

Inflorescence

March 2023

The Newsletter of the Southern Highlands Branch of the AGHS



Events for 2023

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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Upcoming Tours and Events

5 April one day coach tour to Markdale

22-23 April Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens Autumn Fair

26 April garden visit to Upper Woodlands

25 June Winter Solstice Talk – 200th Anniversary of Camellias in Australia

Report from the Chair

Our self drive to Berry was a great success. Thank you to all who made this day happen and to all who made the trip. It was a lovely day drive to explore the distant areas of our branch looking for both commonalities for the towns in the Southern Highlands and beyond as well as the differences in this coastal area.

The open garden visit to Tavistock in Exeter was a resounding success. What an accomplishment by Eleanor and John Dartnall to bring this forlorn home and property back to a glorious place to live and share with family and friends. I can't imagine the hard labor it took to turn white clay into rich dark soil which supports such beautiful flowers and trees. In addition, the havoc wreaked by horrendous rains caused enormous challenges all of which were creatively overcome. A lesson for us all in perseverance, hard work and creativity!

Bud Townsing has been working diligently to create a new slide deck at Berrima Museum featuring the impact of Claude and Isobel Crowe and their Berrima Bridge Nurseries on the landscape of the Southern Highlands. Many of our members remember Mr. Crowe and his garden advice however our newer members may not be so familiar. Please take the time to go and visit the Museum and marvel at the old and new photographs of gardens in the Highlands and learn a little about the history of Isobel and Claude Crowe. Bud is in the process of creating a book featuring many Claude Crowe gardens and telling the story of Berrima Bridge Nurseries.

The Station Street garden terraces have been completed and are now planted with more modern camellias to complement the heritage camellias planted about 90 years ago. While there are still barriers surrounding the terraces, as the council staff work

to repair the Station Street road guttering and paths, it is still worth a visit to see these plantings and admire the rejuvenated stacked stone terraces. These can be seen from the Bowral Station car park. This will positively impact the view not only from Station Street but the view for passengers arriving by train especially in the cooler months when these camellias come into flower.

The Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens Autumn Open Gardens & Plant Fair is coming up on 22-23 April. We will have another tent this year to educate residents in the Highlands and beyond about the AGHS mission and events we hold during the year. If you would like to volunteer for a few hours on either or both days at the tent please let me know. It's always fun to talk to new people and some old friends who are likely to drop by the tent. I'll be back in touch soon to remind you of this opportunity!!

Enjoy these last two months of Autumn as the colours change in the exotic trees which will be contrasted with our wonderful evergreen and native trees and shrubs.

Regards Ruth

AGHS-SHB Committee

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

Associate Members

Tours	Ray Bradley
NMC Representative	Lyn Barrett
WSC Heritage Representative	Laurel Cheetham

Self-Drive to Woodhill and Berry

By Jenny Woodwell, photographs by Lynda Cowley, Bud Townsing and Ruth Bailey

30 people from the AGHS-SHB signed up for a day out to travel to Ros Brooks' garden at Woodhill, and then on to Berry on 22nd February 2023.

Most of us from the Southern Highlands took the scenic route through Wattamolla Road and experienced torrential downpours for our trouble. We made it though and Ros was very welcoming! She provided a map and proceeded to take us on a wonderful tour of her property.



A feature of the garden was the number of unusual sculptures Ros has collected over the years.





Ros Brooks, Eleanor Dartnall, Ruth Bailey, Hazel King, Mary Williamson and Janet Fingleton

Hazel King, Jenny Swan, Mary Williamson and Janet Fingleton greeted us at Ros's property and presented us with a beautiful morning tea. We were also provided with a map highlighting a number of historical trees around Berry.



Before we left Woodhill, we visited the Old Tin shed, located at the top of Ros Brooks' driveway. It was built 1883 to be used as Council Chambers for Broughton Head and Woodhill. It was then sold to the Methodist Church for £25. Over the last 100 years it has been a chapel, a community centre, a Sunday School, and today an artist's studio.

After checking out the interesting portraits of the current work of Bryan Pennington who lives next to the studio, we drove approximately 15 minutes down the hill to Berry. Some of us met for a picnic lunch in Apex Park, Berry. There were many interesting trees in the park, including a Bald Cypress from the Everglades in the USA. After lunch we moved on to recently created George Street Park at the other end of Berry.

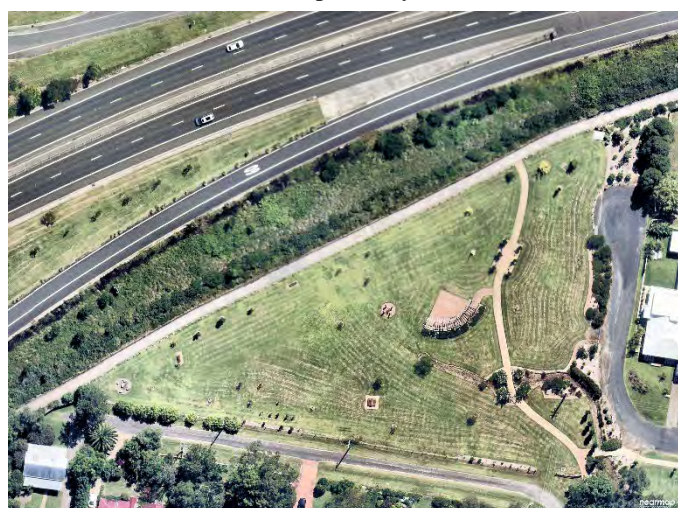


AGHS-SHB donated a *Elaeocarpus reticulatus* Blueberry Ash tree to this garden a few years ago and it has grown beautifully.



Annette O'Donnell, Mary Williamson and Ray Bradley admiring the AGHS-SHB Blueberry Ash.

George Street Park is built on left over land when the expressway was built. The Blueberry Ash is at the top right hand corner of the Park in this Nearmap photograph below. Behind the Blueberry Ash is a protective bank of earth and you are almost unaware of the expressway on the other side.



We did a tour of Berry taking in the *Jacaranda mimosifolia* in the front garden of the Presbyterian Manse, the Cape Chestnut in King Street, the Port Jackson Pine and Stringybark Pine near the showground and the three white cedars on the nature strip in Victoria Street, and drove out to the Coolangatta Estate, near Shoalhaven Heads.

This Estate is the former home of Alexander Berry and some notable trees to be seen amongst the historical buildings were a Bunya Pine, Peppercorn and Canary Island Date Palm. The Estate contains many listed buildings including the blacksmiths shop, stables and workers cottages.

Alexander Berry (1781-1873) was a Scottish-born merchant and explorer who, with his business partner Edward Wollstonecraft, was granted in 1822 10,000 acres of land. This rural grant holding was called Coolangatta, and within it was the private town of Broughton Creek which was renamed Berry in 1889 following the death of David Berry, Alexander's brother.

We then drove home along the Shoalhaven River, up Cambewarra Mountain, and through Kangaroo Valley arriving tired and happy after a lovely day out.

Tavistock Garden Visit

Author Ruth Bailey, photos by Bud Townsing.

Despite the threat of rain 75 people ventured out to visit Tavistock in Exeter, the home of Eleanor and John Dartnall on Wednesday 29 March. Although it did rain during the morning, our members and their visitors as well as 12 members of the Heritage Rose Society were well prepared and ventured on or took refuge in the apple shed where morning tea was served. Many members and guests contributed to the sumptuous morning tea which was enjoyed immensely by all.

This one acre house and garden was truly a pleasure to visit. Eleanor created a story board of the development of the house and garden over a two-year period which clearly showed the enormous task undertaken by Eleanor and John to create such a gorgeous garden and home. Nearmap aerial photos were featured in the apple shed showing the transition from the newly purchased home and block into the home and garden it is today.



Nearmap image of Tavistock taken on 31 August 2020



Nearmap image of Tavistock taken on 11 March 2023

They undertook a complete garden creation after removing

numerous old and dying trees and rebuilt the house from a 70's red brick bungalow into a beautiful home with rendered walls and new verandahs on the front and back of the house.

The verandahs proved useful when the brief rains came and gave dry vantage points to view the garden where native plants have been intertwined with exotic perennials, shrubs and trees. Where water seepage was a problem in the back garden a water garden has been created and where a large ginkgo tree had recently died a large *Nyssa salivatica* (Tupelo) tree has been installed in a new circular brick garden reflecting the same brick work of walls in the garden. This promises to turn deep green foliage to yellow, orange then scarlet in late autumn.



Newly planted *Nyssa salivatica*

A 122,000 litre tank has been installed in the back corner of the garden to provide water to the house and garden. John is aware that this will be insufficient when the "dry" period returns so he is currently in the process of tapping into a spring to ensure continuous water in the future.

Eleanor's love of hydrangeas was evidenced by her diverse collection near the water tank as well as under trees situated along the front fence. Recent excessive rains bought an end to nine *Cupressus torulosa* trees so John cut these down leaving 2 meter stumps. These tall stumps have now been connected with lengths of chain to create a rose festoon upon which multiple Lamarque roses will climb. It promises to be a beautiful display when the roses mature.

If another opportunity arises to visit Tavistock in the future, I encourage those who were unable to come to the garden, to take the opportunity and make this a priority garden visit.



John Wilson and John Dartnall

Views of Tavistock 29 March 2023



Eleanor Dartnall, Helen Gates and Merryleigh Brindley



Berrima Bridge Nurseries

Isobel and Claude Crowe

Author Ruth Bailey

Many people wondered why there wasn't a slide deck on Claude and Isobel Crowe and their impact on the history of gardens in the Southern Highlands when the *Gardens and Landscapes in the Southern Highlands - Then and Now* was being created and opened at the Berrima Museum in February 2022. Although much material was available the task of creating a slide presentation was going to be a long and arduous task so was tabled until a later date. That work has now been done by Bud Townsing who has worked tirelessly over the past 5 months gathering this information into 70 slides as well as additional information all of which will be published soon in a photo book.



Claude and Isobel Crowe at their wedding in 1943, courtesy BDHS



Berrima Bridge Nursery as it was in 1963, courtesy BDHS. The original nursery is marked in red; Claude also grew nursery stock in the areas marked in yellow as well as on the northern side of the Wingecarribee River.

Isobel and Claude Crowe set up the Berrima Nursery in 1943 and continued there for over fifty years. Advice and hand-drawn garden plans were provided free of charge to novice and experienced gardeners alike and many became regular visitors to Berrima Nurseries. Claude also provided many tree plantings for the local councils and public buildings and parks throughout the Southern Highlands.

In an oral history conducted by the AGHS in 2003, when Isobel was 90 years old, she stated that Southern Highlands "is our landscape". After Claude's passing in 1999 Isobel Crowe and her son Noel went to the Gib lookout overlooking Bowral to view and reflect on the cultural landscape before them which is a living memorial to the life and work of Claude and Berrima Bridge Nurseries.



Bowral from the Gib a 1908 Kerry postcard courtesy BDHS



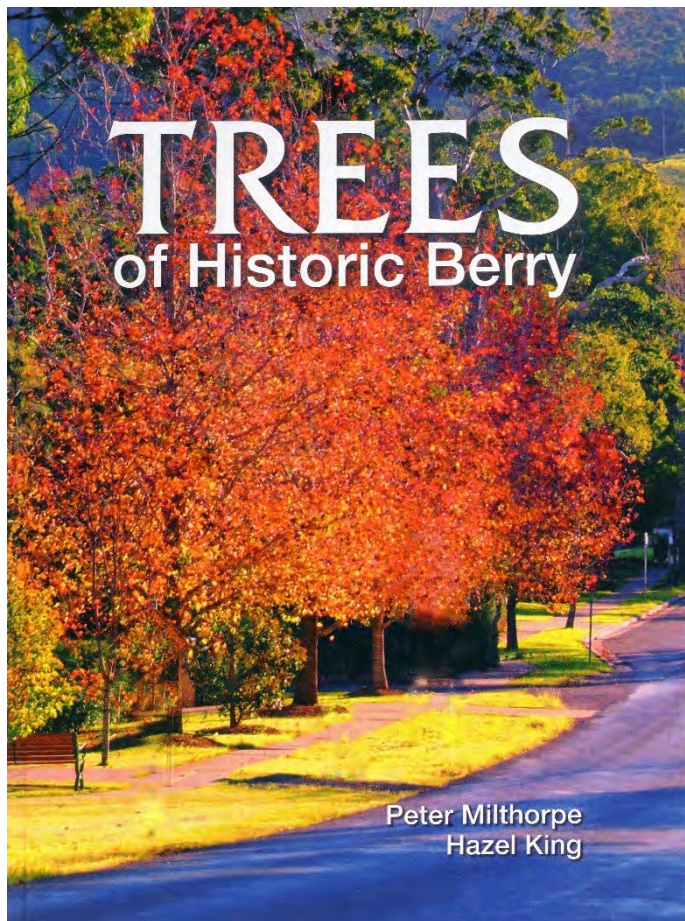
Bowral from the Gib in 2021

Early in our research on Berrima Bridge Nurseries Laurel Cheetham showed us over 200 garden plans that Claude had sketched for customers. Claude did not charge for these plans or for his expert advice. We decided to see how many of these plans we could locate. The plans are not dated however Claude had written the name of the owner and the town on the plans. We borrowed old telephone books and electoral rolls from Berrima District Historical & Family History Society (BDHS) and were able to identify the address of 59 gardens and thought that this gave us a unique opportunity to view these gardens today and see what has happened to these gardens.

AGHS-SHB has taken a subscription to Nearmap to help make these comparisons. The technology is based on a patented, airplane-mounted camera system which allows Nearmap to cover wide land areas in a short amount of time, while capturing imagery at an extremely high resolution compared to say Google Earth. The result is amazing photos in great detail. The photographs are not taken by drones, high flying aircraft are used and individuals cannot be identified in Nearmap images. Bud has now compared the sketch plans created by Claude Crowe forty or so years ago with present day photographs of the 59 gardens and some of these are in the slide presentation. These are quite stunning and a must see for everyone! Others will be featured in the photo book still under development.

The new addition to the *Gardens and Landscapes in the Southern Highlands - Then and Now* exhibition at the Berrima Museum can be seen on Fri-Sun between 10:00am and 3:00pm. I'm sure you will all enjoy learning about the impact that Claude and Isobel Crowe have had on the Southern Highlands landscape.

Trees of Historic Berry



AGHS-SHB member Hazel King and Peter Milthorpe have produced this authoritative compendium on trees found in and around the historic town of Berry. This book highlights and celebrates the street and parkland trees within Berry. To help identify each tree the book contains more than 730 beautiful photographs of key tree parts as well as a short description of each tree. The book can be bought on line for \$69.95 plus \$15 postage at <https://treesofhistoricberry.com>

Gutenberg to Gates, a History of Progress in 100 images at the Gerringong Library and Museum Gallery

We visited Bryan Pennington at the Old Tin Shed at Woodhill on our visit to Berry. Bryan has set out to identify and create images of the people who, by virtue of their ideas, inventions or creations, since the beginning of the Renaissance, have led to and benefitted our modern world.

This exhibition of 100 portraits, 33 paintings and 67 drawings, is the result of his quest. The paintings are the people Bryan selected whose work fundamentally changed the world for the good. Of course we will not all agree on his choice and the ensuing discussion is central to the idea of this exhibition.

The exhibition takes place from 27th to 29th April and 2nd to 6th May at the Gerringong Library and Museum Gallery, 8 Blackwood Street, Gerringong, open from 10-00am to 3-00pm.

Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens Autumn Open Gardens & Plant Fair

22-23 April 2023



We had a tent at last year's SHBG Autumn Fair. The 2023 SHBG Autumn Open Gardens & Plant Fair promises to be an excellent event.



Bud Townsing and Penny McKenna at SHBG Autumn Fair April 2022

Everyone who worked on our tent last year enjoyed the experience, helped contribute to a worthy community event, met other AGHS members, and encouraged visitors to consider joining AGHS.

We will have another tent this year to educate residents in the Southern Highlands and beyond about the AGHS mission and events we hold during the year. If you would like to volunteer for a few hours on either or both days at the tent please let Ruth Bailey know. It's always fun to talk to new people and some old friends who are likely to drop by the tent.



Australian Garden History Society
 ACT, Monaro and Riverina Branch
 P O Box 5008
 Lyneham ACT 2602



Four Gardens of the Monaro **Friday 21 April, 10.15am – 3pm**

On Friday 21 April we have the opportunity for an autumn visit to four lovely Monaro gardens, two in Cooma, followed by two a little further south, near Nimmitabel. This will be a self-drive day, with arrival at our first garden visit planned for 10.15 am. We plan to allow everyone good time to visit and enjoy the four gardens and arrive back in Canberra before dark.

We very warmly thank our hospitable and generous hosts.

AGHS will provide morning and afternoon tea, and tea/coffee at lunch. Please bring your own picnic lunch. Driving and other information will be sent to people who have registered.

Gardeners of the Monaro need to be resilient and adaptable! When Anne and Howard Charles moved from Nimmitabel to Cooma in 2017 they exchanged fertile basalt for sandy shale and an established and beautiful garden to one which was awaiting development. In five years, they have reshaped the two acres surrounding the house to create a garden of contrasts and surprises. Both natives and exotics flourish. A long gabion wall defines the entrance, and extensive plantings of deciduous trees complement the ancient eucalypts. A paved terrace looks onto a grassed area backed by a long densely planted perennial border, and vegetable gardens and a chicken run nestle behind the house. Skilfully planted creepers soften the front steps and hedges conceal the service areas. We will have morning tea here.

At *Blairgowrie*, also in Cooma, Jenny Slatyer and internationally respected artist Imants Tillers have sympathetically enhanced an historic garden. The property was established in the 1860s and the venerable elms, pines and poplars are reminders of successive owners. An Edna Walling inspired area was planted in the 1930s and Jenny and Imants have restored the original layout and created a European styled garden which celebrates the four seasons. Imants' stone studio nestles amongst the trees. Dense growth around the perimeter of the property ensures both privacy and a sense of mystery.

We will enjoy our picnic lunches at our next garden, John Rose and Denham Williams' *Mia Mia* at Nimmitabel. This is a garden of both strength and tranquility. First plantings were in 1989 when the house was built by the previous owners, and John and Denham have expanded and enriched the original design. A tree lined drive opens into a shady oasis densely planted with flowering bulbs and perennials. In spring the garden is a sea of daffodils followed by aquilegias. Judicious planting has preserved views to the surrounding landscape. Well established vegetable beds, berries, fruit trees and a picking garden are attractive and productive.

Erindale is right on top of the Great Dividing Range with sweeping views down the Tom Groggin valley. First settled in the 1850s, the house dates from 1916, but the garden was developed in the 1980s. When Richard and Lainie Lawson bought the property in 2001, they more than doubled the garden by moving a fence to include a rocky hill. They have retained the original layout of the garden, and expanded it with more deciduous trees and perennial borders. The creation of a dry gravel garden on the rocky hill is still a work in progress, with low growing native and exotic shrubs merging into the paddock below. We will enjoy our afternoon tea here, before leaving for home.

Cost	\$30 AGHS members, \$35 non AGHS members.
Bookings	Numbers are limited and bookings essential: https://www.trybooking.com/CFYOU
Bring	Suitable clothing, and your picnic lunch
Inquiries	Nancy Clarke 0423690626 or clarkenancy624@gmail.com