



Australian Garden History Society
Tasmanian Branch

Newsletter No. 120

Spring 2020

2019-20 COMMITTEE

Chairman: Lynne Paul, T: 03 6362 4973

tahara7@bigpond.com

Deputy Chairman & Conference Convenor:

Prue Slatyer, M: 0438 366 092

prueslatyer@gmail.com

Secretary: Vacant

Treasurer: Bruce Chetwynd

M: 0437 250 516

bgaltc@internode.on.net

Committee members:

Antonia Dunne, M: 0418 6500 305

dunne.antonina@gmail.com

Jean Elder, M: 0419 310 696

jeanldr@gmail.com

Jane Long M:

jane.long480@gmail.com

Rosie Mackinnon, P: 03 6392 2210

armackin@intas.net.au

Mary Ramsay M: 0428 595 701

ratho1@bigpond.com

Jennifer Stackhouse, M: 0488 047 011

jstackho@bigpond.net.au

Blue Gum is published periodically.

Send contributions by email to

jstackho@bigpond.net.au or mail to

103 Barrington Road, Barrington, TAS 7306

National office: M: 0419 977 703

gardenhistorysociety.org.au

From the Chairman

Welcome to the spring edition of *Blue Gum* and a special welcome to new members and new committee members – Antonia Dunne, Jane Long and Mary Ramsay – who joined the committee at our recent AGM.

It is encouraging to see new faces on the committee as three current members – myself, Prue Slatyer and Bruce Chetwynd – are coming to the end of our terms in the next two years. Also, we have work ahead of us organising the AGHS's 2022 conference in Hobart. The conference has been delayed due to the postponement of the Sydney conference to 2021 (see more on page 2).

With the advent of COVID-19, we switched to holding online committee meetings via Zoom and we have all found these to be a very efficient way to hold our meetings. If you have been reluctant to join the committee because of the travel commitment, you will now be able to join us without the need to travel to Ross – the halfway point between north and south.

I also have good news about our project at Home Hill (see page 10).

Lynne Paul, Chairman

National conference updates & call for volunteers

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the national Australian Garden History Society conference planned to be held in Sydney in October 2020 has been postponed to 2021. This will result in the conference being held in Hobart in 2022 instead of 2021, and Queensland in winter 2023.

Hobart conference

The new dates for the Hobart conference are November 11-13, 2022.

The theme for the Hobart conference is 'Landscape on the Edge: opportunity and challenge', which relates to Tasmania being on the edge of the world with its own geological, Aboriginal and colonial history; as well as today being on the edge of a changing climate, and most recently a changing world suffering the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

This conference theme will allow speakers to canvas the geology of Tasmania and its impact on our natural landscapes; the landscape of Aboriginal Tasmania; the colonial landscape and how being on the edge of society shaped our gardens and built landscape; and how climate change and the pandemic are impacting our landscape and what changes may occur in the future.

Planning committee

The conference planning committee of 19 volunteers has seven sub-committees, which cover all aspects of the conference from transport and venues to speakers and sponsorship.

Please contact Conference Convenor, Prue Slatyer, prueslatyer@gmail.com, if you would like to be involved.

LANDSCAPES AT RISK

As part of the AGHS's aim to promote awareness and conservation of significant gardens, a 'Watch and Action List' of landscapes at risk has been prepared. In July it was posted on the AGHS website. The criteria for 'at risk' are:

- Active current threat (development approved/ lack of heritage listing or consideration of landscape heritage, lack of protection during development)
- Potential future threat (development, neglect, poor management)
- Lack of champions (community protest, unaware, Council/manager uninterested).

Check the list of landscapes at risk. Are there others, to add, or entries to update?

<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/2020/07/https-www-gardenhistorysociety-org-au-wp-content-uploads-2020-04-landscapes-at-risk-aghs-16-apr-2020-pdf/>

Garden revisited: Lahaye's Garden at Tasmania's Government House

In the absence of real garden visits, Prue Slatyer revisits one of our past events and provides a virtual tour of the recreated garden at Government House in Hobart.



Members of the Tasmanian Branch of the AGHS visited the Lahaye Garden at Government House, Hobart, in April 2018.

This garden commemorates and celebrates French exploration of Van Diemen's Land in the 18th century. Its planting was inspired by the garden created at Recherche Bay in 1792 by Felix Lahaye, who was the gardener on Bruni d'Entrecasteaux's maritime expedition.

The D'Entrecasteaux's expedition stayed at Recherche Bay for about three weeks and returned the following year for another three weeks. This 18th century

French garden was arguably the first European garden in Van Diemen's Land and one of the first in Australia.

A significant area of the northeast peninsula of Recherche Bay is now listed on State and National Heritage Registers for its important cultural heritage values.

The most pertinent of these include d'Entrecasteaux's expeditions of 1792 and 1793 involving botanical collections, astronomical observations, peaceful >

contact with Aboriginal people and the planting of the vegetable garden.



The Government House vegie garden.

The garden at Government House was conceived and constructed by Tara Edmondson, now Estate Garden Manager at Government House, Tasmania, and her colleagues.

Tara researched the journals of Bruni d'Entrecasteaux and his crew to learn about the layout and design of the garden at Recherche Bay and the types of vegetable seeds that were planted to complete her design for the Government House garden.



Vegie seeds obtained from a French company, who also supplied seeds to the French voyage 250 years ago.

Tara even managed to source seeds from the same French seed supplier as Lahaye used 250 years ago.

French guests at Government House have been treated to dinners featuring produce from Lahaye's garden, which their ancestors may have also eaten two and half centuries ago.

How to visit the garden

While Government House is still closed for events due to COVID-19, Tara Edmondson hopes to resume garden tours once restrictions are lifted. For more information see govhouse.tas.gov.au

DIG IN WITH TROVE

One of AGHS's latest projects is to seek volunteers to correct, tag and comment on digitised newspaper articles on Trove (part of the National Library of Australia). It is fascinating, rewarding and important work to do from home. See more on the AGHS website: <https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/publications/dig-in-with-trove/>

Recent events & what's coming up in Tasmania with AGHS

With the easing of some restrictions around gatherings, the AGHS is planning to hold several activities. Our first event was our AGM and Winter Lecture.



Angus Stewart.

AGM and Winter Lecture

Our AGM and Winter Lecture was held on a windy August 30 at Battery Point. Guest speaker was TV personality and native plant expert, Angus Stewart (above). Angus has relocated from New South Wales to the beautiful Tasman Peninsula where he has bought an old dairy farm near Premaydena. Angus has become involved in local projects including edible native plantings at Macquarie Point and the re-creation of a series of historic gardens around late 19th century cottages at Premaydena (formerly known as Impression Bay). The project at Premaydena involves 50 local volunteers.

Angus reported that the initial work has involved infrastructure to enable the garden to succeed including a dam, pump, water tanks and a propagation house. There has also been some planting of oak and other trees.

The committee at Premaydena is seeking sources of heritage plants including shrubs, perennials and fruit trees for the planned gardens.

COMING UP...

40th anniversary garden party

The Australian Garden History Society was formed 40 years ago this year. To mark the anniversary, AGHS Branches across Australia are holding a party and funding a locally important project. In Tasmania we've decided to throw a garden party and garden visit.

The party was originally scheduled for March 2020 but cancelled due to COVID-19. The committee is now organizing a new date, hopefully in September or October. The afternoon will begin with a visit to Valleyfield at New Norfolk. It will be followed by a visit to Glen Derwent for afternoon tea. Watch your email for all the details and booking form.



Historic Glen Derwent at New Norfolk will host a garden party to mark the AGHS's 40th anniversary.

Christmas Party

Plans are also underway for an exciting Christmas Party at Evandale over the last weekend in November. The weekend will involve garden visits, a dinner and boxed lunch. Watch your email for more details and a booking form!

Kitty Henry is not forgotten



Late last year, Prue Slatyer, on behalf of the Australian Garden History Society, put forward the suggestion that Hobart's new foot and cycle bridge over the Brooker Highway should be named the Kitty Henry Bridge to honour Hobart florist, garden designer and identity, Kitty Henry.

Although the naming proposal failed and the bridge has been officially named the Rose Garden Bridge, Kitty's name has been remembered. Where will probably surprise you. But first, let's remember Kitty Henry.

Who was Kitty?

Kitty (Kathleen Vivian) Henry (1904-1966?), lived at Sandy Bay in an old house called 'Ellington' that her family moved to when Kitty was 16. 'Ellington' had a flower room where Kitty worked and a woodland garden described by our Governor, Her Excellency, Professor the Honourable Kate Warner, in a speech to open the Claremont Spring Daffodil and Camellia Show in 2016, as filled with "hellebores, little cyclamen and snowdrops". It is also described elsewhere as wild and weedy but studded with floral treasures. Sadly both the house and garden are no more. Bits of other gardens Kitty designed have fared better.

She worked mainly in the Sandy Bay area but also ventured to the country. 'Carinya' at Sandy Bay and 'Kindra' at Taroona are two town gardens she designed and planted in Hobart while 'Auburn' near Ross, was a large country garden she worked on during the 1950s.

While Kitty Henry may no longer be a household name and much of her landscape designs have been swept away, her life and her work are well documented.

She rates an entry in the *Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens* (Oxford University Press Australia, 2002) as well as a chapter in *Garden Voices* by Victorian garden writer Anne Latreille (Blooming Books, 2013).

Bouquets and memories

She is also remembered in a plaque in the University Rose Garden (near the new pedestrian bridge) and there's a portrait of a square-jawed bohemian Kitty by artist Lucien Dechaineux in the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. Kitty it transpires was an artist's model in her youth.



The University Rose Garden at the base of the Rose Garden Bridge in Hobart with a plaque in memory of Kitty Henry.

Since proposing Kitty Henry's name for the new bridge, Prue Slatyer says she has discovered how fond Tasmanians are of Kitty. "I've had photos of wedding bouquets created by Kitty from couples who were married 50 or 60 years ago, and I've seen frequent mentions of her name in the social pages of that time." One wedding photo came from Judy Wallace whose Kitty Henry wedding bouquet featured 'Iceberg' roses. Judy was married in 1965 at St Davids Cathedral. Kitty not only made the bridal bouquet but also the bouquets of her three attendants and her seven-year-old flower girl and says Judy, Kitty often used the then relatively new release rose 'Iceberg'.

"It is recorded that Queen Elizabeth II on her 1954 visit was so impressed with a bouquet presented to her in Hobart that she asked to

meet the florist, and Kitty was presented to the young Queen," Prue reports.

As Prue explains, Kitty became a garden designer when it wasn't considered a job for a woman. She started designing and building gardens in 1928, self-taught from books and magazines and also by her carpenter father, who built rockeries and garden ponds.

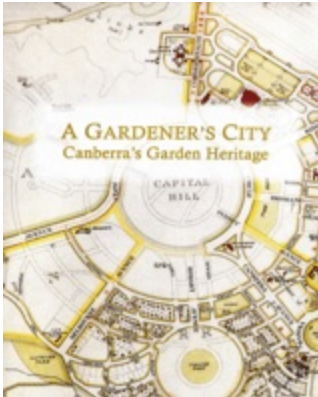
She was inspired by her contemporary the garden designer Edna Walling.

"Her garden designs had a naturalistic style with rockeries and a mix of exotic and native plants," says Prue

Kitty honoured

In a surprise move, it has been reported that a new road in a Canberra suburb is to be named Kitty Henry Rise in her honour.

Highlights from the AGHS website



Follow the link below to view Canberra's garden heritage.

The AGHS website has been updated during the COVID-19 shutdown and contains a wealth of information about what's happening in the world of garden history as well as what's happening for members. Here are seven quick links to investigate online!

- Enter the photo competition currently underway
<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/2020/07/aghs-2020-photo-competition/>
- Check the list of Australia's remarkable landscapes – are there others that have been missed? <https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/remarkable-gardens/>
- Listen to oral history
https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/publications-projects/?category=National+Oral+History+Collection#filter=.iso_29
- Watch a video about the Pialligo Redwood Forest in Canberra
<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/publications/pialligo-redwood-forest/>
- Enjoy a film about Canberra's garden heritage
<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/publications/a-gardeners-city-canberras-garden-heritage/>
- See presentations from the international symposium on 'Tree Avenues from War to Peace'
<https://allees-avenues.eu/en/colloque-2018/2-uncategorised/31-programme-symposium/>
- View the photographic study of Belmont Estate, Victoria
<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/publications/belmont-2/>

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New phone number for AGHS head office

The National Office in Melbourne phone number has now change to 0419 977 703. The office will be closed from Monday, September 7, reopening Monday, September 21. For urgent matters, leave a message and someone from the office will be in touch.

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NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS APPOINTED AT AGM

A big welcome to three new AGHS committee members

Antonia Dunne, Jane Long and Mary Ramsay, all from Hobart, joined the committee of the Tasmanian Branch of the AGHS at the recent AGM.

Looking ahead for 2021

New committee members are always welcome and, with the planned departure of three long-standing members of our current committee in the next two years (Chair Lynne Paul, Treasurer Bruce Chetwynd and Vice-President Prue Slatyer), new members are important for succession planning.

Committee members are elected for a three-year term and can serve for three terms if they desire. The committee meets six to eight times each year (increasingly via Zoom) to plan and organise garden visits and winter lectures, and to co-ordinate projects including advocacy and oral history interviews.

More information

Please consider nominating for the committee at the next AGM, which is held each August. For more information about what's involved, contact Chair, Lynne Paul, on 0438 147 516.

Help wanted with Tasmania's Oral History Project

A GHS Tasmania is looking for someone to co-ordinate the Oral History Project. The project is being funded as part of the Society's 40th birthday celebrations. This contract position would involve an average of 10 to 15 hours per month over a period of about one year. Good computer skills are needed to assist with documentation of oral history interviews plus capacity to undertake other clerical duties. For more information and a full position description please contact Jean Elder on 0419 310 696 or jeanldr@gmail.com.

Stop press...

Home Hill landscape management plan gets council approval



At long last, Devonport City Council has approved the AGHS-funded Landscape Management Plan for historic Home Hill garden at Miendetta (near Devonport).

Dame Enid Lyons created the garden over her lifetime. The house (above) is now a museum managed by the National Trust of Australia (Tasmania). The garden has long needed care and repair so it is pleasing that Devonport Council has earmarked \$25,000, a grant from the Federal Government to support projects in the COVID-19 era.

The grant will see the implementation of the most urgent work on the Home Hill garden, namely the repair and restoration of Dame Enid's stone wall and pond.

We expect to continue to have some involvement in this project and hope that

during 2021 we will be able to plan an AGHS visit to Home Hill to inspect progress.

Cambria Estate update

Not so good is the news about Cambria Estate, on Tasmania's east coast. Despite lobbying by the AGHS and others to protect this important heritage landscape from the threat posed by development plans for the site, its future looks bleak.

The passage of the Major Projects Bill through the Lower House of the Tasmanian State Parliament recently does not bode well. However, the AGHS will continue its lobbying and I urge you to do so as well.

**Lynne Paul, Chairman, Tasmanian Branch
Australian Garden History Society**