

Inflorescence

May 2024

The Newsletter of the Southern Highlands Branch of the AGHS



Events for 2024

<p>Berrima District Museum 1 (A) Market Place Berrima</p> <p>Now open Friday, Saturday and Sundays</p>	<p>Come and see <i>Gardens and Landscapes in the Southern Highlands Then and Now</i></p>
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Upcoming Tours and Events 2024

23 June Winter Solstice Seminar at the new Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens Education Centre.

25 July Visit to the Caroline Simpson Library.

3 August guided walking tour of Station St Camellias.

Report from the Chair

Winter mornings have arrived with frosts these past two days which alerts us all that most of our events in the coming months will be held indoors (with some small exceptions). By now you will have received an email about the Winter Solstice Seminar. I hope using Humanitix to register is easy for you to use. If not, please let Sue Trudeau know and she can assist you. Learning from Charlotte Webb of the many hurdles that needed to be overcome to create a Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens will be a lesson in vision, extraordinary resilience, partnership with supporters and many hours of volunteering. I hope you all plan to come and see what has been achieved and what is in store for the future.

The Committee has now been advised of all expiry dates for membership of the AGHS (never previously provided). Members have a two month grace period before we will be following up so if your membership is not current you will be receiving an email from us as to whether you wish to remain a member. I hope you do renew as our society works very hard to preserve gardens and community landscapes an important part of Australia's evolving history and educates us all about such places throughout Australia.

Winter signals the beginning of the *Camellia japonica* flowering! We are especially proud of the heritage plantings at Bendooley Place and the significant heritage camellias along Station Street near Bowral Station. The Belle Epoque camellias (those of the late 19th century) will be in flower by early August (some are in flower now). Dr. Stephen Utick will conduct a walking tour on

the 3rd of August of these camellias. Bill Parker of Camellias-R-Us will have a rare heritage camellia for sale which was propagated from a Retford Park camellia as well as other heritage camellias. More details to come.

The AGHS has recently sent an email to all members requesting their feedback on the Future Directions of the AGHS. This is particularly focused on the name of the society and whether (or not) it should be changed to reflect the broader focus of the society today. If you would like to comment on whether this should change, please send an email to the head office in Melbourne. Two discussion papers were recently distributed which might help you think about the issues generating this need for feedback. It may or may not occur but we hope to see an answer in the coming months. My response following our Committee discussion, is on page 6 of this newsletter.

Merryleigh Brindley has written a wonderful report on the South Coast Tour - thank you Merryleigh, we are indebted to you! You will feel like you were on the tour with the other 35 members and friends who thoroughly enjoyed the tour put together by Ray Bradley, so please take a moment and enjoy the tour!

Charles and Lynne Moore graciously opened their garden Upper Woodlands to us in April. We thank them for their generosity. The garden was amazing and thankfully the rain held off until after the visit was completed.

Bud is keeping us all up to date on significant changes to our community which will ultimately impact garden space and retention of old plantings and potential future plantings. Wingecarribee Heritage Study Report by the independent peer reviewer was in basic agreement with the community members who were the originators of the review. A report on the peer review is a must read.

The emerging Master Plan for Bowral South is also in the newsletter to keep you informed of future housing availability and also preliminary plans for the Berrima Gaol.

The Maltings in Mittagong now has had two new development plans submitted to the Wingecarribee Shire Council as the old structure has deteriorated more than first thought. Bud has outlined the future plans as they exist today. Another interesting article!

I look forward to seeing many of you again at our future events this winter as I was unable to attend the garden visit to Upper Woodlands due to an overseas holiday.

Best wishes, Ruth

AGHS-SHB South Coast Tour, Tuesday 7 – Thursday 9 May 2024.

By Merryleigh Brindley, Photographs by Ruth Bailey and Bud Townsing

Dear Ray, you've done it again, another 'tour de force' if you will pardon the pun. On a cold, bleak, drizzly morning 35 members boarded the coach for our latest AGHS-SHB adventure. But our usual luck was with us and the forecast rain was never a problem. True, it drizzled at our very welcome morning tea in the park in Braidwood but the sun welcomed us at our very first garden, 'Longsight', Braidwood, an 1850's home on three hectares.



There we were welcomed by the owner, the exotically named Samara. While chatting with her I discovered her to be a lawyer, the very hard-working mother of three young children, the proprietor of a B&B in the restored stables and, obviously, a passionate gardener. Since her arrival in 2016 she has focused on restoring the neglected house and garden which had been empty for the previous five years. Remnants of the original garden established with the house and once home to a local member of Parliament, Sir Austin Chapman, formed the basis of its restoration. You only have to see the huge boulders excavated, the rejuvenated cherry laurel hedges, the newly extended line of Iceberg roses above a stone

buttress, a legacy from the remaining few, to admire the dedication. Two tall old sandstone urns flanking a pathway under glowing autumn foliage and a graceful column towering over a small pool in the hedged garden room on the western side also hint at the previous grandeur. The children's favourite, I imagine, is the secret path linking the front and back gardens.



But there is much new planting and construction to admire – the splendid new steps and entrance path, newly opened vistas to the surrounding farmland, the pears along the driveway and the Western Red Cedar hedge on the Eastern boundary. The new planting flanking the front steps is in tones of grey, mauve and burgundy – teucium, dwarf maples and plectranthus and is bordered by balls of box and clipped teucium. 'Bangay Balls', says Samara, after her favourite designer, and are a recurring theme. Roses and wisteria climb the verandah posts. Above all, it feels like a happy and well used garden. A marmalade cat was skulking in the bushes and happily foraging in the grass were busy multi coloured chooks and their two splendid attendant roosters. I would love to revisit.

Lunch followed at the Concept Cafe, so while waiting we were given a tour of the town with its many charming old houses and public buildings. A 'concept cafe' is usually one with a particular theme and believe me, the Braidwood one is to cheerfully and efficiently feed a large number of people in a very small space with the largest, tastiest sandwiches ever. Our three waitresses told me they had started very early that morning and I could well believe it. Replete, we staggered out to explore the charms of downtown Braidwood.

Unfortunately or fortunately, depending on your point of view and your pocket, being Tuesday many of the shops were shut, so eventually, back to the coach, heading for our destination, Bateman's Bay. We passed the tiny village of Nelligan, then a brief stop at the Holmes Lookout in the Clyde National Park for a spectacular view of the Clyde River winding its way to the Pacific Ocean and, far below, Bateman's Bay.



Out came the cameras but the bird life in the majestic gums also caught my eye. Finally, our destination, the very comfortable Lincoln Downs Resort, our home for the next two nights. Then, one of the best parts of the day, we gathered to relax with a drink, talk over the day and its highlights, relish a dinner one hasn't had to cook and finally bed in a comfortable room. Mine had a water view and as I closed the curtains, a kangaroo was just outside the window!

Day 2 – Wednesday, 8 May 2024

Ray has the endearing habit of occasionally introducing surprises into the program and so our first stop this morning was Moruya Nursery, a large well laid out building behind a tall sasanqua hedge, full of an interesting variety of plants and garden accessories which many of us found to be irresistible. Then, another surprise, this one due to Ann Beaumont – morning tea at the Post and Telegraph building in Moruya's main street. What an absolute delight!



Post Office Moruya circa 1900, Moruya and District Historical Society

The building had been bought in 2020 by retired Canberra couple, Sue and Michael Franklin, and transformed after months of work into a stunning B&B upstairs and a wonderful family home downstairs. A linked series of small courtyard spaces surround the building, each one beautifully planted with ferns and camellias, perennials and climbers, and leading to secluded sitting places, overflowing urns, trellised walls and even a private Balinese themed retreat.



Morning tea was under a pergola but I was too busy looking at the colourful Spanish tiles, the Moroccan windows, the potted fruit trees, at just everything, to eat.



A little King Charles Spaniel sat at the door and I think I caught a glimpse of a cat hiding behind the amazing salvias. Then, to my surprise, I noticed some of our party actually inside! Looking around! I was up those stairs like a rocket. And inside was just as attractive as outside. How kind of the Franklins to let us wander around.

On to a more expected treat, the Rectory Garden at Bodalla. I notice on the blurb for the garden it says 'A garden full of country charm' which of course it is but it is so much more. It is really a clever, sophisticated place designed by a clever, sophisticated artist.



It is a private world that seems even larger than its 3 acres because of its design – its curving, interlocking paths leading into and out of the various rooms, its vistas from one area to another, its inspired planting, its colours – mauve, purple, greys around steel grey pots. I love the colour of the old weatherboard house, perfect against the

green lawns – I don't know how to describe it in my memory. Rhubarb colour?



Appropriate, perhaps, because there is a great fruit and vegetable area. And chooks. Everything is done with style. I noticed that instead of just throwing some greens into the pen, a bunch had been gathered, tied up like a rustic bouquet and pinned to the wall. While the lower garden is free flowing, the upper is more formal. Similarly, the planting follows the design. For example, box balls against the house wall are in line, looking marvellous against the colour, while lower down others are placed randomly on the lawn. The low-key entrance walk faces a burst of glowing wall colour. The garden certainly has 'country charm' but it is also a garden for the plant and design connoisseur.



So back to reality and lunch at the Tilba Valley Winery and huge plates of 'Ploughman's Lunch', very tasty. How hard these people must work. Romance and reality must sometimes seem far apart. On to Central Tilba, a listed National Heritage village. Here romance and reality also seemed quite far apart – there was a great cheese shop though. Back to the bus and home to another relaxed evening and another delicious dinner. Perfect.

Day 3 – Thursday, 9 May 2024.

Reluctantly we packed up and headed for our first visit, the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Garden. Work began on the Garden in 1988 but a devastating bush fire caused major damage to plant and wildlife population. Apart

from obvious damage to the larger trees it is hard to believe so much replanting and replacement of infrastructure had been needed when it has been so successfully achieved.



Everywhere dedicated volunteers were working, in the Visitor Centre and the grounds.



First stop for most of us was the plant Nursery and the cafe – great coffee. I asked a volunteer in the Garden Shop who had designed the garden and was thrilled to discover it was an old friend, John Wrigley, an authority on Australian native plants. Originally an industrial chemist, John developed a strong interest in propagating and cultivating them. His first book, *Australian Native Plants*, 1979, became a classic and sold over 100,000 copies. He became curator of the Australian National Botanic Gardens in Canberra from 1967 to 1981. We met John Wrigley when he visited our first farm in Berry. My John, who some of you will remember, was an accountant turned farmer and we had on our farm a patch of the only rain forest at that level, full of towering cedar trees, which of course were protected, and a platypus habitat creek. When for health reasons we had to leave this paradise, we still remained friends with John W. One feature of the Botanic Garden I particularly liked was the swathes of green grass which set off the bush plantings.

Now we headed for the coast and lunch at Mollymook Golf Club with a brief stop to photograph the lighthouse at Ulladulla. The Golf Club has a magnificent setting right on the beach and we enjoyed a very substantial lunch.

And now we turned for home, heading first for Terrara House near Nowra. Some years ago I visited the 1904 sandstone mansion with a relative and her friend, a Canberra fashion designer, who planned to buy it to run a wedding venue and subsequently did so for a time. The house was essentially the same but very gloomy and old fashioned with a few basic, very basic amenities. Apart from the area to the right of the house, the grounds were virtually non existent, just soggy paddocks with a few decrepit timber buildings looming over a flat horizon. A few ragged palms and some huge Moreton Bay fig trees that still exist reminded me of that visit but everything else has changed. Externally, the gracious old house with its cast iron lace, its widow's walk, its lovely curved entrance steps and cedar front door looks much the same but spruced up and well cared for.



Internally it is now a grand home with elegant furnishings, chandeliers galore, restored stained glass, a conservatory replacing the old verandah and a kitchen to die for.



The old wooden shed has been converted into 'Chester', the main event space, where we enjoyed a sumptuous afternoon tea. The former empty and forlorn stable building is now transformed into guest accommodation. There is an outdoor entertainment area, a pool, a tennis court, a wellness retreat. The grounds, now immaculate, lead from that first area I remember, now called the mirror garden, to a parterre with heart shaped beds and on to an obviously productive vegetable garden. In the paddocks, Scottish Highland cattle loom over the immaculate fences and guinea fowl strut elegantly around. I was amazed, totally amazed, at the

transformation. Terrara House was the perfect culmination of our trip, the grand finale.



So thank you, Ray, you have given us the perfect mini holiday, to enjoy, to learn from and to remember. Even the weather cooperated. Often it would be raining as we approached our destination, cleared as we explored it, only to resume as we boarded the bus. There, as a bonus, we had our driver, Ken, to skilfully and cheerfully drive us and bring us safely home. Until next time!

Upper Woodlands 17 April

One hundred AGHS-SHB members and friends went to the 7 acre garden on the 100 acre Upper Woodlands property of Charles and Lynne Moore on 17 April 2024. Upper Woodlands is situated on the picturesque hills and rolling rural landscape between Berrima and Mittagong. The garden was established in 1989 with the house being built some fifteen years later.



Nearmap image of Upper Woodlands in January 2024

Upper Woodlands has been inspired by the gardens of England and Europe and has been planned around the views and garden destinations complimented by the landscaping and plants.



As a thank you we gave Charles a copy of the AGHS-SHB book *The Southern Highlands is Our Landscape*, the story of Isobel and Claude Crowe. Claude and Isobel's son Noel Crowe wrote the foreword of our book and was the designer of the Upper Woodlands garden.

Our thanks again to Charles for allowing us to visit his wonderful garden and to the AGHS-SHB committee for turning on a superb afternoon tea.

Discussion on possible AGHS Name Change

The AGHS-SHB Committee has discussed the possibility of changing the name of the AGHS. Our view in response to a request from the National Management Committee is:

- History describes our attempts to research, study and explain the past and it is always changing i.e. it as an evolutionary dynamic process that encompasses past, present, and future. This aptly describes Australian Garden History.
- Colleen Morris and Peter Watts have raised many issues which need to be considered carefully. We believe that the "no change" option is the best option as our current name appropriately describes the dynamic process that we are experiencing.
- More importantly a "brand name" is a valuable asset which has taken 40+ years to establish! As a prior marketing and communications professional, a cardinal rule is never to change an established brand because it would be starting from ground zero to establish a new name. Our committee members feel the same way.
- As an example, the brand Coca-Cola, has retained its name over 130+ years and brand image but have evolved their tag lines (also called slogans) i.e. throughout the years, the slogans used in advertising for Coca-Cola have reflected not only the brand, but the times. Tag lines provide a simple, direct way to communicate about Coca-Cola. They have used 50 slogans during this time period to communicate according to the times.
- Crafting a memorable slogan is crucial for brand differentiation (in our case from garden clubs and other societies) and building emotional connections with consumers (do they care about our history and how it is changing in Australia). Generally the slogan should be 5 words or less. Something like Conserving Gardens and Community Landscapes. It's a challenging process to develop a slogan but it is crucial for the brand to be connected to consumers i.e. current and potential members of the AGHS. The AGHS could consider developing a slogan to reflect the expansion of our focus from enclosed gardens to include streetscapes especially as it relates to our urban expansion and loss of enclosed garden space.

Ruth Bailey

Chair

Advocacy

Wingecarribee Community Heritage Study

The Independent Peer Review Report (IPRR) of the Wingecarribee Community Heritage Study (WCHS) is completed and the WSC Local Planning Panel has recommended that it be endorsed to go on public exhibition for further comment from 1 June to 30 June. The Local Planning Panel will then review the IPRR in the light of these further comments and make recommendations to Council at its next meeting on 31 July 2024.

The WCHS recommended the heritage listing of some 478 heritage items. The IPRR has recommended listing 421 heritage items. Whilst there are some differences between the WCHS and the IPRR in some of the items recommended, in big picture terms the independent IPRR review is broadly consistent with the WCHS recommendations including most of the proposed extensions to Conservation areas.

The WCHS and IPRR are significant steps forward in protecting the towns, villages and landscapes of the Southern Highlands. Heritage listing and conservation areas are the only protection we have over the inevitable blandness of statewide planning policies which continue to be invented.

For further information on the IPRR see:

<https://participatewingecarribee.wsc.nsw.gov.au/community-heritage-study>

We encourage our members to read the IPRR report and to use the opportunity of its June exhibition to support further heritage listing in Wingecarribee. We thank the WSC for the way in which it is progressing heritage listing in Wingecarribee Shire.

Wingecarribee Tree Strategy

At the WSC extraordinary meeting on 29 May 2024 the Administrator, Viv May, described the current WSC tree management process as a quagmire, the Urban Tree Policy as pages of waffle and he could not find the Significant Tree Register which he said if he could find it was more than ten years old. WSC has engaged a consultant to advise on tree management delivery in a more customer friendly manner and WSC has resolved to:

- Dedicate resources to develop a Tree Preservation order and integrate it into the LEP,
- Prepare an updated Register of Significant Trees to better protect our local trees of visual, botanical, ecological and historical, and commemorative, cultural or social significance,
- Trees in new subdivisions, it is crucial to protect existing trees and to mandate tree plantings in all new subdivisions.

This is an important WSC initiative which AGHS-SHB fully supports. It is consistent with the recommendations of the IPRR where it has suggested trees should not be heritage listed but are more appropriately identified via a Register of Significant Trees.

Bowral South New Living Area

The Wingecarribee Shire Council continues to develop a master plan for the Bowral South New Living Area (BSNLA) which is south of East Bowral beginning at the roundabout at the junction of Kangaloon Road, and Eridge Park Road opposite the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens (SHBG).

The BSNLA is identified as the next greenfield development area in the Wingecarribee Local Housing Strategy of July 2021.

The emerging draft Master Plan is shown below. There is a small shopping centre at the top (in red) opposite the SHBG.



The purple area is the Pepperfield Seniors Housing development, the darker brown areas are attached housing and the lighter brown areas are detached housing.

The development at this stage seems to be about half detached housing and about half attached housing such as town houses, terraces, semis, manor houses and flats. The BSNLA development will be much denser than existing developments such as East Bowral.

BSNLA is being designed on a similar basis to Tullimbar near Albion Park with for example rear lanes being used for vehicle access.

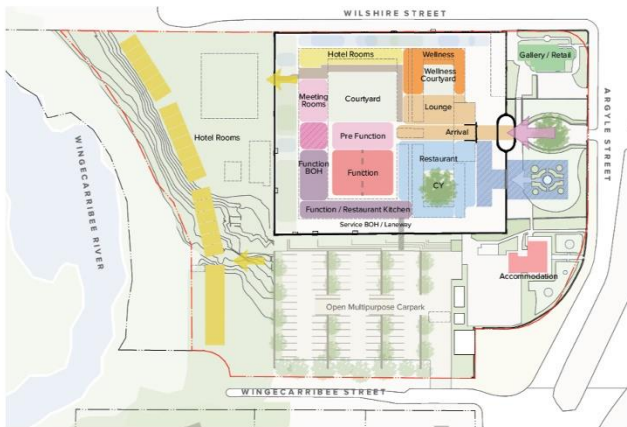
BSNLA will have 2,000 plus dwellings and a population of about 5,000 people. The Census 2021 population of East Bowral was 3,811 people, Burradoo was 2,976 people and Bowral was 6,685 people so this is a large development.

The BSNLA will go on exhibition from mid-2024.

Berrima Gaol



December 2023 Nearmap image of Berrima Gaol



The above drawing is a concept strategy by Blue Sox who bought the Gaol for \$7million from the NSW Government. The current Blue Sox proposal is: “The adaptive re-use of the former Berrima Gaol for a boutique hotel comprising the following 60 hotel rooms, signature restaurant, several high-end bars, boutique retail, wellness centre, spa, gym, function space, meeting rooms, car parking, working gardens.”

Most of the hotel accommodation is planned to be outside the Gaol walls and is the yellow areas in the above drawing. At this stage there is no detail on what the development will actually look like so it hard to make any judgment on the development. For further information see

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/berrima-hotel>

The Maltings at 2 Colo Street Mittagong

Two new Development Applications for the Maltings have been submitted to Wingecarribee Shire Council, DA24/1138 and DA24/1140. Further detailed investigation has indicated that the old structure has deteriorated more than first thought and a revised approach is required. The proposal is still to build a function centre, hotel accommodation, restaurant and a pub.

The following points are an extract from the DA documents:

- The proposal will allow the core part of the site consisting of the large scale maltings buildings, remnant landscaping and the river to be conserved as a whole entity.
- The new uses enable the on-going usage and activation of the place and to fund the necessary conservation and repair works.
- New architectural elements have been designed to be distinctive and separate from the heritage fabric. The changes are introduced in a manner that minimises loss of significant fabric and respects the spatial qualities, setting and views across the site.
- Due to the ruinous state of the site, extensive reconstruction of lost fabric is not considered an appropriate or feasible option. The conservation approach is to design around the heritage values of the site to tell a layered story of hope, decline and abandonment amid new uses.
- The proposal will halt the further deterioration of the remnant buildings, which are at risk of irrecoverable loss.
- The proposal will allow public access and appreciation of the heritage item.



Nearmap view of the Maltings Buildings in 2024



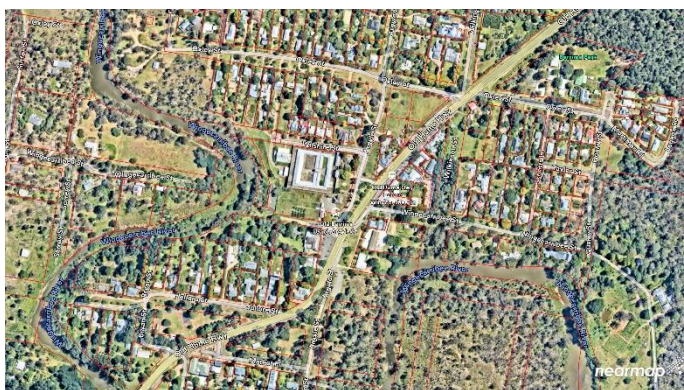
Artist's impression of the building at “B” converted to an open gallery.



This is an Artist's impression of the existing Maltings building 'A' with the hotel development around it.

Support for other organisations

During the month we supported Berrima Residents Association (BRA) with a set of high resolution A3+ size images of Berrima to assist in defending a Land and Environment Court (LEC) appeal against a WSC decision to refuse a dual occupancy and subdivision at 11 Oxley Street Berrima. The LEC dismissed the appeal thus helping maintain the integrity of Berrima Village and landscapes. Below are a couple of the images we prepared to assist BRA.



Save The Date

3 day tour to the Hunter Valley departing Tuesday 19 November to include Hunter Valley Christmas Lights, the Bath House Garden, guided tour of Kuri Kurri murals and the historic town of Morpeth. Itinerary to be released early September.

An extended 8-10 day tour to Western and Central Victoria departing Tuesday 1 April 2025 to include Mt Gambier's Sinkhole and Cave Gardens, Mt Macedon and the Daylesford area.

New Members

We welcome four new members:

Roger & Jenny Manning, Moss Vale

Jane Douglass, Berrima

Anne Murray, Burradoo

AGHS-SHB Committee

Chair	Ruth Bailey
Secretary	Sue Trudeau
Events Coordinator	Eleanor Dartnall
Treasurer	Lynda Cowley
IT Coordinator/Research	Jenny Woodwell
Editor/Research	Bud Townsing
General Member	Chris O'Brien
General Member	Narelle Bowern

Associate Members

Tours	Ray Bradley
NMC Representative	Lyn Barrett
WSC Heritage Representative	Laurel Cheetham
Oral History	Heather McIntyre

AGHS –SHB	Events Program for 2024
23 June	Winter Solstice Seminar at the new Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens Education Centre. Charlotte Webb will talk on how to make the impossible possible - the remarkable story of the creation of the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens.
25 July	Guided visit to Caroline Simpson Library from 11am to 1 pm. Self travel by train to St James Station. Can view The Mint as well, maximum of 20 members.
3 August	Guided walking tour of Bowral Station Street Camellias with Dr. Stephen Utick. Heritage camellias will be for sale.
18 August	AGM and Winter Seminar at East Bowral Community Centre.
13 September	Garden visit to Peak Hill an historic home and garden in Moss Vale.
13 October	Day coach tour to Vacluse House and Elizabeth Bay House Sydney.
October – date to be confirmed	A joint event with Heritage Roses in Australia to a heritage garden.
18-20 October	National AGHS Conference in Bunbury WA with pre and post conference tours in Margaret River Region.
8 November	Wine and Roses Event at Harpers Mansion Berrima.
19-21 November	3 day coach tour to the Hunter Valley departing Tuesday 19 November to include Hunter Valley Christmas Lights, the Bath House Garden, guided tour of Kurri Kurri murals and the historic town of Morpeth. Itinerary to be released early September.
6 December	Christmas Party at the garden named Tavistock in Exeter.