

Australian Garden History Society

West Australian Branch

Summer Newsletter 2021



AUSTRALIAN
GARDEN
HISTORY
SOCIETY

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

Welcome Members

Through the plethora of purple you may have noticed a small tree with terminal clusters of small, pink, orchid like flowers. This is the Cape chestnut *Calodendrum capense* from South Africa and flowering at the same time as the jacaranda is usually seen in the older suburbs such as Nedlands and South Perth. The identification of the plant is frequently requested on gardening programs at this time of the year with Hyde Park and the University of WA both having good specimens. If you do find a good example let us know and enjoy the festive season looking for them.

John Viska, Chair, AGHS WA Branch



Calodendrum capense, Hyde Park. L Oliver



Calodendrum capense bloom.
L Oliver

West Australian Branch

Contact: Lynette Petersen
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West Australian Branch Committee

Chair: John Viska (johnviska@gmail.com)

Secretary: Lynette Petersen

Treasurer: Sue Davis

NMC Representative: Patsy Vizents

Membership, Webpage & Newsletter: Lyn Oliver

General Committee: Boris Roglich, Sue Medalia, Felicity Farrelly

Australian Garden History Society Inc. (Inc in NSW)
ABN 97 291 212 843
ARBN 654 108 915

Welcome to the West Australian Branch. Our Branch has approximately 60 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, email and the AGHS website for all events.

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

AGHS WA Branch Committee

We welcome back Sue Medalia who has undertaken to expand the WA component of the AGHS's Remarkable Gardens. The information will include an illustration, the garden's significant features, location, accessing it and appropriate web links for extra information. We now have seven committee members with Felicity Farrelly, a long-time member, being co-opted onto the committee in October.

Felicity Farrelly

I became aware of the AGHS when introduced to a Conference in Perth years ago by Marion



Blackwell and met John Viska and other committee members at the time. Brilliant discussions and with work commitments and other matters I kept my membership going, however it is not till recently when semi-retired that I had the time to relink with AGHS WA Branch and have been recently invited on committee.

I have a Bachelor of Agricultural Science but it was my mid-life quest of taking up a Landscape Management Masters Preliminary which opened up doors of further academic exploration and opportunities. A study semester in Copenhagen and Masters research in reviewing the contested space in our landscape in the suburban area led me to touch the urban planning profession and short term contracts in the Midland Redevelopment Authority and urban regional planning at Curtin University. For me the GFC meant all such contracts died and I taught Science and Horticulture for 10 years. I now am a Councillor in the City of Stirling and find the opportunities to represent the community are of great interest and always challenging. AGHS WA Branch provides me with a wonderful balance and friendship and I hope to support this well as part of the committee in WA.

Heritage Legislation John Viska

On behalf of the branch I made a submission to the Heritage Council of WA on the proposed Guidelines for Development of Heritage Protected Places. As the draft document was biased towards built heritage with little specific reference to natural heritage, it was pointed out that the landscape around buildings, the trees, gardens and streetscapes needed stronger protection. Professional heritage specialists with horticultural and landscape background need to be engaged for the assessments.

Education John Viska

In response to an inquiry made to the Head of the School of Design at the University of Western Australia, regarding the inclusion of the subject of Conservation Management Plans (CMP) in their Landscape Architecture Course, I was invited to present a lecture on this topic to the third year students. This involved covering the concept of CMP for heritage listed gardens and landscapes. Hyde Park was used as a case study and subsequent to it I attended the group assignment presentations. The branch looks forward to future involvement with the University.

Remarkable Gardens Update Project Sue Medalia

Please enjoy the first in a series of articles that Sue is writing for the National Remarkable Gardens Register information expansion project.

Cottesloe Civic Centre, 1890s +

109 Broome Street, Cottesloe 6011, Perth. Open to the Public.

Cottesloe Civic Centre is a rare example of a late Federation garden with landscape features intact. The gardens occupy over 2 hectares (5 acres) with views west to the Indian Ocean. They include extensive limestone walls with Italianate balustrades and a western terrace with sweeping lawns and mature Norfolk Island pine trees.

A tennis pavilion overlooks the former tennis courts, now a children's playground. There is a formal rose garden on the northern side and a Moorish inspired fountain to the west of the Civic Centre. To the north west of the fountain is a small rockery incorporating succulents. In 1962 landscape architect John Oldham designed the waterfall garden located next to the Town of Cottesloe administration building.

The original Federation Style building was constructed in 1898 by Richard Pennefather and was bought by Claude de Bernales in 1911 who extensively renovated it in the Spanish Mission style in the mid 1930's.

Since 1949 it has been used as a Civic Centre when it was purchased by the Cottesloe Municipal Council (now the Town of Cottesloe). It is a popular destination for family picnics, concerts and weddings.

It was classified by the National Trust in 1979.

Getting there:

Located 12kms from Perth, it is on bus routes 102 and 999 and the closest train station is Cottesloe on the Fremantle line.

References:

The Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens, edited by Richard Aitken & Michael Looker. Published in 2002 by Oxford University Press in association with the Australian Garden History Society. See page 300.

[inHerit - State Heritage Office](#)

[Cottesloe Civic Centre - Wikipedia](#)

[The Grove Library » Town of Cottesloe](#)

[Home » Town of Cottesloe](#)

Photographs of the Cottesloe Civic Centre are courtesy of Sue Medalia



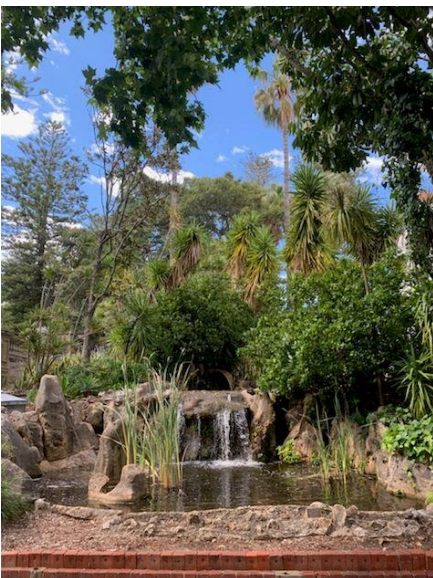
Entrance



Mature Norfolk Pines on the Western Terrace



Formal rose garden



John Oldham Waterfall



Restored tennis pavilion

Landscapes at Risk – AGHS Advocacy Issues

Hyde Park Kiosk *John Viska*

Since our last newsletter the City of Vincent is progressing with its intention to allow a permanent commercial enterprise in the Heritage listed Hyde Park. The council had advertised for expressions of interest in the proposed commercial venture to which four businesses responded with the Council selecting Veggie Mama. Concerns were expressed to the Heritage Council by the branch that upgrading a gardener's storage fit for purpose will have an impact on the fabric of the place notably the 120 year old trees in the immediate area.

The Council's proposal has been supported by the Heritage Council subject to the following being submitted to the satisfaction of the Director, Heritage Development and prior to the application for a Building Permit:

- a. A Tree Protection and Management Plan prepared by a suitably qualified arboriculturist that identifies significant landscape elements and provides measures to ensure that they are protected during development activities and the operation of the new facilities. The Plan shall establish tree protection zones to avoid paving, underground services, excavation, and soil compaction around tree roots.
- b. Details of any proposed excavation associated with service installation or upgrades.
- c. Details of any proposed signage, seats, bins or shade installations associated with the new facilities. Any new installations shall not visually dominate the area or detract from the visual presentation of the place and shall maintain existing views and vistas within the park.

The City of Vincent has also requested a Business Concept Plan for managing the environmental impact of a Kiosk on the Park in compliance with the Hyde Park Conservation Management Plan.

I attended the Council's briefing meeting on Tuesday the 7th of December and requested that the necessary requirements be provided by practising Heritage Consultants and the arboriculturist has extensive heritage experience before council votes on the proposal.

The proposal was passed by the City of Vincent Council on 14th December 2021.

Kings Park Cable Car *Lyn Oliver*

As you are aware, AGHS WA Branch supports Kings Park Botanical Gardens and their volunteer agencies in opposing the proposed Kings Park Cable Car.

The idea is still garnering media space in Perth. A recent article in The West Australian by architect Reinette Roux was titled *Ditch Perth cable car idea*. Apparently the cable car idea fronted many discussions at a recent Brand Perth forum. The writer believes we should think bigger and better and says:

“We cannot curate a city with low expectations and standards in mind. A cable car will not solve our identity crisis, nor does it suit our budding brand.”

Meanwhile, we here in WA and the AGHS National Body are watching with interest the current cable car issue in Hobart the size of which has been recently scaled back. About 72% of a record 16,500 public submissions made to council were not in favour of the cable car. In 2018 thousands attended an anti-cable car protest led by former Greens leader Bob Brown.

[Divisive Hobart cable car plan scaled back | PerthNow](#)

Forthcoming Publication John Viska

The branch's book, *Historic Gardens of Perth European Settlement to Modernism*, is in its final stages of preparation. As well as the information and accompanying illustrations of the panels from our two exhibitions it also incorporates sections of the 2007, *A Guide to Conserving and Interpreting Gardens in Western Australia* and covers significant WA historical periods, garden styles and plants from the periods. The work is timetabled to be professionally edited in early 2022 with the final printed version ready for release thereafter.

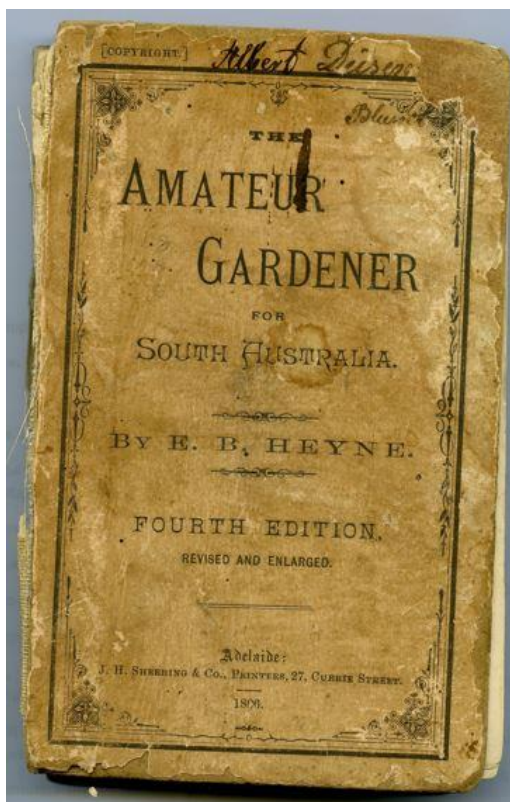
Conservation John Viska

The City of Perth has commissioned an upgrade of the 1998 Conservation Management Plan for Queens Gardens. This will involve revisiting the original document and ascertaining if its recommendations have been followed. The upgrade will also include any new client's requirements and additional new information about the history of the place. This process is recommended every ten years. NB the Hyde Park Conservation Management Plan completed in 2003 is long overdue for an upgrade.

An Interesting Find John Viska

We've heard that a branch member has purchased a copy of *The Amateur Gardener for South Australia* by E B Heyne. Even though this 1886 gardening book was written specifically for South Australia it had relevance for WA gardeners due to the similarity of climate. The book covers soils, manuring, compost, draining, and irrigation, planting, mulching etc. and laying out gardens and offers an interesting insight into 19th century gardening. The chapter on the kitchen garden precedes the flower garden attesting to the importance of productive gardening over amenity in the late 1880s. There is also a section devoted to plants in pots and a gardener's calendar.

As the majority of ornamental plants described in the publication were equally suitable for WA's conditions, nurserymen advertised frequently that plants from South Australia had arrived and would be auctioned in Fremantle. A regular intercolonial shipping trade in plants between WA and SA was well established by the 1870s.



The Journal of the Bureau of Agriculture listed it when it published the books it had in its professional library in 1898/99 and the *Western Mail* was still quoting it in response to local gardener's queries in the 1930s. It was not until 1924 that WA gardeners could refer to their own locally produced gardening publication when Wilson and Johns, nurserymen, released *The West Australian Gardening Guide Methods Simplified and Condensed* then followed in early 1930s by the *Westrallia Gardener*.

[Biography - Ernst Bernhard Heyne - Australian Dictionary of Biography \(anu.edu.au\)](http://anu.edu.au)

National Management Committee Patsy Vizents

The year 2021 has certainly been a busy one for the NMC. All our meetings have been via Zoom, which have been quite easy to manage from my location in Augusta. I believe I have a better NBN facility here than I did in Perth so I don't have drop outs, except when the power disappears. This can happen during storms when trees bring down power lines - this happened during the year, reminding me that I really need solar panels and a battery!

With the help of our committed West Australian branch committee, the NMC has introduced a Strategic Plan and a new Constitution. These documents have been a necessary update to our management system as we are a different organisation than we were 40 years ago, and as we move further into the 21st century, it is important that our systems meet current best practice. Adhering to current Covid19 safe practices has also meant a risk management strategy has had to be in place and this has been distributed to branch committees to assist with events and gatherings. Can I encourage members to make use of their member login to explore the AGHS website? The link is below.

[My account - Australian Garden History Society](#)

It has not just been a year of "best practice" catch up. We had the Sydney Conference and as you know, it was necessary to cancel the face to face conference attendance and offer a virtual experience for members. The Sydney organising committee had two years of difficulty (2020 conference was cancelled completely) but all praise must be given to the committee and Lisa Tuck, our Executive Officer, for providing an excellent online experience of the lectures. We all missed the camaraderie and renewing of friendships that come with face to face conference and of course not being able to visit gardens and landscapes in Sydney and the Blue Mountains was very disappointing, but I understand the Sydney branch is planning a Blue Mountains Tour as well as a Sydney-based Tour, based on the huge work undertaken by the conference committee. These tours will be programmed into 2022 and with any luck, WA will be able to participate.

The Tasmanian Conference 2022, to be held at Wrest Point Casino, is shaping up well and you can imagine that places will be taken up very quickly. Registration is not available yet as the conference is not to be held until 13th November, but I imagine the 250 places will be snapped up pretty swiftly. Branch representatives at the last NMC meeting of the year (Dec 6th) all said their members are desperate to attend, especially after so many lockdowns and restrictions. Let's hope WA members get a chance to attend - watch this space for notification of the registration date.

New Members Lyn Oliver

We are pleased to welcome Maria Ignatieva to AGHS WA Branch. Dr Maria Ignatieva is a Professor of Landscape Architecture at the School of Design, University of Western Australia. For thirty years she has been dedicated to working in academia in five countries (Sweden, New Zealand, USA, and Russia and now in Australia), teaching and researching as a full-time tenured academic in landscape architecture programs. Maria's main research interests are the history of landscape architecture and historical gardens restoration and conservation, and urban ecology (urban biodiversity and design). She was involved in the restoration of famous St. Petersburg gardens (Summer Garden, Peterhof and others) and the activity of UNESCO. She is a member of the AILA (Australian Institute of Landscape

Architects), IFLA (International Federation of Landscape Architects) and the President of URBIO (Urban Biodiversity and Design network).

Maria is interested in learning about the history and conservation of Australian gardens and hopes to be involved in the activity of the Australian Garden History Society. Maria has started to develop a good connection with AGHS WA Branch colleagues and has introduced a section on garden restoration (conservation plans) in a new unit in the landscape architecture program at UWA.

Camellia Ark *Lyn Oliver*

The not-for-profit organisation Camellia Ark is dedicated to the identification, conservation and propagation of rare and endangered camellias in Australia. Due to Australia's strict but necessary quarantine laws, the importation of many of these rare plants is prohibited. The Camellia Ark foundation is managed by the E.G. Waterhouse National Camellia Gardens in Sydney through prominent camellia nursery Camellias-R-Us at Glenorie, NSW. From January 2013 the project was in a position to release to subscribers over 50 rare camellias. The ark founders also believe that the heritage aspect of gardens is not considered sufficiently when development applications are assessed by local councils.

For foundation co-founder Jim Powell the 2001 Helensburgh Christmas Day bushfires largely destroyed his collection of 1100 rare camellias. Fortunately his home was saved because the fleshy leaves of the 860 plants in his front garden absorbed the heat. Mr Powell says camellias have played an important role in Australian garden history since the first recorded plantings at the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney in 1823.



Jim Powell with the camellia japonica 'Otahuhu Beauty', that came to Australia with Macarthur.
Credit: Wolter Peeters

Follow the link to the article by Julie Power, Sydney Morning Herald, 18/9/2021:
[Camellia Ark working with Royal Botanic Garden Sydney to save rare camellias \(smh.com.au\)](https://www.smh.com.au/news/gardening/camellia-ark-working-with-royal-botanic-garden-sydney-to-save-rare-camellias-20210918-5311116.html)

In 2014, co-founder Bill Parker and his team were involved in the rescuing of 97 old camellias from a long-established nursery in St Ives before it was re-developed as an aged care facility. The plants were removed using an excavator, put onto a truck using a sling then transported to Glenorie, NSW, where Bill and the Camellia Ark team care for them and propagate new plants from them. The following link will take you to a very interesting seven minute video of the work that featured on the TV program Gardening Australia.

[Camellia Ark - Fact Sheets - Gardening Australia - GARDENING AUSTRALIA \(abc.net.au\)](https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/2014/11/11/camellia-ark-fact-sheets-gardening-australia-gardening-australia-abc-net-au/)

The third co-founder and secretary is Dr Stephen Utick, International Camelia Society Director of Australia. More sources relating to this interesting project are below:

[The Camellia Ark | Camellias Australia](https://www.camelliasaustralia.org/)

[Camellia ark news from Australia \(internationalcamellia.org\)](https://www.internationalcamellia.org/news/camellia-ark-news-from-australia/)

Recent Events

Wyemando Wildflower Nursery Talk *Sue Davis*

The evening of October 6th saw members and friends gather at the Mechanics Institute Hall in Guildford for a delightful evening of reminiscence with Dr Kingsley Dixon. He prefaced his recollections of Wyemando nursery with a message of concern about Sandalwood trees which have reached a perilous state of survival in Western Australia.

As a young twelve year old, Kingsley was fascinated by the Wyemando native plant nursery in East Guildford which he observed as he drove past it with his father. Wyemando nursery was established around 1960 by the three Harper sisters, Nan, Sue and Cecilie who pioneered native plant sales in Perth. Their father was the son of Charles Harper of Woodbridge who had a commercial nursery on the Woodbridge property. The sisters were catering to a burgeoning local interest in native plants which was fostered by the establishment of the Wildflower Society, the Tree Society and the development of botanic gardens. Contemporary with Wyemando was Yilgarnia nursery run by Fred Lullfitz. The two nurseries assisted one another where possible. Wyemando advertised native plants ready for the garden.



Dr Kingsley Dixon holding the Wyemando Wildflower Nursery Sign.

Photo: S. Monger

Kingsley recalls mustering up the courage to approach the owners and ask if he could volunteer to work there on the weekends...a request which met with approval. So began a long apprenticeship and friendship with the three Harper sisters. He was allocated general work around the property from which he gradually acquired a working knowledge of the business. As well as learning to propagate from seeds and cuttings, a solid background in plant care and exposure to botanical names grew over the years. He described a large fern house and a range of exotic trees being part of the nursery property. Kingsley recollected with amusement a feeling of always being looked down upon by the sisters until he realised that they were peering at him through the lower lenses of the prescription glasses of the day.

Members were interested in the origin of the name ‘Wyemando’. Kingsley believed it to have been the name of a lake so named on the North West family owned pastoral lease.

The Harper sisters eventually retired in Darlington. Today there is no trace of the nursery on the Guildford Grammar School site and there is no evidence of the established plants once on the property.

John Viska presented Kingsley with three terracotta pots which were used at the historic Hamel Nursery at Waroona.

AGHS WA Branch: Christmas Function John Viska

On Sunday 5th December, 28 members spent a pleasant afternoon celebrating the final function for 2021 in Claremont Park. A shady area under the canopy of a large English elm *Ulmus procera* was selected and with the early sea breeze it was an ideal location. Following the welcome, members shared the Christmas fare and waited eagerly for the annual quiz. One group attained a perfect score thus obviating the need to have a tie breaker. A walk and talk tour was then conducted outlining the history of the area since the 1850s plus significant plantings. As well as the English elm a notable specimen of a sugar gum *Eucalyptus cladocalyx* was admired and original tuarts *Eucalyptus gomphocephala* and introduced Norfolk Island pines *Araucaria heterophylla* were in abundance.



Thinking caps on for the highly competitive Chairman’s Annual Quiz.



Norfolk Island pines are in abundance.



Photographs courtesy of Leon Tang

AGHS WA Branch: AGM Sue Monger

The West Australian Branch held its 32rd Annual General Meeting on Sunday 8th August at Halliday House, Bayswater. There were 30 members and guests in attendance. The President and Treasurer presented their respective reports prior to the Election of the Committee. Office Bearers: Chairman John Viska, Treasurer Sue Davis, Secretary Lynette Petersen, NMC Representative Patsy Vizents. Committee: Lyn Oliver, Boris Roglich. Sue Medalia was formally elected to the Committee and Sue Monger resigned. Felicity Farrelly has been co-opted as a committee member.

Glen Cookson, Secretary of the Bayswater Historical Society, addressed the gathering on the first settlers, the Noongar people and their use of the land according to the six seasons of their culture. The arrival of European settlers paved the way for different use of the land; productive gardens and orchards fed the recent settlers and the Swan River, navigable as far upstream as Guildford, enhanced transport and communications.

Halliday House, originally Leighton, was built by Henry Halliday in the early 1890s, before Bayswater was declared a Road Board district in 1897. The home remained in the Halliday family until 1984 when it was purchased by Kingsley Dixon and Lionel Johnston. The pair carried out an extensive restoration of the house, and created a beautiful garden. Sadly much of the garden was replaced with easy care plantings and brick paving when the City of Bayswater bought the property in 1992.

AGHS WA Branch 2022 Event Diary

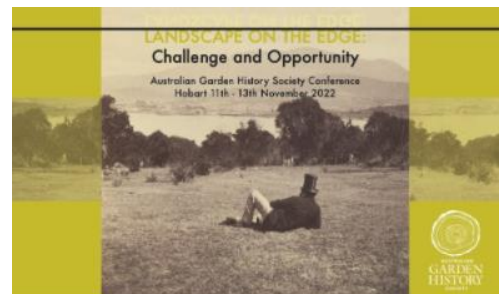
We are currently formulating events for 2022 and will advise as details are confirmed.

National Events

2022 Annual National Conference

Landscape on the Edge: Challenge and Opportunity
11th to 13 November 2022

Wrest Point Casino 410 Sandy Bay Road, Hobart, TAS



[2022 Annual National Conference - Australian Garden History Society](#)