



Australian Garden History Society  
Tasmanian Branch

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### 2020-21 COMMITTEE

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## From the Chair

Amid the challenges being faced across mainland Australia, AGHS Tasmania has been able to continue to hold a number of events this year. We are at the mid point of our winter lecture series with final lecture on 15 August, which is also our AGM. I encourage you to consider offering your talents and skills as a Committee member.

Beyond the winter lecture series there are still two more events for 2021 and we look forward to meeting many of you at these as well. 2021 has seen an increase in membership in the Tasmanian Branch and I extend a most warm welcome to all new members.

A significant aspect of the work of the AGHS is advocacy for gardens and cultural landscapes that are at risk. Reference to the proposed cable car is included in this issue of *Blue Gum*. The proposal to rezone land at Cambria near Swansea to enable a large-scale development is still before the Tasmanian Planning Commission and we have continued to make representations in this matter. Your views on both of these issues would be most welcome. If you become aware of other proposed developments or of other landscapes, which are in jeopardy please alert your AGHS committee to them (*contacts are listed, left*).

This is my last letter to AGHS Tasmania members as Chair of the committee. It has been a privilege to be so involved in the organisation of our branch over the past few years and I extend my thanks to all committee members for their commitment to the task.

*Lynne Paul, Chair*

# *AGHS Conference 2022 for Hobart: Landscape on the Edge*

**P**lanning is well underway for the 2022 Australian Garden History Society conference, which will be held in Hobart, 11-13 November but your input is welcomed by the committee.

## **Hobart conference**

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 would like to hear from members who can help assist during the conference for example to assist with transport and assistance at the conference venue. In addition to the three-day conference, the Tasmanian Branch will also run a full day's garden tour on 14 November, 2022.

## **How to volunteer**

Contact Conference Convenor, Prue Slatyer, [prueslatyer@gmail.com](mailto:prueslatyer@gmail.com), if you would like to be involved.

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## **LANDSCAPES AT RISK**

**V**ice-Chair, Prue Slatyer, on behalf of the Executive of the Tasmanian Branch of the AGHS, prepared a lengthy objection to the controversial proposal to build a cable car on kunyoni/Mount Wellington. The objection was lodged as kunyoni/Mount Wellington is a natural and cultural landscape of high significance and that the proposed development would severely impact on these natural and cultural values.

The AGHS's objection was based on several major concerns including the visual impact of the cableway across the organ pipes and the large development at the Pinnacle; the lack of consideration of historical heritage; and the loss of amenity for those not using the cable car. Hobart City Council received 17,500 representations with 5000 for and 12,500 against the proposal. Individuals and groups that made a representation, which went beyond a form letter have now been asked to make a short presentation to a council meeting on July 27. Prue and Jean Elder will attend.

## John Glover's garden reborn



*'A view of the artist's house and garden, in Mills Plains, Van Diemen's Land, 1835, Deddington, Tasmania'. Collection Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide.*

**As part of the AGHS winter lecture series, the June lecture went behind the scenes of the restoration of the John Glover garden at Patterdale. The lecture brought together members of the AGHS and the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects.**

**G**arden restoration is a tricky concept as gardens change over time, as do their surroundings. Often there's scant historic record of a garden.

This is not the case at Patterdale, a garden planted by John Glover in the 1830s at Deddington in northern Tasmania. The garden is well known from his painting of the house and garden in 1835, which shows a cottage garden with parallel rectangular beds planted with a mix of shrubs, annuals and perennials (*shown above*).

In 2019, Patterdale's owner, Carol Westmore, commissioned landscape designer, Catherine Shields, to create a garden around the newly restored property. At the June AGHS Winter Lecture, Catherine discussed her approach to creating the garden explaining that while the 1835 painting and an early plan of the property helped inspire the look and feel of the new garden, many more influences and considerations came into the design and planting. A starting point was the property

name. Why Patterdale she asked? It is a town in the Lakes District in England where John Glover had a farm. Catherine, who knew the area, explained there were many parallels between the country around Deddington in Tasmania and around Patterdale in England. Both were flat plains with scattered trees.

She also examined the painting of the garden identifying most of the plants depicted. As many are now considered environmental weeds in Tasmania (including the broom clearly identifiable above) she decided to use some original plants but to work with other species that captured the feel of the 1830s planting. Part of the design brief was to create a garden that would look good year round as the restored house is open to public viewing. The garden also had to be easy to maintain and work with what remains of the garden and its wider landscape setting, which includes native grasslands. She also sought inspiration in modern plantings around other historic >

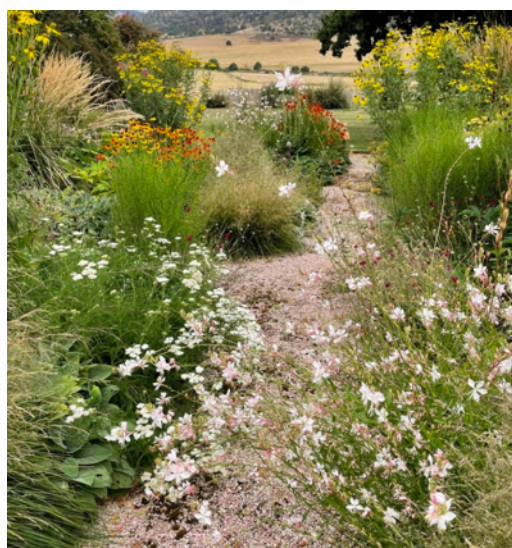


homes in the UK. She decided perennials, especially grasses, with some shrubs including pink roses as depicted in John Glover's painting.

Catherine designed a matrix planting which formed a base layer made up of perennials and mainly grasses. The plant colours, whether flowers or foliage, were those seen in John Glover's painting.

Planting was carried out in June 2019 following good soil preparation and watering. The beds were densely planted for colour and to limit weeds. Vigorous growth followed providing a succession of flowers and colour until late autumn when the garden is cut back and cleaned up.

Future plans are to extend the garden on the western side of the house with beds of *Rosa x centifolia* and *Geranium macrorrhizum* with native kangaroo grass (*Themedia triandra*).



Above and left, views of the modern garden at Patterdale, designed by Catherine Shields to feature colours of the original 1830s planting as shown in John Glover's painting of the garden (page 3). The newly planted garden was viewed by AGHS members in November 2020.

### How to visit the garden

Patterdale is open to the public once a month and to organised group tours. The house is also available for short-term accommodation. For more information about Patterdale see [www.glovercountry.com.au](http://www.glovercountry.com.au). For more information about Catherine Shields and her design practice, The Alchemy of Gardens, see [www.thealchemyofgardens.com](http://www.thealchemyofgardens.com).

### Plant list for Patterdale garden

	Colour	Plant type	Comment
<i>Achillea</i> 'Terracotta'	Yellow	Perennial	Mass planted
<i>Baptisia australis</i>	White form	Perennial	Echo Spanish broom in painting
<i>Calamagrostis</i>	Yellow	Native grass	Contemporary feel
<i>Digitalis</i> (foxglove)	White form	Biennial	Tall white spires
<i>Lilium</i> 'Regale'	White	Bulb	Echo lilium in painting
<i>Olearia stellata</i>	White daisy	Native shrub	Substitute for unknown shrub
<i>Rosa x centifolia</i>	Pink	Shrub	Echo pink rose in painting
<i>Rudbeckia</i>	Yellow	Perennial	Autumn colour
<i>Verbascum</i> 'Jackie'	Pink/apricot	Perennial	Tall spires, not weedy

## A yew tree mystery



*A pair of yew trees beside Vaocluse, a mansion dating from 1830, in the north of Tasmania.*

### **A garden visit in 2020 sent retired arboriculturist, Andrew Robert-Tissot, on a journey to discover more about historic yews in Tasmania.**

**W**hen members of the AGHS visited Vaocluse Estate at Conara in the state's north in late November 2021, Andrew Robert-Tissot became excited when he spotted two mature yew trees in the garden.

Yews are European conifers often seen in churchyards especially throughout the UK. Many are centuries old relics that pre-date the church and are considered signs of pagan worship. Andrew says the yews at Vaocluse are Irish yew (*Taxus bacatta* 'Fastigiata', shown above), trees that are of the more upright shape than the common yew and are found in western Britain. The shorter, squatter form is more common in the east adds Andrew.

According to Alan Mitchell, writing in *Trees of Britain and Northern Europe*: "they are common in every churchyard and most large gardens throughout the British isles". Andrew says he has always associated yews with churchyards. He recalls his parents' church at Totteridge in North London had a 500-plus-year-old specimen that sprawls in

its old age at the front entrance that was monitored by staff from Kew Gardens. He wonders if the Vaocluse trees indicate the location of an old burial site or even a pet cemetery. Vaocluse Estate dates back to 1820 but the current homestead was completed in 1830 as a four-storey brick and stucco mansion.



*Yew tree in Friends Park, West Hobart. The site was a burial ground dating to 1836. >*



"I was excited seeing the yews at Vaucluse as they are rare in Tasmania," he explains. "I think now after talking to colleagues that they are uncommon rather than rare in Tasmania, although perhaps rare in old estate gardens.

"Since seeing the Vaucluse yews, I recalled the tree in Friends Park, West Hobart (*page 5*). This is a burial ground from 1836, so I would expect an old yew to be present.

"I understand there might still be a tree in St Mark's churchyard in Pontville, which dates from 1861, and also in the Old Anglican Cemetery in Campbell Town in the Midlands.

Garden historian Gwenda Sheridan agrees: "I think old Irish yew trees of any dimension are extremely rare in Tasmanian gardens, at least the ones I've been in and out of," she says.

#### More sightings

Andrew is interested to discover more information about the yews at Vaucluse and also more widely, old yews in Tasmania. Please send comments to *Blue Gum* (email editor and committee member, Jennifer Stackhouse on [jstackho@bigpond.net.au](mailto:jstackho@bigpond.net.au))

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## Oral History Project gets gardeners talking



*Woodbank, the garden created by Ken Gillanders OAM.*

As part of the Tasmanian Branch's Oral History Project, interviews are well underway to record the stories and views of important figures in Tasmania's garden history. The project is funded as part of the Society's 40th birthday celebrations, which were marked in 2020. An interview has been recorded with Ken Gillanders OAM, which is now on the AGHS website.

As a nurseryman, Ken was responsible for bringing many rare and unusual plants into Australia. Many of those plants grow in Woodbank Gardens, established by Ken at Longley near Hobart, now owned by Kerry and Harry van den Berg.

Interviews with garden historian Gwenda Sheridan and artist, gardener and a previous Chair of AGHS in Tasmania, Robyn >

Hawkins (Mayo), will be ready to upload to the site soon. In the meantime, we celebrate Robyn's arboretum below.

The next in the planned oral history series is an interview with Bob Magnus. Sally Dakis and Jean Elder have conducted the interviews for AGHS.

### Listen to our oral history

To hear Ken Gillanders' recollections see: ([www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/publications/ken-gillanders-oam/](http://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/publications/ken-gillanders-oam/)). For more about the Oral History Project, contact Jean Elder on 0419 310 696 or by email at [jeanldr@gmail.com](mailto:jeanldr@gmail.com)

## *Arboretum as a living legacy*



*Part of Robyn Hawkins' arboretum, which is being developed adjacent to the historic property of Bentley at Chudleigh.*

Back in early April more than 50 AGHS members gathered in the north-west of the state for a three-day tour, which took in a range of gardens in Devonport, Spreyton, Eugenana, Barrington and Mole Creek. The weather was cool and crisp, there was snow on the Western Tiers, the wind was brisk and the gardens were filled with autumn colour. A highlight of the weekend for many, was

the visit to Chudleigh (near Mole Creek) to tour Robyn and John Hawkins' garden, Bentley, and adjacent arboretum.

The arboretum is planted with local species and features modern sculpture as shown above. Robyn discusses the creation of the arboretum in the interview for the AGHS Oral History Project, available soon on the AGHS website (*see page 6 for details about this project*).

## Donate your gardening books for our sale

The AGHS Tasmanian Branch will be running a secondhand book sale at its upcoming meeting in August, and also at Longford in Bloom (20-21 November), Longford. Books cover subjects of gardening, history and natural history.

We need more books so, if you have gardening and related books to donate, or can offer a helping hand on the sale table during Longford in Bloom, please contact Rosie Mackinnon 0408 922 601 or by email to [armackin@intas.net.au](mailto:armackin@intas.net.au).

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## JOIN THE AGHS COMMITTEE AT THE AGM

New committee members are always welcome and, with the planned departure of two long-standing members of our current committee this year (Chair Lynne Paul and Treasurer Bruce Chetwynd) and of Vice-President Prue Slatyer in 2022, 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, the winter lecture series and to co-ordinate projects including advocacy and oral history interviews. The major project for 2022 will be staging the national conference in November 2022 (*see details, page 2*).

### More information

Please consider nominating for the committee at the next AGM, which will be held on August 15 at 2pm at the Battery Point Community Hall, 52 Hampden Road, Battery Point. For more about what's involved, contact Chair, Lynne Paul, on 0438 147 516.

## FUTURE EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

- **15 AUGUST** AGM AND WINTER LECTURE 3: HELEN PAGE 'GARDEN CEMETERIES AROUND THE WORLD'. Helen is a horticulturist and a founding member of the AGHS.
- **10-12 SEPTEMBER** AGHS NATIONAL CONFERENCE, SYDNEY (for online registrations contact Steven Halliday on 0409 417 848 or email [aghssydney@gmail.com](mailto:aghssydney@gmail.com))
- **10 OCTOBER** VISIT TO LANDSCAPES AND GARDENS SOUTH OF HOBART
- **20-21 NOVEMBER** LONGFORD IN BLOOM, LONGFORD (*see Facebook for details*)
- **4-5 DECEMBER** WEEKEND VISITS TO LANDSCAPES AND GARDENS OF NORTHERN TASMANIA AROUND PERTH, INCLUDING CHRISTMAS LUNCH

**Members will receive more information and booking details closer to each AGHS event.**