



**eNewsletter
No. 26
August 2024**

Northern NSW Branch

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

Larger images are available from the editor on request

Magnolia is an ancient genus that appeared before bees evolved and were pollinated by beetles instead. Fossilised specimens of *M. acuminata* have been found dating to 20 million years ago. Magnolias are spreading evergreen or deciduous trees or shrubs characterised by large fragrant flowers, which may be bowl-shaped or star-shaped, in shades of white, pink, purple, green, or yellow. In deciduous species, the blooms often appear before the leaves in spring. The name *Magnolia* first appeared in 1703 in the *General* written by French botanist Charles Plumier (1646–1704), for a flowering tree from the island of Martinique. It was named after the French botanist Pierre Magnol. There are asiatic and North American species. In general, the genus *Magnolia* has attracted horticultural interest. Some, such as the shrub *M. stellata* (star magnolia) and the tree *M. x soulangeana* (saucer magnolia) flower quite early in the spring, before the leaves open. Others flower in late spring or early summer, including *M. virginiana* (sweetbay magnolia) and *M. grandiflora* (southern magnolia). The shape of these flowers lend themselves to the common name *tulip tree* that is sometimes applied to some *Magnolia* species.. Hybridisation has been immensely successful in combining the best aspects of different species to give plants which flower at an earlier age than the parent species, as well as having more impressive flowers. One of the most popular garden magnolias *M. x soulangeana* is a hybrid of *M. liliiflora* and *M. denudata*.



Magnolia x soulangeana Tulip tree

Image: " https://www.havlis.cz/karta_en.php?kytkaid=261

Join AGHS Northern NSW Branch

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

Ref: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magnolia>

Send articles & photos to: Reports/Newsletter Editor Maria Hitchcock
maria.hitchcock@gmail.com

From the Chair:

Hello everyone.

The signs that Spring has almost sprung are appearing. Hopefully you have been able to take the time to appreciate budbursts and the first blossoms.

With our Annual General Meeting coming up on Sunday 25 August, I'm very pleased to report that all positions on our committee have been filled. Helen Wilson has put up her hand to replace Dar Brookes as our Minutes Secretary, and Sandra Welsman will take over the Events Coordination role from Helen Wilson and Moira Lloyd. Thank you very much to all our committee position holders. Your work for AGHS and our Northern NSW branch is appreciated by all. The AGM will also include our discussing the Future Directions papers and providing some feedback to the National Management Committee. The flyer providing the background to the discussion is included on the next page. Please take the time to read the documents and think about how you would like the Society to move into the future. I look forward to a lively discussion at the AGM.

Prior to our AGM, we will enjoy a great presentation by Kim Woods-Rabbidge entitled *Mid-Atlantic USA: The Art of Gardens*. This is a significant fundraising event for our Branch so please advertise it far and wide, and book as soon as possible at <https://www.trybooking.com/CTOWL>. We have 120 seats to sell with many still available. Entry for AGHS members is \$20.00 and community members will pay \$35.00. As well as hearing Kim's wonderful presentation, you will also receive some delicious refreshments.

We're trying something a bit different this year with our pruning in the Heritage Rose Garden. We will be running a couple of pruning workshops and inviting community members and other garden club members to come along and learn how to prune specific species of roses. The workshops will be held on Saturday 17 August and Wednesday 21 August and will be led by a number of our skilled and experienced members. The flyer advertising the workshops is to be found in this newsletter, and I ask that you help advertise the events through your gardening and community networks. Bookings can be made at <https://www.trybooking.com/CUDEL>. At \$20.00 for a four hour workshop, including morning tea, this event is great value. Unfortunately, we have had to postpone our visit to Moree until Autumn. We could not coordinate dates that worked for the garden owners and our conference goers, but rest assured that we will have a lovely selection of gardens to visit next year. The Moree Garden Club has been so welcoming and helpful, and we look forward to meeting the group in person. Many thanks to Fran for making the approach and diligently following up.

Lynne and I attended a National Management Committee via Zoom on Monday 12 August. Of great interest to everyone will be the change of 2025 annual conference venue from Alice Springs to Mount Gambier instead. It was felt that perceptions around safety and security may have resulted in fewer conference registrations if the conference had gone ahead in Alice Springs. The South Australian team is planning a very interesting conference schedule for us in Mount Gambier and I'm sure many of us will find the location in South Australia much easier to get to. I'm looking forward to heading over to Bunbury in October. It looks like the conference will be fantastic.

Kind regards,

Helen Oates

Chair | Northern NSW Branch

National Secretary | Australian Garden History Society

Co-Chair | Heritage Rose Garden at Saumarez Homestead Sub-committee

DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS AT BRANCH AGM

Future Directions for AGHS

Our Mission

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

Formed in 1980, the AGHS brings together people from diverse backgrounds united by an appreciation of and concern for our parks, gardens and cultural landscapes as part of Australia's heritage. The Society promotes knowledge of historic gardens, significant landscapes and research into their history. It aims to examine gardens and gardening in their widest social, historic, literary, artistic and scientific context.

While the focus of the AGHS in the early years was on historic gardens, there has been change in the social, environmental and statutory climates in which the Society now operates. The AGHS has increasingly reflected these matters in various ways – through its updated constitution, journal, activities, funding and advocacy programs. It is perhaps most palpable at its annual conference which now invariably includes First Nations participation and acknowledgment, and in positioning the conference venue in its broad historical, geological and landscape setting.

Should the AGHS reflect these changes in a more formal or structured way?

What would any change look like? Options might be:

- No change – continue as at present continuing to reflect and embrace new thinking but without any more formal/structural change, our Mission Statement will remain the same;
- Name change – a change of name reflecting a new focus including landscape issues whilst retaining an interest in historic gardens and using terminology which reflects relevancy for members both current and prospective.

Your thoughts are vital in constructing a broad and consultative future direction for AGHS.

Your Chair will provide the overall feeling of the meeting back to the NMC.

You may also provide individual feedback to info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au Additionally, every member of AGHS will be surveyed to determine how or if changes are made.

This is **your organisation. Your opinion counts.**

Additional reading:

<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Future-Directions-Discussion-Paper.pdf>

Oral History Project - Interviews 2



Lynda Skipper Image: James White

Tim Hughes and Sal Molesworth

Tim Hughes and Sal Molesworth moved to Lilburn, originally an outstation for Rangers Valley Station, near Glen Innes in 2000. Lilburn was Tim's family home and he recounts its rich colonial history. His g.g.g grandfather, Oswald Bloxsome was among the first European settlers in the district in 1838. Tim and Sal took on the repair, restoration and reinterpretation of Lilburn's garden with enthusiasm. They articulate their philosophy for the historic garden with selection of plants appropriate to the period of the garden's establishment (1880-1920) and in keeping with the core architecture of the homestead. They acknowledge the influence of other heritage gardens in the area such as Invergowrie near Armidale and Salisbury Court, Uralla. Tim and Sal have brought back structural, textured plants such as yucca, agave and succulents that had fallen out of favour and reinstated the central circular rose bed, now planted with the heritage variety Quatre Saisons. They have rejuvenated privet and spirea hedges and removed invasive bamboo, preserving the original footprint of the garden layout. Lilburn first opened for Australia's Open Garden Scheme in 2008 and has since welcomed several garden tours and charities.

Interview Recording Interview Transcript Tim Hughes and Sal Molesworth interviewed on 12 May 2024 by Liz Chappell and Lynne Walker

[Full transcript here](#)

Lynda Skipper

Lynda Skipper and her late husband Bill came to live at Ollera Station, west of Guyra, Northern NSW, in 1984. Bill was a descendant (by marriage) of John and George Everett who came to Ollera in 1838 with an Aboriginal guide who used the name Ollera explaining it meant 'sweet water'. The Everett brothers brought acorns with them, which formed the nucleus of the Ollera garden and landscape trees, along with early plantings of elms and radiata pines. The iron fence surrounding Ollera's garden was brought from the Everett's home village of Biddestone in England as ship's ballast. Ollera's outbuildings are heritage listed, as is the private brick church, designed by Horbury Hunt and built in 1876. The homestead was constructed in several stages from the 1880s to 1912. Trees like the Liquidambars that Bill and Lynda planted 40 years ago have now reached glorious maturity. Lynda has added understory shrubs, topiary and a woodland planting of hellebores. Ollera has opened regularly for Australia's Open Garden Scheme, garden groups and local charities.

Interview Recording Interview Transcript Lynda Skipper interviewed on 10 May 2024 by Liz Chappell and Lynne Walker

[Full transcript here](#)



Tim Hughes and Sal Molesworth
Image: Lynne Walker

Magnolia Species

Magnolia is a large genus of about 210 to 340 flowering plant species. The natural range of *Magnolia* species is separated with a main centre in east and southeast Asia and a secondary centre in eastern North America, Central America, West Indies and South America.

Ref: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magnolia>



Magnolia grandiflora

Southern Magnolia or Bull Bay SE USA
Evergreen tree with a single trunk and a pyramidal shape. It has large, dark-green leaves which are brownish underneath and large, white, fragrant flowers. *M. grandiflora* is widely cultivated in warmer areas around the world. The timber is hard and heavy, and has been used commercially to make furniture, pallets, and veneer. It grows naturally on the edges of bodies of water and swamps but does not withstand being submerged.

Image: Josep Renalias Lohen11

Magnolia pacifica

Magnolia pacifica is found only in a few locations in the mountains of Nayarit and western Jalisco states in western Mexico. It most often occurs in cloud forest, but is also found in humid locations, like gorges and ravines, in pine-oak forest, in tropical evergreen forest, and tropical semi-evergreen forest, between 790 and 2,250 meters elevation. The species is threatened by habitat loss from deforestation and conversion of its habitat to agriculture.

Image: Yyoorrk



Magnolia virginiana

Magnolia virginiana, most commonly known as sweetbay. It was the first magnolia to be scientifically described under modern rules of botanical nomenclature and is the type species of the genus *Magnolia*. It is an evergreen or deciduous tree native to the lowlands and swamps of the Atlantic coastal plain of the eastern USA. It is evergreen in areas with milder winters and is semi-evergreen or deciduous further north. The bark is smooth and grey, with the inner bark mildly scented. The flowers, which appear in late spring or early summer, are creamy white and carry a very strong vanilla scent that can sometimes be noticed several hundred yards away. This species was the first magnolia to be cultivated in England

Image: William (Ned) Friedman



Magnolia iliiflora

Small tree up to 4m native to southwest China, but cultivated for centuries elsewhere in China and also Japan. Various names, including red magnolia. It was first introduced to English-speaking countries from cultivated Japanese origins, and is also called Japanese magnolia, though it is not native to Japan. It is now also planted as an ornamental in North America and Europe, though rather less often than its popular hybrid, the cultivar 'Nigra'. It is deciduous, blooming profusely in early spring with large pink to purple showy flowers, before the leaf buds open.

It prefers an acid or neutral soil, in full sun or light shade. Image: Thilo Machotta

Magnolia stellata

Magnolia stellata, the star magnolia, is a slow-growing deciduous shrub or small tree native to Japan. This shrub grows 1.5 to 2.5 metres in height and blooms at a young age, with the slightly fragrant flowers covering the bare plant in late winter or early spring before the leaves appear. The leaves open bronze-green, turning to deep green as they mature, and yellow before dropping in autumn. It is deciduous, revealing a twiggy, naked frame in winter. Plants have thick, fleshy roots which are found fairly close to the surface and do not tolerate much disturbance. It grows naturally by streamsides and in moist, boggy areas.

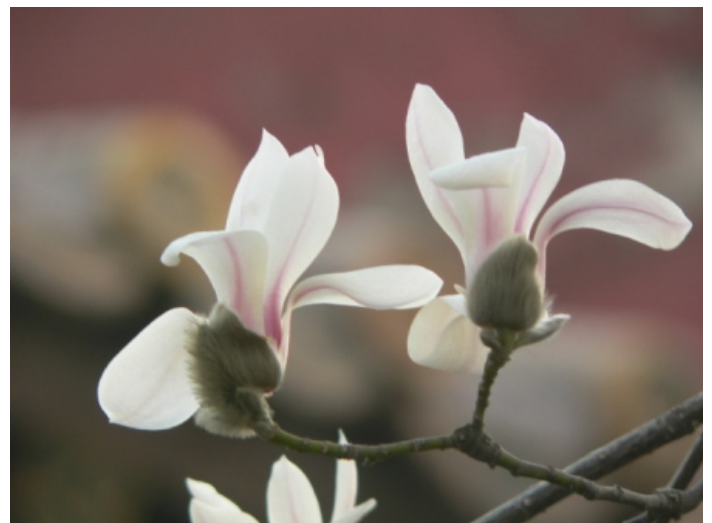
Image: [Myrabella](#)



Magnolia denudata

Magnolia denudata, the lilytree is native to central and eastern China. It has been cultivated in Chinese Buddhist temple gardens since 600 AD. Its flowers were regarded as a symbol of purity in the Tang Dynasty and it was planted in the grounds of the emperor's palace. It is the official city flower of Shanghai. *Magnolia denudata* is a low, rounded, thickly branched tree. The leaves are bright green and the bark is a coarse, dark grey. The white flowers that emerge from early to late spring have a citrus-lemon fragrance but are prone to browning if subjected to frost. It likes rich, moist soil and should be planted in a location where it is protected from elemental extremes.

Image: Yongxing

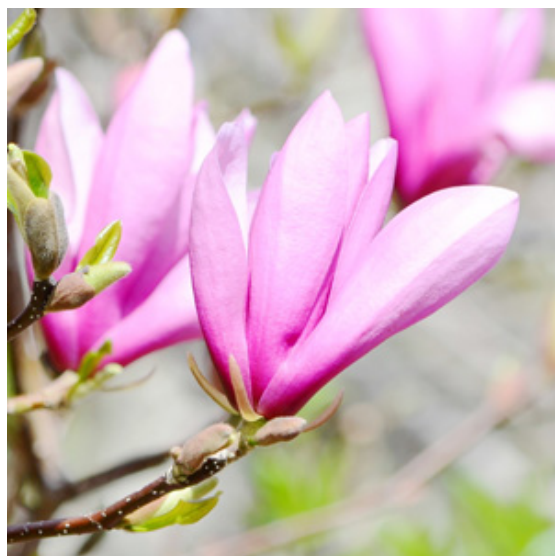


Magnolia hybrids

The following Magnolia varieties are currently available in the nursery trade.

The images and descriptions have been taken from the Garden Express website.

<https://www.gardenexpress.com.au/product/magnolia/>



Magnolia Star Wars

(*Magnolia liliiflora* x *campbellii*) is a larger growing variety that features enormous dark purple/pink buds that open into large pink flowers fading out to white at the tips. Star Wars is quite precocious and will start flowering at a young age, and once mature this beautiful tree can bear fragrant flowers up to 30cm across. Star Wars is a winner of the RHS Award of Garden Merit Frost hardy deciduous small tree.

Large goblet shaped blooms on bare branches in late Winter to early Spring, followed by large green leaves that will eventually become shades of gold in Autumn. Ideal as specimen tree.



Magnolia 'Cleopatra' PBR (*Magnolia hybrid*) is a new release true dwarf Magnolia. It has attractive reddish purple flowers. 'Cleopatra' has a naturally column shaped growth habit so is ideal for a narrow space. Frost hardy deciduous small tree. Large goblet shaped blooms on bare branches in late Winter to early Spring, followed by large green leaves that will eventually become shades of gold in Autumn. Does best in a cooler climate and grows into a better shape (and flowers for longer periods of time) with protection from strong winds. Snails love the delicate flowers so keep an eye out for these troublesome pests at flowering time.



Magnolia Genie PBR (*Magnolia hybrid*) is a new release true dwarf Magnolia. Black-red buds open into large maroon-purple cup shaped flowers. Will flower from a young age so perfect for instant results. Frost hardy deciduous small trees. Large goblet shaped blooms on bare branches in late Winter to early Spring, followed by large green leaves that will eventually become shades of gold in Autumn. Ideal as specimen trees in small gardens or courtyards and driveway plantings. Performs best in cooler climates and grows into a better shape (and flowers for longer periods of time) with protection from strong winds.



Magnolia Manchu Fan (*Magnolia hybrid*)

A small tree with an upright rounded growth habit, Magnolia Manchu Fan is a standout performer for a smaller garden. It has masses of creamy white flowers with a hint of pink at the base in mid Spring, this beautiful tree makes a magnificent specimen tree wherever it is planted. Prefers a sheltered position in full sun or part shade - well drained slightly acidic soil. Cover the soil with mulch after planting to keep the roots cool.

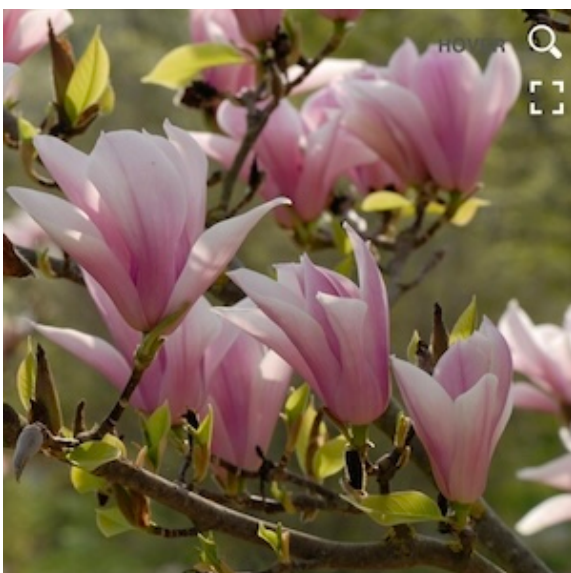


Magnolia Caerhay's Belle (*Magnolia sargentiana var robusta x M. Sprengeri 'Diva'*)

is a stunning pale pink variety bred in Holland but named in the UK. An outstanding feature tree, Caerhay's Belle shows off extremely large buds opening into huge flowers in the softest shades of pale to mid pink. This variety is an early flowering Magnolia so care needs to be taken in cooler climates as frosts will damage the delicate flowers.



Magnolia Black Tulip PBR (*Magnolia hybrid*) makes an excellent feature tree in any garden with its magnificent deep red to near black fragrant blooms up to 15cm across. Flowers appear on bare stems in early Spring and are followed by beautiful green foliage. It is a frost hardy deciduous magnolia variety with attractive foliage and a compact growth habit. Black Tulip' PBR will flower at a young age, but the flowers may take a few seasons to develop to their true size and colour.



Magnolia Heaven Scent (*Magnolia liliiflora x veitchii*)

is a smaller growing deciduous variety making it perfect for a smaller garden. Large fragrant tulip shaped blooms in pastel lavender to pink with white shading on the interior will adorn the bare branches of this award winning Magnolia in early Spring, putting on a magnificently fragrant and memorable display. Recipient of the RHS Award of Merit, the tree is truly spectacular when in full bloom. The flowers can be enjoyed for a period that lasts up to six weeks. As with all magnolias, it prefers a moist, fertile and well-drained soil that is slightly acidic. A sunny aspect in a protected position is best.

**Australian Garden History Society
Northern NSW branch**

***Rose pruning workshop
Heritage Rose Garden
at Saumarez Homestead***



Join our AGHS rose pruning experts for a hands on workshop.

Learn about the history of the Heritage Rose Garden and the rose species it houses.

A demonstration of pruning techniques for particular rose species will be followed by your opportunity to practise your pruning skills.

Small groups. Experienced guidance. Written notes to take home.



A choice of sessions:

\$20.00 per head

9.00am to 1.00pm

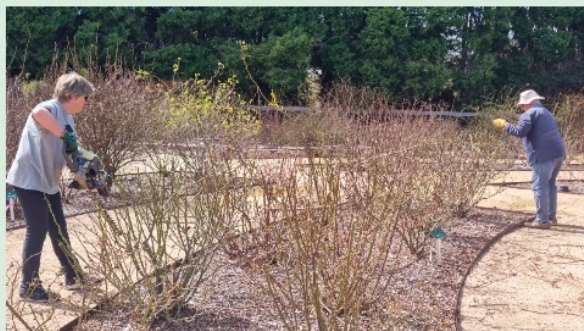
Saturday 17 August 2024

Wednesday 21 August 2024

**Saumarez Homestead
Saumarez Road
via Armidale Airport**

BYO secateurs and gloves

**Morning tea included
BYO mug and hot drink**



**Book at:
(Be sure to choose your preferred
workshop)**

<https://www.trybooking.com/CUDEL>



AGHS Northern NSW branch proudly presents

Kim Woods Rabbidge

***Mid-Atlantic USA:
The Art of Gardens***



**Kim is a keen gardener, tour leader, writer, photographer,
and owner and curator of *Our Australian Gardens* on Instagram**



Sunday 25th August

2.00pm - 3.45pm

Doors open at 1.30pm

AGHS members \$20.00

Non-members \$35.00

**Armidale Playhouse
309 Beardy St
Armidale**

Refreshments included



Book at:

<https://www.trybooking.com/CTOWL>





**AUSTRALIAN GARDEN HISTORY SOCIETY
ACT MONARO RIVERINA BRANCH**

***CLEVER COUNTRY: AN ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVE
ON LANDSCAPE***

SPEAKER: ADJ. PROFESSOR MARGO NGAWA NEALE

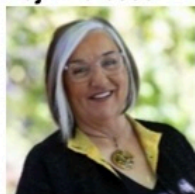
WEDNESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER, 6 PM



**The Joint Annual Lecture of the ACT Monaro Riverina Branch of the AGHS and
the Friends of the NLA.**

Land is viewed as 'Country' in Aboriginal Australia. It is a worldview that embodies a oneness with nature and its many manifestations through the seasons, weather and land formations. It is not a view of nature as the term landscape implies in the western view. Our history is written in the land. Country is our archive, it is where our knowledge, law and identity reside. Country holds information, stories and secrets - from medicine, engineering, ecology, astronomy to social mores on how to live well and sustainably on this planet and with each other. If Country holds such knowledge, then Country is clever. This concept will be visually explored through the award-winning landmark exhibition *Songlines: Tracking the Seven Sisters* and the Garden of Australian Dreams (GOAD) at the National Museum of Australia (NMA). It begs the question of where gardens fit into this schema?

Adj. Professor Margo Ngawa Neale is an award-winning Indigenous art curator, historian and researcher.



She is considered a pioneer in the representation of Indigenous culture in public institutions across major art galleries, museums and universities nationally and internationally. She has recently become Emeritus Curatorial Fellow: First Nations and was formerly Head of the Centre for Indigenous Knowledges at the National Museum of Australia, where she continues to work on her award-winning global touring exhibition, *Songlines: Tracking the Seven Sisters*.

She has authored, co-authored or edited some 30 books including the *Oxford Companion to Aboriginal Art and Culture*, and the *First Knowledges* series with Thames & Hudson. Of Aboriginal and Irish descent, Margo is a member of the Gumbaynggirr nation with clan affiliations to the Kulin and Wiradjuri nations.

Venue	Theatre, NLA
Cost	\$20 for AGHS members & NLA Friends, others \$25 (includes light refreshments following the presentation.) Livestream tickets \$11 for AGHS members & NLA Friends, others \$16.
Bookings	Bookings through the NLA at https://www.nla.gov.au/whats-on/events/clever-country-aboriginal-perspective-landscape (NO bookings to be made through AGHS).
Inquiries	Nancy Clarke clarkenancy624@gmail.com

New England Garden Festival (from NE Times)

This year's festival will kick off with a Spring Garden Trail, beginning in the township of Walcha, and will showcase three gardens in each town. Final details of which exact gardens will be showcased in each location is yet to be finalised but the itinerary for the trail is set:

- 31 October Walcha
- 1 November Uralla
- 2-3 November Armidale and New England Garden Festival at the Armidale Racecourse
- 4 November Guyra
- 5 November Glen Innes
- 6 November Tenterfield

"In making the event a Trail we've deliberately kept the gardens to just three per town for two reasons – firstly because we know the gardener's attending all want to see as much as possible and secondly, we've capped the open times from 9am – 2pm so that they can then stay overnight in that town and enjoy some of the other attractions each location has to offer," said Ms Forsythe. "We're currently working with residents in each township to curate a list of some of the best things to see, eat and do in each town that we can give to visitors so that from 2pm once they're done seeing the gardens, they can explore."

The main festival event will be once again held at the Armidale Racecourse on Saturday and Sunday 2-3 November. "We've already had an incredible response from stallholders, with the same number that we had last year already locked in and more applications to be a part of the festival still coming," said Ms Forsythe. "As well as the stalls, we'll also be holding workshops again, with all the favourites from last year plus some new additions to the schedule"

"And, after highlighting local musical talent in general last year, this year we'll be highlighting local school musical talent – the talent in our schools in Armidale is just outstanding so I know that we're going to have some fabulous performances."

Last year saw television personality Brendan Moar take to the stage as the festival's special guest and Ms Forsythe assures us that this year will also provide a great surprise. "I'm not giving away any names just yet but I will say that we have an excellent special guest in the works for this year," said Ms Forsythe.

The festival is still run entirely by a crew of very dedicated volunteers, with some additional help from the volunteer garden clubs in all the towns except Walcha, where the Quota club is taking the reins and assisting with organisation. "It's a little bit scary but also very exciting to see that everything is starting to fall into place now," said Ms Forsythe.

"But on a serious note, I really want to highlight our wonderful charity this year. Once again, we'll be raising funds for Can Assist who do amazing work ensuring that people in the region can access cancer care, helping with things like medication, accommodation, travel and financial assistance." Can Assist currently have branches in Armidale, Glen Innes, Guyra and Uralla. "In those four townships, funds raised will go directly to Can Assist and Tenterfield and Walcha will each name a charity in their town that they will donate to – it's all about making sure that the money raised stays in the local community to help the local community," said Ms Forsythe.

Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Notes
August Saturday 17 Wednesday 21 9.00am - 1.00pm	Rose pruning workshops Join our AGHS rose pruning experts for a hands on workshop. \$20.00 per head Morning tea included Bookings: see flyer on p.9	Heritage Rose Garden - Saumarez Homestead A demonstration of pruning techniques for particular rose species will be followed by your opportunity to practise your pruning skills. Small groups. Experienced guidance. Written notes to take home. Learn about the history of the Heritage Rose Garden and the rose species it houses. BYO Secateurs and gloves, mug and hot drink
August Sunday 25th 2.00pm	Winter Speakers Presentation Kim Woods Rabbidge <i>'Mid-Atlantic USA: The art of gardens'</i>	Armidale Playhouse - Beardsley St Armidale Admission: AGHS Members \$20.00 Non-members \$35.00 Payment through TryBooking https://www.trybooking.com/CTOWL
August Sunday 25th	3.30pm Committee Meeting 4.00pm AGM 4.30pm General Meeting 6.00pm Dinner	Armidale Playhouse - Beardsley St Armidale Dinner venue t.b.a.
October 18,19,20	AGHS National Conference Bunbury WA	Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre Accommodation: Bunbury Hotel + other options Flights: Jetstar direct from Sydney to Busselton Still a few places left. To register go to https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/product/aghs-conference-registration-2024/
November 2nd & 3rd	New England Garden Festival	Armidale Jockey Club Barney St, Armidale NSW 2350
November Sunday 24th	Christmas Function	Petersen's Winery
Date tba	Yulgilbah Trip	Details to come
Date tba	Visit Moree Gardens	This trip is being arranged by Fran Webb and the Moree Garden Club. More details to come.

