



AGHS Queensland Branch Newsletter

June 2019



AGHS trip to Glen Innes

A group of AGHS members and some lucky friends enjoyed a self-drive trip to Glen Innes, via Ipswich, Allora and Tenterfield from Friday 10 May to Sunday 12 May. The first rendezvous was at 90 Nicholas Street, Ipswich, where John Lyon graciously opened up his home and garden for us. 'The Chestnuts' was built in 1885 in the Gothic Revival style and was used during the early part of its existence as a finishing school for young ladies, run by Mrs Darnley Morrison. It was originally designed by John Mackenzie and consisted of a three-storey, double-clinkered plastered brick building incorporating an attic and basement. Cedar joinery and finishes feature throughout the house. In its latest renovation, a two-metre high rear walled garden was developed and a collection of sun loving plants, both in-situ and in pots, have been placed on the terrace, which is ringed with glazed barley-sugar edged tiles (see above right). This has created a charming warm morning 'sun trap', and here we enjoyed John's magnificent fruit cake and refreshments while viewing the outlook to the north east afforded by the elevated position on Denmark Hill.

We then travelled on to Deuchar near Allora to visit 'Rivoli Farm'. The home-stead shown right, which was originally



AGHS QUEENSLAND BRANCH COMMITTEE CONTACTS

COMMITTEE

The committee's next meeting to be advised.

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John Taylor and Helen Mackay

built in 1897 as a home and surgery for Dr Noll and his family, was designed by Robin Dods. It was transported in five pieces to its current location from its original site in the grounds of Turrawan Hospital in Clayfield. Here we partook of a pleasant lunch of sandwiches and sweets and strolled in the extensive garden, the highlight of which was the colorful display of roses. These included the hybrid tea-rose varieties of Joyfulness, Mr Lincoln, Papa Meilland and Black Beauty — all redolent with their rich perfumes. Floribunda Icebergs have been mass planted at the front of the house.



Farm animals abound here, including six Persheron horses, a French breed that is preferred in America. They are a versatile horse and sought after for their spirit, strength and intelligence. They are both work and show horses; on Rivoli Farm they are mainly used for driving and riding.

There was a well laid-out kitchen garden (above right) with a delightful stone Garden Shed and a pond where the domestic pooch (opposite) fished unsuccessfully for goldfish that outsmarted him at every attempt.



We then headed off to our base at Waterloo Station, located some 17 kms west of Glen Innes on the Gwydir Highway. Here our hosts, Don and Deborah Anderson, warmly welcomed us with true country hospitality. Our group was apportioned between the homestead, the Schoolhouse, the original manager's house (or Stockman's Cottage) and the Shearers' Quarters — all charmingly restored and comfortably fitted out.

The Shearers' Quarters shown here sports a wonderful communal lounge and kitchen where all twenty-six of us shared a splendid dinner around the enormous



fireplace that has been magnificently crafted out of local river-worn rock. This was an extremely welcome feature to help us Queenslanders 'defrost'!

On Sunday morning at the end of our stay at Waterloo, Don took us on a guided tour of the property, including the heritage shearing shed (see below), machinery shed (sans roof – thanks to a 'willy-willy' that tore through a few months prior to



our visit), modern saleyard and 'state of the art' cattle yards that are located across the Gwydir Highway away from the rest of the infrastructure.

We greatly appreciated Don's tour as it gave the many 'city slickers' among us an insight into the life of the pastoralist and the associated uncertainties and hardships they face on a daily basis.

On Saturday, Deborah arranged for us to visit a nearby property called 'Danthonia'. Here the Bruderhof Community practise regenerative agriculture, following the principles of Natural Sequence Farming developed by Peter Andrews. This community of some 200 people strive to provide all their fresh produce and also run a business where they design and produce commercial signage.

We had an interesting morning tea at Danthonia, where some of the residents explained a little of their philosophy and treated us to their best spiced biscuits and Pink Lady apples — the latter picked from their orchard that morning. Their apples really left Woolies Fresh Food People in the shade!

Their netted orchard has been planted with several varieties of apples to extend the fruiting season. They also have a large market garden producing sweet potatoes, corn, tomatoes, carrots and other vegetables to meet the requirements of their community. This proved to be an interesting and informative visit and generated much later discussion about choice in the paths of life that people follow.



Following this we drove to 'Dursley' in Glen Innes, which has been developed over forty years by Peter and Coral Campbell. This garden is a living work of art, as shown by the photographs on this page. Bathed in warm autumn tones and studded with interesting sculptures and pots, the layout and design of the expansive grounds is extremely considered and effective. It was 'other worldly' to stroll through the various sections of the garden and to finish at Coral's vegetable plot and nursery, which has interesting touches to capture the visitor's attention.



Later that afternoon after lunch in Glen Innes, we travelled 'cross-country' (lots of bumpy, dirt roads) to find George Vivers' folly — a castle built in 1910 with 28 rooms and 14 fireplaces on Kings Plains Station. Dr Vivers was a colourful and popular local who greatly enjoyed the racing world and left the management of the property to his brother Allan.

At present the castle is awaiting its next reincarnation, but the tour gave a ready glimpse of its past life as a social hub in the midst of the Australian bush.



On our final day we stopped in Tenterfield and visited Glenrock Gardens, shown left and below. This is an extensive garden located along a string of man-made lagoons comprised of mass plantings of single species. Wildlife was plentiful and active, with sightings of a kingfisher and many reptiles, including red-bellied black snakes. There are impressive drystone rock walls (made from 'flaggy' pieces of granite from nearby Boonoo Boonoo on the Mt Lindsay Highway) that support

the terraces leading down to the lagoons. This was a very peaceful setting, and its layout invited one to stroll through, with much to catch the eye.

So, on reflection, a weekend of diverse experiences. There were insights into rural life, from both a family-run enterprise and a community venture based on self-sufficiency and eco-sensitive principles. There was a visit to a historic home in Ipswich, and strolls through expansive gardens that have been designed for a cool, dry climate. The charm of the rural centres of Glen Innes and Tenterfield were captured in quick visits; and, finally, the amazement of discovering a Scottish castle deep in the Australian bush! In short, a weekend of wonderful surprises.



Removal of inner city trees in Toowoomba

Even the 'Garden City' of Toowoomba is not exempt from the rampant tree removal taking place in our inner cities to allow for increased housing density with infill development.

These photos were taken in Toowoomba's heritage area in Campbell Street near Queens Park. The existing house has always been on one block with the owners developing a very attractive park-like area on their adjoining block.

John Swarbrick (author of *Toowoomba's Best Trees*) identified the trees as quite significant, with one on the corner being a particularly good specimen that should be retained. However, despite many people expressing concern, the trees have been removed and a house application submitted to Council. John had stated to the Council: 'I am very concerned about the possible loss to our city of the beautiful old cedar tree on the corner of Campbell Street and Tana Lane. This is a large, venerable and beautiful tree that adds much to our inner city's heritage values. It is, I believe, contemporary with the adjacent house and together with that house is an important historical landmark.'

Unfortunately, this tree has now been lost, yet another example of what is happening in all cities today as the population has a desire to live closer to the inner city. The original owners of these properties knew the value of gardens and trees for beautification and climate moderation; it is such a shame that now the trees that provide much needed shade in an environment that is heating up are being removed, never to be replaced.

AGHS members and interested Toowoomba residents are welcome to join PROTECT, which aims to lobby Council to introduce vegetation protection orders. Contact Wendy Lees at wendyklee@gmail.com.



From the Chair

The Branch trip to Glen Innes occurred in time for us to catch the last of the Autumn colours of the New England Tableland. The committee were delighted with the response from members and we hope to continue to offer this kind of event.

We had mooted a similar event to Mackay for this July, but unfortunately it will have to be deferred.

The Australian Garden History Society will have been in existence for 40 years next year and the National Management Committee is keen for each state to hold an event or make a lasting gesture to the Society. If you have a suggestion we'd be delighted to hear from you.

Member Wendy Lees continues with her advocacy in making Toowoomba residents and local Councils aware of the value of mature trees and trying to protect the landscape of Toowoomba residential areas, which are under developmental pressure to subdivide and create smaller lots for more housing. We commend Wendy for her efforts.

Ann Wegener

Australian Garden History Society – Queensland Branch Annual General Meeting and Talk by Phil Adam

Botanic Gardens — A History from Early Convict Settlement

AT THE COMMISSARIAT STORE

A museum built by convicts

115 WILLIAM STREET, BRISBANE

FRIDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2019

AGM 10.30 am – Talk 11.00 am

Followed by a walk to the City Botanic Gardens at 12.00 and then a guided walk, 1.00 pm, around the Gardens, established in 1828 to provide food for the early penal colony as described in Phil Adam's talk.

