



Sydney & Northern NSW Branch

Branch News –September 2016

Unfortunately I could not attend the Annual General Meeting as I was very contagious with influenza and Tempe Beaven (Vice Chair) stood in. As it was my first year as Chair I was disappointed not to have been there. I heard how wonderful our guest speaker Tim Entwistle was – honest and open about issues that face our great botanic gardens and their stewards.

When compiling the record of events and advocacy for this year's AGM, I was very pleased to see how full and diverse our calendar of events has been, I feel we have responded the directive of Richard Heathcote, our National Chair, to lead with advocacy. With every membership the Society strengthens its position vis a vis advocacy and enables the activities at the core of our mission.

There was a good representation at the AGM this year of our members from the Northern NSW sub Branch. We congratulate them and their work for which they received a heritage award from the National Trust of Australia (NSW) acknowledging their work at *Saumarez*. This raised the profile of not only our Society but the heritage value of gardens to an important audience.

Advocacy will remain an objective of the Society into the future and I hope governments may be swayed – or slowed down by the loss of significant landscape heritage. I asked a very senior heritage practitioner about the proposed extension to the art gallery and he very wisely said that a great building or design is often the result of dealing with difficult constraints and the proposed extension does not seem to show any restraint. How much better it might have been if the building could have improved the eastern slopes behind the gallery where the chaos of toll roads and rail links might be enveloped and the landscape improved – not a simple land grab of the best land.

The two exhibitions with a garden theme have now opened. If you hurry you can visit *Florilegium: Sydney's Painted Garden*, curated by Colleen Morris - on at the Museum of Sydney until October 30. *Planting Dreams: Shaping Australian Gardens*, curated by Richard Aitken, with a smaller companion exhibition called *Grand Garden Designs* curated by Howard Tanner will be the last exhibitions held in the Dixon Galleries and runs until 15 January 2017.

Advocacy will remain an objective of the Society into the future and I hope governments may be swayed – or slowed down by the loss of significant landscape heritage. At the next meeting of the Executive Committee on 10 October we will be finalising the calendar of events - so if you have any suggestions you would like the committee to consider, please feel free to contact me – we do appreciate the feedback and suggestions.

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