

Australian Garden History Society

West Australian Branch

Spring Newsletter 2020

The Australian Garden History Society promotes awareness and conservation of significant gardens and cultural landscapes through engagement, research, advocacy and activities.



West Australian Branch

Contact: Sue Monger
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West Australian Branch Committee

Chair: John Viska (johnviska@gmail.com)

Secretary: Lynette Petersen

Treasurer: Max Stewart

NMC Representative: Patsy Vizents

Membership: Sue Monger

Website & Newsletter: Lyn Oliver

General Committee: Ros Stewart, Boris Roglich & Sue Davis

Australian Garden History Society Inc.
ABN 97 291 212 843



40th Anniversary Theme **People, Plants and Places**

Welcome to the West Australian Branch. Our Branch has approximately 75 members throughout the state. We conduct numerous events during the year, including lectures and garden visits. Members, guests and visitors are welcome to all events. We communicate with our members by newsletter, emails and the AGHS website for all events.

<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au>
info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au

AGHS WA Branch Self-Drive Day Trip \$20 to **Pinjarra & Waroona** Sunday 27th September



Cypress Farm: The lost garden of Waroona

This promises to be a day full of interest with a visit to Fairbridge Farm, Pinjarra enroute to the Waroona Historical Society to view and have a talk about the Wardian case. Bring a picnic lunch to enjoy at Cypress Farm, the garden in the forest developed by Kingsley Dixon and Lionel Johnston. This is sure to be an absolute picture of Spring colours with an extensive variety of plants.

Full details on attached flyer

Annual General Meeting Sue Monger

The 31st Annual General Meeting of the West Australian Branch was held on Sunday 9th August at Wilkinson Homestead, Gosnells. The Committee was pleased to welcome 22 members and five visitors, an excellent attendance given the wintry conditions.

The Chairman presented his Annual Report which summarised functions held since August 2019, advocacy undertaken, landscapes at risk e.g. proposed chairlift Kings Park and promotion of AGHS through community talks given by the Chairman.

Preparation of the publication of Historic Gardens of Perth - the exhibitions held in the Perth Town Hall, 2011 and Gardens of the Western Suburbs in the Cottesloe Civic Centre, 2018 to mark the 40th Anniversary of the AGHS is well underway.

A delicious afternoon tea followed the meeting and members enjoyed catching up again after COVID-19's interruption to some of our proposed events.

Office Bearers

Chairman: John Viska / Treasurer: Max Stewart / Secretary: Lynette Petersen

Newsletter and Website: Lyn Oliver / Membership: Sue Monger

National Management Committee (NMC) WA Representative: Patsy Vizents

General Committee: Ros Stewart, Boris Roglich, Sue Davis

Sue Davis has joined the Committee and we look forward to her new ideas and energy.



Wilkinson Homestead Museum. Photo L Tang



Fiona and Theresa enjoying the artefacts on display.
Photo L Tang



Stephen O'Brien, Gosnells Local History Librarian, spoke about Oscar Lauterbach, the Carnation King. He managed to weave the Marty Robbins song, "A White Sports Coat and a Pink Carnation" and Carnation Milk into his talk, as examples of how carnations have figured in popular culture.
Photo L Tang

Wilkinson Homestead Museum

Located on the beautiful banks of the Canning River, the Museum collection is housed in the State Heritage listed Wilkinson Homestead. The site has an interesting history that includes early European settlement, and the district's agricultural development. The Museum property and adjacent park are part of the 1829 land grant to pioneer John Okey Davis. The homestead, built in 1912, is on one of the largest citrus producing properties in nineteenth century Western Australia. Replica buildings, including the machinery shed, dunny and washhouse reflect life in earlier times.

https://www.gosnells.wa.gov.au/About_our_City/Places_Spaces/Wilkinson_Homestead_Museum

Kings Park Festival 2020

Celebrating ‘Perth’s Green Heart’, the 2020 Kings Park Festival runs from 1st to 30th September.

See thousands of Western Australian wildflowers in full bloom right across the park and take part in dozens of free and fabulous events, displays, guided walks and talks, family activities and much more.

The 2020 Kings Park Festival is proudly presented by Kings Park and Botanic Garden and the Friends of Kings Park.



Stunning blue Leschenaultia on display at Kings Park. Photo S Monger

Visit the King Park website for information on daily activities and special events
<https://www.bgpa.wa.gov.au/kings-park/events/festival>

National Trust WA Properties Opening

After closing for COVID-19 the National Trust WA have announced that some properties have reopened to the public. Visit the NTWA website for information on which properties are open.

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/news/getting-ready-for-your-return/>

Congratulations to Ros Stewart who hosted a very successful morning tea at which \$2133.00 was raised. The funds will contribute to the recasting of the original lace ironwork for the balustrades at Woodbridge. The house is currently closed while extensive conservation works are in progress.

2020 WA Heritage Awards

AGHS WA Branch extend their congratulations to AGHS member Malcolm Traill as winner in the 2020 WA Heritage Awards Professional category. The jury praised Malcolm for tirelessly promoting Great Southern heritage over his 26-year career.

Those who attended the 2014 AGHS Conference in Albany may recall Malcolm’s enthusiasm for local history when he introduced delegates to the Menang and European settlements of Albany.

<https://www.dplh.wa.gov.au/information-and-services/historic-heritage/heritage-grants-and-incentives/heritage-awards/2020-western-australian-heritage-award-winners/professional-contribution>

Anzac Cottage John Viska

An article recently appeared in the 5th of September issue of *The Perth Voice* regarding the possible transferring of Anzac Cottage in Kalgoorlie Street, Mount Hawthorn from the City of Vincent to the National Trust WA. The property has been managed and promoted by both the Vietnam Veterans Association and the Friends of Anzac Cottage.

In 2001 in conjunction with the Vietnam Veterans, the West Australia Branch of AGHS assisted with the upgrade of the garden by providing advice on landscape features and plants typical of the 1914 - 1918 period. These included reinstating the brick piers, wire netting fence and relaying the curving grey cement path from the front gate to the surviving steps. To give veracity to the planting scheme the shrubs recommended were a selection from a 1916/17 Wilson and Johns and 1914 Newman's nursery catalogues.

Buffalo grass, typical of the period and newly introduced in Australia around 1890 was also planted. The shrubs selected were hardy and water wise readily available at the time of the house's construction, which took one day on Saturday January 29th, 1916! Linda Green, of Hidcote Landscapes and a former branch secretary, drew up the plans and oversaw the garden installation. The property until recently has been maintained by the Vietnam Veterans. In Swanbourne, there is also an Anzac cottage which was built by the Ugly Men's Association in the same period but over two weekends. If you would like to make a comment regarding the transfer proposal, the consultation period runs until 5pm Tuesday 22nd September.

<https://imagine.vincent.wa.gov.au/anzac-cottage-transfer>



Anzac Cottage, Mount Hawthorn.

Photo <https://www.vincent.wa.gov.au/parks-and-facilities/item/anzac-cottage>

National Management Committee Patsy Vizents

Please refer to the Spring E-News which should have arrived via e-mail on 1st September, 2020. The NMC is requesting that all members assist the Society by completing the AGHS Membership Survey 2020 so that decisions made are informed by what members value and communicate about our Garden History Society. Please use the link here <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/V3HHMLR> to complete the survey and thank you for contributing. It is the only really accurate way we have of measuring how we are performing and how we can move forward in these uncertain times.

As you know, the Sydney Conference has been moved to 10th to 12th September, 2021 and the Hobart Conference has been moved to 2022. As you can imagine, the organising committees of both conferences have been working extremely hard to re-schedule venues and gardens to work around government regulations regarding Covid-19 restrictions but we are all hoping all will go ahead according to the revised plans.

Landscapes at Risk – AGHS Advocacy Issues

- ***Kings Park Cable Car***

The proposed Kings Park Cable Car is still on the agenda particularly as City of Perth Mayoral elections are scheduled for 17th October. Please take the time to familiarise yourself with the issue if you haven't already and if you agree please support the two major volunteer groups in Kings Park, the Friends and Volunteer Guides, in opposing the proposal to build a cable car from Elizabeth Quay to Mt Eliza.

The Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority Board is concerned that the proposal would impact significantly on the park, the showcase of WA's extraordinary history and plant life.

We only have one Kings Park. Let's keep it a natural experience.

<https://www.friendsofkingspark.com.au/support-us/proposed-perth-cable-car/>

Many thanks to the AGHS National Management Committee for their support regarding this proposal (see AGHS National E News Spring 2020)

- ***Proposed Amendments to Local Heritage Lists*** *Brian Baskerville*

Brian Baskerville and Barbara Dundas have brought the following proposed amendments to the awareness of AGHS WA Branch to share with members:

There is currently a proposal for amendments to the Planning Regulations that will, in effect, downgrade the requirement for local councils to have a Local Heritage List from mandatory to optional. The proposed amendments are open for public comment until 18 September.

I believe this would be a retrograde step for local heritage in Western Australia.

A blog commentary on the proposed amendments can be read here <https://heritagedetection.wordpress.com/2020/09/06/the-demise-of-heritage-lists/>, (or just search for 'heritagedetection' to go to the blog without using this link), and attached are some fairly detailed notes I have prepared on potential consequences of such a change.

If you would like to make a submission on the proposed amendments (and I encourage you to do so), please don't hesitate to draw upon the attached notes or otherwise use them as a basis to develop your own specific comments.

Whether your submission is as simple as just saying you do not support the amendment, or also provides supporting argument and comment, this is a proposal that should not go unchallenged. Every submission will have value.

Please do not hesitate to also forward this message and the attachment to anyone else who you think would be interested in this matter.

WA Branch Events 2020

WA Branch: Waroona – A Day in the Country

Sunday, 27th September. All details on attached flyer

- **Fairbridge Farm**, South West Highway, Pinjarra
- **Waroona Historical Society**, Cnr Millar Street & South West Highway, Waroona
- **Cypress Farm**, 1225 Nanga Brook Road, Waroona

WA Branch: Christmas function 6 December @ 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm. Details will be forwarded closer to the day.

National Events

Online Events

AGHS have introduced webinars using the online meeting technology Zoom. Please feel welcome to participate in these opportunities to engage with the national Society. As we are on the west coast and the events are in Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST) or Australian Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT) you must remember to make the time conversion. Further information is on the branch webpage.

<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/branches/western-australia/>

Webinar: Sydney Branch: “Marion’s Garden” 23 September @ 6:00 pm AEST with Glenda Korporaal. \$10 members; \$15 non-members

Webinar: Fabulous at Forty AGHS ‘up for air’: what next?

30 September. Zoom session with Stuart Read. To register your interest in taking part in this Zoom session 30 September, please contact Jenny Woodwell by email: woodwell@optusnet.com.au.

Webinar: French Gardens 21 October @ 7:00 pm AEDT. This free webinar via Zoom will be presented by Angela Low.

Webinar: AGHS Annual General Meeting 2020

The 41st Australian Garden History Society Inc. Annual General Meeting will be held Sunday 25th October 2020 at 10am AEDT. More information to follow.

2021 Annual National Conference 10 September 2021 - 12 September 2021 at Luna Park, Sydney AGHS 41st Annual National Conference in Sydney, New South Wales.

Note:

- AGHS head office has a new telephone number 0419 977 703 and the 1800 free call number is no longer operational.
- Don’t forget to complete the national membership survey and enter the photograph competition. Congratulations Patsy, your photo was front and centre on the national newsletter!

Remarkable Gardens Patsy Vizents

One of the projects the WA Branch contributed to for the July 2020 Zoom NMC meeting was the Remarkable Gardens list. Please go to this list on the AGHS website using the link <https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Remarkable-Gardens-list-July-2020.pdf> and note the selections of public and private gardens highlighted for Western Australia. If you can contribute to this list, please contact any of the WA Committee with the information. It is hoped that this list will be the definitive "go to" source for members and those seeking gardens of interest, so we want to highlight all that Western Australia has in the way of historic and important gardens.

Remarkable Gardens in our North West *Lyn Oliver*

In early June my husband and I joined the ranks of the grey nomads and have been travelling in the north west of Western Australia. Below are three remarkable gardens I visited. These brought to mind the talk Colin Barlow gave the AGHS WA Branch in 2016 regarding the formation of the Australian Garden Council which states that:

“Garden tourism is a massive global industry (300 million tourists), but one that Australia has yet to tap into”.

<http://www.gardencouncil.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/AustralianGardenCouncil/>

1. Carnarvon – Fruit Loop Drive Trail and the Cactus Garden

There is an interesting tourist drive in Carnarvon known as the Fruit Loop Drive Trail. It follows a loop around North and South River Roads and takes you past working plantations, some of which have roadside stalls or shops where you can purchase fresh fruit and vegetables and/or a range of preserves, dried fruits and ice-creams.

Along this trail is also the Carnarvon Cactus Garden which was started 14 years ago by Robert Westcott and includes a full whale skeleton. The Cactus Garden has become an Instagram sensation and can draw up to 40 tourist vans a day. A remarkable garden not just in its conception but a demonstration of how unplanned social media use has promoted garden tourism.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-08-11/carnarvon-cactus-garden-attracts-dozens-of-tourists-every-day/12534652>



Instagram sensation Cactus Garden, Carnarvon.
Photo W Shaw

2. Mt Hart, Gibb River Road, Kimberley

Mount Hart is a former cattle station 3.5hrs from Derby or 6hrs from Broome along the Gibb River Road in the heart of the Wunaamin Miliwundi Ranges Conservation Park (formerly the King Leopold Ranges) in the Kimberley region of northern Western Australia. The area was first explored by Europeans in 1879 and Mt Hart was first gazetted as leasehold property in 1914 as a cattle station. Mt Hart has had a range of lease holders with stories of abject hardship and/or bad luck over the century since. The Gibb River Road was originally a track of rugged and extreme terrain for the movement of cattle is now a popular tourist drive of 660 kms with Derby and Wyndham at either end.

It was in the 1960's that the story of the Mt Hart homestead garden begins when Charlie Telford from Melbourne took up the lease sight unseen at the ripe age of 63 to become a 'cattle baron'. After building a stone homestead his next project was to create the garden around it. Charlie conceived the idea to drive to Adelaide (which is over 3000km on a current Google online map) to obtain some trees. Once there he filled the back of his Commer Semi-trailer with 6ft high trees (which were non-indigenous to the Kimberley) in 44 gallon drums. It took him seven weeks to drive from Adelaide to Mt Hart at about 28 miles (or 45kms) per hour.

When he arrived at Mt Hart he realised he needed more trees so he headed back to Adelaide and repeated the trip. Overall it took Charlie five years to build the house and garden. By then even though the cattle had multiplied significantly he ran out of money and he became another lessee who left with "only the shirt on his back".



Charlie Telford's legacy is a wonderfully cool welcoming oasis for travellers in the heart of the Wunaamin Miliwundi Ranges Conservation Park, Kimberley. Photo W Shaw.



Me with owner Colin who convinced me to taste the small bitter fruit of the mandarin he has planted alongside the airstrip. A work in progress! Photo W Shaw

The station did enjoy some investment and success but it was eventually declared by the pastoral board as an "unviable cattle station". For the three years it was in receivership, Peggy Lawrence, a local Kimberley identity and avid gardener, lived there alone with only her blue heeler dog for company. It is Peggy who brought the garden back to life and shaped it into the cooling, green oasis it is today. I did ask the staff if any of Charlie Telford's original trees had survived but they didn't think so and my lack of botanical knowledge didn't help me. As an "unviable cattle station" the

Department of Environment and Conservation WA (DEC) eventually bought the one million acre property and the area around the homestead was leased for tourism. Currently Kununurra Resorts own the lease and plan to continue to develop and upgrade the property.

Today, the homestead is surrounded by about one acre of mature trees that provide cool shade in the heat of the day. On my walk around the property I met the current owner Colin at one of his current garden projects, a row of mixed citrus trees along the airstrip. Unfortunately, only one mandarin was bearing small bitter fruit but it was lovely to look at and good to know that after eighty years the garden is still evolving.

3. Wattles and Bush Tucker Tour, Cape Leveque, Dampier Peninsula

The 1st of September celebrates Wattle Day in Australia and flowering wattles were very much in evidence on the Broome – Cape Leveque Road on the Dampier Peninsula. It was a stunning drive lined with kilometres of golden wattles contrasting with the blue sky, red dirt and green foliage.



The road into Kooljaman was lined with flowering wattle which indicates the time of “the fat”. Photo L Oliver

At Kooljaman, at the tip of Cape Leveque, I went on a bush tucker tour with Lomardina elder Bundy who operates Bundy’s Cultural Tours. As we left the reception area and walked over to the east side of the ridge, Bundy told us traditional



Lomardina Elder, Bundy, of Bundy’s Cultural Tours. Photo L Oliver

stories about birds, animals, plants and fruits. There was a lot of information to understand given I was starting from a low base regarding the complex culture and knowledge of the Bardi people. Bundy talked about the seasons and that the year is divided into the wet and the dry. It is then subdivided into six seasons that describe what is actually happening rather than the traditional four seasons. There is a board on display that aligns the 12 months of the year to the traditional Bardi seasons. When the yellow wattle is in bloom its barramundi season. It’s the time of “the fat” which means good eating as all the

animals are feeding and “fat”, especially the oil rich fish. On the walk we were able to taste a range of fruit in the trees including the tiny fruit of the Gubinge (Kakadu Plum) which has the highest natural vitamin C content of any plant in the world, while also being exceptionally high in antioxidants. Gubinge is now wildly harvested from an Indigenous community in the Kimberley.

Further quick internet research resulted in an abundance of information relating to the cultural meaning of the wattle in Australia, including but not limited to the nation’s floral emblem, our national sport colours of green and gold, the iconic Golden Wattle Cookery Book (first published in Perth in 1924) and even as a possible symbol of inclusivity.



Diagrammatic representation of the Bardi Seasons and important natural resources in conjunction with the corresponding Roman calendar. Photo L Oliver

For those who keep their copies of the journal vol 9 no 3 January 2018 has an article "Wattle: 'symbol of this nation's heart'. The article explores wattle's role as a patriotic symbol during "the dark days of Great War of 1914 - 1918". "...from 1 September 1910 an annual Wattle Day began to be observed in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney"

<https://www.nma.gov.au/explore/blog/wattle-day>
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-09-01/wattle-day-celebrating-110th-anniversary-and-growing-prominence/12574654>

La Festa della Donna

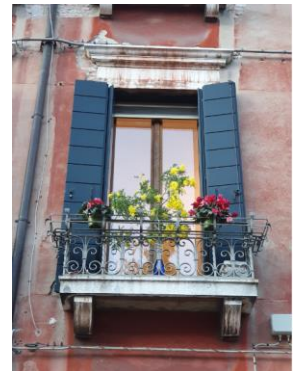
The 8th of March is International Women’s Day or, as it’s more commonly called in Italy, *la Festa della Donna*, where the importance of women is celebrated by the giving and receiving of mimosa blossom.

Historians cannot agree when and why the act of giving mimosa began, but there is documented evidence that men in Rome on March 8, 1946, gave the fragrant flowers to their wives, mothers, sisters and daughters as a sign of love and appreciation. Nowadays, women also hand the flowers to other women as a sign of solidarity.

Mimosa, *Acacia dealbata*, also known as the Silver Wattle, was first introduced into Europe from south-eastern Australia in 1820 and, being a fast growing shrub, spread rapidly.

Retrieved from

<https://www.italymagazine.com/news/mimosa-blossom-womens-day-festa-della-donna>



Displays of Mimosa in Venice on International Women’s Day, 8th March 2020.



Photos L Oliver