



INFLORESCENCE

NOVEMBER 2020

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS BRANCH OF THE AGHS

Merry Christmas and a very happy new year . . .



Final Events for 2020:

<p>Sunday 25 November 9.00 am</p>	<p>AGHS National AGM with Professor Tim Entwisle Via ZOOM (info about registering will be sent nearer the date)</p>
<p>Friday 4 December 4.00 to 6.30 pm</p>	<p>Christmas Party at <i>Rotherwood</i>, 7621 Illawarra Highway, Sutton Forest</p>

40th Anniversary morning tea Sunday 11 October 2020



Brigid Treloar and Keva North (photos by Bud Towsing)

The event turned out to be a lovely occasion even though it was not what the Committee had originally planned. Numbers had to be restricted because of Covid-19 so instead of all the membership being able to enjoy a champagne party, a small number of members came for morning tea to watch Brigid Treloar (sister of Charlotte Webb and an original SH branch committee member) and Keva North (widow of Tim North, the first chair of the Southern Highlands branch) unveil the plaque next to the *Carpinus betulus* (Hornbeam)—gift from the AGHS branch to the Southern Highlands Botanic gardens.



Keva North with the past and present Chairs of the SH Branch (L to R—Chris Webb, Jenny Carroll, Lyn Barrett, Keva North, Laurel Cheetham and Meg Probyn)

It was fortuitous that Keva North was visiting Bowral from her home in Canberra. Below is a photo of her giving an address to the members. A precis of her speech (transcribed from Keva's speech notes by Bud Towsing) follows:



Keva North and Lyn Barrett

It is a thrill and honour to be here this morning. Thank you Charlotte, Chris and Lyn and your Committee for inviting me to your 40th Anniversary event. This is my second visit to the Botanic Gardens and a huge step forward after all the recent rain.

Tim and I purchased Yarrabin in 1983—the start of eleven wonderful years. We made lots of friends and I discovered the joy of gardening. The AGHS was a huge interest and part of our life. For the last 26 years I have lived in Canberra on a suburban block of less than a quarter of an acre but my interest in gardening has never waned.

As the years roll by the Highlands never seem to change and the interest in gardening is very much part of your existence!! However I feel sad to think some properties are being carved up into housing estates and I believe we must participate in preserving our heritage in the Southern Highlands and be mindful that this is a very special area of Australia.

Thank you again and my very best wishes to you all—it is such a privilege to be here.



Charlotte Webb and Brigit Treloar (photos M. Probyn)



Ruth Bailey and Francesca Beddie (Editor of AGHS Journal)

Retirement of Barry Ford

[This story was posted by Geoff Goodfellow on the Facebook page—We Love The Southern Highlands—and I asked him if I could reprint it in the Inflorescence. The problem about Facebook is that stories disappear into the ether—but Inflorescence has a chance to save stories for this generation and the next . . . The Editor]

Legendary Southern Highlands gardener Barry Ford, the man who planted the first tulip in Corbett Garden, has finally decided to retire just shy of his 83rd birthday after 60 years working for Council's garden crew. For those who would like to read about a remarkable local bloke, I've cobbled together a few words.

Before Barry began with Bowral Council in 1959 he was a gardener for Miss Robinson and her mother. He also worked for a while three days a week at *Moidart*, eventually giving that all up for the full-time job with Bowral Council. He once told me about the Robinsons.

They had a big garden in Bowral and obviously represented the old money upper class that is so well described in Ron Wilde's sociology textbook, *Bradstow*, about status, class and power, written during the early 1970s. According to Barry, when the Robinson women had to travel to Sydney, two big limousines would pull up at the house and take them off separately. Such was the way the rich lived in Bowral then.

Barry remembers well the first Festival of the Flowers in 1960, recalling colourful flowerbeds planted in Glebe Park and around Bradman oval in those days.



Barry planting tulips (photo G. Goodfellow)

"Corbett Gardens was quite small then," recalls Barry, who said the bowling greens took up most of the space. His first job was to take the couch out of the netting fence on the Merrigang and Bendooley street corner. Eventually the Bowral bowling greens were relocated to what is now Venables Park and a few houses were demolished to make room for a larger Corbett Gardens plus the Gumnut kindergarten.

"Most of the old pin oaks you see around the district came from seeds out of Corbett Gardens," he said, mentioning the legendary nurseryman and landscaper from Berrima, Claude Crowe, "who collected corn-bags full of seeds to propagate each year."

Barry also propagated pine trees in honey tins and planted them around the district.

"Everywhere I go I can say, I planted that," mused Barry, who must have planted many hundreds, perhaps thousands of the magnificent street trees, and trees in public parks that are now such a distinctive feature of Bowral.

But perhaps his most memorable achievement was planting tulips in Corbett Gardens for the very first time.

"I can remember the day well," said Barry. "Old Dave Absolon from up there at *Robinwood* in Rose Street, came into the garden to see Alfie Stubbs . . . it was 1960.

"I've got a great idea," said Old Dave, "I think it will bring thousands of people to the district."

"What is this idea of yours, Mr Absolon?" asked Alfie.

"Tulips," he said confidently.

"Alfie and me didn't know anything about tulips, we'd never grown them before, but Old Dave said if we'd plant them he'd supply them. We agreed and he did the rest."

According to Barry, Jack Davy and his legendary slippery pig show came to town and put on a show at the picture theatre.

"Five thousand quid they raised. It was a terrific show, the best thing I've ever seen in Bowral," says Barry remembering the show as if it was yesterday.

Go well Barry. Enjoy your retirement mate, even if you've had to wait 83 years to finally clock off.

Geoff Goodfellow

[In addition to Geoff's story, Graeme Tooth wrote a comment on FB page: "As well being a wonderful gardener Barry had a passion for showing Old England Game Poultry and won many prizes. He used to tell me that when he went away from Bowral for a few days to Poultry Shows he used to pack a photo in his suitcase of the Gib so he would not miss his beloved home of Bowral."]

Christmas party at Rotherwood



Rotherwood lawn (photos M. Probyn)

What a special treat this will be to have our Christmas party in the beautiful Sutton Forest garden of *Rotherwood*—and to drink their delicious wines! We are very grateful to Ken and Katrina Cooper for allowing us to share their garden. Please book early as we have to restrict numbers due to Covid rules and regulations. Barbara Sinden will be providing the Covid-safe boxed refreshments. The booking form is on the final page of this newsletter.

There are three different garden installations by David Harber, the award-winning English sculptor: a stainless steel armillary sphere at the centre of the small walled garden; a Dark Planet garden sphere on the lawn next to the house; and a beautiful bronze Mantle a little further away on a grassy slope—extraordinary pieces of art complementing this remarkable garden.



Please wear appropriate shoes for walking round the garden—and bring an umbrella if the weather continues to be unsettled. Although we are all enjoying the spring rain, we are hoping that we might get some sunshine for the Christmas season. Parking will be from the second driveway (NOT the

Gatehouse main drive) and there will be parking marshalls to assist you. The property is on the left-hand side of Illawarra Hwy.

Rotherwood is supplying the wines for the event at cost price and as well as tasting it, there will be an opportunity to buy it too—their Pinot Noir, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Grigio and Rosé are highly thought of in the wine industry—a delicious gift for Christmas.

Camellia Walk, Harper's Mansion

2nd October 2020

The National Trust at Harper's Mansion, with the support of the Australian Garden History Society and Camellia Ark, has embarked on a wonderful project. To commemorate Australia's colonial gardeners who not only sourced camellias from Europe but began to breed new cultivars, the AGHS SH branch is delighted to announce the opening of the Camellia Walk at Harper's Mansion.

The notable 19th Century camellia breeders and collectors include William Macarthur at Camden Park, members of the Shepherd family at the Darling Nursery in Chippendale and Silas Sheather at the Camellia Park Nursery in Parramatta. Along the Camellia Walk are planted some of the most beautiful camellias in the world. So do visit now that Harper's Mansion will be open to the public.



Lyn Barrett and Dr Stephen Utick



Camellia japonica 'Queen of Denmark'

Beatrice Park Garden

Beatrice Park (known as *Eugenie Lodge* from 1955 to 1993) is located at 90 Bendooley Street on the corner of Kangaloon Road, Bowral. This property celebrates its 60th anniversary of winning a coveted gardening award—'Best Open Garden' in the 1960 Bowral Festival of Flowers competition. The prize went to property owner at the time Mrs Lois Eugenie Whittle in the category of part-time gardener. The competition coincided with the first year of the Tulip Time Festival. As a celebration of this time in history, current property owners Justin Hutchinson and John Bowers decided to open the grounds to the public for the diamond anniversary celebration.

Beatrice Park is a beautiful 1949 house designed by Crimean born Queensland trained architect Aaron Bolot (1900-1989). Bolot established a practice in Sydney during the early 1930s, which through necessity included freelancing for other architects including Walter Burley Griffin. His later theatre designs were influenced by Sydney architect, Bruce Dellit. The thirties saw him design numerous theatres and cinemas, apartment buildings and houses. As his style progressed, these works were marked by an embrace of streamlined Art Deco design aesthetic.



Beatrice Park designed by Aaron Bolot

The original main entrance to the property is through wrought iron gates that are flanked by brick piers at the junction of Kangaloon Road and Bendooley Streets. Integral to the design of the house, the main gravel drive circles to meet the residence. The sale notices during 1953-1955 make it clear that the garden and grounds were designed and laid out by a landscape architect. On the eastern boundary in the adjoining *Yarrabin* a mature and uninterrupted line of 23 Bhutan Cypress cascades down to Kangaloon Road forming a visual backdrop and frame for both gardens.

Owners of *Beatrice Park*, Samuel and Rose Faigen, commissioned Aaron Bolot to build their Bowral residence in 1949. They had the largest handbag manufacturing company in the Commonwealth. Rose Faigen died in 1954 and Samuel sold the property in 1955 to Harry Gladstone Whittle who named the property as *Eugenie Lodge* after his wife Lois Eugenie Whittle. Whittle had substantial wool grazing interests in the Tumut region and the Wee Jasper Station near Yass in addition to a thriving construction company in Sydney. Among H. G. Whittle and Sons major builds were The Hotel Manly (1935), Transport House Macquarie Street, Asbestos House (1936), Gloucester House R.P.A. Hospital (1937), St Vincent's Hospital, Nurses Wing (1938) the Sydney Dental Hospital (1939) the extensions to the Sydney

G.P.O. (1939), and the Canberra High School (1939). Under the Whittles the garden reached maturity and was awarded first prize for best garden in both 1960 and 1961 during the annual October Bowral flower festival. Throughout much of the period of the Whittle ownership the garden was opened annually to the public. A gardener was regularly employed to maintain the garden.

In April 1975, Evelyn Marie Worth and her partner Jean Victory Coleman bought *Eugenie Lodge*. Worth and Coleman were Matron and Nurse at Kenilworth private hospital respectively. Both took a keen interest in the preservation of the gardens. In her youth, Jean Coleman had been a champion athlete, representing Australia at the 1938 Empire Games in Sydney. After setting a new Australian record in the 220 yard sprint the previous year, Coleman won an individual silver medal in the 220 yards and was a dual gold medallist with the Australian relay team. Like many athletes of her generation the war robbed her of the prime years of competition. Although she continued to compete and place in events once sporting meets resumed, she retired shortly before the 1948 London Olympics. She then returned to the nursing work that she had trained for during the war.



Beatrice Park picture window 2020 (photos Justin Hutchinson)

In May 1980, Ronald Smith and his wife Yvonne Mary Smith bought *Eugenie Lodge*. Yvonne was passionate about the garden at 90 Bendooley and those of the Highlands in general. Active on many local gardening bodies, she served as vice-president of the Southern Highlands Garden Society in 1982 and 1983.

In July 1993 the property was purchased by John Robert and Lottie Beatrice Dempsey, and brothers Frank and Justin Hutchinson and it was renamed *Beatrice Park*. Justin Hutchinson and John Bowers became joint owners in 2006. Justin was a godson and nephew of the Dempseys.

Yarrabin immediately adjoins *Beatrice Park* and their development is closely aligned. Built in 1951 the house is of similar design to *Beatrice Park*. The story of *Yarrabin* and especially its connection to the Tim and Keva North was included in the September edition of *Inflorescence*.

Dennis McManus

Save Southern Highlands Heritage

Background

In July 2020 neighbours to a beautiful house and garden *Yarrabin* at 32 Kangaloon Road, Bowral were alarmed to

hear that the property had been acquired with the intention of a seniors medium density housing development. It was quickly realised that the same situation could affect all residential areas and all heritage areas in Wingecarribee Shire and for this reason a wider approach was needed. On 1 August 2020 a *Save Southern Highlands Group* was formed with the view to making known to the wider community the threats to the heritage of the whole of Wingecarribee Shire and to campaign as required.

Save Southern Highlands Heritage has two main aims:

- To increase community awareness of the wonderful heritage in Wingecarribee Shire and of the potential and actual threats to its retention.
- To actively campaign against proposals which would adversely affect the heritage values of Wingecarribee Shire.

How does *Save Southern Highlands Heritage* operate?

The *Save Southern Highlands Heritage* group is currently an informal group of interested and informed residents of Wingecarribee Shire. It seeks to work cooperatively with many other like-minded individuals and groups and Wingecarribee Shire Council to achieve its aims.

Website for *Save Southern Highlands Heritage*

As at 21 October 2020 a website is being finalised in the name of *Save Southern Highlands Heritage* which will fully set out the current issues and threats to heritage and how to access a full range of information on heritage

Interim contact

In the meantime you can record your interest by email to Bud Towsing at metow@bigpond.com

2021 Events Planning

The Branch Committee is considering a range of options for tours and events for next year. Ray Bradley is continuing to play an active role in this aspect of the Branch. There is still continued uncertainty regarding Covid-19 including possible health and Government restrictions and the difficulty in securing high quality venues. At the October committee meeting it was agreed that the proposed Adelaide tour be deferred until autumn of 2022.

For 2021, Ray has suggested that the committee consider two 3-day tours and a one-day tour as follows:

- Autumn: a 3-day (2 night) tour to the Cowra area:
 - Cowra Japanese Gardens and prison site;
 - Iandra Station and Mt Oriel Homestead—a large heritage listed castle of outstanding significance. The magnificent Federation homestead, park-like gardens, original workers cottages, managers residence, blacksmith, chapel and cemetery, wool and hay sheds, silo, other outbuildings, associated structures, and surrounding farmland. A picturesque garden complements the homestead and includes a large white cedar which edges a grassed terrace with beds of roses between it, the lawn and house.

- Cowra Rose Gardens – featuring 880 bushes of 130 varieties including a bed of the beautiful Cowra Rose
- Old Graham Garden at Hovells Creek (42 kms from Cowra)—A country garden developed around an historic stone Cobb & Co inn. David Austin roses: day lilies; iris walk; pond and bog garden; and specimen trees. Beautiful stone walls and edgings; rustic arbour paved with convict bricks; slab hut; antique Sydney sandstone folly and stone bridge; labyrinth and nine standing stones. 75 sculptures in garden and adjoining paddock, with sculpture walks.
- August: a one-day tour to Eryldene at Gordon and Camellias R Us at Glenorie, owned by Bill Parker. Subject to any restrictions which may be in place at that time lunch may be available at Eryldene.
- Late November: a 3-day (2-night tour) to the Hunter Valley to include:
 - Hunter Valley Gardens Christmas light spectacular with over 3 million lights—usually commences about a month before Christmas
 - The Bath House Garden located at Oakhampton Heights (3.5 kms from Maitland and approximately 10 Kms from the historic town of Morpeth) overlooks the rural flood plains along the Hunter River and the heritage Walka Water Works. The garden initially established around the house has been expanded to 4 acres to become a peaceful, rustic country garden with climbing roses, a small lake, hedging creating spaces each with features of their own and a french lavender field.
 - A visit to historic Morpeth
 - Various other venues when timing and date are determined but could include a winery and / or a nursery or a historic venue in Maitland.

Welcome to New Members

Bud Towsing and Michael Ellis

AGHS Southern Highlands Branch Committee

Chair & NMC Representative:	Lyn Barrett
Treasurer:	John Biffin
Secretary and Events co-ordinator:	Ruth Bailey
Technical Officer:	Jenny Woodwell
Editor/Minutes Secretary:	Meg Probyn
<u><i>Associate Members</i></u>	
Tours:	Ray Bradley
WSC Heritage Rep:	Laurel Cheetham

Email: aghs.sh.info@gmail.com

DON'T FORGET TO SPEND YOUR GIFT VOUCHER

*A gift voucher was attached to September's Inflorescence.
In case you've lost it, here is another!*

To: _____ AGHS-SHB member
Insert Name Here

Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the AGHS with a Living Memory This voucher entitles a current member (as at 30 September 2020) of the AGHS-Southern Highlands Branch to a plant from the nursery at the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens to the value of \$12.50 or towards the cost of a higher priced plant.

Please present voucher when selecting your plant.

Voucher eligibility will be verified by a staff member or volunteer at the SHBG from a membership list provided by the AGHS-SHB Committee.

Valid for 2 months only –
1 October to 30 November 2020



SHBG Nursery Location:
Corner Kangaloon Rd and Old South Road
Bowral NSW 2576

Website: <https://shbg.com.au>

Opening hours:
Tuesday 9am - 3pm
Thursday 9am - 3pm
Saturday 9am - 3pm

Booking Form for Christmas Party Rotherwood 7621 Illawarra Highway, Sutton Forest



Friday 4 December 2020: 4.00 – 7.00 pm

Your name/s:

Non-members name/s:

.....

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
4 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: Ruth Bailey 0409 126 718