

Inflorescence

September 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

13 October coach to Vacluse House and Elizabeth Bay House.

19-21 November 3-day coach tour to the Hunter Valley & Hunter Valley Gardens Christmas Lights.

6 December Christmas Drinks at Tavistock, Exeter.

Report from the Chair

After a very busy year with 12 events during 2023/2024 the Committee has been working hard to create monthly events for the remainder of the year and finalising an event program for 2025.

We are fine tuning the 2025 events at upcoming Committee meetings and will distribute hard copies to all who attend the **Christmas Drinks at Tavistock in Exeter on Friday 6 December from 4:00-7:00pm**. An invitation will be sent out in October for registration so we can plan for catering.

In the meanwhile, there are 11 seats available on the 3-day coach tour to the **Hunter Valley and Environs on 19-21 November**. Please contact Ray Bradley on rbb1945@bigpond.net.au or his mobile 0416 191 905.

We have 5 remaining places available for the **one day coach tour to Sydney on Sunday 13 October** to see Elizabeth Bay House and Vacluse House. Please contact Sue Trudeau if you would like to join us or register at <https://events.humanitix.com/sydney-coach-trip>

For those who came to Park Hill in Moss Vale, Margie Stuart's wonderful 100 year old home and property on Friday 13 September, I'm sure you're still marveling at the old original garden and trees, especially on such a glorious day! We were fortunate to be able to explore this lovely garden and see the history of the plantings not only by Margie's mother but also Claude Crowe. As Margie is a descendant of the Throsby's of nearby Throsby Park, Bud and Margie have provided more historical information in this newsletter plus some lovely photographs outlining some of the history of Throsby Park and Betsey Throsby.

Our AGM/Second Winter Seminar on 24 August 2024 was well attended and our speakers Michael Bligh and Linda Emery held our audience captive for many hours. Brief summaries of their presentations are in this issue.

We supported an event held by Camellia Ark Australia on 3 August where Dr. Stephen Utick took all who attended on a walking tour of the heritage camellias on the terraces at Station Street describing each one and its history.

Thanks to Merryleigh Brindley for a wonderful report of the event which has been included in this issue.

Hope you are all enjoying spring now that we've received a little rain to help spur on our gardens and our lovely landscapes in the Southern Highlands.

Please welcome our three new members at some of the upcoming events.

Lois Macadam Bowral
Val Turnbull Sutton Forest
Margi Stevens Mittagong

Looking forward to seeing you all soon!

Best wishes,

Ruth

AGHS-SHB Visit to Park Hill Moss Vale on 13 September 2024

By Margie Stuart and Bud Townsing

Fifty members of the AGHS-SHB visited Margie Stuart's wonderful home and garden Park Hill on 13 September.



Photograph courtesy Bud Townsing.



Nearmap view of Park Hill house and garden December 2023.

Park Hill, in Narellan Road Moss Vale, was part of the original 1819 land grant to early settler and explorer, Dr Charles Throsby, as a reward for his expedition from Cow Pastures at Camden, south to what is now Taralga, north up the western side of the Great Dividing Range, and to what are now Oberon and Bathurst. It was the first land grant outside of the County of Cumberland. Charles Throsby's nephew and heir, also Charles Throsby (Junior), and his wife Elizabeth Isabella (Betsey, nee Broughton), built Throsby Park, circa 1836. They also built Christ Church Bong Bong, and the family built several of the very early houses in Moss Vale: Redbraes and Bibury in Valetta Street, and Farnborough, on Illawarra Highway, also the original Council Chambers in Throsby Street.

Charles and Betsey Throsby were Margaret Stuart's great-great grandparents. Park Hill was subdivided from Throsby Park in about 1900 by Francis Throsby, Margaret's great uncle, and was bought by Jane Crick, a farmer, unusual at the time for a woman to buy land in her own name. In the 1930s and 1940s it was the home of the Nicholsons, parents of Highlands Garden Society member and friend, Elizabeth Symonds. Elizabeth's mother had well known Berrima nurseryman, Claude Crowe, to help plan most of the plantings in the front garden.



Photograph courtesy Bud Townsing.

Park Hill house and garden (about 2 acres/ 8000m²) are WSC Heritage listed, as is the old hayshed, which probably pre-dates the house.



Photograph courtesy Bud Townsing.

The hayshed is of tree trunk construction, possibly from trees cut on the property. In the shed is an original hand operated chaff cutter (made in England), the original cow bails with a hay loft, and 'man's room' where lived the chap who used to milk the cows, feed the chooks and generally care for the place.



Current use of the 'man's room'. Photograph courtesy Ruth Bailey.

In the middle 1960s it came back into Margaret's part of the family, when it was bought by her parents.



Photograph courtesy Bud Townsing.

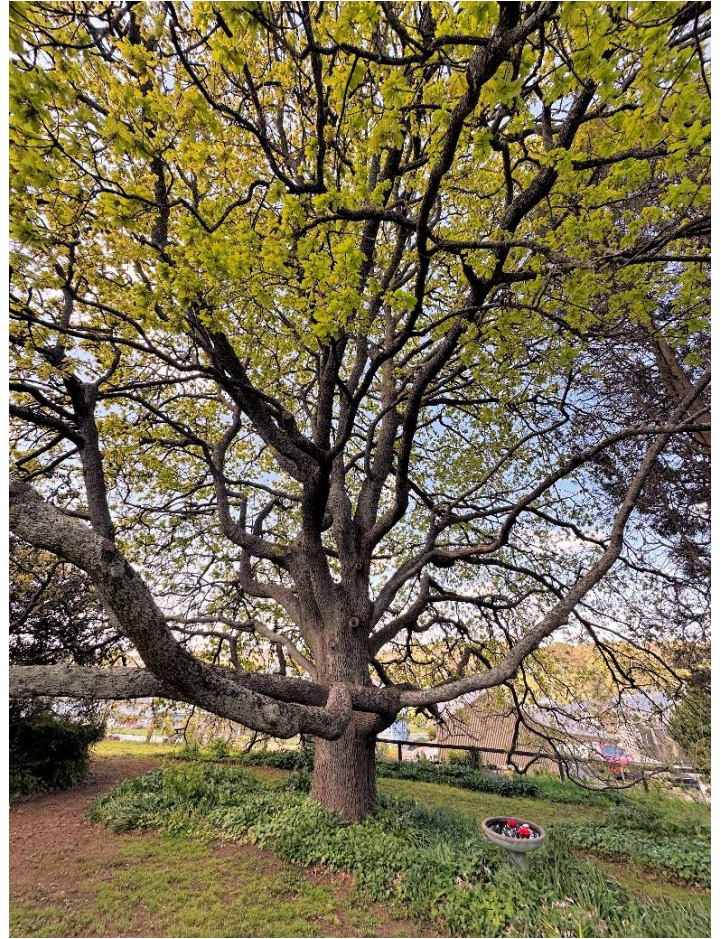
Margaret's mother Nora (who was born in Redbraes, in Valetta St. Moss Vale) was a keen gardener. When she came to Park Hill in the late '60s, the garden was mainly the front garden and beds bordering the house: facing the house, the left hand side had been a tennis court and the right hand side, a lawn with a mature flowering prunus.



Photograph courtesy Ruth Bailey.

Two long beds bordered the central path from the front gate to the front verandah steps. There were and still are, trees bordering the semi-circular gravel driveway: torulosas, poplars, a rhododendron, a pale cotinus, kolkwitzia, mature crab apple (malus), mature Japanese maples, and a variegated holly. Burgundy lilacs and roses, hellebores, a dark pink spirea (may bush) and bearded iris, were established in the path garden beds, as well as muscari and crocus.

On the eastern side of the house is a huge old English oak – *Quercus robur*, planted by Elizabeth Symonds' mother in about 1938, from an Anthony Hordern's promotional acorn.



The English oak, leafing out. Photograph courtesy Ruth Bailey.

Nora set about extending the garden in the 1970s. She incorporated the house paddock (uphill and west of the house) into the garden, making a pond (now a fish and frog habitat) and getting Claude Crowe back, to select and plant ornamental trees. There are still in this part of the garden, a mature *Parotia persica*, two golden elms, a huge claret ash, a Chinese elm, a weeping elm, golden weeping cyprus and fruiting quince and plum.



Eleanor Dartnall feeding the sheep. Photograph courtesy Ruth Bailey.

Margaret currently has Suffolk sheep on the property to the right of the house and she breeds pheasants, ducks and chooks in the area behind the house.



Golden pheasant. Photograph courtesy Ruth Bailey.

On the southeastern side of the house Nora planted camellias and a (now very tall) *Magnolia stellata*, as well as a tree peony, Etienne de France.



Photographs courtesy Ruth Bailey.



Photograph courtesy Ruth Bailey.

Nora also established curved planting areas on what had been the tennis court – mainly roses and bulbs, and Margaret has added rhododendrons, *Magnolia soulangeana*, nepeta and more bulbs. A ten year old addition, a magnificent *Michelia doltsopa*, is currently (August '24) in full flower on the eastern boundary.

Margaret and [now late] husband David, took over Park Hill in 2000 and established a circular rose garden in the south end of the ex-paddock garden and planted the start of a long shrub border running north/south with *Hydrangea aspera*, *Viburnum macrocephalum*, *Magnolia soulangeana*, a Sally Holmes shrub rose, and a huge burgundy loropetalum (Chinese fringe flower). She also

adds more daffodils each year.



Burgundy loropetalum. Photograph courtesy Bud Townsing.

As the town has come out to surround Park Hill, Margaret has commenced screen planting in the previously paddock area behind the house. Native plantings predominate here: leptospermum, banksia, lomandra and hakea, plus ornamental pears. Like every garden, Park Hill continues to develop and change as some specimens come to the end of their lives, enabling new plantings and plans.

Looking from Park Hill there is a wonderful landscape showing Throsby Park which is reminiscent of an 1836 Conrad Martens watercolour painting of Throsby Park from almost the same location!



View of Throsby Park, watercolour by Conrad Martens circa 1836. Courtesy Caroline Simpson Library.



A September 2024 view of Throsby Park from the front of Park Hill. Photograph courtesy Bud Townsing.

Throsby Family History

Margaret's great-great grandmother Betsey Throsby (nee Broughton) was born in 1807. She died in 1891 at the age of 83 and rests in the Bong Bong Cemetery. She married Charles Throsby Junior in 1824 and they had 17 children. They built Throsby Park between 1834 and 1836.

Betsey was the youngest of five children of William Broughton and his partner Ann Glossop. William arrived in the First Fleet. On the voyage he was a servant to the First Fleet Surgeon John White. Ann came to Sydney in February 1792 on board the convict ship the *Pitt*, along with 352 males and 57 female convicts. She had been sentenced to seven years transportation for the theft of cloth from a shop.



Portrait of Betsey (then Elizabeth Isabella Broughton) aged about seven, by Richard Read, 1814. Courtesy National Library of Australia.

In the 1950's a New Zealand art dealer and collector Rex Nan Kivell found the above portrait of Betsey in a secondhand shop in England. When it was removed from the frame, he found this remarkable 1814 letter by Betsey's father William Broughton to Don Gasparido Rico in Lima describing the death of Ann in 1809 and the rescue of Betsey by Alexander Berry, a family friend. This copy of the letter is from Rachel Roxburgh's book *Throsby Park*.

"Commissary William Broughton to Don Gasparido Rico

Elizabeth Isabella Broughton the subject of this portrait is the daughter of William Broughton Esq. Deputy Assistant Commissary General and one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the colony of New South Wales.

She was born on Norfolk Island in the South Pacific Ocean, 13 November 1807 and embarked from that place on board the ship, City of Edinburgh, 9 September 1808 for Port Jackson in New South Wales and arrived 9 November following. On 8 November 1809 she sailed for

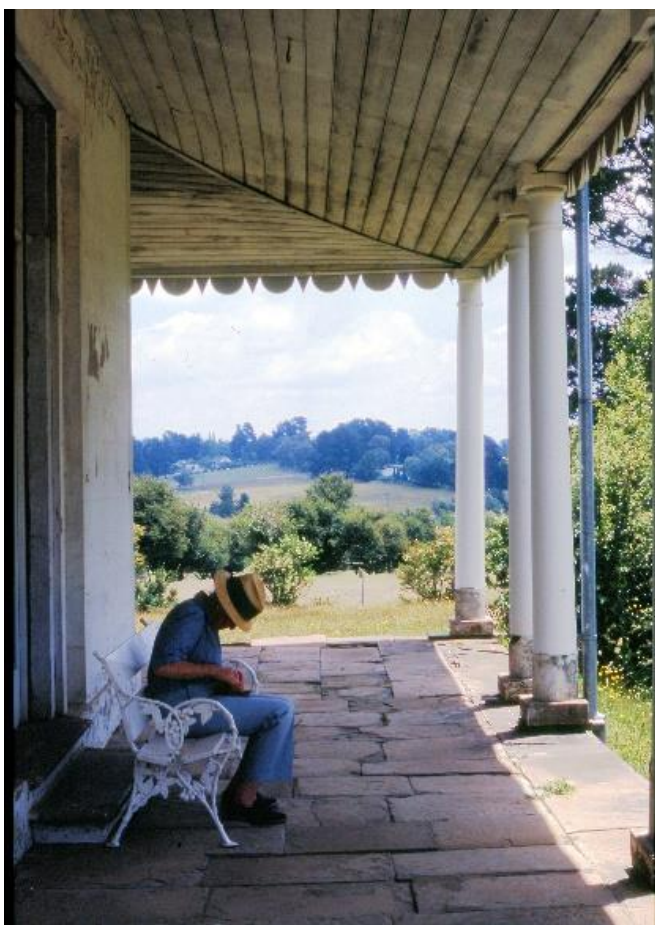
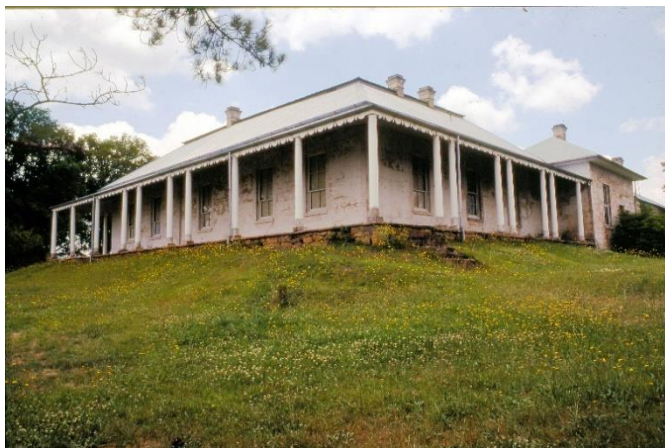
England under the protection of her mother in a ship called the General Boyd commanded by Captain John Thompson; but that vessel touched (unfortunately) at the Island of New Zealand, for the purpose of obtaining spars, where the whole of the crew and passengers (except one woman and a boy and two infants) were inhumanely murdered by the cruel natives of that place. The subject of this picture, whose mother fell a victim, was more than three weeks among the savages, and suffered incredible hardships, providentially however for the survivors the ship City of Edinburgh arrived in a short time after the event took place for a supply of spars and gaining information among the natives that a British vessel had been cut off in the Bay of Islands, and that every person on board, except the persons before mentioned had been murdered, Mr Berry, the owner, boldly entered the harbour in a boat, the crew of which were armed, and succeeded in getting two of the principal Chiefs of the District into his possession, one of them he dispatched in search of the child, the other he kept a hostage for the true performance of the mission whom he threatened with instant death if the child was not produced in a given space of time.

In a few hours, to the agreeable astonishment of Mr Berry she was produced and, although the child was in a very emaciated state, it still afforded him much pleasure for she was the daughter of his friend. By the intrepidity and courage of this worthy man the child's life was preserved for owing to the unwholesome food of which from necessity she had been obliged to partake during her stay in common with the savages, it occasioned a disease which must have inevitably put a period to her existence had she remained with them but a few days longer. About the latter end of January or beginning of February 1810 Mr Berry took his departure from New Zealand and after encountering various perils and hardships he arrived at Lima safe, there he discharged his cargo and repaired the ship and from thence sailed for Rio de Janeiro at which place he fell in with a British Brig called the Atlanta bound for New South Wales, on board which the child embarked and arrived in safety about the latter end of May 1812 to the great joy of her disconsolate father who most respectfully inscribes this portrait to Don Gasparido Rico and the other Spanish gentlemen and ladies as a tribute of respect and grateful remembrance for so nobly distinguishing themselves by their humanity in their protection and benevolent treatment of the child during her residence at Lima for eleven months and deems himself honoured in subscribing himself,

Sydney, NSW, 8 April 1814.

*Their most obliged, grateful & devoted humble servant
William Broughton."*

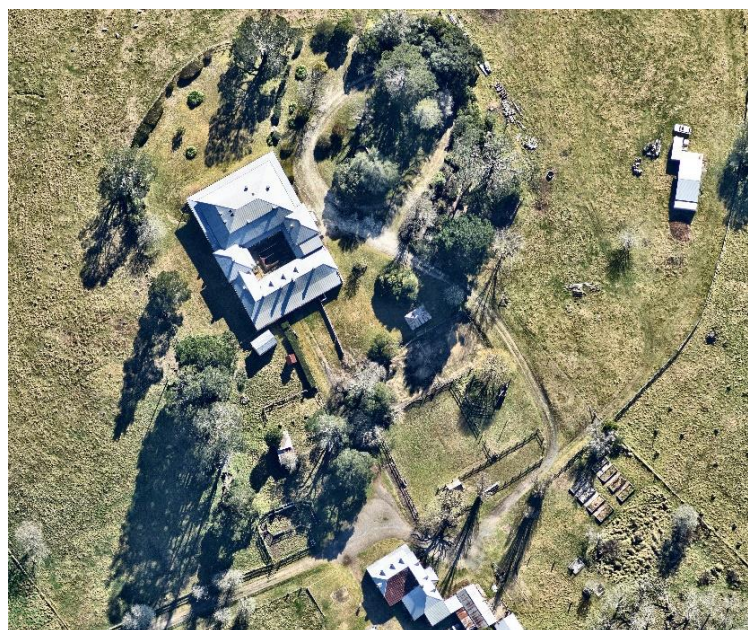
Governor Macquarie requested that Lord Strangford use his endeavours to forward the portrait of Betsey to Lima. We do not know whether the portrait of Betsey ever made it to Lima or where it was in the 150 years before turning up in an English secondhand shop.



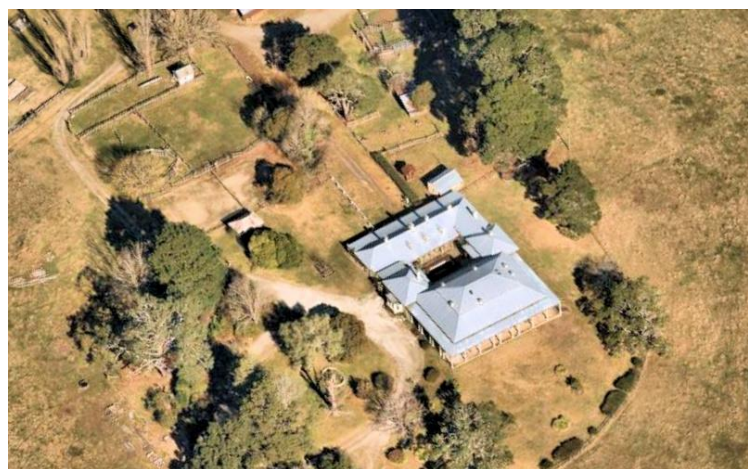
The above three views of Throsby Park were taken in about 1987. Photographs taken by and courtesy Keva North.



A sketch of Throsby Park by Conrad Martens from *Scenes in Sydney & New South Wales, 1836-1863*, courtesy State Library of New South Wales. It may be the basis of the Conrad Martens painting shown on page 4.



Nearmap image of Throsby Park 16 June 2024.



An oblique Nearmap view of Throsby Park on 24 June 2023

Throsby Park is owned by Museums of History NSW which entered into a long lease arrangement with a Throsby descendant in 2015. See [Throsby Park](#)

The Walking Tour of the Heritage Station Street Camellias

By Merryleigh Brindley

Saturday, 3rd August, 2024, a perfect winter's afternoon in Bowral - sunny, no wind. I stood on the ramp leading down to the station forecourt and looked down on the group gathering near the line of heritage camellias, now standing proud on the rejuvenated trachyte terraces. A group of tourists/visitors were near me. "What's happening?" they asked me. "Is it a protest? But surely not on a Saturday afternoon."



Photograph courtesy Bud Townsing.

I briefly explained but thought to myself, it's a celebration really. It's another acknowledgement of a victory - a David and Goliath type of victory - when through persistent community effort including local AGHS members, these heritage camellias have been saved. They were at risk because the Wingecarribee Shire Council of that time proposed to realign Station Street and the camellias and the neighbouring pin oaks were in the way.



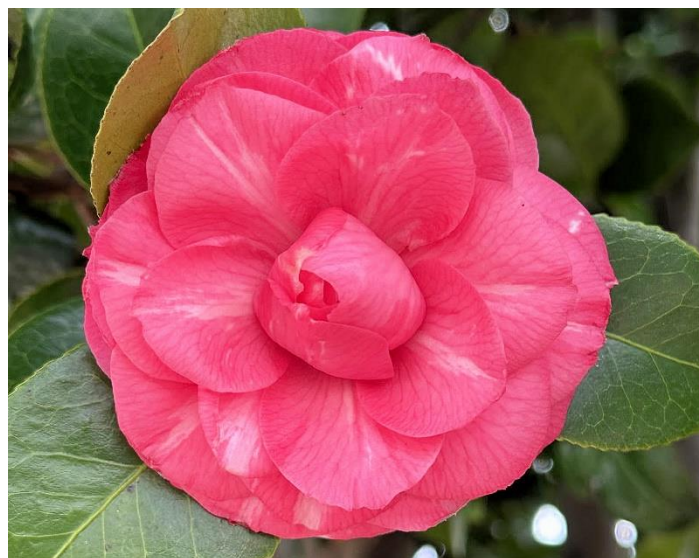
Photograph courtesy Bud Townsing.

Today, however, Dr Stephen Ulick of Camellia Ark Australia is taking us on a 'simple walking tour' of these camellias, an event that a few short years ago would have seemed an impossible dream. He led us along the line of eighteen camellias, naming each one, a task made easier as they began to flower, then related its history. Some, like *Camellia japonica* 'Aspasia Macarthur' were descended from Australian cultivars as early as 1848, others from overseas cultivars.



Camellia japonica 'Aspasia Macarthur'. Photograph courtesy Ruth Bailey.

Their long history was evident - for example, *Camellia japonica* 'Orandako' 1739 from Japan.



Camellia japonica 'Orandako'. Photograph courtesy Ruth Bailey.

Also, *Camellia japonica* 'Alba Plena' 1792 via England from China and *Camellia japonica* 'Prince Eugene Napoleon' 1859 from Belgium. I had these last two among many others that I bought from Professor Waterhouse at St Ives for my first garden many years ago. I wish I had known of their history.



Camellia japonica 'Alba Plena'. Photograph courtesy Ruth Bailey.



Camellia japonica 'Prince Eugene Napoleon'. Photograph courtesy Ruth Bailey.

Dr Utick's knowledge of camellias is encyclopaedic, rivalled only by his enthusiastic, and rapid delivery as he related fascinating stories of each one.



Dr. Stephen Utick in the mustard-yellow jacket. Photograph courtesy Bud Townsing.

Today the rescued camellias stand proud on their rejuvenated trachyte terraces near the neighbouring pin oaks which were also at risk. The walking tour by Camellia Ark Australia is yet another affirmation of all the effort, dedication and six years of intense activity of the AGHS-SHB, Camellia Ark Australia, the National Trust and the Friends of Bowral. And, incidentally, it was a very pleasant way to spend a sunny Saturday afternoon with our members and friends.



A circa 1936 photograph of Bowral Station, courtesy BDHS.

AGM/Second Winter Seminar

This year there were 50 attendees of the AGM/Second Winter Seminar at a new location for our meetings, the Moss Vale Senior Citizens & Community Centre. The facility was excellent and provided good protection from a very windy day. The 2023/2024 annual report, minutes of the previous years AGM and the full year financials were distributed prior to the meeting. The AGM focused primarily on the 12 functions that we held during the calendar year ending June 2024, the many advocacy activities that were deemed necessary to help inform the WSC and protect our heritage environment and several ongoing projects. The new approach was to communicate this information through a slide presentation with many photos to remind everyone of the events. This was well received so it will be used again next year.

We were able to make a reasonable profit last year because a generous member donated funds to offset the cost of the Nearmap subscription of just over \$3,000. Due to accumulated funds over several years we plan in the next financial year to donate \$1,000 to Harper's Mansion to continue to expand the heritage camellia collection and \$10,000 to the Southern Highlands Botanical Gardens to create a significant and unique native conifer collection.

Jenny Woodwell has stepped down from the Committee after providing excellent support over the past 4 years with IT for Zoom meetings, research and online book sales amongst other activities. We thanked her for her support and wished her well with her ongoing leadership in the southern region of the CWA.

Ralph Suters was the returning officer this year and after itemising the past and future committee members requested nominations from the floor for new committee members. We were thrilled to learn that three people were interested in learning more about the functions of the Committee. Both Pamela Jane and Olga Birrell will explore this opportunity further in the coming months.



Ruth Bailey giving her annual report. Photograph courtesy Bud Townsing.



Michael Bligh. Photograph courtesy Bud Townsing.

Our first speaker was Michael Bligh, a landscape architect, one of Australia's most experienced and trusted garden designers and an authority on the design of town and country gardens. He is also a current and long-term member of the AGHS-SHB.

Despite many perceptions that you can't modify a heritage house and garden and stay true to the period Michael encouraged owners to consider making thoughtful adjustments which reflect the current needs of families living in these properties today.

He showed, using his own home as an example, how dormer windows were added to the second floor of their heritage cottage to let in more light and a car parking area was created off to the side of the garden to clear the turning circle in the front of his home from parked cars. This allowed a walkway to be created with hardscaping that matched the house.



Michael's home illustrating the changes he has made.

Old trees can be a concern for new heritage homeowners but evaluating whether they are rare or common trees can help owners make decisions about whether to keep a tree or remove it for other garden modifications. A well credentialed arborist can also assist in pruning old trees to increase their health and longevity. However, if safety is an issue trees can be removed.

In addition, gardens and pots on verandahs also can be planted with "old fashioned plants" such as geraniums, wisteria, rhododendrons, roses to name but a few. There is even a role for periwinkle under groves of birch trees where the blue flowers bloom in the spring and summer. He showed how a hedge of may bush can create a stunning boundary fence which is evergreen and beautiful in spring with arching stems covered with double white flowers.

To demonstrate on a larger scale how moderate but appropriate changes to a garden can significantly enhance a heritage property, he showed how he worked with Howard Tanner, a leading heritage architect in Australia, to rejuvenate Rotherwood in Sutton Forest. A ha-ha fence and lawn was created near the front of the house with bricks that were similar to those on the house.



Before and after views of Rotherwood showing the ha-ha fence and lawn.

Side steps led to a pathway which joined a central path on the axis to the house and at the end of this path was a small pond allowing a peaceful view back to the house. Patios were installed using similar materials to the house and a pergola designed by Howard Tanner featured pillars which were similar to those found on the house. Climbers were planted on the pergola which reflected the period of the house. A walled vegetable garden was also created using the same bricks as the house. The gardens featured large plantings of the same flowers in large beds to reflect the scale of the large home.

So, by using similar hardscape material to the house to create raised beds, water features, retaining walls, steps, pergolas and ponds this allows a heritage home to be rejuvenated to fit modern styles and family living.

Homeowners do not need “deep pockets” to create this look as evidenced by the plantings at his Federation cottage office in Goulburn where lavender was used to create a hedge in front of the office and roses and other traditional plants were planted in the garden. A vine was also planted to drape along the roof edge of the verandah. None of these were expensive plantings but they contributed to the heritage look and feel of the cottage.

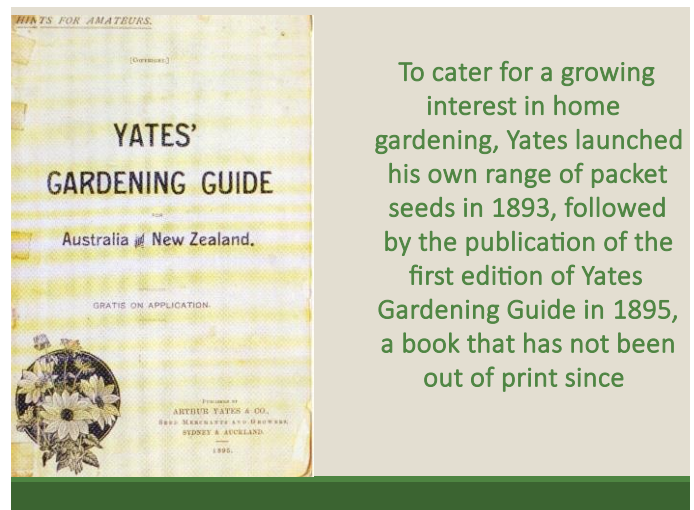
Our second speaker was Linda Emery, of the Berrima District Historical and Family History Society (BDHS) and Linda spoke on the Commercial Gardens of Exeter. The following is a summary of her excellent talk.



Linda Emery. Photograph courtesy Bud Townsing.

Recognising the suitability of Exeter for horticulture, with its combination of extremely fertile soil, cool climate and accessibility to the Sydney market via the Great Southern Railway, several nurserymen established seed and bulb farms on the edge of the village from the mid-1890s.

The largest and most diverse was the property of Arthur Yates & Company, a name that became synonymous with the popular home garden guide which has not been out of print since the first edition was published in 1895.



Searl & Sons purchased land adjacent to the Yates property in 1905 where they developed their flower and bulb fields.



Hyacinths in bloom in the Searl Garden. Photograph courtesy Peg South taken by her grandfather Martin Moore.

In spring, the sea of daffodils and hyacinths in Exeter became a local tourist attraction and hundreds of blooms packed in large wicker baskets were sent to Sydney every day.



Packing Exeter daffodils for Sydney markets. Photograph courtesy BDHS.

Nearby, a smaller commercial garden was conducted for more than 90 years by the Jensen family – Danish-born Fritz, his wife Annie and their sons Erik and Derek. Fritz imported bulbs from Holland and many other parts of the world to establish a specialty nursery, sending bunches of daffodils, jonquils, lily of the valley and rhododendrons to outlets all over NSW. Sydney florists were always charged five shillings (fifty cents) a bunch no matter what the flower. Erik and Derek had a hand cart that they wheeled down to Exeter Railway Station to load the baskets of flowers on to the trains. After almost a century of operation the elderly bachelors Erik and Derek closed Jensen's Nursery in 1985.



Erik and Derek Jensen. Photograph courtesy Linda Emery/BDHS.



Searls' garden in Exeter, about 1908, photograph by Martin Moore courtesy Peg South.

AGHS-SHB Committee

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Treasurer	Lynda Cowley
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