

ACT Monaro Riverina Branch

Newsletter April 2023 No 2



Australian Garden History Society
www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au

ACT Monaro Riverina Branch, PO Box 5008, LYNEHAM ACT 2602
For an e-copy of the newsletter email judy.pearce@netspeed.com.au

BRANCH DIARY

11 - 30 APRIL

*Heritage Festival:
Exhibition – Hackett: A
Mid-Century Modern
Suburb*

15 APRIL

*Heritage Festival: National
Trust Open Day, Duntroon
Dairy*

17 APRIL

*Heritage Oration, Speaker
Max Bourke*

21 APRIL

*Self Drive Tour: Four
Gardens of the Monaro*

22 APRIL

*Heritage Festival: Hackett
Heritage walk, joint event
with NT*

29 APRIL

*Heritage Festival: Kingston
Heritage walk, joint event
with NT*

11 MAY

*Westbourne Woods: Walk
and Talk*

21 JUNE

Gundaroo Film Day

Vale Wendy Dodd



The local AGHS Branch bids a sad farewell to member Wendy Dodd who passed away peacefully at Royal Canberra Hospital on 28 February 2023.

As a former member of the Branch Committee (February 2017 to August 2019) Wendy organised a successful tree walk around the Australian War Memorial and a visit to the truffle farm "Terra Preta" near Braidwood. She, like many of us, was also a keen gardener and as a retired textile conservator, weaver and artist she developed a special interest in using mushroom spores for printing on fabric.

We will miss her in the AGHS Branch.

AGHS NATIONAL CONFERENCES

43RD AGHS ANNUAL
CONFERENCE
IPSWICH, QLD
29 SEPTEMBER –
1 OCTOBER 2023
2 optional days – 28 Sept
and 2 October
Registration opens 1 May

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CANBERRA AND REGIONAL HERITAGE FESTIVAL 2023

<https://www.environment.act.gov.au/heritage/heritage-festival>

There are many events taking place during the festival, and we (the AGHS Branch) are involved with three which are highlighted below. I have included in the **OF INTEREST** section of the newsletter (see page 8) some other event which our members may be interested in. But do go online to acquaint yourselves with the full program.

44TH AGHS ANNUAL
CONFERENCE
BUNBURY, WA
18 – 20 OCTOBER
2024

HACKETT: A MID-CENTURY MODERN SUBURB EXHIBITION: TUESDAY 11 – SUNDAY 30 APRIL

BRANCH COMMITTEE

Bronwyn Blake, Chair
Sue Cassidy, Treasurer
Anne Claoue-Long, State
NMC Representative
Nancy Clarke, Secretary

Lynne Curran
Louise Gaudry
Susan Phillips

A joint AGHS/NT (ACT) event

Come to the Hackett shops to see an exhibition on the distinctive character of this suburb. It covers Hackett's early development as a planned suburb, how to identify mid-century modern houses and gardens, the emergence of native gardens, community building and heritage contributions.

In line with the Heritage Festival theme *Sharing Stories*, several residents have also contributed their 'House Stories'. The AGHS and the National Trust of Australia (ACT) acknowledges the ACT Government for its support for this event.

View during daylight hours, no charge.

NATIONAL TRUST OPEN DAY SATURDAY APRIL 15, 10 AM – 3 PM

The Open Day for the Canberra and Region Heritage Festival is back after the unfortunate cancellations of the last couple of years, thanks to Covid and the weather!

AGHS will have a stall at this event. If you could offer a few hours of your time to staff the stall (either in the morning - from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm, or 12.15 to 3.15 pm), we would be very glad to have one or two extras. Contact Nancy Clarke 0423 690 626 or clarkenancy624@gmail.com if you are interested. Do come to enjoy the guided tours, entertainment, refreshments and various stalls and in particular, do drop by the AGHS stall. We would love to see you there.

Location Duntroon Dairy is accessed via car parks on Kelliher Drive, Russell

WALK: HACKETT HERITAGE A MID-CENTURY MODERN HUB SATURDAY APRIL 22, 9.30 – 11.30 AM

A joint AGHS/NT (ACT) event

Join a short guided walk in the streets of Hackett, and learn how California came to Canberra, developing its own local character in its domestic architecture, gardens and urban development. From the simple to the simply stunning, original to latest renovation, Mid-Century Modern has stood the test of time in Hackett and other suburbs established in the 1960s-1970s. After the walk, led by Anna Howe, participants are invited to view the exhibition in the Hackett shops, and perhaps buy morning coffee at one of the Hackett cafes.

Meet At Maitland House, 100 Maitland St Hackett. Free off-street parking.

Cost \$15

Booking Essential, numbers are limited. Book at
<https://www.trybooking.com/CFOSI>

Inquiries Nancy Clarke 0423 690 626 or clarkenancy624@gmail.com

WALK: KINGSTON PARKS, GARDENS AND WINDBREAKS – OLD AND NEW SATURDAY APRIL 29 APRIL, 9.30 – 11.30 AM

A joint AGHS/NT (ACT) event

Kingston Foreshore is not renowned for its gardens but there are plenty of parks and green spaces in the vicinity. On this walk we will visit some of the oldest (Telopea and Bowen Parks) and some new ones along the shores of the Lake and Jerrabomberra Creek, with some highly informative information along the way. We will finish in Norgrove Park, where you are invited to buy coffee and crepes from an onsite van.

Meet	At Canberra Glassworks, Wentworth Ave Kingston
Cost	\$15
Booking	Essential, numbers are limited. Book at https://www.trybooking.com/CFOUG
Inquiries	Nancy Clarke 0423 690 626 or clarkenancy624@gmail.com

FOUR GARDENS OF THE MONARO FRIDAY 21 APRIL, 10.15 AM – 3 PM

On Friday 21 April we have the opportunity for an autumn visit to four lovely Monaro gardens, two in Cooma, followed by two a little further south, near Nimmitabel. This will be a self-drive day, with arrival at our first garden visit planned for 10.15 am. We plan to allow everyone good time to visit and enjoy the four gardens and arrive back in Canberra before dark.

We very warmly thank our hospitable and generous hosts.

AGHS will provide morning and afternoon tea, and tea/coffee at lunch. Please bring your own picnic lunch. Driving and other information will be sent to people who have registered.

Gardeners of the Monaro need to be resilient and adaptable! When Anne and Howard Charles moved from Nimmitabel to Cooma in 2017 they exchanged fertile basalt for sandy shale and an established and beautiful garden for one which was awaiting development. In five years, they have reshaped the two acres surrounding the house to create a garden of contrasts and surprises. Both natives and exotics flourish. A long gabion wall defines the entrance, and extensive plantings of deciduous trees complement the ancient eucalypts. A paved terrace looks onto a grassed area backed by a long densely planted perennial border, and vegetable gardens and a chicken run nestle behind the house. Skilfully planted creepers soften the front steps and hedges conceal the service areas. We will have morning tea here.

At *Blairgowrie*, also in Cooma, Jenny Slatyer and internationally respected artist Imants Tillers have sympathetically enhanced an historic garden. The property was established in the 1860s and the venerable elms, pines and poplars are reminders of successive owners. An Edna Walling inspired area was planted in the 1930s and Jenny and Imants have restored the original layout and created a European styled garden which celebrates the four seasons. Imants' stone studio nestles amongst the trees. Dense growth around the perimeter of the property ensures both privacy and a sense of mystery.

We will enjoy our picnic lunches at our next garden, John Rose and Denham Williams' *Mia Mia* at Nimmitabel. This is a garden of both strength and tranquility. First plantings were in 1989 when the house was built by the previous owners, and John and Denham have expanded and enriched the original design. A tree lined drive opens into a shady oasis densely planted with flowering bulbs and perennials. In spring the garden is a sea of daffodils followed by aquilegias. Judicious planting has preserved views to the surrounding landscape. Well established vegetable beds, berries, fruit trees and a picking garden are attractive and productive.

Erindale is right on top of the Great Dividing Range with sweeping views down the Tom Groggin valley. First settled in the 1850s, the house dates from 1916, but the garden was developed in the 1980s. When Richard and Lainie Lawson bought the property in 2001, they more than doubled the garden by moving a fence to include a rocky hill. They have retained the original layout of the garden, and expanded it with more deciduous trees and perennial borders. The creation of a dry gravel garden on the rocky hill is still a work in progress, with low growing native and exotic shrubs merging into the paddock below. We will enjoy our afternoon tea here, before leaving for home.

Cost \$30 AGHS members, \$35 non AGHS members.

Bookings Numbers are limited and bookings essential:
<https://www.trybooking.com/CFYOU>

Bring Suitable clothing, and your picnic lunch

Inquiries Nancy Clarke 0423 690 626 or clarkenancy624@gmail.com

WESTBOURNE WOODS WALK AND TALK THURSDAY 11 MAY

Meet at 2:45pm outside the Royal Canberra Golf Club for 3:00pm departure

Friends of ACT for Trees (FACTT) convenor, Paul Scholtens, will take us on a guided walk through Westbourne Woods to the Nicholls incinerator. Ipswich and Canberra each have one of the remaining seven incinerators designed by Eric Nicholls and Walter Burley Griffin for the Reverberatory Incinerator and Engineering Company. Paul will give us some background on Westbourne Woods and point out significant trees, while AGHS member and historian, Anne Claoue-Long will tell us a little about the incinerator and its significance. It's opportune to focus on the ties between Ipswich and Canberra as Ipswich will host the 2023 AGHS Conference later this year.

Sturdy shoes are required as some of the walk to and from the incinerator will be between the fairway. Dogs are not permitted.



Photo: environment.gov.au

Cost \$10 AGHS members, \$15 non AGHS members.

Bookings Essential, <https://www.trybooking.com/CFVKP>

Inquiries Lynne Curran 0428 976 965 or lcurran578@bigpond.com

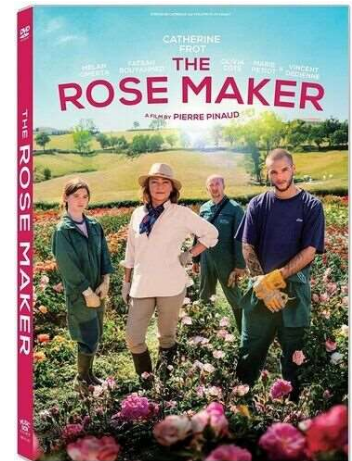
SAVE THE DATE for our Special Midwinter Event

GUNDAROO FILM DAY WEDNESDAY 21 JUNE

Our very popular Gundaroo Film Day is on again. This year we're going to show *The Rose Maker*, a French comedy directed by Pierre Pinaud and starring Catherine Frot as Eve Vernet, a formerly successful rose grower on the verge of bankruptcy who hires three workers with no horticultural skills and must train them to help save her business.

To get us in the mood, AGHS member and keen rose grower, Louise Gaudry, will give us a short talk about heritage roses in Australia, and more particularly the Canberra region. Louise has been a member of Heritage Roses in Australia (HRiA) for many years.

We'll then enjoy some country hospitality with a hot lunch followed by the film screening in the historic Gundaroo Memorial Hall.



This Gundaroo Film Day has become, by popular demand, a regular fixture in our calendar of events.

We are waiting on some information and will send further details by email once we have finalised the arrangements. In the meantime please save the date.

PAST EVENTS

Is that a Cordyline among the Callistemons? A walk in the streets of Hackett Friday 24 March

When is a garden historic? We tend to think of spacious country gardens as the backbone of Australian garden history, but our late March walk reminded us that history is everywhere, including in the suburban streets of Canberra. Mid Century Modern (MCM) enthusiast Anna Howe reminded a group of AGHS members and friends of this as she guided us along some of the streets of Hackett on an early autumn afternoon walk.



Photo: Nancy Clarke

One of the new Canberra suburbs of the 1960s, Hackett was designed and grew under the auspices of the National Capital Development Commission, with generous residential blocks and a small number of higher density blocks of flats near the small local shopping centre. The first house for sale in Hackett was advertised at the end of 1962 and development followed rapidly.

The overall design style of most of the houses was conservative, but the appeal of a design movement originating in California was strong, and what became known as Mid Century Modern design became a feature of many of the houses in the new suburb, and our walk led us past a number of houses that in design and landscaping have features that can be identified as in that MCM style. We were all issued with a double sided checklist, and to help us get our eye in, Anna invited us to use this to identify houses and gardens that had MCM or MCM inspired features.

Among the important features of MCM front gardens (all easily seen in Hackett apart from the pampas grass) are

- a comparatively deep setback of the house from the street with well-defined street frontages
- well kept open front lawns
- a limited number of trees (to avoid leaves falling on the lawn)
- a taste for formal trees, feature plants with coloured foliage, and spiky shrubs, with any of the plants neatly pruned and shaped – cypress, pines, flax, cactus, yuccas, palms, pampas grass, cordylines, agapanthus
- creepers and climbers – ivy, vinca, wisteria, Virginia creeper, Boston ivy

But a rival garden design style was running in parallel with the MCM one – the Australian bush garden, and many of the Hackett gardens adopted this style or combined the two; so Australian plants, with a mulched understory and natural rather than shaped forms often appeared in the Hackett garden as well.

On our walk we stopped to look at some houses and gardens that have retained many of the original MCM - and bush garden - features; some that have been extended and modified; and some completely new builds incorporating many MCM / bush garden features. Among these was the very new house of Erin and Adrian Rule, who generously explained to us its many highly efficient environmental design features while it retains the overall appearance of an MCM house and garden.

At the end of the walk we gathered at Anna's own house, itself an MCM one, to enjoy period themed refreshments.

For more information about MCM gardens and the Australian bush garden, see some articles in *Australian Garden History*– Vol 25 No 2 of 2013 is dedicated to the topic of Modernist gardens, an article in Vol 32 No 2 of 2020 covers the bush garden movement, and the coming issue of the Journal contains several articles on the 1960s garden.

This was an outstanding event, with a very enthusiastic response from those taking part. We very much appreciate the time and thought Anna had put into preparing and leading this walk, and the house owners who shared their stories with her.



Nancy Clarke

Photo Lynne Curran: Our Mid Century Modern cocktail feast

BRANCH NEWS

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

The committee would like to welcome the following new members who have joined since the last Newsletter.

- Mary Appleby, Northangera
- Joy Stone, Canberra

MAX BOURKE AM THE INAUGURAL SPEAKER FOR THE HERITAGE ORATION MONDAY 17 APRIL, 6PM



To celebrate World Heritage Day, the National Trust (ACT) has recently announced that the inaugural speaker for the Heritage Oration will be AGHS member and long-time AGHS supporter, Max Bourke AM.

In making the announcement, the National Trust said that the Heritage Oration *provides an opportunity for a prominent heritage leader and thinker to deliver an address on the current state and future directions of heritage nationally and in the ACT.*

For the inaugural address, Max has chosen to speak about **Australian heritage at the cross-roads – looking back and forward without breaking my neck**. Max Bourke has a long and distinguished career in heritage and conservation.

For more details on the oration see <https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/event/inaugural-act-heritage-oration-2023/>

Venue Albert Hall, Commonwealth Avenue

Cost Free, but bookings are essential at <https://www.trybooking.com/CFREV>.

AGHS NATIONAL OFFICE

KEEPING UP TO DATE

Did you know that you can customise the information you receive from AGHS National Office?

Simply go to the AGHS website and log in using your email address and password. Under “My Account” scroll down to “Communication Preferences”. The webpage is self-explanatory, and do remember to choose “subscribed” before you choose the topics you’d like to hear more about.

You can choose to receive:

- The AGHS National Newsletter (E-News)
- Book Updates
- Climate Updates
- Project Activity Updates
- Landscape Australia Newsletter

There's sure to be something of interest so log on and expand your horizons! And while you're on the AGHS website, why not check out some of the other great resources available for members? So many wonderful ***Oral Histories*** and the ***Selected Bibliography on Garden History*** has recently been updated.

AGHS FACEBOOK PAGE

Are you following the AGHS Facebook page? Rather than being bombarded with inane messages and food porn photos, the AGHS Facebook page has curated links to news articles of interest to all lovers of gardens and garden history as well as information on climate and branch activities.

Two recent posts had links to news articles about ***the threat to Trove*** from a cut in federal funding and another was a link to an oral history project from the Bundanoon History Group to capture the ***impact of climate change***.

To follow the AGHS Facebook page go to

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=australian%20garden%20history%20society>

OF INTEREST



<https://www.environment.act.gov.au/heritage/heritage-festival>

SOME OF THE FESTIVAL EVENTS WHICH MAY BE OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO OUR MEMBERS

Flora and Fauna Artist Group

13-23 April: Exhibition

Old Barn Gallery, 18 Beltana Road, Pialligo

National Capital Authority: Regatta Point

Talks, free, booking required

13 April, 2 – 2.30

Talk: Marion Mahony Griffin: Her Story

After the death of her husband, Marion Mahony Griffin started penning a book to celebrate his work. We can learn a lot about the heart of Marion from *The Magic of America*, her unpublished manuscript. Join Curator Roslyn Hull as she uses Marion's own words to uncover private thoughts of this woman of immense talent.

13 April, 3 -3.30

Talk: Charles Weston: His Story

Tasked with greening the treeless plains of early Canberra, Charles Weston filled workbooks and field journals with notes detailing his experience. Ultimately, he made decisions based on scientific evidence and selected plant species that would survive in the landscape. Join Educator Isabella Simonovski as she delves into Weston's own writings to uncover the depth of his experimentation and unique vision.

20 April, 2.00-2.30

Talk: Charles Scrivener: His Story

Charles Scrivener had a vision for the future capital. Join Educator Kate Collins as she studies field notes, diary entries, maps and official reports of Chief Surveyor Charles Scrivener to peel back the layers of his life. Examining Scrivener's own accounts, Kate will speak on the workmanship that determined the national capital's precise location.

20 April, 3 -3.30

Talk: Sylvia Crowe: Her Story

Wanting to learn more about the woman behind the design for Commonwealth Park? Dame Sylvia Crowe's deep love and understanding of the landscape made her a woman before her time. Now, Sylvia's plan is shared by Caroline Hennessy as she draws out stories about the woman behind the dream for Canberra's 34.5-hectare Commonwealth Park.

Canberra Museum and Gallery

29 April, 2 – 3.30

Precinct Tour: Mid-Century Modernism

City, free, booking required

Join Senior Curator, Virginia Rigney on a free tour through the Canberra City precinct, as she discusses the people and places of Canberra featured in the new exhibition 'Canberra: Place & people'.

National Foundation for Australian Women

30 April, 2 – 4pm

Talk: Women sharing Stories

NLA, Gold coin donation

Learn more about the fascinating women whose lives and experiences are recorded in Canberra's collecting institutions. A panel of archivists, librarians and curators will share their passion for this work, revealing some of the intriguing women whose stories can be found and what they do to safeguard these stories.

[End of Heritage Festival events](#)

**SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS BOTANIC GARDENS ANNUAL PLANT FAIR
22 & 23 APRIL, 9 AM – 4PM**

The Plant Fair will feature specialist nurseries offering collectors plants, trees, perennials and bulbs along with plants from the 'Growing Friends' of the gardens. Garden art, tools and accessories. Refreshments available.

5 privately owned gardens open their gates to visitors in support of the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens. The gardens include two large estate gardens, and artists country cottage garden with magnificent views to Sydney, a fully native town garden, and an artist's stylish town garden. The gardens are located in Bowral, Mittagong and Glenquarry. The full detailed list of gardens will be available in early April.

To limit delays at garden or plant fair entry, please purchase your tickets online at <https://shbg.com.au/open-gardens-plant-fair/> Tickets will also be available at each garden and the plant fair throughout the weekend.

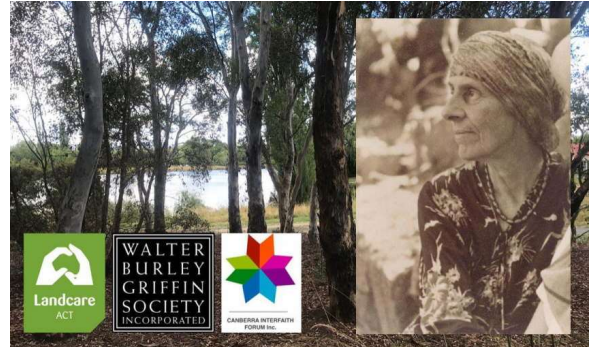
Costs: Full Weekend ticket, valid both days, for all 5 gardens + plant Fair = \$45,
Single entry to any garden of the plant fair = \$10

MARION MAHONY GRIFFIN GARDEN GROUP

Environment, Meditation and Healing Garden
Grevillea Park 5 Menindee Drive Barton, ACT 2600

A new gardening group is forming to commemorate and celebrate the life and contribution of Marion Griffin.

Wife of Walter Burley Griffin, Marion Mahony Griffin worked closely with her husband. Her talents were largely overlooked in her lifetime - it was in fact Marion who prepared the award-winning planning drawings of Canberra. She has since been posthumously recognised as an architect and artist in her own right; one whose designs show great sympathy for nature and the environment.



Under the auspices of Canberra Interfaith Forum's Environment, Meditation and Healing garden on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin, the Marion Griffin gardening group hopes to honour Marion's legacy whilst providing a safe and supportive space to learn about native plants and engage in the restorative benefits of communing with nature. The first planting event was held on Marion's birthday (14 Feb).

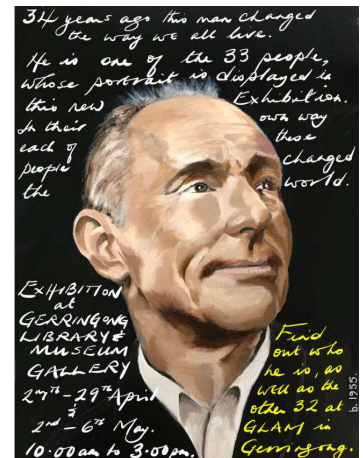
The group meet on the first Saturday of the month, weather permitting, from 8am in the warmer months and 9am in winter. If you are interested in going along please contact Carolyn Minchin cminchin42@gmail.com

EXHIBITION: GUTENBERG TO GATES, A HISTORY OF PROGRESS IN 100 IMAGES

During the recent day trip to Berry organised by the Southern Highland's Branch of AGHS, we were invited to see preparations (actually almost completion) of this exhibition by Bryan Pennington. It is well worth a visit if you are in the region.

Dates: 27 – 29 April & 2 – 6 May, 10am – 3pm
Venue: Gerringong Library and Museum Gallery, 8 Blackwood street, Gerringong.

About the exhibition: During the 'covid years' Bryan set out to identify and create images of the people who, by virtue of their ideas, inventions or creations, since the beginning of the Renaissance, have led to and benefitted our modern world.



The exhibition of 100 portraits, 33 paintings and 67 drawings, is the result of his quest. The paintings are the people he selected whose work fundamentally changed the world for good and the drawings are people he also considered.

NATIONAL ARBORETUM CANBERRA
www.nationalarboretum.act.gov.au

For details on walks, workshops and other events visit the Arboretum website.

HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF CANBERRA
<http://www.hsoc.org.au>

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS
www.anbg.gov.au

Friends Thursday Talks - for program details and for bookings go to <https://www.friendsanbg.org.au/calendar>. This calendar also provides information on other talks, walks and activities in the Garden. Details are already up for events in early 2023.

NATIONAL TRUST (ACT)

For details on monthly Heritage walks go to:
<https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/act/heritagewalks-act/>
:

OPEN GARDENS CANBERRA

Gardens are open 15/16 April, 22/23 April and 6/7 May. For more information go to <https://opengardenscanberra.org.au/>

LAKE BURLEY GRIFFIN GUARDIANS (LBGG)
<http://lakeburleygriffinguardians.org.au/>



For more information go to <https://icomosga2023.org/>