



45th Australian Garden History Society
Conference

Beyond the Garden Fence

Looking not only at gardens but
also the wider cultural landscape

MT GAMBIER 30 October to 2 November 2025

Pre-conference tour Wednesday 29 and Thursday 30 October
Optional day on 3 November



Book online <https://www.trybooking.com/CYYLQ> or **click here**





A

Mt Gambier

Mt Gambier is an amazing city. Situated on a limestone plain, the whole region is honeycombed with underground channels, caves and sinkholes. The volcanoes erupted through the limestone only about 4,000 years ago. This makes for a unique patchwork of soils upon which grow beautiful gardens, vineyards, pine forests and farms of many descriptions.

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. They changed the landscape forever.

This conference 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 produced in the region goes.

A Umpherston Sinkhole/Balumbul, image courtesy South Australian Tourism Commission

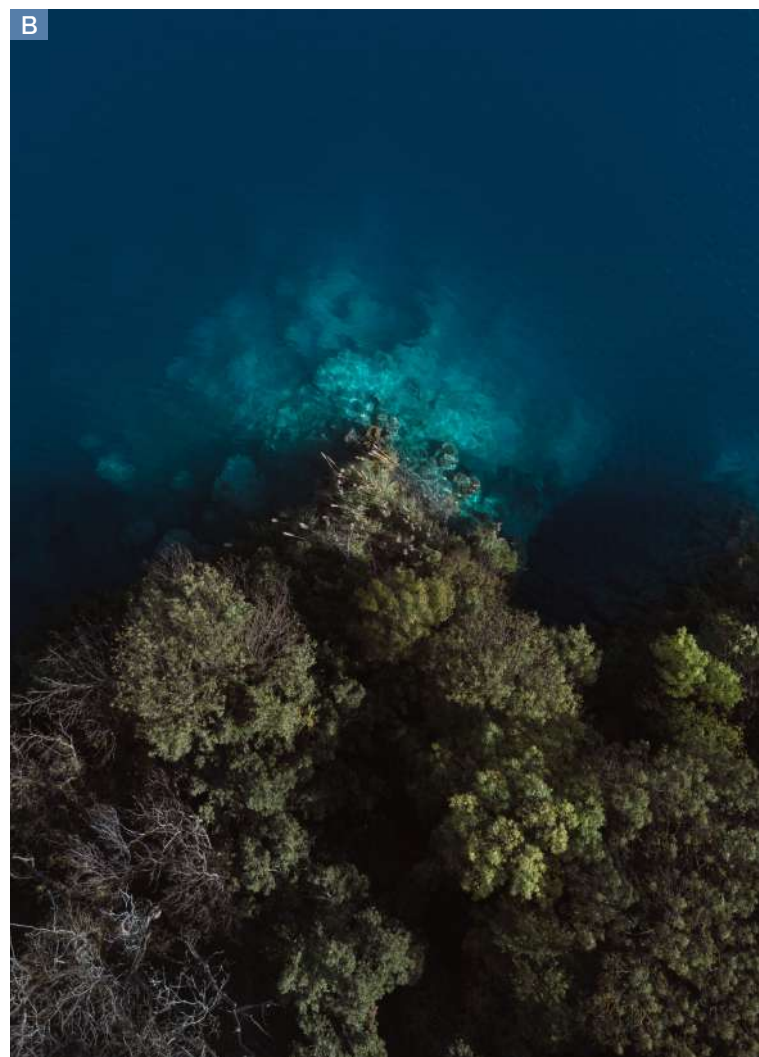
B Blue Lake, image courtesy South Australian Tourism Commission

Cover Little Blue Lake/Warwar, Mt Gambier, image Jarrod Andrews @jrodcaptures on Instagram / JROD Captures on Facebook

Andrews used a drone at sunrise to capture the scale of the lake, the still blue water and the fog in the surrounding paddocks. The image appeared on the front cover of a popular novel by Margaret Hicky called Broken Bay.

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Pre-conference tour

Wednesday 29 and Thursday 30 October

Pre-conference tour visitors will be collected at 9 am from a central Adelaide location by the conference bus and driven to Carrick Hill, a historic house in Adelaide and the site of the proposed Australian Museum of Garden History.

The tour will then travel via the Princes Highway to Kingston, and then on to Robe. Robe is a historic town and fishing port located on the limestone coast of South Australia. Motel accommodation in Robe has been booked for AGHS members and a dinner for the tour group will be held at the historic Caledonian Inn Hotel on Wednesday evening.

<https://www.caledonianinnrobe.com.au/>

On Thursday morning, we travel via the Southern Coast Highway to Beachport, visit a rose farm at Tatanoola, a historic woolshed at Glencoe and arrive at Mt Gambier for the mayoral reception for AGHS conference delegates at the Town Hall.

The pre-conference tour fee of \$790 for twin share per person and \$840 for single per person includes all visits, meals, accommodation and coach travel from Adelaide to Mt Gambier via Robe. It excludes drinks with dinner in Robe.



Robe. Image credit: [locationscout.net](https://www.locationscout.net)

Conference program

The conference is being held at The Barn, which also offers accommodation (see page 8).

The program is broken into morning lectures followed by garden visits in the afternoons on Friday and Saturday, with an all-day tour on Sunday.

Thursday 30 October

4.30–6.30pm Mayoral reception and early registration at City Hall

There will be a glass of wine and finger food available. This is an opportunity to greet old friends and meet new ones.



Friday 31 October

7.45 am Registration at The Barn

8.20 am Delegates to be seated

AGHS patron Tim Entwisle will welcome everyone and will introduce Trevor Nottle, the keynote speaker. Trevor is not only a well-known author but he was at the previous Mt Gambier conference in 1999, so is well placed to look back and see how the AGHS has developed over the past 26 years.

He will be followed by Uncle Ken Jones, a Boandik elder who has some fascinating facts about how the Boandik lived in this area as well as amazing stories to tell.

Ian Lewis, a renowned geologist, will explain how the land was shaped and how the soils originated.

Glenys and Barry Mulligan will show us how their beautiful garden at St Mary's vineyard was created, and we'll visit it on Sunday

There will be an opportunity for questions and answers from the speakers before lunch is served.

In the afternoon we will board buses for a tour of the geological features of the town and an afternoon tea at The Apple Farm.

In the evening a buffet dinner at the Pantry, in the city of Mt Gambier itself, will be provided, another opportunity to mix and chat but this time buy your own drinks.

A Mt Gambier, image courtesy South Australian Tourism Commission

B Umpherston Sinkhole/Balumbul, photo Adam Burzzone, courtesy South Australian Tourism Commission



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Saturday 1 November

8.00 am Delegates to be seated for the Society's annual general meeting.

Sue Bell, who runs Bellwether Vineyard will explain why viticulture is so successful in this region, what wines are produced and the tourist attraction that results.

Richard Heathcote will talk on how the first settlers saw the country and has some wonderful images to show.

Emma Baily's family has been involved in recycling on a commercial scale for many years and this will be a very interesting topic.

Our last speaker is Susan McCormack, Director of Carrick Hill, a historic house and garden in Adelaide. Delegates will have walked through the Blade display. The display explores why Australians love lawn and the game changer role of the lawn mower. Susan will explain how it originated and its future at Carrick Hill.

Another question-and-answer session will be followed by Stuart Read summing up the conference. Finally, Helen Oates will tell us what is planned for next year's conference in Orange, NSW.

After lunch we again board buses to see more features of the town but this time we will have tea at Caroline Hills vineyard.

The Conference dinner will be held at The Barn. The after-dinner speaker will be Francesca Beddie, our journal editor.



B



C



D

A Bellwether Wines, photo Ryan Cantwell, copyright Frame Creative Pty Ltd, courtesy South Australian Tourism Commission

B Bellwether Wines, Tourism Australia / courtesy South Australian Tourism Commission

C Caroline Hills vineyard, image courtesy <https://visitlimestonecoast.com.au/blog/limestone-coast-wine-regions/>

D Eastern facade of Carrick Hill mansion built in 1939, photo denisbin, Flickr, Creative Commons (CC BY-ND 2.0)



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Sunday 2 November

8.45am depart

This will be an all-day trip. We will travel in a circular route that incorporates the Nangwarry Forestry Museum, Penola Petticoat Lane cottages, St Mary's vineyard and garden, Yallum Park garden, Millicent wetlands and the HollaFresh herb farm.

Buses will travel separately, so your bus might visit these places in a different order. Delegates will get a packed lunch, catered morning tea and an afternoon snack.

5.00pm arrive back at The Barn

No evening events planned. Delegates make their own arrangements.



B



D



C

A Limestone Coast, image Antiago Gonzalez Redondo

B St Mary's vineyard and garden, image courtesy South Australian Tourism

C St Mary's vineyard and garden, image courtesy South Australian Tourism

D Penola Petticoat Lane cottages, photos Dot Evans



A



B

Monday 3 November OPTIONAL DAY

Led by Richard Heathcote and Di Wilkins

7.45am pick up from The Barn and Commodore

8.50 am Arrive Naracoorte Caves National Parks

9.00 am Victoria Caves Fossil Guided Tour [approx. 1hr duration] for first group
second group explores caves

9.30 am Victoria Caves Fossil Guided Tour [approx. 1hr duration] for second group
first group explores caves

10.30 am Guided Tours completed
coffee and other onsite activities led by tour leaders

11.00 am Coach departs for Hynam

11.15 am Arrive Hynam township – Gum Park house and garden
Dee Nolan, owner, addresses group on the history of her family's ownership and the restoration undertaken since she returned in 1996. Her interests are organic gardening, rare breed sheep and olive orcharding. Lunch and tour.

1.45 pm Coach departs to visit Hare & Thistle, Naracoorte

Anna Robinson, the owner, explains the history of the house. Opportunity for retail therapy.

2.45 pm Coach departs for Mt Gambier via Princes Highway [1 hr 25 mins]

includes comfort stops at either Millicent/ or Snuggery/ or Gower National Park/ or Tantanoola Hotel (Tantanoola Tiger attraction)

4.45 pm Optional Day Tour concludes with drop offs to motels and The Barn

Cost

\$385 pp AGHS member

A Naracoorte Caves, Limestone Coast, courtesy South Australian Tourism Commission

B Naracoorte Caves exhibition, Tourism Australia/ South Australian Tourism Commission

Transport and accommodation

Melbourne to Mt Gambier

Flights: Rex (one or two flights a day) and Qantas.

Train/coach from Southern Cross Station.

(Train to Ballarat, then coach to Mt Gambier (takes about 6-7 hours) Driving takes about five hours.

Adelaide to Mt Gambier

A bus will be available, at a cost, to transport delegates back to Adelaide on Tuesday 4 November. This is a direct journey with a stop for lunch, not an AGHS tour, **and should also be indicated on the booking form.**

Delegates will be staying at The Barn or at another hotel, possibly The Commodore, in Mt Gambier. Both these venues are offering special rates for AGHS members.

Delegates book their own accommodation.

A shuttle bus has been arranged to transport delegates without their own transport between The Barn and Mt Gambier accommodation venues. If you will have a car at your disposal during the conference you can travel the short distance (7-8kms) between venues.

If not, please indicate this on the booking form.

Bookings for accommodation are open now.

The Barn

747 Glenelg River Rd, Mt Gambier

T (08)8726 9999

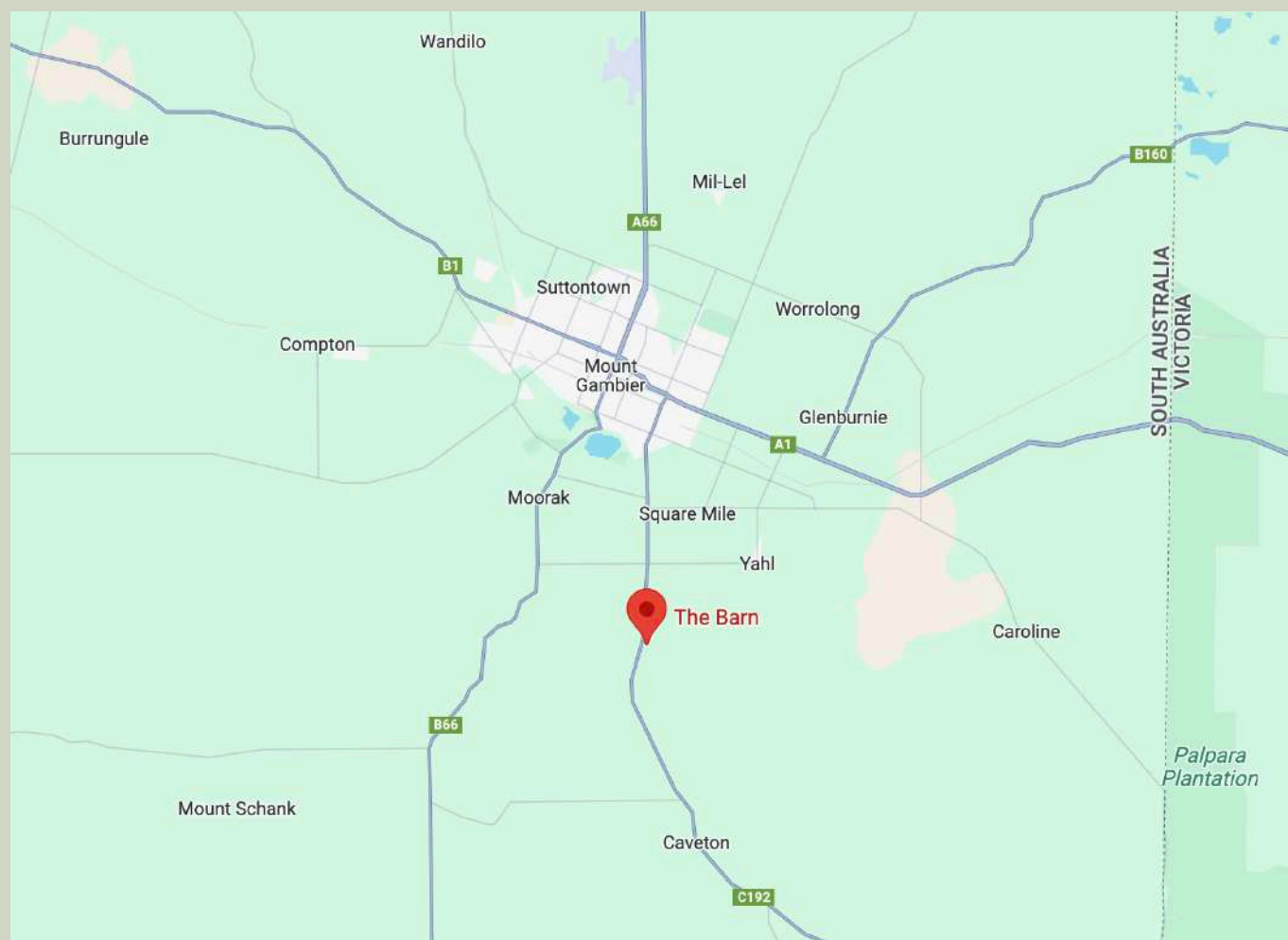
E info@barn.com.au

The Commodore

1 Jubilee Highway East, Mt Gambier

T (08) 87246400

E stay@thecommodoremtn.com.au



Conference fees



Use the QR code or book online at
<https://www.trybooking.com/CYYLQ>

For postal bookings only, complete the Booking Form (pages 9 and 10).

\$980 FULL CONFERENCE x =

Includes the welcome event, lectures, all morning and afternoon teas, all lunches, a Friday evening buffet dinner and the conference dinner

Please indicate your attendance at the following:

Thursday evening Mayoral reception

Friday evening buffet dinner at The Pantry

\$200 LECTURES-ONLY x =

Two half days of lectures and morning teas

\$100 VIRTUAL CONFERENCE x =

Two half days of lectures

\$100 CONFERENCE DINNER x =

Lectures-only delegates and/or extra guests

\$385 OPTIONAL DAY x =

Includes garden visits, morning and afternoon tea, lunch, coach transport

\$790 PRE CONFERENCE TOUR (share pp) x =

\$840 PRE CONFERENCE TOUR (single pp) x =

Transport options [please indicate numbers]

Interest in shuttle bus between accommodation in Mt Gambier and The Barn

\$100 Bus to Adelaide – Tuesday 4 November [see p. 8 for details]

Will you be driving to the conference? ☐ Yes ☐ No

The Conference, Pre-Tour and the Optional Day are for AGHS members only.

If you would like to attend the conference, consider becoming a member:

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

Booking form FOR POSTAL BOOKINGS ONLY

NAME

Title _____ First name _____ Surname _____

Preferred name for lanyard _____ Membership number _____

Dietary requirements _____

Postal address _____

_____ State _____ Post code _____

Phone _____ Email _____

NAMES OF OTHERS INCLUDED IN THIS BOOKING

Title _____ First name _____ Surname _____

Preferred name for lanyard _____ Membership number _____

Dietary requirements _____

Postal address _____

_____ State _____ Post code _____

Phone _____ Email _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT

Name _____

Relationship to delegate _____ Phone _____

TOTAL \$

PAYMENT METHODS

Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) **AGHS BSB** 012 006 **ACC** 2166 72228

Please write your Surname in the Reference field so we can identify your payment

Cheque

Payable to Australian Garden History Society

Please mail to Private Bag 2000, South Yarra, Victoria, 3141

Credit Card

Please call the office to pay by credit card: **M** 0419 977 703

REFUND POLICY

- Prior to 2 September 90% refund
- 3 September – 30 September 60% refund
- From 1 October no refund
- We strongly advise you have travel insurance.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact AGHS office • **M** 0419 977 703 • **E** info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au