New perspectives on garden history

Ray Choate

The forthcoming Australian Garden History Society annual national conference, to be held in Adelaide from 16 to 18 October 2015, promises to be a vintage affair. Our conferences see the Society at its best—entertaining, informative, enjoyable—with delegates old and new participating at the confluence of our mission to promote ‘awareness and conservation of significant gardens and cultural landscapes’. In Adelaide, and South Australia more generally, our chosen theme ‘Garden to table: productive garden history’ brings a wide range of topics and sites into focus.

South Australia is known for its innovative and enquiring approach to culture and ideas (as well as cuisine!), and so too this year’s conference brings innovation in its format, with a one-day symposium to be held on the day prior to the conference. The general theme of the symposium will remain the same as the conference, but the subtitle ‘new perspectives on garden history’ indicates a subtle shift of intention and approach.

This proposal follows the very successful Hamilton 2014 ‘Gardens at the Frontier: new perspectives on garden history’ symposium, organised by the University of Waikato and Hamilton Gardens, and convened by Dr James Beattie. It builds on this foundation by setting up an annual symposium focused on Australia and New Zealand, convened by institutions, organisations, and individuals with academic and scholarly interests in garden history; and by linking past, present, and (hopefully) future symposia by use of the ‘new perspectives on garden history’ sub-title.

‘Garden to table: new perspectives on garden history’ will, we hope, attract a wide range of scholars crossing disciplinary boundaries. A call for papers is being made, and all abstracts will be peer-reviewed for acceptance and possible publication. We hope that this might not only attract new scholarship in our field, but also make a return to the very foundations of this Society in 1980, when the freshness of garden history meant that cross fertilisation from different disciplines was the norm rather than the exception.

As a member of the Society’s National Management Committee I can say that many hours have been spent in discussion on ways to refresh the Australian Garden History Society. We crucially need to engage with demographics that are young, academic, professional, and/or scholarly, and need to do this sooner rather than later. The time for talk is over, and building on the energy and enthusiasm of new committee members, we need to take positive steps to implement this much-needed engagement.

Engagement is not an easy task. It involves reaching out on terms that suit new demographics, not a top-down approach; breaking down homogeneity in our activities; broadening our fields of endeavour; harnessing new means of communications; and embracing a willingness to change. Stasis is dangerous for any organisation and I believe—as do many of my committee colleagues—that change is vital and overdue.

Engagement is a key part of our mission—it is listed first amongst the ways we promote awareness and conservation of significant gardens and cultural landscapes—and it has crucial links to our other tasks of research, advocacy, and activities. ‘New perspectives on garden history’ promises to be one means of widening our reach and embracing a wider range of potential members and followers. Cut loose. Come to the symposium and the conference.
The 36th annual national conference of the Australian Garden History Society will be held in Adelaide from 16–18 October 2015 with the theme ‘Garden to table: productive garden history’.

In the past decade or two some wonderful trends have swept the nation. Productive gardening or having your own veggie patch and fruit trees has become de rigueur. School children are learning to grow, harvest, and cook fresh produce, and this experience is being enhanced as other parts of their curriculum are interwoven with their gardening sessions. Organic and Permaculture methods are being embraced in the domestic garden and commercially. The knowledge and wisdom of Indigenous Australians is being sought and researched as we introduce more Australian native plants into our diets. Bush tucker cuisine is becoming widely appreciated, traditional gathering skills are being learnt, and research has resulted in the commercial production of such produce. These trends are not new or ground breaking, but are a part of the evolving story of helping to feed the nation and of our horticultural and gardening history.

The beginning is with ‘dreamtime’ stories of hunting and gathering; harvesting food as the seasons provided. We now know that Indigenous peoples of our land utilised fire to promote the lush growth of grasses for the harvest of seeds and it was mentioned in a paper at the 2014 Albany AGHS conference that evidence exists that local tribes possibly transplanted ‘bush tucker’ plants to the base of rocky outcrops, to be watered by the runoff. The women harvested fruits, roots, and seeds from native plants, and long journeys were made to gather seasonal crops such as the protein...
rich kernels of the bunya pine. Such harvesting routines are strongly reflected in Indigenous art and culture.

Productive gardens were an essential component of all colonial settlements—it was a matter of survival. The tyranny of distance meant it was essential for settler colonies to quickly establish food crops and become self-sufficient. Supplies of seeds and plants arrived with the settlers as well as basic tools, but in many instances the convicts and settlers had little experience or knowledge of agriculture and/or gardening. This, coupled with the alien climate and environment, resulted in many failures. It is well documented that the early colonies in Australia struggled to feed themselves and in the case of New South Wales relied heavily on supplies from England, Cape Town, and the penal outpost on Norfolk Island for a number of years. Luckily for the colonies there were obviously some latent ‘green thumbs’ and early records list an amazing variety of fruit and vegetables being grown in government plots and in private gardens. One wonders if stories of hardship and starvation could have been avoided or lessened if the settlers had been able to, or prepared to communicate with the local inhabitants and so learn to identify and harvest edible native plants in the surrounding bushland. There are stories of such co-operation, but sadly few and far between.

In South Australia there are recorded visits of Europeans from the late 1700s and itinerant settlers on Kangaroo Island in the early 1800s, with the first official settlement on the island by the South Australian Company in 1836. Soon after arriving they established a plantation of trees at Kingscote. Today the sole survivor of these early plantings is a mulberry tree—now the oldest recorded surviving exotic fruit tree planted in South Australia. A decision was made not to proceed with the Kangaroo Island settlement and later that year the settlers moved to Holdfast Bay on the mainland, where they awaited the arrival of Governor Hindmarsh and the proclamation of a colony of free settlers. According to botanical historian P.M. Kloot, as these ‘pioneers and those who followed them came freely with the intention to settle and make a new life ... they brought with them all the goods and chattels that they considered necessary’, including seeds, live plants, and gardening tools.

Despite pressing financial problems in the early days of the South Australian colony, funds were made available to establish a Government Garden in 1836, with oranges, cherries, mulberry, quinces, and nectarines being planted along with numerous ornamentals. Newspapers of the day advertised for sale vegetables produced in the Government Garden. Kloot also notes that Stephens in 1839 lists the following vegetables as being grown in an unnamed settler’s garden by 1837: radishes, mustard, cress, cabbages, cauliflower, turnips, broad beans, peas, potatoes, lettuces, leeks, spinach, parsley, onions, love apples (tomatoes), and Indian corn (maize). This settler had also established an orchard of apples, cherries, and almonds, bushes of gooseberries, as well as a decorative garden of lupins, hyacinths, narcissus, anemones, chrysanthemums, sweet peas, stocks, convolvulus, candytufts, and nasturtiums. It is these productive gardens that form the theme of the 2015 AGHS annual national conference.

Included in the 2015 conference garden visits are the historic properties of Gleeveville and Beaumont House. Edward Gleeson took possession of Gleeveville in 1838, cleared, fenced, and built a stone stable, which still stands. Gleeveville Farm (as it was often called) became the first place in

The University of Adelaide’s Wine Centre, adjacent to the Adelaide Botanic Garden, and the nearby Santos Museum of Economic Botany, to be visited on the 2015 conference.

Photos: Grant Hancock

Australian Garden History, 26 (4), April/May/June 2015
South Australia where grain crops were harvested. Samuel Davenport purchased Gleeville in 1846 and, having recognised Adelaide's climate as being Mediterranean, he began his experimental planting of olives, grapes, and almonds. In the 1850s the Cleland family purchased Gleeville; the property remains in the family and early plantings of olives, almonds, and a Norfolk Island pine (planted c.1860) still grace the garden. Samuel Davenport moved further up the hill to Claremont (renamed Beaumont House), the original home of the first Anglican bishop of Adelaide. The story of Sir Samuel Davenport and his contribution to agriculture and new industries in South Australia will be told at the conference.

In 1839, to the north of the fledgling colony, Frederick Dutton took up 160,000 acres to establish Anlaby, which at its peak ran as many as 70,000 sheep, with shearing lasting nine months. Today the current owners are carefully restoring the remaining ten acres of gardens and the homestead. This jewel in South Australia's garden history will be a feature of the conference optional extra day and the amazing tale of the pioneer productive garden will be presented as a paper.

In South Australia—as in other Australian settlements—the perishable nature of fruit and vegetables and the limitations of transport meant that market gardens and orchards initially existed close by each settlement and that until the end of World War II the home productive garden was the norm. Post-war improvements in road transport and refrigeration, the introduction of new irrigation systems, and probably most significantly the start of urban sprawl into the market garden areas on the outskirts of major cities, saw the morphing of market gardens and family orchards into broad-acre style production of fruit and vegetables; cold storage, freezing, and transport interstate and overseas. Are we now seeing the reverse, with farmers markets, restaurants, and chefs who have productive gardens onsite and the ‘Locavore’ or 100-mile diet concept? Look forward to papers on these issues.

The popularity of domestic vegetable gardens and orchards in Australia has waxed and waned, often reflecting the economic climate, the current wave of ethnic groups migrating to Australia and more recently the interest in organic produce and sustainable lifestyles. Coming originally from New South Wales, I have been on a journey of discovery researching the early history of South Australian settlement. This has led me to reflect on my own family’s productive gardening history and I imagine that many AGHS members would have similar memories. I grew up on a property and there was always a vegetable garden at the homestead. I distinctly remember my grandmother picking climbing beans and she hung large bunches of thyme to dry from rafters in the old kitchen. A favourite summer treat when we arrived home from school was sliced peaches fresh from the tree with thick dollops of cream. The peach was ‘Elberta’ and I have never tasted
a peach like it again. My parents also maintained a vegetable garden and a large orchard and Mum was an expert with her Fowlers Vacola preserving kit. I am almost too embarrassed to tell but I remember as a teenager pleading to be allowed to serve tinned fruit when I had friends to stay, instead of home preserves! Yet I ended up years later with my own productive garden and my own Fowlers kit, regrettably giving it away during one of my many moves, but I still have my fruit trees and veggies. I am also happy to report that another generation of my family is into productive gardening—one of my sons has an Adelaide suburban front yard bordered by fruit trees.

The history of productive gardening in Australia is both long and broad, the story starting with Indigenous land management and seasonal harvesting; then chapters include survival gardens of the colonies, domestic patches, early market gardens, large commercial monoculture enterprises, through the ‘chemical’ era, to the organic reawakening; and once again to individuals and families growing their own produce.

On behalf of the South Australian Branch of Australian Garden History Society I invite you to join us at the 2015 annual national conference (and preceding symposium) to begin to explore this fascinating aspect of Australian garden history. Like me, I guess many delegates will have a personal productive gardening story to tell. I look forward to hearing many of those at the conference.

At the 2015 conference, authors, researchers, historians, chefs, and hands-on gardeners will present a broad range of papers on productive gardening history; and garden visits will include both historic and contemporary gardens, most including a veggie garden and an orchard; some featuring elaborate chook houses, and one with bee hives. Harvesting fresh produce and cooking up a storm is the ultimate reward for hours of work in the productive garden. Therefore sessions on gastronomy—the art and science of food and culture—we felt was a satisfying way to wrap up the conference papers, and to whet our appetite for the conference dinner, which as you would expect will feature SA produce and wines! RSVP by completing your registration to attend ‘Garden to Table: productive garden history’.

Further reading
Gaynor, Andrea, Harvest of the Suburbs: an environmental history of growing food in Australian cities, University of Western Australia Press, Crawley, WA, 2006.

Elizabeth Ganguly, South Australian branch committee member and conference convener for the 2015 AGHS annual national conference, has a bachelor of science degree, certificate in horticulture, and diploma in garden design.
View from the verandah: Marble Hill

Marble Hill, South Australia’s vice-regal summer residence from 1880 to 1955, was one of South Australia’s prominent gardens, and today efforts are underway to restore this forgotten gem.

Marble Hill was South Australia’s vice-regal summer residence from 1880 to 1955. Located 14 kilometres east of Adelaide’s CBD in the Adelaide Hills, at 600 metres above sea level, the cooler Hills location allowed the governor and his family to escape the almost unbearable heat experienced in Adelaide’s Government House during the summer months. Set in 160 hectares of grounds, the original cost of making new roads, forming the site, building the residence, stable, and several underground water tanks, and other extras was £21,300. The garden featured a formal terrace garden, tennis court, orchard, and animal enclosures (including an eagle house and kangaroo enclosure), and pony paddock. Colonial and state governments owned the property and paid the bills and the governors had free reign when there. Governors were usually in office for six years but this fluctuated, so during the 75 years—before bushfire destroyed Marble Hill in 1955—the property had many occupants.

In December 1879 a large contingent was invited to inspect Marble Hill. The colonial-funded building had exceeded original price estimates so it was hoped that the delegation, which included parliamentarians, civil servants, and journalists, would help quell dissent. Indeed, everyone was taken with the fine two-storey structure designed by architect William McMinn. The Gothic-inspired edifice comprised 26 lofty rooms and a generous verandah wrapping around three sides. The triumph, however, was the extensive views gained from the 20-metre castellated tower.
constructed over the front entrance. Sited on a platform of levelled ground that extended several
metres, the terrain dropped off steeply and a second large terrace was created on the eastern
side. During the visit several commentators questioned how wise it was for His Excellency to live in such an inaccessible region. One remarked presciently that ‘here and there a patch of weird-looking whitened poles [tell] a tale of bush fires and former devastation’.

The completed building work had not included any landscaping, and with the extensive cost of the residence no monies were left for the garden. Some months’ earlier, parliamentary members had debated what funds for labour costs would be provided to establish the garden at Marble Hill: £150 had been requested but some members commented that ‘this was not a time to go in for fancy gardens’. Hon. Thomas Playford (Commissioner for Crown Lands)—himself a keen gardener—said a flower garden, some trenching, and the removal of trees to open up views was needed. This brief description by Playford outlined what became perhaps the key feature of the garden, the ‘borrowed view’. Enthusiastic descriptions of Marble Hill at the time embrace this concept, describing the view as probably the most magnificent to be obtained in the colony: a ‘romantic panorama of surpassing loveliness’. Perched on a mount, Marble Hill was surrounded by native bush that gave way to well-ordered orchards. Over the decades, many painters, illustrators, and photographers were also enchanted with the views, often distracting their focus from the garden.

Governor William Jervois and his family were the first occupants. South Australia’s tenth
governor (served 1877–83), it was Jervois who had instigated the building of Marble Hill. In
order that Lady Jervois and others might take full advantage of the setting he was keen that ‘walks’ be laid out in front of the residence. A substantial but unpretentious flight of stairs was created taking the visitor between the upper and lower terraced formal garden to the east. An early concept drawing (published in April 1880) shows this lower terrace with a circular central bed containing a pedestal fountain and balanced by several geometrical plant beds separated by wide paths but no contemporary description or plan is known. Early paintings and photographs show staked roses throughout the lower terrace, but mostly the object is the view beyond.

Journalist Winifred Scott wrote in 1925 of Countess of Kintore’s rich memories and fondness for South Australia (Governor Kintore served between 1889–95). The ‘aromatic tang of native shrubs’ in the summer sun was a lasting memory. Scott noted the Countess had a real
fondness for ‘Marble Hill ... and the gardens she planned there’. Plant lists or layout drawings have not come to light so her input was perhaps directly to the gardener, William R. Mobsby, who started working at Marble Hill about a year after Governor Kintore’s appointment and oversaw the garden between 1890 and 1903. Audrey Lady Tennyson, whose husband Governor Hallam Lord Tennyson served from 1899—1902, wrote of her first excursion to Marble Hill (23 April 1899): ‘The dust and heat were terrible at first till we got out of town and then had a lovely drive ... with green hills with gum trees ... till we arrived at the white-painted gate at the entrance to a wide drive though woods with a very wide tall clipped laurel hedge on one side’.  

An orchard at Marble Hill orchard was established around 1913 when Mary Bosanquet, wife of Governor Day Bosanquet (served 1899—1902), initiated the idea. ‘A prominent gardener’ of the district prepared the ground and planted Early Lyon cherries, apple, and pear trees. Several years later a severe hailstorm caused major fruit damage and stripped trees of their leaves. By the 1930s the Marble Hill orchard, with orange and apple trees and gooseberry bushes, was semi-derelict. In 1941 the Governor requested the removal of the orange trees by Frank Ringvall (caretaker/gardener) because they were unsuitable for the climate and to lift and replant the rhubarb to a better location thus allowing space for potatoes.  

It was during the summer months when Marble Hill would come to life, backdrop to a very social environment for a number of the governors and their families. Whenever they visited and depending on the vice-regal family, along with the governor’s private secretary and aide-de-camp, the party could include lady’s maid, nursemaid, tutors, butler, footman, plus other household staff of a cook, maids, and gardener.  

Over the years many shared the magic of Marble Hill and its surroundings. These included royalty, governors-general, politicians, and other persons of note as well as members of the public, who could attend open days and fundraisers for the Red Cross and kindred organisations. Delegates to the Federal Convention in April 1897 shared afternoon tea at Marble Hill along with over 100 guests including five premiers and local residents. When Governor Alexander Hore-Ruthven was in residence during January 1929, records show that 148 people lunched at Marble Hill, 107 were there for tea, and 161 stayed for dinner.  

Lady Hore-Ruthven’s husband was governor of South Australia from 1928 to 1934. She was probably the most passionate gardener of all the governor’s wives. She travelled each year to Victoria for the Garden Week exhibitions and conceived the idea of a competition in model gardens at the Adelaide Royal Show. The Lady Hore-Ruthven trophy was established for which Elsie Cornish entered exhibits. Landscaper gardener Elsie Cornish, who designed Adelaide’s Pioneer Women’s Memorial garden, and Lady Hore-Ruthven formed a ‘close bond’ through their shared passion for gardening. It was during the Hore-Ruthven governorship that the government subdivided a large section of the Mable Hill vice-regal reserve for fruit and market gardening.  

Scythe blades were used to cut the grass at Marble Hill until at least the mid 1930s. John Roney had told his replacement gardener Ernest Hank to order two blades at a time, rather than just one blade as ‘the mowing is very bad and one is apt to spoil a blade at anytime’. Whilst under the care of the National Trust in 1987 a number of Marble Hill garden items were auctioned off including wire tree guards, a scythe, three cross cut saws, a long arm pruner and old ‘antique’ brick moulds.  

A delightful account of life at Marble Hill in the early 1940s, from a schoolboy’s viewpoint, was written by David Liddell-Grainger, son of Lady Muriel Barclay-Harvey and stepson of Sir Malcolm Barclay-Harvey (served as governor 1939—44). He fondly recalled his time and freedom at Marble Hill. The Barclay-Harveys were very hands on when it came to gardening, tending beds of dahlias and canna, and clearing overgrown paths. ‘When we came here these had been neglected and were overgrown to at least 6 foot high with broom, pea and eucalypt’, David Liddell-Grainger wrote: ‘It was a case of arming oneself with a machete,
Glimpses of garden were captured in watercolours of Marble Hill painted by Miss Winifred Scott around 1896 with general views of the house, the distant landscape, and the gulf beyond her the main focus.

Courtesy Emma Slater
finding the start of a path and just continuing on till you got somewhere.’

The difference between the cool freshness of Marble Hill and the stifling heat of Adelaide was often a subject of comment, yet bushfires on a number of occasions highlight the fallacy of this simplistic contrast. In the 1920s it was noted that the caretaker/gardener at Marble Hill ‘must possess credentials as to character and have had considerable experience with gardens and orchards in the hills, the burning of fire breaks and bushfire fighting’. Audrey Lady Tennyson gave a vivid description of one such event in February 1901:

We simply had bushfires raging all round us, really a most wonderful sight, all the hill bursting with great volumes of smoke & great clouds of smoke rolling along the gullies. Our own gully garden was on fire and our men rushed down to help beat it out... at a distance you can see no movement of the flames, it simply looks perfectly still & like the most magnificent illumination.

She wrote that they saved most of the fruit trees. Then in January 1912 when Governor Bosanquet and family were at Marble Hill, bushfire destroyed the rose garden with its heat and flames damage lawns and laurel hedging. The creepers growing on the verandahs were burnt but amazingly the building survived.

And so it was, that on 2 January 1955, Marble Hill and its garden was ultimately all but destroyed by fire and there followed a period of long uncertainty. Patricia and Edwin Michell purchased Mable Hill in 2009 after signing a Heritage Agreement. Amongst other conditions the owners are required to reconstruct the residence to it pre-1955 exterior, a daunting yet exciting prospect.

The rockwork retaining walls at Marble Hill, in 1946 (only a few years after their construction) and as they appear today in the midst of extensive conservation work at the property.

Courtesy State Library of South Australia (B 48482/23)

Photo: Cas Middlemis, 2014

Footnotes

1. ‘New viceregal residence’, South Australian Register, 27 December 1879, p.2s.
4. 18 October 1917: State Records of South Australia, GRG 38/43/15, Bundle 1.
5. Correspondence 13 August 1940, 30 January 1942, 1 September 1941: Private Secretary Duncan to W. Lindsay Architect-in-Chief, State Records of South Australia, GRG 38/43/15 Bundle 1.
11. ‘Marble Hill sale items’ 23 April 1987, Correspondence to Ian Bruce from Enid Hills, Box of papers on Marble Hill, National Trust of South Australia.

Cas Middlemis is co-author of Hung Out to Dry (www.clotheshoist.com). Her current project is a SA AGHS workshop to guide non-professionals in documenting their own garden history.
German farm gardens in colonial South Australia

Recently rediscovered documents and images relating to the Wehl property of Ehrenbreitstein near Millicent shed light on the importance and cultural distinctiveness of the farm garden in colonial German settlements in South Australia.

When Dr Eduard Wehl selected land near the nascent township of Millicent in 1872, he shared the aspirations of many German immigrants to South Australia, to prosper in his new home through rural pursuits. Unlike the others, however, he had Ferdinand Mueller, Director of the Melbourne Botanic Garden and Government Botanist of Victoria, as a brother-in-law, ready to offer occasional advice on the garden that the Wehls quickly established around their sturdy limestone dwelling. Eduard also had a wife and daughters with sufficient artistic talents to capture and celebrate the family’s horticultural progress. Recently rediscovered photographs, watercolours, and poetry, all capturing moments in the Wehl’s garden at Ehrenbreitstein, provide a noteworthy record of what was often an ephemeral, but integral and defining feature of German colonial farms.

The south east of South Australia, where Millicent is situated, was opened for selection relatively late in the century compared to other parts of the colony favoured by German immigrants. Older and better known are the settlements of Klemzig, the Barossa Valley, and the Adelaide Hills, which have been researched in numerous heritage surveys, reports, monographs, and conference...
Ehrenbreitstein

A Castle on the Rhine [sic] of renown
Called the garden of the Colony.
And this Estate of medium size
Nine hundred acres does comprise —
Of newly redeemed swampy land,
Bordered by hills with stone and sand.
Ascending one of greater height [sic]
A splendid view here meets our sight.

His noble mind did not regret
The failure of his labour yet,
It was his mite of a tribut, [sic]
To benefit the multitude.
The different grasses now were tried,
Of those the larger number died
Except a hardly prairie grass
And one or two of equal class.
On these the sheep are thriving well
This by their capers you may tell;
And peaceful is the scene at eve
When they for camp the lowland leave.

In varied shades against the sky;
Bordered by hills with stone and sand.

The traveller on dispatch may count
And now will view the lowly home
And dwellings intermixed with trees.

And Eucalyptus Globulus,
To benefit the multitude.

When they for camp the lowland leave
They for camp the lowland leave.

The failure of his labour yet,
It was his mite of a tribut, [sic]
To benefit the multitude.
The different grasses now were tried,
Of those the larger number died
Except a hardly prairie grass
And one or two of equal class.
On these the sheep are thriving well
This by their capers you may tell;
And peaceful is the scene at eve
When they for camp the lowland leave.

Through which the drainage waters flow
Dispersing in the lake below.
Through stones and ferns, shrub and tree
The scarlet fuchsia not the least
Among this pretty wilderness.

The Wehl's farm was named Ehrenbreitstein
after a fortress on the Rhine opposite the town
of Koblenz in the south German state of the
Rhineland. Ehrenbreitstein was to be Eduard

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Developed by the ANU Centre for Literary Studies

Australian Garden History, 26 (4), April/May/June 2015

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Published online: 2015-06-19
and Clara Wehl’s own fortress against the world in which to raise their brood of 15 children (12 of whom survived to adulthood). Sadly, Eduard died in 1876, only four years after the family established their farm, and while Clara was pregnant with their youngest child. It was left to Clara, and her children, with occasional input in the form of seeds and horticultural advice from their uncle, Ferdinand Mueller, to realise the family’s rural dreams.

By necessity, the Wehl story brings into the foreground the role that women and children played in farm life, but in reality whole-of-family participation was typical on German colonial farms. As Mount Gambier’s Border Watch reported of Heinrich Holzgrefe (a neighbour of the Wehls at Blue Gum Park), a wife could prove to be ‘a capable manager’. ‘Sometimes’, according to this newspaper, when Heinrich ‘became enthused in telling the story of his difficulties and achievements and the personal pronoun singular number would be prevalent’, his wife, Maria, ‘would touch his arm and very quietly say, “We, puppa.”’ Blue Gum Park (named after a belt of eucalypts planted by Heinrich for shelter purposes) was known as a ‘model and picturesque farm’ with a ‘beautiful house’ surrounded by a garden of ‘shrubs and flowers and with pines and gums’.

The Holzgrefe’s combination of plants was reproduced at Ehrenbreitstein as can be seen in the artwork of the Wehl daughters. Clara’s poem (opposite) identifies the flowers as geraniums, roses, and lilies, the gums as *Eucalyptus globulus*, with a single Norfolk Island pine. Local tradition holds that Mueller himself planted this latter tree, which is now one of few markers left of the Wehl’s horticultural industry. The Ehrenbreitstein garden also contained native acacias, and a sense that its edges blended into the surrounding bush, where Clara claimed that some of ‘the loveliest flowers’ were to be gathered, including the ‘scarlet fuchsia’ (presumably a *Correa*).

The gardens of the Holzgrefes and Wehls contained plants that were familiar from the Old World, but they also experimented with plants from elsewhere in the world as well as Australian species. It is also clear that ornamental choices were a significant feature of farm gardens—not just fruit trees and vegetables, as one might expect from farmers with a ‘peasant mentality’ of ‘self sufficiency’. Historian Pauline Payne argues that it was important for German settlers to have
an ornamental garden, because decorations in
country Lutheran churches (a prominent place
of worship for these immigrants), ‘could be very
elaborate with arches and wreaths of flowers
and foliage’. Clara Wehl’s poem also notes
the importance of flowers for festive occasions,
especially for weddings and at Christmas.

In 1876, the farming community of Millicent
established what would eventually become the
local Pastoral, Agricultural, and Horticultural
Society. This body held annual shows where
exhibits of vegetables and flowers were awarded
with cash prizes, thereby acknowledging the
productive efforts of the region’s farmers. While
there is a dearth of German names in the earliest
years of the Society’s lists, by the end of the
1880s the ‘Mesdames Wehl’ were participating
regularly as judges and exhibitors in the
floral sections of shows. The Wehls’ preferred
categories included ‘bouquets’ and ‘baskets of
native flowers’, the latter perhaps influenced in
their tastes by their uncle, Ferdinand Mueller,
for whom they collected Australian plants as
herbarium specimens.

By the turn of the century, there was a decline
in the distinctiveness of German farming
practice. A second generation had taken over,
and many families simply became part of the
local community. In 1900, members of the
Agricultural Bureau visited the farm of Messrs
Sassanowsky at Compton Downs near Mount
Gambier as a representative property in the
district. Originally established by Friedrich
Sassanowsky from East Prussia, the farm was
now managed by his widow and children.

Strolling through the farm garden, the Bureau
observers found it contained ‘some good roses
and other flowers, a variety of good fruit
trees’, and ornamental trees, including Norfolk
Island pines, cypress, and pepper trees. ‘One
cannot have a look over the property of Mrs.
Sassanowsky and her family’, concluded the
Border Watch, ‘without admitting that it is a
model farm.’

The authors would like to thank Mary
Altschwager (Millicent, SA), Dr Tom May and
Jill Thurlow (Royal Botanic Gardens
Melbourne), and Felicity Pexton
(Mount Helena,
WA) for assistance
with the
preparation
of this article, and
to Leon Tang of
The Foto Factory
for his expert copying
of Wehl oil paintings
held in WA.

Footnotes
1 ‘Gordon Young Research Collection’, http://
w3.unisa.edu.au/artarchitecturedesign/
architecturemuseum/docs/catalogue/
2 C.A. Price, ‘German settlers in South Australia,
1838–1900’, Historical Studies: Australia and New
Zealand, 7 (28), 1957, p.447.
3 Reproduced in the Border Watch (Mount Gambier,
SA), 20 February 1867, p.4.
4 Malcolm Turner & Derek Carter, Down the drain:
the story of events and personalities associated with
125 years of drainage in the south-east of South
Australia, South-Eastern Drainage Board, Adelaide,
5 e.g. Letter from F. Mueller to Henrietta Wehl, 5
August 1893 (MS 1946, No. 440 Charles Daley
6 Pauline Payne, ‘“Grandmother came when the pig
was to be killed”: the lives and contribution of
German women pioneers’, Journal of the Historical
7 Border Watch, 22 November 1932, p.3.
8 Register (Adelaide), 17 April 1924, p.8; Border
9 Bruce Towers (text) & Judy Richards (drawings),
Early Millicent, National Trust of South Australia,
Millicent Branch, 1974, p.18—as Mueller made
only one visit to Ehrenbreitstein (for the funeral of
Eduard Wehl in February 1876) if he planted the
tree, it must have been then.
11 For example, see Border Watch, 2 November
1889, p.2; S. Maroske & A. Vaughan, Ferdinand
Mueller’s female plant collectors: a biographical
12 Border Watch, 18 July 1894, p.2; 28 November
1900, p.2.

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The Robust Ghost of Mr Chapman’s Garden

George Chapman’s garden, established in Angas Street, Adelaide, in 1873, is a lost garden but there is no mystery about its contents due to the remarkable diaries that he kept.

On 10 April 1873, Chapman paid ‘as a Deposit on a piece of land, part of Town Acre no. 359, at 47/6 per foot 52.6 x 210 £124.13.9’. He made a note of this in his diary, above the entry for that day. The Certificate of Title shows the further history of the property until 1968, when the old title was cancelled and a new one issued. After that, the land and adjacent land was developed and a row of neat town houses (numbered 328—32 Angas Street) now covers the area where Chapman’s house and garden once stood. There is nothing to suggest that a notable garden once existed there, but what does remain is a remarkably full account of the garden’s day-to-day existence.

George Chapman (1847—1927) kept a diary between 1872 and 1926, most of which survive. The diaries are a valuable source of social history for this period. Chapman wrote as an intelligent, observant man with a wide acquaintance throughout Adelaide society, a man with many interests and responsibilities. He had a deep love of music and the theatre, and a passion for gardening. He was a loving husband, father, and son, and his family was the very core of his existence.

His wide and engaging range of interests is expressed in the short diary entries he wrote at the end of each day. He always used a Letts’s Pocket Diary (No. 26), with the week set out across two pages. Over such a long period, those entries provide an accumulated mass of useful data. He also used other parts of the diary, usually the Memoranda pages provided at the back, to record additional information. In these pages he summarised the most important events of each month, often including details about his garden. Sometimes he set out all the important gardening details for that year in a separate list. Some are particularly interesting because Chapman added information (at a later date) about the outcome of the plantings.

At the time of the first diary, Chapman is living in the family home, Sevenoaks, in Angas Street (now 269—75). He begins that year as a Draper’s Assistant at Northmore and Dean’s shop in Rundle Street and by the end of the year, at the age of 25, has been made manager of their branch in King William Street. Over the course of the year he falls in love with Miss Ella Welsh and they...
become engaged. He later plans a house (in which he resides until his death in 1927) and he creates the garden so carefully detailed in his diaries.

In 1872 he is already an ardent and experienced gardener, buying plants and equipment, building that South Australian specialty, a bamboo house, for pot plants, and is exchanging plants, cuttings, and seeds with his friends. He visits nurseries and is a frequent visitor to Adelaide Botanic Garden. Newspaper articles and correspondence on gardening are full of advice, discussion, and debate throughout the period covered by the diaries—in 1878 Chapman takes out a subscription to The Garden and the Field, a local periodical.

Chapman was a methodical man and his lists of purchases and notes indicate that his was a typical cottage garden. Preparing the foundation garden was a strenuous and expensive business. He records 'Fencing' and 'Filling up' expenses on the November and December Memoranda pages of the 1873 diary. The garden gave good returns for his investment in plants, with numerous vegetables, fruit trees, and vines. But the costs represented a significant outlay, especially for the foundation garden, when Chapman was a wage-earning, budget-conscious householder with a new mortgage. The physical energy he put into creating and maintaining the garden is, of course, incalculable.

The Memoranda lists from 1878, by way of example, are a mixture of interesting events, giving us a sense of how gardening fitted into his busy life. In March he bought a toy wheelbarrow for his son, Georgie, and put in pansy, primula and stock seeds; Mrs Panous had a son; Mrs Charles Birks died suddenly; the Opera season began and he bought 24 tickets. In April, Miss Blomfield and Mr Eagan left the Shop; he paid his Pew Rent at Church, his subscription to the Advertiser, and his City Rates; he went to Semaphore and boarded a heuchera, pruning the vines, cutting down a white broom, weeding, planting new roses.

The garden is constantly under attack. Droughts suffer damage or have to be removed because of blight. Animals are an occasional hazard. Heavy rain and flooding were rarely a problem, but the greatest enemy was always drought. And inevitably, favourite plants die. In the last surviving diary, written when George Chapman was 79, he is setting out 4 dozen anemones, putting in a heuchera, pruning the vines, cutting down a white broom, weeding, planting Malacoides primulas and gerbera seeds, and putting in new roses.

George Chapman died on 29 December 1927. It is to be hoped that the publication of the diaries through the State Library of South Australia may bring some of the missing diaries to light as the record of his perceptions, and his engagement, have given this lost garden a very lively afterlife.

Betsy Taylor studied English at Adelaide University and later lectured in English at Sydney University. In retirement, she has been transcribing the Chapman diaries.
Parklands revisited

1. *Parklands*, released in 1996, is the fictional story of Rosie (played by Cate Blanchett), who returns to suburban Adelaide after the death of her father Cliff (played by Tony Martin), a Drugs Squad policeman. Mystery surrounds the last year of his life. Why was his car set alight? Why, out of the blue, did he suddenly leave his wife of many years for another woman? Was he a cop on the take? Or an honest man who found himself in the shadow-lands of police corruption? Prompted by her father’s diaries, Rosie begins her own investigation. As her inquiries proceed however, she finds herself drawn to the textures and silences of her childhood, her personal memories more and more at odds with the brightly coloured images of Adelaide’s civic pride.

Family groupings stroll through formal rose gardens, admiring the blooms. Expanses of green lawns. A circular bed is filled with red and yellow flowers arranged in a star shape. An avenue of Moreton Bay figs. We catch sight of a late model silver blue Holden Commodore. Brightly coloured flowers are reflected in the car’s polished hubcap.

Rosie, Voiceover: ‘Instructions to police officers on the keeping of diaries. General entries will not be accepted. The object of visiting places must be recorded. Movements must be arranged so that different inquiries may be combined. Impressions may be recorded and even matters not of strictly official nature that may be of interest to the service. The mere entry visiting or patrolling is insufficient as it is almost impossible that a vigilant officer whilst in the pursuit of his duties will find nothing worthy of closer notice.’

3. The parklands feature strongly in my memories of growing up in Adelaide. My grandmother and great-grandmother lived in a bluestone bungalow on Park Terrace (later renamed Greenhill Road) directly opposite the south parklands. We visited often, driving from the northern suburbs, passing a series of Adelaide landmarks: the Pioneer Women’s Memorial Gardens; North Terrace; Victoria Square; and the south parklands. Whilst sprinklers ensured that the ring directly adjacent to the city stayed green, in summer the outer parklands were often dry and dusty. Moreton Bay figs provided shelter on our frequent walks. Late afternoons, perched on the verandah of Park Terrace, we monitored the vane atop The Advertiser building for news of the next day’s weather. ‘Red sky at night, shepherds’ delight / Red sky in the morning, shepherds’ warning’, my great-grandmother recounted without fail.

4. Adelaide was laid out on a grid with ‘a central urban core, a periphery of suburbs and a buffer of parklands’ that visually and physically separated the two. The founding fathers’ instructions to their surveyor Colonel William Light were to make the streets of ample width and arrange them with a view to the needs of the residents and the beauty of the town.
5. Researching *Parklands*, I viewed many archival films of Adelaide from the 1950s and 1960s, most of them commissioned by government departments or prominent local businesses. I was particularly interested in footage of the Botanic Gardens, of the eponymous parklands, of the (once) annual Flower Day and the John Martin’s Christmas Pageant; images that might represent a kind of collective memory bank for generations who grew up in Adelaide. I spent weeks in the State Records of South Australia warehouse and the Mortlock Library, watching films projected onto the wall home-movie style. Archivists brought out cans of celluloid, often shaking their heads and advising me that as the films had not been viewed for decades, there was a risk of extensive damage to the emulsion. After a time, I noticed that whenever they uttered these dire warnings, my interest increased. For me, these fragments of film with their broken down layers of emulsion and fading and shifting colours, were particularly evocative. Their colours bled into the film.\(^4\)

6. As the Red Kangaroo dreaming space of the Karuna people, the Adelaide Plains were a significant cultural site long before European settlement. The new arrivals reported on the lush appearance of the area they named the Parklands. Woodlands dotted with eucalypts and she-oaks provided a habitat for a rich bird-life; the result of thousands of years of fire stick farming and land management by the Karuna people. But the new settlers soon cleared the trees and restricted Indigenous access.

7. According to garden historian Beverley Lear, the use of bright colours and complex bedding patterns gained popularity in Britain in the 1830s, just as my ancestors made their way from England to Adelaide on the *HMS Buffalo*. Annuals ‘were arranged in tightly planted blocks of a single variety and positioned adjacent to blocks of other varieties and colours so that a mosaic effect similar to that seen in a stained glass window might be produced’.\(^5\) This style was initially restricted to the gardens of the wealthy since it required considerable labour and resources. Over time, it was gradually extended to public gardens and became known colloquially as municipal colour. Since then, the use of vivid colours and patterning has gone in and out of favour. At times associated with civic pride; at others, with a lack of refinement. Poor taste. Over time, conservation of water has become a significant factor in decisions about whether to become a dedicated follower of fashion in the garden stakes. Or not.

8. To me, the parklands represent the ethos of Adelaide. As a child, I was often told that free settlers had founded the city. As a student at Adelaide University in the late 1970s, the murder of gay academic Dr George Duncan still cast a shadow over a city that prided itself on its progressive views. Some years earlier, a group of men believed to be police officers, had thrown Duncan into the River Torrens where he drowned. Witnesses were understandably reluctant to come out into the open. Community outrage eventually led to South Australia becoming the first state in Australia to decriminalize homosexuality.
9. As a young adult I ran through the parklands in the early evening. In summer, the magic hour just before dusk expanded and light vanished from the sky in a series of slow dissolves. Half the city was on the move it seemed. Walking, jogging, running. That strip of green oxygenating the city belonged to us all.

10. The Flower Day archival footage in Parklands was shot on an early colour film stock and consequently its palette is skewed towards lemon, pink, and gold. Filmed without sound, the footage is rather more sombre than the event many of us recall. Adelaide’s annual Flower Day was held from 1938 until 1975. Its aim was to promote Adelaide and encourage its residents to beautify their neighbourhoods. In an operation requiring near military precision, flowers were harvested from suburban gardens and transported to central depots where they were transformed into striking floral carpets and displays. Armies of women volunteers undertook the bulk of the work. In 1960, in one of the city’s most ambitious Flower Day undertakings, more than 400,000 blooms were woven into a reproduction of indigenous artist Albert Namatjira’s watercolour depicting the ranges near Mount Hermannsberg. Thousands upon thousands of people strolled along an elevated walkway in the city centre to view the floral tribute.

11. Nearly twenty years after we made Parklands, I still recall the excitement of shooting in the Adelaide Botanic Gardens on a hot summer’s evening. As is so often the case in filmmaking, it involved hours of preparation for a single shot. Lighting the avenue of Moreton Bay figs, waiting for darkness and framing the action. Cate Blanchett as Rosie walked down the avenue of trees, gradually picking up pace. Something was amiss. Someone was watching. Who? Every tweak of leaves or twigs underfoot was magnified. We amplified this in post-production with the sound of sprinklers. I still respond when I hear that (for me) slightly unsettling sound in the dead of night. Parklands. Unnerving.
Australian Museum of Gardening: a new home for our history

Telling history through objects and experiences is core business for museums and soon gardens and gardening will have a new home to tell these stories at the Australian Museum of Gardening.

The birth of a new museum in Australia is no small undertaking, nor should it be embarked upon lightly. But in a country where, as social commentator Hugh Mackay tells us, more people garden than gamble, I suspect few would question that a museum dedicated to the history of our gardens and gardening achievements is a worthy subject.

Fortunately this initiative has been undertaken by the Carrick Hill Trust, responsible for one of the nation’s foremost house museums and historic gardens located in Adelaide. This immediately gives the new Australian Museum of Gardening a head start as it will be a museum within an established museum, with all the necessary structures for its governance and policy already in place.

A dynamic museum revolves around an axis. At one end and mostly behind the scenes is the business of assembling, cataloguing, and caring for the collection. At the other end is the public face of a museum, engaging with the community through the presentation and interpretation of the collection using exhibitions, publications, talks, workshops, and other activities. However, a successful museum needs another quality to give it depth and make it into a dynamic and attractive experience. It has to have a clear vision and purpose in place to be the driving force and context from which to operate. It is also greatly assisted if it is based at an inspiring site.

Carrick Hill embraces one of Australia’s finest Arts and Crafts gardens. The Arts and Crafts design movement of the late nineteenth and early
twentieth century—beloved of writers and garden makers such as Gertrude Jekyll and Vita Sackville-West—emphasized human ingenuity and hand crafts as central to its philosophy. In garden terms this philosophy placed the residence as the focus for distinct and surrounding compartments—the central place of habitation complemented with radiating patterns of utility and ornament. Such a philosophy flourished in England at places such as Munstead Wood, Hidcote, and Sissinghurst.

A precursor of the Arts and Crafts gardens was the remaking, during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, of the English landscape garden. Whereas the landscape garden had emphasized nature as its model, innovations by designer Humphry Repton gradually transformed this overly optimistic aspiration through accommodation of domestic-scaled and human-based pleasures and needs. The residence was central and garden its artistic muse. ‘The rays of art, like those of the sun’, wrote one commentator in the 1830s ‘should grow fainter as they recede from the centre’.

Even earlier than this, following centuries of medieval fortification, the humanist ethos of the Renaissance had stressed an intimate connection between villa and garden. Human endeavor and wild nature linked hands to create environments of contentment and pleasure. The visions of Italian hillsides dotted with cypresses and vines has been an endearing and enduring vision for many civilisations, as it was for South Australia, replete with appealing Mediterranean allusions.

The Carrick Hill Trust Act 1985 identifies the function of the estate ‘as a gallery for the display of art works; as a museum; [and] as a botanical garden’ with collections, services, and amenities. This combination of museum, collection, display, and interpretation—having garden-making as a core function—makes Carrick Hill ideally suited, perhaps uniquely so, to embrace an Australian gardening focus within a broad-ranging museum role. An Australian Museum of Gardening with an emphasis on the hand-tool era would create additional relevance for the estate and has the potential to become one of the most vital and accessible of Carrick Hill’s ‘collection of experiences’.

An Australian Museum of Gardening at Carrick Hill can build on acknowledged strengths of the existing estate: human interest, garden focus, intimacy of interpretation, and pleasure through experience. And the idea of a graduated experience drawing on the Arts and Crafts philosophy of the estate—intense or diffuse according to individual need—can suffuse its
realisation. The estate and the museum can complement and augment each other, rekindling old fondness and generating new interest. Indeed, the future prosperity of the estate may in large measure be influenced by the success of this aspect of Carrick Hill’s role, with the garden being an integral part of its living collection.

The museum has in place some vital relationships, strengths that have assisted in bringing the concept and planning of the Australian Museum of Gardening into being. The Australian Garden History Society is our history and heritage partner, and has endorsed the museum’s mission to be a physical expression of the Society’s mission. Richard Bird and Lynne Walker have not only given the collection of garden tools and implements (plus books and ephemera) but have supported financially the setting up of the facilities in which to temporarily house the collection until it moves to its first home in the house. Richard has also transferred the well-established Old Mole business name to Carrick Hill and the registered business name Australian Museum of Gardening. Warwick Mayne Wilson has generously donated his professional library of gardening and landscape books plus journals to the museum to establish the beginnings of garden research resources for the museum.

The museum also has a group of donors who are members of the Society including both the South Australian and Queensland Branches, Max and Margaret Bourke, Lady Ebury, Rosemary Leitch, Rosia Pasteur, Sue Monger, Elizabeth Brown, Di Renou, Colleen Morris, Janet Dale, Professor Robert Goldney, Ray Choate, Meg Butler, Susie Dunn, Raoul De Ferranti, Genny Binns, and Pam Deverell.

As a first project of the Australian Museum of Gardening, the exhibition ‘Endless Pleasure: the art of gardens and gardening’ will be mounted from 5 August to 29 November 2015 (coinciding with the forthcoming AGHS conference). Gardens have been a dynamic part of our culture as creative activity, absorbing trends and setting fashions that have shaped our private and public landscapes in which we live. This exhibition will trace how Australians in all walks of life have chosen to experience gardening, whether as a private pastime or professional pursuit. Artists have captured our passion for plants and places where gardening takes place for over two centuries and this exhibition will also evoke the ways we enjoy gardens through paintings, drawings, prints, books, implements, and ornaments.

Some of the ‘Endless Pleasure’ referred to in the title include garden parties and garden visiting (the snobbery around gardens), botanising and plant collecting (the adventure, fame, and glamour of gathering flora), plant fashions and nurseries (what’s new), the love affair with the lawn (to mow or not to mow and what with?), the vegie patch (how big is your pumpkin?), children’s gardening (sowing the seed in the young), and plant societies and their competitions (medals, trophies, and gold at the centenary of Chelsea Flower Show), the garden shed (and its secrets), and the armchair gardener (books and catalogues).

Much of the material is drawn from the Museum’s collections, supplemented with loans from public and private collections. The accompanying book, edited by Trevor Nottle, will contain a miscellany of facts and stories evoking our unending efforts in the garden. It will be heavily illustrated with photographs and drawings as well as being interspersed with recipes and unnecessary philosophical advice about fortitude required to truly enjoy gardens and gardening.

It has been an exciting eighteen months working with the exhibition curator, Caroline Berlyn, to prepare this inaugural project of the Australian Museum of Gardening. Carrick Hill looks forward to the feedback on the exhibition from members of the Society visiting either during the conference or at other times when you will also see plans for our next project.

Richard Heathcote is Director of Carrick Hill where he pursues his interest in the social history and interpretation of gardens and gardeners. He has spent the past three years establishing the Australian Museum of Gardening at Carrick Hill.
Anna Foley

The Historic Urban Landscape: a gardener’s perspective

A recent international symposium in Ballarat discussed the latest UNESCO approach for urban heritage conservation, conceptualised as the Historic Urban Landscape.

The Historic Urban Landscape
At the leading edge of cultural landscape management is the UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approved in 2011. This recommendation emphasised that a historic city is not a freeze-frame of the past, but a living, evolving landscape that has constantly added new layers, and continues to do so. This description echoes principles for garden conservation: freezing a garden in time is a futile exercise—it just keeps growing—and the same can be said for a city. UNESCO (2011) defines the Historic Urban Landscape as ‘the urban area understood as the
result of a historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes, extending beyond the notion of “historic centre” or “ensemble” to include the broader urban context and its geographical setting. The HUL approach was drafted as a response to dramatic global urbanisation, which puts pressure on heritage conservation. HUL provides a road map on how to accommodate rapid urban change without losing the heritage character of a city. The HUL approach seeks to reconcile and acknowledge the economic and social dividend of heritage conservation, as well as embrace layers of heritage rather than keeping a place in aspic. This idea that ‘change is the only constant’ has always been at the root of managing heritage gardens.

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An Australian pilot city

Ballarat is forecast to double its population by 2040, and the local council is participating in a pilot program to use the cutting-edge HUL approach in all its urban planning decision making. Concurrent pilots are running across the world in China, India, East Africa, Ecuador, Pakistan, and Fiji. Two years into the trial, the City of Ballarat hosted ‘Revitalising Historic Cities: the 2nd international symposium on the Historic Urban Landscape’ in Ballarat on 20 & 21 February 2015, to assess progress.

The symposium began with Dr Ron van Oers (World Heritage Institute of Training and Research—Asia and Pacific) reviewing the HUL approach. Dr van Oers explained how the HUL approach recognises that a city is not static, but has always been and will continue to be subject to external forces that shape its appearance and amenity. He suggested that planners and developers, when considering urban projects for the first time, need to begin by asking ‘what is of value in this area?’.

This echoes the instinctive process of gardening, particularly in heritage gardens. Good gardeners keep the best of what they have, and make that a feature. Nothing lives forever, but it is possible to keep the highly valued experience of the garden—or the city—even though individual plants may come and go. When an area isn’t working, gardeners choose to fertilise or replant, while developers renovate or rebuild. This approach is essential to keep a garden, or a city, thriving.

Complexities arise because the question ‘what is of value?’ is broader than it appears. We are not simply talking of bricks and mortar, magnificent oaks, or a garden with a significant pedigree. The notion of value must go much deeper than the tangible. It must also encompass the intangible relationships that individuals have with heritage, and this is where the HUL approach starts to reach beyond Australia’s current system for heritage protection.

Planning with people, not for people

Community values organically arose as the focus for the panel forum anchored by Dr Ken Taylor (Australian National University), Erin McCuskey (Ballarat East Network), Jason Forest (strategic planner), and Dr Rohit Jigyasu (Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto). Together with the audience of heritage experts, the panel explored pros and cons of statutory planning for the HUL approach. Statutory planning relies on documents to regulate development, but how can we document what the community values about Ballarat when it is dynamic and constantly changing?

Using the HUL approach, planners and developers move beyond community participation from being a box that is ticked into the realm of meaningful engagement. The community is involved in the planning process to encourage proactive suggestions to shape the project, removing the probability of later objections. The panel noted the importance of avoiding the common trap of considering ‘the community’ as a homogenous and faceless group. The reality is that many communities populate our historic cities and we each belong to multiple communities that reflect our individual set of values. Not everyone wants the same thing from their garden, or their city.

The historic city as a resilient ecosystem

Recent work by Julian Smith (2014) conceptualises the urban landscape as an ecosystem that includes built form, natural features, and people. In heritage conservation, change is often characterised as a threatening process, but Chris Johnston (Context) used the analogy of an old-growth forest to point out that in ecological terms, change provides the opportunity for pioneer species to flourish. So, when it comes to new development, decision-makers need to
ask themselves: is this urban ecosystem being colonised by an orchid or a weed?

To continue the metaphor, a historic city is an endangered ecosystem and people who have a personal connection to that place drive its conservation, whether an old forest or significant site. We know, however, that ecosystem resilience is improved by biodiversity. Therefore, it follows that we can improve the resilience of a historic city by diversifying the number of people who have a personal connection to that place.

A fantastic example of this has germinated at Werribee Park Mansion, where Parks Victoria rangers are working with Karen refugees from Burma. What started as a one-off working bee in the historic garden has evolved into an ongoing kitchen garden project that has returned health improvements, social networks, and cross-cultural understanding to all those involved. The green thumbs of volunteers hailing from agrarian villages have brought the hustle and bustle back to a kitchen garden that fed the entire Chirnside estate in 1875. Visitors can once again experience the buzz of a productive garden, Werribee Park gains resilience by increasing the diversity of local communities with a personal connection to it, and a new layer of heritage is formed.

If the heritage conservation community can embrace the HUL approach, it will hopefully give our historic places and cities some resilience to handle the inevitable change ahead. The 2011 UNESCO Recommendation is an important new direction in heritage conservation, and it is important for Australian Garden History Society members to engage with this concept, one that so neatly echoes a gardener’s approach to heritage.

Resources and further reading
City of Ballarat www.ballarat.vic.gov.au/sh/heritage
HUL Ballarat project www.hulballarat.org.au
National Trust of Australia (Victoria) advocacy blog www.trustadvocate.org.au
UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape whc.unesco.org/en/activities/638
World Heritage Institute of Training and Research—Asia and Pacific www.historicurbanlandscape.com/

Anna Foley was a field botanist before stepping into her role as the Senior Advocate for Environmental Heritage at the National Trust of Australia (Victoria). Her current projects focus on natural heritage conservation, cultural landscapes, strategic planning, and big old trees.
For the bookshelf


Climate, Science, Colonization traces the settler challenge of unpredictable and variable climate experience, the renunciation of climate realities, and contemporary climate understandings. This skillfully edited collection provides insightful perspectives on what it is to be in relationship with climate in settler societies historically, with critical lessons for their futures. It weaves together work from fields of paleo-oceanography and meteorology, geography, indigenous studies, history of science, environmental management and environmental, cultural, and (who could forget!) garden history.

Through entertaining and informative examples we are presented with the many ways that people have perceived, understood, and manipulated the climates of Australia and New Zealand. Structured in three parts: ‘Frames, Events and Responses’, ‘Debating Human Effects’, and ‘Climate Understandings’, this book demonstrates the true affordances of a plurality of perspectives. It teaches us about both nuanced and contested place-based colonial histories as well as contemporary social and ecological realities.

We learn through this collection that settler relationships with climate are undeniably cultural. Limited Western understandings of climate variability and seasonality have been the undoing of many individuals and settlements, while blatant denial and attempted alteration of climate realities are deeply connected with colonial treatment of Indigenous peoples and cultures. With detailed accounts of the place of religion, myth, experiments, and soothsaying in settler climate experiences, shock and entertainment abound.

Climate, Science, Colonization is highly relevant to gardeners and garden historians alike. It provides new perspectives through which to interpret colonial garden history and inform garden design and place relations. Indeed, with considered and thoughtful practice, one might pay tribute to our colonial past while avoiding the ‘mistakes of our predecessors’. This book invites us to live in accordance with current and predicated climates and biophysical characteristics in these now, more familiar, lands.

Lilian Pearce
Fenner School of Environment and Society, Australian National University


I shuddered as I read this book: appalled and thrilled in almost equal measure. Appalled at the dense language and poor editing; thrilled by the wide context and new analysis. The Gulbenkian Foundation in Portugal has a programme of publishing doctoral theses unaltered—we read such texts for what they are and what they were intended to be. How a publisher can market this as a properly edited book is beyond comprehension, the text laden with arcane academic conventions and leaden prose betraying its origin as a thesis. I also yeamed for a good proof-reader as well as copy editor. Only one instance need be mentioned here: Gardener’s Chronicle throughout instead of Gardeners’ Chronicle, a minor point perhaps, but all the more inexplicable given the close attention to such detail elsewhere. I was also baffled by reference to ‘John Loudon’ and ‘Webb Loudon’ (often in the one sentence) when the J.C. Loudon and Jane Loudon might have been a more rational choice. But these criticisms should not detract from the reach of the book. Dewis has read widely, in secondary sources to ground her analysis, and amongst the voluminous writings of the Loudons. She wisely moves beyond the view of Loudon as (male) hero, placing him in the context of his accomplished wife Jane Webb Loudon, and sisters Jane and Mary. The author’s analysis is fresh and stimulating: Dewis brings new understanding to image and text in the Loudons’ published output, adds to our understanding of the rational utilitarianism of John and Jane Loudon, and places Loudon’s codification of the gardenesque in a social context. Readers seeking a readable account of J.C. Loudon will still yearn for Melanie Simo’s Loudon and the Landscape (1988), but Sarah Dewis should be on the shelf adjacent for her deep cultural analysis of this gardening power couple.

Richard Aitken
Recent releases


With an august roll call of contributors, Gardens and Landscapes in Historic Building Conservation fills a useful niche. In Australia, heritage initiatives have primarily come from architectural antecedents, so the garden specialisation of the editor and contributors to this book and thematic treatment of their subjects make a very welcome contribution. Theory and practice are here combined in a rich mix.


Sydney, as a bustling modern capital, is the perfect canvas to examine post-war leisure spaces. Relying on the advent of a booming economy, a combination of commercial and private enterprise produced a string of new urban developments: the shopping centre and mall, motels and international-standard hotels, drive-ins; rejuvenation of others such as golf courses; and a host of ancillary sites as diverse as espresso bars and (rugby) leagues clubs. Unsurprisingly, increasing privatisation of urban spaces for leisure and pleasure was a by-product of commerce, and here expert contributors look well beyond design considerations to explain social and cultural contexts.


The Shire Books garden history series continues to expand and flourish. Whilst predominantly British in outlook, Sarah Rutherford’s Botanic Gardens acknowledges a world view, with chapters on colonial botanic gardens and those in the United States of America. This is couched in simple language, and her uncomplicated explanations of purpose and intent might be well heeded by those authorities that view such places not as richly complex fusions of science and art, but merely as public playgrounds for leisure and recreation.


A comprehensive social history of the extraordinary horticultural feats by the working class in Britain to transform their sometimes drab or meagre surroundings, this book traverses four centuries of garden history from the earliest known records to the present. It provides a richly detailed account of the many different, ingenious, and sometimes devious ways in which the popular cultivation of plants, vegetables, and flowers played—and continues to play—a central role in British life from this fresh perspective.

Aborigines using fire to hunt kangaroos (c.1817) from John Maynard’s True Light and Shade: an Aboriginal perspective of Joseph Lycett’s art (National Library of Australia: RRP $49.99)
ANZAC centenary

With the centenary of the ANZAC landing looming, we note the timely publication of Paul Gough’s article “Planting” memory: the challenge of remembering the past on the Somme, Gallipoli and in Melbourne’ in Garden History, 42 (supp.1), 2014, pp.3–17. This is the leading article in a special issue of Garden History, the refereed journal of our sister organisation, the Garden History Society, entitled ‘Memorial gardens: design, planting and conservation’. Professor Paul Gough, a painter, writer, and broadcaster, is based at RMIT University and his research interests lie in the iconography of commemoration, cultural geographies of battlefields, and representations of peace and conflict.

Renaissance Gardens

‘The Renaissance of Gardens and Gardens of the Renaissance’, is an evening event to be held at The University of Melbourne on Friday, 26 June. There will be no charge for attendance. Melbourne-based Renaissance garden specialist Dr Luke Morgan and US-based early modern Europe specialist Dr Katherine Bentz will be amongst the speakers. Associate Professor Bentz has a current research focus on the social experiences of art and architectural spaces in late 16th- early 17th-century Rome, including an examination of guidebooks and printed images of the urban landscape, the design and reception of early modern gardens and villas, and the history and display of ancient sculpture in private art collections. Check the AGHS website closer to the event for more details and watch the Twitter feed.

National and World Heritage listing of the Mount Lofty Ranges Working Agricultural Landscape

With the AGHS conference coming to South Australian this year, it is timely to report that the Mount Lofty Ranges World Heritage Bid consortium is working towards recognition of this outstanding cultural landscape. The consortium believes the Mount Lofty region provides an outstanding example of a working agricultural landscape which evolved as a result of a radical shift in emigration policy within an expanding British Empire, from shipments of convicts and poor people to a model of ‘systematic colonisation’ involving free settlers. South Australia was the first place in the nation, and, indeed, the world to apply the principles of systematic colonisation, which went on to influence colonisation practices elsewhere in Australia and the New World. The consortium of six local councils is in the process of demonstrating how those founding principles continue to be reflected in the contemporary landscape, landholdings, settlement patterns, and land management policies of the region. Contemporaneous German and British settlement, and an intensity of cultivation over generations of family-owned farms have created an enduring, distinctive, and evolving visual mosaic that has inspired subsequent generations.

Stephanie Johnston
www.mountloftyranges.org
New editor appointed

Our current co-editors of *Australian Garden History*, Christina Dyson and Richard Aitken, have not sought reappointment following the conclusion of their latest three-year term and this issue will consequently be their last. Following a robust selection process, the Society is very pleased to announce that Dr Bernadette Hince of Canberra is to be the incoming editor. Bernadette has extensive experience as an editor and scholar, with qualifications in the sciences and in English. She brings to the job a great interest in Australian natural history and we are delighted with her appointment.

Vale Lionel Gilbert (1924–2015)

We note with sadness the recent death of Dr Lionel Gilbert OAM, subject of our profile in *AGH*, 24 (3), 2013. Lionel Gilbert was held in high esteem by many organisations, institutions, and disciplines, and several lasting tributes are planned for this genial and meticulous polymath, particularly in Armidale, NSW.

2015 Symposium call for papers

The 2015 annual national conference of the Australian Garden History Society will be held in Adelaide from 16–18 October 2015. It is planned to have a pre-conference symposium in Adelaide on 15 October. The theme for the conference and the symposium is ‘Garden to Table’ embracing productive gardens and gardening, food and gastronomy, and related topics. Expressions of interest for presenting a refereed paper at the symposium are now invited. Funding from the Nina Crone Fund has also been recently made available to assist honours/postgraduate/early career researchers towards presenting and attending the symposium, and to later re-present their paper to their local Branch. Enquiries and proposals for papers should be sent (marked to the attention of Ray Choate) to info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au

Gardens of Tropical North Queensland, 29 August–4 September 2015

Warm sunny days and exotic gardens with magnificent trees and gorgeous flowers amidst verdant foliage beckon us to Tropical North Queensland. Our leader is Kim Woods Rabbidge, Brisbane-based garden writer, photographer, and AGHS member, who has drawn together Tropical North Queensland horticulture and garden design professionals for popular presentations. Over six days we will visit outstanding gardens and meet the owners and designers who have created them. We also explore historic, and sometimes quirky, landscapes that reflect the multi-layered regional character. We’ll skirt the languid Coral Sea, drive through a tapestry of cane fields, bands of forest, and unexpected mountain peaks. To book please contact AGHS national office on 1800 678 446 or email info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au

2015 Australian Landscape Conference

This event is scheduled for the 18–22 September 2015, at the Melbourne Convention Exhibition Centre, Convention Place, South Wharf, Melbourne. Indications strongly suggest that the 2015 conference is going to be bigger and better than in 2013. Once again this conference will feature some outstanding local and international designers and presentations. If you wish to register your interest in attending the Conference, receive a copy of the Conference brochure, and regular email updates, please register via the website http://www.landscapeconference.com

2016 Tour of Amalfi Coast with Trisha Dixon Burkitt

In June 2016 Trisha Dixon Burkitt will be taking AGHS members on a tour of a lifetime. The 12-day tour, staying in Ravello, Capri, and Naples, with visits to the what many consider the grandest garden in Italy, Reggia di Caserta, designed for King Charles III by Luigi Vanvitelli; composer William and Lady Susannah Walton’s Russell Page La Mortella garden on the island of Ischia; private twilight visit with drinks at Axel Munthe’s Villa San Michele on Capri; the pergola at the Capuchin Monastery at Amalfi that inspired Edna Walling’s Boortkoi construction; as well as private gardens and visits with the opportunity to go to two wonderful garden concerts while staying at Ravello. The whole area is a vision of wide leafy pergolas, wisteria and brilliant flowering bougainvillea, towering statuesque Italian pines and haze of olive trees against the shimmer of brilliant blue water and sky. A good place to be while frosts settle at home in June!

Flyer and booking form available in the next issue, 27 (1), in early July.
Profile: Roslyn Burge

Roslyn Burge pictured at the AGHS Albany conference, 2014.
Photo: Cynthia Nadai

Roslyn Burge is an elected member of the AGHS National Management Committee and Convenor of the Editorial Advisory Committee.

Sydney has been home longer than anywhere else yet it's the colour of the light, its shadows, and the shape of the land in Tasmania—the land of my birth—that strikes a deeper chord. The brilliant white/yellow paddocks of summer and Mount Roland always in the distance as I grew up are immediate triggers of a wider landscape of belonging and attachment.

Moving from Goat Island in Sydney Harbour to Tasmania meant an adjustment for my mother who found comfort in her garden. Growing up it seemed to me a haven of greenery and trees above the fence-line rather than floral plantings and, with its glassed-in back verandah and crazy-paved front verandah, was unlike any other garden in Devonport.

Chaucer's observations were the closest my undergraduate degree took me to gardens, but my concern about the need for conservation of significant landscapes had early beginnings. In the 1980s I joined other local residents appalled at the vandalism in the remaining Cumberland Plain Woodland adjacent to Duck River in South Granville, Sydney. We met regularly, working to save this small area of bushland.

After graduating from UTS in 1996 (Master of Arts, Public History) it was a leap of faith to abandon the certainties of a corporate job to work fulltime as an independent historian. Oral history has become the largest component of my work with diverse individual and corporate commissions, heritage projects (many place based), and much larger national projects such as the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants Oral History Project. Oral history interviews, whether recorded individually or as a specific collection, are a significant primary resource in which analysis of the interplay of memory, speech patterns, attitudes, and the way stories are recalled, provide another perspective among a range of historical tools. Future researchers will bring a raft of different interdisciplinary questions to their interpretation of interviews.

My own garden is a series of spaces the size of postage stamps that have grown without design. Combatting the voracious appetite of the possum population, which nightly emerges from Callan Park, and the way weather patterns and large trees impact these spaces have been an education. Many friendships and connections are represented in the plantings; a favourite is my treasured ‘Jean Walker fern’ that she plucked from her Balgowlah garden when interviewed in 2007 for the Australian Garden History Society Oral History Collection. Callan Park has become a sizeable distraction in recent years! The psychiatric institutions of Broughton Hall and Callan Park form a remarkable cultural landscape, one of the largest open spaces in Sydney’s inner west, where plantings reflect botanic (Charles Moore) and therapeutic influences (Dr Thomas Kirkbride) and the economic prosperity of entrepreneurial families (Keep and Ramsay). In 1999 I curated a photographic exhibition within the gardens...
Diary dates

APRIL 2015

**Sunday 12**  Haberfield walk  SYDNEY

Haberfield walk exploring heritage houses and gardens, church grounds, and the grounds of Yasmar. 1.30–4pm, address and directions will be advised on booking. Cost: $20 members, $25 guests, includes afternoon tea. Bookings essential, to Jeanne Villani on (02) 9997 5995 or Jeanne@Villani.com

**Wednesday 16**  Autumn lecture 2  VICTORIA

Elizabeth Gilfillan, past President of Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens, will speak about the important role of Botanic Gardens in the community. 6 for 6.30pm lecture, Mueller Hall at the Herbarium, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra. Cost $20 members, $25 non-members, $20 students. Enquiries or phone bookings to Lisa Tuck, lisatuck1@bigpond.com or 0418 590 891.

**Sunday 19**  Two significant gardens in northern Tasmania  TASMANIA

Join us on this self-drive tour to two significant historic gardens in northern Tasmania—Panshanger at Longford (completed c. 1835) and Strathmore at Nile (homestead built in 1826). 10.30am, Panshanger for 11am garden tour, departing for Strathmore at 12.30pm to arrive there at 1pm. BYO lunch. Cost: $40 members, $45 non-members. Contact Liz Kerry, liz.kerry@keypoint.com.au; see Branch webpage for additional details.

**Sunday 19**  Shaw/Mercer Park, Nundah  QUEENSLAND

Visit to Shaw/Mercer Park, Nundah, with Brisbane Aboriginal historian Dr Ray Kerkhove. See Branch webpage for further details.

**Monday 27–Wednesday 29**  Autumn working party on Montague Island  ACT/MONARO/RIVERINA

Our assistance with maintaining the newly restored kitchen garden at Montague Island continues this Autumn (see AGH 26 (3), pp. 32, 34). The Autumn working party is full, but stay tuned for the Spring working party. Contact Nancy Clarke on (02) 6248 6549 or clarkenancy624@gmail.com

MAY 2015

**Thursday 7**  Rock gardens of the early 20th century  WESTERN AUSTRALIA

John Viska will present this lecture. 7–8pm, Grove Community Centre, Peppermint Grove. The event will be held in conjunction with the National Trust. Check the Branch webpage for updated details.

**Friday 22–Saturday 23**  Nanango weekend  QUEENSLAND

Visits to Taabinga Station, Ringsfield House (by architect Robin Dods), and the Nanango district. The tour will be led by Ann Wegener. See Branch webpage for further details.

JUNE 2015

**Thursday 18**  Fearful symmetry: The Medici legacy and Renaissance gardens  ACT/RIVERINA/MONARO

Lecture by Sue Ebury, exploring three ground breaking Renaissance gardens in Tuscany, made by the Medici around six centuries ago. 6pm, Conference Room, National Library of Australia. A joint Friends of the NLA and AGHS event. Cost: $15 AGHS members and Friends of the NLA, $20 non-members, includes refreshments. Bookings through the NLA on (02) 6262 1698 or nla.gov.au/bookings/friends. No bookings to be made through the AGHS.

**Sunday 28**  AGM and winter lecture 1  TASMANIA

The first in our series of winter lectures, to coincide with the AGM. Details to be advised.
Warm sunny days and exotic gardens with magnificent trees and gorgeous flowers amidst verdant foliage beckon us to Tropical North Queensland with tour leader Kim Woods Rabbidge, Brisbane-based garden writer and photographer. For more information please contact the National Office on 1800 678 446 or info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au

The Australian Garden History Society’s 36th Annual National Conference will be held in Adelaide, 16–18 October 2015. See insert for conference brochure and registration. It is planned to have a pre-conference symposium on 15 October also in Adelaide and sharing the conference theme ‘Garden to table’. Expressions of interest for presenting a refereed paper at the Symposium are invited. Enquiries and proposals for papers should be sent to: Ray Choate info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au

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of Broughton Hall (regarded as one of the finest in New South Wales in 1915), where Agathis robusta (30m), Moreton Bay figs, and Araucaria cunninghamii are among the tallest and grandest trees in the municipality. A 2011 tree survey identified more species in Callan Park than Central Park, New York. When closure of the hospital was imminent, I began an (ongoing) oral history project recording the experiences of staff and their understanding of the therapeutic value of the landscape.

Oral history gave me a closer engagement with the history of the AGHS when the NSW Branch commissioned a number of interviews with people associated with the foundation of the Society. The breadth of the AGHS’s achievements, its advocacy, publications, and support for scholarly analysis of significant gardens and cultural landscapes are well documented and its historical achievement is to be celebrated. This is a most interesting time for the Society as the editorship of the Society’s journal, Australian Garden History, changes and the National Management Committee considers new ideas from its Engagement Working Group and possibilities for continued revitalisation.
Australian Garden History, long the flagship publication of the Australian Garden History Society, is set to enter a new era with volume 27.

As incumbent editors, we have decided not to reapply for editorship at the conclusion of our current three-year term. Having undertaken this task since late 2007/early 2008, we look back at that period with a mixture of wonderment and relief. We welcome the robust selection procedure that has seen Dr Bernadette Hince appointed the incoming editor.

The AGHS has been fortunate in the longevity of many of its editorships, and we wish Bernadette all the best for her new adventure. We are confident she will enjoy working with our Editorial Advisory Committee. We have particularly valued the support we have received from successive EAC chairs, Christine Reid and Roslyn Burge, and from successive Executive Officers, Jackie Courmadias and Phoebe LaGerche-Wijsman, who work in the background, attending to myriad enquiries, many journal related.

Editing is a stimulating yet challenging task. Challenges include deadlines, time constraints associated with a quarterly publication, sourcing of high-resolution digital image files, and the wide range of our members’ interests. Striking an appropriate balance in not easy. And we are always looking beyond AGHS members to our wider readership, who might see the journal in a library or online, especially as we have increasingly seen Australian Garden History as a vehicle for engagement (including beyond our shores) as well as member satisfaction.
One of our greatest stimulations has been in seeking out themes and issues for exposure, staying at the head of the pack, and indeed trying to lead by example; we often feel slightly in advance of prevailing sentiment but see the journal as setting agendas for the Society in a way that branches are rarely able to do. This has been a great privilege and responsibility.

We have derived great satisfaction from the regular ‘senior moments’ we have coordinated: reflections on and by the likes of Marion Blackwell, Richard Clough, Peter Cuffley, Lionel Gilbert, and Glen Wilson. We have sought national and international viewpoints, and we regard this broadening beyond the parochial as one of our greatest satisfactions: viewpoints expressed by the likes of Charles Birnbaum, Dominic Cole, Toby Musgrave, Tim Richardson, Tom Williamson, Andrea Wulf; influential Australian academics, professionals, and scholars such as Robert Freestone, Andrea Gaynor, Jane Lennon, Greg Moore, Howard Tanner, Damon Young, Peter Watts; and some unsung—the likes of Janet Heywood and Gwenda Sheridan. But perhaps our greatest satisfaction has been seeing new authors emerge; we have cherished our role as mentors to this group—who represent the future of the Society—and look forward to continuing involvement as part of the Society’s Engagement Working Group.

We see Australian Garden History as part of a cascade of AGHS publications from our Twitter feed and other social media sites, through newsletters, the website, journal, edited papers, and our refereed Studies in Australian Garden History; each appealing to different demographics, some overlapping, some discrete. The journal remains, however, the main public face of the Society, as much as we might wish to see the website take over this role.

We regret, however, our lack of time and ability to craft a reconciliation issue: all our gardening takes place on Aboriginal land, and this is something to work towards. We lament a lack of diversity in contributors, and urgently need to hear more non-Anglo voices in our conversations to reflect Australia’s rich cultural mix and diverse garden heritages. We yearn for the day when the AGHS might have a more influential voice in advocacy, leading opinion on issues concerning conservation of significant gardens and cultural landscapes, ensuring what is significant about them is understood, and ensuring that what is important about them can be ideally conserved.

We will, on a personal note, greatly miss working with M (our Canberra-based designer, Mariana Rollgejser)—she has been a vital third part of our team. But is it cold turkey or Cold Duck? We’ll take the sparkling wine any day.

Mission Statement

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