

ACT Monaro Riverina Branch

Newsletter December 2022 No 6



Australian Garden History Society
www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au

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BRANCH DIARY

1 FEBRUARY
Visit to NGA

AGHS NATIONAL CONFERENCES

43RD AGHS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

IPSWICH, QLD
29 SEPTEMBER –
1 OCTOBER 2023
*2 optional days to be
confirmed – 28 Sept and 2
October*

44TH AGHS ANNUAL
CONFERENCE
BUNBURY, WA
18 – 20 OCTOBER
1924

BRANCH COMMITTEE

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

Lynne Curran
Louise Gaudry
Susan Phillips

END OF YEAR MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

What a pleasure it has been to once again enjoy the comings and goings of our branch in person this year.

As 2022 comes to a close, on behalf of the newly elected branch committee, I would particularly like to thank you for your ongoing engagement with the work of the Society and support of our events. We are so disappointed that our planned final event of the year to two historically significant properties and gardens in the Goulburn area had to be cancelled because of COVID. We hope to be able to reschedule this much anticipated day trip to Richlands and Riversdale next year. In the meantime, we wish Stephen and Rosanna Horn, branch members, owners of Richlands and generous hosts, a rapid recovery. We would also like to thank all the wonderful volunteers at Riversdale who had done so much to prepare for our visit.

Planning of next year's events is well underway exploring gardens and cultural landscapes in all three of our branch name – the ACT, the Monaro and the Riverina - we look forward to sharing the details of these with you in the new year.

COVID has given us all a great deal of time to reflect on what is important to us as individuals and as a community. Many of us have focused on our health and safety, connecting with family and friends, and of course, our gardens and surrounding landscape. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to consider joining our branch committee this year, we would love one or two additional members to share the load.

Wishing you all a happy time over Christmas and New Year, and looking forward to seeing you all in 2023.

Bronwyn Blake

FORTHCOMING EVENT

SAVE THE DATE

CRESSIDA CAMPBELL - a Special Tour at the NGA Wednesday 1 February, 3 pm

Our opening event for 2023 is a special guided tour of the wonderful exhibition **Cressida Campbell** in the National Gallery of Australia.

This large, exceptionally beautiful exhibition has been drawing enthusiastic visitors since it opened in October. Here is an opportunity to join a special tour for AGHS members and friends. Kay Johnston, long standing NGA guide and AGHS member will lead the tour, along with other guides.

For over forty years, Sydney artist Cressida Campbell has been portraying her immediate surrounds in paintings and single edition prints. Of particular interest to AGHS members will be her depiction of the local Sydney landscape and of plants and her garden. She doesn't call herself a botanical artist, but aims at accurate portrayal of plants. Her mother was a keen gardener, and except for a few student years she has had a garden of her own. The flowers and plants she depicts are usually from her own garden, or have been given to her by friends. All her life she has liked to walk in the bushland around Sydney.

The survey exhibition covers Campbell's working life, not chronologically but thematically. Each of the six large rooms is devoted to a theme: Still life, Journey round my house, Plants, Studio, Bushland and Waterways with an additional room that includes a wonderful video interview with the artist.

For more information on the exhibition see the Gallery website:

<https://nga.gov.au/exhibitions/cressida-campbell>

As usual the tour will be followed by refreshments.

Bookings will open in January – we will send an email – and numbers are limited, so note the date and time, and keep an eye out for the announcement.

More information Nancy Clarke clarkenancy624@gmail.com or 0423 690 626.

PAST EVENTS

NIL DESPERANDUM CAMILLIA GROVE Saturday 17 September

Camellias in Tidbinbilla?

(An article by our member Wendy Whitham which first appeared in the Horticultural Society Bulletin and also the National Trust newsletter.)

Yes, indeed, there are some camellias in Tidbinbilla. But they're well-hidden and it takes some effort to find them.

I had the opportunity to see the camellias in September on an outing organised jointly by the National Trust and the Australian Garden History Society. It's a 12 kilometre return walk to *Nil Desperandum*, so we were very fortunate to be allowed to drive there. We went in 4WD vehicles whose tyres had to be pressure-hosed at the Works Depot to remove any weeds, and we went in convoy, led by a ranger.

Our destination was one of the properties settled by Europeans in the century and a half before Tidbinbilla became a Nature Reserve. The property is called *Nil Desperandum* (which means "Don't Despair").

Anne Claoue-Long from the AGHS spoke to us once we arrived at the house and gave us background to the European settlement of the Tidbinbilla area and about *Nil Desperandum* in particular. After a welcome morning tea (it was a cold day), we went for a walk on Eric and Elsie's Loop walk that's been put in by the ACT Parks and Conservation Service and has information boards provided by the ACT Government.

The house is surrounded by native forest and there is no clue that a grove of camellias is going to appear. We walked across the paddock near the house into the forest, down to a creek crossing, along the track, and suddenly there in front of us were the camellias, in full flower. An amazing sight in this otherwise very Australian setting.

So, how do the camellias come to be there? After being used for various purposes, *Nil Desperandum* was bought in 1978 by Phil Gilmour who with his horticulturist friend, Leon Horsnell, replaced the vegetable patch that had been developed by the former owners with a plantation of camellias, azaleas and rhododendrons. The idea was to sell the plants to residents of Canberra. There were 600 plants in the grove when the property was valued in 1985 in preparation for the Government taking over the land. The Government paid \$16,000 for them in 1988 and the Yarralumla Nursery removed the plants for sale. All the camellias are believed to be forms of *C. japonica*.

There are no azaleas or rhododendrons left, and the remaining 100 or so camellia bushes were nearly destroyed in the 2003 bushfires but they regenerated to what we saw in September. The plants are fenced off and cared for by the Friends of Tidbinbilla in recognition of their importance to the European cultural heritage of Tidbinbilla.



Photo: Wendy Whitham

With thanks to Anne Claoue-Long, Geoff Puleston and the ACT Government Canberra Tracks signage.

Wendy Whitham

LOVELY LAMBRIGG Saturday 15 October

The joint AGHS and National Trust ACT visit to Lambrigg was generally agreed to have been an outstanding success. Among the 70 enthusiastic participants were a number of people with personal or family associations with Lambrigg, particularly enjoying the sense of connection with this historic and beautiful site.

Its history as the place where William Farrer conducted his experimentation to develop wheat varieties that would suit Australian growing conditions and that would resist rust is well known, but there's nothing like being on the site where this work actually took place. Our generous hosts Kate and Peter Gullett welcomed us and Peter gave a brief overview of the history of the homestead, pointing out the site of Farrer's wheat experimental plots and some of the trees dating from the earliest plantings. What was originally Farrer's 'laboratory' remains, a free-standing cottage.

For local branch members of AGHS Lambrigg has a special interest. In 1995, as part of a larger project, the Branch commissioned a detailed survey of the Lambrigg Homestead Garden resulting in an important report by Judith Baskin and Anna Lucas. A copy of the garden plan from the report was provided to all of those who attended, as a hands-on guide to the garden as it was nearly 30 years ago. Several copies of extracts from the report were available for consultation, including a brief history of the evolution of the garden up to 1995, and its fascinating list of plants in the garden at that time. Enlarged copies of the coloured photos from 1995 were on display featuring in particular the excellent granite stone work, steps, paths and terracing that are still so important in the garden today.

This was a rare opportunity to compare the 'now' and the 'then' garden. Peter and Kate have continued the work on the garden that was begun when Peter's parents took up the property lease in 1949. Many of the plantings from 1995 remain, with a further thirty years of growth, others have been replaced, responding to both changes in taste and circumstances. The vegetable garden has been removed, opening up this large area for garden, and the land sloping towards the river built up to create a level site bounded by a ha-ha that now defines the boundary line of the property so successfully.



Photo: Nancy Clarke

Lambrigg is notable for its trees, with three Himalayan cedars (*Cedrus deodar*) dating back to the time of Farrer. Other early trees include a few trees outside the garden and therefore not in the garden plan – two Lebanese cedars just outside the garden on the western side and the English oak in the paddock. The avenue of pinoaks that used to define the entrance to the house remains, though no longer marking the entrance, and still without leaves at the time of our visit.

The mature, flowering dogwoods were probably the special features of the day – both single pink and double white dogwoods were in spectacular flower.

Unusually for Australian homesteads, Lambrigg is sited to take full advantage of the view, with an open aspect that looks down to the currently VERY full Murrumbidgee, and across to Lanyon.

The garden remains a pleasure to walk through, with both enclosed and open areas, substantial evergreen and deciduous plants, and a pervading sense of history.

Nancy Clarke

VISIT TO TWO BEFORE TEN, Sustainable Urban Farm, Café and Bar in Aranda Thursday 20 October

Fortunately, the rain held off for our tour of the incredibly productive garden at *Two Before Ten* in the old Aranda shops. Greg Johnson gave us a brief overview of the history of the site and the building which was designed by Dutch architect, Dirk Bolt (1930-2020 - <https://www.architectureanddesign.com.au/people/tone-on-tuesday-vale-dirk-bolt>) before head chef AND head gardener, Toby Peddle led us on a tour of the site.

With an acre of land, the Urban Farm supports *Two Before Ten* cafes across Canberra, growing fresh, sustainable produce throughout the year. Organic farming principles are used and the produce at the end of winter in the raised garden beds was truly impressive with cabbages, a variety of kale, mizuna and brassicas as well as leeks and spring onions. Toby explained that leeks and spring onions were planted throughout the farm as a means of pest control. Apparently, neither possums nor rats are fond of the smell of plants in the onion family. Toby raises all plants from seed and tomatoes were about to go in. Fruit trees have been planted along the western boundary – figs, mulberries, cherries, apples and stone fruit – and there is a very large berry patch at the bottom of the block. On the north facing front façade of the shops, lemons and more stone fruit are interspersed with carrots and brassicas. Toby pointed out a gap in the plantings behind the bus shelter which had been the home of a very large productive lime tree. However, he came to work one morning to find that someone had dug the lime up and taken it away. Walking up the footpath back to the café, Toby pointed out the grapevines which will eventually provide shade for the outdoor courtyard. Inside the courtyard, a variety of herbs are planted in small beds together with nasturtiums. The tour ended with a new raised bed for the South American three sisters - corn, beans and zucchini.

The productivity of the farm is due in large part to turning the green-waste as well as disposable cups, napkins etc. from the cafe and bar into beautiful compost. We were all envious of the compost machine which is capable of processing 60kg of waste a day! Our aspirations to have our own neighbourhood machine were given a reality check when Toby mentioned the price tag - in the order of \$50,000. The machine

comes with its own GPS tracking system to prevent theft. Surprisingly, there is little theft of garden produce – children from the local school might snack on the berries as they pass and other than the loss of the lime tree, the neighbourhood values the community facility that the farm and the cafe and bar provide.

The afternoon concluded with drinks on the house from The Ten Yards bar. What a lovely afternoon! Many thanks to Elise Fairchild who assisted with organisation and to Toby our guide. You can read more about Two Before Ten's philosophy at

<https://medium.com/@yulib75/because-it-matters-b0e1a553d99f>

Lynne Curran and Greg Johnson



Photos: Lynne Curran and Greg Johnson

BRANCH NEWS

NEW BRANCH COMMITTEE

At the recent AGM, Louise Gaudry was elected to the Committee of the ACT, Monaro and Riverina Branch of the AGHS. Welcome Louise! Anne Claoue-Long was confirmed as the branch's representative on the National Management Committee.

At its recent Committee meeting, the Committee elected Bronwyn Blake as Chair, Nancy Clarke as Secretary and Sue Cassidy as Treasurer. General members are Anne Claoue-Long, Susan Phillips, Louise Gaudry and Lynne Curran. Judy Pearce has generously offered to continue as Newsletter Editor – an offer the Committee is very grateful to accept.

Three members of the Committee retired at the AGM which means that the Committee is the smallest it has been in a number of years. This will inevitably impact on the range of activities that can be offered to members and on the advocacy and representational work that the branch can undertake. We urge all members to seriously consider stepping forward to serve on the Committee. The work is not onerous – we meet once a month, generally for a couple of hours – and in between meetings there will be some liaison about event planning, advocacy and communication. If you think you can assist, please contact either Bronwyn (0439 718 580) or Nancy (0423 690 626).

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

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

- Helen Banks, Braidwood
- Peter and Kate Gullett, Tharwa
- Lindsay Mackerras, Canberra

MEMBERS ARE OUR EYES AND EARS AND MAYBE HELPING HANDS TOO!

The AGHS advocacy role comprises contributing to public consultations on landscape and cultural issues with garden heritage or landscape conservation implications. In recent months, the ACT Monaro Riverina Branch has made submissions on the redevelopment of the War Memorial and the removal of many mature trees, a development proposal for Haig Park, and a new conservation plan for York Park. In order to put forward compelling arguments for the protection of our garden and landscape heritage, we utilise Committee expertise, and also consult with other AGHS members who have specialist knowledge. However, we can only make representations and submissions if we are aware of threats and that is where our members can play such an important role. Our members are our eyes and ears – able to identify risks and bring them to the Committee's attention. So, if you see or hear of proposed developments that have the potential to harm Canberra's valued landscape heritage, please get in touch with one of the Committee.

The newsletter is another area where members can add value to the work of the branch. Interesting snippets of information, links to interesting websites or even an article penned by one of our members are always valued.

Our branch has a reputation for well catered events and we'd love to see your culinary contributions if you wished to help out in this way. There will be no roster, but for future events, some of those who have registered may be asked if they could contribute something in the way of biscuits, a cake or some fruit.

NATIONAL NEWS

NATIONAL CONFERENCE: HOBART: 2022 LANDSCAPE ON THE EDGE: CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY

Despite the wintery conditions, the Hobart Conference was an outstanding success with very interesting talks, great warmth among the attendees, and wonderful gardens. It was evident that everyone enjoyed meeting together in person again. Congratulations to the organisers.

AGHS WEB SITE & NINA CRONE WRITING FUND

Did you know that the AGHS website is constantly updated with news? Under the News tab you will find the following of interest:

Book News

Francesca Beddie places a variety of short book reviews on the website where the content is garden related but not strictly Australian Garden History. These can be found Book News under the News tab.

I recently enjoyed reading one of the latest books included in this: *Miss Willmott's Ghosts* by Sandra Lawrence, Blink Publishing, 2022.

There is a copy available for loan in the ACT Library Service if you are interested. Ellen Willmott was famous in part for scattering seeds of *Eryngium* as she visited other people's gardens. The plants were known colloquially as Miss Willmott's Ghosts. This is a picture of *Eryngium* growing on Mt Ainslie last summer. I wonder if Miss Willmott's ghost had been walking nearby!



Photo: **Anne Claoue-Long**

Articles

Francesca receives more articles than she can fit into the journal and some that are not easy to fit into the themed editions. So that none are lost she posts them on the website. Click on some of the links and take yourself on a voyage of discovery.

Climate Adaptation Tab

This is another new initiative and reports on the AGHS Climate Change Position Statement that was launched at the recent Hobart Conference. The tab leads readers to the position statement and also relevant articles, links and case studies. Well worth a look.

Also related to books and writing

The Nina Crone Writing Fund

This writing fund money is used for awards to enable new voices to be included in the AGHS journal. It was used to support Palawa woman, Trish Hodge (who did the welcome to country at the Hobart conference and gave a paper), to turn her paper into an article for the January issue of Australian Garden History.

The fund is now in need of a top up. If you would like to give AGHS a Christmas present then a donation to the fund would be welcomed.

You can find information about the Nina Crone Writing Fund and the articles it has sponsored under the Journal tab on the website.

For donations please email either

Lisa at info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au or

Francesca at editor@gardenhistorysociety.org.au

Happy web surfing and reading and Merry Christmas!

Anne Claoue-Long, State NMC Representative

AGHS NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

NMC Positions Changeover

Four members left at the recent AGM in Hobart – Bronwyn Blake, Stuart Reid, John Maurer and Lynne Paul., and there were three people elected to the member elected positions - Caroline Grant (WA), Prue Slatyer (Tas), Dot Evans (SA).

New NMC executive plus elected members: Lynne Walker (NSW) as Chair, Prue Slatyer as Vice-Chair (Tas), Helen Oates as Secretary (NSW), Lynn Barrett as Public Officer (SH), Stephen Hathway as Treasurer (Syd). Annabel Murray (SH), Caroline Grant (WA) and Dot Evans (SA) as elected members.

Branch Reps: Rosie Mackinnon (Tas), Anna Long (Vic), Patricia Michell (SA), Patsy Vizents WA, Lyn Barrett SH, Ann Wegener (Qld), Anne Claoue-Long (ACT Monaro Riverina), Steven Halliday (NSW).

Francesca Beddie, journal editor and Lisa Nutting NEO both attend and contribute to NMC meetings.

In addition there are various NMC sub committees dealing with different issues. These are headed by NMC members but also have members from the wider society.

- Constitution/ Manual of Procedures / Strategic Plan - Lyn Walker and NEO
- Marketing - Lyn Barrett
- Advocacy- Anne Claoue-Long
- Oral History - Patsy Vizents
- Tours - Lynne Walker

- Editorial Advisory Committee - Anne Claoue-Long and Francesca Beddie
- Webinars - Anne Claoue-Long, Francesca Beddie, Annabel Murray
- Partnerships - Annabel Murray
- Climate Change - Prue Slatyer
- Finance Advisory - Stephen Hathway

If any ACT Monaro Riverina members feel they have something to offer to these committees please get in touch via the local committee.

OF INTEREST



ICOMOS GA2023 Fast Facts

- Dates: 31 August – 9 September 2023
- Venue: International Convention Centre (ICC Sydney) right in the heart of Sydney
- Audience: Expected up to 1,500 professionals from across the globe representing heritage, archaeology, historians, urban planning, architects and academia just to name a few, providing unrivalled access to high-calibre specialist knowledge and delivering a boost to 'grass roots' interest in cultural heritage and conservation work throughout Australia and globally.
- Theme: 'Heritage Changes' with sub-themes: Resilience – Responsibility - Rights – Relationships.
- Legacy: GA2023 will leave a lasting positive legacy for the recognition, protection and management of cultural and natural heritage and for communities that value and care for it in Australia and globally.

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

AUSTRALIA POST'S HERITAGE ROSE ISSUE 13 SEPTEMBER 2022

Has anyone seen one of the new stamps recently issue featuring Australian Heritage Roses. The four roses featured in this stamp issue are examples of high-quality Australian-bred roses that represent a diversity of colour, appearance, type, breeder and breeding location.

The issue was released in the lead-up to the World Rose Convention 2022, which was held in Adelaide between 27 October and 3 November. For more information on this collection go to <https://australiapostcollectables.com.au/stamp-issues/australian-bred-roses>. There is also a link to an interview with rose experts Kelvin and Melanie Trimper on this page.



Lorraine Lee

**Lady of Australia
Marie Bashir**

Governor

Dusty Moon

POTTED FIG TREES

Dr Mark O'Connor has generously offered some large (c. 1.5 metre high) potted fig trees. He propagated these from a new variety of domestic fig, discovered in Canberra that is colloquially called the Cocktail fig. It has a longish neck which means that it keeps better once picked. This variety was discovered by Mark's neighbour Jenny Clark, the former convenor of the O'Connor COGs garden. If you're interested, please contact Mark at mark@australianpoet.com

OPEN GARDENS CANBERRA

Information is not yet up on the website for the Autumn 2023 visits. For more information go to <https://opengardenscanberra.org.au/>

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

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

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/>

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

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