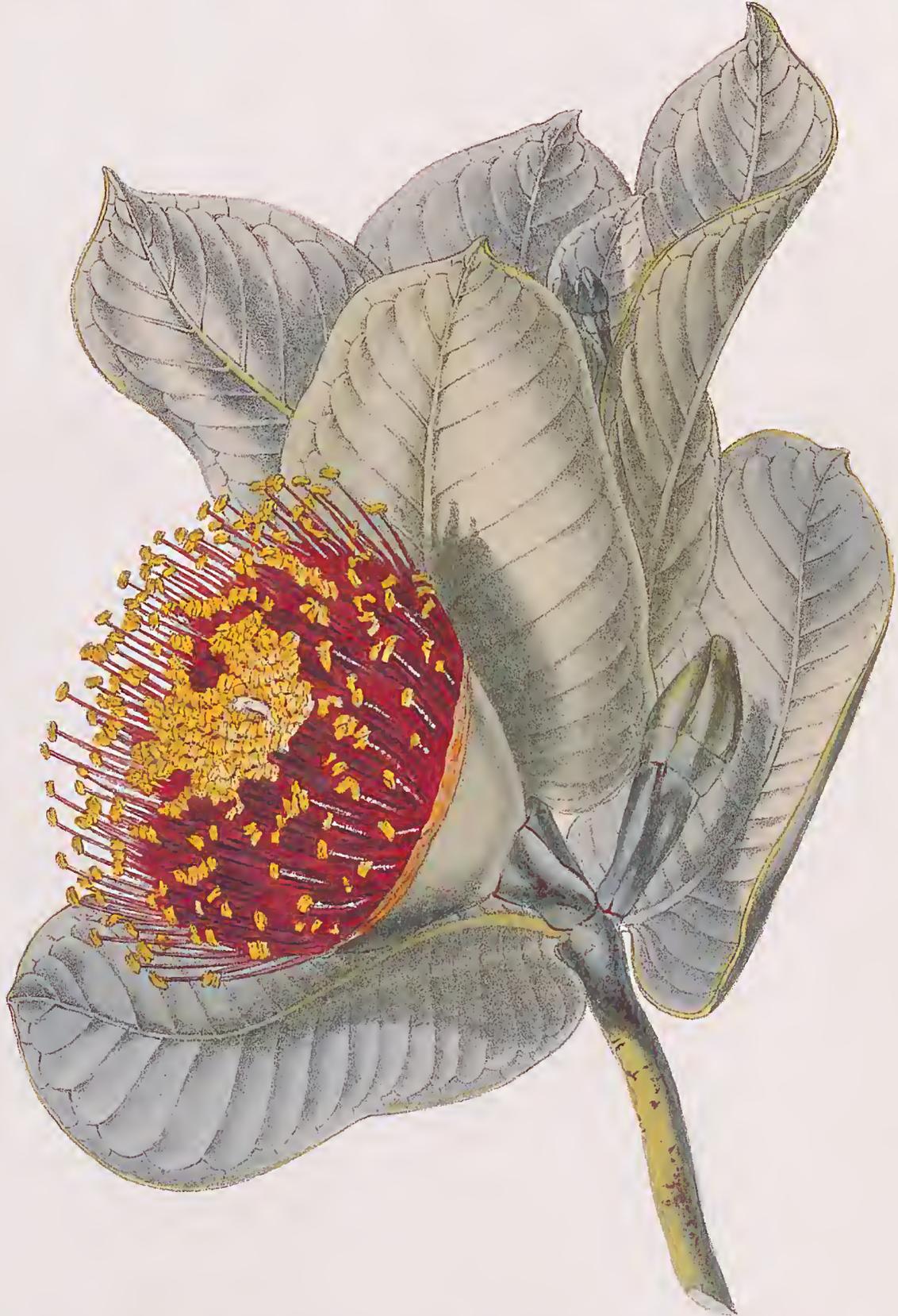


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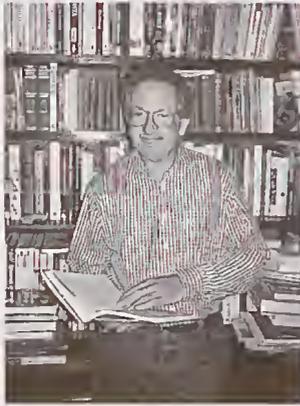
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*Eucalyptus macrocarpa* Hook  
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## GUEST EDITORIAL

by Trevor Nottle



Outside the garden looks pretty much history. The combined efforts of the usual long hot summer and a few months of semi-neglect have wrought an outcome only to be expected but

none-the-less sad. On every hand the garden looks history. Even the incomplete attempts of myself and my garden lad, Pieter-Menno, to get it organised and neat have left it looking more than usually derelict.

This is gardening at the edge of reality; a very hard reality for many to accept comfortably — it does not rain here from mid-December until the end of April, very often on Anzac Day. I am determined to try to garden without a heavy reliance on summer irrigation; in fact to garden in tune with the local patterns of weather and the seasons. I hope that eventually we may all determine to do the same for it was within these parameters, among others derived from the natural world, that all the great gardening styles developed over the centuries.

Gardening this way easily gives the impression that I garden on the edge of good taste. Our garden does not look lush and green, and flower filled all summer long. Indeed, it goes to sleep and I deliberately let it happen. I tell myself we can still have an attractive background of greenery to outdoor activities in summer without riots of petunias and armies of impatiens. We make do very handsomely with large pots and tubs of water dependent plants by our doorways and gateways; things like Oriental lilies, Hostas, Vireya Rhododendrons and such like that flower over the summer. To these I have taken to adding the devilish delights of curious succulents such as *Sinningia leucotricha*, *Agave stricta*, *Dyckia marnier-lapostollei*, *Adenium obesum*, a caudiciform *Begonia* sp. collected in Madagascar and assorted agaves and bromeliads. To add further to the doubts of those who react as though I am gardening on the edge of the art there are an assortment of modern ceramic and pottery pieces to give interest at key points in the months while the grass is yellow and the sun scorching. Unlike petunias and impatiens these neither fade nor frizzle. As a reassuring note I have experimented with clipping bushes of *Artemisia* 'Faith Raven' and 'Lambrook Silver' into a series of domes of different sizes in the manner adopted by Nicole de Vesian in her garden at Bonnieux in the Montagne de Luberon. Shown in all the most important European style magazines the idea is one which is suitably whimsical for me and, I hope, reassuring for those dependent on ideas generated from backward looking glances to older cultures and far removed places.

Among the stimuli to get the garden organised have been the need to clear away old growth in readiness for the burst of growth and early flowers that will be triggered by the first rains. (I search out plants that grow in winter rainfall regions of the world to boost the display that comes in the wet seasons.) The other prime mover this year was the imminent visit of two important garden visitors from the east coast. My suspicion that they might feel I was gardening on the edge of civilization was heightened when they queried several times the weather patterns and growth patterns that are the *raison d'être* of my approach. They seemed almost incredulous at the impossible idea of going without water so long and still being able to have a garden. It was clear they are used to thinking of the lush gardens of that well watered coast as the framework of what a garden should look like, what it should contain, how it should work and the aspirations it should try to express. Given the time frame for getting my act together I can only hope that the thoughtfulness I have put into making our garden proved that I am gardening on the edge of sanity and not beyond it. The vision may not yet be realised but I am working toward it. Risk taking is important to making gardens that are creative and satisfying. They must work without frustrations and disappointments, apart from those brought on by acts of pure folly such as planting *Meconopsis*. Managing the risks is as important for success in this case as in any other venture hence I work with the weather patterns and grow things that will grow here, or at least have a fair chance of adapting well.

The place we have chosen to live can only be the place it is, gardening on the edge requires that we explore to the limits our understanding of reality, good taste, civilization, art and sanity to know what might be possible in terms of creative responses to our own places through garden making. By this means I believe we may one day arrive at feeling a sense of place that links us to the past, present and future.

Trevor Nottle gardens on the edge - quite literally. On the edge of the Adelaide Hills - almost within sight of the Great Southern Ocean. As a part-time gardener, full-time teacher and writer, he gardens on the edge of sanity — too much to do, too little time. He is one gardener that is attuned to his environment and climatic restrictions — a plantsman with a passion for exotica from afar, he is happy to seek out special plants from similar climates. His latest book, *Gardens of the Sun* unfolds fresh perspectives on gardening styles.

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Thanks to John Joyce, Di Ellerton, Helen Page, Laura Lewis, Anne Miller, Rosemary Manion, Beryl Black, Jane Bunney, Kaye Stokes, Nina Crone, Kate McKern, Georgina Whitehead and Jackie Courmadias for packing the last issue of the journal.

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GARDEN OF  
**Antarctic**  
*Delights*

by Patrick Quilty

A GARDEN WITH an Antarctic theme? Surely this could contain only a few mosses and lichens. No flora of any size lives there.

THE BUILDING OF THE GARDEN

At the Australian Antarctic Division headquarters in Kingston, Tasmania, there is a garden consisting, not of those plants that live in Antarctica now, but of those Tasmanian, mainly cold temperate rainforest, species that are known to be descended from Antarctic ancestors. The range is modest but will grow as we get to know more of Antarctica's history.

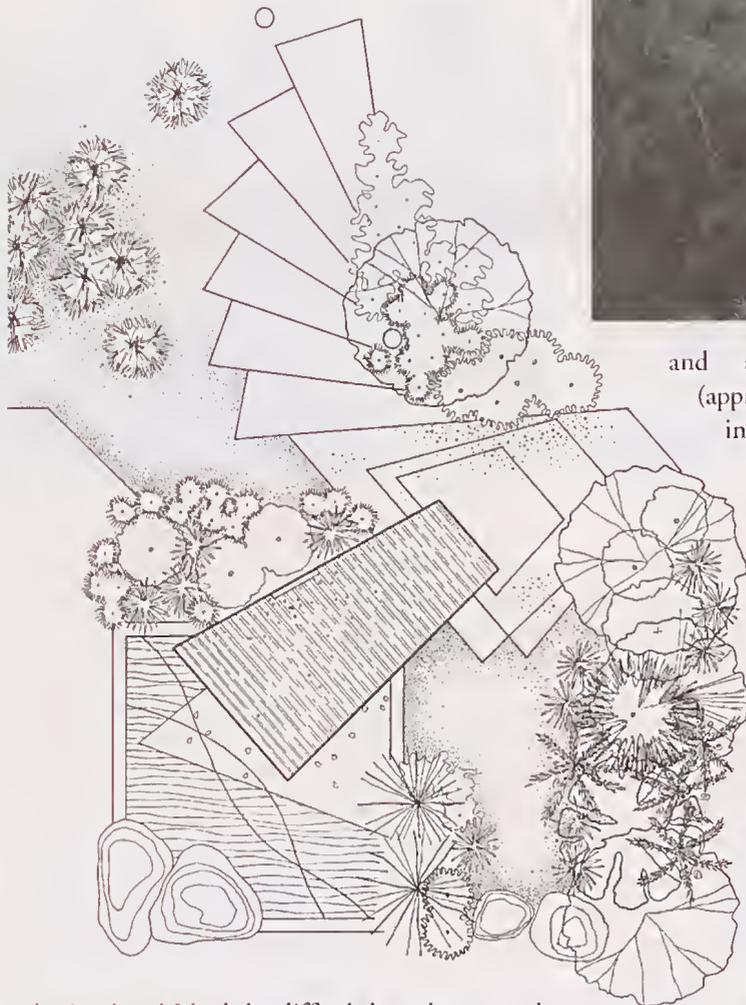
The original idea came to me when the Antarctic Division headquarters was relocated from Melbourne to Tasmania at the beginning of 1981. At that time, we were just beginning to learn, largely through the work of the Australian Dr Elizabeth Truswell (at the Australian Geological Survey in Canberra) and some of her overseas colleagues, that Antarctica had supported a considerable, diverse vegetation until approximately 35 million years ago, and that species derived from that ancestry are now widespread in

Australia (particularly Tasmania), South America and New Zealand.

The garden occupies a small area on the southern side of the headquarters complex. This area was a cold, miserable, useless piece of swampy ground and quite an eyesore after rains. It is now a thing of great beauty and source of immense personal satisfaction.

This garden is a tangible expression of the celebrations held to commemorate 50 years of Antarctic research by the Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE) and was opened by the Parliamentary Secretary for the Antarctic (Senator Ian McDonald) on 22 April 1997, 16 years to the day after the Antarctic Division headquarters was opened by H.R.H. Prince Charles. Its construction was the result of a chance meeting between Mr Lindsay Campbell, then Lecturer in Horticulture at the Hobart Technical and Further Education (TAFE) College and myself. Lindsay organised a competition for the design between members of one of his classes, who enjoyed the chance to design a garden that would be built, rather than indulge in a purely academic exercise.

Fifteen students came to look at the site, all aware that the design needed to incorporate a list of species and also, if possible, to draw out the history of continental movement that separated the modern continents from their once-continuous ancestor — Gondwana. Eleven designs were



and are thriving. TAFE students (approximately 120 in all) have been involved in all phases of the development of the garden. Some designed it (the competition); others planted it; yet others designed and built the concrete and timber structures, designed and built watering systems, and prepared a manual for the Division's garden contractors to use in servicing the garden's needs.

(above) Garden surrounds to show 'magnetic lineations' in the concrete, to represent the seafloor markings left as continents moved apart.

(left) Plan of the garden

(far left) *Dicksonia antarctica*, Man fern

(below) The ancient supercontinent of Gondwana about 160 million years ago. At this time, it was just beginning to show signs of coming apart.

#### TASMANIA AS A PIECE OF ANTARCTICA

submitted and I had the difficult but pleasant task of choosing the final one, prepared by Kerry Fountain. This included all the species given, but also a pond, and boulders of Tasmanian Dolerite, the rock that controls the landforms of the Central Plateau of Tasmania, and which was once continuous with the Ferrar Dolerite of the Transantarctic Mountains in Antarctica. There is also a clever design consisting of a series of roughly concentric rings cast in aluminium to represent the pattern of seafloor magnetic lineations formed as the continents move apart, and used to retrace continental movement.

The garden has been a marvellous exercise in cooperation between many institutions. Forestry Tasmania provided the specimens, but more than that, they isolated individual specimens, helped students to get to know them and ensured that the plants were in ideal condition for removal and replanting in Kingston. The Hydro-Electric Commission (as it was then) helped by raising wires to allow transport of the larger specimens.

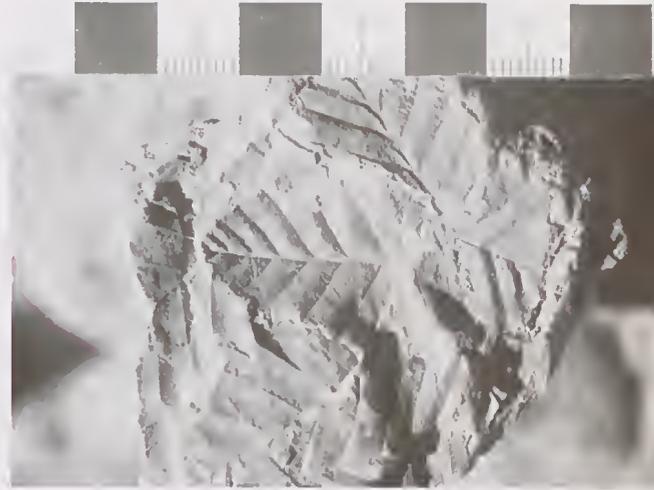
There was only one failure in the transplantation. An attempt was made to move a Myrtle (*Nothofagus cunninghamii*) 6 metres high, the largest specimen for which this has been attempted. It did not survive, but others to 4 metres high have survived

After a period of some 550 million years of common history, Tasmania (with mainland Australia attached) separated from Antarctica and moved north. As it did so, it took with it a body of rocks. These have been moved through various climate zones and eroded to their present forms. They have been modified by earth movements. They form the backbone of Tasmania's spectacular landforms and they controlled the flow of rivers. They have accumulated sediments and rocks formed by



(right) Fossil *Nothofagus beardmorensis*, showing density of an autumn leaf fall in Antarctica's past

volcanoes and these have weathered to form the soils which are so important to our standard of living. This movement north, now at about 6 cm per year, allowed Tasmania to carry the forebears of the current vegetation as that vegetation was eradicated from Antarctica. Movement through climate zones helped this to evolve. It allows us to live in a climate and elevation where rain and snow fall are sufficient to allow us to use hydroelectricity rather than a fossil fuel based electricity system. We owe a great deal of our Tasmanian lifestyle to our historic links with Antarctica.



#### ANTARCTIC VEGETATION HISTORY

The garden is not an attempt to show descendants of all plant life that has lived in Antarctica. Instead, it is concerned mainly with Tasmanian cold temperate rainforest forms derived from vegetation that lived on Antarctica between roughly 65 and 35 million years ago, since the extinction of the dinosaurs, and the time during which Antarctica changed from a fully vegetated continent lacking an icesheet (but probably with glaciers and small icecaps on high ground) to the modern ice-covered inspirational landmass. After the demise of the dinosaurs, Antarctica was still fully vegetated and lacked an icesheet.

Earth has been in existence for about 4.6 billion years, and algae have occupied its oceans for some 3.5 billion years. Animals emerged about 575 million years ago, but the land could become vegetated only when the oxygen content of the atmosphere was high enough to allow some to be transformed into ozone to give protection from harmful ultraviolet

radiation. This seems to have happened in Silurian time, some 425 million years ago. Throughout the time that vegetation has inhabited the land, Australia and Antarctica have been adjacent to each other, locked together as part of the supercontinent of Gondwana until this broke up progressively, beginning 160 million years ago, in the Jurassic. Australia and Antarctica were in close contact until 55 million years ago, and vegetation has been absent from Antarctica (with a couple of possible short exceptions) since the icesheet began 35 million years ago. As a result, the vegetation history of Australia and Antarctica has been much the same until the dismemberment of Gondwana, and only since that time have the continents had different vegetation histories.

Fossil plants are well known from rocks of many different ages in Antarctica.

Perhaps the historically most significant evidence of earlier vegetation, well preserved in Antarctica, is the leaf form *Glossopteris* which was at the heart of the concept of Gondwana, an hypothesis first proposed to explain the widespread distribution of glacial rocks and *Glossopteris*. When Scott's party was found dead in their tent on the way back from the South Pole, specimens of *Glossopteris* from the Beardmore Glacier region were found with them. While they had jettisoned almost everything else on the way back, they recognised the immense scientific importance of *Glossopteris* and refused to leave the specimens behind. These are some 280-300 million years old and are thus older than the material of which the garden is made.

When Australia and South America had moved north from Antarctica far enough for the Southern Ocean's circumpolar circulation to develop, Antarctica became isolated from the rest of the world. As this happened, the icesheet began to form, eradicating vegetation from Antarctica. The connection between South America, Antarctica and Australia which had been the means of migration of

(below) Bronze model of the leaf of the fossil leaf *Nothofagus beardmorensis* from 86°S.

(bottom) Twig of Tasmanian fossil *Fitzroya* taken under Scanning Electron Microscopy

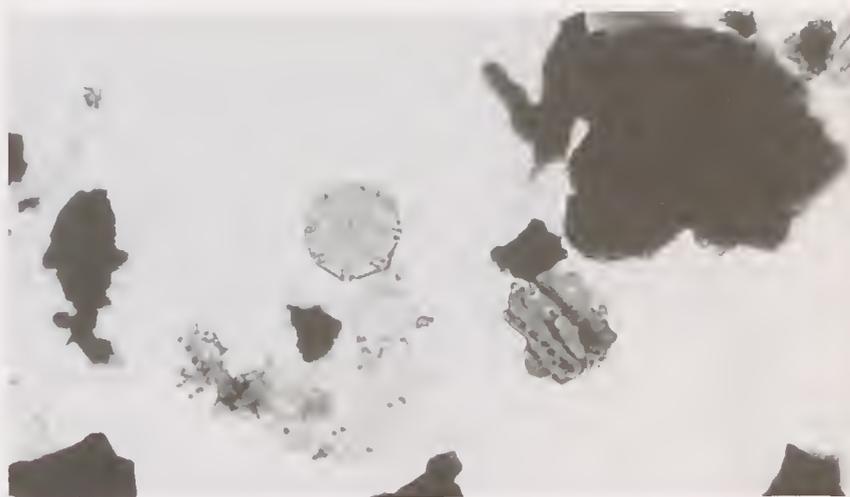


plants and animals each way was broken. (Yes! There are fossils of marsupials and other land mammals from Antarctica.) Since the development of the Circumpolar Current, Australian and South American fauna and flora have evolved independently.

One line of evidence for existence of vegetation on Antarctica comes from pollen and spores from rocks 35 million years and older on and around the continent. A practical nomenclature has developed to aid those who work with spores and pollen which are given their own names, often reflecting the biological affinities where this is known. In many cases, the natural affinities can only be guessed at.

In addition to spores and pollen, there are rare records of wood, leaves, roots and twigs. Sediments with plant remains accumulated in several places but the record is poor compared with that of any other continent because so few rocks of the right age are known from the region. Most are buried under ice or have been eroded off the continent and deposited at sea. In fact, some of the best pollen records have come from studies of such material recycled by iceberg transport from old rocks under the ice into the surrounding ocean sediments. The principal locations yielding large remains (leaves, wood) are islands (Seymour Island, Alexander Island, King George Island and Adelaide Island) off the Antarctic Peninsula, south of South America. These fossils are mainly from rocks about 45–60 million years old but some may be from younger rocks, even as young as 30 million years although much restudy of this material is needed. The record is quite diverse and includes remains similar to forms in the garden but some are similar only to modern South American plants and thus are not included in the garden.

One particularly abundant leaf form from 86°S (about 400 km from the South Pole), is *Nothofagus beardmorensis*, a leaf which bears considerable resemblance to the living Tasmanian alpine species *N. gunnii*. This is represented in the garden by bronze leaves of the right size and shape embedded in the walkways and in the small pond. This species was deciduous and occurs as an autumn leaf-fall accompanied by branches and pollen. It probably grew no more than knee high. It is the centre of a major scientific debate about past conditions in the Antarctic. One school of thought believes that *N. beardmorensis* is only 2-3 million years old, whereas another school believes it to be much older, at least 30 million years. The leaves were sculpted by Piers Allbrook of the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Tasmania.



Fossil pollen of *Nothofagus* from a marine core near Mawson in Antarctica.

Much detail is unknown because many species of plants such as ferns have spores that are indistinguishable and thus the diversity probably was much greater than indicated by the species growing here. Many spores and pollen from Antarctica cannot be related clearly to particular plant types, and those that are linked with modern forms are linked only in a general way. It is impossible to say that the pollen *Phyllocladites mawsonii* represents the Huon Pine *Lagarostrobos franklinii* but it possible to say that it represents an ancestor. Whether or not the ancestor looked like the modern Huon Pine is unknown.

One species that is worthy of a place here, but is absent, is *Nothofagus gunnii*, the Deciduous Beech or Tanglefoot. The environment here is not conducive to its survival.

In addition, one species from South America (*Fitzroya cupressoides*) is grown here even though it now no longer lives in Tasmania. It is known as a fossil in Tasmania from leaves and twigs. Most forms present here have closely related species living still in South America but the most closely related forms are those that were in Antarctica and are now extinct.

The presence of Macquarie Island and Tasmanian grass species, while both modern, is to show the link that exists between these two localities.

#### NOTES ON THE GARDEN

##### *Flowering Plants*

##### *Nothofagus*

*Nothofagus* demands a special place in any Antarctic garden. It is THE common link between most southern hemisphere fragments of Gondwana and occurs widely in South America, New Zealand, eastern Australia (although once widespread throughout the continent), New Caledonia and the higher country of New Guinea, but not South

Africa which had separated earlier. It is known from Antarctica in the form of leaves, twigs, roots, and pollen, and in rocks of many ages. It has by far the most abundant fossil record of the plants related to those growing here. *Nothofagus* pollen is probably the best known evidence from the Antarctic of past vegetation, is produced in great abundance and preserves readily in sediments. The name *Nothofagus* reflects the fact that this group is closely related to the northern beeches (*Fagus*), and belongs in the same botanical family (Fagaceae) but has evolved independently in the Southern Hemisphere.

*Nothofagus cunninghamii* (Hooker) — Tasmanian Myrtle or Myrtle beech. Although it grows also in Victoria, it is widely regarded as a Tasmanian form. It is the dominant plant in the garden and in the wild can grow to 35–50 m. Several specimens were transplanted to this site, one standing 6 m high, the largest specimen for which this had been attempted. Unfortunately, that specimen did not survive.

*Nothofagus beardmorensis* Hill, Harwood and Webb. As noted earlier, this form is known from fossil leaves, twigs, roots and pollen from close to the South Pole. It was deciduous and probably lived as a straggling ground-hugging plant with a growth form similar to that of the Arctic Willow (*Salix arctica*). It is present in the garden, not as living plants, but as natural-size sculpted bronze leaves on the timber path to the pond, and in the pond itself. Its presence as bronze reproductions is to satisfy the need for a deciduous species of *Nothofagus* because *N. gunnii*, the Tasmanian deciduous beech would not survive in this environment, but also because it is a classic Antarctic occurrence.

*Lomatia tinctoria*,  
Guitar Plant



*Lomatia tinctoria* (Labillardiere) — Guitar Plant. A Tasmanian endemic species. It grows on hillsides and in light forest and reaches 0.5–1 m high, producing white flowers in January and ultimately a fruit that splits down one side to produce a guitar-shaped product, hence its popular name. It is the only member in the garden of the Proteaceae, the group that includes the important *Grevillia*, *Banksia* and *Hakea*. Antarctic discoveries are from leaves on Seymour Island. Closely related species occur in Chile.

*Tasmannia lanceolata* (Poiret) — Native or Mountain 'Pepper'. This form, widespread in Tasmania, now is industrially significant as a source of pepper and as a base for a liqueur. It grows normally to about 3 m high but can get to more than 4 m. Also known in Victoria and New South Wales. A South American equivalent is Canelo (*Drimys winterii*). *Tasmannia lanceolata* was described originally as *Drimys lanceolata*. *Drimys* has been recorded from Seymour Island as leaves.

*Richea dracophylla* R. Brown — endemic to Tasmania. Grows normally to about 2 m but can reach 5 m. Produces flowers as long dense white spikes with flowers to 13 cm as part of a spike to more than 20 cm long in September–November. *Richea* is included as an example of the Epacridaceae (which includes several species of *Epacris* and *Richea*) which are widespread in Tasmania but have a poor fossil record.

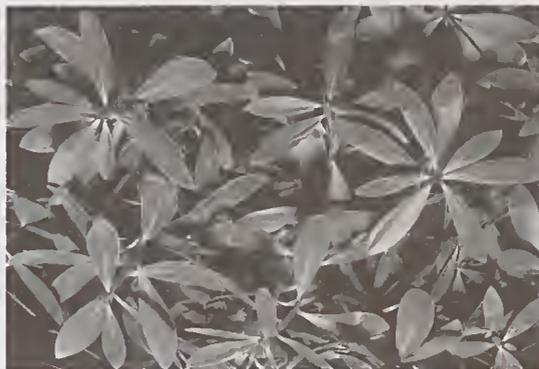
#### Grasses

Two grass species grow here. These are the only grasses in the garden as Antarctica and Australia separated long before grasses became widespread. These grow in a part of the garden separated from the rest by a path to indicate a significance distinct from that of other plants.

*Poa foliosa* (Hooker) a native of Macquarie Island and *P. labillardieri* Steudel — Tussock Grass—known throughout alpine regions of eastern Australia. These two species illustrate another link of Tasmania, with the sub-Antarctic Macquarie Island which is formally part of Tasmania and of the Huon Valley Shire.

#### Pines or conifers

*Phyllocladus asplenifolius* (Labillardiere) — Celery top pine. Endemic to Tasmania. Almost imitates a flowering plant because what appear to be leaves are, in fact, flattened pine needles, and what appear to be flowers are the female seed-bearing scale enveloped in a white or pink fleshy growth from their stalks. Grows to about 20 m in forests below 900 m above sea level and produces a valuable, non-shrinking timber. Its Antarctic associations include



(far left) *Phyllocladus aspleniifolius*, Celery Top Pine  
(left) *Tasmania lanceolata*, Native or Mountain Pepper

leaf fossils and possible wood from King George Island on the Antarctic Peninsula, and pollen from several localities.

*Podocarpus lawrencei* (Hooker) — Mountain Plum Pine. Also known from Victoria and New South Wales. Leaves, while having the appearance of the leaves of flowering plants are modified pine needles and stems. Male and female cones are quite distinct, the female growing red and succulent when ripe and supporting a dark green/black scale. Common on rocky slopes such as talus between 1000-1500 m and along some river edges. The Antarctic link is through its ancestral pollen *Podocarpidites*, widespread in rocks about 100 million years old (Cretaceous).

*Lagarostrobos* or *Dacrydium franklinii* (Hooker) — Huon Pine. This species, a symbol of Tasmania, grows to almost 40 m high, usually along river banks but with an interesting occurrence at Mt Read containing a record of Tasmania's climate change over about 2700 years. Its ancestors are represented in Antarctica by pollen included in the name *Phyllocladidites mawsonii* which is widespread in rocks (Antarctica and Australia) about 40-55 million years old.

*Microcachrys tetragona* (Hooker) — Creeping or Strawberry Pine. Endemic to Tasmania especially on high land between 1350 and 1500 m above sea level. Has a prostrate growth form and stems that are square in section. The female cone when ripe is red and resembles a small raspberry, hence the name? This group has a very long history extending

back almost 170 million years. It is represented in Antarctica and Australia by common pollen named *Microcachrydites antarcticus*.

*Fitzroya cupressoides* (Molina) — A native of South America and the only living species of *Fitzroya*. It is grown here because *Fitzroya* once grew in Tasmania but is now extinct. The Tasmanian extinct species was described as *Fitzroya tasmanensis* Hill & Whang from rocks about 25-35 million years old near Lea River about 50 km south of Burnie. It is known as a fossil from twigs on Seymour Island.

#### Ferns

*Dicksonia antarctica* Labillardiere — Manfern. Widespread and prominent in Tasmanian rainforests and gardens. Grows to 2-3 m. Represented in Antarctica by spores that delight in the name *Matonisporites ornamentalis*.

*Blechnum* is represented by two species, *B. nudum* (Labillardiere) (Fishbone Fern) and *B. wattsi* Tindale (Hard water-fern) from eastern Australia. Their Antarctic pollen has the name *Laevigatosporites* and fronds have also been recovered from King George Island.

#### ARE THERE OTHER SPECIES THAT DESERVE A PLACE IN THE GARDEN?

Our knowledge of the past flora of Antarctica is very poor and it is almost certain that many more fossil links between Tasmania and Antarctica will be discovered. Since the garden was proposed, fossil pollen of the carnivorous Sundew *Drosera* has been identified by Dr Truswell from the region offshore of the Australian Antarctic station of Mawson in rocks about 40 million years old. Several species are well known from Tasmania. On the other side of Antarctica, *Gunnera* is represented, again by pollen. It also is known in Tasmania by an endemic herbaceous species *G. cordifolia*. Like so many species in the garden, equivalent species grow in South America.

Many other forms are tentatively linked with forms discovered in recent years. *Epilobium* — represented in Tasmania by three species of

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In putting this summary together, I have depended on help from many sources. Lindsay Campbell supervised the building of the garden, to Kerry Fountrain's design, without which there would be no subject. Knowles Kerry provided the stimulus to put this article together. Phil Wood of the Antarctic Division coordinated the parties working to build it. Dr Elizabeth Truswell provided much of the knowledge and also reviewed and improved an earlier text I had drafted. Wayne Papps of the Antarctic Division performed the photography of plants in garden and Dr Greg Jordan of the School of Plant Science at the University of Tasmania provided the image of fossil *Fitzroya*. Professor Bob Hill, now of the University of Adelaide, one of the authors of both *N. beardmorensis* and *F. tasmanensis*, gave approval to use his images of both species. Peter Boyer and Dr Des Lugg of the Antarctic Division provided information when requested and Peter reviewed the text.

(right) *Nothofagus cunninghamii*, the Tasmanian myrtle.

(below right) *Lagarostrobos franklinii*, Huon Pine

#### LITERATURE

If you wish to pursue further some of the issues raised in this paper, I suggest the following:

Curtis, W.M.C. 1963–1994. *The Student's Flora of Tasmania*. Parts 1–4B. Various publishers and co-authors.

Kirkpatrick, J. 1997. *Alpine Tasmania: an illustrated guide to the flora and vegetation*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 196 pp.

Launceston Field Naturalists Club. 1992. *A guide to the flowers and plants of Tasmania*. Chatswood: Reed books. 120 pp.

Patrick Quilty is Honorary Research Professor in the School of Earth Sciences at the University of Tasmania. He has retired recently from the position of Chief Scientist for the Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE). He is a geologist by profession, with particular interest in palaeontology, and has had a long involvement in the links between the southern continents, especially through their fossils.

Among his many awards are Membership of the Order of Australia (A.M.), Distinguished Alumnus of the University of Tasmania, the Royal Society of Tasmania Medal and the US Antarctic Services Medal. He has had 14 working trips to the Antarctic and is a regular commentator on tourist flights over the Antarctic and on tourist ship visits to the southern continent.

In May 1999 he presented the opening keynote address at a meeting in Brazil concerned with the Evolution Biology of Antarctic organisms, organised by the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR), of which he was, until recently, Vice-President.



Willowherbs — is known in the Ross Sea region from pollen that goes by the name of *Corsinipollenites epilobioides*, showing by its name the links. Also, very rare pollen grains of pollen similar to the She-oak *Casuarina* have been recovered. *Coprosma* (known in Tasmania from several species including the Coffee-berry, and Mountain Currant Bush) has Antarctic links through the pollen *Palaeocoprosmadites*, a name showing that it is an ancient *Coprosma*.

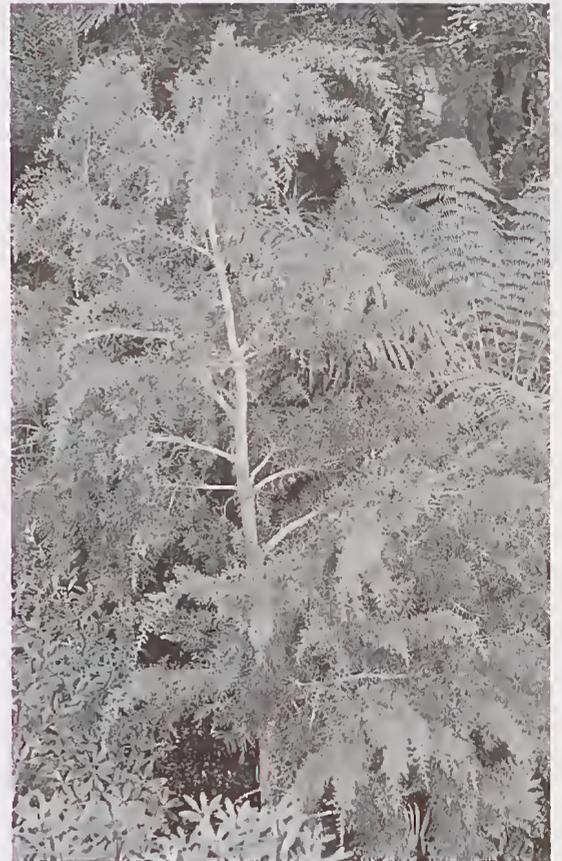
It is difficult to separate different fern types but the widespread Alpine coral-fern or its relatives seems to be represented by spores which have the name *Gleichenioidites*.

Another group of plants not represented is the Araucarias (Norfolk Island Pine, Monkey Puzzle Tree, Hoop Pine, kauris etc) which do not live in Tasmania at present. The Araucariaceae are very well known in Antarctica, South America and in more northerly parts of Australia.

Both *Araucaria* and *Agathis* (kauris) have an excellent Tasmanian fossil record which includes leaves, wood, and pollen and a similar though not as comprehensive a record exists for the northern part of the Antarctic Peninsula. *Araucaria* in particular has a long, diverse and interesting Tasmanian record, and could deserve a place in the garden in the same way that *Fitzroya* does. *Araucaria* survived in Tasmania until some 2–3 million years ago and may owe its local extinction to the onset of the modern global glacial interval about 2.4 million years ago.

Which species would we plant? The closest geographically may well be the recently discovered Wollemi Pine (*Wollemia nobilis*) from New South Wales (when it becomes available in nurseries).

A problem remains; while it is relatively easy to find new forms in Antarctica as new samples come to light, it often is very difficult, if not impossible, to say what species a pollen or spore might represent and thus not all discoveries can be utilised



in the way the forms growing here are. This is a carefully selected group of plants.

The diversity in the garden can be expected to increase.

#### VISITORS WELCOME

The Antarctic Division headquarters has a display area in addition to the garden and visitors are welcome to come in and browse in an environment that includes a considerable collection of material from the modern and 'Heroic' phase of Antarctic exploration. The area is open on work days from 9 am to 5 pm, and the garden is adjacent to the display area.

# A GARDEN ON THE EDGE

**Claude Bulley** recalls his garden on the black soil plains of Queensland

MY FATHER WAS A teamster at the turn of this century and I remember him telling me how livestock developed into much bigger and stronger animals when fed on the rich Mitchell and Flinders grasses which grow on the black soil plains of Central western Queensland.

The town of Longreach is situated in the centre of these black soil plains which drain into the Thompson River which is situated about five kilometres from the township. This river continues on under different names right through to Lake Eyre in South Australia.

I was stationed in Longreach from 1940 until 1945 and allotted a railway cottage fronting the main railway line from Rockhampton to Winton. The cottage was situated in a corner position on a half acre of rich black soil and had the town water supply laid on which was sub artesian water, also a rain water tank. In addition, water from the Thompson River was laid on from a railway pump which pumped the water to a large tank in the railway yards to provide water to the steam engines which powered the railway trains. The steam engines which hauled the trains could not make steam with the sub-artesian bore water.

Bore water was also unsuitable for growing plants, so those half dozen railway cottages which had river water laid on were the only ones able to have a garden.

As I was a keen gardener, I was able to take advantage of the rich soil so readily available. I drew up a plan and laid my garden out in squares and triangles and the Railway Department assisted by supplying old wagon boards and red gravel. All trains passing through Longreach passed our cottage, and having a garden, it became a show piece for travelling passengers as well as the townspeople.

I grew all my own seedlings from seed and this was no easy task. I remember growing about twenty five different varieties of flowers as

well as dozens of varieties of vegetables. I even planted grape vines which did very well at Longreach and the fruit was delicious. The rich black soil was of such substance that it needed no artificial

fertilisers or spraying for insect pests, although I must confess I did use sheep manure mixed with the soil at times as this was in plentiful supply from the sheep yards inside the rail yards.

Longreach has an excellent climate in the autumn, winter and spring but the summer months are hot and dry. Although there were occasional frosts in the winters, I learned to spray with water or rise before sunrise and wash the frost off the tender plants like lettuce and tomatoes before the sun froze the frost.

It is a great pity that the big coastal rivers in North and Central Queensland can't be diverted inland to build huge dams and so permit irrigation of these rich black soil plains which would grow crops of any food if only water was available all year round.

Claude Bulley grew up at Torrens Creek west of Townsville in Queensland and has gardened throughout his life. Highlight of his gardening life was in 1974 when he was asked to judge the Royal National Rose Show in London. Now in his 90s, Claude continues to garden around his unit and the the public gardens of the Resthaven Garden Settlement near Brisbane.

(bottom) Claude and Wilma Bulley in their Longreach garden (c. 1944)

(below) The layout of the Longreach garden and cottage



# COOLRINGDON

## HEART OF THE MONARO

THE MONARO IS THAT VAST TRACT of naturally treeless plain country at the foothills of the snowy mountains in southern New South Wales. A demanding area for gardening, it is nevertheless home to some fine historic gardens. Coolringdon is one of Monaro's earliest gardens — its origins can be traced back to the opening up of the southern lands in the early 1820s.

Within six years of the Monaro's official discovery in 1823, Stewart Ryrie, who was Deputy Commission General of the colony, had established a large sheep grazing enterprise at Coolringdon. Many of the trees date back to this early settlement and the magnificent 150 year old English elm avenue was possibly planted by Commissary Ryrie.

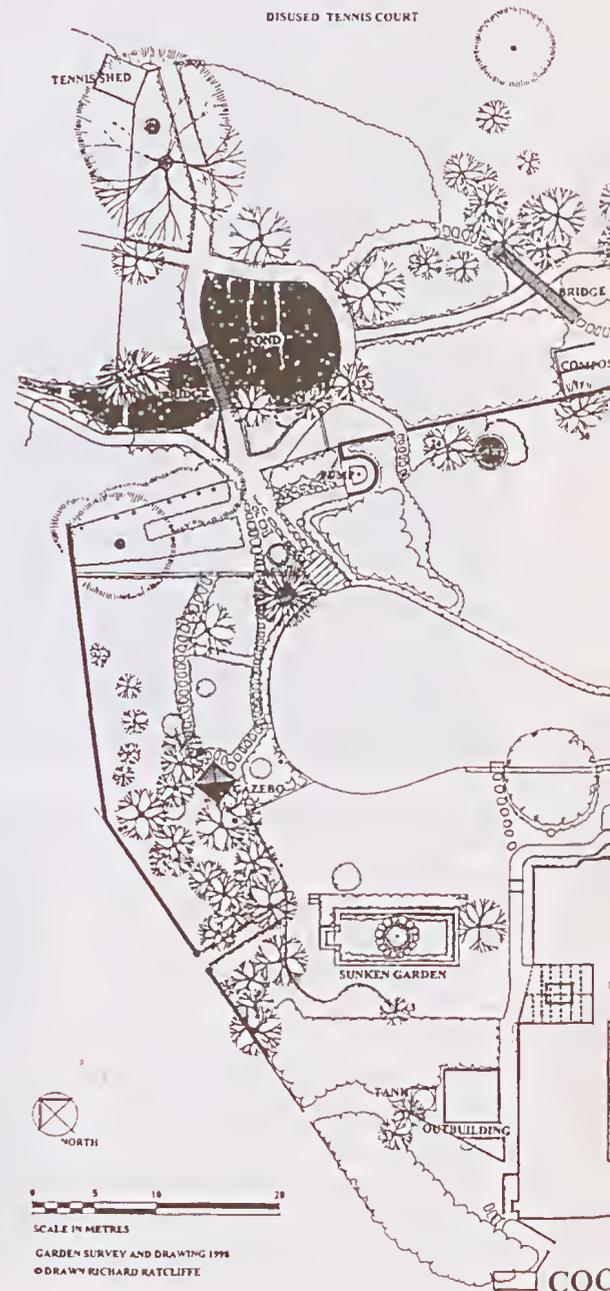
The Coolringdon garden encompasses a large area of parkland, formal terracing, walled garden, sunken garden, courtyard and walks along the creek that runs through the garden. Much of the present layout and design can be attributed to Mrs Betty Casey-Litchfield and her parents, Mr and Mrs Robert Craig.

The late Betty Casey-Litchfield lived her entire life at Coolringdon. Her death early this year closes a chapter in the history of the Monaro, itself a key theme in the pastoral history of Australia.

Poet and pastoralist, Betty was passionate about Coolringdon and was generous in sharing her garden with groups such as the Australian Garden History Society. The English tour of Australian gardens organised by the AGHS visited Coolringdon in spring (see article page 17 – 19). The following is straight from the heart — written by Betty before an opening some years ago:

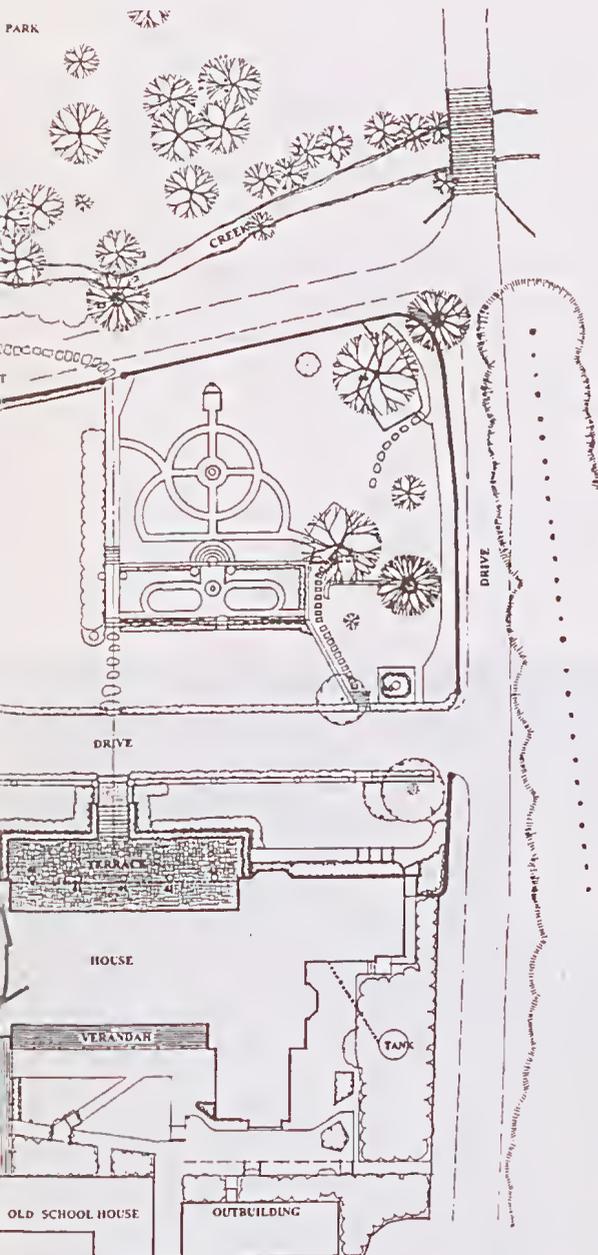
*Coolringdon is just a much loved unsophisticated old garden which has been my playground since I was a tiny child...There were daffodils, forget-me-nots and violets growing in the grass. Their descendants are still there, whispering with an odd collection of 'flower things' that grow themselves,*

*regardless of colour, perfume or formation. I love them specially. I used to make flower chains for my sailor hat from them, particularly the pink clover, and now their descendants are still there mingling with the wild roses and hellebores. Then of course there were the fairies and golden pixies. My mother used to tell me I would meet most of the tiny flower people at night when a white moon was smiling and careless stars tumbled about in the grass. I found them of course, and so will you.*



The Coolringdon garden has been documented in a book published by the ACT, Monaro and Riverina Branch of the Australian Garden History Society who undertook a conservation survey of the garden. This is the fourth publication on historically important gardens by this branch — the others being Durham Hall, St Omer and Mt Elrington gardens in the Braidwood area.

The Coolringdon booklet was launched by Betty Casey-Litchfield in her garden at Coolringdon before her death in February. The book is available for \$10.00 (including postage and packing) from the Australian Garden History Society, ACT, Monaro and Riverina branch, GPO Box 1630, Canberra, ACT 2601.



COOLRINGDON GARDEN COOMA N.S.W.

**CALL OF COOLRINGDON**

I love you so much more tonight  
Than all my love tomorrow!  
Your soul so very close to mine  
Reflecting joy and sorrow.

Each time I see a falling leaf,  
Pure snowdrops in the grasses,  
A part of me calls out to you  
To halt; as beauty passes.

Pink buds upon the apple tree,  
Flung wild in all their glory:  
While underneath, forget-me-nots  
Sing low their age old story.

Pale moon behind a swinging cloud,  
You too will share my sorrow  
And drench my garden with the tears  
I cannot shed tomorrow.

—Betty Casey-Litchfield

(below) Coolringdon  
(bottom) The bridge over the pond



# GARDENS *of* AUSTRALIA

Compiled by members of the UK Garden History Society following their tour of Australian gardens organised by the Australian Garden History Society

'SEE YOU IN SYDNEY', some of us said to each other gaily before we set off for the first GHS tour to Australia especially arranged for us by the Australian Garden History Society. The prospect of such a visit had a slight air of unreality about it — would we really meet up 'down-under', travelling on our particular individual routes? However all of us assuredly did meet up in Sydney where we were warmly welcomed by Ann Cripps and Jackie Courmadias at the start of what turned out to be an incredible and truly remarkable three week tour.

This tour took us by coach from Sydney via Canberra to Melbourne, visiting gardens and viewing the landscapes all the way, and then by air to Launceston in northern Tasmania for another coach journey seeing gardens and scenery on our way down to Hobart. In all we viewed over forty gardens, many of them privately owned and what made our visits even more delightful and special was meeting and talking to their owners, gardeners and friends.

The hospitality extended to us everywhere was quite remarkable and we gourmandised at 'elevenses', alfresco lunches, teas and dinners all

the way, meeting many AGHS branch members. Dinners included a splendid occasion in Melbourne at the home of Mr and Mrs Warwick Forge where we also examined books on gardening in the owner's warehouse and the fine hospitality extended by AGHS members in their own homes in Hobart.

We arrived in Sydney in the Australian spring

and some of the first things that struck us about the country were its light, its mixture in trees, shrubs and plants of the familiar and unfamiliar, a vividness in colour and a difference in shades of green, seasonal differences in blooming time between England and Australia, the strange bird-song, the presence of the exotic and a wealth of different trees, shrubs and plants. 'O brace new world!'

In Sydney we had an illuminating talk on Australian history and gardening by James Broadbent, which was a very good introduction to our visit. In the next weeks we were to see a huge

Turkeith, Birregurra



diversity of gardens and landscapes. It is impossible to encapsulate the essence of everything we saw in a few words as each had many elements — we saw old homestead gardens which had an unaffected, magical quality about them and many had along continuity of gardening such as Denbigh (Cobbity), Brownlow Hill (Camden), Micalago Station (Michelago), and Turkeith (Birregurra), and gardens with historic features, Elizabeth Farm (Parramatta), Vacluse House (Vacluse), Camden Park (Menangle), Lanyon (near Canberra), Coolringdon (Cooma), Durrol (Mount Macedon), Symonns Plains (Perth), Strathmore (Evandale), Esk Farm (Longford), Woolmers (Longford), Redlands (Plenty), Woodstock (Hobart) and Somercotes (Ross). Then there were cottage-style gardens, Belmont (Beaufort), Gulf Station (Yarra Glen) and gardens with views over farmland, Gidleigh (Bungendore), Lambrigg (Tharwa) and Hazeldean (Cooma).

We took long walks round landscaped gardens at Mawallock (Beaufort), Sanders Wood (Kerrie Valley) and smaller gardens with formal elements, Coombe Cottage (Coldstream), Cruden Farm (Cranbourne), Delatite (Mansfield) and Marlbrook (Pontville). Botanic gardens were included in our tour, those of Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne and we visited two National Parks, Kosciuszko in New South Wales and Mount Field in Tasmania. Gardens at Government Houses in Sydney and Hobart were very interesting and in Hobart we were privileged to take tea with His Excellency The Hon. Sir Guy Green AC KBE, Governor of Tasmania, and Lady Green.

Not only historic but modern gardens were seen, Glenmore (near Camden), Boxford (Canberra), the Bergers garden (Canberra), the courtyard of the Island Produce Fudge Factory in Hobart, Costerton (Baxter) and spectacular gardens at Kennerton Green (Mittagong). The main sculpture garden we saw was that of the National Gallery in Canberra, some 24 sculptures interspersed with trees and native plants on the shores of Mount Burley Griffin and there were artefacts in a woodland setting at Turalla (Bungendore). A visit to a wholesale nursery at Moidart (Bowral) was combined with a tour of its splendidly maintained garden and our largest site with individual gardens was that of Port Arthur in Tasmania where we were guided by Peter Cripps and Richard Weston.

Perhaps the most 'foreign' to our eyes and unusual gardens we saw were those using native trees, shrubs and plants with water, earth and rock features, designed by Gordon Ford, a



(above) Elizabeth Young and June Vivian under the wisteria covered verandah entrance at Micalago Station



(left) Driveway to Cruden Farm, Cranbourne

pioneer in bush gardens, at Eltham (Melbourne) and a new garden in memory of Tamsin and Deuchar Davy at the National Gallery in Canberra, opened in March 1998. On our progress we heard of Australian garden designers who were new names to many of us — in particular William Guilfoyle (one-time a Director of Melbourne Royal Botanic Gardens) and Edna Walling (about whose work we saw an interesting exhibition).

It is nearly impossible to sum up such a wonderful and varied garden tour, but distinct impressions will always remain. The quality and character of each of the Australian gardens we saw was quite special. The importance of buildings (often with charming verandahs and courtyards) in relation to gardens and often farmed landscapes was evident and the surprise of discovering old



(above) Micalago Station,  
Michelago

(top) Memorial Garden,  
National Gallery, Canberra

(above right) Topiary,  
Kennerton Green, Mittagong

homesteads and gardens in the great pastoral areas was a delight. It was a fascinating to feel how close we were to the beginning of European settlement in Australia and Tasmania and we were able to concentrate on the late 18th and 19th Centuries very vividly and to put the gardens in their social and economic context.

At some places much restoration was being undertaken. Sometimes we felt we were in an 'English' garden but often this feeling was combined with the shock of the new. The planting was both familiar and excitingly unfamiliar (clivias carpeting a wood; for example). The fact that early settlers planted trees such as elms and oaks and plants they had known back in Britain to create an environment of reassuring familiarity, was rather touching but the sight of Australia's native trees and plants were perhaps the most thrilling things for us, being a truly new experience and one which also enabled us to see unusual and fresh combinations in planting. The presence of the exotic was exciting.

The treatment of the surrounding landscape was very interesting — some gardens banished it

and others opened up to the surrounding views. We saw a wonderful variety of terrain — the tree ferns and the sheer number and diversity of eucalypts were especially amazing. The ways in which garden-owners lived and coped with nature greatly impressed us and from talking to owners we realised that every day may bring a threat of food, drought or fire on a scale the English gardeners simply cannot imagine — not to mention kangaroos, wallabies, possums, wombats, rabbits, snakes, spiders, parakeets, flying foxes and Tasmanian devils! We admired the gardeners' pioneering spirits and appreciated everyone's friendly, informative and unaffected courtesy.

Everywhere we went we were treated to wonderful refreshments and we greatly appreciated the hospitality extended to us by AGHS branch members and the opportunity to meet them. Our two coach drivers were very knowledgeable and helpful and our warm thanks goes to them. Our great gratitude goes to Ann Cripps and Jackie Courmadias for their tremendous expertise in planning this outstanding tour and its brilliant execution and for their untiring solicitude for our well-being and interest. It was lovely for us also to sometimes have the guidance of other AGHS members, especially Fairie Nielsen in Tasmania.

This twenty-four days of visiting historic, native and contemporary gardens in Australia and Tasmania was a real tour-de-force and those of us from the Garden History Society who were fortunate to benefit from it, will never forget such a fascinating and life-giving experience. We cannot thank the Australian Garden History Society enough for arranging this memorable visit especially for the Garden History Society.

Compiled by all GHS members on the tour of Australian gardens.

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# OF BEDDING AND BEGONIAS

## *in Ballarat*

Australian Garden  
History Society  
on tour

Article and photos by Nina Crone

MARCH IS A VIBRANT MONTH in Ballarat — ideal for a Discovery Tour. The flamboyance of the tuberous begonias is heightened by the riotous colours in the bedding displays, the increasingly fiery tints of the city's magnificent trees and even the fungi take up the blaze of colour.

However, Australian Garden History Society tours look for issues underlying horticultural razzamatazz so to speak. We certainly found them.

Our meeting place was Kirk's Reservoir, Ballarat's first water storage which turned Yuille's Swamp into Lake Wendouree, the catalyst for the future direction of the city's landscape and gardens. Kirk's is a peaceful spot on the Eastern edge of Ballarat. The exotic trees of the picnic area counterpoint the muted tones of the native vegetation.

Here the deadly *Amanita muscaria* displayed every stage of its life cycle from anaemic youth, through crimson maturity to withered old age. Why ever do children's book illustrators show elves and fairies seated on such a lethal species?

In 1997 Kirk's Water Wise Garden was developed. It offers an informative demonstration area for home gardeners and aims to change the attitude to traditional Ballarat gardening which is labour intensive and water extravagant.

Next, an 'over the fence' look at Trelawny a garden dating from the 1880s described by Peter Watts in 1983<sup>1</sup>. 'Trelawny has somehow managed to retain that elusive Victorian flavour conveyed so often by plans and photographs of the period'. The owner thinks the garden should only be visited in spring when the bulbs are out.

Kuranda was formerly owned by plantswoman Dr Heather Dick who established a notable collection of bulbs and rockery plants. The new owners are extending the house and the garden is not receiving the attention due to it at present. However, the orientation of the garden and its superb trees — a huge weeping elm *Ulmus glabra* 'Pendula' listed on the National Trust Register of

Significant Trees, *Fraxinus excelsior* 'Aurea' and a large mulberry — make any visit worthwhile. Again, it will be interesting to see what the future holds for this garden.

The Friends of the Ballarat Botanic Gardens organised

a wonderful afternoon taking us on a comprehensive tour of the gardens and showing us 'behind the scenes' activities — seed raising, nursery work and making plant labels.

Although still evoking debate the Robert Clark Conservatory is settling into the panorama of the Gardens. The woodland vista developed at the southern end of the building extends the interior displays integrating them with the exterior gardens. Border planting using strong vertical elements, crystalline colours and sinuous lines offsets the sharp, angular shape of the building and anchors it more companionably to the flat landscape of patterned bedding.

The Robert Clark Centre buzzed with conversation and camaraderie at the dinner catered by the Friends. Tour leader, Kevin Walsh, entertained us with a lively and witty quiz but when vice-chancellors, academics, botanists, heritage experts, historians, writers and the pick of AGHS members got to work he had little hope of stumping anyone!

Well rugged up against the bracing Ballarat weather all gathered next morning at Mimosa



Entrance gateway at Mary's Mount and beginning of the Rosary Walk

#### REFERENCE

- 1 Peter Watts, *Historic Gardens of Victoria* 1983, Oxford University Press Melbourne pp 82, 87

The Statuary pavilion with the Robert Clark Conservatory — Ballarat Botanic Gardens.



Park a Federation style house and garden — cypress hedge, imposing circular drive and central lawn featuring that trade-mark of many Ballarat gardens, *Ulmus glabra* 'Pendula'. Our effervescent and generous hostess, Emmy Thomson, served a truly Edwardian morning tea before we explored the orchard walk, the rose garden, the kitchen garden and found the secret garden.

Then a fascinating account of Ballarat's Avenue of Honour and the challenge which time brings to such a landscape. Bruce Price, President of the Arch of Victory/Avenue of Honour Committee highlighted the issues faced in maintaining an 80 year old public landscape and planning, managing and financing its future. The Arboricultural Officer of the City of Ballarat, David Grant, explained considerations in selecting and nurturing suitable trees.

The Loreto Order has always cared for a garden behind those high walls bordering busy Sturt

Street and a visit to the Mary's Mount garden was most appropriate on Palm Sunday. We admired the *Muehlenbeckia* arbour that entices visitors along the path to the little cemetery and memorial commemorating the founders of the Ballarat House. We followed the rosary garden to the grotto — now half the size of its 1890s predecessor. It was easy to see why these gardens won accolades over the years.

Imagine the distress of the organisers (who had reconnoitred the Discovery Weekend in January) to find integral parts of the garden at Kawarau — the picket fence, the hedge and the tiled entrance gateway — had been destroyed and replaced by an iron fence totally out of character with the house and its period garden. It certainly highlighted the importance of vigilance, lobbying and education by Australian Garden History Society branches.

Near View Point there has been an obvious effort to recognise the past and share it with the public. This used to be a popular place for a promenade to admire the rockery or waterfall before boarding a paddle wheel vessel for a trip across the lake to the Botanic Gardens. The small but well presented Lake Museum, set up late last year, displayed records and photographs of early Ballarat gardens.

Glenholme was the highlight of the weekend. It has steadfastly remained a remarkable example of an 1870s garden. Peter Watts in 1983<sup>2</sup> considers it '...possibly the finest and most intact of Victorian 'suburban' gardens' in the state...'

The integrity of this garden is immediately impressive. Plant material, hard surfaces and house are in harmony with each other. There is proportion, balance, surprise and an indefinable quality — *a je ne sais quoi* — about this garden. It appears to break many of the garden design conventions of its day.

The lawn is oval and slightly sunken (constructed on the site of a mine puddling

REFERENCE

2 Watts pp 83, 86, 89



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The Robert Clark Conservatory at the Ballarat Botanic Gardens in early spring.

pond); it is not encircled by a carriage drive but is bordered on the eastern side by a path with an inclined camber counterbalanced on the opposite side by a low bluestone retaining wall for the shrubbery. The driveway parallels the western boundary creating an allee softened by a copper beech and clipped shrubs.

The venerable wisteria swathing the house excited admiration as did the quartz chip paths edged with dwarf box and the magnificent trees which hide the neighbouring bulk of the Base Hospital. The *Sequoiadendron giganteum* are remarkable as much for their symmetry as for their height. They have survived the storms that wreaked damage on their brothers in the Botanic Gardens. It is the same with the spreading American Red Oak (thought to be, though not confirmed as, *Quercus rubra*).

Glenholm is a charmed garden which has received, and still receives, understanding, care and respect from generations of the Cuthbert family.

Our last visit was to Hymettus. Proudly tended by successive members of the Taffe family for nigh on one hundred years it is a splendid example of the 'florists' garden popular in the early years of the twentieth century. The house, built with the winnings of a Caulfield Cup

victory by race-horse 'Hymettus', displays trophies, certificates and memorabilia of past horticultural successes.

The meticulous bedding designs of tuberous begonias around clipped holly and under standard roses in the front garden and herb walks, luxuriant vegetable plots and productive fruit trees in the back epitomise the colour, care and pride of Ballarat's gardens in March.

The weekend was an excellent way of celebrating the centenary year of Ballarat's begonias. It was fun too. Remember Kevin's quote?

*The soil conditioner which is still unmatched  
Is a simple spouse with spade attached.*

And it highlighted the importance of reconciling water conservation techniques with traditional gardening; the challenge of integrating new structures in historic gardens; the need to educate institutional owners to respect historic gardens; the importance of monitoring change in ownership of historic gardens; and the problems of financing and maintaining a historic landscape.

Australian Garden History Society is more than visiting pretty gardens.

Historian and linguist, **Nina Crone** taught in various places in Australia and Switzerland, had a stint as a television and radio producer with the ABC, became an accredited freelance journalist writing for *The Age* before becoming principal of a Melbourne girls' school. In retirement Nina enjoys travel, gardens and people.

# TRIBUTE

RICHARD RATCLIFFE (1932-99)

Members of the Australian Garden History Society will be sad to hear of the death of Richard. From the time he graduated with a Credit Diploma in Architecture from the Newcastle College of Sydney Technical College, he worked diligently to further both architecture and landscape design. His experience as an architect included twelve years in the private sector before joining the Commonwealth Department of Housing and Construction in 1967.

Within three years, the Department gave him the opportunity to study Landscape Design at Sheffield University under Professor Arnold Weddle. By 1972, Richard graduated with a Masters in Landscape Architecture. It took another two years to convince the Department to use his landscape skills.

With a Landscape Section to supervise, Dick developed a team dedicated to landscape. They worked on a wide range of projects throughout Australia including both large and small scale landscape projects. Their confidence grew and soon they handled school grounds, college campuses, public parks, caravan parks, defence layouts, reservoirs and major dams. In 1982, Dick made a special contribution as Chairman of the organising committee for the first international conference held Australia. The AILA — IFLA Congress 'Australia — a Challenge' held in Canberra.

Included in Dick's achievements and extensive interests are many historically significant gardens, which he either designed or supervised their renovation. These provided the opportunity for him through his expertise to contribute to the Australian Garden History Society. Significant garden restorations include the Prime Ministers Lodge, Duntroon House, Gorman House, Cuppacumbalong, Lanyon and Calthrope House. Perhaps the highlight of his work can be seen at Sydney's historic Admiralty House and at Kingston, Norfolk Island.

With the 1989 demise of the Department, Dick had worked there for twenty two years. He continued as a Heritage Consultant in landscape conservation providing valuable advice and support to many people associated with historic gardens, especially at Everglades. To continue this work, Dick received in 1990 a Churchill Fellowship and travelled in the United Kingdom, Switzerland and North America visiting historic gardens. Students at the University of Canberra will remember his magnificent collection of slides of historic gardens, and his delightful sense of humour. Perhaps, his most important contribution is the writing of *Australia's Master Gardener*, describing Paul Sorensen's work, the designer of the famous Blue Mountains garden at Everglades. As a fellow of both the RAlA and the AILA, we have lost a valued friend and a committed member of these professions.

by Margaret Hendry



GORDON FORD (1918-99)

On Monday June 21, in Eltham, a gathered community said farewell to a man who has graced both their company and Victoria's physical landscape for more than 50 years. His name was Gordon Ford. He came from country New South Wales but he had lived and worked in Eltham since the war. He was one of Australia's great landscape designers and hands-on environmental thinkers.

Gordon Ford was an artist. He knew his material as intimately as a heart surgeon knows his capillaries and valves. And he could work it. He is one of Australia's unsung cultural giants.

In Eltham and around Victoria there are private gardens galore that Gordon Ford has made. But his environmental thinking always had a public dimension to it. He understood what kind of planting would bring the native birds and other creatures back to a whole district. Working originally in partnership with his distinguished predecessor Ellis Stones, he developed a style of landscape design that involved an understanding of the regional materials — what grows well, where, and why — and a keen appreciation of the limits of Australia's water resources. Gordon and 'Rocky' Stones use of the humble, moisture-conserving mulch of leaf litter is now so common we could be lulled into thinking we have always gardened like that. But we haven't. In this bone-dry continent, we spray millions of litres of precious water onto grass and bare earth annually. We still plant and replant annual beds. We waste as a matter of habit.

Gordon Ford gardened for the long term. He knew the ground he handled. He taught native planting and conservation as a matter of course to generations of young aspirants — but he was never a zealot. Gordon could let you keep your prize magnolia while at the same time persuading you into ways of coming to terms with this strange, subtle continent, its capricious soils and infiltrating beauty.

He was a magnet for young people who wanted work that sent them home at the end of the day with a sense of achievement and worth. He made apprenticeship a dignified business. A Presbyterian minister's son, he understood the puritan work ethic, but he was also one of the sharpest wits ever to live in a district that prides itself on its earthy sense of humour. No wonder they loved him.

He was a learned man, widely read, but he wore erudition as casually as his muddy jumpers. Barry Jones did not list Gordon Ford as one of his prominent public intellectuals. But anyone who came into contact with him during the long course of his public and private landscape career will know that they had met a man who understood this country thoroughly and had more than a few inklings about where it should be heading.

At the funeral, Graeme Bell, a friend of more than half a century, played a haunting blues for Gordon Ford on the grand piano in the upper room of the great hall at Montsalvat. And then he upped the tempo and played Duke Ellington. Bell knows about nobility and its various guises. Sun streamed in the window one moment and rain pelted down the next. It was the shortest day of the year — the pivot on which things turn before they open out again. That seemed somehow fitting.

by Morag Fraser (reprinted from *The Age*, Sunday 27 June, 1999)



## AUSTRALIAN ROSES

by Peter Cox

pub. Blooming Books, Melbourne, 1999

RRP \$29.95

At last, at last, at last a book about Australian roses. How long have rosarians, garden historians and garden lovers waited for a book such as this? Too long. Within this book Peter Cox sets down a comprehensive survey of roses bred and selected in Australia. It is eclectic and contains roses that would be considered old-fashioned, new, modern, classics, dated, out-moded and even perhaps 'duds'. What of it? They are all Australian raised and worth celebrating as part of our own developing garden tradition. Indeed, this book (along with others planned for release in 2000) sets down evidence that as a nation of garden makers and plant growers we are moving slowly, and not without hiccoughs, towards a vision of gardening that is our own.

The format and design are simple, clean, appealing and very accessible. The publication is of high quality but with an eye to economy so that the book will be affordable. It is also beautiful; the front cover portrait of 'Climbing Duchesse de Brabant' is so engaging that I am confident the book will sell itself off the shelves of many bookshops. Inside a further 237 colour photo-portraits illustrate the book. Organised alphabetically, breeder by breeder, the entries give biographical details (where known), dates and brief descriptions of each rose. 373 roses are included, though perhaps as many as 20% are no longer in cultivation.

I am inspired by Peter Cox's fine book to plant one more rose. I think it will be Alister Clarke's 'Princeps', a single scarlet climber introduced in 1942.

## THE GARDEN PLANTS OF CHINA

by Peter Valder

pub. Florilegium, Sydney, 1999

pp400 420 col. illstr. RRP \$80.00

James Thurber once wrote that his advice to intending authors was "Don't get it right. Get it writ." Clearly he intended to convey the urgency of the writer's task; that getting the words down with freshness and verve are far more important than the polished agonising perfection that some authors pursue to the point where their book never gets finished. Peter Valder has achieved a book that is fresh and charming, filled with personal observations, interesting bits of history and helpful botanical notes.

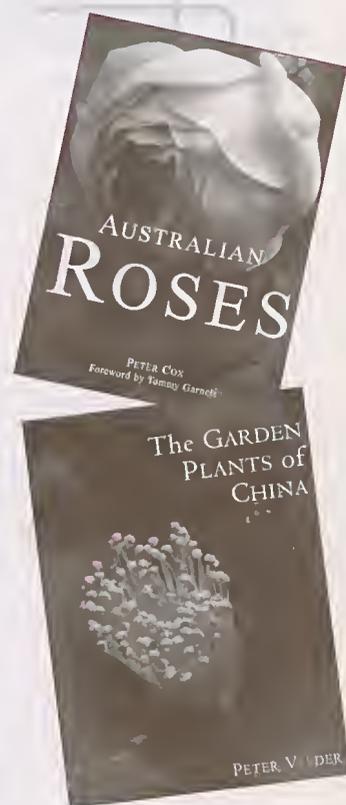
Peter could have waited many years to compile an exhaustive list of the garden plants of China. As it is he has seized the moment and given us a wonderful and comprehensive introduction to the subject. 400 plant species, a historical range of 3000 years and 15 Imperial dynasties should satisfy even the most particular scholar.

From beginning to end the reader can 'hear' Peter speak, setting forth with clear, concise expression and sharp observations plant descriptions, historical facts and comments on cultivation, botany and design that are typical of his speech patterns and charming way with words. Many of the plants about which he writes are old garden faithfuls, others are strange and new to our experience, yet others are genuinely new to cultivation having been recently discovered or just introduced. With considerable humility, and a masterly display of knowledge, he weaves into his text a vast amount of background information that would be almost unknown to many readers. Things such as Chinese garden aesthetics, Chinese methods of propagation and cultivation, Chinese history, Imperial court ritual, Chinese art and its relationship to gardens and flowers. It is fascinating stuff, indeed, a rich brocade every bit as fabulous as the elaborate floral embroideries on the gowns worn by the Dowager Empress Cixi. Peter Valder gives his readers rare insight into the plants which adorned Chinese gardens and culture for centuries: the peony, the camellia, flowering fruit trees, lilacs, wisterias, the lotus, roses, azaleas, chrysanthemums, citrus trees and many, many more.

There will almost certainly be those few, very few, who regard the book with suspicion because it attempts a range of plants and a span of history that by tradition (and expectation) is claimed by British plant hunters, British plant collectors, British writers and British gardeners. But those who come fresh to the book will find a wealth of information, a treasure trove of good garden plants for Australia and places where the climate is Moderate rather than Cool Temperate. And who cares if he has staked a claim on ground traditionally regarded as the preserve of others? Peter Valder had done it; he has challenged the supremacy of English garden historians and garden writers. He has done it with panache, bravado, style and a sure hand.

A high standard of publication has created a book that is a pleasure to handle and a visual treat. Among the illustrations are fine plant portraits, pictures taken from old books, photographs and scrolls and many shots of Chinese natural landscapes and gardens. A great book for bookish gardeners and a great gardening book for book lovers. Highly recommended.

Reviews by Trevor Nottle



**KINDRED SPIRITS**

*A Botanical Correspondence*

*Jean Galbraith and Joan Law-Smith crossed paths by chance in 1964. Joan was looking for someone from whom to learn basic botany and Jean, a noted naturalist, amateur botanist and writer, was suggested as a possible teacher. Jean was fifty-eight years of*

*age, Joan thirteen years her junior. They lived radically different and widely separated lives. But they soon found that they were kindred spirits.*

*The botany lessons were conducted by correspondence. Fortnightly from her home in Gippsland in eastern Victoria, Jean sent lessons and assignments, hand-written on pages torn from a small notepad, to Joan, who lived on the other side of the state. Joan absorbed the lessons, then did the drawings that Jean asked for and posted them back.*

*The lessons extended over only four months but they were seminal for Joan. They gave her the confidence to pursue her dream of becoming a botanical artist... In 1964, on conclusion of the lessons, Joan carefully stored away the flimsy original material.'*

*This is the basis of a superb book to be published this September by the Australian Garden History Society.*

Noted writer Anne Latreille has woven the stories of these two kindred spirits into an engaging text and Alison Forbes has used Joan Law-Smith's delicate illustrations (many previously unpublished) in the design. A generous bequest from Joan Law-Smith (past patron of the Society) enables the Australian Garden History Society to publish the book. All funds from sales of the book will go to the AGHS.

**BIBLIOPHILES OPPORTUNITY TO PURCHASE SIGNED JOAN LAW-SMITH BOOK**

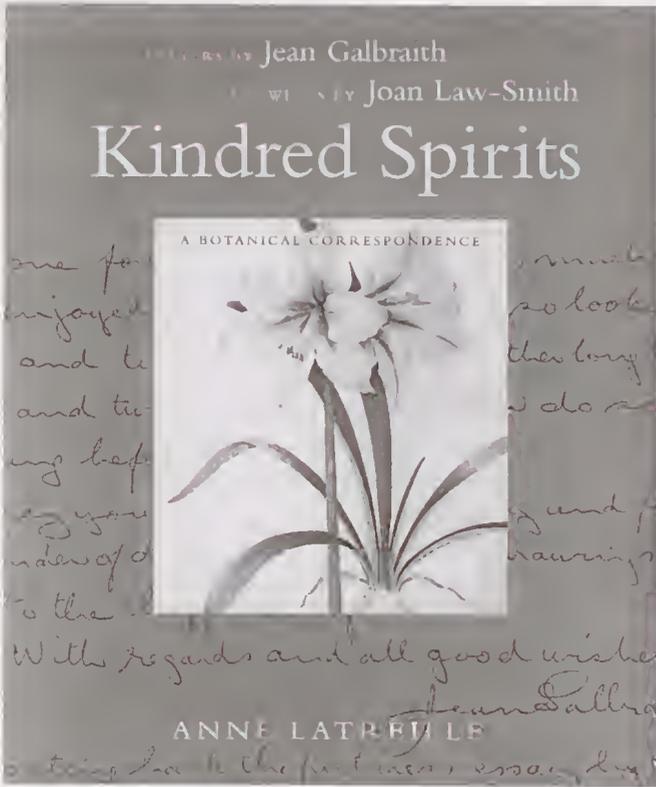
Joan Law-Smith left another generous bequest to the Society in the form of signed copies of her book, *The Garden Within*. There are a limited number available for sale from the AGHS office:

Three copies with slip cover, numbered and signed \$150.00

One copy without slip cover, signed and numbered \$120.00

6 copies without slip covers, signed but not numbered. \$100.00

Contact  
Jackie Courmadias  
on (03) 9650 5043 for details.



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The Society is affiliated with the Australian Council of National Trusts and is thereby able to benefit from the Trusts' tax deductible status.

\*Donations are welcome and should be payable to the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) and forwarded to the AGHS.

Membership benefits: subscription to the Society's official journal, *Australian Garden History*, six times a year; garden related seminars, lectures, garden visits and specialist tours; opportunity to attend annual conference and conference tour; contributing to the preservation of historic gardens for prosperity.

AGHS Office, Royal Botanic Gardens, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra, Vic. 3141  
 (03) 9650 5043 Toll Free 1800 678 446

THIS FORM CAN BE PHOTOCOPIED SO THAT THE JOURNAL CAN BE RETAINED INTACT

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS



## JULY

SATURDAY 24 – SUNDAY 25

*NSW Monaro* — Weekend Winter Seminar: Gardening on the Edge. A weekend of dynamic lectures and garden visits. Opening address by South Australian author, Trevor Nottle. Talks by commercial lavender grower, designer, artist, commercial eucalyptus foliage grower and visits to gardens (including only Monaro garden designed by Edna Walling) and gallery. Interstate visitors welcome  
*Venue* Travellers Rest Inn, Cooma  
*Accommodation* Cooma Visitors Centre 1800 636525 (toll free)  
*Enquiries* Virginia Berger (02) 6295 2330

SUNDAY 25

*Vic Kalorama* — Working bee Ridge House *Enquiries* (03) 9397 2260

## AUGUST

MONDAY 2

*Vic Melbourne* — AGM 7.30 pm followed by Winter Lecture by Sarah Guest *Gardens at the Turn of the Century* *Venue* Mueller Hall, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra *Time* 8 pm  
*Cost* \$8 (\$10 non-members)  
*Enquiries* (03) 9650 5043

TUESDAY 3

*NSW Sydney and Northern* — Winter lecture by Gil Teague of Florilegium followed by the AGM *Venue* History House, 133 Macquarie Street, Sydney  
*Time* 6.30pm, light Refreshments followed by lecture *Bookings* Colleen Morris (02) 9660 0573

SATURDAY 7 – SUNDAY 8

*Vic Geelong* — Weekend Winter Seminar: *From Gaiters to Gumboots — Women and Gardens in Rural Victoria*. The aim of this seminar is to raise awareness of a collaborative effort between the State Library of Victoria (SLV) and the AGHS (Vic Branch), to develop an archive of gardening history in Victoria. Speakers to include SLV curators, local custodians of heritage gardens, Holly Kerr Forsyth, Peter Cuffley, Katie Holmes and Caroline Clemente. Dinner speaker — Anne Latreille *The Gardening Correspondence of Jean Galbraith and Joan Law-Smith* (see p22). Interstate members welcome. Booking form now available. *Enquiries* Suzanne Hunt (03) 9827 8073

SUNDAY 22

*NSW Southern Highlands* — Winter Lecture and Luncheon. Guest Speaker, Dr Judyth McLeod, specialist in biodiversity in food plants and author of 14 books including *Heritage Gardening* and Lecturer of Landscape Studies at University of Western Sydney. *Venue* Theatre, Viciv Centre, Elizabeth St, Moss Vale  
*Time* 10 am (morning tea) followed by lecture and lunch *Cost* \$20 (\$25 non members) *Bookings* (02) 48683581 or (02) 93988117

SATURDAY 28

*Vic Bulla* — Working bee, Glenara at daffodil time. *Enquiries* Nicky Downer (03) 9397 2260

## SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY 26

*NSW Sydney and Northern* — South Coast Spring Garden Tour commencing at the Garden of Peace, Stanwell Tops at 11.00am followed by a visit to the garden of John Challis and Arthur Cheeseman at Wombarra and the Grevillea Garden at Bulli  
*Cost* \$10.00 *Bookings* Colleen Morris (02) 9660 0573

*Vic Birregurra* — Working bee Turkeith — dry stone walling  
*Enquiries* (03) 9397 2260

## OCTOBER

FRIDAY 1 – MONDAY 4

*Vic Wyperfeld National Park* — Self drive tour led by Rodger and Gwen Elliot. Interstate members welcome. Booking form now available.

## NOVEMBER

MONDAY 1 – WEDNESDAY 3

*SA Adelaide to Mt Gambier* — SA Adelaide to Mt Gambier - The Adelaide Bus Tour to Mt Gambier led by Richard Nolan visiting gardens in Coonalpyn Downs, Padthaway, Coonawarra, Lucindale, Robe, Beachport and Millicent districts. Wineries, Tantanoola Caves and an Historic Woolshed also to be visited. *Enquiries* Nicky Downer (08) 8370 8783

TUESDAY 2 – THURSDAY 4

*SA Mount Gambier* — Pre Conference Tour led by Di Wilkins focusing on the gardens and caves of the region and

nearby: Tantanoola, Naracoorte, Englebrecht and Princess Margaret Rose. *Enquiries* Nicky Downer (08) 8370 8783

THURSDAY 4

*Vic Melbourne* — Coach departs for Mount Gambier — lunch/garden stop, Titanga, Lismore, led by Pam Jellie. *Time* 10 am Royal Botanic Garden, 10.35 am Tullamarine airport  
*SA Mount Gambier* — Conference registration at The Lady Nelson Visitor Centre and tour of the Discovery Centre

FRIDAY 5 – SUNDAY 7

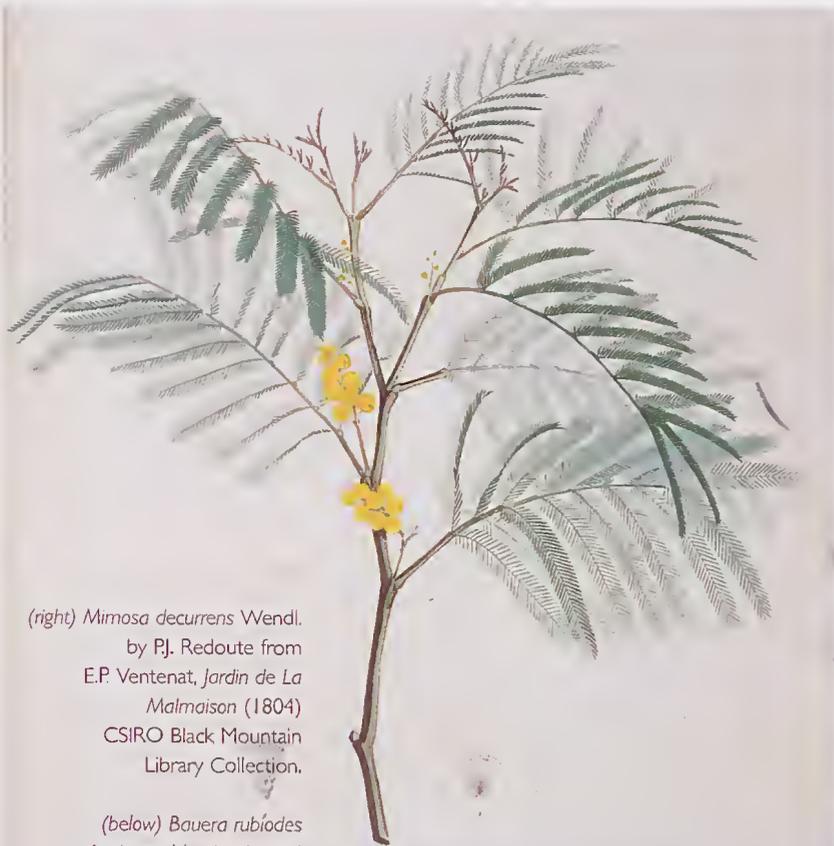
*SA Mount Gambier* — 20th Annual National Conference: The Changing Rural Landscape... Gardens, Vineyards and Forests' *Venue* Barn Palais, Mount Gambier, SA. *Enquiries* Nicky Downer (08) 8370 8783

MONDAY 8

*SA Mount Gaubier* — Optional Day. Gardens of Western Victoria — visit Ardgartan designed by Edna Walling; Pine Grove created by Conference Speaker Helen Diprose; Kort Norien, an historic property dating back to 1845 with historic shearing shed; and Nareen, with a short stop at historic Harrow with its convict slab huts. *Enquiries* Nicky Downer (08) 8370 8783

MONDAY 8 – THURSDAY 11

*Vic Western District* — Three day Post Conference Tour commencing Monday evening 8 November following the Optional Day of gardens in Western Victoria. Three days meandering through special historic private gardens of the Western District: historic Merndal, Devon Park, Pear Tree Cottage, Green Hills, Minjah, Boortkoi, Woolongoon and Banongil. Tour commences on Monday evening 8 November with dinner and night at The Botanical Motor Inn opposite the Hamilton Botanic Gardens, followed by two nights at The Royal Mail in Dunkeld and finishes in Melbourne (via Tullamarine airport) on Thursday evening 11 November. Tour Cost of \$495 (Single supplement \$90.00) includes three nights accommodation, all meals and garden entries. *Enquiries* (03)9650 5043



(right) *Mimosa decurrens* Wendl.  
by P.J. Redoute from  
E.P. Ventenat, *Jardin de La  
Malmaison* (1804)  
CSIRO Black Mountain  
Library Collection.

(below) *Bauera rubiodes*  
Andrews Hand coloured  
engraving by Sydenham  
Edwards published in *Curtis's  
Botanical Magazine* in 1804.

The plate depicts  
the plant named in honour  
of the Bauer brothers,  
Ferdinand and Franz.  
CSIRO Black Mountain  
Library Collection.

Dr Helen Hewson is former director of the flora section of the Australian Biological Resources Study (which produces the *Flora of Australia*) and former deputy director of the Centre for Plant Biodiversity which embraces the Australian National Herbarium. An acknowledged botanical authority and scientific illustrator, Helen has a particular interest in the illustration of scientific works who turned this interest to writing a book on the history of the illustration of Australian plants. *300 Years of Botanical Illustration* is to be released in September and is being published by CSIRO Publishing. The book represents work of all major artists and illustrators of Australian plants.

## WORLDS APART *the flowers in Australia, the artists in Europe*

by Helen Hewson



Lord Talbot de Malahide, a born collector, chose to "collect" Tasmanian plants. To do this he decided to have the plants painted and published together with descriptions of them in the *The Endemic Flora of Tasmania*, 1967–1978. The descriptions were written by Winifred Curtis, resident botanist at the herbarium in Hobart at the time and the paintings were executed by Margaret Stones, freelance Australian botanical artist resident in London. The logistics of such an enterprise are quite extraordinary. Winifred Curtis organised collecting the plants in Tasmania. The plants were then air-freighted to the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew and Margaret Stones set about drawing them. These had to be checked by Winifred before Margaret began to paint. Meanwhile, Winifred described the plants.

*The Endemic Flora of Tasmania* is one of Australia's modern gems of botanical illustration. It joins historic gems such as James Smith's *A Specimen of the Botany of New Holland*, 1793–1795, and Ferdinand Bauer's *Illustrationes Florae Novae Hollandiae*, 1813. For the Specimen, James Sowerby prepared the paintings. John White, surgeon with the First Fleet, began to send dried plants back to England. In many cases he also had the plants painted live at Port Jackson. White had to rely on convict artists for this purpose. Thomas Watling,

sent to the colony for forgery, was quite competent and many of his paintings were used by Sowerby to create his paintings. These Sowerby engraved and had hand coloured in the *Specimen*. In the early 1800's colour printing was rare. The usual method was to prepare a metal engraving based on an artist's drawing and then to

hand colour the engraving.

Ferdinand Bauer came to Australia on Matthew Flinders' circumnavigation voyage. Once back in England he proposed to publish an illustrated Flora of Australia. He painted the plants from coded sketches, which he had made while in Australia, together with dried specimens for guidance. Bauer's standards were so high that he could not find competent engravers and colourists. He had to turn his hand to those skills as well. Regrettably, he only published 15 plates in his *Illustrationes Florae Novae Hollandiae*, 1813.

Colour printing was exploited by the French, notably Pierre Redouté, in the early 1800's. Redouté learned and developed the technique of stipple engraving combined with coloured-inking. The inks were applied with a fine tool so that each full-coloured impression was created with one printing. Australia is fortunate to have had some of its plants illustrated in this way in a few of Redouté's famed works, *Jardin de la Malmaison*, 1804–1804 and *Les Liliacées* 1802–1816. Redouté was fortunate to have live plants from the famous gardens of Paris to work with. By this time Australian plants were sought after by horticulturalists, scientists and artists alike.