interview, recording equipment, permission-to-interview forms, transferring digital records to computer, safe location for permanent storage and access to the interviews through cataloguing and publicity.

Participants engaged throughout the workshop and were enthusiastic with the opportunity to practise and record their ‘trial’ interview with a participant colleague. The need for feedback on the interview examined the worthwhile role of listening to one’s interview technique with a view to refining future interviews.

A small committee will be formed to schedule interviews with individuals identified as ideal candidates. The possibility was discussed of having two members present at each interview - one to actually conduct the interview and one to set up and monitor the recording equipment. This was thought to be less challenging for interviewers still growing in comfort with the process as well as dealing with equipment.

A workshop manual has been developed by Janis Wilton for AGHS NNSW and further edited to include some specific items relating to the project. As previously reported in *Branch Cuttings*, we have identified several threads to the project.

These include:

- Interviewing AGHS members of advanced years who have a lifetime of gardening experience;
- Some 14 rural properties have been identified as being in the hands of descendants of original settlers, many have extensive records of garden, landcare and pastoral activities;
- Members Marilyn Pidgeon (with Noeline Miller) and Liz Chappell (with Kim Woods Rabbidge) have both published books (*Gardening Secrets: Successful gardeners show how they cope with the variable Australian Climate* and *Celebrate the Seasons: Garden Memoirs from New England*). Persons featured in these books are prime candidates for interview;
- Several members who were present at the meeting held on 13 March 2005 at historic *Salisbury Court* decided to form the Northern NNSW Sub-branch of AGHS can contribute valuable archival memories;
- Some members were integrally involved with the former Australian Open Garden Scheme, the *Sydney Morning Herald* Garden Scheme and other community-run open garden events and
- The planning and establishment of the NNSW major project, the Heritage Rose Garden at *Saumarez Homestead*.

Recently, AGHS NNSW has been informed of their successful application for an Armidale Regional Council community small grants scheme grant of \$1,000 to support the oral history project. While the project is still in its infancy there is significant enthusiasm to proceed expeditiously. The project expands the opportunities for members to be actively involved in projects as well as ongoing meetings, functions and presentations.



Janis Wilton presenting at the Oral History Workshop in Armidale



Morning tea break

L to R: Maria Hitchcock, Graham Wilson, Marilyn Pidgeon, Bill Oates (NNSW Chair), Owen Croft, John Maurer, Jenny Sloman, Liz Chappell

Photos by Roslyn Burge

A weekend with Tom Roberts by Liz Chappell & Graham Wilson

AGHS members from Brisbane and Sydney joined a contingent from Northern NSW for a weekend exploring historic country properties and gardens old and new in the Inverell district in late April. Themed around the painting sites of Australian landscape artist, Tom Roberts, the locations of two of his most famous works, *Bailed Up* and *A Corner of the MacIntyre* were visited. Roberts stayed with his friends, the Andersons, at *Newstead Station* for several months in 1895 and on several other occasions. He enjoyed the undulating landscape and splendid view around *Newstead* but described Inverell as *dull shops, straight streets, square houses, flat country*. *Bailed Up* was painted on adjoining *Paradise Station* and Christine Swan, who grew up on the station, can remember the platform he built in a tree to paint from.

Roberts was also a frequent visitor at nearby *Elmore Station*. We enjoyed a picnic lunch in its spacious gardens created by Ann and Peter Bucknell. Roberts completed a painting during his time at *Elmore*, said to be on a cupboard door. It was later sold through a Sydney gallery. The present Federation style home was built in 1906 some years after Roberts' visit.

Byron Station, one of the earliest pastoral properties to be settled in the district was taken up by Alexander Campbell on behalf of Peter McIntyre from the Hunter Valley in 1836. Parts of the weatherboard homestead date back to 1840. Our hosts, Bill and Christine Swan generously gave our group a tour of the homestead and on the billiard table had laid out a series of photographs and letters from the late 19th century describing both the property and homestead garden. A brick tennis court is one of the significant extant features of the early garden, together with a variety of trees and shrubs. Both Stuart Read and Clive Lucas have spent time at *Byron Station* identifying botanic and architectural features.

For a change of pace in the late afternoon we visited the remnant bushland garden at *Wallaby Rocks*, bordered on two sides by the *Goonoowigal National Park*.

Inverell Station had undergone three reincarnations as the property has been subdivided and has had several ownership changes since 1844. Our Sunday morning visit was to the third homestead where Cynthia and Robin Archer have established an extensive contemporary country garden showing amazing maturity in just eleven years.

Blair Athol Estate, by contrast, dates much of its garden to the turn of the twentieth century, including a splendid driveway of bunya pines (*Araucaria bidwillii*). The imposing Federation style home, now a bed and breakfast, was built for Theophilus Cooper in 1904. Accoutrements from the period, such as a dumb waiter and housemaid call bells are still evident. His family lived on there until 1938 and continued to develop the garden. It was a tradition that their many visitors from overseas were asked to bring tree seeds from their home country. Further specimens were brought from *Kew Gardens*. A splendid arboretum was thus established. Unfortunately, in just the last decade it has been severely damaged by flying foxes, killing some trees and making others unsafe. Therefore the arboretum is no longer open to visitors.

The talent of local New England garden designer, Carolyn Robinson, was evident in the final two gardens visited. Melanie Bloom commissioned Carolyn to redesign the garden firstly at the early twentieth century cottage *Wiltshire* and later at the adjoining *Lunawarra*. *Wiltshire* already had the advantage of well-established exotic and native trees. Carolyn added her trademark of low stone walls to define the entrance, a ha-ha to emphasise the garden's connection to its undulating landscape, and a reflection pool. A special feature of the *Wiltshire* garden is a sweeping prairie border with repeat plantings of *Miscanthus sinensis*, *Salvia microphylla* and *Petrovskia atriplicifolia*, located to catch the highlights of the late afternoon sun. *Lunawarra*, our final garden visit of the tour is a more recent project, using drought hardy shrubs such as *Ceanothus* and *Spiraea* in combination with native Australian shrubs and ornamental grasses.



Lunch on the lawn at *Elmore Station*



Lunawarra garden sits graciously in its landscape



Finding 'A Corner of the *MacIntyre*

Council supports Australian Garden History Society - Except from *Armidale Express* May 18th

Armidale Regional Council has approved funding of \$43,656 to the Australian Garden History Society for the development of its Heritage Rose Garden Stage 2 at *Saumarez Homestead*. The funding support has come from Council's Stronger Communities Grants program which was a one-off allocation from the State Government provided to Councils that have undertaken mergers in NSW.

Armidale Regional Council Administrator Dr Ian Tiley said that Armidale is home to the Northern NSW sub-branch of the Australian Garden History Society which promotes awareness and conservation of significant gardens and cultural landscapes.

"This funding will enable the Society to complete the planned Heritage Rose Garden Project," Dr Tiley said "A sustainable Heritage Rose Garden is being established on the site of a former orchard at *Saumarez Homestead* – a project which will have cultural, educational and economic benefits for the region."



(L-R) Richard Bird (Project Manager), Helen Oates (Rose Sub-committee) & Dr Ian Tiley (Armidale Regional Council Administrator).

TO PRUNE OR NOT TO PRUNE by Tempe Bevan

The ‘butchering’ of street trees across the state has created a community outcry against the network providers that has led to greater monitoring of contractors and agreements to work more closely with local councils. It is recognised that there is a requirement for trimming of street trees to manage the risk consistent with public safety, environmental amenity and operational efficiency. However the need for such brutal pruning of street trees within urban and non-bushfire prone areas, referred to by many as ‘vandalism’ that has destroyed the form of immature trees and avenues and with it the local identity of some local government areas and townships, has remained unclear.

In NSW, the *Electricity Supply Act (1995)* permits the network operator to trim or remove trees that have the potential to interfere with electricity works or be a potential cause of bushfire or potential risk to public safety. The act includes some exclusions, however Tree Preservation Orders or street trees having local heritage listings, do not apply. The regulations to the act performance based and provide industry with considerable scope as to how to best achieve desired safety and network management outcomes. The regulations provide that the *network service provider* or *distributor* cannot trim a tree in such a way to substantially damage the tree, except where they are of the opinion it is necessary to protect the power lines, or property or people near the power lines. The regulations also call for the preparation of a tree management plan in consultation with councils and communities however it is not mandatory. Many local councils are now demanding community consultation. Despite recent amendments, the failure of NSW legislation and inadequacies of the industry guidelines to prevent increasing excessive pruning practices, such as ‘clear to the sky’ pruning in urban and non-bushfire prone areas, has allowed network providers to undertake vegetation management that may be driven by economic efficiencies rather than primarily for public safety. Seeking answers from those responsible for monitoring compliance has also been made more difficult since 2015 following the NSW Government’s leasing of electricity distribution providers, where the Minister for Resources and Utilities handed the electricity safety regulatory functions to IPART.

A further update of the industry guidelines for vegetation management is urgently needed with more detailed arboricultural input than simply a brief reference to *AS4373-2007 Pruning of Amenity Trees*. The regulations also allow alternatives that would avoid the need for vegetation management such as undergrounding of the electricity supply. In the past, the benefit of undergrounding has not been considered worth the cost to government even with community contribution. The growing awareness of the community who highly values these assets, the government desire to place greater reliance on street trees to provide urban landscape amenity and the increasing maintenance costs of servicing the environmentally insensitive aerial cabling network, it may be a solution that the network provider along with the government and community would be prepared to support.



Plane tree avenue in front of *Eryldene* at Gordon

YASMAR, HABERFIELD UPDATE – AGHS garden volunteers required

Most of you will already be familiar with *Yasmar*, the last remaining 19th century villa estate on Parramatta Road and may have visited the garden. You may have read my short article published prior to my illustrated talk last November on this historic house and garden. In the surviving portion of the garden are several original trees, now possibly up to 150 years old and some very rare and unusual shrubs. Both the house and the garden are suffering from serious neglect; significant trees have died, weeds proliferate and it is difficult to discern traces of the original garden layout.

NSW Crown Lands, the current owner of *Yasmar*, will soon be carrying out much needed maintenance work on the house and has recently overseen two contracts to remove unwanted, dead or weedy trees and palms and large weedy shrubs that volunteers could not remove with hand tools. This is in preparation for upcoming garden maintenance and possible restoration work of the garden by a team of keen volunteers. Which is where you, our wonderful Garden History Society members come in. Members of The Haberfield Association have already shown great interest in the project following a similar talk I gave to the Association in 2016. Last year Vincent Crow from the association and I submitted paperwork to Crown Lands for the necessary licence and I have also presented a list of basic tools and equipment required, for which funding has been granted. The licence has been approved and we will be able to purchase our equipment and begin work once The Haberfield Association has provided documentary proof of current insurance. Crown Lands assure me that insurance is only needed from one of our organisations to cover volunteers from both groups.

The best scenario is that volunteers will meet on site in front of the house on Thursday 8th June. Depending on volunteers’ preferences, we will thereafter work on either Tuesdays or Thursdays. Gloves and tools will be supplied but please wear sturdy shoes and bring your own hats, sun screen and water. Parking is available on site via the Chandos Street entry. Please register your interest and intention to attend to me either by Ph: 0410 655 815 or email: ginaplate@bigpond.com Please supply your name and appropriate contact details so I can confirm an actual start date and time. Unfortunately these were not available before this *Branch Cutting*’s deadline.

Gina Plate



Yasmar c1870s showing its young plantings.

(Photo: Macleay Museum)



Some of the weeds infesting the garden today. Fine asparagus fern, *Cassia* & ink weed Photo: Gina Plate March 2017

EXPLORING PHYTONYMY: WHAT FLOWER NAMES TELL US

Rose, pansy, iris, violet...have you ever wondered what these words might mean and how they have been applied to particular plants? PHYTONYMY is the study of plant names and the reasoning behind them. Come along on 21st June and hear the meaning of plant names revealed.

Dr Geoffrey Hull is an honorary associate of the Department of International Studies, Macquarie University, and retired Professor of Linguistics and Director of the National Language Institute at the University of East Timor. As a professional philologist researching the evolution of languages and their cultural contexts, he was involved in several projects concerning the nomenclature of tropical plant species while working in Timor between 2001 and 2008, and studied in particular their vernacular names and the rationale behind their terminology. As a keen gardener himself, Geoffrey has extended his interest to the scientific and popular names given to the plants cultivated in Australian gardens. In this talk he explores the inner meanings and cultural and historical associations of the names of our favourite flowers, not only their official Latin and English appellations, but the names given them in other European languages.



How did this beautiful flower get its name? Come along on June 21st to find out.
Photo: James Quoyle

TOUR OF CALLAN PARK & BROUGHTON HALL - GRAND TREES & GARDENS

led by Roslyn Burge & Stuart Read 15th July

Callan Park, the former psychiatric hospital in Rozelle and an item on the State Heritage Register, is a magnificent cultural landscape which the Australian Garden History Society has long listed on its national Landscapes @ Risk – and the Sydney & Northern NSW Branch has supported over the years with submissions and letters of support.

What other city in the nation has a rainforest 6 traffic lights from the CBD? Evidence of private estates of *Callan Park* and *Broughton Hall* and their botanical riches flourish in this remarkable place: a haven in an increasingly urbanised metropolis. Beyond the original ideals of psychiatric care a heady mix of horticulture and politics has been evident at *Callan Park* since the early development of the site in colonial times and particularly in recent decades. Charles Moore guided the development of the grounds; and after the WW1 transformation of *Broughton Hall* by the Red Cross, its gardens were harnessed for their therapeutic qualities and as a distraction for patients: a philosophy practiced by nurses into the twenty-first century.

The hospital closed in 2008, but the site endures: it is the largest green open space in the inner west, bookended by early and mid-century modernist structures and valued anew by a changing community. With more tree species than *Central Park*, more dragon's blood trees (*Dracaena draco*) than the *Botanic Gardens* (though outnumbered by the *National Arboretum of Australia*) and other botanical riches, *Callan Park* could be an arboretum, a visiting international landscape architect pronounced recently.

Come and explore this 61 hectare, western harbour-foreshore site; see the tallest trees in the (former) Leichardt LGA; understand immediately why the Gadigal and Wangal peoples spent time feasting at *Callan Point* and hear audio extracts from former patients, staff and children for whom all of *Callan Park* was their playground.



Plane trees and geometric brick by Michael Dysart, *Broughton Hall* Clinic grounds (now University of Tasmania campus), Photo by Roslyn Burge

BEYOND EXPLORATION - ILLUSTRATING THE BOTANICAL LEGACY OF LUDWIG LEICHHARDT

talk by Tanya Houlihan 16th August

Ludwig Leichhardt is best known for his expeditions in Northern Australia and the mystery that surrounded his disappearance. Yet little attention has previously been paid to the significant contribution Leichhardt made to scientific studies in colonial Australia. Fluent in 5 languages and a student of zoology, botany and geology, Leichhardt was one of the most qualified scientists to have worked in Australia at the time. An avid observer, collector and recorder of natural history his greatest legacy lay in the field of botany. As a result, over 3,500 of his collected specimens are still held in Sydney and Melbourne herbaria today.

Despite Leichhardt's botanical knowledge his application to become the director of the Botanic Gardens was rejected. This led him to follow a life as a scientific collector and explorer. For the first 2 years, Leichhardt collected and recorded flora from the Sydney, Newcastle, Upper Hunter and the Moreton Bay area. In 2013, a translated copy of Leichhardt's field notes and diaries from this period was published, which for the first time revealed the true botanical legacy he left behind. Tanya is a Phd candidate in natural history illustration at the University of Newcastle and has used these diary entries to ascertain when, where and what Leichhardt collected during this significant period of his life. Her talk will highlight some of the diary entries which relate to the flora recorded, the influence Leichhardt had on early botanical discoveries and his connection to important gardens and institutes such as the *Royal Botanic Gardens* and *Camden Park*. Tanya will show copies of Leichhardt's collected specimens as well as some of her botanical illustrations as she outlines the work she has undertaken to highlight Leichhardt's important botanical contributions.



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In autumn when my husband, Graham, and I visited *Great Chalfield* the perennial border near the lawn featured mixed herbaceous species including purple salvias, catmint and geraniums with yellow daisy flowers providing a bright contrast to the cool greens and purples. The background trees and shrubs add to the creation of a well-proportioned picture. As with the other perennial borders in the garden a work of art has been created with charming compositions of colour, texture and form. On the other side of the lawn branches of a *Cedrus atlantica* 'Glauca' spread above the two-storey Edwardian gazebo. The upper floor of this structure is used for apple storage. The lower floor was once used to store cheese.

A flight of steps leads down from the lawn to a lower terrace beside a dry-stone retaining wall. The straight lines of the stone pathway here are softened by sprawling aster flowers in a border of brilliant shades of pink and purple interwoven with mauve. From this terrace a meadow with fruit trees and wildflowers slopes down to the tree-lined lower moat and the wilder more natural part of the garden. A secluded walkway takes you beneath the trees alongside the water. Rushes line the banks and plants spill from the stone retaining wall above. Beneath the trees vistas over the water framed by trunks and branches reveal the buildings at the higher level. A lovely rill down to the moat through stone edging is filled with ground covers such as primulas. The trees and gazebo are reflected in the water.

In a different area of the garden another perennial border features warm-toned flowers and leaves in attractive colour and textural combinations using species such as dahlias, Amaranthus and smoke bush with reds, burgundies and yellows contrasting with the variety of green and grey-leafed plants.

The terrace bordering the warm southern side of the manor is an inviting space paved with huge slabs of stone and planted with bush roses around an old well. Self-sown ground covers soften the edges of the pavers. The adjoining house walls are draped with climbing roses.

The garden at *Great Chalfield Manor* is a perfect setting for the historic stone house. The Arts and Crafts features of the garden, namely the combinations of formal garden areas leading to wild garden, topiary, perennial plantings, terraces, water features and use of stone walls and paths, are a perfect complement to the buildings. If you are visiting Bath and Wiltshire it is well worth taking a small detour to visit this lovely National Trust property.

Anne Smith is a committee member of the Sydney branch of AGHS, holds an Associate Diploma in Landscape Design and was a Regional Co-ordinator then Liaison Officer for Open Gardens Australia from 2004-2014.



The rill down to the moat through stone edging filled with ground covers such as primulas.



Herbaceous species including purple salvias, catmint and geraniums with yellow daisy flowers providing a bright contrast to the cool greens and purples



Glorious asters in a border of brilliant shades of pink and purple interwoven with mauve.

All photos by Anne Smith

NOTICE OF 2017 AGM AND CALL FOR NOMINATIONS TO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE BRANCH

Notice is given that the branch AGM will be held on Wednesday 16 August, 2017 at 7pm in the Annie Wyatt room, National Trust Building, Observatory Hill, 2 Watson Road, Millers Point (Sydney). The business to be transacted will include approval of the minutes of the 2016 AGM, the chairs' report of the branch activities, presentation of the audited statements of account and election of committee members.

The AGM will be preceded by light refreshments between 6-7 pm and followed by an illustrated talk by Tanya Houlihan *Beyond exploration - illustrating the botanical legacy of Ludwig Leichhardt*.

Nominations are called for members of the committee. If any member wants to nominate another member for election to the branch committee, please contact Jeanne Villani who can send you a nomination form.

The constitution requires that nominations be received no later than 4 July, 2017 (42 days before the AGM).