

INFLORESCENCE

NOVEMBER 2019

Forthcoming events 2019— for your diary:

Sunday 3 November 10.00 am to 3.00 pm	Riversdale Annual Rare Plants and Growers Garden Fair
Wed. 6 November	Field Trip to <i>Arthursleigh</i> and <i>Garroorigang</i>
Friday 15 November 10.30 am to 4.00 pm	Highlands Garden Society Rose Show Uniting Church Hall, cnr Boolwey & Bendooley Streets, Bowral.
Friday 6 December 4.30 to 7.00 pm	Christmas Party At Jeanne Villani's home 5 Crago Lane, Bowral

Tour for next year

The previously announced tour to Adelaide which had been scheduled for autumn of 2020 has been deferred until autumn of 2021 due to a conflict of dates and gardens in the Adelaide area being unavailable next year. But *SAVE THE DATE* for a three-day tour departing on Saturday 31 October 2020 for the Millthorpe Garden Ramble—details to be announced in the New Year.

Festival of Flowers

AGHS TOUR, SEPTEMBER, 2019

Picture the scene. We are seated at long tables under brightly striped umbrellas on a sunny, breezy spring day at a riverside restaurant in Brisbane. Plates of delicious food keep arriving as do new arrivals to join our group. It's the beginning of our latest AGHS tour, 25 of us all told, on our Toowoomba adventure, organized and led by our intrepid Ray Bradley. Eventually surfeit, we join our coach and the first signs of the widespread devastation of the Queensland drought appear as we drive through the famous food bowl of the Lockyer Valley, ironically the scene of the devastating floods of 2011. Now much of the rich chocolate brown soil is under irrigation and surprisingly we find later that in spite of the sparse brown footpaths and dry park lands, Toowoomba itself does not have water restrictions as the dam is currently 65% full. Another surprise, apparently competition gardens get discounted water!

Each day of the tour was so packed with interest that I will only mention my personal highlights. Obviously the 'Carnival of Flowers', a celebration of 'Food, art, music and flowers' was the focus. Because it was a 'Carnival', the winning suburban gardens were indeed a 'carnival' of colours – thousands of brightly coloured annuals in a manicured

dazzling display, all grown with an amazing display of horticultural expertise.



Clivias (photos Jane Clifford)

I particularly remember, though, the swathes of cream clivias in shady spots, the weeping grevilleas, the lavender grey eremophila in a couple of gardens and the huge camphor laurels providing welcome shade in the streets and parks.



Des Church, Judy Foy, John Biffin and Ray Bradley in Queen's Park



Queen's Park

Queen's Park, opposite our motel, was thronged with people enjoying more wonderfully grown annuals and perennials in ordered beds – tall foxgloves and delphiniums and sweet peas whose fragrance scented the air around.

A picnic lunch under a perfumed wisteria arbour in a famed Japanese garden followed, with its traditional elements of lakes, arched vermilion bridges and, as a final touch, small Japanese children playing on the water's edge.



A later highlight was a display by a local School of Floristry in St Patrick's Cathedral, wonderful arrangements in autumn colours, both native and exotic, which harmonized perfectly with the golden stone of the church. And a particular joy, the small containers of native flowers on each pew, each one a tiny work of art.

A special delicious dinner at Gips restaurant in a historic home was the final touch.

Next day, the National Carriage Collection at the Cobb & Co museum intrigued us, as we were blessed with such a knowledgeable and enthusiastic guide. The afternoon Grand Floral Parade was enlivened for me by the many groups from other countries now calling Queensland home, all in colourful national dress. Out into the country the next day and here the reality of the drought really hit us with the famously productive Darling Downs brown and bare.

Similarly at our destination, the heritage listed 1867 Glengallan Homestead whose owner over-reached himself and walked off, leaving it uninhabited and derelict for more

than half its lifetime. Now it is being slowly restored by its very hardworking supporters.



Glengallan Homestead

Another sad story in the nearby small town of Allora where a drive by view of the charming weatherboard childhood home of the author of "Mary Poppins" turned into an unexpected tour of the 1879 house and garden by the friendly couple who restored it. Formerly the Manager's residence of the Australian Joint Stock Bank, the third manager was Travers Goff who arrived in 1905 with his wife and three daughters. The eldest, Helen, became the writer. An alcoholic, he was gradually demoted, ending up in this tiny place where he died aged just 43.

The drought was also very evident the next day at Highfield Native Park, a beautifully designed and maintained native garden. A young gardener hand watering heavily mulched new plantings told me the last decent rain was 'in May, 2016, the day my daughter was born'. Equally dry was Spring Bluff Railway Station, now a tourist attraction, where we enjoyed a picnic lunch in the terraced garden, watched brush turkeys at home scratching in the dust, enjoyed the reaction of an Indian family to a large goanna and returned to Toowoomba by diesel train pulling old wooden carriages—great fun. Later that evening, a return visit to Laurel Bank Park for a torchlight tour by the resident curator gave us a completely different and really beautiful perspective of the plantings, particularly the sculptural shape of the trees.



Empire Theatre

Another favourite outing on our last day was a behind-the-scenes tour of the 1911 Art Deco Empire Theatre which, not

surprisingly, the Council intended to demolish to make a carpark. Saved by concerted community effort, it now hosts a year long program of events in a wonderfully restored and extended building. This year's offerings ranged from Bell Shakespeare, the Queensland Symphony Orchestra to circus, all types of music, drama and dance, children's theatre and workshops. A packed day, with visits to gardens large and small, old and new, a massive retail nursery which tempted some of us and lunch at the fascinating Inbound Restaurant in the historic Railway Station squeezed in. Toowoomba has been a delightful experience with its charming old houses, its gardens and parks, its cafes and restaurants.

An early start so into NSW by midday. Almost immediately the scenery changed. Green grass! Endless paddocks of sugar cane, densely wooded hills, smokey blue Mt Warning on the horizon, palms, houses on stilts with louvred verandahs. On to Murwillumbah and the Tweed Regional Gallery and the Margaret Olley Art Centre, the icing on the cake.



Margaret Olley Art Centre

The Gallery is large, modern and very attractive surrounded by gently rolling green pastures around the river – a view we enjoyed while having an exceptional lunch. We explored the other galleries first before an excellent tour of the MOAC by a charming and knowledgeable volunteer guide. Several of Margaret Olley's paintings are outside the recreation of her home studio in Paddington, after her request that her home and contents be offered to the Gallery, near her childhood home on the Tweed River. Thousands of her personal items were transferred to the recreation after being carefully documented to produce an authentic reproduction.

Last day and another memorable experience—a Tweed River Cruise with two knowledgeable guides—some highlights: the protected rain forest island where Aboriginal women went for childbirth, the amazing bird life with kites swooping around the boat to catch tidbits and the osprey nests high on purpose built metal poles, the new ventures like Farm and Food Tours based around products like Agricol Gin from sugar cane and rum from a riverside distillery. Two hours of interest and then the grand finale, a seafood lunch at a riverside restaurant and the end of a memorable tour, thanks to Ray's hard work and our delightful coach driver, Judy.

Merryleigh Brindley

Indexing Highlife Magazines

Jenny Simons and Jeanne Villani are doing a splendid job collecting all the *Highlife Magazines* and then indexing the gardens that appear in them. The magazines will be stored at Jeanne's until the SHBG has the library/education facility. A copy of the index will go to the SHBG Office, Highlife Office, the Wingecarribee library (neither of which have a listing), and we will keep a copy for our members or other people making enquires.

Heritage: once it's gone it's gone...

The St John's Precinct in Camden NSW, which includes the church, rectory, cemetery, two church halls in a landscape setting, was listed on the NSW State Heritage Register in 2018. The listing was in recognition that the precinct comprises a significant and unique grouping of ecclesiastical buildings set in a beautiful landscape setting comprised of mature and exotic tree plantings and open grassed slopes.



(From the website) On the hill overlooking the Camden town centre is a church building that represents the historic, moral and emotional heart of community. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the church represents the soul of the town, which was built below it on the Nepean River floodplain in the mid-19th century.

The Precinct was a gift from the Macarthur family to Camden for all time. It was designed by the Macarthur family and Surveyor General Sir Thomas Mitchell to link Camden Park to the privately founded town of Camden (1840) and to be its visual, social and spiritual focus.

Heritage experts agree that the rectory and open space are historically and culturally intrinsic to the NSW Heritage-listed site.

On 1 May, 2017 the local church leadership was permitted to sell roughly 60% of the land associated with St John's. St John's church proposes to sell the rectory and glebe to the Moran Group for development of a 120 person aged care facility and to construct a new modern church.

The loss of any part of the St John's precinct to housing development will have a deleterious and permanent affect on the cultural significance of this State listed property.

The Camden Residents' Action Group Inc has been working tirelessly to prevent this development and is seeking support of all people interested in preserving this heritage listed site.

More information is available at <http://www.stjohnscamden.info/>

Ruth Bailey



St John's Church, Camden

Identifying Camellias at Retford Park with Camellia Ark Australia

Camellia Ark, whose main mission is to conserve, for Australian gardens, rare and endangered species and cultivars of the genus *Camellia*, and to identify unlabeled camellia shrubs in old gardens. The purpose for this event was to identify the many varieties of camellias at *Retford Park* for the National Trust

We were fortunate to be asked to help in the identification process with Dr Stephen Utick. We managed to identify 31 different varieties, but alas, there were a number of outstanding camellias which remain still to be identified.

The process involved each shrub being numbered and labelled (RP1 onwards) and listing the name under the direction of Stephen. We were so fortunate to have present on the day, Neil Mitchell, Vice-President of Camellia Ark. Between the amazing knowledge shared by Dr Stephen Utick and Neil Mitchell, the group was imbued with a great appreciation of the manner utilized for identification—whether it be through the petal shape, the stamens, the flower habit and colour, the leaf shape and characteristics.

We came away from this exercise with an expanded awareness of the enormous and wonderful job Camellia Ark

is doing in carrying out the process of identification and labelling these historic camellias. It was an honour to have been involved. We realized that there is a great association between AGHS and Camellia Ark, as without the support of, and co-ordination of this day by AGHS, the work would not have been carried out as it was.

Leonie and James Furber



Lyn Barrett, Ray Bradley, John Biffin and Dr Stephen Utick



Strolling round Retford Park's garden



Neil Mitchell discussing the plants with Laurel Cheetham

AGHS Annual Conference 2019 in Wellington, New Zealand: report from Rick Shepherd

Wonderful Whimsical Windy Wellington . . .

Boarding the plane for Wellington last Thursday, I found myself sitting with two other Garden History members, with more in the seats behind—so the conference began before take-off. During the next three hours, we solved many of the world's problems and lamented the lack of leadership to guide us out of the mess that our planet earth is hurtling towards.



Kakabeak (Clianthus piniceus)—the Australian Sturt Desert Pea was the same genus before a taxonomic revision (photos Rick Shepherd)

Over the next three days I was beguiled by the New Zealand capital's quirky approach to landscape and urban design and my horizons were expanded by the conference speakers and garden visits. Highlights were Dr Hamish Campbell's alarming presentation on the origin of New Zealand's landforms—in summary, there could be a major earthquake or volcanic eruption at any minute—and visiting the Otari-Wilton's Bush Native Botanic Garden. New Zealand's native plants are stunning, and in my view, under-utilised in this country!

Congratulations to the organising team for a truly memorable time in a wonderful venue in a wonderful city. My only gripe was the plastic water bottles being handed out—hoping to see an end to that next year.

At the airport this morning there was lots of *ooing* and *arrhing* as we shared garden snaps. As soon as I was home I was able to locate and order a new plant for Retford Park's modest but expanding New Zealand Garden (the beautiful *Pachystegia insignis*) On that note, don't forget that Retford Park Garden will be open every weekend in November, as part of the Art of Collecting event.

Rick Shepherd (Head Gardener Retford Park)



Rick Shepherd with AGHS Patron Professor Tim Entwisle at the Otari-Wilton's Bush Native Botanic Garden



Richard Heathcote and Rick standing in front of Lance Wood – Pseudopanax crassifolius, the horoeka or lancewood, is a New Zealand native tree belonging to the family Araliaceae. Found throughout New Zealand from sea level up to about 750 m (one of Rick's favourite plants—five growing at Retford Park)

Oral History Update . . .

Rick Shepherd has been interviewed and documented for the AGHS National Oral History Collection.



Annual Conference in New Zealand visited 'The Forgotten Garden' at Fernside Gardens near Featherstone (photos Rick Shepherd)



Teddy Bears' Picnic at Old Tablelands near Martinborough, South Wairarapa District, in the Wellington region of New Zealand.

New Committee member sought

The committee is looking for someone who will assist with trying to encourage more young people into the organisation. Anyone with connections to schools, colleges or universities would be a great asset to AGHS.

Please contact Lyn Barrett or any of the committee members if you are interested in helping the branch committee.

Enquiries: Lyn Barrett 4862 3442

Harper's Mansion Garden and Plant Fair

The weather was perfect for the very successful Harper's Mansion Fair on Sunday 27 October. The AGHS committee was in action to raise awareness of the activities of our branch. Ray Bradley brought a beautiful arrangement of his Gold Bunny roses to decorate the table. For those of you who haven't met her, Jenn McCormac (photographed below) is the new secretary of the branch and we welcome her very warmly to the organisation.

Congratulations to all the organisers, volunteers and stall-holders who made this event such a wonderful occasion. So many people worked tirelessly preparing for the day by baking and potting up plants, setting up, organising and manning the stalls.



Jenn McCormac and Ruth Bailey on duty at the AGHS Stall (photo M. Probyn)



The bustling fair with so many plants and goodies to buy (photo C. Probyn)

Welcome to Our New Member

Tichon Kendal



Highlands Garden Society Bowral Inc.

Annual Rose Show

Floral Art Display & Photography Workshop



Uniting Church Hall, Corner Boolwey
& Bendooley Streets, Bowral

Friday 15th November 2019

10:30 am to 4:00 pm

Members & non-members are encouraged to enter specimen Roses
 Tabling of exhibits 7:00 am - 8:45 am. Judging commences 9:00 am
 Prize Giving: 10:45 am

Rose Show Schedule available on Highlands Garden Society website
<http://highlandsgardensociety.org.au/notice-board/>

Exhibit enquiries contact Sally Gaudry: 0406 496 708
 or Ray Bradley: rbb1945@bjrpond.net.au

Floral Art enquiries contact Judy Keast: judykeast2576@gmail.com



Entry fee \$5.00 for non-exhibitors.
Accompanied children under 18, Free!

Photography Workshops: 12.30 pm & 2.00 pm
"Flowers & Gardens on your phone or camera"

Light refreshments available at additional cost.

 Instagram
 Find us on Facebook
 The Garden Club of Australia Inc. Affiliate

Dates for Your 2020 Diary

- 23 February: Special event – details in next edition . . .
- 22 March: 40th Anniversary Party to be held at the Southern Highlands Botanic gardens from 2 pm to 4.30 pm. Free event for AGHS members.
- 18 & 19 April: Open Gardens and Plant Sale at the Southern Highlands Botanic gardens 9 am to 4 pm.
- April: watch this space for a special exhibition at Berrima District Museum—*People Places and Plants*—Exhibition opening will be a free event for AGHS members.
- 1 May: Autumn Coach tour to Canberra.
- 21 June: Winter Seminar.
- 23 August: AGM in the Heneritta Rose Room, Bowral Library from 11 am to 3 pm.
- September: opening of the *Colonial Camellia Walk* at Harpers Mansion—free event for AGHS members.
- October: AGHS National Conference to be held in Sydney.
- 31 October: Departure for Millthorpe Garden Ramble Coach Tour.
- 4 December: Christmas Party . . .

If you would like to be involved with any of our events (or have suggestions of what you would like to see or hear), please let us know on our society email address aghs.sh.info@gmail.com.

Spring in the Southern Highlands



Choisya terrato (Mexican Orange Blossom)



The big footprint!



Red Cow Farm woodland

SHBG Guinness Book of Records

We received this notice from Charlotte Webb:

We are thrilled to announce that our attempt at the record for the Largest display of solar lanterns has been successful. We are now, officially, the Guinness World Record Title Holder!

Our "Earth Hour Celebration", held at the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens on the 30th March incorporated the construction of a GIANT SOLAR POWERED FOOTPRINT using 1500 solar lanterns.

Thank you to all those who helped make the evening, and our record breaking efforts to shine a light on the importance of a future powered by renewable energy such a success!

Booking Form for Christmas Party

5 Crago Lane, Bowral



Friday 6 December 2019: 4.30 – 7.00 pm

Your name/s:

Non-members name/s:

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Your email:

Your Phone:

Cost per person	Numbers attending	Amount Included \$
AGHS Members \$35		
Non-members \$45 (Children free)		
	TOTAL	

Payment Options:

By Cheque: payable to Australian Garden History Society:
PLEASE NOTE – USE OUR FULL TITLE.

Please return this form and cheque to
AGHS Bookings, PO Box 2327, Bowral 2576

By EFT: Account name: AGHS

BSB: 012 547 Account Number: 237 514 077

- Include the following reference information
6 December and your surname
- Email the above booking details to
aghs.sh.info@gmail.com

By Direct Debit: if paying directly at an ANZ branch,
record your phone number as the reference.

- Email booking details to aghs.sh.info@gmail.com

Please Note: No tickets will be issued. You will be notified
if the event is sold out.

No refunds can be given for cancellations after bookings
close on 30 November.

Enquiries: Lyn Barrett 4862 3442

AGHS Southern Highlands Branch Committee

Chair & NMC Rep: Lyn Barrett
Treasurer: John Biffin
Secretary: Jenn McCormac
Tours: Ray Bradley
Research: Ruth Bailey
Guest Editor: Meg Probyn

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