



# AGHS Queensland Branch Newsletter

October 2018



## Visit to Northern NSW

On the weekend of 13–14 July, a group of AGHS members visited Northern New South Wales.

We arrived in Murwillumbah late Friday morning to a busy and vibrant town.

Most of the group then met at the Tweed Gallery at 12 noon to have lunch and a tour of the Margaret Olley rooms at the gallery. Unfortunately, some people were held up in a traffic jam on the M1.

The day was cloudless and the view from the Gallery of the Tweed Valley with cattle pastures bisected by the river and framed by the distant mountain peaks was splendid, a vista of the best of north-eastern NSW, worthy of a McCubbin or Stretton.

One member suggested that some landscaped gardens around the gallery would add extra interest to the already magnificent regional gallery. *(continued over)*

### Australian Garden History Society (Queensland Branch) 2018 Annual General Meeting

#### ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

All positions were declared vacated and there was a call for nominations from the floor. There were no additional nominees so the current office bearers who were all prepared to continue in the same roles were voted in unopposed.

#### AGHS QUEENSLAND BRANCH COMMITTEE CONTACTS

**Chair:** Ann Wegener  
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**Vice-Chair:** VACANT

**Secretary:** Lois Closter  
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**Treasurer:** Elizabeth Teed  
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**Newsletter Editor:** Roberta Blake  
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**Members**  
John Taylor and Helen Mackay

The tour was informative and taken in two groups. Many had been to the gallery before but there is always something new to see. There was a display of the Border Art prize.

We then visited the local small garden of Jo Armstrong in the town of Murwillumbah. Jo showed considerable talent in constructing the garden from scratch. A large tree overshadowed the street entrance to the garden, and there were well-placed sculptures around the garden. Jo generously allowed us all to wander through her charming house.

A wonderful afternoon tea was served on the deck and the group then headed to Casino to arrive just before nightfall.

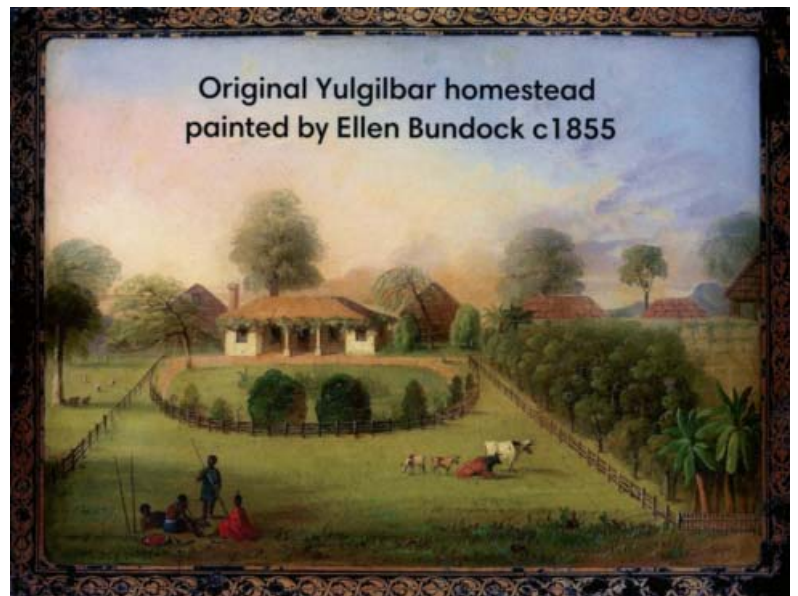
We stayed in Tabulam for the night and we can recommend the B&B Chauvel Park, set in magical heritage gardens. The house had a wonderful open fire and was most welcome on what was to be a frosty night.

The highlight of the weekend was the visit to Yulgibar. We have Rob Sinnamon to thank in facilitating this occasion.

Normally there is an 18-month wait to visit the garden as it is only open 10 days a year.

Ann Wegener provided comprehensive directions to reach the property and she did well to have us all arrive together at 11 am as required.

Two guides greeted us, who gave us a comprehensive history of the house and garden. It was originally built by Edward Ogilvie, who arrived with his brother in the 1840s from the Hunter Valley. Once established, Edward returned to England and Ireland with his parents, where he met his future wife, Theodosia. The story is that he promised to build this young woman a castle if she would marry him and come and live on his property on the Clarence River. Stonemasons came over from Germany to construct the two-level castle shown above right. A highlight of the day was the drive to the folly (right), which has a commanding view over the Clarence river and surrounding countryside. The Ogilvie girls would come here to sketch.



Yulgibar Castle c1900



A relaxing BYO lunch was enjoyed by all in the gardens. We were also shown a movie on the lengthy history of the property. The Myers employ staff to enrich the archives and even provide travelling exhibitions of this local history to interested museums and galleries.

This website has more details of the rich and lengthy Ogilvie family history: <http://athemefordaydreams.blogspot.com/2015/06/asquatters-castle.html>

We also visited the original house on the property (see right) where the manager resides, as well as their state-of-the-art cattle yards.



Mid-afternoon we headed on to Dyraaba Homestead, shown left, which is featured in the book *Australia's National Trust Historic Homesteads*. This property, which now sits on just 150 acres, is 25 kilometres west of Casino. Originally it was one of the great squatting runs of the area. The house sits in a commanding position on a hill. It has a sense of age, and the original character of the house has been retained. What I loved most were the very visible signs of wear on the floorboards. The house had a comforting feel, with a large fire in the living room (see below). The

main building at Dyraaba is a low-slung timber construction consisting of a dining room with pantry, sitting room, office, main bedroom and sundry other rooms. The date of construction was circa 1857.

The owners sleep in a separate building with three bedrooms. There is also a small cottage with two bedrooms, which they rent on a casual basis. Ann Wegener managed to rent this for the night. We were lucky to be able to secure a bed at the last minute in the main house. We were intending to head back to the coast, but because the day had been so interesting, we did not want to miss any opportunity to see such historic places. The bedroom in the main house was small but very cosy, and we were greeted by the sounds of the resident dogs in the morning.



Dyraaba is currently for sale for somewhere under \$2 million, but the owners are torn between moving closer to amenities and wanting to ensure that future owners have the same commitment to ensuring the heritage value of the property.

We were very fortunate to be able to see these wonderful properties.

Thanks to all who contributed to making the weekend so successful.

**Cathy Marchant and Jim Butler**



## From the Chair

The 2018 AGHS conference held in Mittagong on the Southern Highlands of NSW met the usual high standard our conferences obtain. Entitled 'Gardens in Times of Peace and Conflict', the gardens and gardening emanating from the wars had great resonance for many. Papers included 'A parcel from France', an effort by French schoolchildren to gather seeds of the familiar red Flanders poppy that were sent to Australia and then distributed to families who had lost loved ones during World War I.



Another described the internment of a group of mostly high ranking German ship personnel at Berrima and their efforts to build small cottages and crop fruit and vegetables. A third explored the threat to memorial roadway plantings and Anzac memorial parks, with only some positive results, and showed images of Honour boards commemorating war throughout NSW. Some of the designs and craftsmanship are exceptional.

Accompanying garden visits have met with one superlative after another.

The 2019 conference will be held in Wellington, New Zealand 25–28 October with pre and post conference tours. Details available mid February 2019.

The recent National Management Committee meeting outlined year 2020 activities. This will be the 40th year since inception of the AGHS. Branches are invited to submit up to five project ideas for their state or area with a view that the project will highlight the society and its activities. The South Australian branch and Carrick Hill Garden Museum will have by then developed a travelling exhibition entitled 'The Blade', about Australians' love affair with the mower. It would be good to have this exhibition displayed in a gallery or library in Queensland during the celebratory year.

Date claimer AGHS Christmas Event 9 December 2018.

Location to be advised.

**Ann Wegener**  
Chair

## Heritage news

The Laurel Bank Park nomination has been formally accepted and is going through the assessment process within DEHP, but is not yet listed. Advice from the Department is that it will be considered at the October meeting of the Heritage Council, so progress is being made.

The avenue of hoop pines at Imbil forest station is the next site to nominate to the Queensland Heritage Register. The good news is that Tania Metcher, who did the work on Laurel Bank Park, has some spare time and will start work on nominating the Imbil site. We have a history of the place prepared by Judith Nissen for the Society in 2014.



Laurel Bank Park looking marvellous one week before the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers, September 2018.

## Advocating for stronger protection of trees in the Toowoomba region

As a direct result of the AGHS Tree Forum held in Toowoomba, attendee Peter Macqueen, Horticulture teacher at the Toowoomba TAFE, carried our banner forward and took our concerns along to the DDEC (Darling Downs Environment Council).

The subgroup 'PROTECT' (Protecting the Region of Toowoomba's Environment, Community and Trees) was formed and they continued with a series of Tree Forums available to the public, with the latest being held in association with Toowoomba Regional Council. The aim of the latter was to provide a forum for public input into the TRC's 'Green Infrastructure Policy'. Also in attendance were



representatives from the Qld Department of Planning and Infrastructure presenting 'Matters of Local Environment Significance in the Planning System'. Following these presentations, the opportunity for community input and feedback was enabled via a Q&A panel discussion.

A large, vocal group of people attended and information flyers were provided by PROTECT, giving suggestions on how the public can be more proactive, with the ultimate aim being tree protection legislation being put in place by the TRC.

## An English Summer

It was a complete surprise to travel to England in July this year and experience a summer that rivalled even Queensland's, with temperatures often in the thirties and barely a drop of rain. It was a shock to see the brown fields and ponds and lakes covered in green algae. Nevertheless, the gardens we visited were coping with the conditions as best they could.

### Kew Botanic Gardens

The gorgeous potted display (right) greets visitors at the entry to Kew Gardens. Although large swathes of lawn have been allowed to die off, as in the avenue below, heavy watering has been needed for the trees and other plants. The Temperate House (below right), which was reopened this year after some five years of renovation, has a section of Australian flora – depicted below right is a Morrissey's gum, a eucalypt restricted to two small populations in Tasmania.



## Garden Museum

I wish I'd read the article about the Garden Museum in the latest issue of *Australian Garden History* by Richard Heathcote because I did not fully appreciate the origins of this museum and the fascinating story of gardener and plant-hunter John Tradescant. The grave of Vice Admiral William Bligh was a surprise to come across in a central courtyard of the museum, which has been established in a decommissioned Anglican church, St Mary's at Lambeth.

Below is a display of early watering devices; the thumb pots were used for gentle watering as well as dampening earth and stone floors.



## Highgate Cemetery

Highgate Cemetery was the third of the 'Magnificent Seven' private cemeteries established in London in the 19th century as the population doubled and parish burial grounds became overcrowded. The architect James Bunstone Bunning and renowned gardener David Ramsey designed this cemetery over a three-year period, with its official opening in 1839. This place was a cool respite on a hot Saturday, and the tour by volunteer Andrew Yeo very informative. The photograph below left is of an apple tree in the orchard section.





## Stourhead

This National Trust property, on 1,072 hectares in Wiltshire, was gifted to the National Trust in 1946 by Sir Henry Hoare, whose descendants have use of Stourhead House in perpetuity. At the ticket office next to the magnificent copper beech shown right, the *Stourhead Tree List* can be purchased, which lists the extraordinary collection of trees planted over the last 200 years, including a Wollemi pine. Below is a Sargent's spruce (*Picea brachytyla*) – number 523 – from Western and Central China, planted in 1901.



The walk around the expansive lake at Stourhead is amazing, spaced at intervals with temples, a grotto, an obelisk and a tower, and finally a welcoming pub in the tiny but charming village of Stourton, where B&B or cottage accommodation is available. The end of the garden tour brings visitors to the walled vegie and flower gardens, and greenhouses and other farm buildings. The perlaogonium house shown below is particularly interesting – put together in the early 1800s by Richard Colt Hoare, with over 600 varieties it was considered the best in the world.



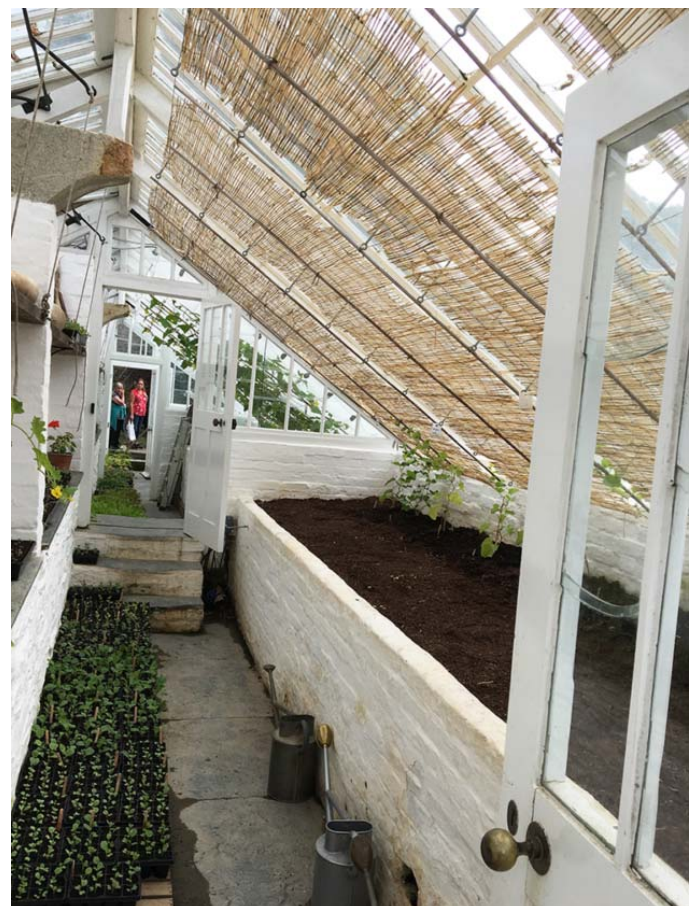
## Tiverton Castle

On our way to Cornwall we stopped off at Tiverton in Devon, located on the River Exe. Tiverton Castle, which was first built in 1106 (this part is now a delightful ruin – see right), is in the middle of the town. We were fortunate to visit on a Sunday afternoon when a volunteer guide spent some time relating the history of the site, from its earliest days when it was believed to be a Saxon settlement, through Roman occupation to the Normans and then the Courtenay family, one of whom was implicated in a plot against Henry VIII and beheaded in 1539. The brochure I have states that the earliest mention of a garden in Devon was in the 1400s – the Earl of Devon had an apple garden at Tiverton Castle. Over time, the castle has evolved with new buildings and renovations that reflect changing needs and tastes. The image below shows how what was once a flat roof on the tower was replaced with a conical roof when it was no longer used as a battlement.



## The Lost Gardens of Heligan

There's nothing lost about these gardens any more, going by the huge numbers of visitors and well organised facilities similar to the larger National Trust properties, though this is a private commercial concern in Pentewan, Cornwall, once home to the Tremayne family for more than 400 years. On 200 acres, there's a lot to see here, including walled gardens with healthy looking vegies, fruit trees and flowers, heirloom farm animals, the Pleasure Grounds, which includes a collection of camellias and rhododendrons from the early 20th century, the Jungle with its Burmese rope bridge, and the Lost Valley and extensive woodlands. Shown right are young beans and snapdragons, below is an example of the frame used for the espaliered fruit trees, and below right is the melon house, one of several glass houses.



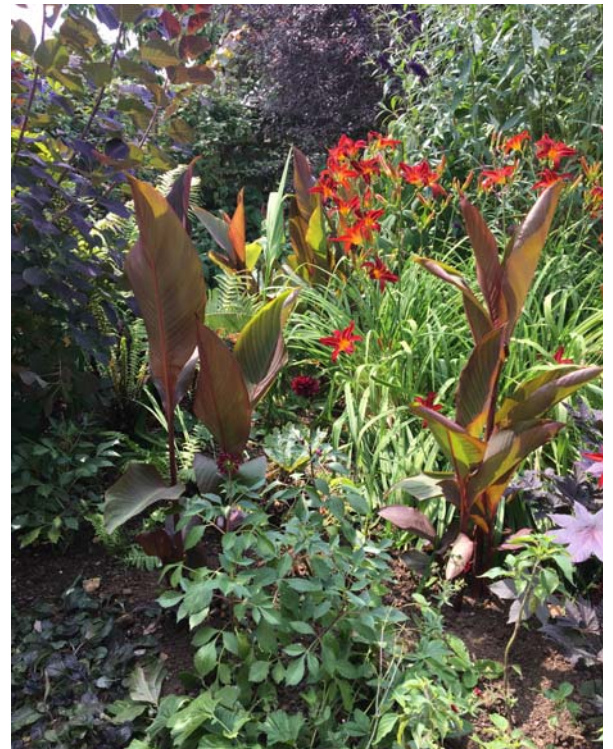
## Snowhill Manor and Garden

You need a car to get to Snowhill Manor, out in the countryside in Worcestershire. This is an interesting place, a medieval manor bought by Charles Wade after World War I, to house his collections of objects that he considered represented good craftsmanship, colour and design, and followed his family motto, 'let nothing perish'. These are collections of musical instruments, samurai armour (which seem somewhat incongruous but apparently Wade found these in Britain), kitchen implements, bicycles, keys, clocks, furniture, and more – all set out in rooms arranged as a pictorial series with a theatrical atmosphere that Wade enjoyed creating. He lived in a separate dwelling, the Priest's House, really a cottage, and his rather gloomy bedroom, containing more random items from his collections, is shown top right. As a trained architect, with his friend and fellow architect Baillie Scott, they designed the garden as a series of outdoor rooms. These are delightful areas that are meant to serve as 'different courts for different moods', according to Wade. The photo below shows the dovecote, with a few doves still in residence, and below right, the nicely laid-out vegetable beds and orchard.



## Hidcote Manor

This property feels much larger than the 10.5 acres on which plant collector and garden designer Major Lawrence Johnston laid out his vision over three phases following its purchase by his mother in 1907. The first phase, influenced by the Arts and Crafts principles of cottage gardens, is within the Old Garden, closer to the house. Here are the Maple Garden, White Garden, Fuschia Garden, Bathing Pool Garden, Green Circle, Red Borders and gazebos. In the second phase, from 1919 to the 1930s, an adjoining farm was purchased, which formed the Wilderness, Lime Arbour, Mrs Winthrop's Garden, Pillar Garden (shown right) and Rock Bank as well as the Upper and Lower Stream Garden – whew! The third phase was initially about the expansion of the kitchen gardens, but thereafter a gradual decline occurred as Johnston spent more time in France. He entrusted the property to the National Trust in 1947, which has since slowly restored it to the showpiece garden it is today.



## Stowe

The National Trust have only had management of Stowe since 1989, and since then have restored this estate to its former magnificence (Stowe House is managed by Stowe House Preservation Trust as the home of Stowe School). Considered to be the foremost of English landscape gardens, its development was overseen in the 18th century by designers Charles Bridgeman, William Kent, Capability Brown (who began work here as



head gardener in 1741) and Richard Woodward, and architects John Vanbrugh and James Gibbs. Temples and other monuments and statues are spaced around the expansive lake system, with paths through wooded areas and open fields. Tucked away on the side of the two narrow lakes called the river Styx, shown above, is Captain Cook's Monument (below left). There are 45 amazing features of this garden listed on the map in the Stowe brochure, including such delights as the Saxon Deities, Chinese House, Shell Bridge, and the Temple of British Warriors, where I found hidden away behind it an eloquent poem about a favourite Italian greyhound, Signior Fido, inscribed on a plaque. The sheep and cattle are contained in some of the fields with ha has.



## Castle Howard

This was the last of the National Trust properties we visited and we gave the castle itself a miss. It is another English landscape garden, and the grounds are quite vast, set out with formal gardens, walled flower gardens (looking fabulous with summer flowers in full bloom), tall hedges and pergola walkways closer to the castle and with statues of Greek and Roman gods strategically placed at intervals; spreading out beyond to lakes and a forest called Ray Wood (below right). The tennis court shown right reminded me of some Australian tennis courts I have seen.



A National Trust volunteer at Stowe told me that the organisation has more volunteers than any other in the UK – over 65,000 in 2017 – and they are a testament to what can be achieved in the restoration and maintenance of so many amazing historic houses and gardens. The facilities we used – cafes, restrooms, gift shops, nurseries, car parks – were all excellent. I'm looking forward to seeing more of the National Trust's 300 houses and gardens, 41 castles, 39 pubs, 25 medieval barns and 9 lighthouses next time.

**Roberta Blake**