

Inflorescence

February 2017

Possumwood at Robertson

Sunday 2 April at 12 noon to 4.30pm



One of the loveliest gardens in the Southern Highlands (photos featured in Myles Baldwin's book 'Rural Australian Gardens')

The event starts at Robertson Inn (89 Hoddle St, Robertson) at 12 noon for lunch with talks by Howard Tanner and Myles Baldwin, followed by a private tour of *Possumwood*.



Howard Tanner

Howard Tanner, curator of the exhibition *Planting Dreams: Grand Garden Designs*, at the State Library of NSW until Easter Monday, will join us over lunch at Robertson Inn and discuss "Contemporary Gardens in NSW—an anecdotal talk including the realities of surveying gardens and the idiosyncrasies of curating an exhibition".

Howard Tanner AM LFRAIA is an architect, award winner, writer, editor, teacher, mentor, a former president of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects and a former chairman of the Australian Garden History Society. He was recognised as a Member of the Order of Australia in 2013 for significant service to architecture, and to heritage conservation.



Myles Baldwin

Myles Baldwin is a horticulturalist, landscape designer, award winner, writer and curator. In *Rural Australian Gardens*, Myles describes how "in the misty hills of Robertson in the Southern Highlands, he designed a modern rendition of a walled perennial garden, with a twist".

After lunch at Robertson Inn, Myles will introduce *Possumwood*, and then take AGHS members and their guests on a private tour of the property.

Logistics: This is a self-drive event. Parking is available at Robertson Inn. Please arrive at Robertson Inn at 12 noon where we will enjoy lunch; the event will conclude at *Possumwood* at 4.30 pm.

Cost: \$40.00 per AGHS member, \$45.00 per guest, which includes a two-course lunch but not drinks (bar own account). Please advise any dietary constraints when booking—the booking form is on last page.



Pamela Bennett

Future Events for your Diary Saturday 8 July

Afternoon Seminar at Bradman Museum with Richard Heathcote and Stuart Read.

Sunday 20 August

AGM and lecture.

Saturday 11 November

Kangaloon Gardens Day

Friday 1 December

Christmas Party



Jazz band: Next on the List (photos Tom Carroll)

Jazz Picnic on 19 February at Prittlewell, Avoca

What a storm we had the afternoon and night before the party at *Prittlewell*. Patty Mouhtouris and her husband Roger Keys had cleared out the barn in case we had to escape the rain. In the event, however, it was a perfect evening—warm, sunny and exceedingly balmy. The band members, in fact, quite like it when it rains and there is a barn or a hall because they get more response from the crowd—though we were all very appreciative of their playing and Jo's singing.



The band played under the shade of the lovely trees

There were a hundred members and guests enjoying the jazz, their picnics and wine.



Behind the scenes, a great deal of work goes into preparing for this event. Patty told us how many hours they had spent in the garden getting everywhere ready for us.



Jenny Carroll and Lyn Esdaile



People strolled round the beautiful lake with a glass of wine and occasionally stopped to take a photograph . . .



Dancing on the lawns

This has become such a popular event for the start of the year and we are always immensely grateful to the garden owners for allowing us to use their gardens. If any members can suggest venues for future events, such as the Christmas Party or next year's Jazz Picnic, please let one of the committee members know. We're always on the look out! Meantime, we send our many thanks to Patty and Roger and very best wishes for their new home.

Station Street Camellias

In the December 2016 edition of *Inflorescence*, we wrote about the plans to reroute Station Street Bowral and that this will put the camellias near Bowral Station at risk.

It was decided that cuttings should be taken from the plants as insurance against their loss. And as summer is the time to propagate camellias, in late January Les Musgrave, Laurel Cheetham, Margaret Chadwick, and Dr Stephen Utick with other members of *Camellia Ark* visited the site to take cuttings of the 17 camellias there. Despite the heat during January, the plants were in a very healthy condition so the chances are good for a healthy set of new plants.



Les Musgrave (on the left) and Jenny Carroll (on the right) with the group taking cuttings of the camellias

The camellias include *Camellia japonica* 'Rosa Mundi' 1827, Europe, 'Prince Eugene Napoleon' 1859, Europe, 'Orandako' 1739, Japan, which is a rare formal double, 'Aspasia Macarthur' 1848, one of the Camden Park camellias, 'Virginia Franco', 1858 Europe, 'Contessa Woronzoff' 1858, and 'Odoratissima' 1867. It is believed that Claude Crowe planted them for State Rail in the 1950s/1960s.

If the cuttings are successful, the AGHS will offer them to the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens as a collection. It is expected that by that time there will be a suitable location in the Gardens for them.

Jennifer Carroll

Melbourne has tree problems too!

Metro Rail Tunnel Project in St Kilda Road

The tree-lined street of St Kilda Road is one of Melbourne's most distinctive sights—but their iconic status will not be enough to save these historic mature trees. Hundreds will be removed to make way for the Metro rail tunnel, fuelling concerns about the environmental impact of the project.

The *Age* reported that:

... as the Andrews government starts awarding contracts for the \$10.9 billion train line, documents have revealed a range of issues, including the loss of trees, traffic disruption and the possible relocation of residents put out by noise and vibration during construction. According to the environmental effects statement, about 900 trees could be removed along the

tunnel route – including up to 223 trees in the precinct surrounding the Shrine of Remembrance, where a new underground station will be built.

This would result in "a high residual impact" on St Kilda Road, which is lined with plane trees and elms – many planted in the late 19th century – and is one of "Victoria's most significant landscapes".

"Construction of the proposed Domain Station would require full clearance of a defined area, including extensive tree removal for the establishment of the construction work site and station box, and removal of the existing tram stop and other infrastructure," the documents say.

Residents say it is not clear how many trees will be returned, whether they will be replaced by the same species, or how long this could take given the Metro rail project—a nine-kilometre twin tunnel between South Yarra and South Kensington—won't be complete until 2026."

When the National Management Committee met in Melbourne (11-12 February 2017), Jess Hood (Victoria branch) took us all for a walk from Domain House across to the site of where the trees are to be removed, which is next-door to the Shrine of Remembrance.



Elizabeth Ganguly (SA), Kay Johnston (ACT), Richard Heathcote (Chair), Anna Long (Vic), John Maurer (NSW), Bronwyn Blake (NSW), Roslyn Burge (Sydney), Jess Hood (Vic), Stuart Read (Sydney) (Photo Meg Probyn)



Richard Heathcote (Chair of NMC AGHS) and Phoebe LaGerche-Wijsman National Executive Officer

Southern Highlands Winery site

Editor's note: As you know, in its mission statement the AGHS states that it 'promotes awareness and conservation of significant gardens and cultural landscapes through engagement, research, advocacy and activities'—and advocacy means that we do get involved in a range of local and State government issues. We are very fortunate to have Laurel Cheetham to represent the AGHS on the WSC Heritage Committee, as well as Charlotte Webb, and they keep a watchful eye on developments in the Shire. The following is Laurel's report:

Recently the AGHS-SH branch committee made a submission to Wingecarribee Shire Council about a development for tourist and visitor accommodation, with a function centre, cafe, bar and helipad, proposed for the Southern Highlands Winery site between Moss Vale and Sutton Forest. The development has an estimated value of \$23 million and will be determined by the Southern Councils Joint Regional Planning Panel.

The proposed use is in addition to the current uses, with new buildings being located at the western end of the site, the majority closer to both Oldbury Road and the Illawarra Highway than the existing winery complex, and they would be clearly visible to anyone driving along these rural roads.

The AGHS committee's concerns are not about the use of the site for tourist and related development, as the site was rezoned a few years ago to specifically allow this form of development. The submission is about the significance of this area because of its heritage and scenic landscape values and the fact that the proposed development as currently designed will be visually intrusive.

What is proposed is a Tuscan village, with two-storey building clusters, red roofs and a three-storey tower—clearly visible from the roads which it fronts—the Illawarra Highway and Oldbury Road.

The site is within the Exeter-Sutton Forest Heritage Landscape Conservation Area recognised as a Significant Landscape at Risk by the National Management Committee of AGHS and is a classified Heritage Landscape by the National Trust Australia (NSW).

This is an area where the rural landscape has changed little for almost 100 years (apart from the vineyard). It is characterised by open paddocks with plantings along fence lines, on ridges and around a number of historic buildings. Buildings are generally not visible from either the Illawarra Highway nor Oldbury Road and those that are, are sympathetic in style and colour to the pastoral landscape. There are many historic properties that are recognised on State and local heritage schedules including, *Oldbury, Whitley, Summerlees, Peppers, Cardrona, and Newbury.*



This shows the development opposite, well back from the road and sympathetic colours

The submission requests that the development proposal in its present form be refused. The objectives for the Tourist Zone include a requirement for any development to:

- be sited and designed to respect the rural environment within which the development stands;
- be constructed from materials which respect the rural landscape; and
- complement the style of any existing development in the Tourist zone.

The submission states that the scale of development, and the height, form and proposed colour palette would make the development unsympathetic to the landscape and be intrusive in it and the vistas from Oldbury Road and Illawarra Highway.



The site from Illawarra Highway looking across the dam to the existing building. The new buildings would be between the dam and the current building and to the left of it.

Laurel Cheetham

James Fairfax AC

James Fairfax AC, who died peacefully at home at *Retford Park* in January, had bequeathed his beautiful property, estimated to be worth \$18-20m, to the National Trust in April 2016. Former chairman of publisher John Fairfax Ltd, he was known for his support and philanthropy for the visual arts, conservation and many other organisations.

On Sunday 23 October 2011, over a hundred members of AGHS paid a memorable visit to *Retford Park*, where we were permitted to visit inside the house as well as the garden. His artwork was impressive with European and Australian masterpieces. In return we presented him with a magnolia (*Magnolia x soulangeana* "Lennei alba"), which is now happily growing in the garden and marked by a plaque so you can identify it. Remember the story in *Inflorescence* December 2014 about the rabbits and Rick Shepherd (head gardener) rescuing the plant?

Bowral has indeed benefitted from having James Fairfax live in our midst and his many friends will miss him deeply. He has always been generous in his hospitality to the AGHS, allowing us to shelter in his Gallery during our very wet Christmas party in 2014.



Clive Probyn presenting James Fairfax with the magnolia

New Journal January 2017

All members should have received the latest *AGH Journal*: Vol. 28 No. 3 January 2017—but if anyone has missed out, please let AGHS Head Office know: <info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au>.

The cover photo is by Dr Alison Pouliot, whose article on 'Lichens in the garden—and attic' is a delight. For Southern Highland's local interest, there is a comprehensive article on *Golden Vale* by Peter Watts AM (a former chair and founding secretary of AGHS).

Southern Highlands Autumn Gardens Weekend 22-23 April 2017

Three town gardens and three country gardens will be open from 10am to 4pm. The Plant Fair will also take place at the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens (corner of Kangaloon and Old South Rds).

Town gardens: *Carisbrooke* and *Retford Park* in Bowral, and *Yarrowin* in Burradoo.

Country gardens: *Wildewood* and *Dragon Farm* in Wildes Meadow; and *5th Chapter Estate* in Avoca.

It's a weekend not to be missed—gorgeous gardens and a wonderful Plant Fair of superb plants.



The lake at Dragon Farm, Wildes Meadow



*Through the archway at Carisbrooke
(owner AGHS member: Merryleigh Brindley)*

AGHS Southern Highlands Branch Committee
PO Box 2327, Bowral 2576 (aghs.sh.info@gmail.com)

Jennifer Carroll	Chair	(0419 275 402)
Pamela Bennett	Events	
John Biffin	Treasurer	
Narelle Bownen	Secretary	(4868 3972)
Ray Bradley	Tours	
Jane Clifford	Events	
Jo de Beaujeu	Events	(4862 3532)
Meg Probyn	Vice-Chair, Editor, NSW NMC rep.	(4871 3134)

Booking Form

Possumwood, Sunday 2 April 2017



AUSTRALIAN
GARDEN
HISTORY
SOCIETY

Southern Highlands
Branch

Your Name: _____

Names of Guests: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Please advise Pamela Bennett if there are any dietary constraints when booking.

<i>Event</i>	<i>Cost per person</i>	<i>Numbers Attending</i>	<i>Amount Incl \$</i>
Sunday 2 April 2017	Members of AGHS \$40	_____	_____
<i>Possumwood, Robertson</i>	Non-members \$45	_____	_____
Bookings Close: Thursday 30 March			
		<i>TOTAL</i>	_____

Payment Options:

By cheques: 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 (2April) 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

ENQUIRIES: Pamela Bennett (T) 0401 907 199, (E) 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 closed date.