

## Sydney & Northern NSW Branch News – April 2017

Our second event of the year was also a sellout! Stuart Read, shared with members and friends his breadth of understanding about the work and influence of Capability Brown, gleaned from his reading and the presentations at the 2016 ICOMOS –UK conference on Capability Brown. This major international conference celebrated the tercentenary of Capability Brown's birth and brought together world-renowned speakers to present Brown's work in a global context. Stuart is an outstanding photographer – the first image in his presentation was of Stourhead in the early hours – spectacular. He had stayed in one of the cottages on the grounds and therefore had the garden almost to himself at times. Another of the many places and gardens he had visited last September was Iford Manor, not by Brown but by another great garden designer, Harold Peto, there was a garden for everyone and two themes stood out for me – skillful land management and being the right person at the right time.

Our next speaker is Richard Heathcote, National Chair of our society, who will illuminate for us the garden at Malmaison, the country house of Empress Josephine. With the subtitle *Pets fit for a French Empress's Garden*, it promises to be a very amusing illustrated talk. Richard will reveal the Empress Josephine's desire for novelty in the collection of rare flora and fauna from Australia at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with her better-known passion for roses. It promises to be a very interesting lens through which to view garden history.

We are always updating the *Landscapes at Risk Register* – advocacy is a focus for the AGHS. A garden included recently and being watched is Centennial Park, Bathurst. The local council have announced the Scoping Study Tender has been awarded to local company. If there is a significant garden / landscape that you are aware of that might be included, please let us know.

The oral history initiative of AGHS is constantly being improved. In March this year our Northern sub branch held a training session at Armidale. All places were filled and we are strengthening our ability to expand the collection. At our meetings of the executive in Sydney, Roslyn Burge showcases one voice that has been recorded – we had thought to listen to a few but found that one was enough to ponder at a time. They are often profound recollections by eminent gardeners and right on our mission to study gardening over time.

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

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