



# Victoria Branch News

WINTER 2022

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Members

Welcome to our winter newsletter. As the weather turns cooler and the days get shorter, it is a great time for vigorous gardening. I'm enjoying being able to finally start on the garden renovation projects I planned during the lockdowns but was frustrated with the inability to source plant materials. To me, there is nothing better than a day spent in the garden.

It has also been great that we have been able to hold several events, including two well attended bus trips. The first led by Stephen Ryan at Mount Macedon on 30 March was a wonderful insight into several properties and the tales of the characters who lived in the district. We were privileged to be able to access the interior of the magnificent Venetian Gothic property of Alton, as well as its extensive gardens and outbuildings. Visits to Turgurium, Durrol and Dicksonia Rare Plants nursery rounded out a very enjoyable day. As we only scratched the surface of the many magnificent heritage properties in the Macedon district, a spring visit, maybe next year, has been mooted.

A report on the second sell-out bus trip on 29 April to the Melba/Streton properties, written by committee member Robyn Teed, may be read below.

We have also held two successful zoom lectures in lieu of the cancelled Burnley event. Michele Adler gave a very comprehensive lecture on the history of the Burnley Gardens and introduced us to Hilda Kirkhope, and Sandi Pullman spoke very comprehensively about Ina Higgins. Both women are in the soon to be released book, "Burnley Gardens and the people who loved them." We will let you know when you are able to purchase a copy.

Also, we held a productive working bee on 29 May at Yantaringa in Ivanhoe, a new garden for AGHS working bees. We have several other working bees scheduled over the colder months as detailed below so why not lend a hand for a few hours to help out the owners and meet some other members.



Wendy & Mark Dwyer at Durrol,  
Mt Macedon

Below is the schedule of a variety of events for the rest of the year, so please put them in your diary and we look forward to seeing you soon.

Best wishes

WENDY DWYER - CHAIR

### Diary Dates:

#### June

**Sunday 19** - Working bee, Medlow in Surry Hills

**Thursday 30** - Online lecture by Caroline Holmes. "The Edwardian Garden - golden & delicious".

#### July

**Saturday 23** - Working bee, Turkieth in Birrregurra

#### August

**Sunday 14** - Wattle Park - walk & talk with Professor Tim Entwisle

**Thursday 18** - Annual AGM followed by lecture on Edna Walling by Sara Hardy.

**Saturday 20** - Working bee, Belmont, near Beaufort Victoria

See below for booking details

**Note:** If you need help booking online please contact a committee member.

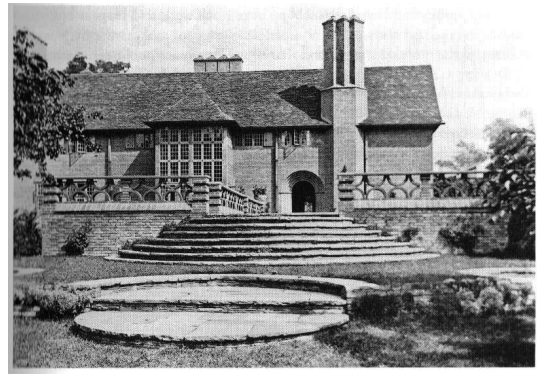
## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The committee would like to welcome the following new and rejoining members:  
Jane Black, Jennifer Dearnaley, Lisa Harper, Jane Howat, Judith Laird, Libby Marsden, Lynne Robertson, Sally Saville, Sue Shields, Sally Upjohn, Ian Alexander, Gail Bett, Anthea Dickson, Carolyn Menzies, Iain Wallace.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### THE EDWARDIAN GARDEN - GOLDEN & DELICIOUS

**DATE:** THURSDAY. 30 JUNE  
**TIME:** PROMPT 6:00PM START. LOG IN FROM 5:45  
**VENUE:** ONLINE VIA ZOOM  
A LINK WILL BE SENT TO TICKET HOLDERS PRIOR TO SESSION  
**COST:** \$12 MEMBERS, \$15 NON-MEMBERS  
**Enquires:** Lynda Entwisle 0466 925 370



Deanery, Sonning, house and steps

**Bookings:** TRYBOOKING  
<https://www.trybooking.com/BZGVX>

Please join us for this special ONLINE LECTURE by renowned UK Garden Historian, Caroline Holmes. Caroline presented two sell-out lectures for AGHS last winter and we are pleased she has accepted to deliver another one for our members this year.

## WATTLE PARK

WALK & TALK WITH PROFESSOR TIM ENTWISLE

**DATE:** SUNDAY 14 AUGUST  
**TIME:** 10AM-12PM  
**PRICE:** FREE FOR MEMBERS & THEIR GUESTS

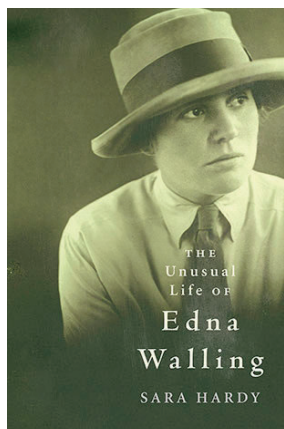
**BOOKING:** [HTTPS://WWW.TRYBOOKING.COM/BZMPK](https://www.trybooking.com/BZMPK)  
**ENQUIRES:** LYNDIA ENTWISLE 0466 925 370

Come and join us for a leisurely stroll with Professor Tim Entwisle to explore the history of the site and surviving plantings.  
BYO picnic morning tea and your stories of the park.

**GETTING THERE:**  
**BY CAR - ENTER VIA MONSBOROUGH DRIVE OFF RIVERSDALE ROAD, BURWOOD**  
**TRAM :** TRAM NUMBER 70, ALIGHT AT STOP 58 OR 59  
Meet at the Chalet carpark.



## AGHS VIC BRANCH AGM & GUEST LECTURE



### Edna walling - an unusual life

**DATE:** Thursday 18 August

**TIME:** Drinks and nibbles from 5:30 pm

AGM starts at 6pm

Lecture to start after AGM

**LOCATION:** Mueller Hall, National Herbarium of Victoria

Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra

**COST:** \$20 members, \$25 non-members

**BOOKINGS:** [WWW.TRYBOOKING.COM/BZMPR](http://WWW.TRYBOOKING.COM/BZMPR) OR PAY AT THE DOOR

Sara Hardy is a playwright, biographer, novelist and former actor. Sara was inspired to write her first biography, *The Unusual Life of Edna Walling*, after portraying the famous Australian landscape designer in a theatre performance. Her manuscript won the Peter Blazey Award for Life Writing.

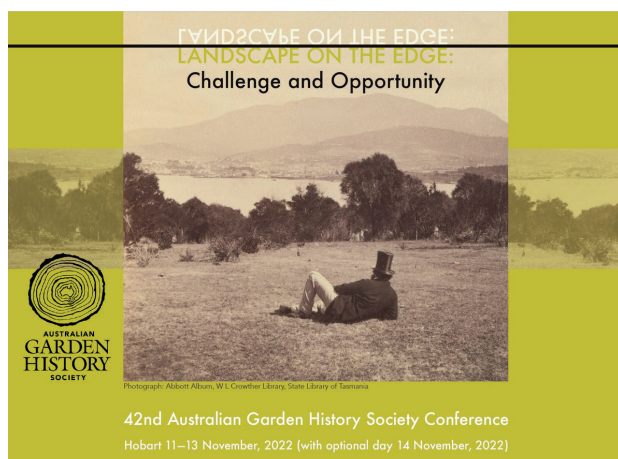
## WORKING BEES 2022

These are MEMBERS ONLY events. For further information and to register your interest to attend please contact Di Ellerton.  
[diana.ellerton@icloud.com](mailto:diana.ellerton@icloud.com) OR telephone 9397 2756

**Sunday 19 June**  
Medlow, in Surrey Hills.

**Saturday 23 July**  
Turkeith, Birregurra

**Saturday 20 August**  
Belmont



### Landscape on the Edge: Challenge and Opportunity

Wrest Point Casino 410 Sandy Bay Road, Hobart, TAS

11 – 13 November 2022

Full Conference and tour registrations **SOLD OUT** first week.

Lectures only, Conference Dinner and Optional Day available.

For further information go to **AGHS website**  
or call the office on Ph: 0419 977 703



# EVENT REPORTS

MELBA AND STREETON. A VISIT TO COOMBE COTTAGE AND  
LONGACRES  
BY ROBYN TEED

This was a wonderful day that included garden visits as well as the opportunity to see some of the rooms in both homes which are still owned by the Melba and Streeton families.

Tim Gatehouse gave an informative talk about Dame Nellie Melba and Sir Arthur Streeton on the bus on the way to Coombe Cottage and garden at Coldstream.

Melba purchased the farm and cottage in 1909 and engaged the architect and engineer, John Grainger (father of Percy), to design and build the current house. The visit to the lounge, dining room and Melba's bedroom provided an insight into Melba's life at the home where she entertained many overseas visitors. The rooms contained many of her artworks and personal effects.



The garden was designed by William Guilfoyle, with Edna Walling providing some input during the 1920s. The garden comprises a number of "rooms": the Italian garden, French style rose garden, a native garden (created by Melba's granddaughter, Lady Vestey, on the old tennis court), vegetable gardens; English-style herbaceous borders, as well as a swimming pool and croquet lawn. Melba employed three graduate female gardeners from Burnley, as at the time, it was difficult for females to get a job.

The age of many of the trees was a highlight as well as the ten metre high Cypress hedge that extends around the property. To the side of the house is a glorious oak tree believed to be over 180 years old. Outside Melba's bedroom is a lovely old wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*) and from this room she had a lovely view of her garden and distant mountains. The rear drive has a long avenue of Oak trees along which Melba enjoyed riding her horse.

After a delicious Devonshire tea we headed up to the Dandenong Ranges Botanical Garden to enjoy a boxed lunch and had the opportunity to wander through this area before the short drive to Longacres.



Through his friendship with Dame Nellie Melba, Streeton purchased the land at Olinda in 1921 and had the current house built in 1924 in the style of an arts and craft bungalow. Upon arrival we had a tour of the garden, viewing linden trees at the turning circle of the driveway, the apple walk, driveways bordered by azaleas and hydrangeas, (although at this time of the year were not in bloom, Julia Dodds-Streeton showed us beautiful photos of these plants in flower), the rockery and the many salvias that were in bloom. In the gardens are Streeton's studio and the caretaker's cottage. Nearby is a block of cypresses (*Cupressus lambertiana*), a grove of silver birches and the dry pond. At the front of the property is the scarlet oaks (*Quercus coccinea*) lawn and many Blackwood trees (*Acacia melanoxylon*) that Streeton planted.

We were very fortunate to see the gardens before the rain appeared. We then had a most interesting talk and power point presentation on Streeton by Julia Dodds-Streeton in the lounge/art gallery of the house. We heard that at Longacres, Streeton had so much pleasure and enjoyment visiting his country home and garden and that later in life lived there permanently. The visit finished with an afternoon tea at the house. We gave our thanks to Julia for her generous hospitality and time.



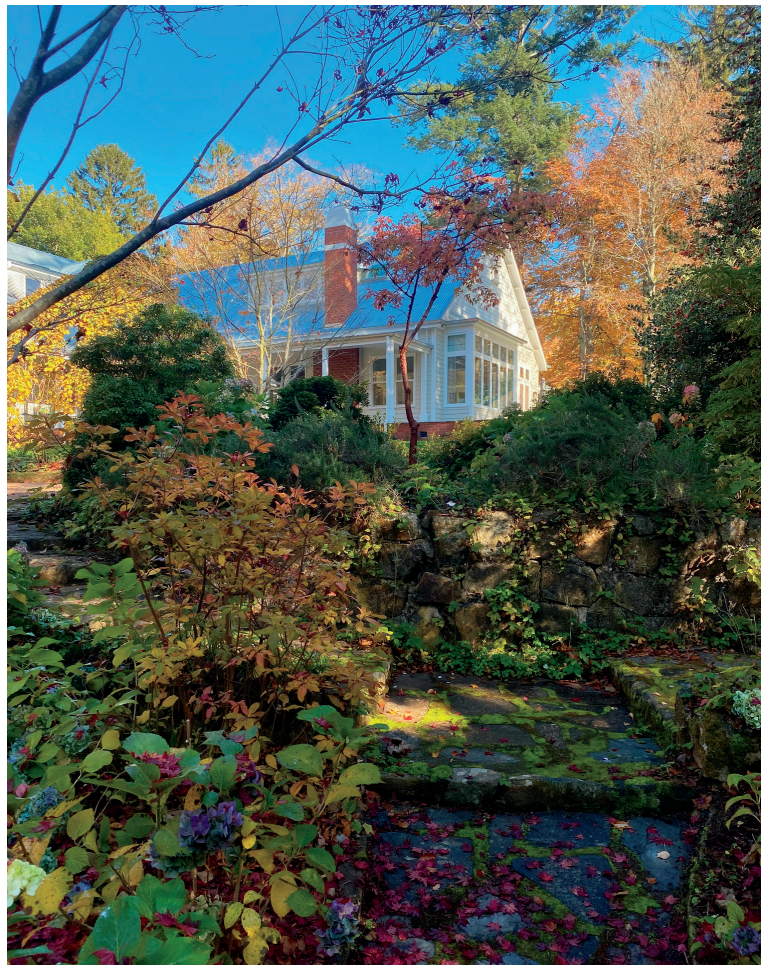
## References:

Coombe Cottage and Gardens, Heritage Council Victoria, Victoria Heritage Database, available at [http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/search/nattrust\\_result\\_detail/66971](http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/search/nattrust_result_detail/66971)

Gatehouse, Tim (2020) Longacres, available at [www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au](http://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au)



## MOUNT MACEDON - BUS TRIP, MARCH



Clockwise from top: Alton - visitors viewing tree damage from recent storms. Durrul - view of house. Morning tea at Stephen Ryan's property, Tugurium. Tugurium, entrance. Wendy Dwer & John Hawker viewing heritage listed Monkey Puzzle tree at Alton.



**ALSO OF INTEREST**

FROM AFFILIATE ORGANISATIONS

**ADFAS Melbourne Lecture****FROM MIAMI TO MERRICKS: THE RISE & ROLE OF THE MODERN SCULPTURE PARK****8 June 2022, LIDO CINEMA 1 at 8pm Lecturer: Geoffrey Edwards**

As one of the oldest art forms, monumental sculpture has been presented in spectacular outdoor settings since antiquity. This lecture describes the creation of modern sculpture parks in the US, Japan NZ & Australia. Geoffrey Edwards consults widely to private corporations & government bodies. He is consultant curator of Pt. Leo Estate Sculpture Park.

All lectures are at **8pm at the Lido Cinemas, Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn**. Should anyone wish to attend they would need to book in via Eventbrite and contact Veronica Rickard at [adfasmelbourne@gmail.com](mailto:adfasmelbourne@gmail.com) or **0408 113 669**. Cost for non-members for each lecture is \$30 and includes supper after the lecture. The link on the Eventbrite booking site is generally available approximately two weeks prior to the lecture.

AGHS Members may be interested to read the extract of an article below from the **Friends of HV McKay Memorial Gardens** Autumn Newsletter.

***The current state of the Gardens***

*Sadly, the Friends have noticed a significant decline in the state of the Gardens in recent months. We are currently advocating to replace Garden Curator Alice Pyers who left at the end of last year. We have been told that her dedicated position as curator will not be continued.*

*While the Friends are grateful for the efforts of staff and Council members to make our gardens a source of pride for Sunshine and acknowledge the efforts already made, we are finding it difficult to believe that 15 years on from when our group was set up we still have to fight for adequate resourcing!*

*We welcome letters of support, which should be sent direct to [contact@mckaygardens.com.au](mailto:contact@mckaygardens.com.au)*

**VICTORIAN BRANCH COMMITTEE****Chair & Secretary :** Wendy Dwyer**Vice Chair and Newsletter:** Lynda Entwisle**Treasurer:** Anna Long**Committee members:****Working Bee Coordinator:** Diana Ellerton**Advocacy:** Trevor Pitkin**NMC Rep:** Anna Long**Catering Coordinator:** Annie Woodside**General committee:** Robyn Teed**Events Coordinator:** Wendy Nichol

We meet on the 4th Tuesday of the month, 4.30- 6pm at Burnley Gardens. We welcome members to join committee meetings at any time. If you wish to discuss opportunities to get involved please contact Wendy Dwyer [aghsvicbranch2@gmail.com](mailto:aghsvicbranch2@gmail.com), or contact a committee member. Go to our Webpage [www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/branches/victoria/](http://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/branches/victoria/) for more news and updates. Contributions to the newsletter are always welcome and should be addressed to [aghsvic19@gmail.com](mailto:aghsvic19@gmail.com) with newsletter in subject line.