

BRANCH CUTTINGS



Issue 76 – February 2025

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.

AGHS FORTHCOMING EVENTS

MARCH

Date: Wednesday, 5th March, 6:00pm for 7:00.

Event: Threading the jewels: the 'Green Necklace' parklands of Sydney's western harbour. Presentation by Christine Hay on the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) 2018 Landscape Heritage Study they co-authored with Colleen Morris as project consultants to AILA NSW.

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

Cost: AGHS Members \$20, Non-members \$30, Students \$5;
includes light refreshments

Bookings: www.trybooking.com/CYTXM



Walama - Ballast Point (Image: James Quoyale)

APRIL

Date: Sunday, 6 April at 2:00-4:00

Event: Walama – Ballast Point, Birchgrove: a 'Green Necklace' Sydney Harbour park - WALK with Colleen Morris, Christine Hay and James Quoyale, around this spectacular headland park as they guide and reveal its little-known stories.

Cost: \$25 AGHS members; \$30 non-members; Students \$5;
includes light refreshments

Bookings: to be finalised

(Image: Stuart Read)



MAY

Date: Saturday, 10 May at 2:00-4:00 pm

Event: Yurulbin: a 'Green Necklace' Sydney Harbour park – WALK to Wyoming. Join Colleen Morris, Christine Hay and James Quoyale, for another stroll around this second Birchgrove headland as they guide us to unfold its secrets. At Wyoming Dr James Broadbent will speak on that garden.

Cost: \$25 AGHS members; \$30 non-members; Students \$5; includes light refreshments

Bookings: to be finalised

See more information about events at end of newsletter.

NEW MEMBERS

The Branch would like to extend a warm welcome to the following new local members: Hector Abrahams, Anne Goodfellow and Cameron Logan

BROUGHTON HOUSE GARDEN -a Hidden Treasure in Scotland

Anne Smith



A hidden treasure of a garden concealed behind high walls can be found in the town of Kirkcudbright in Dumfries and Galloway in southwestern Scotland. Graham and I discovered it while visiting the UK in May last year. We were of course, trying to visit all the gorgeous gardens that we could fit in. Overlooking the estuary of the River Dee, Broughton House & Garden is a delight. Edward Atkinson Hornel, an artist associated with the 'Glasgow Boys' lived in the 17th Century house from 1901 until 1933. He was born in Australia in 1864 but soon after this his family relocated to Scotland. This Edwardian garden was created by Hornel and his sister Elizabeth (Tizzy).

Stepping through the gateway in the stone walls the lovely garden opens out with a choice of routes. Narrow pathways lined with lush vegetation lead through the garden to a variety of areas, revealing ornaments and structures. One area was influenced, both in design and plant material, by Hornel's trips to Japan. Stepping stones lead across a fern-ringed pond. Other spaces are edged by low clipped borders of box and golden yew. A great variety of trees and shrubs, many Japanese, fill the garden, including irises, bergenias, peonies and an arch of wisteria which were all flowering at the time of our visit. A magnificent *Hydrangea petiolaris* (climbing hydrangea), planted by Hornel, completely covers the studio wall.

Hornel's collection of sundials makes interesting focal points on the lawn and punctuating pathways. Old pineapple-topped gateposts lead to the house.



Millstones and troughs which he collected can also found amongst the foliage. Hornel built a summer house designed to rotate with the sun and further down the garden towards the vegetable garden he constructed a glasshouse.

The adjoining house was not open when we visited so we missed out on seeing Hornel's artwork and his library full of works by Robert Burns. However, the garden was well worth visiting.



Images -Anne Smith

Anne Smith is a past committee member and past chair of the AGHS Sydney Branch. She has a degree in Biology and an Associate Diploma in Landscape Design. She was a primary school teacher and was then Regional Co-ordinator for Australia's Open Garden Scheme.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Sydney Branch

A late happy new year and greetings to all and especially to new members. We're cooking up a few interesting events that you might like to join in on over the next few months.

Members enjoyed a wonderful special guided tour of the exhibition of architect and artist William Hardy Wilson's drawings, at the Fisher Library, University of Sydney with co-curators Hector Abrahams and Assoc. Prof. Cameron Logan and the rare books librarian Anne Goodfellow who found a few extra things which AGHS enjoyed – bit of a trifecta treat. Members of The Australiana Society joined us.

Some coming events are themed around what the NSW Chapter of AILA (Australian Institute of Landscape Architects) call the 'Sydney's green necklace'. These are harbour-side parks, many created in the last 40 years, from ex-industrial sites, now returned to public open space and recreation.

One proposed for state heritage listing is on public exhibition from 10th February - *Yurulbin Park and foreshore*, Birchgrove – formerly called Long Nose Point Park and reserve. Another doing likewise is *Balls Head Reserve*, across the harbour at Waverton. We've visited Balls Head before, with adjoining Waverton Coal Loader and Berrys Bay Reserve (Carradah Park).

It's terrific that these young (yet really, old – pre-1788) landscapes are slowly getting recognition as state heritage items. And that AGHS stalwarts and ex-chairs Christine Hay, Colleen Morris and James Quoye are all instrumental in making this happening. Yours truly has a small role, too.

The Sydney branch will be making submissions in support of these two new state heritage listing and we encourage you to, also – if you'd like. Check out the website www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritage/ scroll down and click on 'search databases' and 'comment on current proposals' (sic) or just search for 'comment on listings'. Have a read...

One event is a talk about the 'Green Necklace' of parks, and work to have them better recognised. We're also planning a couple of branch visits to two Birchgrove 'green necklace' parks: Yurulbin noted above, along with a visit to the lovely private garden of Wyoming, Birchgrove (yes, we've visited before, but this time, with Dr. James Broadbent).

And a separate visit to Wallama - Ballast Point Reserve, at East Balmain. The observant among you may have noticed this was advertised last year for possible state heritage listing and is now 'with the Minister' awaiting her decision. These are a contrast in dates (early, recent), scale (modest, large) and style (naturalistic, almost post-modern). Yet they have much in common and it is easy to see how one inspired the tradition that led to the other.

I hope you can join us in all three of these upcoming events – these are layered places full of interest and rich in stories. They are well worth a bit of concentration on.

Longer-term members may be sad to hear of Glenn Cooke's death and I hope some of you managed to dial in to his live-streamed service of appreciation from Queensland's State Library – I haven't seen so many vivid hibiscus-themed tropical shirts in ages. What a life well-lived, and a sly, wry character. And joyous gardener. Such people are the heart of AGHS, and getting to know them on walks, tours and conferences is one of the pleasures of membership.

I note there is a good deal of activity going on around AGHS traps in recording oral histories of longer-term members and that my own interview is approaching. One of my mentors has been Juliet Ramsay, and I'm glad she has been interviewed in recent months. More to come.

Hoping to catch up with you, at one of our events, soon

Stuart Read

Ph: 0498 594 734 or email: stuart1962@bigpond.com

PAST AGHS EVENTS CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Branch Christmas Party in the historic garden of Brownlow Hill near Camden was generously hosted by Edgar and Lynne Downes. The sudden downpour didn't dampen the enjoyment of catching up with friends. The committee and members provided delicious food and drinks, the peacocks entertained and Edgar Downes spoke of the property's history and led a tour through the garden.



*Images: Anne and
Graham Smith*



HARDY WILSON Exhibition Guided Tour

Members enjoyed a fascinating introduction by co-curators Hector Abrahams and Assoc. Prof. Cameron Logan on the Hardy Wilson collection and associated books. Beautiful drawings of NSW and Tasmanian buildings were admired.

Downstairs, rare books librarian Anne Goodfellow sourced some gorgeous rare books related to gardens and horticulture for members to peruse.



Images: Anne Smith

ADVOCACY

See the advocacy pages on the AGHS Website.

https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/garden-history-now/#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.

Greater Sydney Parklands

The branch has recently sent in a submission to the parliamentary inquiry of the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Act and its operations.

GSPA 'run' 2/3 of Callan Park Estate at Rozelle / Lilyfield; and Fernhill Estate at Mulgoa Valley (just across Mulgoa Road from James Broadbent's 'the Cottage', which members will know), and Parramatta Park (our World Heritage listed landscape in the midst of Sydney).

VALE

Glenn Cooke

Members will have read of the death of Glenn Cooke in the National e-news,

The link to the recording of Glenn's memorial service, live-steamed from the State Library of Queensland, is below.

[Glenn Cooke Memorial Service | Thursday 6th February 2025](#)

Of interest is a clip from Gardening Australia about Glenn's garden. Click on the link below.

www.abc.net.au/gardening/how-to/the-curated-garden/9436882

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

AGHS Northern NSW Branch

Friday 11th to Sunday 13th April

AGHS Northern NSW Branch will be On the Road Again for our second 2025 trip.

Heading west to the Moree and Pallamallawa area attendees will visit four gardens, memorials, galleries and nurseries. We will organise group meals and teas and there will be some free time to scout Moree town.

TRANSPORT. Attendees are asked to self-drive or car pool or train to Moree. On Day 1, Friday 11 April, you could join the group at Inverell for lunch, or Pallamallawa for afternoon tea, or in Moree for drinks then dinner. Please see the program below, thanks go to Fran Webb and the Moree Plains Garden Club.

ACCOMMODATION. Attendees, please make your own bookings for Friday and Saturday nights or longer as you choose. The [Albert Motel](#) is centrally located and offers various facilities including secure vehicle parking. There are a [number of other motels](#) including some with [Artesian pools](#).

On the Road to Moree registration is now open. [Please use this TryBooking link.](#)

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

Please provide your contact details. As the Branch incurs costs for these events we are asking attendees for a contribution of \$40 each. Payment of the \$40pp is linked to your registration. To assist with catering please answer the additional questions to indicate Yes/No for activities you plan to attend in Trybooking online, when you register and before you pay. All are 'free' (though for meals we will self-order and pay on the day) but we need indicative numbers for each. If registration help is needed, please contact one of our organisers: Helen Oates 0408434016, Fran Webb 0411237712 (trip details and assisted booking), Sandra Welsman 0411100048 (for online issues).

[Botanic Gardens of Sydney](#)

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

Guided walks led by volunteer guides 10:30am-12:00pm daily.

Mount Tomah: Daily 9am-5:30pm, **Mount Annan:** 9:30am-4:00pm

Growing Friends Plant Sales: Sydney: Monday - Friday 11am-2pm, Weekends 10am-2pm.

[National Trust](#)

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

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

Experiment Farm Cottage 9 Ruse Street, Harris Park -open first and third Friday and Saturday of each month, 10.30am- 3.30pm. Entry Fees: National Trust members -FREE, Adults -\$12, Concession/child >5yrs- \$10, Family- \$34
Experiment Farm Cottage is part of an historical Parramatta precinct which includes Hambledon Cottage (1824), Elizabeth Farm (1793) and the Queen's Wharf, all within easy walking distance of each other.

Jazz & Wine in the Garden at Norman Lindsay Gallery, 14 Norman Lindsay Crescent, Faulconbridge NSW
Saturday 8 March 2025, 11am (12 noon start) – 4pm

Entry Fees: National Trust members \$30.00, Adults - \$35, Under 18 \$20, Children <5 Free

Everglades House & Garden, 37 Everglades Avenue, Leura –open Wednesday to Monday, 10am – 4pm.

Entry Fees: National Trust members – FREE, Adults - \$17, Concession - \$15, Family- \$49

[Royal Australian Historical Society -Special Lecture](#)

Aspects of Chinese-Australian Heritage: Landscape Traces

Speaker: Stuart Read.

When: Wednesday, 19 March 2025 at 6 pm.

Where: History House, 133 Macquarie St, Sydney.

Cost: RAHS Members \$20 | Non-members \$25.

The Chinese have long known Australia. As 'sojourners', fleetingly chasing sandalwood, trepang, gold, and 'stayers'. They marked landscapes of transit, harvest, making, growing, and trade. This included harvesting food and timber, ringbarking, mining, water use, and gardening. At first vegetables, later, much more. China has long had sophisticated horticulture and a rich flora. We owe it much – many garden plants are Chinese and got here early. Find out more!

[RAHS eNewsletter, 31 January 2025](#)

Blue Mountains Historical Society, McLaughlin Address

Paul Sorensen, landscape designer – his life and works.

Date: Saturday 1st March

Talk by Stuart Read -This Danish-born nurseryman and 'place maker' worked on over 100 private projects spread across New South Wales, over several decades. While best-known for Blue Mountains gardens, he worked on Canberra, Illawarra, Central West and New England tableland jobs.

Image: Sorensen 1936_Harold Cazneaux

Details and booking here:

<https://bluemountainshistory.com/event/mclaughlin-lecture-paul-sorensen-his-life-and-career/>



Sydney University

Ongoing - Free Exhibition:

Hardy Wilson's Old Colonial Architecture 1924-2024

Sydney University Library level 2

EVENTS- FURTHER DETAILS

MARCH

Date: Wednesday 5th March

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

Event: **Threading the jewels: the 'Green Necklace' parklands of Sydney's western harbour.** **Presentation by Christine Hay** on the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) 2018 Landscape Heritage Study they co-authored with Colleen Morris as project consultants to AILA NSW.

Cost: AGHS Members \$20, Non-members \$30, Students \$5; includes light refreshments

Bookings: www.trybooking.com/CYTXM

Further Event Details:

Presentation by **Christine Hay** on the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) 2018 Landscape Heritage Study they co-authored with Colleen Morris as project consultants to AILA NSW.

Christine will talk about its nominations for the State Heritage Register and the 'green necklace' - a whole of landscape approach which underpins the work. An inspiring method applied, in this case, to protecting the cultural landscape and western waterways of Sydney Harbour.

In 2023, Badangi was the first to be State heritage listed. It combines two nominations (Berry Island Reserve and Wollstonecraft Foreshore Reserves) developed by James Quoye.

An update by Christine on the AILA nominations and listings will complete the evening's event.

Speaker Information:

Christine Hay is the principal of Circle Square Design, an award-winning consultancy specialising in landscape architecture and heritage assessment. A Registered Landscape Architect (2007) with a Masters in Heritage Conservation (2016), she has held roles in government and private practice, including as a Senior Heritage Officer at Heritage NSW (2017-2023) and Project Manager for the AILA study. Her work encompasses cultural landscape assessment, conservation management plans (CMPs), and stakeholder engagement. A former Chair of the Sydney Branch, Christine is a member of the AILA Advocacy Group, National Trust Cemeteries Conservation Committee, and Metropolitan Memorial Parks Heritage Advisory Committee.

APRIL

Date: Sunday, 6 April at 2:00-4:00 pm – Walama – Ballast Point Park, Birchgrove visit

Event: **Walama – Ballast Point: a 'Green Necklace' Sydney Harbour park - WALK with Colleen Morris, Christine Hay and James Quoye, on a stroll around this spectacular headland park as they guide and reveal its little-known stories.**

Cost: \$25 AGHS members; \$30 non-members; Students \$5; includes light refreshments

With continuing First Nations connections, its landform and waterway formed the setting for 19th century colonial occupation. In the early-mid 20th century the site was heavily modified to accommodate industry, part of its role in the working harbour.

Located in Birchgrove, for decades this headland was covered with grease and oil lubricant tanks and reservoirs, created for Caltex Australasia. Community activism, alarmed at plans for medium density housing here, led to the State government acquiring the land and commissioning a master plan and new public park. Design and consultation work took from 2003 – 05 and it opened in 2009.

Find out about the main players in this inspiring story of advocacy. And intriguing historical elements woven into its 2.5 ha parkland by renowned Landscape Architects McGregor Coxall.

While more 'post-modern', it took much from eminent landscape architect, Bruce Mackenzie's influential approach used in the 1970s: respect for topography, local vegetation, sense of place, recycling and retaining traces of layers of the site's history: here, more evident. Detailing is sharp and with time, planting is softening its lines and providing welcome 'bush' for visitors.

One of 10 nominations from the award-winning 2018 AILA Landscape Heritage study, the listing for Ballast Point Reserve was developed by Colleen Morris. It is currently recommended for listing on the State Heritage Register.

Colleen Morris is a landscape heritage consultant and known for her extensive expertise in evaluating cultural landscapes and implementing effective management strategies. Colleen played a pivotal role in developing the Colonial Plants database for the Historic Houses Trust of NSW and has crafted conservation plans for some of Australia's most historically significant gardens. Serving as the National Chair of the Australian Garden History Society from 2003 to 2009, Colleen has left an indelible mark on the field. Her notable publications, such as *Lost Gardens of Sydney* (2008) and major contributions to "The Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens" (2002), solidified her standing as a respected authority. With a presence in professional, academic, and international publications, Colleen's dedication to the preservation and comprehension of natural landscapes has garnered widespread recognition. Colleen recently completed a six-year term as a member of the Heritage Council of NSW.

James Quoye worked as an architect with a five year hiatus as a full time lecturer in design at UTS. In 2014 he completed a Masters of Heritage Conservation from the University of Sydney, which enabled him to focus on heritage conservation with a special interest in garden history and cultural landscapes. A past Chair of the Sydney Branch, James has been at Heritage NSW since 2016 as a Senior Heritage Assessment Officer. James was the nominator for the Badangi SHR listing

Christine Hay information -see above

MAY

Date: Saturday, 10 May at 2:00-4:00 pm – Yurulbin – Wyoming visit.

Event: Yurulbin: a 'Green Necklace' Sydney Harbour park – WALK

Join Colleen Morris, Christine Hay and James Quoye, for another stroll around this second Birchgrove headland as they guide us to unfold its secrets

Cost: \$25 AGHS members; \$30 non-members; Students \$5; includes light refreshments

Join Colleen Morris, Christine Hay and James Quoye, for another stroll around this second Birchgrove headland as they guide us to unfold its secrets.

A long narrow headland on the harbour's southern shores, Yurulbin (its Indigenous name recorded in 1832) has continuing significance to First Nations people. Known as Long Nose Point Park, its landform was modified as part of cooping and the ship building industries on Sydney's working harbour. In the 1960s its potential as parkland was recognised by planner Nigel Ashton, Chairman of the State Planning Authority (SPA) who inspiration ensured its purchase. Bruce Mackenzie, at the forefront of Landscape Architecture in Australia, designed its landscape scheme in 1973-76 for the SPA and Leichhardt Municipal Council. With a desire to create informal recreational parklands, Mackenzie's theme took cues from surviving harbour bushland such as Balls Head opposite (also an AILA nomination).

A revegetated 'bush park' on the harbour, Yurulbin is a re-imagining of a lost Indigenous landscape. It also retains recycled remains of its European colonial maritime industry – wharf structures, terracing, footings of structures. It

is a continuation of his work at Iloura Reserve (Peacock Point), East Balmain in 1970. These two 'alternative parklands' were radical =, a departure from formality. And set a lot of ideas on end about inner city and modern parks. They were influential and much copied. Both went on to win design awards.

Yurulbin meaning 'fast flowing water,' is located at one of Sydney Harbour's narrowest points. Across the harbour are Badangi (Berry Island and the Wollstonecraft Foreshores), Waverton Coal Loader (both state heritage listed) and Balls Head Reserve (about to be on public exhibition for possible listing. Beyond it is Berrys Bay Reserve (Carradah Park), which is recommended for State listing too. In the western harbour, these headlands centre on Me-mel, listed on the State heritage register as Goat Island, a significant place for Aboriginal people.

Like Balls Head, both Birchgrove parks have been nominated by AILA NSW for state heritage listing. Yurulbin Park will be out on public exhibition soon and AGHS will be making a submission in support of its listing.

After the walk through Yurulbin Reserve, we'll finish up at lovely Wyoming, Birchgrove, enjoy its terraced harbourside garden outlook and hear garden details from Dr James Broadbent. Wyoming is State heritage listed. We look forward to joining our hosts Janette and Colin Sullivan in appreciating the harbour sunset.

Newsletter collated and edited by Anne Smith. Contact Anne Smith on smith777@bigpond.net.au