



Report of the 39th Annual National Conference

**Australian Garden History Society
Southern Highlands, NSW**

25-29 October 2018

Fuelling the Fire

**Symposium held at Joadja
Thursday 25 October 2018**

Gardens in Times of Peace and Conflict



**Conference held at Mittagong RSL
Friday 26 – Saturday 27 October**

The Gardens

Visits from Saturday 27 – Monday 29 October

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ADVOCACY AND THE AGHS'S ROLE IN IT

Stuart Read

Introduction

Advocacy is:

- Pleading in support of (or against) (Middle English; Old French; Latin: ad vocare)
- Speaking on behalf of (in courts)
- Defending what's threatened
- Recommending what has not been thought of; and
- Promoting the neglected or not known.

Advocacy has been part of the Australian Garden History Society from its birth in 1980. The AGHS's mission is advocacy—the society was created out of a concern for gardens as 'heritage'—that is, as transient, fragile works of art. The Society was established as an activist group for the preservation of gardens. It won some early battles, gaining key victories both at national and at branch levels.

Often our most effective tactic has been a quiet word, behind doors, in private. At other times it has been more public submissions, letters, making presentations at planning tribunals and in the courts. At other times, it has been (and increasingly now is) on-line campaigns using the internet and social media (Facebook sites; Instagram), and seeking daily newspaper coverage.

Where did the Ratbags come from?

It's important to remember that, without advocacy, there would have been no 'Green Bans' on development sites in the 1970s in Australian cities. Nor would there have been any 1970s or 1980s environment, nor heritage laws—all these came about through community action: lobbying.



Remember the Franklin Dam (Tasmania) campaign and Bob Brown's rise to public renown? Or Rachel Carson's 1950s American book, *Silent Spring*?

This photo is of a Wahroonga (Sydney) street, c1903—the now 'leafy' North Shore suburbs only got so through the anger and agitation of housewives, sick of dust from unsealed streets drifting onto their clean washing.

Preservation Leagues were established—Mrs Annie Wyatt who created the National Trust of Australia (NSW) was one such housewife. Let's call them what they were: rat bags! And I don't mean that in a derogatory way, but as a compliment—as a result of their action, we today have

leafy streets, sealed roads (and clean washing).

Giving a fig: what to do when they go
19-20/7/03 SMH
Stephanie Peatling
Environment Reporter

Old photographs of the city of Sydney show an expanse of lawns lush with Moreton Bay fig trees, providing shade for the crinolined ladies and waist-coated gentlemen who strolled beneath their leafy boughs. Before cars started choking the air and eventually taking away their ground, the trees which dotted the cityscape were considered an integral part of the new colony.

"People are quite legitimately attached to very beautiful trees, but what we haven't yet seen is a program for the replacement of these landscapes," Dr Alistair Hay, director of the Botanic Gardens and Public Programs at the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust, said.

Dr Hay lives by the motto of the gardens: "To inspire the appreciation and conservation of plants".

The felling of 24 Moreton Bay figs earlier this week to make way for construction of



Children's tree ... one of the oldest Moreton Bay figs in the Botanic Gardens provides leafy shade. Below, the felled trees near the Domain tunnel.

Photos: Peter Rae



The present Mayor, Genia McCaffery, believes people will grow more protective of trees in public spaces.

"That local park with the tree is critical because that's how you get a link to nature," Cr McCaffery said.

"We have been madly pursuing urban consolidation but aren't planning for urban spaces. As we are longer in this land we get more attached to the things that are symbolic of it."

Dr Hay is waiting for the

some hard facts about the northern precinct of the

Sydney Morning Herald, 19-20 July 2003

This newspaper clip from 2003 shows NSW's second-oldest (1847) street tree avenue (of glorious Moreton Bay fig trees) going, to create one more lane of traffic in the 'ditch' of the Cahill Expressway, slicing through the heart of Sydney Botanic Gardens and Domain.

Gardens, particularly public ones, remain increasingly under threat. Some threats are natural: here are shots of bats (grey-headed flying foxes) killing rare rainforest trees in the *Sydney Botanic Garden's* renowned Palm Grove (1862+). The bats are 'threatened' and only there due to loss of habitat elsewhere. The palms and trees they're killing are in some cases, far rarer. Even without the bats, old trees die and need constant renewal—propagation, a sight many do not welcome.

There's a sign explaining to the protesting public that mature trees along Hospital Road, in the Sydney Domain, had to go, and be replaced. This was a bitter, long battle—yet once they were replaced and the new ones put on speed—will people settle down and perhaps understand? They certainly were upset at the time of the decision to remove and replant.

Right now, is a peak period of 'big infrastructure' fights, across Australia—particularly in its cities—some affecting much-loved public parks, botanic gardens, reserves. An example AGHS members in Victoria will remember well is East-West (freeway) v *Royal Park*, in that city's north—slicing conveniently through, not nearby housing (too contentious) but, open space. 'Just grass'? Not so: AGHS, through careful submissions via Dr John Dwyer QC and others, won a stay of execution (for now).

There's another current 'hot spot' on Tasmania's dreamy but dry east coast, north of Swansea: *Cambria* estate, where a big tourism project worth an alleged \$100m—an 'eco-resort' promises a heap of jobs, facilities and attractions to boost the local economy. Sadly, at the cost of trashing one of that island's earliest intact colonial land grants, held in but two or three family lines—now subject to foreign investment.

How will a small regional council, let alone (should it be taken off their hands by) a keen State Government) balance nature (wetlands, estuaries, bird habitat), culture (un-heritage-listed colonial farmland, grant patterns and some 200 years of continuous farming land use) with the

temptations of progress? The proposal has some 300 'villas' (three-storeys tall), 240 units, a palliative care unit, a 120-room 'sky hotel', golf course—all covering over 3000 hectares: no impact? *Heritage Tasmania* is silent—having reduced most rural heritage listings to 'house only': laughable.

Another example of conflicting land use affecting an historic 'garden' or landscape: the living being challenged by the dead—La Perouse Chinese Market Gardens (one of three such, listed on the State Heritage Register for their history and rarity, surviving) up against the growth-spurt ambitions of neighbouring Eastern Suburbs (Botany) Cemetery—greedy for more land to bury in. We've been remiss in not zoning and making new cemetery lands, nationally—we're running out of space: putting pressure on existing ones, including the historic. Infill, goodbye trees, grass, open space.

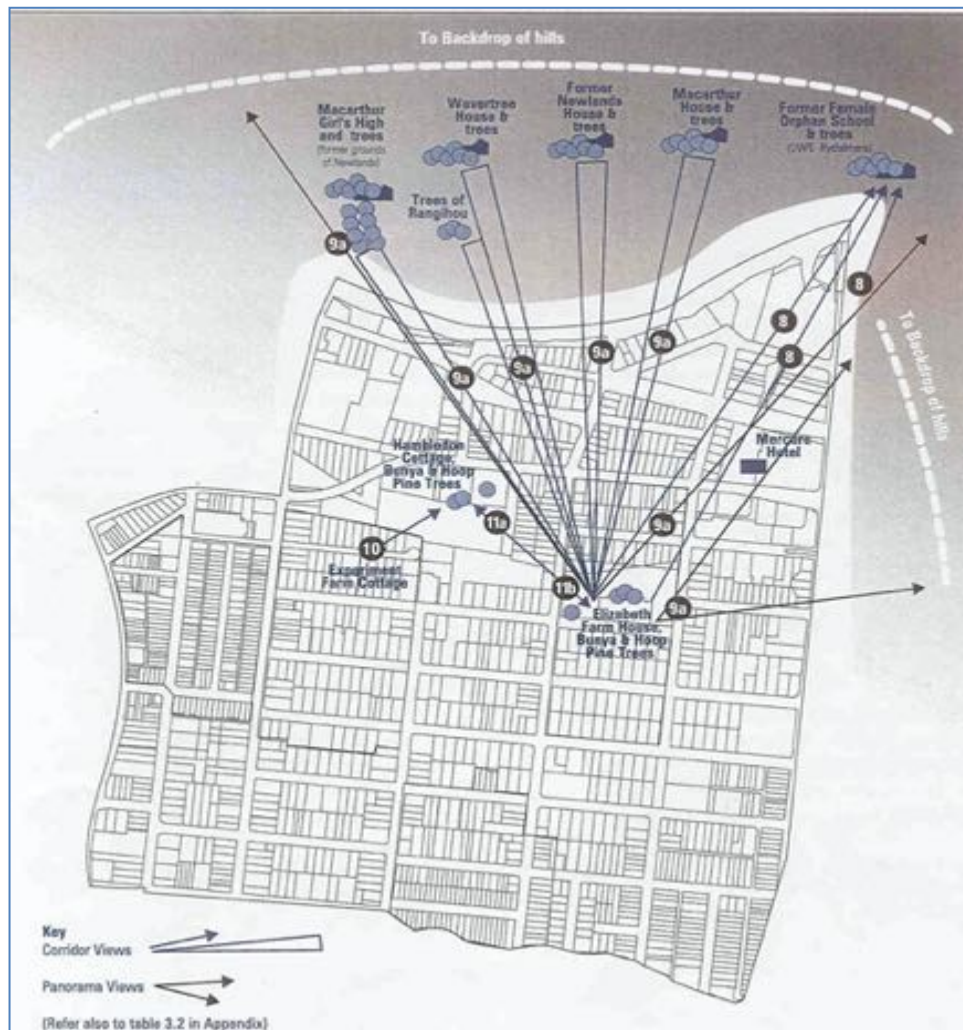
A particular type of infrastructure putting pressure on landscapes are wind farms—Australia is having a 'wind boom' creating these in many states, an apparent boom to areas with dwindling agricultural or pastoral prospects (or waxing and waning incomes): and better than coal-fired power stations. But any or everywhere? The one near Beaufort in Western Victoria would have dozens of massive turbine towers running directly across the designed vista (axial view) from the terrace of *Mawallok* towards the Pyrenees mountains. This garden and view are one of great garden designer William Guilfoyle's master works and are still the home of former AGHS national chair, Jocelyn (and Peter) Mitchell. Protests, letters and submissions may have some influence, but you can see how 'big infrastructure' can ignore or not 'see' other issues.

Infrastructure-project-mad and cash-poor state governments are cutting public authority budgets nationally and insisting on 'self-generated income' through more 'activation': i.e. events. Here is a dance party in the forecourt of Sydney Opera House and adjacent Royal Botanic Gardens. More and more such events are taking over supposed public open spaces—some historic—making them effectively 'private' for those with money and inclination. Yes, this can mean income and renewal, it can equally mean trashing, damage, theft and vandalism—disregard for their original design, function and less 'active recreation' values.

Careful town planning of the 1990s is fast becoming ignored, side-stepped and got around by clever developers and care-less Councils. An example from Parramatta, NSW's second-oldest colonial settlement, shows how 1990s height controls were generated to ensure historic view connections between heritage properties remained. Edinburgh and Vienna and Paris share such things.

Today clever developers are lodging development applications for 'slice of pie' shaped skyscrapers fitting between these view cones – claiming they don't block the views. Perhaps: but the slivers left once the gaps between become 10, 20, 40 storey buildings will be hardly visible.

Infill in Australian cities includes of institutions such as schools, hospitals and university campi. Here is our oldest, Sydney University (1855+) as it faces the city's *Victoria Park*. Note the gaps between buildings, the ovals and tree-lined drives linking elements. Much of this has been lost in the last decade with massive infill buildings, spanking new and glistening, filling up 'empty' spaces, cheek-by-jowl with older buildings, far taller, fatter and dominating. Tellingly, Sydney University was only heritage-listed this last year (some 40 years after having a Heritage law), after much of the 'damage' has been done. This phenomenon is national, not restricted to Sydney or NSW.



Plan showing significant view connections between Elizabeth Farm, Experiment Farm, Hambledon Cottage and neighbouring estates north of the Parramatta River, Harris Park. These views led to height controls to ensure their retention.



Here is another: urban sprawl 'eating up' our peri-urban farmlands: some of them very historic. Sydney's settlement was really saved by Parramatta and Western Sydney's 'Cumberland Plain'—the wide belt of clay-shale-based soils around the sandstone—that were richer, cultivable. Here is an example, in Campbelltown's Menangle, of one such estate, *Glenlee*, converting, in the 1990s, from sheep and cattle to olives (since ripped up) and now applying for rezoning to houses: bricks and mortar are the new 'crop' we waste our productive hinterlands with.



The second image is a close-up of how much 'farm' is proposed to be left, maximizing the number of new houses 'to market', but making a mockery of any sense of an early 'farm'. A common threat.

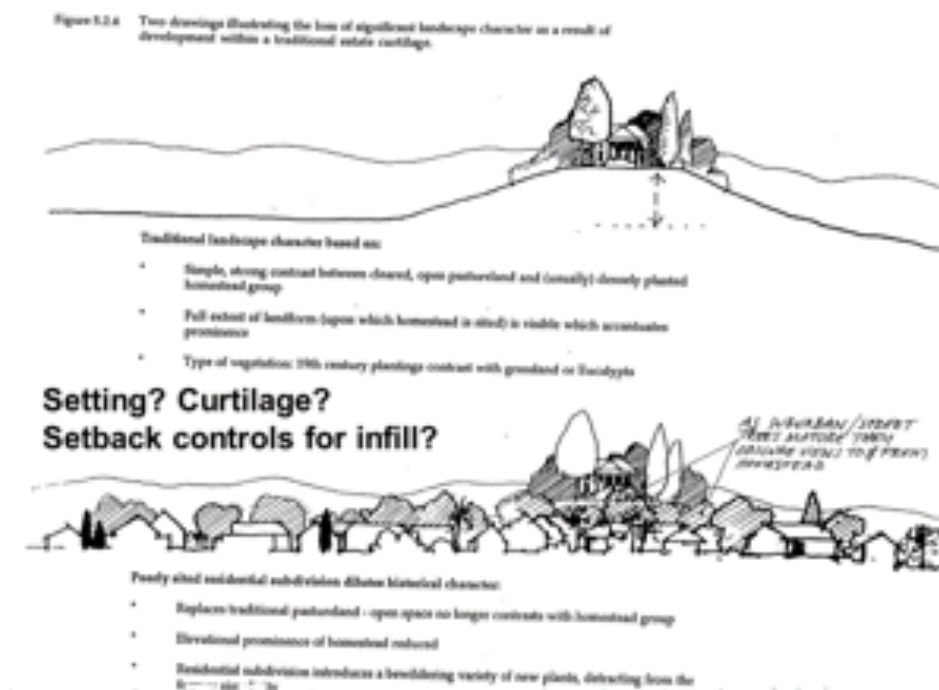


Image: Geoffrey Britton & Colleen Morris, 2000, *Colonial Landscapes of the Cumberland Plain & Camden – a survey of pre-1860 farms (sic)*, Heritage Council of NSW, unpublished report. The title is mine.

The issue is one of setting curtilages (areas of land comprising the 'heritage item') of enough size to enable ongoing economic farming or at least easy interpretation of former farming. Most heritage curtilages are woefully inadequate, a bit like Tasmania's 'house only' approach. Not good enough.



Anzac Parade, Moore Park, Sydney – site of (photo taken from) the Tibby Cotter Bridge

Urban trees are very much under threat: one example is Anzac Parade, *Moore Park*, Sydney which has controversially sacrificed many of its component Moreton Bay and Port Jackson fig trees for a new light rail line—not down the existing road (can't take away car-space!) but along the trees on the left-hand side (east). More were sliced off to erect the Tibby Cotter bridge 'to nowhere', which now turns out to lead to the Allianz Stadium (a prize-winning Phillip Cox oval stadium from the 1980s is to be ripped down and made 'rectangular' to be 'world class', at great cost.



This 'Shame Parade' photo shows evidence that the public care for, and grieve the loss of beautiful, mature trees (to say nothing of war memorial avenues) for dubious 'benefits' that couldn't be achieved in another way, i.e. while still retaining the trees. Lose two lanes of traffic!

I wanted to make a point about heritage 'listings' which many do not understand. When you hear the phrase 'it's listed (or classified) by

the National Trust', or on the Register of the National Estate, don't think that means it is protected: not at all. Neither do a bunch of 'non-statutory' "listings" such as Institute of Architects, or Institution of Engineers. Non-statutory lists are for community information (only): they are not 'statutory' i.e. connected to any statute in law, thus they do not require any approval for a demolition or removal. There is no requirement for public advertising of development affecting non-statutorily-'listed' items.

So, get them statutorily-listed—on a local environmental plan or in a planning scheme overlay! Don't get mad: get even! Play the game: you can be sure savvy developers are. Lobby your local Council and / or state government heritage body.

Even statutorily-listed items often are 'buildings only', ignoring the fact they may have a heritage garden. Often gardens or landscape features are not described, under-ranked or prioritized—thus, by definition, not protected and liable to destruction when change comes along.

Often listings ignore key access ways (drives, paths), views in or out. They often do not have information on layout, design and landscape plantings. There is still a vital need for lobby groups to get better representation, description and protection of historic gardens and landscapes. We still need to lobby – some days you wonder if we've made much progress at all.

Here is a good news story where community lobbying won the day. *King George V memorial avenue* of oaks lines the old highway on the east entry into Tamworth, NSW. It was planted in 1936 out of love and respect for a popular King. And planted by the community. The same who lobbied to get it heritage-listed and protected against moves to cut it down with road widening to allow rural-residential subdivision and 'lifestyle blocks' on each side. Local newspaper articles were manifold.



Here are Tamworth ratbags out protesting on a drizzly day above or (below) outside Town Hall:



Much use was made of social media, e.g. an online petition which got 2000 signatures – something that tends to wake up sleepy local Councilors quickly! Other sly tactics were using blogs (like www.wordpress.com/2012)—a community tree watch site—keeping sharp eyes on healthy trees to stop any needless removals by power companies, pruning for overhead power lines. Or careless lawn-mowing staff on roadside tractors. A shame page was a popular and public tool.

You-Tube videos and subscribe-to-feed facilities on a website. Magazine articles enlisting local notables such as Troy Cassar-Daley. And they won Council over: it listed the avenue, prepared a conservation management plan to stage its replanting in stages and improve its ongoing management. The sky has not fallen in!

Another 'win' campaign was the King's Highway both sides of Braidwood in NSW's Southern Tablelands, between Canberra and the coast. Planted with lofty Lombardy poplars, black poplars and pin oaks by the community to celebrate the same King George V in the 1930s, it has become

a bit of a 'black spot' – with speeding, drunken drivers crashing into trees. The NSW Roads authority decided it needed to remove and replace the trees at safer, wider spacing. The community disagreed, kicking up such fuss that a whole turn-around of approach took place.

In admirable fashion, the authority paused: held community workshops, calmly worked the way through various issues, sought community preferences for options to remove and replace (all-at-once, in stages, what with?), community volunteering to help maintain trees (a vital issue with new planting projects), etc. As it turned out, the trees have yet to be removed, but the process and engagement were exemplary. It's good to see that with some patience and humility, community consultation can be included and done well. But it only happened through community advocacy.

We are in an age where historic plantings, particularly roadside and avenue trees, are aging and needing replacement. This can be traumatic. Equally it can be a good opportunity for education and engagement, bringing communities and people along, positively. These English oaks in River Drive, *Parramatta Park* area recent replantings of Macquarie-era (1820s) oaks—because Western Sydney is hot and dry, I argued that Algerian oaks would do far better than English—which tend to die young and falter in growth with the hard summers. This time I won. But it's great to see young trees thriving in old places: *Parramatta Park* is World Heritage-Listed as one of our 11 Convict Sites.

If you've read only one book this year, make it this one: *Client Earth* by American environmental lawyer, James Thornton. He set up a company, then moved it from USA to the UK, which sues governments for failing to adhere to their international treaty and convention obligations: e.g. the UK Government over diesel emissions and poor air quality, killing elderly people in cities. Don't get mad: get even! *Client Earth* is a company many environmental groups find inspiring and a champion.

The charming photo of youngsters and a smiling woman (in fact the then Mayor of Sydney's Waverley Council, Sally Betts) are a bunch of rat-bags in the making. The headline is *Ankle Biters plan to bring Council to its knees*—and they did, over trying to remove paperbark trees outside their childcare centre in Waverley Oval (for a new sports building). Despite her smile, the smiling Lord Mayor is grinding her teeth: these under-age non-voters won the day and the trees stayed. Watch out Australia when these tots grow up and start to vote, attend Council meetings!

Of course, there's plenty of lobbying left needing to be done—for instance, Paul Sorensen, *Australia's Master Gardener* as Richard Ratliffe's 1990 book called him, left some 100 garden design jobs, many masterly, across NSW and the ACT—very few are heritage listed—only two on the state heritage register. This makes all of them vulnerable to changing owners, drying climate, dwindling budgets and constant media pressure for change, 'upgrading', erasure.

Some examples are local to the Southern Highlands: Sorensen did some 14 jobs across this region including the Illawarra just down the coast. One was *East Berrima Cement Works*, now Boral. Remember those Wahrenonga housewives' dirty washing? Just imagine cement dust wafting all over yours, in 'New Berrima'. Sorensen was brought in to landscape the factory works and railway sidings, doing so effectively with thick conifer belts, mixed deciduous tree and shrub plantings in informal drifts. Totally unaware of this history or its author, Boral started 'revegetation' using locally-native species tube-stock, planted in military rows and grids. Totally inappropriate. AGHS Southern Highlands Branch lobbied and got a stay-of-execution. So far so good.



East Berrima Cement Works main entry, with swamp cypress, cherries, redwoods and cedar trees.

More recently, Hume Coal lodged a huge infrastructure project application seeking to upgrade the rail siding for its adjacent underground coal mine proposal. The landscape remains un-listed. Just to the west is *Mereworth*, Sutton Forest a country estate planted out by Sorensen from 1962-4, before its house was erected. It adjoins the Hume Highway to Canberra and Melbourne. A sophisticated drive, hugging the highway, swinging up onto a ridgeline with expansive views, then swinging north to drop into the homestead was carefully planted with drifts and clumps of native trees, then lined with a double avenue of golden elms and cherries. Ha-has using curving low walls of bricks, with silver birches for canopy, led eyes out from the homestead across undulating paddocks.



View north-west from Mereworth house over the ha-ha walls. To be covered with slag heaps

All this has now been bought by Hume Coal who plan to fill it with stockpiles of mining waste, while digging below the valley floor for underground coal. For 25 years. AGHS lobbying has sought heritage listing for *Mereworth*'s landscape as well as its garden, and at least careful thought about where stockpiles might be allowed, where they might be less visible and destructive, as well as how the garden might be conserved and managed during those 25 years. Verdict: watch this space.

And more local still: if you drive from Mittagong over Mount Gibraltar into Bowral, you'll come

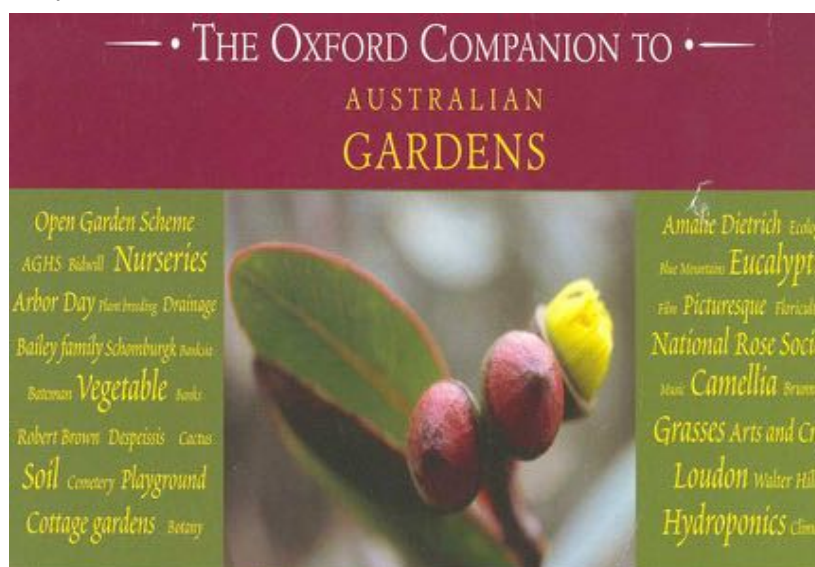
into Station Street, a charming avenue of pin oaks, then of elms, flanking the railway station and western 'entry' to the town, parallel to the main street. All planted through community interest, un-heritage-listed and threatened with removal—for a 'road bypass upgrade' to nowhere—an already busy congested roundabout at the southern end of town! All because 'infrastructure funds' are available to local Councils for a brief period only—now.

Vigorous AGHS and other community protest, fiery Council meetings, petitions, websites and newspaper articles are flying. It seems the not enough Councillors are not interested, or listening: when's the next Council election?

As well as the trees, outside the railway station are a line of mature old camellia bushes, it seems chosen and supplied by local nurseryman and legend garden designer, Claude Crowe, some very rare old varieties, even from the illustrious *Camden Park* estate. Despite the fact that even if the road had to be widened, camellias with care can be transplanted, the future of these old bushes is under a cloud. No such commitments have been given, again despite lobbying and clear information.

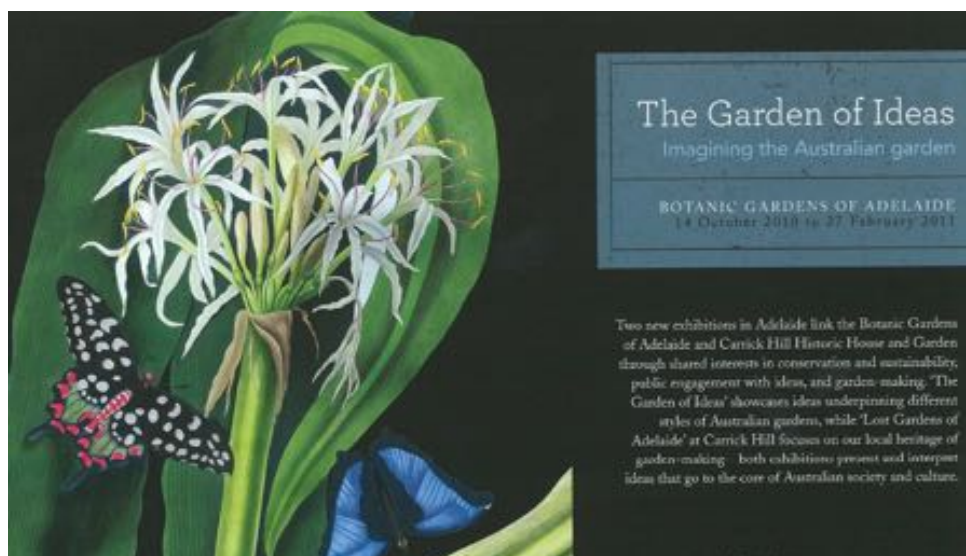
But some good news—advocacy is also promoting positive information and education: AGHS has much to be proud of in this regard, with a long history of helpful publications, conferences, working bees, events including direct learning and raising awareness.

We are one of few countries in the world to have our own *Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens* (2002: Richard Aitken & Michael Looker editors, with contributions from dozens of AGHS members): a huge resource. We have 40 years' worth of informative journals, with garden visits, descriptions, more philosophical articles on aspects of garden history, types of places, styles, fashions, even garden archaeology. Such rich resources are often untapped: they should be in active use, daily.



The Society has a large collection of oral history recordings: transcripts of 'movers and shakers' of our garden history, garden design and making—39 interviews nationally and 11 in the Sydney & Northern NSW branch alone: again, a great resource for researchers, worth tapping. Three transcripts include Brian Smith, an apprentice of Paul Sorensen who lived and worked at *Mereworth* in the 1960s, before branching off to run his own nurseries—he was one such interviewee.

AGHS has had public influence through travelling exhibitions, since 1979's *The Art of Gardening in Colonial Australia*. Above is one such: 2010-11's 'Garden of Ideas: imagining the Australian Garden' which travelled four states. Below is another: *Gardenesque: a celebration of Australian Gardening*, which displayed the riches of the State Library of Victoria on garden history resources.



And another: 2016-17's *Planting Dreams: (Dream Gardens)*, exploring the State Library of NSW's riches.



Many became lavish books, giving the exhibition a far-longer life and usefulness.

One thing AGHS does well is offer 'insider-tours', opening gates that aren't open to the public, but might for an interested, sympathetic group. Such as *Yaralla (Dame Eadith Walker Convalescent Hospital, Concord, Sydney)*, perhaps the largest private rockery and (despite these people walking on its infill) once its earliest private coastal swimming pool. What huge fun!

AGHS through *Carrick Hill Historic Home and Garden* in Adelaide's suburbs is supporting the new *Museum of Australian Gardening*, which is running annual exhibitions, such as *Endless Pleasure: the art of gardens and gardening* and another on lawns and lawn mower-fascination. It is also amassing historic tool and book collections—a huge future resource, nationally. England's *Garden History Museum* started modestly in 1983. And it expands with time and interest.

AGHS increasingly uses its website to do public advocacy: an example is its national online list of 'Landscapes at Risk: a watch and action list': see www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/advocacy

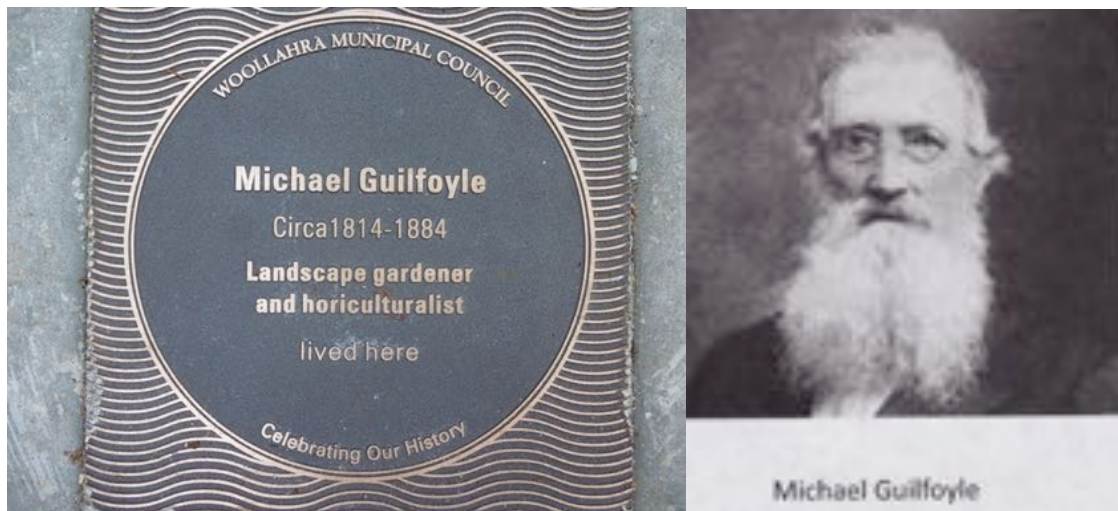
Why have such lists?

- To raise awareness of historic gardens, parks, landscapes. To clarify who, when and where to write, or to lobby to seek better outcomes, better management of them.
- To gain better legal (statutory) listings, zonings that are sympathetic, better conservation and daily management of such places. To show we live up to our mission of being the leader in its field.

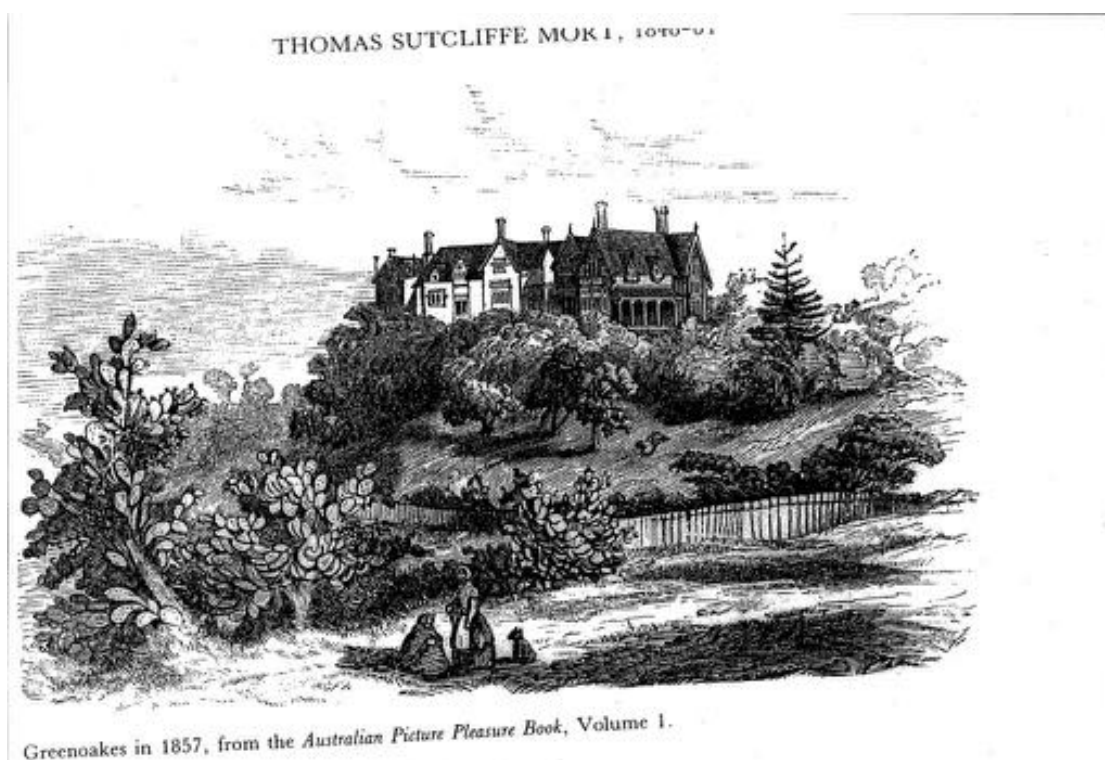
- And mostly, to reach out to, find and foster partnerships with like-minded groups who can band together on projects, campaigns of interest, do joint events.

Another example online is a national list of war memorial and other commemorative avenue plantings, other commemorative plantings such as 'Lone Pines' for Gallipoli WW1 dead. Altogether this list now runs into the hundreds: something rare internationally—to have one central list.

This list has been actively used for advocacy with some success: *Bacchus Marsh's Avenue of Honour*, which Treenet's Dr Greg Moore says is subject to 'a battle every 10 years' has thwarted another bisection and tree removal proposal for road construction with AGHS's lobbying help. Not that we're alone—one success is the highway underpass built and opened in 2015, reconnecting the then-severed *Ballarat Avenue of Honour*, again only achieved by vigorous advocacy.



Sydney & Northern NSW Branch of AGHS's lobbying has led to some heritage plaques in Eastern Sydney's Woollahra Council area, celebrating noted gardens and gardeners. Such as this, William Guilfoyle's father, Michael Guilfoyle, and his *Exotic Nursery*, Double Bay. AGHS sent Council a short list of possible plaque locations—this one got a plaque: as did more recently Thomas Sutcliffe (T.S.) Mort, outside his *Greenoaks* (aka *Bishopscourt*), Darling Point: a noted gardener of the day, and employer of Michael Guilfoyle, giving him the necessary career platform and contacts to thrive.



But there's much more to be done! Why, for instance, isn't *Albury Botanic Garden* state-heritage listed? It's the State's second-oldest (1877) after Sydney. It had some input from William Guilfoyle even if his advice wasn't taken—JER Fellowes was its designer and long-time developer.

Pre-and post-conference tours are visiting and enjoying *Pejar Park*, Beatrice Bligh's country garden—her books such as *'Cherish the Earth'* (1973) were garden history pioneers, and her garden influential. But it is not heritage-listed, has no conservation management plan, so what is its future?

Jocelyn Brown was an influential NSW garden designer from the 1920s-70s—yet her work is almost all un-heritage-listed, under-recognised and thus, utterly vulnerable to changing owners and ignorance. Surely an advocacy priority?

Betty Maloney's tiny Frenchs Forest 'bush garden' was hugely influential, through books she and sister Jean Walker published. Yet finding a new owner for the garden, with its tiny, modest house, was an advocacy challenge for AGHS and other friends—thankfully successful this time. The garden is not heritage-listed. Why not?

Even heritage-listed and well-recognised gardens such as *Eryldene*, Gordon—Prof. E.G. Waterhouse's east-meets-west quasi-Oriental/ Georgian Revival interwar hybrid, overlaid with a rich collection of camellias, is run by volunteers under a Trust. Yet how do you ensure a private garden made to the precise aesthetic of one person survives, 'intact', 'authentic', once they have gone and their eye, their taste, their decisions are not being recorded, reminded, re-used, daily?

A contemporary garden for *Eryldene* and Waterhouse's architect, artist-visionary William Hardy Wilson, *Purulia* at Wahroonga, was so radical when made. (No front lawn! No servants! No double storey red brick like the neighbours! Shame!). It isn't now: it's very tasteful, very 'North Shore' with prettified in calm green and white, with razor-cut lollipop shrubs, groomed lawn, symmetrical pots—but it isn't his garden anymore. It has charm but lacks authenticity as 'his' garden.

Historic cemetery management and 'character' is another challenge needing advocacy and better understanding. 'Spare the Roundup!' might be the clarion call. Managing old cemetery landscapes sensitively, allowing some 'weeds', longer grass in areas, wilding bulbs in drifts— particularly

where 'wilder' areas are serving other purposes: like wildlife habitats and refuges. A 'standard approach' and 'Australian standard' or 'contractual procedures' is not applicable to such places.

Often old cemeteries are repositories for out-of-fashion, rare plant species and cultivars. Such as the Chilean wine palm (*Jubaea chilensis*) gracing *Rookwood Necropolis*, Sydney. Endangered in the wild, this palm only occurs in some 38 Australian gardens (public and private). It needs babies. Active propagation. More going in to replace the old ones which inevitably will fail.

Some historic cemeteries make features of their plant collections: Dunedin North in New Zealand has a heritage rose trail, with plaques giving not only species or cultivar name, but also the date of introduction of that variety: a very helpful and interesting feature. And no roundup used near them.



Talking roses, AGHS Northern NSW sub-branch's advocacy and fund-raising has led to the development of a Heritage rose garden at *Saumarez* historic house and garden, outside Armidale. Two stages of rose garden development in the old picking garden/orchard area have created both a home for a large collection of historic rose cultivars, but also a useful tourist attraction for *Saumarez*, which soon will be complemented by a brown (historic place) sign on the New England Highway, a plus in terms of attracting motorists to visit.

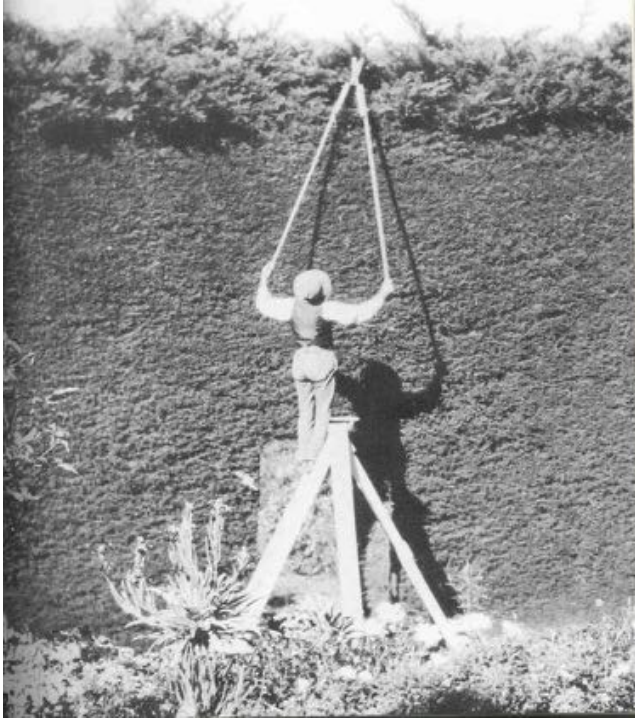
So, what's coming up next?

- Whole landscapes under threat (such as *Lake Burley Griffin* at the heart of Canberra, where divided government responsibilities and lack of overall responsibility or interest risk this beautiful created landscape)—the Guardians of Lake Burley Griffin and AGHS have been active on this;
- Another example is South Australia's *Mount Lofty Ranges*, Adelaide's Hills belt of productive lands girdling that city and stretching to Maclaren Vale and the Barossa and Clare valleys—there are moves to national-heritage list and world-heritage list this, much as France has recently gained World Heritage listing of Champagne and Burgundy. Don't forget that Australia has a 'garden' on the World Heritage List: Melbourne's *Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens* – a rare 'expo' park from the 19th century;
- More peri-urban sprawl affecting rural heritage;
- More major infrastructure projects, such as a SE Australian 'very fast train'; ring-roads, tunnels and other city transport infrastructure;

- More high-rise infill and urban densification as our cities 'thicken up' particularly their inner and inner-central belts, where transport links are good and distances short.

All of which bring challenges for garden, park and landscape heritage. More to do.

But remember, AGHS has been, and remains active in advocacy—we just need to work more to foster links and partners with other, like-minded groups and extend our reach.



Replanting key things as and before they die should be a priority—here is *Buda*, Castlemaine's gardener getting older and less able to reach the top of the equally aging cypress hedge. Eventually both collapsed. Helpfully AGHS funded removal and replanting of a new hedge—here's hoping it gets clipped a bit lower and under firmer control—but at least it's back in the ground!

So, in short, we need more rat-bags—get out there and get active!

THE REMEMBRANCE DRIVEWAY IN ITS SEVENTH DECADE

Ian Scott and Greg Jackson

Abstract

The Remembrance Driveway is a living memorial to those who have served in the Australian Defence Forces in the Second World War and subsequent wars or conflicts. The driveway runs from Sydney to Canberra along the Hume and Federal Highways.

Conceptualised by Margaret Davis, founding president of the Garden Clubs of Australia, the driveway was established in 1954 with the planting of trees in Macquarie Place, Sydney and at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. Development of the driveway continued in the form of plantations, groves and memorial parks over the ensuing decades, until the mid-1990s when the route of the Driveway beyond Sydney changed to follow the new dual-carriageway Hume Highway just constructed, bypassing much of the original corridor. As well as new plantations the highway comprises rest areas dedicated to the memory of recipients of the Victoria Cross awarded during the Second World War or later.

This paper explores the conference theme by discussing

- the history of the driveway's establishment as a living 'Avenue of Honour', including how the vision of the Garden Clubs of Australia translated into a real project which captured the imagination of the public, and what current efforts are being undertaken to maintain that interest
- how the built form of the driveway elements has changed over time to reflect its relationship to the adjacent highway infrastructure
- the opportunities and challenges in ensuring the driveway continues in its role as a living memorial into the future, both physically and conceptually.

The Beginnings

The Remembrance Driveway, linking Sydney with Canberra along the Hume and Federal Highways, is distinguished by groves of trees, memorial plantings and rest areas that provide a living memorial to Australians who have served in the defence of the nation in the Second World War and subsequent conflicts and peacekeeping missions.

The idea for the national memorial highway was the inspiration of the late Margaret Davis MBE, OAM, Founding President of the Garden Club of Australia. She had observed the impact of similar gardening clubs in the United States of America on enhancing landscapes in the public domain – and their contribution to the creation of the Blue Star Highway across America. It took the idea of the 'avenues of honour' that had been created in many regional Australian towns following World War I to a national level.

Inspired by the impact of the Blue Star Highway, Margaret Davis suggested the idea of creating an inspirational landscape, dedicated to the patriotism, heroism and sacrifice of servicemen and women, as a beacon of hope for the future. Under the chairmanship of Major General Frank Berryman, then General Officer Commanding Eastern Command, an influential committee consisting of representatives of major service and community organisations was set up to work with federal, state and local government representatives, and with experts such as Robert Anderson, Chief Botanist at Sydney's Botanic Gardens to oversee the development of the Remembrance Driveway. Along with the army of volunteers enlisted through the Garden Clubs of Australia, and with local councils which lent equipment and assisted with maintenance, the committee gave form to Margaret Davis' idea for a living memorial.

On 5 February 1954, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and His Royal Highness, Prince Phillip Duke of Edinburgh, launched the Remembrance Driveway by planting two London plane trees in Macquarie Place, Sydney. The choice of this location was significant for it was from the nearby obelisk, erected in 1815, that all roads in New South Wales originate and have been measured. To mark the termination of the Remembrance Driveway, the Royal couple planted a Snow Gum at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

The plane trees in Macquarie Place have flourished; unfortunately, the ones at the War Memorial have not been so lucky due to vandalism and disease, and we now have the third iteration of the terminal tree.

From the twin plane trees at Macquarie Place the alignment ran down George St and Parramatta Rd to the commencement with the Hume Highway at Ashfield. It continued from here through inner and outer suburbs of Sydney such as Strathfield, Bass Hill, Liverpool and Narellan. As it reached beyond Sydney, it acted as a connector between regional settlements like Camden and Picton, splitting at Mittagong into separate branches running via Bowral and Moss Vale or Berrima, and re-joining near Bundanoon to continue towards Marulan and Goulburn. Shortly south of Goulburn the alignment turned off the Hume Highway and followed the Federal



Figure 1. The original Remembrance Driveway alignment

Highway through Collector, along the edge of Lake George, into Northbourne and Limestone Avenues, and terminating at the Australian War Memorial, marked by the Snow Gum (Figure 1).

An initial collection of plantations was established in the first decade and a half after inauguration. A majority of plantations were sponsored by individual corporations (for example Qantas and the Leyland Motor Company) or ex-service associations (such as the 7th Division AIF Association, still active at their plantation today). The individual plantations took a number of forms underpinned by idea of ‘grouping plantings in groves and copses which provided opportunities to mix species for contrast and variety, and adapt plantings to suit local conditions’.¹ The original plantations exhibited a variety of planting styles (see Figures 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d below which illustrate some of this variety).



Figure 2a: Formal native spotted gums at Bass Hill

¹ Musescape, 2012, *Remembrance Driveway Heritage Assessment*, unpublished draft, p44.



Figure 2b: formal use of poplars an exotic species, at Lansvale



Figure 2c: in a rural setting, mixed informal exotic plantations near Berrima;



Figure 2d: more formal usage at Wollongorang.

Changes

The original plantations reflected a travelling speed of 60km per hour and were also situated in locations where people could park nearby and access the trees and read the associated dedication plaques. They also reflected less consideration of road safety, where trees were planted close to carriageways with little chance of recovery for errant vehicles.

As a living memorial, the driveway was envisaged to evolve over time. Whether foreseen or not, the route also evolved with the creation of significant sections of bypass of towns, or where alignment was retained, it was upgraded to dual carriageway, with the existing two lanes repurposed into a single carriageway and two new lanes being constructed parallel and adjacent to carry vehicles running in the opposite direction (Figure 3).



Figure 3: The alignment of the Remembrance Driveway after establishment of bypasses and dual carriageway sections.

With this came an increase in traveling speed—100km/h or more—and a greater setback of trees to allow errant vehicles space to recover. This forced a change of approach to how new plantations were implemented. The intimacy of the original plantations experienced at a slower speed and allowing physical interaction had to be replaced by large scale gestures established over a greater length to achieve an equivalent impact. The Australian Defence Force Memorial Plantation between Kenny Hill and Prestons near south-west Sydney as seen in Figure 4 is one such example. 50000 trees were planted over the 15.5km length, supported by interpretive signage at each end.



Figure 4: The ADF Memorial Plantation showing interpretive signage with rows of trees in the background

Where the Hume and Federal Highways diverge at Yarra, multiple rows of Lombardy Poplars are planted on approach to the intersection and continue through it complementing the larger scale of the infrastructure, as can be seen in Figure 5. The 90-second long experience creates a memorable event for motorists and also assists with wayfinding.



Figure 5: Poplars at the Yarra Interchange

This new motorway-style infrastructure requires the incorporation of rest areas to create a safe travelling environment, allowing drivers a chance to regularly break their journey to rest and recover. An initiative from the mid-1990s was to dedicate rest areas and memorial parks on the newly duplicated corridor to honour posthumous Australian recipients of the Victoria Cross from World War II and Vietnam. Here credit must go to the late Major General Kevin Latchford, President of the Committee of the time, who developed the idea to revitalise interest in the Remembrance Driveway. These rest areas created opportunities to reclaim the more intimate scale, and at the same time offering areas where motorists can interact with the living memorial via a citation sign focused on the VC recipient to whom the area is dedicated.

Over the ensuing years, the Remembrance Driveway Committee has worked closely with Roads and Maritime Services (formerly Roads and Traffic Authority and Department of Main Roads) in NSW and with Transport Canberra and City Services in the ACT to develop and maintain the driveway. Plantations bypassed by road diversions have been retained wherever possible and their care, control and management transferred to local councils – with varying degrees of success.

Derrick VC Rest Area at Towrang reuses the original alignment as its access road and incorporates original planting into a park-like setting, supported by the provision of new shade structures and interpretive signage.



Figure 6: Derrick VC rest area at Towrang

Where no residual part of the original alignment was able to be repurposed as a rest area, a dedicated facility such as the Partridge VC Rest Area at Menangle seen in Figure 7, would be provided.



Figure 7: Partridge VC at Menangle just outside Sydney

The provision of rest areas extends into the Australian Capital Territory, where they are referred to as Memorial Parks. In Figure 8 you can see the Hughie Edwards VC Memorial Park near the Majurah Parkway Interchange.



Figure 8: Hughie Edwards VC Memorial Park in the ACT

As well as a changing physical environment, the operating environment of the agencies which physically support the driveway is constantly changing. For NSW Roads and Maritime Services, Transport Canberra and City Services in the ACT and local governments areas through which the corridor passes, road safety, worker safety and budget constraints are universal considerations.

Guiding Principles

The aim of the Remembrance Driveway Committee is to create and maintain a living memorial that enables and encourages remembrance and reflection on service to Australia in times of war and conflict. The Committee actively develops and maintains the Driveway in partnership with the aforementioned agencies.

In response to the question ‘what do we want the living memorial to be and how can it maintain its relevance?’, a number of issues warrant discussion:

- What happens to the bypassed plantations?
- How do we deal with the safety of both workers and the travelling public?
- What is the ongoing role and support of the private sector?

- How do we accept that change is not only inevitable but is potentially advantageous for a living memorial?

Issue 1: Bypassed plantings

With the bypassed sections of corridor being established as Remembrance Driveway, the committee resolved that it could not maintain responsibility for the bypassed plantations with their care and responsibility passing to local authorities and historical societies. Their previous association with the Remembrance Driveway has not been entirely lost, and the committee will still advocate for the best way to manage the former driveway assets in consultation with their current managers and stakeholders, with the contribution of the plantation to the heritage of remembrance as the prime consideration.

An example is near the Lake George wineries where the former highway alignment has been superseded by two new carriageways running immediately parallel. The formal plantation of oaks (Figure 9) in an avenue along the old highway, which now has become a local access road, would still be visible from the new carriageways but it is screened because of height of the revegetation growing on the batters between new and old formations. Trimming this vegetation would open up this view back to the avenue, with its year-round changing appearance culminating in autumn.



Figure 9: Formal plantation of Oaks on the former highway alignment at Lake George

Particularly with the former corridor at Berrima, many of the original plantations are established in private property as shown in Figure 10, limiting the ability of public authorities to undertake necessary maintenance work. Many of the philanthropic former owners and institutions who sponsored the original plantations are no longer in existence. These factors cumulatively diminish the commemorative value of the plantations, which will only exacerbate as they are at an age where senescence is demonstrated in many of the individual specimens within them.

Without an obvious solution to these factors the committee is looking for a way to honour the value the plantations have collectively provided over the years. A park in Mittagong located on the bypassed alignment exists with a commemorative focus and an upgrade of the site is imminent. The committee believes it is appropriate that the plaques from the plantations are relocated to that site, in a suitable setting with appropriate interpretative signs which describes their history and importance.

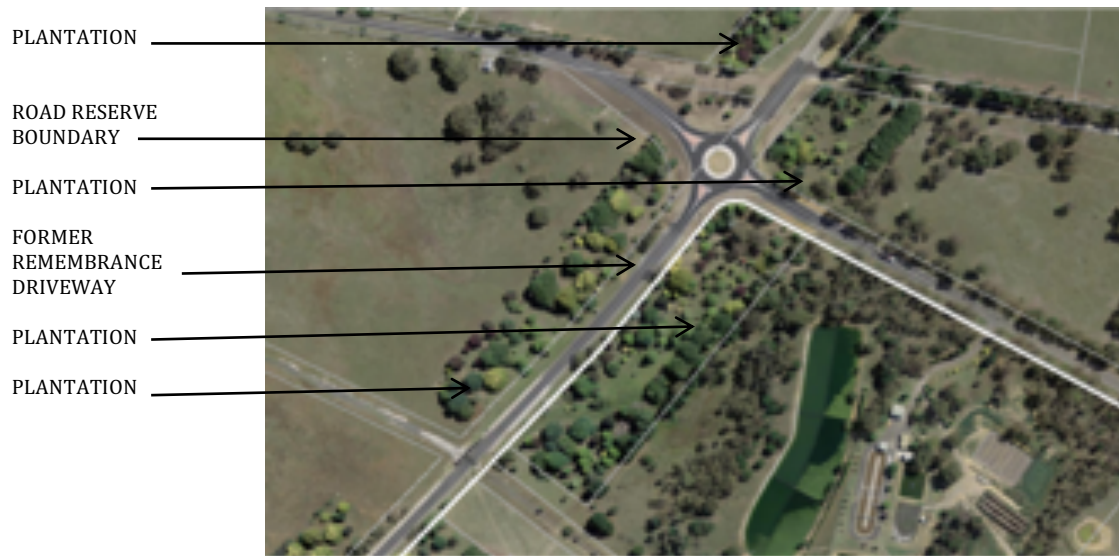


Figure 10: Aerial photograph of the plantations at Berrima on the former Remembrance Driveway alignment (imagery: maps.six.nsw.gov.au)

Issue 2: How to deal with the safety of both workers and the travelling public

Two examples highlight the considerations which affect the driveway more broadly. Firstly, at Wollgorang (just north of Collector on the Federal Highway) the avenue of poplars shown at bottom right in Figure 2d was becoming senescent. Planted as part of the original effort, they are considered too close to the carriageway by modern standards, exacerbated by the faster speed limit set when this part of the corridor became the southbound carriageway when it was duplicated in the 1990s.



Figure 11 is a later photo showing dieback in the tree to the left of the car



Figure 12a and 12b show the result of one of these trees falling on the carriageway. This is an unacceptable situation for road user safety, and also requires bringing maintenance crews and emergency service officers close to the carriageway each time a tree falls over and must be cleared. Over time the avenue had diminished and there was no plan to reinstate it in its current form.



Figure 13 also shows the new northbound carriageway was established in a wide reserve reflecting the contemporary needs of a roadside environment. The greater space has allowed the plantation to be re-established, set back to reflect safety standards. The replacement of poplars with fastigate pin oaks reflects the form of the original species, but in a more reliable, durable form. Whilst the pin oaks are slightly smaller at maturity their more prominent autumn colour will maintain their impact (Figure 14).

WIDER
NORTHBOUND
CARRIAGEWAY

SOUTHBOUND
CARRIAGEWAY
SHOWING GAPS IN
AVENUE

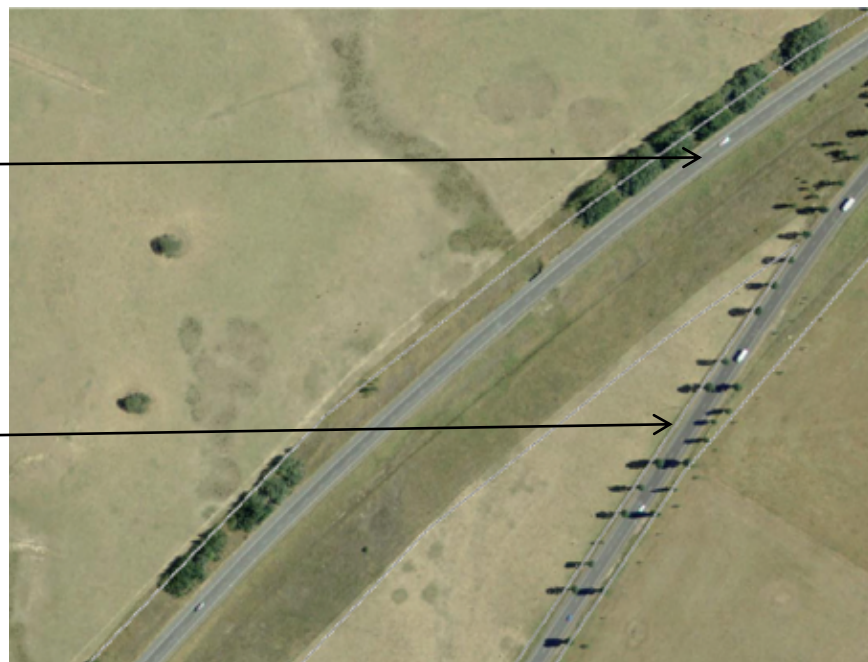


Figure 13: Aerial photograph of the Wollgorang site
(imagery: maps.six.nsw.gov.au)



Figure 14. Replacement planting

Safety is also consideration in the second situation, but in a different form. Ex-service associations wish to access the Sixth AIF Division Association plantation where Campbelltown Road crosses Remembrance Driveway. The effect of nearby residential development and increasing traffic has meant that this location is no longer safe to access from the verge on Campbelltown Road as was previous practice.

Near to the Plantation is Mont Saint Quentin Oval, a former parade ground associated with the Bardia Barracks and part of a heritage-listed former defence site which is now being repurposed within the South West Growth Area. The oval is being redeveloped to serve the recreation needs of the future community. This redevelopment has provided the opportunity to investigate relocating the plaque from the plantation site there and interpret the Sixth Division Association plantation at a location which is safer and more accessible to a larger number of people (Figure 15).



Figure 15: Sixth AIF Division Memorial relocation investigation area
(imagery: maps.google.com.au)

Issue 3: What is the ongoing role and support of the private sector?

It has always been a fact that the Remembrance Driveway has relied on the support from the private sector; the large number of companies represented amongst the plantations themselves is testament to that. That support continues to the present day where it is recognised that interaction with the private sector to further the reach and impact of the driveway as a memorial will be pursued if it is appropriate.

An example of this is at the Pheasants Nest service centre, shown in Figure 16, where the Edward Kenna VC Rest area has been established on the northbound site. Along with the memorial being established with the cooperation of the existing tenant, they continue to maintain it as part of the broader facility. The committee is looking to establish a similar memorial to Keith Payne VC on the southbound site.

The committee will turn its focus in the coming years to increase the involvement of the private sector in its endeavours to support the driveway.



Figure 16: Pheasants Nest service centre (imagery: maps.six.nsw.gov.au)

Issue 4: How do we accept that change is not only inevitable but is potentially advantageous for a living memorial?

Figure 17 below shows FOUR examples of decisions to physically intervene in the driveway asset. They are all 'negative' examples which diminish the value of the driveway: the overzealous distribution of bollards defining a car park edge; root-girdled stock planted rather than being rejected as unsuitable, a bin placed beneath a citation sign unceremoniously or another similar sign with a desire line tracked to it. Whilst one could be disheartened by these issues, they are all evidence of activity on or interest in the driveway. The decision to install in bollards and trees is an active decision to invest in the fabric of the driveway. The bin is being emptied, indicating that maintenance does occur, and the bare ground of the desire line shows that the travelling public does in fact read the signs that have been provided.





Figure 17. 'Negative' interventions on the driveway

These examples reflect a lack of guidance and common understanding about the driveway which results in a mismatch between its values and the physical asset. It should be an easy task to harness the existing activity on the driveway to ensure its value is maintained and enhanced by directing it in an appropriate manner.

As a summary of these issues; we have learnt there is a high-level need for a Plan of Management to reassert the Remembrance Driveway as a living memorial which;

- focuses on the urban arterial and motorway plantations as a memorable travelling experience,
- where the plantations are maintained and renewed appropriately,
- supported by VC Rest areas which encourage interaction at a more detailed scale, and
- which are held to a standard which befits the Driveway's importance.

The Future

The Committee is committed to maintaining and growing the Remembrance Driveway as a memorial and keep it updated and fresh in the minds of the public. As mentioned, the most recent additions and plans are:

- The establishment in 2010 of the 15.5 km Australian Defence Force Memorial Plantation located between Prestons and Mount Annan.
- The Kenna VC rest area at Pheasants Nest Northbound, on the 7-Eleven service centre site.
- The upgrade to the Cutler VC Interchange of the M7 and M5 and associated rest area at Prestons near Liverpool, with vital support from the RMS and sponsorship from the two road operators (Figure 18).
- Plans for Payne VC at Pheasants Nest Southbound.
- Plans to replace all the existing VC citation signs with contemporary ones showing a photo of the recipient
- and a QR code to link people to our website.



Figure 18: Cutler VC Interchange upgrade 10

In 2014 the Committee discovered that a park in Watson, Australian Capital Territory, was being cleaned up for use by residents of expanding housing developments in the suburb. This space this was original a Remembrance Driveway site maintained by Apex and so the Committee developed a proposal for the ACT place names authority to have it named Valour Park (Figure 19) with the intent of developing a memorial for the Victoria Cross recipients from the Afghanistan conflict. There are some existing tributes in Valour Park for Junior Farmers and Apexians who served in World War Two and the form of the new memorial will be in keeping with those.



Figure 19: Valour Park in Watson, ACT

The Remembrance Driveway Committee – Next Steps

Like many not for profits, associations and charities, the Committee has had to look at our governance and we believe we have to restructure as company, mainly to be able operate in two states, and perhaps more importantly, legally fund raise across Australia.

It also struck the Committee that the Driveway does not get the recognition it deserves as it has not been declared a War Memorial of National Significance, and the Committee is working with the Department of Veterans Affairs to see how this can be done.

We also want to encourage other bodies that were stakeholders at the outset to reinvigorate their interest; to get corporates and individuals to support the Driveway. One of the main reasons is the possibilities for financing our operations. It is very expensive to do anything new on the highway, and modestly so to maintain the current artefacts. Good sponsorship will take some of that pressure off Roads and Maritime Services in NSW and Transport Canberra and City Services in the ACT.

In conclusion, among the many thousands of war memorials across Australia, the Remembrance Driveway is significant as a designed landscape of national importance, honouring the intentions of its creators as ‘a tribute from those who remember yesterday and have faith in tomorrow’—surely the essence of gardens in times of Peace and Conflict.

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