



Sydney & Northern NSW Branch

Branch News – January 2018

I hope all our members have enjoyed a relaxing break and look forward to a stimulating 2018. The Christmas gathering was a delight – it was a lovely evening in an enthralling and charming garden in Warrawee – hosted by Angela and David Low.

2017 was a significant year for gardening. This year's New Years Honours list included four people from the field of gardening: Judy Horton OAM, Paul Bangay OAM, Kelvin Trimper AM and Jeanne Villani OAM (Honorary). Judy Horton is a horticulturist who works as a garden adviser for Yates. She is responsible for the regular updating of Yates Garden Guide, the best-selling Australian gardening book – the first gardening book I ever owned and she is heard on the ABC as one of their gardening experts, Paul Bangay is a garden designer with a distinctive approach, Kelvin Trimper is the President of the International Federation of Rose Societies and, of course, Jeanne Villani we all know for her long association with the Australian Garden History Society as a committee member, Sydney and Northern NSW Branch, since 2002, as well as a past secretary, booking officer and editor of the newsletter 'Branch Cuttings' from 2003–2017. What a splendid time for all engaged in gardening, its history, its design, its practice and its protection. Gardening is one of the major recreational activities in Australia and more people engage in gardening than they do sports. Congratulations to all those honoured this year.

Our first event this year is a talk by Lynne Walker about the development of the rose garden at Saumarez Homestead, Armidale and a community inspired by the passion of one woman, Catherine MacLean who collected hundreds of roses on a suburban block. The work at Saumarez is now in the second stage and from the air the geometric design look extraordinary and the execution is so exacting. I can't wait to hear more about the progress they are making. The remainder of the year will be brimming with interesting talks, walks and more. I am particularly looking forward to hearing Dr Greg Johnson, who will commence his series of lectures on Australian garden writers in May.

The future of Hadley Park is uncertain and the Sydney Branch of the AGHS Executive committee has included it on the AGHS *Landscapes at Risk* register. The estate includes two very early buildings: a two storey farmhouse ca.1811 and a timber cottage ca.1806. It is not listed on the State Heritage Register and Hadley Park's status as one of the earliest surviving houses in the country with an intact setting on its original land grant makes its future management worthy of the most careful consideration and it should be listed as a state heritage item and afforded the respect and care it deserves. We will be writing to the Minister for Heritage, the Hon. Gabrielle Upton imploring her to protect this vulnerable vestige of our heritage from the threat of development and I commend all members to consider the same.

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 or suggestions for possible speakers, are welcome. Happy New Year!

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