

Inflorescence

May 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:-

- Bare Island Coach Tour 19 July
- Canberra Coach Tour 13 October
- Millthorpe Garden Ramble Coach Tour 4-7 November
- "Save the Date" Adelaide 27 March - 4 April 2023

Other Events

- Winter Solstice Seminar 5 June at Burrawang Hall
- 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

Autumn is in full swing and the trees this year have been glorious. The Southern Highlands has been a picture, which draws many visitors and locals revel in the colour. Our rainfall continues to be unseasonably high but we are always grateful when we are treated to such a display.

Many people continue to be infected with Omicron or the new variants BA.4 and BA.5 despite having booster vaccinations. This is to be expected but the infection is likely to be less severe. Ongoing risk of infection is playing havoc with our personal lives and in many cases our physical and mental health. We are doing our best to schedule events where members and friends are at a reduced risk of infection. However, if you feel unwell or are waiting for the results of a Covid 19 PCR test please stay at home until you receive the results and if positive stay at home according to the NSW guidelines. The Winter Solstice Seminar is scheduled for Sunday 5 June so I hope we are all well and able to attend.

It appears that a large number of our members are unaware that their membership needs to be renewed. Please go to <https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/membership/> and confirm that you have an online account. If not, please create an account and you will be advised by email when your annual

or 3 yearly membership is due for renewal. If you need some assistance please don't hesitate to contact me on ruthbailey1428@gmail.com or on my mobile 0409 126 718 (please leave a message if I don't answer).

The sign for the library camellias was submitted to WSC on 8 May and I heard back from Greg Bray on 19 May that all necessary departments at the WSC have approved the sign. I'm still hoping we will be able to schedule the revealing of the sign when the heritage camellias are in flower!

During the Southern Highlands Botanic Garden Autumn Fair a Sydney AGHS member wondered why members from the Southern Highlands haven't been registering for the Sydney events. I just wanted to remind everyone that events for all branches are posted on the AGHS National website under a tab for each branch. Please take a look on a regular basis especially for Sydney and Canberra events as they are open to all AGHS members and the drive to these cities is relatively close. Better still you can sign up to receive the Sydney newsletter through this portal.

Regards, Ruth

Library Heritage Camellias

In the January issue of *Inflorescence* we advised you that the planting of the heritage camellias had taken place in Bendooley Place. If you haven't been by the library recently we can report that the camellias are well cared for by the WSC and have set many buds which will likely flower in July/August. Three additional *Camellia sasanqua* 'Bonsai Baby' plants have also been installed near the fence to the upper ledge of the parking lot to fill the gap after the original planting.

The final storyboard for the sign, to be erected near the Bendooley Place Camellia Garden, and which will describe the history and the individual names of the camellias has now been approved by WSC and is currently being created. Linda Emery, Lyn Barrett, Leonie Furber and Stephen Utick helped craft the wording for the sign. We hope the sign will be approved, created and installed as the camellias are flowering in late winter. We have approval from the International Camellia Society to place QR codes signs near each camellia so visitors can learn more about each plant. Sourcing the signs and having these created and installed is the next challenge so we'll keep you posted.

New Members

A big welcome to the following new members:

Serena and Adrian Beresford-Wylie	Goulburn
Olga Birrell and Raymond McCann	Bowral
Nyema Hermiston and John Gamble	Yerrinbool
Rowie Kelly	Moss Vale
Sally Bodor	Burrawang.

Projects

Autumn Fair Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens



Penny McKenna and Bud Townsing at AGHS-SHB tent with the Graphoscope to the right of Penny, photograph by Ruth Bailey.

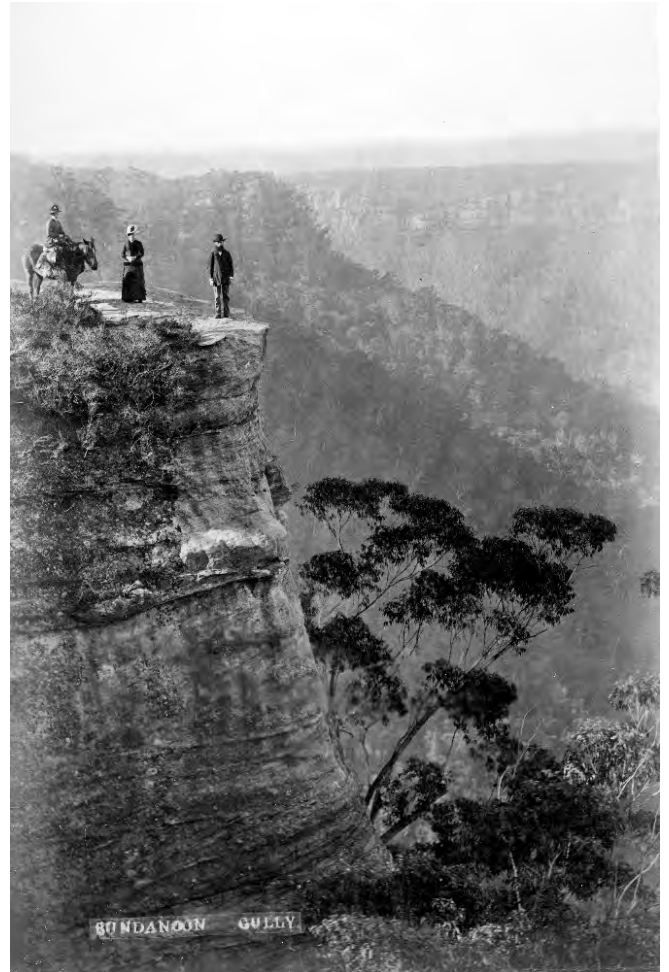
The AGHS-SHB together with Southern Highlands garden clubs and societies were invited for the first time to participate in the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens (SHBG) Autumn Fair on 23-24 April 2022. We had volunteers who helped set up and pull down the tents (thank you Jenny and Mark Woodwell, Bud Townsing, Penny McKenna, Ruth Bailey) generously loaned to everyone from the Southern Highlands National Trust (thank you Ralph Suters) as well as volunteers who heeded the call to man the AGHS stall over the two day fair (thank you, Lyn Barrett, Sue Whitehouse, Barbara and Al McKay, Susie Monckton, Annette O'Donnell, Penny McKenna, Lyn MacBean, Christine Windeyer, Claire Baddeley, and Ruth Bailey).

The Graphoscope, dating from the 1870's, on loan from the Berrima Museum, was a great drawcard showing before and after photos of significant gardens in The Highlands which are featured at The Berrima Museum Exhibition *Gardens and Landscapes of the Southern Highlands - Then and Now*.

On the right are two of the "then and now" photographs viewed through the Graphoscope. The top photograph is by W. A. Nicholas and is circa 1880 to 1890. The bottom image is by Graham Morgan in 2014.

Visitors to the stall were happy to learn more about the AGHS, take away our 2022 calendar of events, free AGHS Journals, how to sign up sheets for AGHS and Berrima Museum brochures.

Everyone enjoyed the experience, helped contribute to a worthy community event, met other AGHS members unknown to them previously (especially the two new members), encouraged visitors to consider joining AGHS and gave written feedback on how to improve our presence for next year. We also provided feedback to the SHBG on additional ideas for the fair which we hoped were helpful.



Update on the Station Street Camellia Garden Beds

Chris Betteridge's Landscape Character Study of Bowral Public Spaces identifies Bowral Station and its environs as a key part of the cultural landscape of Bowral.

Bowral Station with its tiered trachyte camellia beds is beginning to emerge from years of neglect. Our thanks to Viv May, Lisa Miscamble and Greg Bray of the Wingecarribee Shire Council (WSC) who supported the initiative from the AGHS-SHB to restore the heritage camellia beds and terraces to their former glory. The recovery of the camellias is an important first step in addressing some of the long-standing issues of Station Street. We also need to thank many others who have helped in the long struggle to recognise, identify, take cuttings for propagation, water through the drought, the trachyte camellia beds including, to name a few, Peter and Margaret Chadwick, Laurel Cheetham, Stephen Utick, Les Musgrave, Bill Parker and the Friends of Bowral.

In late April 2022 WSC began the process of rejuvenation of the row of 18 heritage *Camellia japonicas* on Station Street (and facing the Bowral train station) Bill Parker from Camellias-R-Us and Camellia Ark is assisting WSC. Bill said: "it was quite a task removing the blackberries, overgrown weeds and unwanted shrubs from the understory to reveal the crumbling trachyte terraced walls and access the camellias to cut them back to a defined shape. They will regenerate over the next 1-2 years and will be glorious."

Laurel Cheetham, of AGHS-SHB, discussed the future plantings with Bill. The plan is to plant additional heritage camellias on the lower terraces and potentially some contemporary camellias once all evidence of weeds and unwanted ivy growth has been removed. This will be a significant task for Bill and the WSC as these beds have been unkept for many years. WSC is liaising with Transport NSW to obtain approval to remove the old soil and replace with new soil and install some appropriate irrigation.

On April 29, Laurel met with the heritage consultant engaged by WSC and is liaising with her on the details she is including in her report. Laurel advised that they are thinking of two signs which could be placed near the finished terraces. One to tell the story of the trachyte walls and terracing and the other about the camellias. This signage will be similar to that being developed for the Library camellias.



Bowral Station and Cab Stand circa 1900, by Ebb Davis courtesy BDHS.



Bowral Station circa 1939 courtesy BDHS



The trachyte walls emerge in May 2022



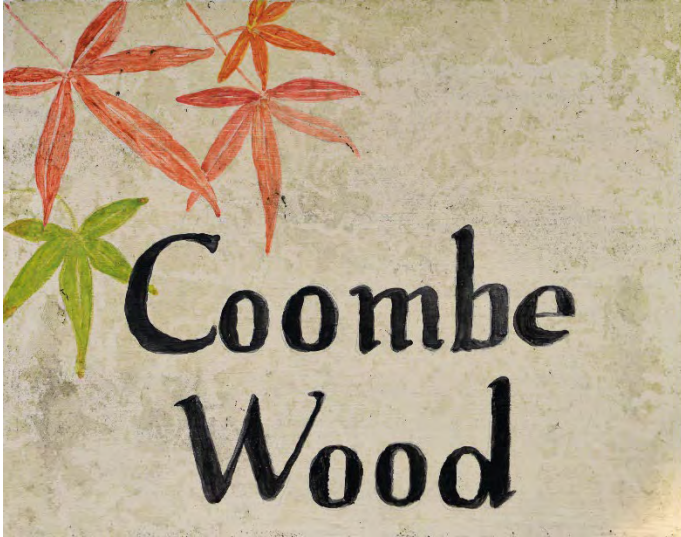
Bowral Station May 2022



Bowral Station May 2022, photographs by Bud Townsing

Coombe Wood

Slow Gardening at Coombe Wood



Coombe Wood at Mittagong began in 1985 when Simon and Mariese Grant acquired eight and half acres of undulating pasture. Coombe Wood is situated in a small gently sloping valley "a coombe". It has been developed and maintained by Simon and Mariese in stages over 37 years. The continued evolution of the garden has been one they term "slow gardening" with much raised from seed or cuttings. They aim for botanically interesting plants. Particular collections include maples, conifers, crab apples, viburnum, camellias and species cyclamen. More recently, they are building up a collection of hydrangeas as well as gradually gathering winter flowering shrubs. Their reliance on trees, shrubs and bulbs instead of annuals and perennials reflects limited water (in most years) and limited time.

While the garden is mostly informal in layout with island beds sheltering in the shade of the original gums, they have also used variety of hedges to divide areas and to lead the eye. The hedges include box, hornbeam, beech, viburnum, cotoneaster, sasanqua camellias and maples. The vegetable garden is surrounded by espaliered apples and quinces. A wisteria covered pergola leads through to the more enclosed woodland garden. Around the small dam, there is a slightly Japanese influenced garden and an experiment with some maples maintained in rounded shapes. The old rose garden is in the process of changing to bulbs in spring and perennials in summer and autumn. John Stowar writing in *Highlife* Magazine in an article on Coombe Wood in 2012 summarised it thus: "As the garden further matures Coombe Wood will be a treasure trove of the rare and beautiful, sought out by the horticultural cognoscenti."

On the 29 April Ruth Bailey and Bud Townsing paid a visit with cameras in hand. Lynda Cowley had been there a week earlier, and the following photographs were taken by them.



Simon and Mariese at Coombe Wood



Coombe Wood



Mereworth Sold Again

Mereworth, a pastoral property of 494 hectares near Berrima, was part of 1,205 hectares of land sold by Hume Coal to Thomas Peter Crown on 1 November 2021. Peter Crown paid Hume Coal \$33.2 million for Mereworth when he settled on 5 May 2022. Peter Crown agreed to sell Mereworth for \$49.7m to Mereworth Pastoral Pty Ltd on 28 April 2022. This was settled on 9 May 2022. Mereworth Pastoral Pty Ltd is owned by Roy and Anthony Medich via a Medich Company.



Mereworth a photograph taken by Keva North in 1988



Mereworth when it was advertised for sale in September 2021

James Atkinson, in 1822 held two land grants, Oldbury and Mereworth. Mr. A. Oxley bought Mereworth in 1963 and Paul Sorensen was immediately commissioned to landscape the gardens to be established around the above new house. The house was designed by J J Amory reflecting a French country style. It was built by A C Herbert & Sons of Bowral, using warm Bundanoon sandstone, and a Mansard roof with grey shield-shaped roof tiles.

Paul Sorensen was born in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1890, and migrated to Australia in 1915. With considerable training and experience in 'landscape architecture', and familiar with the cold climate European species over a very long career, he was to become one of the State's most influential garden designers for a major portion of the 20th century.

Mereworth house and garden is important via the Atkinson and Sorenson connections. The Berrima Remembrance Grove, planted under the direction of Sir Cecil Hoskins between 1956 and 1965, is in part on Mereworth land along the Old Hume Highway border.

Roy and Anthony Medich acquired the Maltings at 2 Colo Street Mittagong, paying \$6m., for the 6.4 hectare site in November 2018. It is an abandoned historical ruin established in 1899 to supply malt to Tooth Breweries.

A development application for a \$68 million mixed use development of the Maltings is under consideration by the Southern Regional Planning Panel. The application is in two stages.

- Stage 1 - The adaptive re-use of the existing heritage listed buildings and the addition of new building elements to develop an exhibition space, information and education facilities, swimming pool, function centre including performance space, storage uses and a bar, hotel with 40 rooms. Upgrading of the site including landscaping, 139 parking spaces, vehicular access and construction of pedestrian bridges and a vehicle bridge across the Nattai River which runs through the site, and
- Stage 2 - Concept approval for 7,430sqm of potential residential accommodation, tourist and visitor accommodation, and/or seniors housing development in the eastern portion of the site being 10,400sqm in area and including 82 car parking spaces and access.



Early photograph of the Maltings courtesy BDHS



Maltings as it is today



Camellia Ark Shoalhaven and Southern Highlands Tour

Camellia Ark Australia (CAA) is hosting an exclusive garden tour of camellia collections and heritage sites on Wednesday 10 August (Shoalhaven) and Thursday 11 August (Southern Highlands). The Central departure point will be 8am sharp at Mittagong RSL Club by luxury coach.

Day One, Wednesday 10 August 2022: Tours of Shoalhaven gardens and camellia collections will include Stan and Lorraine Heath's at Jasper's Brush; Graham Oke's Camellia Garden at Berry; and Sarah Waddell's collection including rare HIGO camellias at Wattamolla (near Kangaroo Valley). Note: a degree of fitness is required to explore some of these rural gardens.

Day Two, Thursday 11 August 2022: During the morning, a make a short stop at Station Street Bowral to introduce the story of this historic hedge. Then inspect the newly-developed heritage camellia garden at Harper's Mansion, Berrima, including plants donated by CAA. This will be followed by a visit to Margaret and Peter Chadwick's significant garden, 'Southdown' at Burradoo. After lunch, a visit to Retford Park, Bowral (as further camellia identifications have been undertaken there), and finally Simon Grant and Mariese Hely's important arboretum and garden at Bowral.

Enquiries: to Stephen Utick, Secretary CAA, on 0421972287 or sutick@grapevine.com.au for reservations etc. Please reserve your place ASAP, and have payments finalised by 30 July 2022.

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

We are seeking extra Committee members. If you wish to become part of the Committee, or think you can contribute in some way, please contact Ruth Bailey on 0409 126 718 for a chat.

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

Controversial Sale of Berrima Gaol for \$7 million



Berrima Gaol, photograph by Bud Townsing.

According to Mr. Roberts the Minister for Planning the sale of the Berrima Gaol for \$7 million to the Blue Sox Group is an outstanding result.

Mr. Roberts says: "The proposal incorporates a boutique hotel whilst retaining the beautiful grounds of the estate, and will include café, restaurant, bar, community and event areas, and spaces which will cater for small business opportunities such as antique and bookshops, personal services, art galleries, library and museum."

Local community interests represented by Berrima Gaol Community Buy Back Group and the Berrima Residents Association are extremely upset at the outcome and see it as a lost opportunity for the local community and that their bid to acquire the Gaol for the community was ignored.

The Blue Sox Group is a business name of Blue Sox Investments Pty Ltd which has 100 fully paid \$1 shares on issue. It was established in 1986 and as a developer has been involved in land development and building apartment and townhouse complexes through to residential towers.

It is not possible to comment on the proposal for the adaptive re-use of Gaol until we see the proposal in detail.

The Gaol is a State-heritage listed building and according to the Minister the "site will have the highest protections in place to be preserved and protected."

It is going to be a huge challenge for a commercial development to adaptively reuse a culturally significant place whilst meeting the standards of the Australia International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Burra Charter.

**AGHS Southern Highlands Branch
Winter Solstice Seminar
Burrawang School of Arts
5 June @ 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm AEST**

Chris Betteridge – “Landscape Character Study of Bowral Public Spaces”



Chris is a founding member of the Australian Garden History Society, having presented a paper at the inaugural conference in Melbourne in 1980.

As part of the 40th Anniversary celebrations for the Australian Garden History Society, on the theme of People, Places and Plants, the Society's Southern Highlands Branch commissioned Chris Betteridge of Betteridge Heritage to prepare a landscape character study of public spaces in Bowral. The study, jointly funded by the Branch and AGHS National Management, is providing Wingecarribee Shire Council with information to help guide future development in Bowral. Chris studied plantings in streets, parks and public reserves within the settled area of Bowral to identify and assess the elements and overall character of the town's cultural landscape and how it has evolved over time.

Edwina and John Macarthur-Stanham – “The History of Camden Park House and Garden”



Camden Park was designed by colonial architect John Verge for wool pioneers and agricultural entrepreneurs John and Elizabeth Macarthur. Since its completion in 1835, Camden Park has been recognised for its fine architecture, its connection to the Macarthur family and to the many and varied contributions made by this family to the development of agriculture in Australia. In all, seven generations of John Macarthur's descendants have resided at Camden Park.

Venue: Burrawang School of Arts Hall

Cost: members: \$35.00 and non-members \$45.00.

Afternoon tea will be provided.

Bookings: If you would like to attend please contact Ruth Bailey at ruthbailey1428@gmail.com or 04 0912 6718 (please leave a message if phone not answered).

Australian Garden History Society (Southern Highlands Branch)
Rescheduled

Tour to E G Waterhouse Gardens and Bare Island *Tuesday 19 July 2022*

Departing Mittagong RSL 7.30 am - Returning approximately 5.30 pm

Cost - \$85 - includes coach travel, morning tea, lunch and Bare Island Tour

The Committee reserves the right to amend the itinerary without notice.

The tour will be restricted to a maximum of 40 passengers

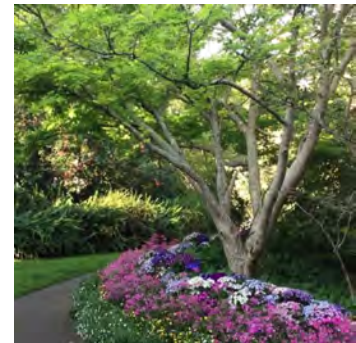
Itinerary



The *E. G. Waterhouse National Camellia Gardens*, located in Caringbah, overlook beautiful Yowie Bay. In 2014 the gardens were recognised by the International Camellia Society as a Camellia Gardens of Excellence as one of only sixty Camellia Gardens of Excellence in the world and were opened by Lady Cutler on 18 July 1970 to commemorate the bicentenary of the arrival of Lt James Cook at Kurnell in 1770. The Gardens, named after Professor Eban Gowrie Waterhouse a distinguished Australian linguist and expert on camellias, contain one of the largest

collections of camellias in Australia.

With over 400 cultivars and species of camellias the gardens provide a unique value to Australian horticulture and are in season during autumn and winter with *Camellia sasanqua* blooming from autumn to early winter followed by *Camellia japonica* from late autumn through winter and *Camellia reticulata* in bloom from mid-winter to September/October.



Please note - The gardens are established on a steeply sloping site making some sections inaccessible or difficult to access for people who have limited mobility. However, access is available to the specially designed Senses Garden and to most of the lower sections of the garden.

Lunch – Ramsgate RSL Club

Bare Island, located within Botany Bay close to the bay's northern headland, is one of Sydney's most picturesque venues and is nationally significant as an almost completely intact example of late nineteenth century coastal defence technology. It is one of the more substantial and impressive of the many fortifications built around Australasia. Captain Cook first spotted the area now known as Bare Island in 1770, and referred to it in his journal as 'a small bare island'. The fort built in the early 1880s to protect Sydney's back door was in operation until 1908. In 1912 Bare Island became a retirement home for war veterans continuing to operate until 1963 when it was transferred to the New South Wales Parks and Wildlife Service for use as a museum and tourist attraction.



We will take a guided tour crossing a 130-year-old wooden bridge to enter a world of fine engineering and great deception to hear about the unpredictable history of Bare Island Fort.

Enquiries / bookings: Ray Bradley (E) rbb1945@bigpond.net.au (T) 02 4861 4090 or (M) 0416 191 905

Payment - no later than Monday 5 July.

No refunds will be made after that date unless the seat can be resold.

Payment details are included on the attached booking form

Stay Covid Safe and please stay home if feeling unwell. Passengers might consider performing a Rapid Antigen Test the night before the tour or wearing a mask on the coach.

Australian Garden History Society (Southern Highlands Branch)

Tour to E G Waterhouse Gardens and Bare Island

Tuesday 19 July 2022

Passenger/s Booking Form

to be completed and returned to Ray Bradley

Cost - \$85 - includes coach travel, morning tea, lunch and Bare Island Tour

Payment – no later than Monday 5 July 2021

Please note – no refunds will be made after that date unless the booking can be resold

Please print clearly.

Tour Passenger/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)

Please select one of the following for **lunch** to be served at Ramsgate RSL Club:

- Beer battered flathead & chips with salad, lemon & tartare sauce ☐
- Half chicken schnitzel with chips, salad & gravy ☐
- Grilled fish & chips with salad, lemon & tartare sauce ☐
- Minute steak with chips, salad & gravy ☐
- Crumbed calamari & chips, salad, aioli & lemon ☐

Cake and tea/coffee will also be provided.

EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS:-

1: Name:Phone:

2: Name:Phone:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Enquiries / bookings: Ray Bradley (E) rbb1945@bigpond.net.au (T) 02 4861 4090 or (M) 0416 191 905

Final Payment - no later than Monday 5 July 2021.

No refunds will be made after 5 July 2021 unless the booking can be resold.

Payment may be made by:

1. 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 & Bare Island**. **Email your name and phone number to** rbb1945@bigpond.net.au to advise the deposit has been made.
- OR
2. Cheque payable to **Australian Garden History Society** returned with this form to:
The Bare Island Tour, AGHS, PO Box 2327, Bowral 2576