



Message from the Chair

Sydney & Northern NSW

Branch News – July–August 2017

In July our event was a walk around the gardens and grounds of Callan Park. Unfortunately I could not join in but heard that it was a wonderful day and many stories emerged of how people had been unaware of the extent and significance of the place. Roslyn Burge and Stuart Read led the walk and provided insights into the unexpected botanical riches of this large garden in the Inner West of Sydney.

The AGM in August was attended by an enthusiastic and engaged group of members, the food was fabulous and our speaker, Tanya Hoolihan shared her abiding love for LL (Ludwig Leichhardt). Apparently, Leichhardt liked to carve his initials into trees as he made his way into the yet to be discovered outback. Tanya wove into her talk her own work as a botanical artist and how much Leichhardt's discoveries have influenced the choices she has made in the specimens depicted in her work. She is working on a database that unpicks the diaries of Leichhardt to locate where he was at a particular time and from where he was likely to have source his specimens. A huge undertaking of immense value to garden history.

I would like to thank all committee members of the Sydney branch and sub-branch committees for their time and energy, with a special mention of those who did not stand for re-election or left the committee earlier in the year: Anne Galbraith (Secretary), Dr Pamela Bell and Susan North. They have all, in their own way, given so much to the improvement of the way the branch operates.

The move towards using Try Booking for future events has its challenges; however, we are confident because it is in step with the National Management approach and that of other branches of the Australian Garden History Society. It makes reporting and management by the committee less cumbersome and when you try it you will also see events by the other branches and on seeing them, I feel a sturdier connection to the larger community of garden history. You will see that the Sydney Branch has its own email address that David Low has created aghssydney@gmail.com – and once it is used a few times it should come up first on your computer.

I attended my first AGHS conference last year. I had such a great time, learnt a lot and laughed so much. When I thought of joining the Society many years ago, friends who encouraged me to join often mentioned the conference as a high point. I hope from now on I don't miss one and encourage all members to give it a try. Melbourne will be magnificent and many garden gates will be open to us. Next year the Southern Highlands are our hosts and that will be fun.

In September, Christine Hay, has organized a talk by Janine Kitson on the conservation movements of the early twentieth century in Sydney. Christine told me that she is in awe of their passion and commitment to the preservation of our landscapes and inspired to build on the legacy. Also I will be keen to know more about Annie Wyatt, the namesake of the lecture room where most of our talks have been held for years. Many thanks to the support of the National Trust of Australia (NSW) and in particular Jane Donnelly, who is usually there at the beginning of our events to make sure all is well, all is clear.

The Christmas Party this year will be hosted by David and Angela Low who have a lovely garden and house in Warrawee. Angela is a collector of very interesting plants – and is generous with cuttings and sharing advice on what the plants require to thrive. I look forward to meeting new and existing member for a feast and celebration of the holiday season.

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