



**eNewsletter  
No. 33  
May 2025**

## **Northern NSW Branch**

**Newsletters are sent out monthly  
except for December and January**

Larger images are available from the editor on request

### ***Quercus palustris* Pin Oak**

The common name "pin oak" is possibly due to the many small, slender twigs, but may also be from the historical use of the hard wood for pins in wooden building construction.

*Q. palustris* is mainly distributed in the eastern and central United States. It is also native in the extreme south of Ontario in Canada. It is well adapted to life in Australia and is widespread across the continent, especially in the cooler southern States such as Victoria and New South Wales and in temperate zones.

It is naturally a wetland tree, confined to acidic soils but is very adaptable to drier conditions. It grows naturally on level or nearly level, poorly drained, alluvial floodplain and river-bottom soils with high clay content.

Pin oaks are medium sized deciduous trees, relatively fast growing and have a straight, columnar trunk with smooth thin bark and a pyramidal canopy. Mature trees have distinctive branching with upper branches pointing up, mid level branches horizontal and lower branches drooping.

They have a life of about 120 years in their natural environment which makes them an ideal specimen for parks and larger gardens. They develop a shallow, fibrous root system, unlike many other oaks making them a good choice for street trees.

Ref: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quercus\\_palustris](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quercus_palustris)



*Quercus palustris* Pin Oak

Image: <https://www.featuretreesballarat.com.au/products/quercus-palustris-pin-oak>

### **Join AGHS Northern NSW Branch**

<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/membership/>

Send articles & photos to: Reports/Newsletter Editor Maria Hitchcock  
[maria.hitchcock@gmail.com](mailto:maria.hitchcock@gmail.com)

## From the Chair:

Bonjour from a quirky farmhouse near Chaillac in France. Good friends, great food and wine, and fabulous landscapes have all made our holiday a wonderful experience. The roses are blooming in all the village gardens, gorse has turned the roadsides into a bright yellow sea, and the bumble bees are loving their lives. We are driving to Annecy in a couple of days, then flying to Athens before spending time on Kythera.

I hope by now you have made your bookings for the Mount Gambler conference. Dot Evans and her organising committee have put together a really interesting program for us to enjoy, so let's help make this conference a huge success.

Have you checked your AGHS membership status yet? You will need to log in on the website to do so. Sarah works from Monday to Wednesday each week if you run into any difficulties and need to phone the national office. I received a Northern NSW branch membership report this morning and can see quite a few 'paused' memberships. We want to continue enjoying your company at our events, so please take care of this little task soon.

Kind regards,  
Helen Oates  
Chair | Northern NSW Branch  
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The village



Democracy Sausages a la Francais



The farmhouse and garden

Please note: Our final two Moree gardens **Vitonga** and **Woodcourt West** will feature in the June newsletter.

## On the Road to Moree

Text: Sandra Welsman

Images: Kim Woods Rabbidge

Moree is located on the banks of the Mehi River, in the centre of the rich black-soil plains. The Newell and Gwydir highways intersect here linking Moree to the centres and coasts of NSW and Queensland. Town population is around 7,000. Moree is noted for artesian hot spring baths that are renowned for their reputed healing qualities.

The Weraerai and Kamilaroi peoples are the earliest known inhabitants of the area, and the town's name is said to come from an Aboriginal word for 'rising sun', 'long spring', or 'water hole'.

In 1832, Major Thomas Mitchell led a large expedition to the district after convict and bushranger George Clarke told of the existence of a great river called the 'Kindur' flowing through the region. Squatters soon came to the area taking pastoral runs including 'Mungie Bundie' and 'Booloroo' in 1837, 'Wee Bolla Bolla' in 1838, and 'Mooree' in 1838.

A settlers' village was established in the 1850s and in 1862 Moree was gazetted as a town with land for sale. A court of petty sessions was established the next year followed by the first constable. A church was built in five years later when the town population was 43.

Agriculture emerged as a thriving industry on the fertile flood plains leading to the first bank, a local newspaper and gazettal of the town as a municipality in 1890. Five years later the Great Artesian Basin was tapped and a bore sunk to 910m to provide water for agriculture but it was found to be unsuitable. The railway line from Sydney arrived in 1897. Wheat cultivation increased after World War II, and a flour mill was built. Moree has grown as a major rural centre, noted for its part in the Australian cotton-growing industry which was established in the 1960s. Newer crops include pecans and olives.

**'Rockdale'** Dave and Leonie Doran's garden is situated on the banks of the Gwydir River. It was designed and created by well known Moree gardeners Ron and Edna Hardman and has held many weddings and events over the years. Established trees provide shade for the large garden beds and shrubs. A beautiful oak tree greets visitors at the entrance.





Elton Squires



Peter Rogers, Graham Wilson, Richard Bird



Leonie Doran, Lynne Walker



Left: Anne & Graeme Smith

## Kooroogamma

Bernie and Marg Boland's property 'Kooroogamma' is one of Moree's older homes and garden situated on the Mehi River. Large established trees provide much needed shade during the heat of summer. Beautiful ornamental pears provide a wonderful spring display. Morning tea was kindly provided by the Moree Plains Garden Club.





Robyn Jackson, Carolyn Fitzroy



Elton Squires, Angie Smith



Wendy Thompson, Bill Oates



Fran Webb, Francesca Beddie



Above: Liz Chappell



Alice and Kooroogamma owner Marg Boland

Below: Kooroogamma homestead  
Image: M. Hitchcock



### Café Gali and Yaama Ganu Centre

This Aboriginal Gallery opened in 2011. It is a not-for-profit Aboriginal art enterprise which proudly supports and features consigned works from artists of the local Kamilaroi Nation and Aboriginal-managed Art Centres from communities around Australia. Cafe Gali onsite at the Gallery, offers a range of fresh food, coffee and homemade sweets.



Maria Hitchcock, Robyn Jackson, Caroline Fitzroy and Julie Roberts



Graham and Anne Smith, Tom O'Connor and Peter Lloyd



Gallery Manager Toby Osmond, Helen and Bill Oates



Event Co-ordinator Sandra Welsman



Helen Nancarrow and Christine Fry

## 2025 Winter Speaker Program

**Sunday 3 August 2025** 'Evergreen: A life in Botanic Gardens' - Professor Tim Entwisle

Tim Entwisle is Patron of the Australian Garden History Society. Tim has been director of Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney and NSW Government Botanist, a director at Kew, London and recently retired as chief executive of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria with focus on planning for the gardens under climate change. Tim is a skilled communicator. He is a radio and TV presenter and author of 'Evergreen: The Botanical Life of a Plant Punk' 2022.

In August, Tim will also outline his forthcoming book on dispelling plant and garden myths

**'The Sceptical Botanist - Separating Fact from Fiction'.**

Tim Entwisle's Oral History interview is to be found [here on the AGHS website](#).

**When: Sunday 3 August 2025.** 3pm start, please arrive around 2.45pm.

**Where: The Hoskins Centre** at The Armidale School, Gate 7, Chapel St, Armidale.

**Cost: \$45 per person** including a friendly glass of wine and light snacks after the talk.

**Please book online for 3 August using this link:** <https://www.trybooking.com/DARUF>.

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**Sunday 24 August** 'A Day with Camellias' - Dr Stephen Utick  
- bus trip to 'Wanderriby' featuring a camellia collection and back

Stephen Utick will present on Camellia Ark Australia and the significance of camellias to garden history. Stephen is a renowned camellia expert and co-founder of Camellia Ark. He speaks internationally on this project which aims to conserve Australia's rarest Camellias. Stephen is Vice President of the International Camellia Society and Visiting Curator of Theaceae at the Royal Sydney Botanic Gardens.

Stephen Utick's Oral History interview is to be found [here on the AGHS website](#).

On the Sunday morning, we will convene 9.40am at The Armidale School to board buses to Wollomombi to visit Nan and Roy Robertson's magnificent garden 'Wanderriby' with stunning trees, perennials and flowering shrubs including over 200 camellias with blooms of splendid size and colour. A light lunch with tea and coffee will be provided. Then we head back to the Hoskins Centre by 2.40pm for Stephen's presentation.

**When: Sunday 24 August 2025.** Meet at 9.40am for bus trip or 2.45pm for our speaker.

**Where:** The Armidale School, Gate 7, Chapel St for bus trip. Then later, TAS Hoskins Centre for the presentation.

**Cost: Full day is \$115 per person** for return bus, light lunch, speaker and a glass of wine and snacks after the talk.

Please note, **travel to this garden is by bus only as part of the day package.**

**Or, \$45 per person** just for Stephen's talk at the Hoskins Centre and refreshments.

Please book online using these links:

For full 'Day with Camellias' on 24 August use: <https://www.trybooking.com/DASBI>

For just Stephen Utick's presentation on 24 August use: <https://www.trybooking.com/DASBV>

### A note from Events Co-ordinator Sandra Welsman

Please book as soon as you read this newsletter.

We know that people like to leave things to the last minute.

We do need your bookings now for transport and catering arrangements

## ***Beyond the Garden Fence:***

### ***Looking at gardens and the wider cultural landscape***

#### **45th AGHS Conference, 31 October - 2 November 2025**

Optional Day: Monday 3 November  
Pre Conference tour: 28 and 29 October  
**Mt Gambier, South Australia**

Mount Gambier offers a fascinating landscape situated on a limestone plain, honeycombed with underground channels, caves and sinkholes. The limestone volcanoes erupted about 4000 years ago, creating a unique patchwork of soils that support beautiful gardens, vineyards, pine forests and farms of all kinds. The Boandik people have lived here for thousands of years fishing the productive wetlands and hunting the drier plains. Early explorers recognised the rich grasslands and came with their animals to settle and change the landscape forever. We will visit many geological features, some historic houses and cottages, a museum, several vineyards and an orchard as well as gardens great and small. We will also investigate where all the green waste goes. The Program on Friday and Saturday includes presentations with excursions in the afternoon. Sunday is a full day excursion and Monday has a tour to Naracoorte Caves as well as several gardens and attractions.

**Registration:** <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1352302>

**Conference Brochure:** <https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/2025AGHS-Conference-brochure.pdf>

#### **Conference Venue**

The conference is being held at [The Barn](#), 7-8 kms from Mt Gambier town. The Barn also offers accommodation and is the venue for the conference dinner. AGHS has booked all the rooms which are priced from \$145.00 per night to \$350.00 per night (5 persons). You should have received a notification from AGHS National Office with details of all the rooms. Bookings for accommodation are **open now. It is advisable you book as soon as possible. Make sure you ring this number and tell them you are with the AGHS.**

**08 8726 9999** or **0418 851 471** to make a booking.

The email address is [info@barn.com.au](mailto:info@barn.com.au)

**Flights:** Rex and Qantas fly from Melbourne and Adelaide to Mt Gambier. Rex has a daily flight to and from Melbourne. Check their websites for details.

**Train/Coach** from Southern Cross Station, Melbourne. Train to Ballarat, then coach to Mount Gambier (travel time about 6-7 hours). Self-drive takes ~ 5 hours. A bus will be available, at a cost, to transport delegates from Adelaide to Mt Gambier on **Thursday 30 November**, and from Mt Gambier back to Adelaide on **Tuesday 4 November**. This is a direct trip with a stop for lunch, not an AGHS tour. There will be an opportunity to indicate your intention to use this service when the booking form becomes available on Thursday 1 May.

Alternatively, there is a less direct **Stateline bus** from Adelaide to Mt Gambier return.

#### **Mt Gambier to The Barn (and back)**

A shuttle bus will transport delegates who don't have their own transport between The Barn and Mt Gambier accommodation venues. If you will have a car during the conference, you may wish to carpool. When registrations open on 1 May, please indicate if you will have a car.

## Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Notes
<b>June</b> Sunday 29th	3.15 Committee Meeting 4.00 Branch General Meeting, Speaker/s and dinner to follow.	Bring a Friend Details to come
<b>August</b> Sunday 3rd	' <i>Evergreen, a life in botanic gardens</i> ' 3pm Speaker: Tim Entwisle 4.30 pm drinks and light snacks Members' dinner to follow.	<b>WINTER SPEAKER PROGRAM</b> Guest speaker: Professor Tim Entwisle (AGHS patron) See previous page for bookings. TAS Hoskins Centre, Cost: \$45 or \$50 per person.
<b>August</b> Sunday 24th	' <i>A Day with Camellias</i> ' <b>Bus only event.</b> 9.40 Arrive at Tas. 10.00 Bus leaves TAS 11.00 Garden Visit 12.30 Lunch 1.30 Bus departs 2.30 Arrive back at TAS 3.00 Speaker: Dr Utick 4.30 Drinks Dinner to follow	Visit to Nan and Roy Robertson's magnificent garden 'Wanderriby' at Wollomombi. This is one of the regions finest camellia showcase gardens Dr Utick will join us to discuss the camellias in the garden <b>WINTER SPEAKER PROGRAM</b> Guest speaker: Dr Stephen Utick of Camellia Ark TAS Hoskins Centre Drinks and nibbles to follow with dinner. Cost: \$115.00 (bus, lunch, speaker, drinks) Or - \$45.00 (speaker, drinks) Dinner: Separate See previous page for bookings.
<b>September</b> Saturday 13th Sunday 14th	'On the Road to Grafton via Ramornie' to be confirmed	Possibly a coach trip, Saturday morning Armidale to GI to Ramornie Station, lunch, afternoon to Grafton. Stay locally 1-2 motels. Sun morning Heritage tour with Schaeffer House, return Armidale via Ebor.
<b>September</b> Sunday 31st	3.15 Committee Meeting 4.00 NNSW Branch Annual General Meeting Dinner to follow.	Details to come
<b>October 31st - November 2nd</b>	AGHS National Conference Beyond the Garden Fence The Barn, Mount Gambier, S.A.	Bookings are now open. Optional Day tour Monday 3rd November Pre and post tours will be available The theme this year is <i>Beyond the Garden Fence</i> which means that we will be looking not only at beautiful gardens, but at the geology of the area and at land uses. See previous page for details.
<b>November</b> Sunday 30th	NNSW Annual Festive Lunch	Details to come

Inquiries and ideas - please send to Sandra Welsman (Events Co-ordinator)  
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