

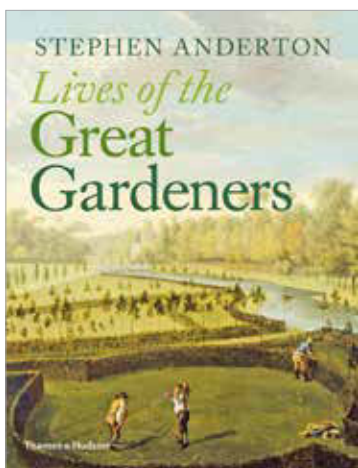
these scenes might shake us from complacency and change our attitudes towards conserving this treasure of a region. If you hadn't already realised the unique richness of Australia's South-West, then after reading Laurie's book, you will! I hope this book inspires people to get out and experience what the region has to offer.

Anne Cochrane is a senior research scientist with the Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia.

Stephen Anderton *Lives of the great gardeners*
2016 Thames and Hudson (London) hardback,
304 pp, 247 illus, £24.95

When I was studying art history many decades ago I fell in love with the wonderful book written in the mid-16th century by Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the most excellent painters, sculptors, and architects*. Now we have a similar project by Stephen Anderton, and it is done well.

Anderton is the garden writer for *The Times* and has spent years working in gardens in both restoration and management. His writing is punchy and engaging and he has avoided doing what Vasari did, ensuring he himself appears as



one of the great artists. Still, he did not work for Cosimo di Medici, where a little self-publicity was pretty important to get the next gig!

He is also much more eclectic than Vasari who only really wrote about Florentines. Anderton covers the world and our

own Edna Walling gets due respect. Of course his choices are his own and all of us could add or subtract a few. But when you go from Wen Zhengming (working in China at the same time as Vasari in Florence) to Charles Jencks and Piet Oudolf in the 21st century you have covered a lot of turf (ouch, particularly in Jencks' case!).

The structure is engaging too, grouping the designers into 'Gardens of ideas', 'of straight lines', 'of curves', and finally 'Gardens of plantsmanship'. The book is well illustrated,

though in the case of Edna Walling I think he could have done better. There is an excellent further reading section, which is essential when each entry is only 4–6 pages of text, but I thought that with one or two of the designers mentioned he might have chosen differently here too. In the excellent chapter on FL Olmsted, for example, he omits the wonderful biography by Witold Rybczynski, *A clearing in the distance*.

As a quick reference tool this needs to be in any garden historian's collection – alongside the *Oxford Companion*.

Max Bourke AM is a former deputy chair of AGHS with agricultural science training and a career in the arts and heritage.

Lisa Murray *Sydney cemeteries: a field guide*
2016 NewSouth, paperback, 400 pp, \$34.99

'I love cemeteries', writes City of Sydney historian and taphophile Lisa Murray. Visiting the open spaces which constitute our cemeteries to admire the headstones and enjoy their park-like spaces has long been a Sydney tradition. This guide is a handbook for exploring the city's cemeteries today, from crowded inner-city plots to spacious burial grounds in semi-rural spots. It covers the history and heritage of 101 public cemeteries in Sydney, listing notable and notorious burials, but going beyond this with short essays on topics such as the evolution of cemetery design in Sydney, Australian expressions of the European garden cemetery movement, changing architectural style of headstones and changes in styles of managing cemeteries. Ryan lists her 'top five' cemeteries in various categories – for picnics, for example, and birdwatching, admiring views, seeing the oldest ones (the oldest of all is St John's, Parramatta, with burials from 1790).

