

BRANCH CUTTINGS



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

BROWN, GREEN, OTHER COLOURS & PLAYERS: A Tercentenary Pilgrimage – Stuart Read

In case you missed it, 2016 was the 300th anniversary of the birth of Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown – England’s greatest garden designer. A host of activities took place to celebrate this in the United Kingdom.

One drew me and a few Australians to Bath, for a conference on Brown/ the English ‘landscape school’, tracing their international influence – beyond England to Europe, Catherine the Great’s Russia, America, Australia. How can this guy be relevant here? He never came here! What do I care for, or need a grotto, a hermitage or a ha-ha?

True he was resolutely-England-bound in life and work (famously allegedly saying he would not work in Ireland, as ‘*he hadn’t finished England yet*’), but his ideas, the odd plan and the style of that landscape school certainly did: in the memories of educated, travelled colonists, soldiers, settlers and convicts who knew, lived near or worked in those landscapes. Through popular gardening and estate management books and magazines promoting that style, or its later evolutions such as the ‘Picturesque’, J.C.Loudon’s ‘Gardenesque’ etc- embroideries and mutations of this ‘natural’ style. Through the Grand Tour – which intriguingly included foreigners travelling English estates to learn, and copy.

In fact it was not natural but completely ‘faked up’, convincingly so! Much of what we take as typical English countryside is as re-made in the 1700s-1800s. Many ‘style Anglaise’ (sic) landscapes re-worked in that informal, ‘natural’ style across Europe owe their ideas to this school and its leading exponents, Brown foremost among them. These are landscapes as ‘artefact’ and monument – i.e. as works of art – as much as are the great mansions and grand country houses gracing their cores. Many were made or re-made for clients of the new merchant or banking class, minor gentry, ne’er-do-well or aspiring aristocrats out to prove their worth by having the latest and greatest, showing off their wealth, taste and culture. If you like, to buy social position and respect, through demonstrated taste.

True Brown, Kent and others swept away much of the older formality prevalent before them: terraces, avenues, straight (military) lines, clipped hedges, topiaries and parterres.



Atop the temple of Apollo at Henry Hoare II's Stourhead, Wiltshire



A knockout purple/red/orange border at Great Chalfield Manor, Wiltshire



Enjoying a young Mr Brown's capabilities along the serpentine river at Croome Court, Worcestershire.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I hope all our members have enjoyed a relaxing break and maybe caught up on some reading, Sydney at this time can be so pleasant – no parking problems with neighbours away, the weather is tough but in general everything is growing strongly. I was given a copy of Peter Wohlleben's *The Hidden Life of Trees* for Christmas – a book that decodes the joyous entanglement that reflects our own networks. With over 800 trees slated for destruction to allow for the massive infrastructure around *Sydney Park* at St Peters - it makes me despair at the havoc wrought on many communities by the loss of canopy and the loss of empowerment over government. Those elected to improve our lives seem to undervalue the community and the connectivity and protection trees provide – they are a civilizing element of our environments. Last year we lost so many magnificent fig trees for the light rail in Randwick and *Moore Park*. We are enduring a massive change with huge costs – I hope it is worth it. 2016 was a significant year for garden history - the bicentenary of the *Royal Botanic Garden Sydney* and the exhibitions at the State Library of New South Wales and Sydney Living Museums were so well researched and designed. AGHS is proud to have been a sponsor for both. We also enjoyed a talk by Tim Entwisle about the connectivity between the Botanic Gardens of Melbourne and Sydney.

On the topic of community networks, we also enjoyed the walk though the *Female Factory*, lead by Gay Hendrikson. *The Parramatta Female Factory* is the earliest surviving convict women's site in Australia and predates all but three of our current world heritage convict sites. Over 9000 went through the factory system, of which 5000 went through Parramatta. Gay estimates that one in seven Australians is related to these women.

As usual, the Christmas gathering was very well attended – it was a lovely evening in a fascinating garden - the home of Anne and Graham Smith in Turramurra.

The year ahead will be a big year for the AGHS Oral History program. We have already recorded many luminaries of gardening and I have listened to a few of the interviews. I find them so engaging and the character of the person being interviewed is illuminated. John Maurer and Roslyn Burge are leading and guiding members in the field. This collection and the ongoing work will be a valuable gift to gardening history made possible by the membership and generosity of volunteers.

Our first event this year is a talk by Judy Fakes, who retired last year as a Commissioner in the Land and Environment Court of NSW after ten years of arbitrating. Disputes over fences and trees between neighbours are very common. Here in Newtown we had awful neighbours who, while we were away for the weekend, scaled our boundary fence, lopped a huge limb from the large Chinese tallowwood, *Sapium sebiferum* on our upper terrace, and in the process dislodged our brick fence, said nothing. On our return from our trip we were horrified to see the loss of canopy. I never spoke to them again. To be honest I had never spoken to them much and was pleased when soon after the incident they sold up and quit the area. Arboraphobia (I made that up) but you know what I mean. I think the talk will be a sell-out so you should book promptly.

The committee and I encourage you to get in touch: we are stronger and better with your feedback and ideas! Ways of involving potential new members, widening our reach and message are welcome. Happy New Year!

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

Past, Present and Future: AGHS NNSW Oral History Project

When recalling one's childhood it is interesting to think of the occasions when we were told by grandparents of their experiences from a very different time. How often do we say, "I wish I could remember more".

The NNSW sub-branch has embarked on a significant oral history project to record the experiences and learning of settlers and gardeners in the Northern Tablelands. We have identified a number of persons and projects which we feel important to capture. Among these are:

Marilyn Pidgeon published "*Garden Secrets*" in 1990. Marilyn still has some 60 audio taped interviews of interviews conducted with gardeners in preparation for her book. We plan to digitise these recordings and to follow-up those who are still available to interview again - some 25 years later.

Owen Croft has been methodically searching the many dairies of FJ White and extracted the numerous mentions of garden activity at *Saumarez Homestead*. Associated gems include rose and other plant orders from a Sydney nurseryman in the early 1890s. Owen himself has lived in the area most of his life and has identified some 14 family properties which have been held continuously since European settlement from the 1830s onwards.

Liz Chappell recently published "*Celebrate the Seasons*", which provides the opportunity to interview contemporary gardeners as they deal with the challenges of the 'high, lean country' of the New England.

This wealth of material provides NNSW members with an exciting new project now that Stage 1 of the *Heritage Rose Garden* is almost complete. Our plan is to conduct a training workshop in Armidale on the weekend of 4–5 March using Assoc. Prof. Janis Wilton as facilitator. Janis' reputation as an oral historian is well known and widely respected. We hope that among the 10 participant trainees will be representatives from the Sydney and Queensland branches.

Future activities hope to include interviews with Marilyn Pidgeon, Owen Croft, Catherine MacLean and Jillian Oppenheimer, all with extensive knowledge of gardening activities in the New England. From there we anticipate expanding interviews to capture as much as is achievable using the skills of trained members. Included in our activity will be recording the genesis of the NNSW group using the memories of members who were present at the meeting at *Salisbury Court* on 13 March 2005 of what was to become the NNSW branch of AGHS Sydney.

Graham Wilson, Chair, NNSW Oral History Project John Maurer, NMC Oral History Committee

NEW MEMBERS

The Branch would like to extend a warm welcome to the following new local members:
Glennis Clark, Cynthia Grant and Thomas & Marcella O'Conner

AGHS FORTHCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY

Date: Wednesday 15th February 6pm for 7pm - 8.30pm.

Event: Illustrated talk by Judy Fakes - *Trees & neighbours – managing disputes*

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

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

MARCH

Date: Wednesday 15th March - 6pm for 7pm - 8.30pm.

Event: Illustrated talk by Stuart Read – *Brown, green, other colours & players: a tercentenary pilgrimage*

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

Cost: Members \$20 Guests \$30 includes light refreshments. Bookings essential. More details on page 1 & 8

APRIL

Date: Wednesday 5th April - 6pm for 7pm - 8.30pm.

Event: Illustrated talk by Richard Heathcote - *Josephine's Garden at Château de Malmaison*

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

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

MAY

Date: TBC - Saturday 20th May 2pm - 4.30pm.

Event: Visit to *St. Thomas Anglican Church*, Enfield. Built 1849 designed by John Frederick Hilly. The cemetery has many graves & headstones of pioneer families. The visit will be followed by afternoon tea in a member's garden in Burwood. TBC

Venue: To be confirmed on booking.

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

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, Centrepoint 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 19 Feb. 4:00 pm. Meeting at UNE Heritage Centre followed by dinner at the New England Hotel. Speaker Bill Oates, NNSW Chair. Topic: *Womens' Agricultural Security Production Service (WASPS)*. No cost for the talk; dinner at own cost.

Saturday 22nd – Sunday 23rd April 2017 - Weekend with Tom Roberts. Visit the site of 'Bailed Up' and other Tom Roberts paintings plus six historic homestead and Inverell town gardens. Mini-bus from Armidale, overnight in Inverell.

Cost *estimate* for bus, garden visits, 2 lunches & 1 dinner approx. \$220 members, \$250 non-members. TBC

Bookings essential, contact Liz Chappell 02 6734 4143,

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

Open every day until April 2017: *Sweet Addiction*, the inaugural exhibition inside 'The Calyx', the new exhibition centre and glass house inside the *Royal Botanic Garden*, Sydney, which explores where chocolate comes from, how it is grown, its history and pervasive connection to so many of our lives. Includes the largest Green Wall in the Southern Hemisphere and much more. \$15/\$9.50, 10am-4pm daily, info: www.rbg Syd.nsw.gov.au/visit/sweet-addiction/ / phone: 9231 8111.

March 14th - Waverley/Bronte day, including 1840s *Bronte House* and garden, \$38 National Trust members only, bookings: www.nationaltrust.com.au/house-inspections, p: 9363 2401

25th/26th March- Mudgee District Open House weekend, including 1865+ *Heaton Lodge* with 1940s Paul Sorensen garden, long held in the Loneragan family, \$85 National Trust members/\$105 friends. Bookings as for March 14th. above

April 8th/9th - Open weekend at *Eryldene* house and garden, Gordon, with its sasanqua camellias flowering, guided house tours, garden cafe, teas from 2pm, \$24 NT members, \$32 friends, bookings: 9498 2271/ eryldene@eryldene.org.au

April 18th - May 18th Australian Heritage Festival, events all over the country, details: www.nationaltrust.org.au/ahf

29th April -Faulconbridge discovery tour, 9.30am - visit MP Sir Henry Parkes' grave, the house he built and named after his wife. Wander down the corridor of oaks, planted for each Australian Prime Minister. Morning tea at *Norman Lindsay Gallery*, \$20 Nat.Trust members, \$25 Friends, bookings essential: 4757 2424 or e: BMNT1814@gmail.com

May 6th/7th - Nowra Region Country Weekend, including 1830s and 1840s houses one with an early garden and choice of 2 river cruises, \$650 Nat.Trust members twin share, \$675 friends, bookings as from March 14th.

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.

AGHS ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION - Background To The Project

by Roslyn Burge

The Australian Garden History Society has a remarkable collection of oral history interviews recorded between 2003 and 2011. The National Management Committee is looking anew at how the collection can be used, publicised and extended.

In 2001, to mark the 25th anniversary of its foundation of the Society, the Australian Garden History Society initiated a program of oral history interviews with people who were significant in its establishment. That collection continued to develop, capturing a diverse range of, not only about the Society, but also about the influences on their lives which fostered their interest in gardens. This collection provides an important adjunct to formal written records and a resource for the future. The Society has two collections of interviews: National and Sydney and Northern NSW's. There are 20 interviews in the national collection: the first three were recorded in 2002 (Dr Sophie Ducker, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, DBE, and Phyllis Simons); and the last in December 2010 (Richard Aitken). Each state and territory (except the Northern Territory) is represented in the national collection (including Dr James Broadbent AM, Howard Tanner AM and Peter Watts AM from NSW). All the interviews have been transcribed and lodged in the State Libraries of Victoria and NSW and one interview in the National Library of Australia (see listing at <https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/news/details/60>)

At the same time the Sydney and Northern NSW Branch commissioned eleven interviews recorded between 2003 and 2011. If the interviews with Dr Broadbent AM, Howard Tanner AM, and Peter Watts AM, are included in the tally of interviews with NSW residents, approximately 25 hours of audio, transcribed into nearly 174,000 words were recorded. (The Sydney and Northern NSW collection has also been lodged in the State Library of NSW.)

Throughout all the interviews the threads of early influences leading to an interest in gardens and garden history are evident. Three people whose interviews are included in the Sydney and Northern NSW Collection are Mary Dougan, Shirley Stackhouse, OAM and Jean Walker.

Mary Dougan: Mary established a beautiful garden on four and a half acres in Kirkham Street, Beecroft. There is no doubt her record as the oldest person interviewed for the collection is unlikely ever to be broken: Mary was 104 when interviewed in 2006! She vividly recalled the childhood influence of her grandfather, who had been gored by a bull, once sat all day on the verandah of their home at Maclean on the Clarence River and taught her how to graft. Clearly this was an important skill for Mary in managing her orchard at Beecroft.

Shirley Stackhouse OAM was a foundation member of the Society and already well known through her columns and publications when interviewed in 2006. She grew up in the nursery trade: her grandfather, George Henry Heers, was a well-known rose grower though because of his employment (as Director of Dairying for the Department of Agriculture and Stock in Queensland) his sons ran the *Pacific Nurseries*.

Asked if a career in horticulture was an option, she explained that *the only way you could do horticulture in Queensland was at the Gatton Agricultural College which only admitted boys, so there was absolutely no way you could study horticulture in Brisbane in those years. Still keen to study horticulture, in 1964 when I came to Sydney to live the first thing I did was enrol at Ryde School of Horticulture.*

Jean Walker, with her sister Betty Maloney, established a business in Sydney designing and building bush gardens (and much more). Jean grew up in Colac, Victoria, and when asked during the interview whether she was aware of bush gardeners in Victoria she replied, *No we didn't know there was such a thing as a bush garden. We just thought it was ... well my father had planted natives already and everybody in the whole town had said, 'Silly old Selwyn – planting natives', fancy planting gum trees! No, it was my father who did that. And he planted twenty gum trees when I was born.*

Jean remembered when polio came to Colac. Housebound and not allowed to play with other children she decided to build a pond and fountain in the garden. *I'd seen my father use cement and wire netting ... and build funny structures and fences and things and we dug a hole and we made a pool and we put wire netting in the bottom of it and threw cement and made a pool. The reason why I started doing this was because my grandmother was ironing the clothes and she had a little sprinkler on the top of her tomato sauce bottle and she used to sprinkle the water on the clothes ... and I said to my grandmother, "Could I have the little sprinkler – I want to make a fountain in the garden?" ... and we made this beautiful little pool underneath the tree ... The plumber lived about four doors up and I went asked him could he arrange a pipe under the ground to come up (in the middle of the pool).*

Conclusion

In giving so generously of their memories and stories for this collection, **everyone** interviewed for this project has provided a record of a great deal more than the formation of the Society. The collection provides a window on a particular era, highlights different approaches to philanthropy, reflects changing understandings of history and gardens, heritage and advocacy and provides vignettes about the ways in which members understood the significance of the Society. It records the ethos of the Society and provides a wonderful resource for the future. Because it is impossible to do justice to the collection here, a brief extract from each interview will be included in future editions of *Branch Cuttings*.

PETS FIT FOR A FRENCH EMPRESS'S GARDEN - by Richard Heathcote



Memory of Malmaison, 1866 by Victor Vigé

When it comes to designer pets we have all had to come to terms with vacuous celebrities and their miniscule dogs poking out of their expensive handbags. Hollywood receives suitable derision for such fashion trends in the 21st century but in imperial France two centuries ago, pets as status symbols took a different form and required much more time and effort to acquire than a visit to a shop.

Empress Josephine purchased her country house *Malmaison* in 1799 despite her Emperor husband's misgivings about its lack of scale and grandeur. She moved in that year in the spring and began at once to plan its garden and improve the park's woodlands and water pieces. Originally 60 hectares it grew to become an estate of 726 hectares bordering the river Seine.

From 1802 there could be seen in the park three kangaroos, two emus and five black swans as well as trees such as *Melaleuca*, *Acacia* and *Casuarina*. How had the Empress come by these exotic creatures and were they just for decorative effect and to impress her guests? She held a keen interest in voyages of scientific exploration and the discoveries of intrepid naval personnel who undertook them. Napoleon, her husband, was attentive to scientists and had high hopes for the expedition setting off in 1800 and led by Captain Nicolas Baudin to New Holland, as Australia was then called. Josephine sought plants from these expeditions, whose teams included botanists and gardeners, and through the assistance of the eminent botanist, Pierre Ventenat, she propagated and introduced a wide range of unusual and exotic plants for her garden. She wrote to Joseph Banks and other British botanists requesting seeds from Botany Bay and other regions of the world that were streaming into London from all over the globe. They arrived at *Malmaison* where they were cultivated with use of the great hothouse, by her gardeners and botanists.

During the sixteen years of the Napoleonic era more images were published in France of Australian flora than in Britain in the ninety years following Cook's discovery of the east coast of Australia. Since there is no longer any evidence of the plant collections at *Malmaison* the greatest record of all this activity can be found today in the work of the artist Pierre Joseph Redoute. Josephine commissioned the book *Jardin de la Malmaison* which was illustrated for her by Redoute and published in Paris. It contained many colour plates of Australian plants. The greatest record of our flora was also published in Paris and written by Jacques Julien Houtou de La Billardiere with 265 black and white engraved illustrations by Redoute. The book weighed seven kilograms.

So many of our place names in and around Australia reflect the role that French cartographers played in mapping and naming our coastline. There are many tragic stories behind them and they often suggest how close we came to becoming part of the French empire rather than the British. Not least is the end met in 1787 by Jean Francois de Galaup, Comte de La Perouse, who had been ordered by Louis XVI to hurry to Botany Bay to see what the British were up to in sending the First Fleet to establish a permanent settlement.

He arrived on 28 January 1788 and after making some repairs departed six weeks later on 10 March with his two ships the *Boussole* and the *Astrolabe* and was never seen again. A box containing his journals and dispatches which he had trusted to a convict ship at Botany Bay, had arrived in Paris a few weeks before the storming of the Bastille on 14 July, 1789. It was Admiral Antoine Raymond Joseph Bruni D'Entrecasteaux who eventually led the expedition in 1791 to search for the lost La Perouse. But no evidence of his demise was ever found. If you have flown in or out of Sydney airport you will have passed over the suburb named to commemorate La Perouse and his landing.

The extended search for La Perouse by D'Entrecasteaux took his two ships, the *Esperance* and *Recherche*, to New Caledonia, the Admiralty Islands, the Solomons, Bougainville, between New Britain and New Ireland and around New Guinea to the Moluccas. From there they sailed down the west coast of the Australian mainland; the southwestern corner of the continent is speckled with the names Point d'Entrecasteaux, Cape Riche (after one of the naturalists on board, who managed to get lost for two days), Esperance Bay (today the town of Esperance) and Archipelago of the Recherche. They crossed the Great Australian Bight before limping back to Recherche Bay in southeast Tasmania to effect repairs on the *Esperance* and to replenish their water and other supplies.

It was at Recherche Bay that French expeditioners made several gardens in May 1792. In 2003 the remains of one established by Felix La Hale was identified and gained public attention as the site was threatened by logging. It was not uncommon for ships to attempt to cultivate some plants that could provide fresh supplies for them on their anticipated return. Paul Healy wrote (*The Sunday Tasmanian*, March 2nd 2003, p.24) that in this case the altruistic view was that some of the plants might naturalise and provide supplies not only for themselves but for later visiting ships.

Healy points out that the size of the four plots (about the size of an average kitchen garden in rural France) and the types of plants (chicory, cabbages, sorrel, radishes, cress and potatoes) put it beyond doubt that this was a Potager plot, or food garden. However, as he recounts, the gardeners were disappointed with the results of their efforts on their return 9 months after planting, seemingly a combination of some possibly spoiled seed, the late planting, an unsuitable rather dry clayey site, and undoubtedly the depredations of the local possums and wallabies.

So the imperial pets that were to later amuse the Empress and her guests at *Malmaison* had cousins in Tasmania who were enjoying the first French gardens in Australia in a different way. **Richard's illustrated talk will be on April 5th at NT Centre.**

SPECIES ROSES by Peter Cox - Book review by Angela Low

It is a handsome volume 30 x 21cm. with a double page spread for each species. After the exquisite botanical art we saw in the Florilegium exhibition at The Museum of Sydney, the paintings appear a little amateurish but they are pretty, charming and above all, accurate. On reading further into the book, however, I was astonished to realise that all 56 images were painted by one man, the author, Peter Cox.



Peter was an engineer, son of a nurseryman from Surrey in the UK. He emigrated to Australia in 1965 and worked in the Port Kembla steelworks but after 2 years started a family dairy farm, first at Camden, NSW, and later Narellan. He and his wife Kate experimented with growing roses and dahlias, eventually opening a specialist 5 acre rose nursery at Thirlmere just outside Sydney, in 1979. Here they developed a passion for species and heritage roses, and joined the local branch of Heritage Roses in 1985. In 1995 The 2nd national conference of Heritage Roses was to be held in Orange, NSW, and Peter, who had always loved painting, undertook this project, aiming to propagate and illustrate every species rose available in Australia at the time. He was then nearly 70. All were done within an 18 mth period leading up to the conference. For financial reasons the paintings were done in oil paint on hardboard so they could be displayed without framing on wooden easels. The potted plant of the species was displayed beside each one, but of course not always in flower or carrying hips. At the end of the conference all of the plants and paintings were donated to *The Orange Botanic Gardens*. This is the first time the paintings have been published.

There are some 120 Rose species in the world, that will reproduce true to form from seed, although some may be natural hybrids. I have grown some of these roses and have seen them growing in various places in Australia, for instance Rookwood cemetery has a collection saved from old graveside plantings. Memorably in a lovely garden called *Coccinea* in Western Australia (after the conference in Albany), we saw a wonderful collection flowering amongst ancient, gnarled native grass trees (*Xanthorrhoea*). They are often large, sprawling shrubs which only flower once a year, but for any lover of roses they are fascinating because they are the basis, the history of all roses since. Every rose in the book is described in botanical detail, and placed in the appropriate section of the family *Rosacea*. Horticultural notes including remarks on characteristics such as vigour and perfume, are obviously written by a nurseryman who knows his stock. Common names are recorded and the native geographical location. It is curious to reflect that while all are from the Northern Hemisphere, very few were found in Europe, most come from China and other parts of Asia and the Far East, several from North America. (*'The Quest for the Rose'*, written by Roger Phillips and Martyn Rix in 1993, was my first introduction to this idea.) Habitat loss is putting some species on the endangered list so it is important to preserve and identify these roses as sources of DNA for future generations of roses.

Finally a curious, unexplained detail is that each species has a chromosome number recorded and sometimes more than one. In animals, which I am more familiar with, a species is defined by its chromosome number. Haploid describes the number of chromosomes in a gamete, ie. an egg or a sperm. After fertilization the developing individual is diploid having half its number from each parent. After some research I found that in the bizarre world of rose genetics the haploid number is 7 but naturally occurring hybridisation can produce diploidy (14 or 2 x 7) but also triploidy (21 or 3 x 7) and so on even up to 56 or 8 x 7. *Rosa canina*, the dog rose of Britain and Europe is known in forms with 35, 42 or 56 chromosomes. This is essential information for the modern rose breeder, for instance most triploids are infertile, ie. they do not easily set seed. Rose breeders traditionally crossed (artificially) plants with desirable characteristics and hoped to find the seedling that carried all the good genes. Alister Clark chose to cross *R. gigantea* from China as a vigorous rose which withstood hot, humid conditions to produce famous Australian roses such as Black Boy and Lorraine Lee. In the story of the Peace rose, *'For the Love of a Rose'* by Antonia Ridge (1965), the French rosarian, Papa Meilland is depicted examining hundreds of seedlings produced in his nursery and with his skilful eye, picking out the ones worth persevering with. In our modern world the science of genomics is emerging whereby the researcher will have the tools to identify individual genes and *'snip'* them out. This is probably the first book in the world on species roses since Ellen Willmott's book published in 1914. It is a fascinating and I believe valuable text.

The recommended retail price of the book is \$29.95. They can be ordered directly from Clive West (savwest@bigpond.com) and postage - \$15 extra.

Payment can be by EFT - Account name: Heritage Roses in Australia Illawarra; BSB 802-101, Account No: 100065861

DA FOR JUNIPER HALL WITHDRAWN BY APPLICANT

In June last year the Sydney Branch lodged an objection with Woollahra Council to oppose the proposed redevelopment of *Juniper Hall* in Paddington. We advocated that they refuse the application to reinstate shops in front of and below the garden in Oxford Street. You will be heartened to hear that Woollahra Council notified the Branch in November that the development application had been withdrawn by the applicant. The advocacy, of which the Branch was a part, was successful in stemming the removal of the established garden and the reworking of the buildings in an unsympathetic fashion. *Juniper Hall* was the largest conservation project ever undertaken by the National Trust of Australia (NSW) and partly funded by a public appeal and the public purse.

The Branch will remain on guard and watch the situation if it unfolds further.

HANS HEYSEN by Lou Klepac - Book review by Cecelia Clarke

After a surfeit of Christmas parties, plum pudding and luscious seasonal fruit, comes the prospect of catching up with goodies for the mind. This Christmas I've been fortunate to receive a copy of Lou Klepac's latest title: *Hans Heysen*. No subtitles obscure the magnificent reproduction of 'The Brachina Gorge' (1955) gracing the book cover.

This book can be read on several levels: a biography of Heysen (1877-1968), a history of Australian landscape painting; and a view of Heysen, the naturalist – the garden historian. Gretchen Poiner, in her essay, 'A Sense of Place' posits "that who we are is tied ineluctably to where we are...and where we were." Klepac awakens us to Heysen's sense of place. He observed and wrote about his own garden and surrounds at *The Cedars*, in Handorf, in the hills behind Adelaide. His was an Australian garden in the broader sense of the garden: beyond the garden gate, particularly in the Flinders Ranges.

In 1903 after four years of study in Europe, paid for by Adelaide businessmen, Heysen returned to Adelaide with a full tool kit which stood him in good stead. This kit included: technical skills, draughtsmanship, close attention to detail and colour – an absorption of the Old Masters who understood how to render the landscape. Although Heysen painted very fine still lifes, he is best remembered by his landscape paintings.

Always the keen observer of nature, Heysen translated his detailed observations of light and growth patterns onto canvas. We are also fortunate that he articulated his thoughts in notes on art and in correspondence. Heysen writes about the 'majestic gum trees' just outside his front gate and how his 'favourite trees' altered in appearance. He noted his reflections on nature and its mysteries on paper and pinned these to his studio walls. A great friend of, and correspondent with Lionel Lindsay, Heysen wrote in 1909 of his sense of frustration in trying to capture the perfection of nature's details – 'hopeless for an artist to imitate'. This is a dry book – not Klepac's prose, Lou Klepac does not write dry prose, but the art work evokes dry climatic conditions and the atmosphere of water-starved South Australia. One of my favourites is a small watercolour, 'Bushfire Haze' (1913). It is a study of the heroic efforts of men dressed in ordinary work clothes with their simple, by today's standards, fire-fighting tools. You can feel the heat and smell the smoke just by looking at this painting. The Flinders Ranges captured Heysen's imagination. He travelled there with his son and always hankered to return. In 'The Brachina Gorge', you can get a sense of the region's vast space, geomorphology, the vegetation and the light. Heysen wrote to Lindsay in 1941, "My thoughts are often in the Far North...one seems to come in contact with quite another world."

Lou Klepac was a friend of Hans Heysen and of his extended family and received their co-operation in producing this book. The book demonstrates a deep understanding of the artist and of his time and place in Australian landscape painting. It would be hard not to be caught by the great beauty of the 149 illustrations and to want to read more of the works mentioned in the bibliography. It would be hard not to find a place for it in your (groaning) bookshelves on garden history.



TREES & NEIGHBOURS – MANAGING DISPUTES by Judy Fakes

Trees on neighbouring properties are one of the four most common reasons for disputes arising between neighbours. In late 2006, the NSW government introduced the *Trees (Disputes Between Neighbours) Act, 2006* as a means of providing a relatively inexpensive and quick process by which these disputes could be resolved.

The jurisdiction for this piece of legislation sits with the NSW Land and Environment Court. The Court has appointed arborists to act as Commissioners.

The Act is in two parts: Part 2 deals with disputes arising from actual or potential damage to property on an applicant's land or potential injury to any person.

Part 2A deals with disputes where there is a severe obstruction to sunlight to windows of an applicant's dwelling or a severe obstruction to views from an applicant's dwelling arising from a neighbour's hedge.

This illustrated presentation provides an insight into: the underpinning principles behind and within the Trees Act; the people who apply; where they live; their reasons for doing so; how to make an application; what happens during a hearing and the type of orders that may be made. I have drawn on the more than 450 tree matters that I have heard and determined as both a full-time Commissioner and as an Acting Commissioner of the Court. This talk will be at the National Trust Centre on February 15th at 6pm.



New Hill's fig trees outside Newcastle Regional Gallery after acrimonious public debate about cutting down the old ones



Cleveland House, Surry Hills with only trees for privacy from overlooking



Typical historic garden fringed with trees in leafy Lorn, Hunter Valley



Typical tree between neighbours in downtown Maitland

Above photographs by Stuart Read

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Interestingly some of this crept back in under Humphry Repton (a noted Brown advocate and successor), Thomas Mawson and others in the Victorian and Edwardian eras.

Lesser-known is the political or nationalist agenda behind these landscapes, not least *Stowe*, the great estate of a retired soldier, who took Brown on as journeyman, and ‘made’ him. Nor the wide knowledge and ability of and for good drainage, water, forest and land management that made Brown farms productive, cheap to run and profitable, compared to high maintenance and non-productive ones modelled on *Versailles*, or *Sans Souci*. That they could earn their keep yet be beautiful, inspire poetry, literary and artworks in praise says much about their power and invisible craft.

Having only set foot on English soil once, I was keen to see non-Brown too and managed this in a 16 day tour. I enjoyed discovering educated amateurs of Brown’s era such as Henry Hoare of *Stourhead*, Wiltshire (that famous lake and valley), Coplestone Warre Bampfylde of *Hestercombe*, Somerset (newly-restored and serious competition for its far-better-known Gertrude Jekyll and Edwin Lutyens Edwardian terrace) and William Hamilton of *Painshill* (didn’t get there, but admired a cascade by him in an earlier, major Brown landscape, at *Bowood*). My arc was Cornwall (to see the inspiring *Eden Project* and *Lost Gardens (now found) of Heligan*), Somerset, Wiltshire and Worcestershire (of apple-growing and cider-making fame) and Gloucestershire, not quite Wales. The South-West or ‘West Country’. A few earlier gems (Wells’ *Bishop’s Palace garden* from the 13th century) and later delights were squeezed in, like Edwardian Harold Peto’s *Iford Manor* and *Hazelbury Manor* (1970s garden around an early manor), both in Wiltshire. I give a rapid purview on the Brown conference, skipping through a 1-2-3 of his key ingredients and mode of working. I point out some web-links to Brown resources, new books and visiting. I put in a plea for buying both of expert John Phibbs’ 2 new Brown books– he impressed me greatly at that conference, which was rich in Brown/Georgian era/competition expertise! I try to dispel some myths about the man and show examples of his ingredients in 3-D: either surviving or newly reinstated or restored.

It was wonderful to see organisations such as the National Trust (UK), Historic Houses Association and private owners opening these places to a grateful public and using entry funds to actively conserve, restore, better-present them. Great to see happy families out for the day, with dogs, pram, picnic, fishing rods, apple-picking buckets, whatever – actively enjoying these marvellous landscapes as welcome respite from urban living in flats, terraces or cramped conditions. Perhaps many of these know nothing about Brown et al – but recognise beauty, fresh air and long views when they are available! These places function today as green lungs, balancing urban density, as green open spaces are increasingly valued, loved and used. We could take a lesson there!

I make a bit of a fuss over *Croome Park*, almost in Wales, the first ‘private job’ Brown got on his own merits, after *Stowe*, for a long-standing patron and friend. Despite a chequered 20th century including Army use in WW2, later Hare Krishna phase and developer neglect, this is actively being restored today, including with flowering shrubberies and much detail not thought typical of Brown, but in fact typical, just ephemeral and lost elsewhere.

I skip through a few other Brown (*Corsham Court*, Wiltshire) and others’ landscape jobs I came across such as *Great Chalfield Manor*, Wiltshire (Alfred Parsons garden and terrific) the UK’s National Arboretum at *Westonbirt* and 17th century once-Anglo-Dutch formal, later re-made *Dyrham Park*, both in Gloucestershire. And a few global Brown descendents.

I hope you can join me for this small pilgrimage.



Inside one of Heligan's atmospheric cluttered tool sheds, Cornwall



On an upper terrace at Harold Peto's hypnotic *Iford Manor*, Wiltshire



The revitalised 18th century cascade and pools, *Hestercombe*, Somerset.

All text & photos by Stuart Read