

Inflorescence

April 2018



From the Chair



Meg Enjoying jazz at Somerley House

Dear Members, Wow, what a busy time since our last *Inflorescence*.

The end of summer gig in February at *Somerley House* could be likened in atmosphere to the recently closed Basement in downtown Sydney - the wet weather meant that we moved into the Garden Room, which jazz band, Next On The List, didn't mind at all, and nor did members and guests who danced the afternoon away. "Best party I've been to in years" commented a member.

Thanks to Nadine and Cal O'Brien once again for sharing their home so generously for this event. Nadine has also agreed to open their garden for our annual conference in October.

Indefatigable Ray Bradley pulled another rabbit out of the hat with a marvellous Tasmanian tour in March. Member Jennifer Carroll has written her account of this trip, appearing further on in this issue. Unlucky me had to pull out at the last minute but I'm already lining up for Ray's next offering.

Thank you for all your hard work and contribution of AGHS, Ray.

It's great to see member Merryleigh Brindley's garden, *Carisbrooke* in Bowral, featured in the April/May edition of *Highlife*. This garden will also be included in our conference garden tours in October. In this issue, Merryleigh writes about her memories meeting Claude Crowe of Berrima Bridge Nursery.

On Sunday 24 June our annual Winter Seminar promises an afternoon of stimulating presentations, with two outstanding guest speakers

Leonie Norton on *Marriane Collinson Campbell: A Privileged Life*.

Stephen Utick on *The Significance of Camellias in Garden History across the World*

Do book early for this event as it will fill quickly. Details and booking form are on pages 6 and 7.

After our Branch hosts the national conference in October, a reminder to all members that AGHS will celebrate its 40th birthday in 2019. A milestone year with some fabulous events in the planning.

Don't forget to support the Southern Highlands Autumn Gardens Weekend - Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 April 2018 - five beautiful gardens and a wonderful Plant Fair at the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens (corner of Kangaloon Road and Old South Road. Open from 9am to 4pm.

So many activities in the Southern Highlands so enjoy the autumn weather and keep mulching.

Yours decidedly

Meg

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Jazz at Somerley House 25 February 2018



Next On The List: the band plays on



First on the dance floor: Sue and Ulli Tuisk



Lyn & John Barrett



Clive Probyn in full voice



Meg Probyn & Ulli Tuisk, with Brian the dancing barmen



Lyn & Allan Morehen



Sydney branch members David & Angela Low



Meg Probyn with Jim & Margaret Buckland

Remembering Mr Crowe and Berrima Bridge Nursery

I was just twenty five years old when my husband John introduced me to Mr Crowe whom he knew from buying trees for our farm at Berry. I was full of plans for my first 'homestead' garden, my enthusiasm matched only by my ignorance. My mother, a knowledgeable gardener, had given me Russell Page's seminal work *The Education of a Gardener* but it was Mr Crowe who became my real educator.

I remember him as a slight, quiet man with such an innate dignity that, to us, he was always Mr Crowe. Similarly his wife, Isobel, much more briskly business-like. It was a red letter day when she actually invited us in for a cup of tea. Soon we had four children and although they loved the swing at the gate, a plant nursery is not the most riveting experience for young children. But she let them feed the chooks and very carefully water the plants and always there were biscuits as a reward.

A renowned garden designer, Mr Crowe encouraged me to visit as many gardens as possible to formulate my ideas – not that I needed much encouragement. It seems strange that it did not occur to me to ask for his design help but I wanted to do it myself. Arrogant as well as ignorant! But he continued my education by taking me to meet two Bowral women who became both friends and mentors – Joan Arnold of *Buskers End* and Mrs Crago of *Highdown* (recently sold to Jeanne Villani OAM, a long time AGHS member and supporter.)

In time we moved to a property at Cootamundra and our children went off to boarding school in Sydney. Deepest gloom would rein in the car going home after leaving them – all those waiting empty bedrooms – but finally John would say "Let's stop at Mr Crowe's and buy some trees" and somehow the atmosphere lightened. So many times we were given 'something to try' and so our garden became an experimental one, full of rarities.

The Crowes and my John are no longer with us but their memory is – to quote Russell Page, in our garden that is "a world for itself and for me." I really did read his book!

Merryleigh Brindley



AGHS Annual National Conference 2018

The 39th Annual National Conference with the theme **Gardens in Times of Peace and Conflict**, will be held in the Southern Highlands of NSW from 25 to 29 October 2018, just a few weeks before the centenary of Armistice Day

AGHS Events: Save the Date

Sunday 24 June 2018 AGHS Southern Highlands **Winter Seminar**

Saturday 25 August 2018 AGHS Southern Highlands **Annual General Meeting**

25 to 29 October 2018 39th AGHS National Conference **Gardens in Times of Peace and Conflict** in the Southern Highlands

Friday 7 December 2018 AGHS Southern Highlands **Christmas Party**

The Beauty of Tasmania: Garden Tour March 2018

On March 11, 31 travellers met tour-guide Ray Bradley at our welcome dinner at *La Cantina* in Launceston. And there kicked-off a wonderful 11 day tour of Tasmania! The itinerary sounded really good, but in reality it turned out to be exceptional – full of interesting gardens and places, each different to the others and with its own compelling story.

The Archer properties: *Brickendon*, *Woolmers* and *Panshanger*. The Archer brothers were given land grants around Longford c.1815-20. This first generation became very wealthy and so built appropriate estates.

Brickendon is still with the Archer family and the current owner is trying to preserve the garden legacy of his forebears; *Woolmers* is being preserved as a rural settlement museum including an outstanding collection of roses; and the garden at *Panshanger* has been beautifully developed and re-shaped since the 1980s by the current owner.

The Topiary Garden at Evandale was a real surprise – with its sensational views across the valley. *Old Wesley Dale* at Mole Creek was incredibly exuberant and a riot of dahlias, asters, sedum and hydrangeas, not to mention the 'elephant hedge'. We enjoyed a delicious and relaxing lunch at *Wychwood*, which the new owners are trying to restore after a period of neglect, a devastating flood and very recently, a damaging wind storm.

We rounded out our time around Launceston with an incredibly interesting visit to *Home Hill*, the home of Joseph and Enid Lyons; visited the fascinating creatures at *Seahorse World* and the platypus house (which also had echidnas); took a boat trip into the spectacular Cataract Gorge; viewed the murals at Sheffield and the quirky topiary at *Railton*.



Hobart by night: RB



Brickendon:JC



Old Wesley Dale: JC



Parterre at Corinda: JC

A visit to the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hobart (celebrating 200 years this year) was thoroughly enjoyed, as was *Runnymede* with its typical 19th Century garden and significant trees. *Corinda* has an exceptional parterre in the front garden, but that didn't overshadow the rest of the plantings – not a large garden but certainly plenty to delight, with the topiary native animals very skilfully done.

Visiting The Wall in the Wilderness meant a bit of a trek out to Derwent Bridge but it was certainly worth it. Greg Duncan (the sculptor) met us and gave us an insight into his work – it has taken 12 years to carve a stunning sculpture out of Huon pine – it is 100 metres long and three metres high, depicting the history of the Central Highlands.

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We had a quick visit to *Rosedown Cottage* at New Norfolk on our way back to Hobart.

Woodbank in the Huon Valley is a garden with 'nothing ordinary' in it. Started by the Gillanders – avid plant collectors who travelled the world for material (when one could), it is being restored by Harry and Kerry. Kerry pointed out the magnolia that has just flowered for the first time (planted 40 years ago from seed from Darjeeling), and the golden bay tree grown from seed

from Agatha Christie's garden. This garden is full of rhododendron and must be even more spectacular in spring.

Crawleighwood has been developed over the last 30 years and the owner Pav is still passionate and developing new plantings. He took us on a very interesting tour, pointing out the rare plants as well as the Tasmanian natives. I for one could have lingered here for the rest of the afternoon. *Avi*, to quote Merryleigh, was a 'monument to hard work'.



Our final day was spent at Bruny Island – *Sprokkelwood*, a beautifully designed garden full of rare trees and plantings, was also full of the most amazing art and sculptures done by the owners, who could explain what each piece meant and how it was made. We were all enchanted by this garden.

Inala was a different passion – the Jurassic Garden has been planted to show how family groups of Gondwana species differed between the continents. But the primary reason for *Inala* is as a wild-life refuge to preserve endangered bird species.

This was a wonderful tour and each destination seemed to out-do the last.



Ray had clearly done his research well and put together a tour of great interest and difference.

I am sure we all thoroughly enjoyed our time in beautiful Tasmania and our heartfelt thanks go to Ray for his many hours of effort on our behalf!

Jennifer Carroll

Next Event:

Sunday 24 June 2018 2 pm to 4.30 pm

AGHS Winter Seminar

Bradman Museum

St Jude Street Bowral

AGHS is delighted to invite you to attend its annual Winter Seminar, with two outstanding guest speakers, Stephen Utick and Leonie Norton.

Leonie Norton is a botanical artist, international tutor and author of the best selling book *Women of Flowers*. She is one of Australia's most prominent and highly qualified botanical educators and a leading artist in her field. Leonie will speak on *Marriane Collinson Campbell: A Privileged Life*. In the nineteenth century, Marriane and George Campbell and their two children moved to Duntroon in what is now Canberra. Marriane transformed the home into an imposing, two-storey Gothic revival house. The gardens were redesigned and planted with numerous exotic and rare blooms, as well as various trees from England and trees collected on Marriane's travels. Duntroon became the home of Australia's Military College.

Dr Stephen Utick is the Director for Australia of the International Camellia Society, co-ordinator of the Camellia Ark project, and formerly a career scientist and policy researcher in the Australian public service. Stephen will speak on *The Significance of Camellias in Garden History across the World*.

Please complete the attached Booking Form for catering purposes.

**AGHS Southern Highlands Annual General Meeting
Saturday 25 August 2018**

Our AGM for 2018 is set down for St Jude's Hall, Bendooley Street Bowral, Saturday 25 August, from 10.30 am to 4 pm.

The formal AGM will be followed by two presentations:

Botanical illustrator Tanya Hoolihan will speak about her research *Beyond Exploration; Illustrating the Scientific Legacy of Ludwig Leichhardt*, drawing on the explorer's field notes, diary entries and letters as well as his collection of 4000 plants in the Sydney and Melbourne Herbariums

AGHS member Susan Hand will lead a conversation with Colin Blanch of Essential Gardens about his experience working as a volunteer at Great Dixter in Surrey.

About Inflorescence

Inflorescence is the newsletter of the Southern Highlands Branch of the Australian Garden History Society.

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2017/18 Committee

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Booking Form AGHS Winter Seminar Sunday 24 June 2 pm to 4.30 pm Bradman Museum St Jude Street, Bowral

Your Name: _____

AGHS members are reminded please to wear name badges to AGHS events

Names of Guests: _____

Dietary requirements: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Event	Cost per person	Numbers Attending	Amount Incl \$
Sunday 24 June 2018 Winter Seminar	AGHS Members \$25	_____	_____
	Non-Members \$35	_____	_____
Bookings Close: Wednesday 20 June 2018			
		TOTAL	_____

PAYMENT OPTIONS:

By Cheque: payable to Australian Garden History Society, NSW Branch.

- Please return this form and cheque to: Bookings, AGHS, PO Box 2327, Bowral 2576

By EFT: Account name: AGHS BSB: 012 547 Account No: 237 514 077

- Include the following reference information: *the date of the event (24June) and your surname.*
- Email the above booking details to aghs.sh.info@gmail.com

By Direct Debit: If paying directly at an ANZ branch, *record your phone number as the reference.*

- Email the above booking details to aghs.sh.info@gmail.com

PLEASE NOTE: No tickets will be issued. You will be notified if the event is sold out. No refunds can be given for cancellations made after the bookings close date.

ENQUIRIES: Elisabeth Heard 0417 247 213 or Pamela Bennett 0401 907 199