



Victoria Branch News

SEPTEMBER 2020

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Victorian Members

Welcome to our September Newsletter. No doubt your garden is looking stunning, having never received so much care and attention, and our daily walks are enhanced by seeing what's flowering in our neighbourhoods. Aren't we lucky to be gardeners at a time like this? In keeping with the Spring theme, we are focusing on plants with a quiz on historic plant names to test your knowledge and are delighted to invite you to book in for a lecture on October 6th by Stuart Read on 'A History of Garden Design Using Australian Native Plants 1788-Now.'

COMMITTEE NEWS

It was wonderful to see so many members making the effort to attend our AGM and lecture on Zoom – it was one of the largest AGM turnouts for many years. Robyn Robins has stepped down as Chair and was thanked for continuing on during her period of ill health and has decided to stay on the committee.

At our recent committee meeting Wendy Dwyer was elected as Chair and Lynda Entwisle as Vice Chair, with new committee member, Trevor Pitkin, taking over the advocacy role.

A brief introduction to Trevor is included below. All other positions remain the same and a full list of committee members and their roles is set out below. We are still looking for new committee members so please get in contact if you are interested or have any ideas.

EVENTS

Over the next few months we are planning to present Zoom lectures for a small charge as a way to raise some funds for the Victorian Branch to meet some of our operating costs. We encourage all members to support our branch in this small way. Please see the information below and book in via the Trybooking link for our first lecture. You will then be sent the Zoom link and instructions. If you are new to Zoom, we can help you get set up. It's very simple.

IN THE PIPELINE

The Committee is planning a series of easily accessible "Garden Gems" once restrictions are lifted and venues can re-open safely. We are organising a special house and garden visit with morning tea to Bishopscourt, a hidden treasure



RBG Cranbourne: Photo by Tim Entwisle

where committee member Tim Gatehouse is a volunteer guide. Also, on the drawing board is a lecture on 29 October about 'Governor La Trobe: His Melbourne House and Garden' with some new information on recent plantings by Helen Botham. This will be followed up with an exclusive 'Gardens of the Governors' tour where we are planning an extended garden tour with the Government House gardeners followed by a short walk to La Trobe's cottage for a box lunch and tour of the house and garden with Helen Botham and her volunteers. More details in the next newsletter.

WENDY DWYER | CHAIR

Welcome Trevor!



Trevor Pitkin is a researcher, writer and photographer, with an engineering background. A gardener and photographer from an early age, his interest in photography has evolved to include the documentation of Victoria's natural and built heritage. A recent example is his photographic essay on 'Belmont' near Raglan, Victoria, now on the AGHS website. Trevor has advocated for the System Garden at the University of Melbourne since 2016 including through social media, an article in *The Age*, as well as a full submission to Heritage Victoria to have the site listed. He has published three articles in the AGHS Journal and several of his image sets are held by the State Library of Victoria. Last year Newman College asked Trevor to curate an exhibition of John Kauffmann's mages from a century ago, along with contemporary re-photographs he took.

ONLINE TALKS

The History of Garden Design Using Native Plants 1788 -Now by Stuart Read

We only started planting natives in the 1960s, didn't we? Actually, no: that might be 'round 3 or 4'. A skip through settlement history, tracing our waxing & waning attraction to and distraction from using native plants in gardens. Some 'got it' right from the start, others still find this a bit of a challenge! Why aren't we celebrating our flora and why don't we know more about using it? Who, when, how, what influences were important, links and cross-fertilisation from the nascent conservation movement, will all be touched on.

Date: Tuesday October 6th

Time: Login from 5:30 pm for 6 pm start

Price: AGHS members \$5

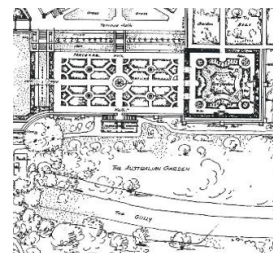
Friends of RBG Mel. & Cranbourne \$5

Non-members. \$10

Booking Link: <https://www.trybooking.com/BLLMU>



Stuart Read was raised in New Zealand, trained in horticulture, science and landscape architecture. He's been nuts about plants since childhood, and about Australian ones since his first tree, aged 8: a Cootamundra wattle. He is currently Co Chair of the Australian garden History Society.



Top: c1799 Annandale farm drive, Sydney
Bottom: Detail of Walter Butler plan, Warrawee, Toorak, 1907-17.

SEPTEMBER QUIZ

'WHAT'S IN A NAME?'

We are all familiar with the famous name behind the genus *Banksia* – Sir Joseph Banks, the botanist aboard Cook's Endeavour, but there are many other plant names which give a clue to their history. See if you can guess the name of the following plants from the clues.

Question 1

What is a tree with a weeping habit, named after a naval battle in 1797.

Question 2

Which type of trees are all descendants of a single tree which grows at Florence Court, County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland?

Question 3

Which trees, now commonly regarded in Australia as pests, are widely thought to be derived from cuttings taken from trees overhanging the grave of Napoleon Bonaparte on the island of St. Helena?

Question 4

Which genus of strappy garden plants, which most commonly have orange flowers, is named in honour of Charlotte Percy, who was for a time the governess of the future Queen Victoria.

Question 5

This iconic Australian native tree was named after the place where it was first recognised as a new species. That place was not in Australia.

Answers at end of newsletter



image: Tim Entwisle



SEPTEMBER ADVOCACY

P32675 St Kilda Road - 25 LED installation screens and lighting upgrades

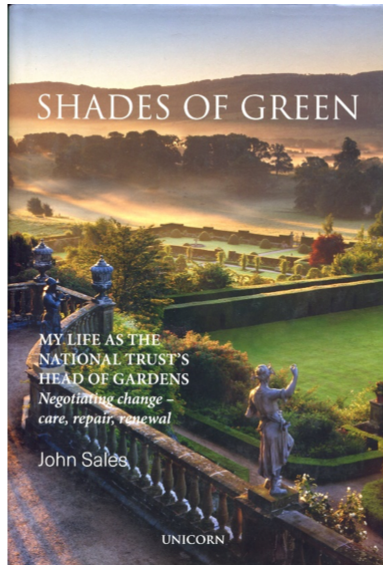
- This application by the City of Melbourne is a collaborative push with National Gallery Victoria to install electronic artworks on the centre verge opposite the NGV site. A letter expressing strong objection to the concept and the implementation proposals was submitted to Heritage Victoria, to all CoM councillors and their CEO, on 26th August 2020. The objection centred on the loss of the sense of cultural place created at the confluence of three heritage elements (Domain parklands, St Kilda Boulevard and Arts Precinct) by introduction of clutter and distractions incompatible with appreciation of the grand boulevard.

Conservation Management Plans for Emerald Lake Park and Nobelius Heritage Park

- These draft plans are feed-in documents for a master planning stage to follow for the overall site in the Cardinia Shire. Observations were compiled for the two plans, with focus on Nobelius as the passive recreation space most compatible with heritage appreciation. Principal suggestions related to including digital interpretation of the sites in addition to the physical signage, and the need to ensure management of forested areas was clearly identified as critical to maintenance of the botanical fabric. The submission was lodged with the Shire 4th September 2020, and copied to National Trust.
- **City of Melbourne processes for heritage management**
- On 1st September 2020 the Future of Melbourne Committee passed a heritage review and reform motion, which should lead to the introduction of more transparency, embedding heritage values in the planing/proposal stage and having greater community consultation and disclosure before Council lodges applications (such as P32675 above) with Heritage Victoria for permits etc having an impact on heritage listed lands and places.
- **City of Maribyrnong tree register**
- The Maribyrnong Planning Scheme is being amended to apply permanent protection controls for trees on their Significant Tree Register. The amendment proposes to introduce a control called the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO), and would apply to trees on the register and neighbouring properties in the tree protection zone (canopy and root area). An interim ESO is in place, requiring permits to remove, destroy or lop a significant tree, while the formal amendment process is completed.

BOOK REVIEWS

BY HELEN PAGE

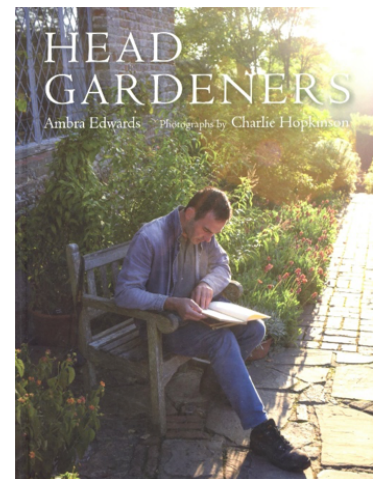


I love reading books about gardens and in particular about gardeners. These two books complement each other. 'Shades of Green, My life as the National Trust's Head of Gardens, *Negotiating change - care, repair renewal*' is John Sales own account of his 27 years with the National Trust. It is a fabulous record of the restoration and/or conservation of 50 of the Trust's gardens, he was involved with many more but space did not allow them all to be included. Each garden in the book is there for a specific reason and they are grouped together in chapters described as Learning, Conservation Planning, Encounters with Donors, Storm Restoration and Icons and Shrines. Hearing of all these projects from the man himself is a lesson in how you go about garden restoration and if you are interested in the subject and you must be as Garden History Society members you will gain a great understanding of the subject. John Sales is a charming and modest man, some of you will recall him as the keynote speaker at the 1988 Melbourne conference, 'Open to View'.

When I met him at a UK National Trust Summer School in 1997 he spoke very generously of his time in Melbourne and of the members he met here. What shone out of the book for me was his deep respect for the gardeners, I now see that the book is dedicated *For the professional gardeners of the National Trust*. He believes that a garden is only as good as its Head Gardener which leads me onto 'Head Gardeners' written by Ambra Edwards in her respectful tribute to them. Ambra quotes Mike Calnan who succeeded John Sales as Head of Gardens, 'It's difficult to imagine a class of people who have such tremendous skills, who contribute so much to society, and who are so thoroughly undervalued.'

Fourteen gardeners are featured, some well-known, such as Fergus Garrett from Great Dixter and Jim Buckland and his Australian wife Sarah Wain who until their retirement last year were joint head gardeners at West Dean and some lesser known such as Carol Hales of Hadley Court in Surrey where gardening helps in some way to restore lives shattered in Afghanistan and Ned Price who so gently tends nature at The Weir in Herefordshire.

All use in their roles a broad range of management skills and she argues a larger set of skills than usually required in other management roles. Tim Richardson in his review of the book in Hortus said 'it might be argued that there is no better advertisement for the horticultural profession in the twenty first century than this book, since it posits the head gardener as horticultural hero. Perhaps some high-minded philanthropist might pay for a copy to be presented to every secondary-school careers department in the land.'



John Sales 2018 - Shades of Green My life as the National Trust's Head of Gardens. Unicorn Publishing Group London, hardback 328 pp

Ambra Edwards - Head Gardeners. 2017 Pimperal Press UK hardback 240 pp

Dear Members,

If you are receiving this newsletter only in hardcopy, but do have an email address, could we please ask you to consider changing to email delivery. Preparing a separate newsletter for printing and the associated postage is difficult in these times with limited funds and volunteers. Apart from the savings for the Branch, you too will benefit from more timely updates and more extensive content, including links to online events. If you are able to supply an email address, please contact Lynda Entwisle at aghsvic19@gmail.com

Thank you for considering this request.



SEPTEMBER QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Weeping Elm: *Ulmus glabra* Camperdownii : named after the first such tree discovered in the grounds of Camperdown House in Scotland in 1840. It was owned by Admiral Duncan, Earl of Camperdown, and like his title, was named in commemoration of his victory at the Battle of Camperdown in 1797 fought off the Dutch coast near the village of Camperduin. The town of Camperdown was named after him too, but that is a very complicated story.
2. The Irish Yew. *Taxus baccata* 'fastigiata'. Two saplings were found by a farmer on the Florence Court estate in 1767. He planted on his own garden, and it lived until 1865. He gave the other to his landlord, William Cole, Earl of Enniskillen. This was planted in the demesne of Florence Court, and remains today. All Irish Yews in the world are descended from this tree.
3. The Weeping Willow. *Salix babylonica* 'Babylon'.
4. Clivia. Charlotte Percy's maiden name was Clive. She was the paternal granddaughter of Robert Clive, also known as 'Clive of India'.
5. The River Red Gum, *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*, is named after a private garden in Italy. (L'Hortus Camaldulensis di Napoli). The type specimen was grown in these gardens from seed reputedly collected by the botanist Allan Cunningham in 1817. Frederick Dehnhardt, the chief gardener, is credited with first describing the species.

VICTORIAN BRANCH COMMITTEE

Chair & Secretary: Wendy Dwyer

Vice Chair & Newsletter: Lynda Entwisle

Treasurer: Anne Aston

Committee members:

Speaker/Tour ideas: Robyn Robins

Working Bee Coordinator: Diana Ellerton

Advocacy: Trevor Pitkin

Garden Histories: Tim Gatehouse

Rep. Landscape Reference Group: Anthony Menhennitt

NMC Rep: Wendy Dwyer

Catering Coordinator: Annie Woodside

We meet on the 4th Tuesday of the month, 3.30pm - 6pm at Burnley Gardens, except for October when the meeting will be held on 3rd Tuesday of the month. 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, or contact a committee member. Go to our Webpage 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 with newsletter in subject line.