

# BRANCH CUTTINGS



## Issue 68 – June 2022

This branch is affiliated with the Royal Australian Historical Society & National Trust of Australia (NSW)  
We acknowledge and pay respects to the traditional owners and custodians on whose land we walk, work & live.

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### AGHS FORTHCOMING EVENTS

#### JUNE

**Date:** Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 7:00pm

**Event:** Dr Luke Keogh will present an online talk, **The Wardian Case: How a Simple Box Moved Plants and Changed the World**

**Cost:** \$10 AGHS members; \$15 non-members; full time students \$5

**Bookings:** [www.trybooking.com/CAIGU](http://www.trybooking.com/CAIGU)

#### JULY

**Date:** Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> July

**Event:** Lisgar Gardens specialised tour for AGHS led by Dr Stephen Utick during the Lisgar Gardens Camellia Gala Day. Events during the gala day include camellia identification.

**Venue:** Lisgar Gardens, Lisgar Road, Hornsby

**Details to be finalised**

#### AUGUST -AGM and talk

**Date:** Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> August, 6:00pm for 7:00pm start

**Event:** AGM followed by an illustrated talk on Fernhill Estate and the Mulgoa Valley presented by historian and author Dr James Broadbent. Refreshments provided.

**Why not bring a friend and introduce them to the AGHS?**

**Venue:** Annie Wyatt Room, National Trust Centre, Observatory Hill

#### SEPTEMBER

**Date:** Day to be confirmed

**Event:** Tour to Western Sydney

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### TWO LOVELY TOWN PARKS IN ORANGE

Stuart Read

Country towns such as Goulburn, Bathurst, Orange, Tamworth, Wellington and others often sport wonderful parks dating to the long Victorian era. Orange's *Cook Park* might be known better than *Robertson Park* – although the latter is downtown, the former slightly to the west of the shops. Both are well worth a stop, slow stroll, good look, sit, and picnic.

When Orange's streets were laid out in 1846 over 14% of its 'square mile' was devoted to parks and public open space. Despite Australia's first gold rush, nearby from 1851, it took 3 decades before Council could afford to develop them.

*Robertson Park*, dedicated in 1887, is named for NSW Premier Sir James Robertson (of the 'Robertson Land Acts': a key reformer). Judged vital to the town's business district, Council made an effort to develop it in 1892, providing

walks, seating and shady trees. A marble fountain was donated by Cobb and Co. in 1896 to honour William Franklin Whitney, a partner of that firm.



Above::Robertson Park. (Image: Visit NSW)

Orange's original name was Blackman's Creek – which paints a picture! However, Blackman was the first chief constable of nearby Bathurst. Sir Thomas Mitchell, Surveyor-General, renamed it in 1848, after his good friend, Prince William of Orange.

Blackman's Swamp Creek crossed *Robertson Park* diagonally. In 1887 Council began concreting its bed to prevent its periodic overflows damaging nearby properties. By 1893 the channel was finished and it was roofed over in 1937.

The town's first bowling club was here: today's CWA Hall

was its pavilion. In 1927 *Robertson Park's* entrance gates were moved to *Cook Park*. Over decades, *Robertson Park* became home to varied war memorials, remembrance services, gaining a Cenotaph in 1952. Recently it has hosted night markets for FOOD (food of the Orange district) week and Orange Wine Festival.

Up the street to the west, on a small rise, is *Cook Park*. A public reserve in the 1840s, it was proclaimed a park in 1873 and in 1882 officially named after Captain Cook. From the 1870s, trees were planted, resulting in today's glorious selection: fine conifers and deciduous forest trees, giving good autumn colour and strong spring contrasts. Alfred Patterson was its first curator, from 1887. He was a Swedish-Australian surveyor and gardener, who had worked for wealthy local merchant, James Dalton (of *Duntryleague*). The park's Union Jack



path pattern remains clear on the ground.

Above: Cook Park. (Image: Stuart Read)

rotunda, 1891 cast-iron fountain, reconstructed 1938 Fernery, small lake, curator's cottage, memorial cannons, 2 sets of cast-iron (1890, 1927) gates and the 1934 Blowes Begonia House (named for Mayor Alf Blowes), with annual displays of tuberous begonias. Ballarat, the Victorian city renowned for its begonia displays donated plants, with others from locals and Council purchases.

*Cook Park* is happily listed on the NSW State Heritage Register as a prime example of a High Victorian town park. You can read more about it at [www.heritage.nsw.gov.au](http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au) (click on 'Search...the state heritage inventory').

*Cook Park* is perhaps richer in planting and structures than *Robertson Park*. It has a high Victorian band



*Above and right: Cook Park rotunda and fountain (Images: Anne Smith)*

*Stuart is co-chair of AGHS and a landscape architect, heritage bureaucrat and educator.*

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

### Sydney Branch

A warm hello to Sydney members,

The committee has been busy over the last few months and has hosted some successful events.

Early autumn, we held a three day weekend of events to celebrate Sydney Harbour (Friday 18, Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 March). Sydney had experienced a long wet period but on that weekend the sun shone and the harbour sparkled.

It was a welcome relief to finally bring these days, originally planned for the Sydney Conference, to fruition and heartening to see our members engaged and enjoying the special pleasures we had designed for them so long ago.

A big thank you to all those members who came along to support the branch. We were especially delighted to see so many from the Northern NSW group attend.

There were many highlights to the March events. On Friday, the private audience with Wendy Whiteley followed by a tour of the deep secret areas of her magical gully garden; a surprise tour of the Quarantine Station at Berrys Bay by North Sydney Council, and the gold edged clouds over the western harbour as we sipped our sunset drinks with delicious food on the Coal Loader Platform. Saturday highpoints included the scenic ridgeline bus tour, the waterfall at Vaucluse House and listening to the custodian of Rose Bay Cottage tell his astonishing story about the conservation of the property. Sunday's James Craig cruise was thrilling, entering the heads with the ship under sail was an experience I'm unlikely to forget. Wonderful to share this adventure, and the weekend, with so many of our AGHS members.

Another special event, Sunday 22 May, also carried forward from the Sydney Conference, was the Botanic Endeavour Exhibition at the Lions Gate Lodge in the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens. It included an optional guided walk '8 Days at Kamay Botany Bay', a guided tour of the exhibition by Colleen Morris and Beverly Allen, and refreshments at Lion Gate Lodge courtyard. Very pleasant to sit and chat with everyone at the close of the event and reflect on this important exhibition.

Despite the winter chill there is still so much to enjoy in our parks, reserves and gardens – the intensity of deciduous colour, the last falling leaves and camellias bursting into bloom.

Looking towards our winter program, we are planning a visit in July to Lisgar Gardens with Dr Stephen Utick, Camellia expert, to appreciate and learn more about its significant plantings. More about this day and other events for the coming months can be found in the newsletter.

While the committee has been kept busy on advocacy issues, we have also welcomed two new members onto the committee - Jan Churcher and Ba An Le. Please look out for them at our events and say hello.

We are open for more members to join in the fun of the Sydney Branch. If you would like to find out more about what's involved drop me or Anne, our editor, an email, SMS or happy to have a phone chat.

Keep warm.

Christine

0410 342413

Christine Hay (Chair)

## NEW MEMBERS

The Branch would like to extend a warm welcome to the following new local members: Eliz Burke, Alexandra Gray, Helen Lawson Williams, Simone Loury, Susan McGregor, Caroline Miller and Rebecca Xiouri



## RECENT EVENTS

### WENDY'S GARDEN, CARRADAH PARK and COAL LOADER TOUR

On Friday 18<sup>th</sup> March our members beside the Harbour from Luna Park to Wendy's Secret Garden where Wendy Whitely generously spoke about the garden and then the volunteer garden co-ordinator, Ian Curdie, led us through the garden. A visit to Carradah Park followed with its award-winning landscape design on the old BP fuel site. Angela Low gave a talk on local frogs. After a walk along Berrys Bay and Balls Head a fascinating tour of the Coal Loader was provided by David Banbury. We were also fortunate to have David show us the nearby Quarantine Depot purchased by North Sydney Council. The day ended with sunset drinks overlooking the Harbour.



*Above: Wendy's Secret Garden*



*Left and above: Carradah Park  
(Images left: A Smith,*



*Above: Quarantine Station, Berrys Bay (Image:  
Alex Hawthorne)*

*Image above: Helen Oates)*

*Above: Angela Low's frog talk at Carradah  
Park*







*Above: Coal Loader*

### **EASTERN SUBURBS TOUR**

Rose Bay foreshore, Watsons Bay and the beautiful garden at Vaucluse House was the start of the AGHS Eastern Suburbs tour on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March.



*Above left: Vaucluse House waterfall; above right: Vaucluse House*

The tour finished with a visit to the lovely garden surrounding historic Rose Bay Cottage where we heard details of the restoration of the 1834 house by the current owner, the restoration winning architectural awards.



*Above: Rose Bay Cottage (images: Anne Smith)*

**JAMES CRAIG**



Once again joined by visitors from the Northern NSW Branch, a great day was had on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> March aboard the *James Craig* on the Harbour and outside the heads under sail and motor, sailed by a wonderful team of volunteers from The Heritage Fleet.

### BOTANIC ENDEAVOUR EXHIBITION OPENING

Committee members Christine Hay and Anne Smith attended the opening evening of the Botanic Endeavour Exhibition at Lion Gate Lodge in the Royal Botanic Gardens in May. Delayed for almost 2 years the exhibition curated by Collen Morris and by artist and Florilegium Society President Beverly Allen could finally be seen. On show was botanic artwork by renowned artists depicting plants from the living collection and referencing plants collected by Banks and Solander and illustrated by Parkinson. Some artefacts relating to the voyage and to the historic botanists were included in the exhibition. Also at the opening were several other

AGHS members. AGHS was pleased to be able to provide some monetary support for the project.



*Graham Smith, artist Angela Lober and Christine Hay*

### BOTANIC GARDENS WALK AND BOTANIC ENDEAVOUR EXHIBITION

RBG Volunteer Guides, Jim and Phillip, led a fascinated group of 25 AGHS members on a walk through The Gardens highlighting plants collected by Banks and Solander on the *Endeavour* voyage. Information about the plants and stories of the journey kept everyone enthralled. Luckily the rain held off.

Later Beverly Allen and Colleen Morris led an AGHS tour of the Botanic Endeavour Exhibition at the Lion Gate Lodge speaking about the Florilegium Society's botanic art which was inspired by the plants which Banks and Solander collected.







*Images: Anne and Graham Smith*

### ADVOCACY

See the advocacy pages on the AGHS Website.

[https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/garden-history-now/?category=Advocacy#filter=.iso\\_4](https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/garden-history-now/?category=Advocacy#filter=.iso_4)

**As a reminder, any advocacy requests to the Sydney Branch should be accompanied by an outline of succinct points about the required support.**

#### WINGELLO PARK, MARULAN

A letter was sent to the Heritage Council supporting the listing on the State Heritage Register of Wingello Park, an historic homestead in Marulan.

#### BARRACK POINT SHELLHARBOUR

A letter was sent to Shellharbour Council regarding the development at 1 Cliff Avenue, Barrack Point, Shellharbour expressing concern about the trees on the headland

#### BRADFIELD PARK, MILSONS POINT



A submission was sent to Transport for NSW regarding the cycle ramp that will impact both Bradfield Park and the facade of the Sydney Harbour Bridge including the entry to Milson Point Station. Unfortunately our concerns were not addressed.

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### COMMITTEE MEMBER PROFILE

#### SUSAN STRATTON



Susan joined the Society after a suggestion from a friend four years ago and a short time after was elected to the Sydney and NNSW Branch Committee and in recent times the position of Secretary. Being a member of AGHS brought her closer to one of her loves that being the appreciation of gardens and the many aspects that come together to make a complete garden.

Originally from a rural background, a love of nature and plants in particular, saw her pursue her passion to become a landscape architect. She has since gained qualifications in both horticulture and arboriculture. After working for private firms and local government as a landscape architect/manager she now is in private practice as a Landscape Architect and Arboricultural consultant.

The wide variety of garden types and plants both endemic and exotic that can be found in the rural areas and, in particular, the Riverina provided that initial interest. Having moved to Sydney for work and to raise a family a whole new palate of plants has come into the frame of interest.

As a member of AGHS not only does Susan enjoy the opportunity it provides to visit and see superb and in some cases historically important places of beauty and relaxation there is also the added benefit of camaraderie and discussion with like-minded people with diverse ideas.

Urban pressures which are impacting our towns and cities with a disregard for the 'natural landscape', and the problems associated, she believes raises the importance of organisations such as the AGHS in both combatting the problems and educating people on the benefits of gardens and the value of what our forebears have provided us as a community.

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### OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

#### YASMAR

On May 12 2022 an agreement was reached for the eastern two thirds (1.5 hectares) of Yasmar's 2.4 hectare site to be transferred to the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council. The freehold title includes the house, its heritage garden and the site's other unoccupied buildings. The western portion that contains the building used by Juvenile Justice as a staff training centre and Yasmar's renovated stables is not included.

As reported in The Sydney Morning Herald The Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council chief executive Nathan Moran said approval of the Aboriginal land claim was a significant win for Sydney's Aboriginal community: "This is great news and some recompense in recognition of historic dispossession of land ... Yasmar could meet many objectives including health and community wellbeing, economic benefits and cultural education, so we will develop a plan for the site with our members that can activate and maximise use of the land."

Yasmar volunteers (all are AGHS and/or Haberfield Association members) work each Thursday morning under the guidance of horticulturist and AGHS and Haberfield Association member Gina Plate to maintain the existing garden. They look forward to meeting the new owners and discussing with them future plans and our dreams and desires for the place. It is understood from a Crown Lands contact that the new owners would like the garden volunteers to continue their work. It is understood that the handover will be complete by Christmas.

The place was added to the NSW State Heritage Register in 2000 and the new owners are bound by its rules. It is thought the new owners are likely to be keen and motivated to take care of their new acquisition.



However, from a heritage point of view, the exclusion of the stables (as part of the excluded western portion of the site), is unfortunate as the stables should be included as they are an intrinsic part of the Yasmar house curtilage, as seen in the historic photo below:



*Image: Panorama of the back of Yasmar c 1870 showing courtyard wall, service yard and stables.*

*Source: Macleay Museum, University of Sydney*

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### **Rivendell (Thomas Walker Hospital)**

**31<sup>st</sup> July, 2022**

An open day will be held at the State Heritage listed Rivendell /the Thomas Walker Convalescent Hospital complex and landscape on the Parramatta River at Concord. It is considered of national heritage significance as a rare major institution which has survived along the foreshores of the Parramatta River from the 19th century.

<https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=5045693>

The bookings are filling fast.

You can book via: <https://canadabayheritage.com/>

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### **Royal Botanic Gardens**

<https://www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/what-s-on>

**Until 31<sup>st</sup> July 2022 - Inside the Tide! At the Calyx:** Explore a marine dream of coral, kelp and coast with 'Inside the Tide!'

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### **National Trust**

See National Trust website for details of properties including the ones below:

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/whats-on-nsw/>

**Retford Park**, 1325 Old South Road, Bowral,

Gardens open Fridays to Mondays, 10am – 4pm, house tours Saturday and Sunday only.

Entry Fees: National Trust members – FREE, Adults - \$15, Concession - \$10, Family- \$35

**Everglades House & Garden**, 37 Everglades Avenue, Leura –open Wednesdays to Mondays, 10am – 4pm.

Entry Fees: National Trust members – FREE, Adults - \$15, Concession - \$10, Family- \$35

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### **Eryldene**

**Sunday, 10th July, 2022**

GARDENS OPEN 10:00AM-4:00PM

Explore the camellias of Eryldene on a special open day to coincide with the NSW Camellia Research Society (CRS) annual show. Enjoy a house tour and treats from the Eryldene Garden Cafe

<https://www.eryldene.org.au/>