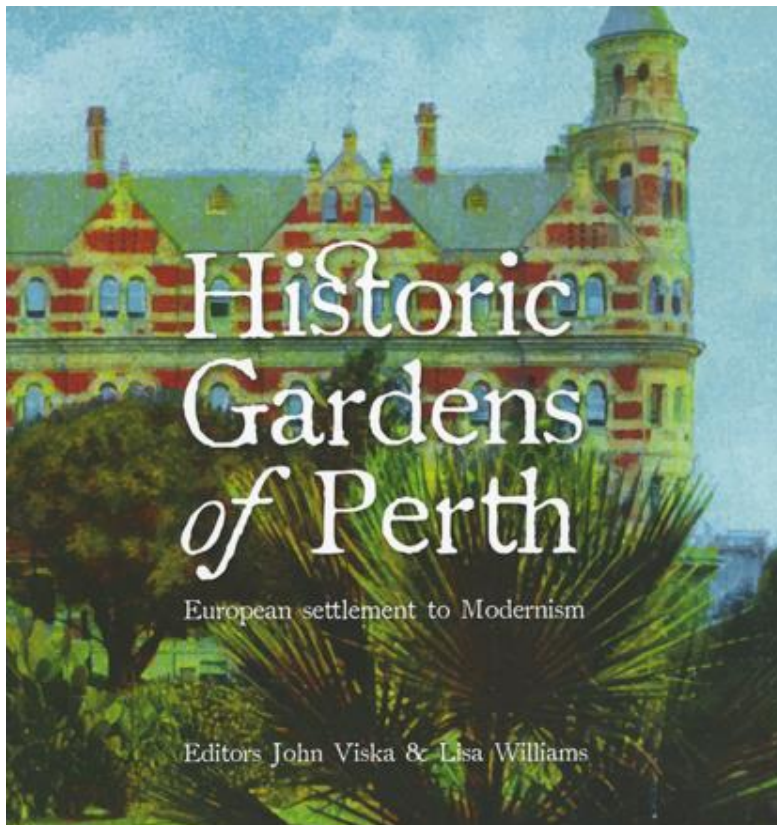


Australian Garden History Society

West Australian Branch

Winter Newsletter 2023

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



I am happy to announce that our publication *Historic Gardens of Perth European settlement to Modernism* has been printed and now available for purchase. Many thanks go to all those who contributed to the project, being either involved in preparing written material, editing or proof reading.

With a print run of 500 we were able to keep the cost within the original budget. The book retails at \$50, including GST. Profit will be allocated towards heritage garden projects. Copies will be available at branch functions (cash or credit card) or you can order for delivery by post by contacting the Chair at johnviska@gmail.com. An official launch will take place in the near future. Watch for details.

John Viska Chair AGHS WA Branch



West Australian Branch

Contact: Lynette Petersen (lpetersen@aapt.net.au)

West Australian Branch Committee

Chair: John Viska (johnviska@gmail.com)

Secretary: Lynette Petersen

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 70 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

Chair's Report John Viska

Wirra Willa Gardens

“Wirra Willa Gardens”, 12 Wangoola Terrace, Mount Nasura, previously 3258 Albany Highway Armadale has been saved by the City of Armadale purchasing the property in Dec 2022.

Its garden was laid out originally in the 1930s and developed over the years by successive owners. In recognition of the garden's heritage value the property was given permanent status on the Register of the National Estate on 21 October 1980, one of the small number of the State's gardens listed. On the 11th December 2008 it was listed on the Armadale Municipal Heritage Inventory and on the 25th March 2009 placed on the Heritage Council WA State Register of Heritage Places. This enables it to qualify for funds from HECWAs heritage grants program. Members of the WA branch of the Australian Garden History Society who attended the August 2017 AGM in Armadale, viewed the garden from the periphery and were alarmed at its deterioration. Consequently, the branch communicated this to the Heritage Council's Director and the City of Armadale. The garden with its many mature specimens of cool climate species will now be in the public domain. The City of Armadale's minutes for 19th December 2022 recorded that their aim was restoring the heritage gardens.

[Australian Heritage Database \(environment.gov.au\)](https://environment.gov.au/australian-heritage-database)

[Heritage List adopted 2023.pdf \(armadale.wa.gov.au\)](#)

Committee News

Due to health reasons Patsy Vizents has resigned from her positions of branch committee member and the State Representative on the NMC leaving a vacancy to be filled.

During her time Patsy has recorded the oral histories of Carol Mansfield, Anne Willox, Tessa Watson, Sue Monger, Linda Green, John Viska and Kingsley Dixon and coordinated the National Oral History Program. Prior to being elected onto the committee she was employed at Rottnest Island as a Heritage Officer developing interpretive programs. As the guest speaker at an AGM she presented an informative talk on Rottnest Island's gardens and assisted in the initial planning stages of our publication. We thank her for her involvement and wish her well.

Boris Roglich has also resigned from the committee which now leaves a vacancy for two new members. We thank Boris for his participation at our regular meetings and we look forward seeing him at future events.

The Committee meets once a month and has the technology available to participate via Zoom. If you are interested please contact John Viska.

New Member

Welcome to new member Barbara Stockton. We hope you enjoy being part of the society and look forward to meeting you at some of our events.

Perth's Autumn Colours

Prior to the welcoming rains, the dry autumn has produced some spectacular colours in liquidambar, Chinese tallows, crepe myrtles, claret ashes and Chinese pistachios around Perth.



[Chinese pistachios - Bing images](#)



[crepe myrtle autumn - Bing images](#)

AGHS Chair Visits WA

The newly elected Chair of the Garden History Society, Lyn Walker and her husband Richard Bird were in Perth briefly and before venturing north visited the West Australian Branch Chair at home and met the Treasurer Sue Davis. Progress on the preparation for 2024 National Conference in Bunbury was discussed.



L to R: Richard Bird, Lynne Walker, John Viska. Photo: S Davis

Recent Branch Events

Wanneroo Botanic Gardens *Sue Davis / Photos Lyn Oliver*

Our day at the gardens on the 16th February began with coffee at the cafe. Sue Medalia's suggestion that we should always start our events with coffee was taken very seriously!



What an inspired choice was a visit to the carefully concealed Wanneroo Botanic Gardens. Set back from the very busy intersection of Joondalup Drive and Wanneroo Road, the gardens have lost their position of prominence to a popular cafe and commercial development. Perhaps this concealment makes entering the beauty of this mature garden all the more surprising and revelatory.

The concept for the gardens began in 1971 with the purchase of a large block of land by Theo and Hanneke Puik, migrants to Australia from Holland. Located on the edge of Lake Joondalup, the land was sand and scrub, hardly an inviting botanical site. However, Theo, a landscape architect and Hanneke took on the massive task of removing 700 tonnes of limestone over seven years to create the waterways and rockeries which give life to over 500 species of plants. Now celebrating forty years of public access, the garden boasts a towering overstorey of magnificent trees giving shelter to a magical landscape of garden rooms which delight the eye at every turn.



John Viska led our group through the site explaining the relevance of planting schemes, the introduction of unusual plants and their features and the ongoing challenge of managing a horticultural environment which changes as its planting schemes mature.

The gardens are a popular place for social gatherings and events and the family have announced plans for a multipurpose function centre and a reimagined cafe. Should you feel you have missed out on a real gem, perhaps a visit before these disruptive reconfigurations of the site take place is to be considered.

Bestry Cottage and Mount Flora Regional Museum *John Viska*

The wet morning of the 10th May didn't deter 17 members meeting at the Bestry family's cottage in Balcatta to hear Peter and Alan speak about their father and grandfather's market gardening experiences in the area. Members then viewed the interior of the heritage listed cottage before driving to the Mount Flora Regional Museum at Watermans Bay. The informative displays on market gardening of the area and historical items were inspected following morning tea.



L to R: Rae Kolb, Peter Bestry, Alan Vestry and John Viska. Photo: F. Farrelly

York Heritage Festival *John Viska*

As part of the York Heritage Festival a presentation on Colonial Kitchen Gardens was given by the Chair in the Town Hall. It was well attended by York residents and visitors and gave the opportunity to display the branch's banner and promote AGHS. Complimentary back copies of the Society's Journal and membership forms were also made available.

Unearthing the Bishop's Garden *John Viska*

On Sunday 2nd April, the first weekend of the City of Perth's Heritage Festival, the Chair presented a talk titled "Unearthing the Bishop's Garden". This was originally presented as part of the Royal WA Historical Society's 2022 lecture series and offered to the festival organiser when the branch was approached to participate. An article on the talk was also published in the AGHS October 2022 journal, vol.34, no. 2 pp. 8 to 11 as well as The Haleian. The talk was attended by 45 people, including five branch members.



Bishop Hale's vine trellis and orchard circa 1860.

Photo courtesy RWAHS

Landscapes at Risk – AGHS Advocacy Issues

Hyde Park *John Viska*

The polyphagous shot-hole borer (PSHB) *Euwallaea fornicatus*, has been identified in the park and unfortunately many of the trees are susceptible to this pest. The top host trees in the metropolitan area are, maple *Acer*, plane *Platanus*, robinia *Robinia*, poplars *Populus*, oak *Quercus*, avocado *Persea*, fig *Ficus* and coral tree *Erythrina*. For more information about the borer visit the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development website at:

[Polyphagous shot-hole borer | Agriculture and Food](#)

Hyde Park Conservation Management Plan *John Viska*

At the 2023 City of Vincent's AGM and Electors meeting the Chair moved that the 2003 Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for Hyde Park be revised and updated. As the park is on the State Register of Heritage Places and qualifies for funding through the Heritage Council's grants scheme, it was recommended that council take advantage of this. Consequently the motion for funding to be sought in the 2023/24 financial year was adopted.

As the 120 year old trees are now under threat of the recently identified polyphagus shot-hole borer (PSHB), it is timely that a new CMP is prepared as the future management of the park's historic plantings is imperative.

National Conference 2024 Update *John Viska*

Planning for the 2024 National Conference at Bunbury on the 18th, 19th, 20th of October 2024 with Monday 21st October the optional garden viewing day is well underway.

The Conference Committee is meeting monthly and in a recent trip to Bunbury the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer inspected venues for the cocktail party, conference dinner and the garden of historic Alverstoke. In a previous visit the Chair viewed gardens in the Ferguson Valley to be included in the program. A pre and post conference tour is also being organised.

WA Branch Event Diary

34th Annual General Meeting

Sunday, 13th August 2023 / Gather at 1:45pm for 2:00pm start.

Venue: Meeting Room, Royal WA Historical Society, Stirling House, 49 Broadway, Nedlands
Guest Speaker: Historian and author Gillian Lilleyman

For any enquiries, assistance or apologies regarding this event please contact Lynette Petersen / Mobile: 0439 941 822 / Email: lpetersen@aapt.net.au

Cost: \$10.00 includes afternoon tea

50 cent ticket fee applies to online bookings

Bookings: Through Trybooking

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

October: Day in York

Details will be provided later.

Late Oct/Nov: Sloan's Cottage

Details will be provided later.

Christmas Function

Sunday, 3rd December. Details will be provided later.

2024 Annual National Conference

18th, 19th, 20th of October 2024, Bunbury, Western Australia.

National Events

2023 Annual National Conference, 29th September to 1st October, Ipswich, Queensland

“Digging into the past – above and below the Limestone Hills”

[2023 Annual National Conference - Australian Garden History Society](#)

Other Events

Talk on Nancy Grasby, Landscape Architect

Tuesday, 20th June

Barbara Dundas, Vice President, Guildford Association Inc, has kindly invited us to a talk which will be given by John Viska on the topic of **Nancy Grasby** a significant Guildford raised landscape architect who enjoyed an international career.

Venue: St Matthew's Hall in Stirling Square, Guildford off access from Meadow St or Johnson St. North of the railway line.

Time: 7.30pm-8.30 followed by a Guildford Association Inc. general meeting.