

Inflorescence

July 2022

The Newsletter of the Southern Highlands Branch of the AGHS



Events for 2022

Berrima District Museum 1 (A) Market Place Berrima Now open Friday, Saturday and Sundays	Come and see Gardens and Landscapes in the Southern Highlands Then and Now
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Tours and Other Events

Tours:-

- Canberra Coach Tour 13 October
- Millthorpe Garden Ramble Coach Tour 4-7 November
- Adelaide Tour, 27 March - 4 April, 2023

Other Events

- AGM/Winter Seminar 21 August at the East Bowral Community Centre
- Car Trail 25 September
- Berry Self Drive in October to be confirmed
- National Conference in Tasmania 11-13 November
- Christmas Drinks 2 December

Report from the Chair

This is our last newsletter for the 2021-2022 year. Bud Townsing has done an amazing job as the new editor of *Inflorescence* with various committee and general members assisting with articles and photographs to enrich the content. Thank you everyone and I'm sure Bud is looking forward to seeing more contributions next year.

We started the year with a lean Committee but we now have four people interested to join us for the coming year. We are so appreciative of their willingness to give us some of their valuable time. This will be a huge help going forward as we enter times when we can hold more in person events throughout the next 12 months. Omicron variants are still present in the community. We will always consider the safety of our members above all, so we'll monitor the environment closely and make appropriate decisions before each event.

The Bowral Library Camellia Garden project is coming to a close on 12 August with the unveiling of the storyboard which describes the history camellias in the Southern Highlands and the history of each of the planted camellias.

We appreciate the willingness of the Wingecarribee Shire Council (WSC) to fund this project under the AGHS and Camellia Ark leadership. If you would like to attend the unveiling and meet Mr. Viv May (interim administrator) and Ms. Lisa Miscamble (WSC General Manager) and haven't already advised me of this wish, please contact me by email or phone call no later than 5 August.

Our branch has traversed the pandemic very well to date so we have been able to hold several events with minimal rescheduling. We have had 45 new members join us over the past 12 months so please make every effort to make these members feel welcome to our branch. Our current membership is 171 but understandably we have had some members decide to refrain from continuing their membership for health or other personal reasons. I want to thank everyone who has continued their membership for doing so as our dues not only support local efforts but also support advocacy and much needed funds for national projects beyond the means of local branches of the AGHS.

Bud Townsing and I have been attending WSC focus group discussions on medium density and low density housing controls and providing input which helps protect the gardens and trees, both private and public, that make the Southern Highlands an iconic region.

Looking forward to seeing many happy smiling faces at the AGM/Winter Seminar on Sunday 21 August!

Regards, Ruth

New Members

We welcome:

Eleanor and John Dartnell - Exeter

Brendan Smith - Sutton Forest

Committee

Chair, Secretary and Events	Ruth Bailey
Coordinator	
NMC Representative	Lyn Barrett
IT Coordinator/Research	Jenny Woodwell
Minutes Secretary	
Treasurer	Lynda Cowley
Tours	Ray Bradley
WSC Heritage Rep	Laurel Cheetham
Editor/Research	Bud Townsing
General Members	Penny McKenna
	So Sum O'Brien
	Chris O'Brien

Contact us by email at: aghs.sh.info@gmail.com

Projects

Winter Solstice Seminar

Author Ralph Sutters

With the AGHS always trying to get ahead of the crowd, this year's Winter Solstice Seminar was held on 5th June which was a few weeks before its eponymous date. The day was cool, but it was good to see around 57 members gathered in the Burrawang School of Arts to hear the interesting guest speakers.

After a welcome from AGHS Southern Highlands Branch Chair Ruth Bailey, there was a short introduction by Mark Keech, President of the Burrawang School of Arts. Mark explained the start of Schools of "Art". The school of arts movement, also known as the "mechanic's institute" movement, began in Great Britain in the mid-nineteenth across the English-speaking world. There was a focus on skills training across a wide range of areas.



In 1883 the Oddfellows Hall was built in Burrawang and bought by the School of Arts in 1903. The current hall was built in 1915 and regularly used for education, meetings and dances until it became unsafe in the 1980's. The local community then banded together to save and restore the hall to what we see today. It is again in regular use.

Ruth Bailey then introduced the first speaker. **Chris Betteridge** is a founding member of the AGHS and presented a paper at the inaugural conference in 1980. Prior to establishing Betteridge Heritage, Chris held positions with The Earth Exchange, Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens, NSW Department of Planning, NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service and the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences. His current position involves consultancy services in relation to heritage investigation, assessment, management and interpretation.

Chris Betteridge was commissioned by AGHS SHB to undertake a "**Landscape Character Study of Bowral Public Spaces**". That report was presented to Wingecarribee Council in September 2021 via a Zoom meeting and a revised presentation was given to this 2022 AGHS Winter Solstice Seminar.

Chris noted that his study concentrated on Bowral and East Bowral, and only included public spaces, but hoped that the methodology may provide a template for studies in other areas.

The presentation began with a discussion of contextual and definitional issues around "landscape", "character", and "cultural landscape". This included an acknowledgement that landscapes are important to different people for different reasons and that any classification of *cultural landscape* involves imposing artificial boundaries on something that is continuously changing due to natural and human-induced factors.

We were then guided through a series of photographs showing an evolution of local places and landscapes from the 1880's though to the 1960's and beyond. It was great to see the work

being done on the terraced trachyte walls and camellias at Bowral Station which now look very similar to the original design in the 1930's. It was not so great to see rural landscapes now replaced by housing developments – even though these developments are home to many new residents including AGHS members.

Chris reminded us of the formal framework of his study and report with discussion of landscape types including Streetscapes, Urban Parks, Cemeteries, Special Purpose Gardens and Bushland Reserves.

Streetscapes, and importantly street plantings, have been an historic characteristic of Bowral and it is hoped that this will be retained in urban areas.



.... and encouraged in new developments.



Chris also discussed ways of protecting landscapes including Zoning, Heritage Listing, Management Strategies, Tree Preservation Control and Community Education & Advocacy.

Key threats, as perceived by local community, included developers seeking best financial returns, general overdevelopment affecting locals and turning away tourists, a focus on tourism to the detriment of residents, and a concern over “ugly houses”. Chris highlighted some of the recent new subdivisions and the impact they had on the landscape. He hoped that the appearance would mellow over time.

Chris’s report has been presented to Council (WSC) with the following key recommendations for conservation of Bowral’s cultural landscape character:

- A Council-sponsored community workshop to assess the success of Council’s tree management plans and strategies and recommend updating where necessary.
- A Canopy Replenishment Strategy to address climate change, conserve character, and minimise risks, with clear targets for tree survival rates and canopy coverage.
- A proactive maintenance program for vegetation in public places.
- Adequate human and financial resourcing by Council to enhance and maintain Bowral’s cultural landscape and its character.
- Promotion of Bowral’s cultural landscape for its major tourism value and cooperative marketing with the town’s other attractions and festivals.

The Southern Highlands Branch of the Australian Garden History Society supports the detail of the Study and the Recommendations.

Wow! That was a lot to take in. Time for a cup of tea. This time including a wonderful spread of sandwiches and snacks provided by CWA Evening Group in Moss Vale.

Our next presentation was “**The History of Camden Park House and Garden**” given by Edwina and John Macarthur-Stanham. Their very interesting presentation concentrated on the historical context, the life of and work done by William Macarthur, and the garden today.

See: <https://www.camdenparkhouse.com.au/>



Edwina reminded us that John Macarthur was a Lieutenant with the NSW Corps and arrived in the Colony of NSW on the Second Fleet in 1790. Our presenter, John Macarthur-Stanham, is the seventh generation in Australia.

John Macarthur had early commercial success in the colony and his two forced returns to England probably assisted the family’s long-term success. In 1793 Macarthur was granted 100 acres at Parramatta (Elizabeth Farm) and in 1805 was granted 5,000 acres at Cowpastures (Camden Park).

Following the Rum Rebellion, Macarthur was absent from Australia from 1809 to 1817. (Google it!). Camden Park was

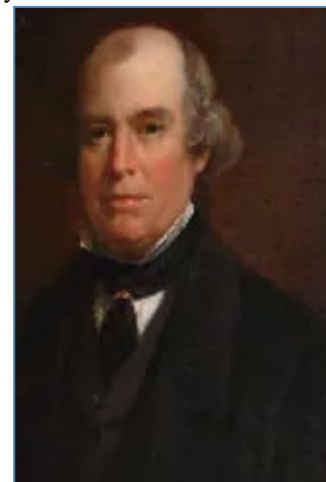
managed by his wife Elizabeth. Macarthur took wool samples to England and came back with more breeding sheep, educated sons and grape vines from Germany.

John Macarthur, and sons James and William, returned to NSW in 1817. As a reference point, that is only 4 years after the first European crossing of the Blue Mountains and the year that the Bank of NSW (which much later became Westpac) was established.

Camden Park House was built during his later years, but he died in 1834 shortly before its completion in 1835. The property and its development then fell to his son William Macarthur.

John Macarthur-Stanham took a turn at presenting and proudly claimed that the family had been instrumental in establishing four activities that have influenced Australia to this day being wool, wine, horticulture and modern dairy.

William Macarthur was born at Elizabeth Farm in 1800 and was educated in England. His father John Macarthur had guided the future of his four sons with the eldest Edward taking a military career, John into the law and then the family’s representative in England with James and William responsible for the business operations in Australia. William played a key role in the establishment of the Australian wine industry including the development of vineyards and the winery at Camden Park and the promotion and support of wine growing in other regions. He was a horticulturalist trading in plants – including supply of Australian native plants to the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew – was a plant breeder and hybridist and established the horticulture infrastructure at Camden Park. William took part in the 1855 Paris Exhibition including a display of 220 Australian native timbers and a range of Australian wines.



Over 2,000 plants at Camden Park were detailed in five catalogues published from 1838 to 1857.

Edwina then took us on a tour of the 5-hectare garden today. She described it as being of an “informal picturesque” style where “history meets horticulture”.

Acknowledging the ground-breaking horticultural work done by William Macarthur, Edwina highlighted some of the special and historical plants and trees in the garden including the Chilean wine palms, the baubinia collected by Ludwig Leichhardt, and the *Picconia excelsa* originating from the Canary Islands.

As a slight aside, AGHS Members who travelled on the Cowra trip in 2021 may recall the visit to NT Cooma Cottage being Hamilton Hume’s home in Yass. The large *Picconia excelsa* towering over the house is believed to have been planted in 1849 and that Hamilton Hume got the tree from William Macarthur’s collection at Camden Park.

Another highlight at Camden Park is the Waratah *Camellia japonica* 'Anemoniflora'.



We were told of the program to retain the old plants and trees through propagation and replanting. This had recently proved critical when a Greek Strawberry Tree was finally successfully propagated and planted out only to have the original tree felled in a storm only 6 months later. The propagation and replanting process was also being used to recreate the original skylines.

John then returned to the podium to discuss some of the infrastructure in the garden including the stove, the glass houses, the rose arbour and the irrigation systems. Much of the original infrastructure had been put in by William Macarthur and that was not necessarily being replaced but was being honoured.

John acknowledged the work done on the house and in the garden, including that done by volunteers, but also accepted that his and Edwina's role was as "custodians". They enjoyed Camden Park house as a welcoming family home.

But let's not just hear about the garden and the plants but accept the invitation to visit Camden Park on the spring open days on the weekend of 17/18 September. (There may even be an opportunity for a special AGHS visit to Camden Park!)



Edwina and John Macarthur-Stanham at Burrawang



Chris Betteridge holding forth.

EG Waterhouse National Camellia Garden and Bare Island Tour 19 July, 2022

Author Ruth Bailey

After a cold morning start we headed off to the EG Waterhouse National Camellia Gardens and arrived in Caringbah amid a few spots of rain all hoping that would be a last of the rain for the day. Alas, that wasn't to be so, but more later. The magpies and parrots welcomed us over morning tea and helped themselves to a few morsels directly from member's hands, much to their surprise. An amazing wisteria was entwined along the fence to the gardens and we all thought how stunning it would look in the spring.



We felt like we were in a botanic garden as the camellias were intermingled with birds nest ferns, fern trees, cycads, several bottle trees and many clivias both wide leaf and narrow plus many other plants. Some of the clivias had variegated flowers which was lovely to see. The camellias were allowed to grow freely so weren't clipped into shape as we often see in gardens. There were so many camellias peeking through the greenery it was a beautiful sight to see so many flourishing in these lush diverse surroundings.



A circular rose garden in the lower lawns of the garden and featuring bare-stemmed roses only gave a hint of a potentially glorious view in the spring. Many ibis and ducks were foraging for food on the damp grass but it gave the gardens a relaxed feel. A scented garden is embedded within the gardens for people with limited sight and ability to enjoy the surroundings.

The gardens established in 1970 were named after Professor Eben Gowrie Waterhouse a distinguished Australian linguist and world expert on camellias who served as the first president of the International Camellia Society in 1962. The gardens

contain one of the largest collections of camellia cultivars in Australia.



Camellias are among the world's most popular flowering shrubs and trees. Originating in Asia (particularly China, Japan and Vietnam) they are now prized by horticulturists and gardeners across the world, particularly as most flower in winter when other flowers are scarce. Camellias include the tea of commerce (*Camellia sinensis*) and have a known history of human cultivation approaching 5000 years. Camellias have a long history even in post-European settlement Australia, possibly arriving with Lady Brisbane in Sydney as early as 1821 with first plantings at Sydney's Royal Botanic Gardens in 1823.

Below is a reference to details of the garden showing the camellias by garden bed and providing more historical information about camellias and the gardens. Worth a look!
<http://camelliasaustralia.com.au/gardens/e-g-waterhouse-national-camellia-gardens/>

By noon the wind was increasing so we welcomed our lunch at the Ramsgate RSL out of the fine rain and wind.

As we travelled to Bare Island after lunch we could see dark clouds looming and by the time we arrived it was raining heavily. As we waited for the weather to clear our National Parks guide Oscar Fernandez entertained us in the coach with many stories of the founding of Botany Bay and the construction of the fort on Bare Island which was completed in 1885. We learned that the British army had departed from Australia in 1870 and Australian colonies were left to defend themselves. With the Germans in Papua New Guinea there was fear by concerned citizens that the Russians would come down from eastern Russia and invade Australia. The fort was constructed to prevent the Russians from entering Botany Bay and easily accessing Sydney through “the back door”. The weather conditions eased and we crossed to the island.



The island was fortified in 1885, according to a design by colonial architect, James Barnet and fitted with heavy guns. However, the concrete used on the outer walls was later considered to be inferior which ultimately led to the site being decommissioned. The concrete was used for the outer walls as the sandstone in the surrounding area would not have endured multiple attacks. The fort had several canons weighing 5 tonnes, 12 tonnes and a massive “hidden” cannon weighing 50 tonnes which could be raised by water then lowered to disappear when the water was drained away. We learned there was a laboratory on the island where gun powder was created from the individual materials. It was used for the firing of cannon balls to penetrate the wooden hulls of ships. Some of the larger but lighter cannon balls were loaded with gunpowder and a slow fuse so that when they landed on the wooden ships the ball would explode.



After 5 years of training, the Russians failed to arrive, and the fort was decommissioned. Most of the cannons were melted down for scrap metal in the early 1900's except for the 12 and 50 tonne canons as they were too heavy to bring back over the wooden bridge that connected Bare Island to the mainland. We were able to view these canons as a result. The island remained unused for many years until 1912 when a war veteran retirement home was established for veterans from the Sudan, Boer War and China campaigns. It continued to operate as a retirement home until 1963. The concrete walls of the fort are now crumbling so only guided tours can be held at the fort for safety reasons.



We were regaled with many interesting and sometimes funny stories by our guide and as we headed back to the bus across the 130-year-old 100-meter wooden bridge, the heavy rain descended upon us and we entered the bus wet and bedraggled but overjoyed by the experience of visiting the island.



Despite the moments of inclement weather everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day's excursion. Our special thanks to Ray Bradley for a wonderful tour.

Photographs by Lynda Cowley, Marilyn Steiner, Ruth Bailey and Bud Townsing

Advocacy

The Census measures the Southern Highland's population and the types and location of dwelling development. It helps us understand the potential threats to the gardens and landscapes of the Southern Highlands.

The official measure of Australia's population is called the Estimated Resident Population (ERP). The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), on 26 July 2022, released the latest ERP estimates for Wingecarribee Shire (Southern Highlands) based on the 2021 Census.

The ERP of Wingecarribee increased by 7.1 %, from 48,998 people in 2016 to 52,456 people in 2021. This is in line with previous ABS estimates for Wingecarribee.

The population growth for areas within Wingecarribee between 2016 and 2021 was:

- Bowral & Burradoo ERP increased by 321 people, 2.4%, to 13,539 people,
- Hill Top & Colo Vale ERP increased by 204 people, 3.3%, to 6,339,
- Mittagong ERP increased by 1,648 people, 17.9%, to 10,880,
- Moss Vale & Berrima ERP increased by 593 people, 5.9%, to 10,601,
- Robertson & Fitzroy Falls ERP increased by 204 people, 5.7%, to 3,810, and
- The rest of the Southern Highlands ERP increased by 469 people, 7.0%, to 7,197.

The most significant population growth has been in Mittagong, 17.9%, 1,648 people, and in Moss Vale & Berrima 5.9% and 593 people. Bowral & Burradoo population increased by only 2.4%, 321 people.

The latest NSW Government Common Planning Assumptions forecast that the Wingecarribee population will grow at a 1.54% per annum and by 2041 will be 71,969 people. These are not population targets but are a common set of assumptions for Councils to use to plan services.

The Median age in the Southern Highlands in the 2021 Census was 48 years old. The 2021 Census median age for different areas is of interest:

- Bowral median age including East Bowral and Burradoo, 56 years old,
- Retford Park 45 years,
- Mittagong 44 years old which, includes areas such as Renwick where the median age is 37 years,
- Bundanoon 59 years,
- Exeter 53 years, and
- Moss Vale – Berrima 45 years old,

The number of dwellings in the Southern Highlands increased by 2,123 between 2016 and 2021. Separate houses increased by 1,737 making up 82% of the total increase. Attached dwellings were 386, 18% of the total new dwelling increase.

Freestanding medium density dwellings, (such as the new Karrara development on the corner of Moss Vale Road and Links Road) are counted as separate houses in the Census. The Census count for attached dwellings is often used as a measure of the extent of medium density dwellings in the Southern Highlands. However this understates extent of medium density development as a significant proportion of medium density dwellings in the Southern Highlands are freestanding and are thus counted as separate houses.

Australian Garden History Society
Southern Highlands Branch
Annual General Meeting and Winter Seminar
Sunday 21 August 2022
11.00am to 3.00pm
East Bowral Community Centre

The AGM will share our past year events, activities, finances and seek nominations for the Committee.

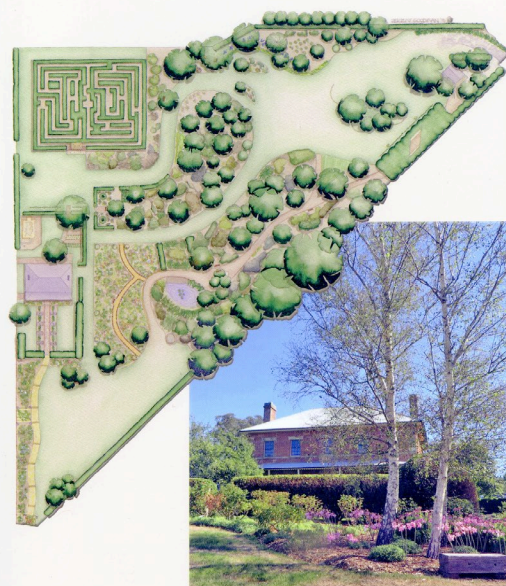
We then have two excellent speakers Chris Thompson and John Siemon.

Chris Thompson will give a presentation on her new book - *A Struggle for Relevance* The Garden at Harper's Mansion.

John Siemon is the Director of Horticulture at the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney and will give a presentation on the 200-year history of the Royal Botanic Gardens.

A Struggle for Relevance

The Garden at Harper's Mansion



Chris Thompson



*Botanical Gardens of Sydney,
 courtesy State Library of
 Victoria, 1878 chromolithograph
 by Charles Troedel & Co.*

Australian Garden History Society (Southern Highlands Branch)

AGM and Winter Seminar

Sunday 21 August, 2022

Booking Form

Cost - \$35 for members and \$45 for non-members

Please print clearly

Participant/s Details

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Other ____ First Name: _____ Surname: _____

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Other ____ First Name: _____ Surname: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____ State: _____ Postcode: _____

Telephone No: _____ Mobile: _____

Email address: ***Please print clearly***

Dietary / Medical Requirements you believe we should be aware of. (e.g. - diabetic, vegetarian, gluten free)

EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS:-

1: Name:Phone:

2: Name:Phone:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Enquiries / bookings: Please scan or send a photograph to Ruth Bailey ruthbailey1428@gmail.com (M) 04 0912 6718 please leave a message otherwise your call will not be returned

Final Payment - no later than **Monday 8 August, 2022.**

Payment Details

Direct credit to ANZ Bank - Account name: **Australian Garden History Society**
BSB: 012 547 Account no: 237 514 077 - please include the following reference **your surname & AGM and Winter Seminar** . **Email your name and phone number to ruthbailey1428@gmail.com** to advise the deposit has been made.

OR

Cheque payable to **Australian Garden History Society** returned with this form to:
AGM and Winter Seminar, AGHS, PO Box 2327, Bowral 2576