

ACT Monaro Riverina Branch

Newsletter September 2021 No 5



Australian Garden History Society
www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au

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BRANCH DIARY

**28 SEPTEMBER,
5.15PM – 7.00**

ACT Monaro Riverina
Branch AGM & Talk by
Greg Johnson on *A Year in
our COVID Garden*
By ZOOM

8 OCTOBER PM
Telling Time by the Sun

14 OCTOBER, 6PM
Winter Series Lecture 3
*Marion Mahony – in her
Own Right*
Speaker: Glenda Korporaal

12 & 13 NOVEMBER
Garden visits in the Albury
Region

26 NOVEMBER
Branch Xmas event to
Taralga and Goulburn

AGHS NATIONAL CONFERENCES

**10-12 SEPTEMBER
2021**
AGHS National
Conference – Sydney
*Many Dreams One
Landscape*
Lectures only by ZOOM

**11-13 NOVEMBER
2022**
AGHS National
Conference – Hobart

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I do hope that you are keeping well, and that Spring gardening, and spying on other gardens during your one-hour exercise walk is keeping you active and happy.

Your energetic local Committee members had planned a varied and interesting program for the Spring months, but sadly it is quite likely that some may be cancelled, or deferred until next year.

As mentioned elsewhere in this Newsletter, the Annual Conference in Sydney will not occur as planned from 10-13 September, but a lecture component will be available via ZOOM.

Our AGM will now be held via ZOOM on 28 September followed by a talk by rare plant aficionado, photographer and long-time AGHS member, Greg Johnson. Greg will be taking us on a photo tour of his garden and talking about the trials and triumphs of gardening in the year of smoke, hail and pestilence

Many of you have already signed up for *Telling the Time by the Sun* on Friday 8 October. You will recall that this is an event deferred from last year. We are awaiting advice, both from ACT Health, and also from our expert speaker Dr Marg Folkard who lives in South Australia, on whether we can go ahead. If not possible, we hope that it will be transferred to March next year.

Another planned October event was a talk by Glenda Korporaal about Marion Mahony Griffin, which is now scheduled for 14 October. This is a joint event with the Friends of the National Library, and it attracted a large prospective audience when originally advertised for 4 August. As Glenda lives in Sydney, it is not certain that she will be able to come to Canberra at that time, but if not, we hope to hold it by ZOOM.

To end on a more promising note, should restrictions be eased in NSW by November we have in planning a self-drive visit to Woomargama and Albury for 12-13 November, and the Christmas event on Friday 26 November with a visit to Richlands, a property steeped in rural history near Taralga, owned by one of our members, and Riversdale, a National Trust property in Goulburn.

So, many interesting events in the offering, but they can only occur when current COVID restrictions are lifted. In the meantime, enjoy the bountiful spring flowers.

Margie Bourke

BRANCH NEWS

WELCOME TO A NEW MEMBERS

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

- Brian Babington, Canberra
- Debbie Argue, Canberra

**BRANCH
COMMITTEE**

Margie Bourke, Chair
Sue Cassidy, Treasurer
Anne Claoue-Long, State
NMC Representative
Nancy Clarke, Secretary

Bronwyn Blake (and Co-
chair of the NMC)
Lynne Curran
Fleur Flanery
Greg Johnson

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ACT Monaro Riverina Branch Annual General Meeting 2021

**To be followed by a short talk by Greg Johnson
(details below)**

TUESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER, 5.30– 7.00PM (INCL TALK)

To be held by ZOOM. ZOOM access will open at 5.15 pm and the AGM will start promptly at 5.30 pm. The talk will follow starting at 6 pm.

Everyone is most welcome to attend the AGM and the talk, but only members of the ACT Monaro Riverina Branch of AGHS are eligible to vote at the AGM. Papers for the AGM (including reports) will be sent to all Branch members before the meeting.

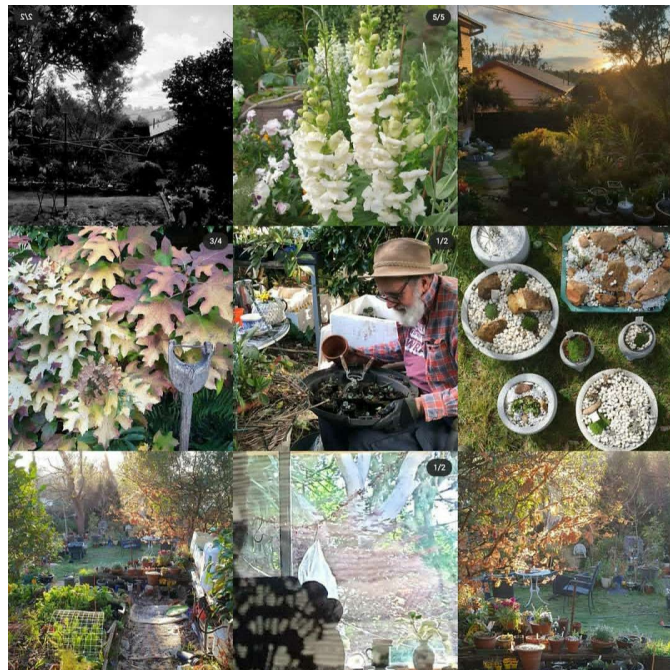
Closer to the event the Zoom link for the meeting and talk will be sent by email to people who have registered.

Registration for the AGM and talk via TryBooking is essential. Please book at: <https://www.trybooking.com/BTYII>

There is NO charge for either event but you are invited to make a donation when you register towards support for refugees during the Afghanistan crisis. We will forward all proceeds to the UNHCR Afghanistan appeal.

Talk: A Year in Our COVID Garden

Speaker: Greg Johnson



Greg Johnson grows rare and unusual plants, especially bulbs and perennials that like Canberra. But, gardeners always try to stretch the climate boundaries!

Immediately after the AGM, join us for his short talk and photo-tour of garden adventures in a year of smoke haze, hail storm devastation and COVID-19.

A member of the AGHS since 2011, Greg has previously spoken about Australian garden writing

after 1788, and, more recently, he helped organise the AGHS 2020 Garden History Photo Competition.

Greg has lived and gardened in Canberra for 25 years and shares his gardening insights on <https://www.instagram.com/gardenrevue/>

Photos: Greg Johnson

Telling the Time by the Sun, An Enlightening Afternoon Friday 8 October, 1.30pm

NB: We are awaiting advice, from ACT Health and also from our expert speaker, Dr Marg Folkard who lives in South Australia, on whether we can go ahead. If not possible we hope that it will be transferred to March next year.



Using the apparent movement of the sun to mark the passage of time goes back to antiquity, with people from many different cultures creating devices – sundials – that use a light spot or a shadow to record time. Before clocks were invented, sundials were used in public places and in the grounds of significant buildings to mark the hours of the day. By the 19th century sundials had become largely ornamental, and today many gardens large and small feature a sundial.

Sundials designed and made by the Adelaide-based physicists, Dr Marg Folkard and John Ward of **Sundials Australia**, are installed in public and private gardens in Australia and beyond, including in many Australian botanic gardens –

among them Sydney, Mt Annan, Mt Tomah and Port Augusta. Each is unique and specific to its location.

Photo: Armillary Sphere, ANBG, Nancy Clarke

Canberra is fortunate to have a number of their sundials, and on Friday 8 October 2021 we have the opportunity to hear Marg talk about the history and science of sundials, as well as the exacting art of creating them. She will focus in particular on two sundials – the armillary sphere in the Australian National Botanic Gardens (a gift to the Gardens from its Friends in 2000) and the analemmatic or human sundial at Mt Stromlo. The Sundials Afternoon will start in the theatre of the ANBG. After this, we will walk to the sundial near the rockery in the ANBG. Flora Explorer, the ANBG mini-van will be available for participants with limited mobility. After afternoon tea we will drive in our own cars to the sundial at Mt Stromlo Observatory, so we can tell the time by our own shadows in the late afternoon light.

This event has been organised jointly by the Australian Garden History Society and the Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens. We had originally planned our Sundials Afternoon for April 2020, but had to defer it because of COVID. We are now delighted to be able to proceed with this wonderful event, though with reduced numbers of attendees permitted.

Cost: \$25 including afternoon tea. Plus 50 cents ticket fee.

Bookings are essential and numbers very limited. Information was sent to members by email on the 5th August and **at the moment the event is fully booked**. However you can join the waiting list by booking through Try Booking:

<https://www.trybooking.com/BSEUG>

Enquiries: Nancy Clarke clarkenancy624@gmail.com, or ring 0423 690 626

WINTER LECTURE 3

POSTPONED FROM WEDNESDAY 4 AUGUST, 6PM

TO THURSDAY 14 OCTOBER, 6PM**NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA****MARION MAHONY GRIFFIN – IN HER OWN RIGHT****SPEAKER: GLENDA KORPORAAL**

This is a joint event with the Friends of the National Library, and it attracted a large prospective audience when originally advertised for 4 August. As Glenda lives in Sydney it is not certain that she will be able to come to Canberra at that time, but if not, we hope to hold it by ZOOM. Details on this and booking arrangements will be sent as soon as possible.

In association with the Friends of the National Library.

Author Glenda Korporeal looks at Marion Mahony, the ground breaking woman who played such a critical role in the design of Canberra.

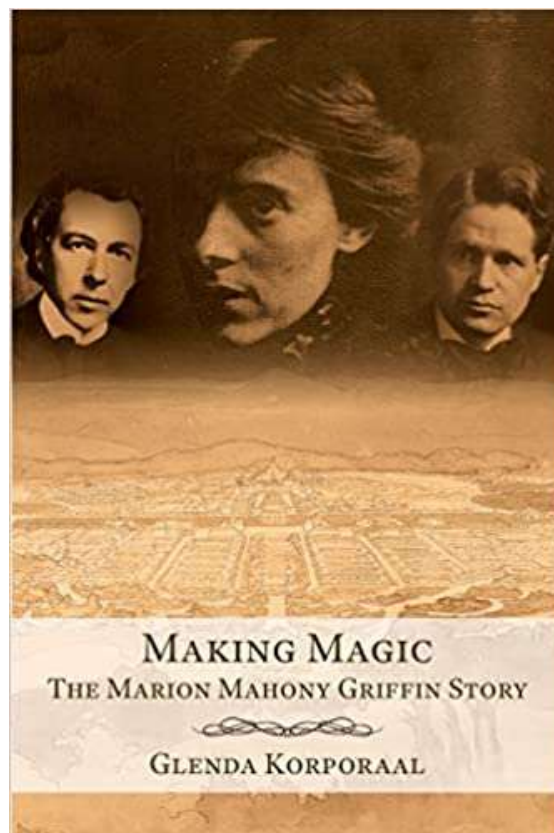
She argues the case for Marion to be recognised for her unique combination of artist, architect, environmentalist, community maker and social observer Korporeal will put the case for Marion to be considered in her own right, separately from her husband Walter Burley Griffin. With so much of her work already in Canberra - in the National Library and the Archives - she deserves to be ranked as a “founding mother” of Canberra whose work and life continues to inspire Australians more than 100 years after she lived here.

Glenda is a Sydney based journalist and writer. After living in the US for six years she developed an interest in US architect Frank Lloyd Wright which turned into an interest in Walter Burley Griffin and a fascination with his ground breaking architect wife Marion Mahony.

Glenda has worked as a journalist in Sydney, Canberra, London, Washington, New York, Singapore, Hong Kong and Beijing. Her journalistic career has seen her work as the US correspondent and the first woman deputy editor of the *Australian Financial Review*.

She has also been business editor of *The Bulletin* magazine, editor of the Australian's business magazine *The Deal* and is now associate editor (business) of *The Australian* in Sydney.

Her book *Making Magic: The Marion Mahony Griffin* story is the first biography of Marion.

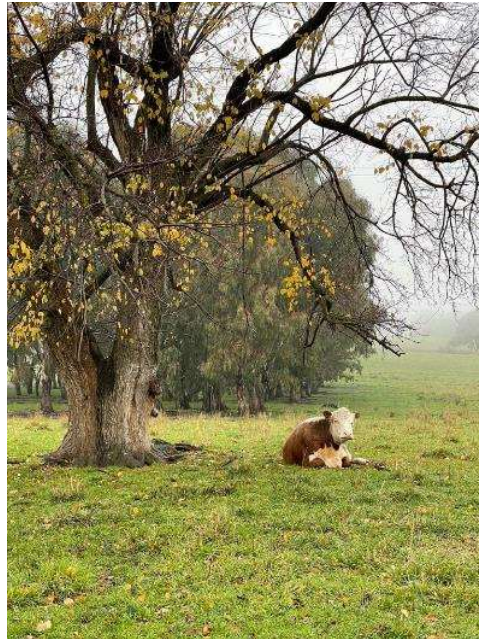


SAVE THE DATES

Garden Visits – Albury Region (Self Drive) Friday 12 & Saturday 13 November

As foreshadowed in our last newsletter, planning continues for a self-drive trip to Woomargama and Albury. The self-drive tour includes - Woomargama Station and Dunraven both outstanding gardens and then onto Albury for more gardens and history – COVID permitting of course!

Woomargama is a mixed grazing property with a beautifully managed house and garden nestled on the edge of the Great Dividing Range near the Murray River. Some of the land on the property is managed under the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT) which is a statutory not-for-profit body, established under NSW legislation. We will also be visiting Dunraven, an extraordinary house designed in the 1970s by Sir Roy



Grounds. The property is 15 kilometres north-west of Albury on a ridge with extensive views and a wonderful garden. Other stops include the Albury Botanic Gardens and the Albury Art Gallery. **Numbers will be limited, so for the moment, mark your diary and book your accommodation in Albury for Friday night or longer!**

The plan is to arrive at Woomargama around 11.30am on Friday 12 November with the programme of activities wrapping up on Saturday afternoon to enable those wishing to return to Canberra time to make their way home in daylight hours or providing time for those wishing to stay on in Albury an opportunity to do so.

For more on Woomargama go to <https://bit.ly/2Uuofwl>

Image and text below from the Woomargama face book page

"My father Gordon always used to say that when cattle are sitting down by 11 AM you know that they are content and not hungry. Here we find the picture of contentment; one of our girls enjoying the winter's morning. We love Poll Herefords for their quiet nature. They are always handled in a low stress manner. What better than to see a cow chew her cud?"

Branch Christmas Party Friday 26 November

It's important to have a few things to look forward to in amongst all the doom and gloom of the last few weeks. So with that in mind, we're planning a Christmas Party to celebrate friendships and gardens and to farewell what has been for many people a very difficult year.

We hope to be able to visit Richlands, a property steeped in rural history near Taralga, owned by one of our members, and Riversdale, a National Trust property in Goulburn.

Further details will be provided in October.

PAST EVENTS

Webinar: The Blooming Simpson – a (Botanist in a) Botanical Paradise **Speaker: Rosemary Purdie**

THURSDAY 8 JULY

There are few people in Australia whose career path demonstrates so clearly their passion for lifelong exploration as does that of Dr Rosemary Purdie. Currently an Honorary Associate at the Australian National Herbarium, Canberra she was previously the Commissioner for the Environment for the ACT Government, Director Natural Resource Evaluation and Communication for the Murray-Darling Basin Commission and Deputy Executive Director at the Australian Heritage Commission, where she was responsible for natural and cultural heritage assessments and advice on heritage conservation.

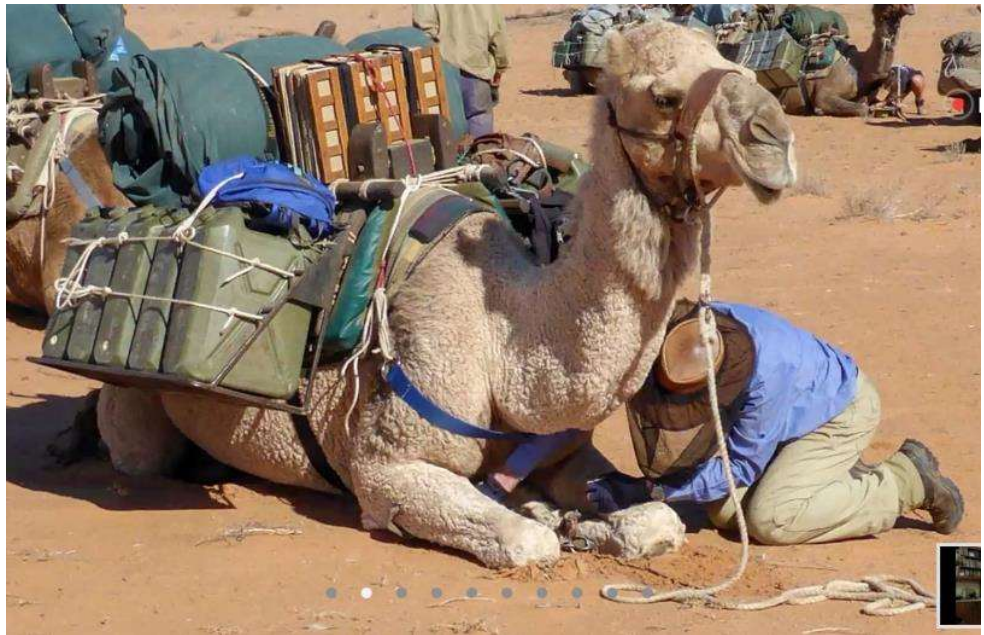


Photo: Rosemary Purdie

Along with this outstanding employment history Rosemary's passion and professional interest are for plants. As an experienced botanical ecologist whose collections are lodged with the Queensland Herbarium and Australian National Herbarium, she has been undertaking flora surveys in the Simpson Desert since 1977.

Watching Rosemary's presentation on a July evening in our lounge rooms felt a long way from the sand dunes of the Simpson Desert – the fourth largest desert in Australia, with its 180,000 sq. km stretching across the Northern Territory, Queensland and NSW. The presentation captured both the beauty and the harshness of the Simpson Desert, one of the richest botanical areas in Australia but one still comparatively free from invasive species.

The presentation commenced with a description of the Desert and the distinctive features of its sand dune system - parallel dunes run north to south, over hundreds of kilometres. Some of these dunes are 30m high whilst others are more manageable for foot exploration at 2-3m. These landforms provide the key features of the vegetation and ecology of the region, and influence the drainage networks of the Great Artesian Basin.

Rosemary explained the meticulous planning needed to allow her to undertake the plant surveys which she does in conjunction with other botanists, as well as the daily record keeping on site that is critical for the success of their work. She spoke of the beauty of many of the plants as well as their adaptability to their harsh environment – super hardy shrubs including many species of *eremophila* that can survive for extended periods with little water, tough grasses including *spinifex* that bind the sand as they spread across the dunes, and other xerophytic species that use devices like sharp thorns or spikes, small leaves, and bulbous stems to survive and flourish in the desert environment. Particularly beautiful are the dramatic and extensive floral displays of ephemeral annuals like the many species of daisy whose seeds lie dormant for years but that germinate, flower, seed and then die with amazing rapidity after rain. There can be bonuses too, appealing to the botanist if not visually attractive. Rosemary had hoped to sight liverworts, and at the very end of one trip she had the satisfaction of locating two species of these tiny plants - *Riccia inflexa* and *Riccia crustata*.

The talk was aided by stunning maps and gorgeous photography that showed the enormity of the landscape, one full of wonder, beauty, survival and brutality. The most astonishing part of the presentation for some was the method of loading the camels which are used to carry supplies for two weeks - swags, tents, clothing, water, food and importantly for Rosemary and the survey team, the plant press and newspaper. It was amazing to know that after the literally hundreds of years of plant collecting and changes in technology over that time, the traditional method of pressing plants between newspaper or other paper remains the preferred method. As weight is of critical importance for the camels, every few days Rosemary dries out the newspaper she has used to press plant species, and once dry, it is reused.

Rosemary noted that for their first three botanical expeditions the survey teams used four-wheel drive vehicles, but that the stop/start timing of this form of transport was not totally satisfactory. The last four expeditions using camels (she warmly thanked Andrew Harper and Australian Desert Expeditions) have been more productive, as the walking pace of the camels allows time for the scientists to work on foot, observing and recording their findings and connecting with an ancient land, while leaving a relatively untouched path.

You may also be interested in one of Rosemary's recent publications '*Black Mountain, A Natural History of a Canberra Icon*'.

Thank you, Rosemary for a wonderful presentation.
Fleur Flanery and Nancy Clarke

AGHS NATIONAL NEWS



Thanks to all the entrants who have participated in the AGHS Garden History Photo Competition.

Entrant numbers were modest - 20 submitting 35 images and accompanying text ranging from sublime to thought provoking to quirky! 15 contestants were AGHS members and 5 were non-members.

The judges have been provided with all the material on an anonymous basis and a preliminary assessment is currently in progress. The successful entrants in each category and overall will be announced at the National AGM later in the year.

Greg Johnson

AGHS 2021 CONFERENCE: SYDNEY 10-12 SEPTEMBER 2021

As many of you know, the AGHS national conference will now be delivered online due to the current outbreak of the Delta variant of Covid-19 in Greater Sydney and regional NSW. The online conference will be held from Friday 10th September to Saturday 11th September. Those who register will receive a link and be able to watch the lectures and participate in question and answer sessions from the comfort of their own home or garden.

By embracing technology, people from all over the world will be able to gather virtually and participate in the wonderful program. The conference will be recorded and available for registered delegates to watch for a limited period of time at a later date. To see the speakers and order of events go to:

https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/2021conference_virtual-program-006.pdf



If you've not already booked for the virtual event, we would encourage you to do so.

WEBINAR: STUART READ ON SPANISH GARDENS – SHADE AND A SENSE OF MYSTERY WEDNESDAY 10 NOVEMBER

More information for follow.

AGHS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021 SUNDAY 14 NOVEMBER, 10AM

This will be a virtual event online due to the pandemic travel restrictions. The ZOOM application will need to be installed on your computer before joining the meeting. Further meeting details to follow in the AGHS National ENews.

The National Management Committee have approved a final draft of an updated AGHS Constitution for consideration at the AGM. We encourage you to read the final draft and invite your feedback, before or at the AGM.

<https://mailchi.mp/gardenhistorysociety.org.au/aghs-national-e-news-june-4802154?e=ffc2230583>

TOUR: GARDENS OF NEW ENGLAND AND THE HUNTER VALLEY 19 MARCH – 10 APRIL 2022

Join garden enthusiast, Lynne Walker, a passionate gardener and former Coordinator for Australia's Open Garden Scheme, Northern New South Wales, on an exciting new tour organised by ASA Cultural Tours for AGHS members which will explore a diverse range of private gardens in the Hunter Valley and New England

Places are very limited so please book quickly. For more information to go

<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/events-conferences/category/tour/>

OF INTEREST

NATIONAL CAPITAL AUTHORITY MAGIC OF MARION

<https://www.nca.gov.au/marion>

Exhibition from late June at Regatta Point

Marion, a Woman of Genius

Discover more about Marion's life and work. Besides being a noted architect she was a gifted painter, community organiser and sometime believer in fairies and elves.
Free.

Sewing Workshop

Making with Marion

Marion was an advocate for sensible, comfortable dressing. Bring your machine and fabric to Regatta Point and join a workshop to learn how to make the famous 1920s 'One Hour Dress', Cost \$22

The workshop has been postponed until after the current COVID restrictions in the ACT have been lifted. Register interest at nce@nca.gov.au

THE CLIMATE CHANGE ALLIANCE OF BOTANIC GARDENS

The world's botanic gardens are custodians of critically needed scientific and horticultural knowledge, and their landscapes a source of inspiration, learning and a place for positive social change.

The Climate Change Alliance of Botanic Gardens brings together botanic organisations and friends to take action to protect and enable adaptation of botanic landscapes in a changing climate. By working together, we can protect our treasured botanic landscapes. The time for working together is now. The time for action is now.

For more information visit <https://www.rbq.vic.gov.au/initiatives/climate-change-alliance/>

AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

AGHS Members may be interested to read the statement by Academy President Professor John Shine's on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Working Group 1 report (The Physical Science Basis) prepared by over 200 scientists. For details go to <https://www.science.org.au/news-and-events/news-and-media-releases/presidents-statement-ipcc-working-group-1-report>

CANBERRA ENVIRONMENT CENTRE ENVIRONMENTAL HEROES

Podcasts about locals doing great things for our world, hosted by Ryan Lungu and Julie Boulton. The most recent interviews are

Episode 6 - Chris Dennis, the man behind *Two Before Ten* cafes. From humble beginnings in Aranda Shops to a network of cafes across the city, Chris has made an effort to make business decisions that are in line with the UN Sustainable Development goals. This has led to the purchasing of an industrial composting machine to deal with organic waste, a truly seasonal menu and a quarter acre urban farm providing fresh produce directly to the kitchen.

Episode 7 - Brook Clinton, the founder and operator of Capital Scraps Composting, a not-for-profit social enterprise motivated by the direct climate benefit and wider social

benefits of composting at the community scale. Brook has a PhD in biodegradation and most mornings she can be found riding her bicycle through the suburbs of Canberra collecting household food scraps before stepping into her day job as the Executive Director of the community organisation SEE-Change.

For all episodes go to:

<https://www.canberraenvironment.org/environmental-heroes-podcast>

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS

www.anbg.gov.au

HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF CANBERRA

<http://www.hsoc.org.au/index.htm>

LAKE BURLEY GRIFFIN GUARDIANS (LBGG)

<http://lakeburleygriffinguardians.org.au/>

A note from the editor

Members receiving this Newsletter by email may wonder why I give the full URL instead of just including it in a hyperlink.

It is because not all members are receiving the newsletter by email and they need the details to access the link.

Judy Pearce
