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Australian Garden HISTORY



Peep in Fernery from Gates, Bendigo

*By Channels of Coolness:
Ferneries and Watergardens*

Journal of the Australian
Garden History Society



Mission

The Australian Garden History Society will be the leader in concern for and conservation of significant cultural landscapes and historic gardens through committed, relevant and sustainable action.

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Viewpoint

Towards an Interactive Journal

Passionately keen to share the delight of a forgotten guest house garden in the hills? Angry about proposed sub-division of a historic garden? Convinced AGHS should take an interest in sportsgrounds? Consider the Visitor Centre in that public park is an eyesore? Share your opinion on issues relevant to the Society's declared mission. Rant, rave, rejoice and write for *Viewpoint*.

Liked a particular television program? Discovered a wonderful web-site? Read a compelling book? Share your feelings. If strong words hold little appeal, perhaps archival research, or garden photography, or action from your corner of Australia is of more interest. Review, relate and report for *The Bookshelf*, *Action* or *Mailbox*.

A national journal should reflect activities and views from all states. While a general theme is taken for each issue, it is not binding. There is always space for additional articles. A list of proposed themes for forthcoming journals can be found on the AGHS web-site or by contacting the editor. Let us have a lively, committed and interactive journal.

Nina Crone

The Next Issue

Summer Gardens

featuring a rose garden in the New England area of New South Wales, latticework ferneries in Victoria, the garden at Bishopscourt in Melbourne, and reports from the National Annual Conference.

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By Channels of Coolness

Part 1

Victorian Ferneries

The great number of postcards depicting the ferneries that were once a prominent feature of Victoria's botanical and major public gardens has always impressed me. Some cards show external views of enormous arched and gabled timber latticework structures, others provide glimpses of cool and shady interiors where ladies in gloves, straw hats and ankle-length skirts accompanied by men in Sunday-best suits, overdressed children and babies in wicker prams have retreated from oppressive summer heat. Why was so much energy and so many resources devoted to the development of ferneries in Victoria?

Both international and local forces encouraged their construction. There was an international craze for ferns. The *Oxford Companion to Gardens* (1986)¹ notes that the cultivation of ferns gradually became popular in Britain in the late 1840s and increased in the 1850s. Further, it adds that Thomas Moore's handbooks on ferns inaugurated a passion for fern collecting that lasted until the 1870s.

In England, ferneries were established in rocky glens, similar to Victoria's open-air ferneries but with less need for shade trees or a protected aspect, and in glasshouses, analogous to Victoria's latticework ferneries. The glasshouses continued to be built until the end of the nineteenth century, well after the fern-collecting fervour had subsided.

The enthusiasm for ferns reached the colony of Victoria shortly after the gold rush gathering momentum in the late 1850s when Australian species appeared in the stock-lists of Melbourne plant nurseries. The most obvious manifestation of the craze was the collection, propagation and cultivation of both native and exotic ferns. Tim Bonyhady gives an excellent account of 'fern fever' or pteridomania in his book *The Colonial Earth*.²

Local impetus for making ferneries came from the spectacular natural, fern gullies and cool temperate rain forests of south-eastern Australia. Notable sites were in the Dandenong Ranges to the east of Melbourne, in the Macedon Ranges to the north of Melbourne and other places within easy reach of provincial centres like Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo, Castlemaine and Warrnambool. These indigenous sites not only served as an inspiration, but more importantly offered a readily accessible source of propagating material – spores, rhizomes and mature tree ferns.

Initially visited by explorers, botanists and artists on packhorses, the fern gullies soon became popular with summer tourists seeking relief from summer heat in cool shade near refreshing streams and waterfalls. Hotels and guesthouses were built, and networks of walking tracks leading to scenic vantage points were constructed, often characterised by flights of steps made from tree fern trunks and edged with rustic handrails fashioned from bush timber.



By Ken Duxbury

Top: Fern Scene, Victoria Gardens, Prahran c.1912
From the Ken Duxbury Postcard Collection



Hill stations, where affluent and socially prominent Melburnians could escape summer heat, were established in the Dandenongs and at Mount Macedon. Here large, elaborate gardens usually included many tree ferns and other native ferns intermingled with 'cool climate' exotic plants and remnant indigenous species like Blackwood and Mountain Ash.

Private and Public Gardens

Ferns were included in gardens of all sizes – tree ferns were grown in front of row houses and terrace houses and in the narrow, shady passages between villas. Small ferneries, often lean-to structures, were built in suburban gardens. Large and imposing ferneries were built in the gardens of mansions.

Almost all these ferneries have long since disappeared. However their outlines are clearly shown on the detailed large-scale maps prepared between 1895 and 1905 to assist with the installation of Melbourne's first sewerage system. One major private fernery does survive. It is the exceptionally large and ambitious structure at Rippon Lea, now owned by the National Trust and open to the public. Elsewhere the great ferneries in private gardens need to be sought in family photograph collections. One such impressive fernery in the country area of Victoria was that at 'Belmont' near Beaufort.³

For the less affluent the ferneries in Victoria's public gardens provided the next best thing to a holiday in a guest-house, to a hill station sojourn, or to a walk to a waterfall through a natural fern gully.

Victoria's generally mild climate permitted a wide range of tropical and subtropical species to be grown in both open air and latticework ferneries. In England and Europe such species could only

be grown in heated glasshouses. These included many varieties of palms – Australian species such as *Livistonia australis* and *Archontophoenix cunninghamiana* and also species originating from various Pacific Islands. Overseas visitors such as J.A. Froude were not only impressed by the scale and grandeur of the ferneries, but also by the great diversity of ferns and other plants which could be grown in the open air.

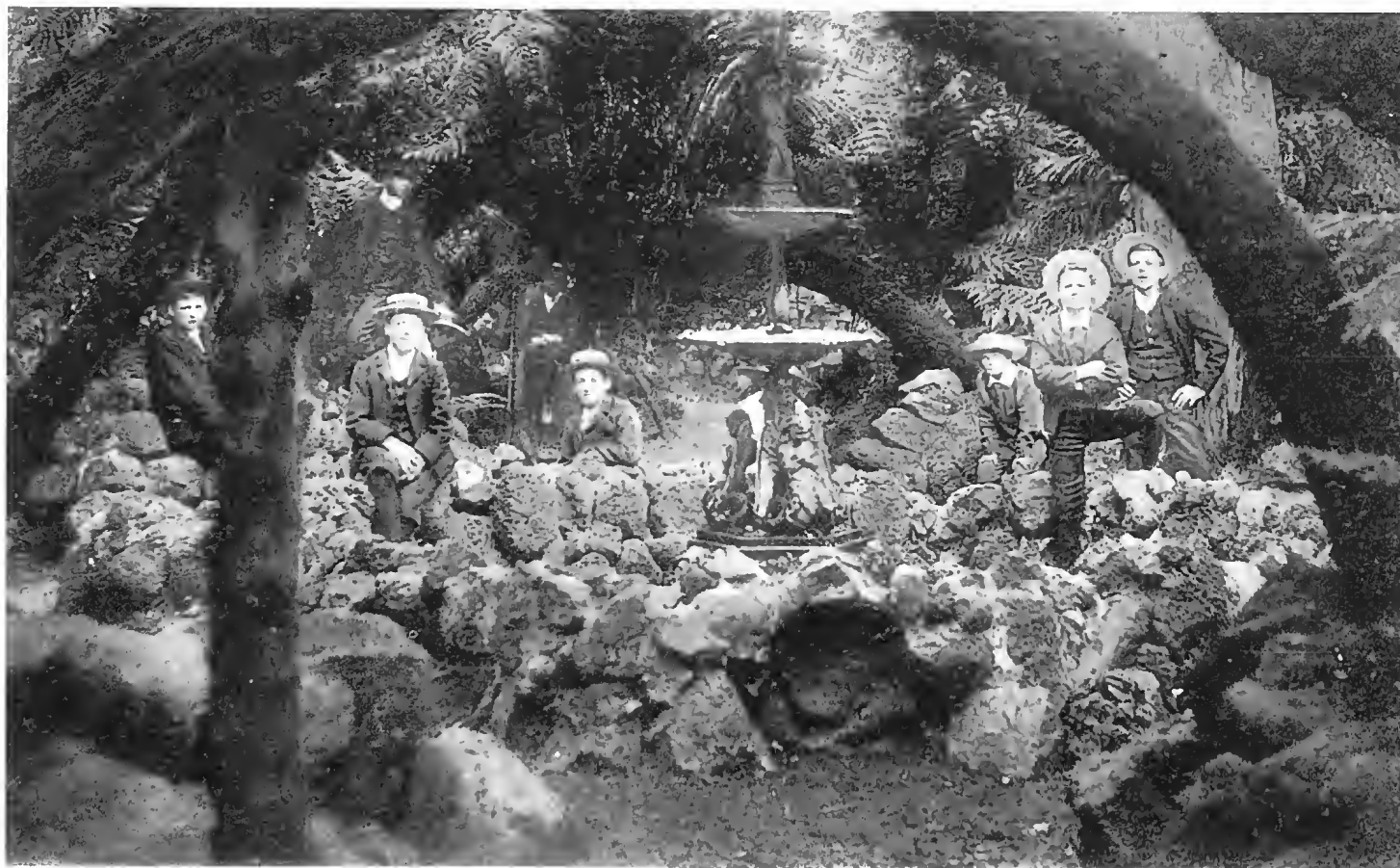
It is important to recognise the way community attitudes to the sun have changed, and to remember that the Victorians and Edwardians did not see the sun as a source of health, pleasure and relaxation but rather as a source of discomfort and a threat to health. People dressed up against the sun and carried umbrellas for additional protection. In the cities and towns summer was made unpleasant through the lack of sewerage, refrigeration and air-conditioning as well as by the dusty, unsealed roads. Public gardens with ferneries provided welcome relief from oppressive heat.

The widespread construction of impressively grand ferneries was also associated with the exceptional affluence of the 1870s and 1880s in Victoria. Provincial centres like Ballarat and Bendigo generated wealth through gold mining, while Geelong flourished in its role as the main port serving the wealthy pastoral districts of Western Victoria.

The ferneries were an expression of civic pride, municipal importance and aggressive competitiveness. Like the town hall and the mechanics institute, the fernery appears to have been a necessary amenity for every self-respecting town, just as a century later every town seemed to need an Olympic swimming pool and a caravan park.

Top Left:
In the Fernery,
Ballarat Botanic Gardens, 2001
Photo: Nina Crone

Top Right:
'Jacob's Ladder',
below Sherbrooke Falls,
Dandenong Ranges, Victoria
From the Ken Duxbury
Postcard Collection



In the Fernery, Eaglehawk (Bendigo)

Postcard c.1909 from the Ken Duxbury Postcard Collection

Decline

Few ferneries appear to have been constructed after 1890, perhaps because most towns already had a fernery, and also because the 1890s depression depleted municipal coffers. However the many postcard views dating from this period suggest that the existing ferneries remained popular recreational attractions in Edwardian times.

The inter-war years evidenced a decline in the fern as a fashionable subject for both public and domestic gardens. Further, active sports such as football, tennis, golf and swimming were becoming more popular. Increased car ownership meant that instead of visiting a fernery many families could go on day trips to visit real fern gullies. Indeed growing car ownership may have actually increased the popularity of some ferneries as Melburnians made day trips to Ballarat, Kyneton and Daylesford.

By the 1950s however, the latticework ferneries had mostly vanished, and many of the open-air ferneries, especially those in smaller towns, became neglected and overgrown with invasive garden plants and weeds.

Renewal

Since the early 1980s there has been something of a revival of interest in ferneries, although it is difficult to know whether this is just a by-product of a more general resurgence of interest in historic gardens. It was pleasing that the open-air ferneries at Kyneton and Daylesford were restored as part of Victoria's 150th Anniversary Program.

More recently, a new open-air fernery has been developed in the Geelong Botanic Gardens, a collection of ferns from the Otway Ranges has been established in a small latticework fernery at Warrnambool Botanic Gardens, and considerable restoration work has been carried out at the fernery in Rosalind Park,

Bendigo. Management plans proposing the phasing in of more naturalistic, ecologically based 'rainforest' planting schemes have also been prepared for the ferneries in the Royal Botanic Gardens and the Fitzroy Gardens in Melbourne.

Unfortunately some ferneries have suffered subtle erosion of character through the substitution of inferior modern details – the use of treated pine, concrete for bridges and anodised plant labels. Likewise there has sometimes been a gradual loss of planting character, with less diversity of fern species. In Bendigo there seems to be almost a monoculture of rough tree ferns, and the extensive use of hardy ground covers such as cliveas, acanthus and *Vinca major* threatens to become invasive.

Ideally all ferneries should have a detailed management plan which sets out the conservation philosophy to be adopted. There is also a need for sufficient highly skilled maintenance by knowledgeable horticulturists.

Although it is sad to see the disappearance of some major latticework ferneries, it is fortunate that very good photographic documentation and written descriptions of the Ballarat and Geelong ferneries still exist. Garden historians must resign themselves to the fact that certain types of structures have only a limited lifespan, and that gardens are subject to a constant process of decay and renewal.

It is interesting to note that the Forest Gallery at Melbourne Museum possesses many of the characteristics of a large latticework fernery. It evokes a feeling of a Victorian 'tall timber' eucalypt forest with tree ferns and other native ferns, an overstorey of blackwoods and some semi-mature eucalypts all transplanted from their forest home with great technical ingenuity.

That said, it should never be forgotten that even the grandest, most spectacular ferneries and sub-tropical gardens are only crude and superficial facsimiles of the plant communities and ecosystems that inspired their creation.

Victoria is unique in possessing about 18 provincial botanical gardens, most of which were established in the 1850s and 1860s with land grants from the state governments. In addition there are two suburban botanic gardens – at Williamstown and St Kilda. Almost all these gardens appear to have had ferneries of some description, or to have included ferns amongst more mixed planting. They were all important as ornamental public gardens and places of public resort and recreation. The two major types of ferneries developed in Victoria were 'open-air ferneries' and latticework ferneries.

Open-Air Ferneries

Ferneries were sometimes established along small watercourses such as that running through the Fitzroy Gardens, on in small public gardens like Victoria Gardens in Prahran, or at Eaglehawk near Bendigo. They were generally developed in wind-protected sites where high-branching trees of a wide diversity of species shaded them. Some shelter was sometimes provided by remnant indigenous species, for example by blackwoods at Rosalind Park.

Open-air ferneries usually included extensive artificial rockeries and semi-natural and artistically enhanced streams, ponds, springs and waterfalls. This type of fernery had a relatively high survival rate and neglected ferneries of this type have been easily restored – especially where the original layout is clearly defined by rockwork revealed when overgrown and weedy vegetation is removed. Replacement planting can then be carried out as required and a modern watering system installed.

Better-known open-air ferneries include **The Fern Gully at the Royal Botanic Gardens**, Melbourne which follows the route of a minor watercourse. It appears to have been established by Ferdinand von Mueller who wrote

*The fern-tree gully has now been extended, and the various hardy arborescent Ferns, some perhaps a century old, huge square Todeas of great age, Staghorn Ferns, and very many other species, became added in masses.*⁴

William Guilfoyle further developed this area by adding many subtropical rainforest species, including palms such as *Arctontophoenix cunninghamiana*. The planting appears to have been inspired by Guilfoyle's experience as a tropical horticulturist on the Tweed River in northern New South Wales.

A rather special fernery was established in **The Domain**, near the Lych Gate entry to the Royal Botanic Gardens. In 1873 William Guilfoyle designed it to enhance an old quarry hole in the grounds of Government House. This area became public open space in the 1930s, when the very extensive grounds of Government House were reduced to more manageable size.

The fernery at **Victoria Gardens, Prahran** has not survived. It occupied the northern slope of a small artificial mountain in the north east corner of the gardens. The mountain was constructed of material excavated from a sunken oval lawn area which can still be seen to-day although the mountain was removed in 1920. This fernery was constructed in 1885 to the design of the well-known horticulturist William Sangster. In an article in *The Australasian* of May 1885, Sangster, writing under the pseudonym 'Hortensis', described his plan for the fernery area.

... the sides and slopes [of the artificial hill] are to be densely covered with evergreens, so as to form a wilderness with winding paths, the south-eastern slope is to be planted with shade trees on tall stems to admit of an undergrowth of tree ferns; this side will be made more precipitous, and will be supported by rockeries with a pool of water fringed by ferns at the bottom.

The large and impressive fernery at **Rosalind Park, Bendigo** still exists and retains much of its original layout. It may have been partly inspired by the article 'Beauties of Australian Vegetation' by Mr G.S. Mackay.

*While on the subject of ferns, if the city council were to convert the island in the Lower Reserve into a fernery, it would be a pleasing attraction to the many visitors who would throng to see this singular but handsome tribe of nature. And as the colony of Victoria in its different parts can furnish over 100 different varieties of ferns, besides what might be had from other colonies, such a structure if created and filled with them, would convert this part of the Reserve – which is at present but an eyesore – into a place of beauty...*⁵

Although it appears that Mackay envisaged some sort of latticework fernery, an open-air fernery was constructed in the Lower Reserve shortly afterwards. This soon became a major attraction, and is described in detail in the chapter on Sandhurst [Bendigo] by J. Glen Oliphant.

*If anyone wishes to escape from the fiery darts of the broiling sun and seek shelter from the furnace blast of the northern sirocco, a retreat is at hand. Here is the Fernery, magnificently and very artistically arranged, and very refreshing after the dust and dryness of the city around... Ferns surround us on every side, from the tender maiden-hair to the towering tree-fern of New Zealand.*⁶

The fernery at Rosalind Park, Bendigo is also described in great detail, and with breathless and almost ecstatic enthusiasm, in the Bendigo section of *Cyclopaedia of Victoria*.⁷

On the right is the beautiful fernery about two acres in extent, containing all kinds of ferns indigenous to Victoria, full of shady nooks and paths of maze-like intricacy. With its cool recesses, its miniature cascades, its grateful umbrageousness, its freshness and perfect seclusion, it forms a delightful retreat during the Summer months... it is in the heart of a city... and only a short remove from the scene of some extensive mining operations, and yet it offers the seclusion and quietitude of a fern-tree gully



Postcard c.1910 from the Ken Duxbury Postcard Collection



Other states also have ferneries. These postcard views show scenes along a 'ferny trail' on Mount Wellington, Tasmania c.1920s from the Ken Duxbury Postcard Collection.



Fern Tree Bower, Mount Wellington



on one of the labyrinth of ranges which abound in the county of Evelyn. Everything that meets the eye and ear is suggestive of sylvan solitude. In laying out these serpentine walks and green cloisters, the art of the landscape gardener has wisely followed the capricious but always picturesque and effective irregularity of Nature... From the glare of the white road and of white buildings outside, to the overarching fronds in every serpentine walk and dim recess, the transition is simply delightful. It is like plunging the sense of vision, strained, dazzled and weary into a refreshing bath...

A fernery at **Eaglehawk Public Gardens** near Bendigo 1880s, is now lost and the fernery in **Johnston Park**, Geelong, developed as a 'fern glade' c.1886, was removed c.1917 when a new design was made for the park. However the fernery at **Daylesford Botanic Gardens**, occupying the south facing slope of Wombat Hill (probably developed in the 1880s) is still in existence as is the fernery at **Kyneton Botanical Gardens** occupying the south facing bank of the Campaspe River and probably established in the 1880s. The *Cyclopaedia of Victoria*, published in 1903, gives a brief account of this fernery in what could serve as a generic description for most of the state's public ferneries of the period.

*The coolness, the vivid verdure, and soft green light which pervade this pleasant bower are especially delightful during the hottest months of the year.*⁸

Delightful though these open-air ferneries were, it was the great latticework ferneries that epitomised the heyday of Victoria's love affair with ferns and challenged the skills of builders and gardeners. These magnificent structures will be considered in the next issue of *Australian Garden History*.

- ¹ Geoffrey & Susan Jellicoe, Patrick Goode, Michael Lancaster (ed.) *The Oxford Companion to Gardens*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1986
- ² Tim Bonyhady, *The Colonial Earth*, The Miegunyah Press for Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2001 pp. 101-125
- ³ See 'Belmont' *Australian Garden History*, Vol. 10, No. 4, pp. 9-20
- ⁴ Ferdinand von Mueller 'Report of the Government Botanist and Director of the Botanic Gardens, 1869'
- ⁵ Published in the *Bendigo Advertiser* of 12 July 1879
- ⁶ Cassell's *Picturesque Atlas of Australia* 1889 p. 464
- ⁷ A major 3-volume work edited by James Smith and published in Melbourne in 1903.
- ⁸ As above Vol. 2 p. 412

Ken Duxbury obtained his Master of Landscape Architecture from Melbourne University in 1986. He has worked in urban and environmental planning and as a consultant on historic gardens. One of his many interests is the history of Victoria's public gardens and he has gathered a remarkable collection of postcards depicting them over many years.



The Gardens of Government House, Yarralumla

By Ian Crawford

The Government House grounds are a subtle blend of varied garden settings which recall Yarralumla's rural beginnings and record the continuing story of Australia.

Long before Yarralumla became Government House, the land on which it stands had links with events in the early history of New South Wales. Robert Johnston who was the first to use the land for livestock grazing in 1827, was the son of Lieutenant-Colonel George Johnston, one of the leaders of the New South Wales Corps mutiny against Governor William Bligh.

Captain Charles Sturt, after being a guest of Terence Murray of Yarralumla, took up land to the north of the property. It was granted to for his achievement in exploring the Murrumbidgee and Murray river systems. This area is now Belconnen. Murray who owned Yarralumla for 20 years played a prominent role in the pastoral industry and the legislature of New South Wales.

In earliest times the property was known as Yarrowlumla which is thought to be a corruption of Arralumna, the name given by the aboriginal people to the place where the Molonglo River cuts through the Stromlo Range. It means 'where the cry comes back from the mountains'. Thomas Mitchell marked it on his 1834 map of the area as Yarrowlumley.

There is an interesting early link between Yarralumla, Canberra and Admiralty House, Sydney, the two official houses of the Governor-General, through Murray's father-in-law, Colonel John Gibbes. His daughter Mary married Murray and for reasons of financial convenience Gibbes became one of three trustees for the administration of Yarralumla on the Mary's death in 1858. In the 1840s Gibbes had bought land at Kirribilli on Sydney Harbour where he built his residence. In 1914 the house, after many transformations and now known as Admiralty House after having been the residence of the

*Above left:
At the watergate*

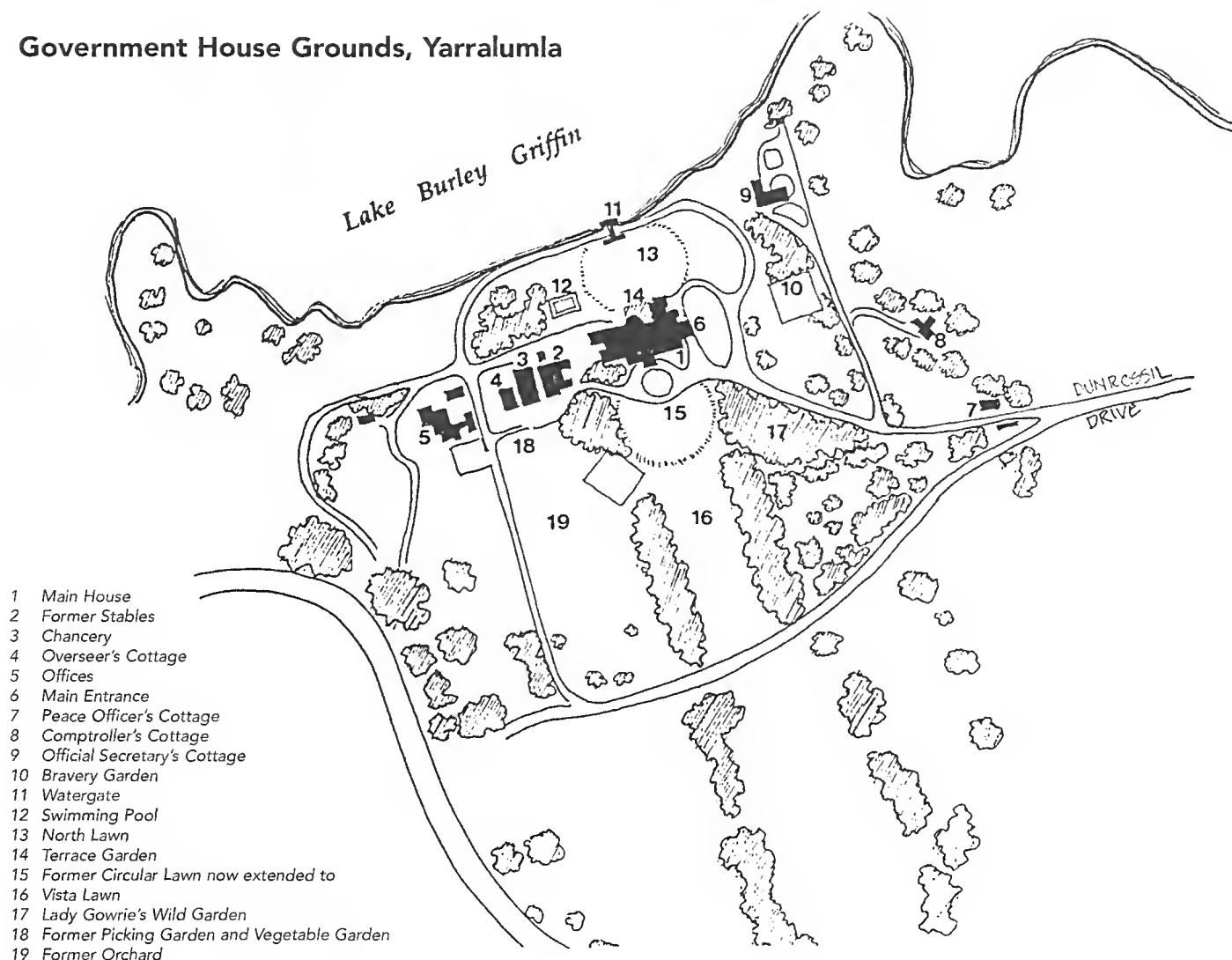
*Top right:
Lady Gowrie's Wild Garden*

*Bottom right:
Government House gardens
in autumn*

*Contents page:
Government House from the
Vista Lawn, 2001*

*Photos:
Ian Crawford*

Government House Grounds, Yarralumla



- 1 Main House
- 2 Former Stables
- 3 Chancery
- 4 Overseer's Cottage
- 5 Offices
- 6 Main Entrance
- 7 Peace Officer's Cottage
- 8 Comptroller's Cottage
- 9 Official Secretary's Cottage
- 10 Bravery Garden
- 11 Watergate
- 12 Swimming Pool
- 13 North Lawn
- 14 Terrace Garden
- 15 Former Circular Lawn now extended to
- 16 Vista Lawn
- 17 Lady Gowrie's Wild Garden
- 18 Former Picking Garden and Vegetable Garden
- 19 Former Orchard

Royal Navy's Commander-in-Chief of the Australian Station, became the official residence of the Governor-General in Sydney. Without any possible idea of what the future could hold for both properties, Gibbes has been associated with their early development.

Frederick Campbell, son of Robert Campbell of Duntroon, bought Yarralumla in 1881 and proceeded to develop it as a model farming property. Over the period 1891 to 1898 he built and further added to the homestead that now forms the gabled wing of Government House facing the Brindabella Range.

The Yass-Canberra district was chosen as the site of the new national capital in 1908 at the height of the Campbell property's rural prosperity. Although there had been thought since 1911 for Yarralumla's use as a temporary residence for the Governor-General, it was not until 1925 that Cabinet decided to proceed with its refurbishment as a temporary Government House to be occupied by Lord Stonehaven, and also to be ready to accommodate the Duke and Duchess of York who were to visit Canberra in 1927 for the official opening of the newly constructed Parliament House.

The development of the garden as we know it today started during the ownership of Terence Murray amidst the scattered local species of gum trees, the yellow box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*) and Blakely's red gum (*E. blakelyi*) which are still features of the garden. In the remoteness and harshness of the Australian wilderness, families from the British Isles strove to achieve the soft relief of an English country garden while at the same time providing for their needs in fruit and vegetables.

Murray, who brought his gardener to Yarralumla from Winderradeen, his Lake George property, obtained trees and shrubs from many sources, including the nursery at Camden owned by William MacArthur, from Dr Wilson of Braidwood, from William Packer's station Esthermead at Gundaroo, and probably from many other neighbouring properties. The pastoralist families depended on each other for much as they contended with the elements and isolation while establishing themselves in the dry Australian countryside. It was during the Murray era that Yarralumla's landscape-defining arboreal features were planted, the deodar or Himalayan cedar, the English elms and the Monterey cypress, this last feature sadly now gone.

The development of Campbell's model rural property included improvements and extensions to the gardens and lawns made possible by the installation of pumps for the water supply and the newly invented lawn mower. Frederick Campbell, who had campaigned for Canberra to be the national capital, was given notice to vacate his property in 1913, not because of any projected use of Yarralumla but as a measure to hold down property prices to prevent land speculation in the new Australian Capital Territory. From 40,000 acres at the peak of its rural prosperity the land use as Government House has now been reduced to 130 acres (52ha).

The design for the refurbishment of the gardens for Yarralumla's new role as Government House was undertaken by Charles Weston who, as Officer-in-Charge, Afforestation Branch and later as Canberra's first Superintendent, Parks and Gardens Branch, had responsibilities for the Yarralumla

gardens after the departure of the Campbells. The main feature of his design was the formal circular lawn to the south-west which has now been extended to be the vista lawn with views to the Brindabellas.

While some of the wives of the Governors-General have concentrated on redecoration of the residence, others have supervised and even undertaken the planting involved in the development of the Government House gardens. From 1969 to 1974 Lady Hasluck gave her attention to the design and installation, by Otto Ruzickas, of the Rhododendron Garden at the main entrance. This garden has magnificent displays through winter and spring progressing from erica, heath and *Pieris japonica* to magnolias, azaleas and rhododendrons.

Between 1982 and 1989 Lady Stephen's influence was more widespread. She was responsible for the plantings of masses of daffodils in the bulb garden, the introduction of a colour theme for the beds flanking the vista lawn, pink and white on the east side and yellow and white on the west side, development of the gardens on the southern side of the house including the "David Austin" English rose collection, the Heritage rose garden, the cottage garden, the south-west terrace and finally the northern terrace with its Mt Fuji variety of *Prunus serrulata*, Japanese flowering cherries and *Malus ioensis plena* (Bechtel crab apple). Lady Stephen also developed the long perennial border, however modifications were necessary to reduce the frequency of maintenance. These modifications were undertaken during term of Sir William and Lady Deane and the transformed bed became a mixed border of shrubs and non-invasive perennials with a back-drop of 'Sea Foam' roses to reduce the maintenance task.

But perhaps the most extensive development was Lady Gowrie's Wild Garden (1936-1945). There has been conjecture about the source of inspiration for this garden. As so many features accord with Gertrude Jekyll's writings about the 'sylvan beauty that the wood displays throughout the year . . . where the track winds and one cannot see far onward',² it may be assumed that Lady Gowrie and her friend Ethel Anderson, the wife of the Comptroller, were indeed influenced by the imaginative English designer.

They developed a garden of four seasons. In August the hellebores, daffodils and jonquils herald the spring and it is then that the succession of displays begins. From this season to the end of summer there are crab apples, plums, cherries, magnolias, laburnum, camellias, mollis azaleas, wisteria, viburnum, fuchsias, aquilegias, irises, dogwoods, abelias, honeysuckle, hydrangeas, crepe myrtles, agapanthus and many others. All present a wonderful show until autumn when the magnificent tones of the deciduous birches, elms, oaks, hawthorns and maples draw the curtain on a performance lasting over nine months.

At the heart of Lady Gowrie's Wild Garden is a glade with rough stone paving and a fountain statue of a dancing child in memory of Major Patrick Hore-Ruthven, the son of Lord and Lady Gowrie, who died of wounds in 1942. The inscription around the base of the fountain reads, 'To Pat's Youth and Happy Hours'.³

On 20 June 2001, just before he completed his term as Governor-General, Sir William Deane dedicated the Bravery Garden that is viewed from the State Entrance to Government House. It is a sunken garden located on the site that had previously been first a croquet court and then a lawn tennis court. Inspired by the values of Australia, as recalled by Sir William and Lady Deane from their visit to Gallipoli for ANZAC Day in 1999, it is dedicated to brave Australians, civil as well



A glade in Lady Gowrie's Wild Garden

as military. The axis of the garden is based on sandstone pillars representing the five stars of the Southern Cross, the bank to the garden is planted with rosemary, and there are borders and plantations of sasanqua camellias, Manchurian pear and hebe. The last-mentioned plant represents the ANZAC link with New Zealand.

With the kind permission of His Excellency the Right Reverend Dr Peter Hollingworth AC, OBE, the present Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, the Australiana Fund conducts tours of the Government House gardens every Thursday during spring, summer and autumn, avoiding the months when Canberra weather discourages garden activities. In 1978, Mrs Tamie Fraser, wife of the Prime Minister at the time, established the Australiana Fund to acquire and preserve for display and use in the official residences of the Governor-General and Prime Minister the finest examples of items of Australian heritage value.

The guided tours access the gardens by way of a delightful cruise on Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin in the Southern Cross Yacht Club's ferry *Southern Cross*. On arrival at the Government House water gate⁴ visitors are welcomed on behalf of the Governor-General by volunteer guides of The Australiana Fund. The sculpture 'Naiad' awaits them. Lord De L'Isle, Governor-General from 1961 to 1965, commissioned it as a bicentennial gift to the nation in memory of his wife who died while he was in office. Its inscription reads

*'Now Naiad from these waters rise
Salute with hope the eastern skies
The day is come'*

1 The terrace was designed by Richard Ratcliffe

2 Cherry Lewis (ed.) *The Making of a Garden: Gertrude Jekyll*, Antique Collectors' Club, Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1984

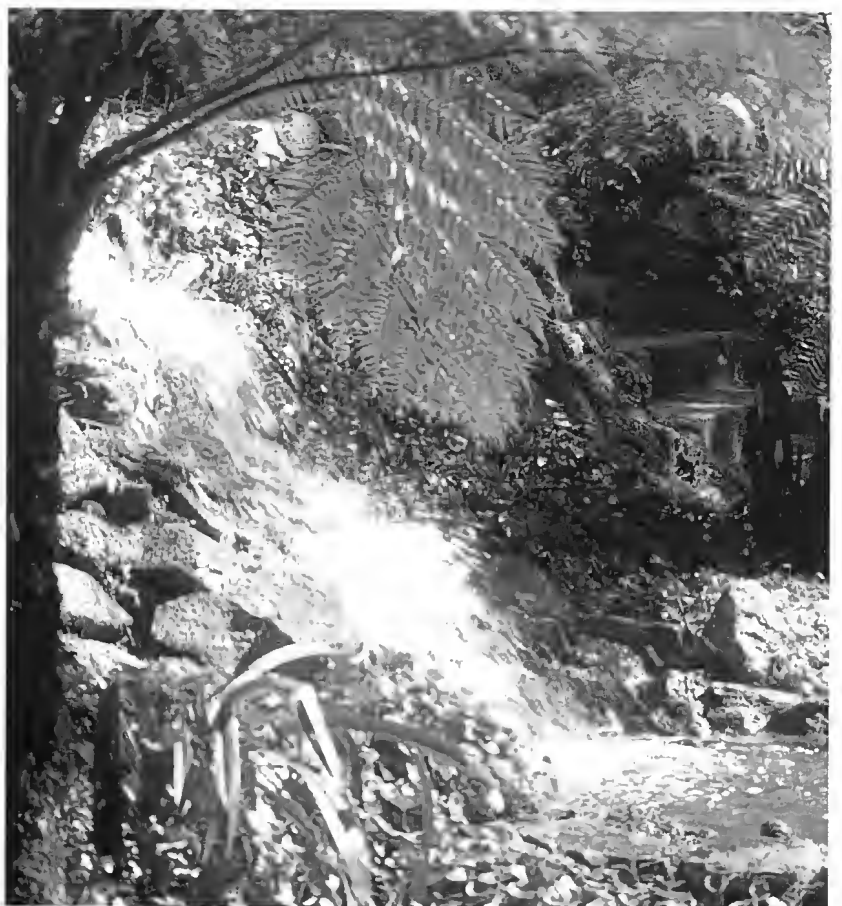
3 Paul Sorensen installed the fountain for Lady Gowrie and also undertook work on the trees

4 The landing place was designed by Richard Clough. It is a stone structure with a double staircase and a central niche containing the statue of Naiad.

Acknowledgments

The material for this article has been drawn from *Gables, Ghosts and Governors-General, The Historic House at Yarralumla* edited by C.D. Coulthard-Clark, Allen & Unwin in association with The Canberra & District Historical Society, North Sydney, NSW, 1988 and from lecture notes prepared by Pat Garratt, Gardening Supervisor at Yarralumla.

Ian Crawford is an enthusiastic home gardener with an interest in the history of Canberra particularly its representation in the story of Yarralumla. He leads the team of volunteer guides for the Government House garden tours that support the Australiana Fund.



Saving Araluen

Araluen is situated 40km south east of Perth at Roleystone, one of the loveliest, hilliest suburbs in the Darling Ranges. The actual garden area is 59.9 hectares in a long, narrow, steep-sided valley running north/south. This orientation is unusual in the Ranges as most valleys run east/west and suffer bad east winds from inland Australia in summer, but the strong winds do not get into Araluen.

Such is the drop from north to south that the dam, at the northern top of the valley, feeds by gravity the whole garden. The creek runs down through the centre of the garden and out the southern end into the Canning River. There is an eastern tributary coming in half way down the valley and joining the main creek in the garden area in the bottom half of the valley. The top or northern end is still bushland.

A dream that faded, 1930 - 1985

In 1896 at the age of 13 John Joseph Simons left Clare in South Australia with his mother and two sisters to join his father who had found work in Western Australia. Nine years later he was a young Perth businessman with an enthusiasm for football. He formed the Young Australia Football League to encourage schoolboy participation in Australian Rules football at a time when that code was being seriously challenged by soccer,

especially in schools. Simons believed that if boys travelled to play football against other districts and other states, they would benefit both mentally and physically. The YAFL became popular and in 1907 a team went to the Eastern States to play other schoolboy teams.

The YAFL acquired a city headquarters, formed a band, and admitted girls changing its name to the Young Australia League or YAL. By 1929 the 'Boss', as Simons was now known to his co-workers and young members, decided they needed a bush block for camps, holidays and, most importantly, band practice.

He searched the hills east of Perth for months looking for his bush dream. It had to be

...quiet, secluded and off the beaten track. It must have a permanent brook with a good supply of fresh, pure water. It must have an abundance of natural growth, preferably with maidenhair fern, wildflowers, tall gums, she-oaks, black butts, banksias, blackboys and with rich soil in which, with cultivation and water, flora from other states and perhaps overseas, would survive.¹

Today I marvel at his vision. Araluen is all he searched for, and much more.



By Noelene Drage



The block was purchased and officially opened to the public in November 1930. Known as Araluen meaning variously 'running waters', 'singing waters' or 'place of lilies' it was to be a picnic spot and a holiday camp for YAL members, their parents and friends, a parade ground for the band – and a garden.

In the next 10 years five log cabin cottages were built, rock terraces were formed on the sides of the steep valley, trees were planted and gardens made. A major project, a memorial to 89 former YAL members who had died in the 1914-18 war, was created on a west-facing hillside. It consisted of a series of five terraces flanked by 89 *Cupressus sempervirens*, planted in the shape of a lyre, the symbol for music as so many of those killed had been bandmen. There was ...a waterfall ...made to cascade down the slope and over several smaller falls between the differing terrace levels, its tinkling music infusing life into the memorial and singing an eternal requiem.²

Called 'The Grove of the Unforgotten', it has now reached maturity and the pencil pines have grown to create a sky-ceilinged place of great tranquillity. At the base of the Grove there is a large 'Pool of Reflection' mirroring a magnificent jacaranda that eventually drops its deep-coloured flowers, turning the Pool into a magic blue lake.

In 1940 Jack Italiano, an Italian stone mason and gardener completed the most impressive feature at Araluen, the Margaret Simons Memorial Pergola, a tribute to J.J.'s mother who had died in 1937. She had encouraged and physically helped her son with his Araluen dream. One of the most impressive man-made structures in Perth the Pergola was mainly the physical work of one man and a horse. It consists of 38 massive pillars of small stones topped by great logs, 35-40cms in diameter. The Pergola was opened on Mother's

Day 1940 and apart from a rock swimming pool and poolside colonnade it was the last major work at Araluen for many years as the 1939-45 war put a halt to all gardening or building activities.

Over the years the League's popularity waned as young people wanted to travel independently. J.J. Simons had died in 1948 but the YAL continued because of its band, its holiday retreat at Camp Simons and some small groups that still travelled – my youngest son was one of nine schoolboys who went on an escorted tour to Singapore in 1975.

By 1985 the League was in desperate financial straits. Araluen, now an overgrown, run-down secret garden in the heart of which the Chalet Healy Restaurant, originally built in 1937 as a guest house, still functioned. Araluen and Chalet Healy were sold. The purchaser's elaborate plans for redevelopment were unsuitable and were rejected by the local authority, the City of Armadale. Araluen dreamed quietly on, the honeysuckle climbing ever higher and wider. However, as it was not for sale nothing could be done.

Action – February to September 1990

After the Council's rejection of the Disney-like plans, Mary Hargreaves, a gardening friend of mine and a member of AGHS, rang me and talked of her suggestion that Araluen should become a botanic garden.

Then on Valentine's Day, Saturday, 14 February 1990, there was a notice in the *West Australian*. Araluen Park was for sale at 1.4 millions dollars. I rang Mary in great excitement but she was not feeling her usual self and did not feel she could face the fight. (That changed later and Mary has been one of the greatest champions of Araluen and is still vitally involved). It now seemed up to me.

Opposite Top Left:
Tulips and 'singing water'
at Araluen

Opposite Bottom Left:
One of the tiers in the Grove
of the Unforgotten

Opposite Top Right:
The cascade in the Grove of
the Unforgotten

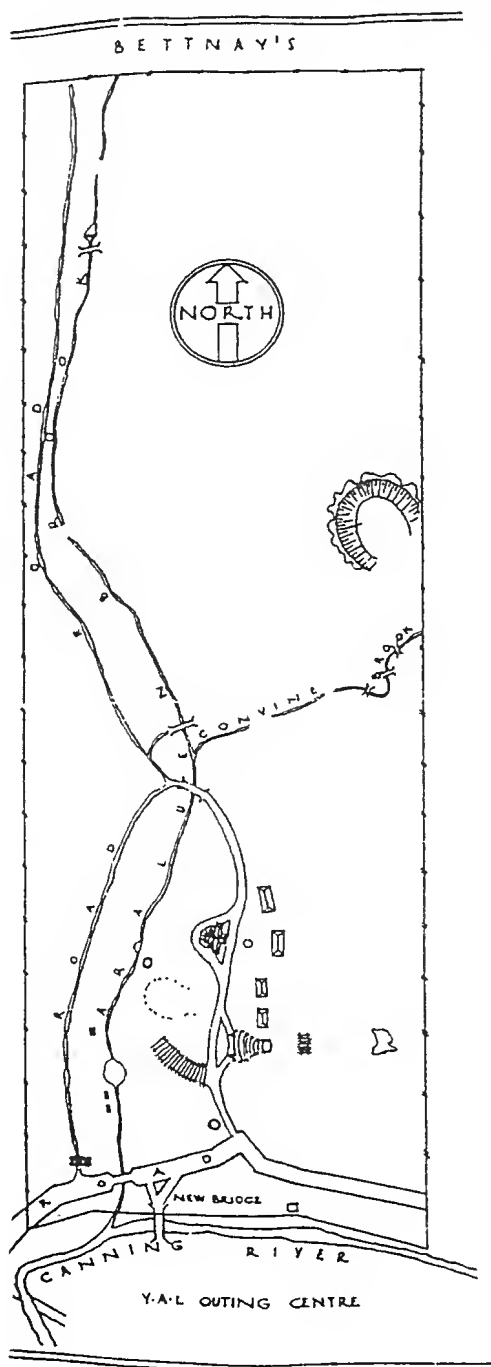
Photos: Nina Crone

Above Left:
Planting of bluebells donated
by Mrs Mary Hargreaves

Above Right:
Swimming pool and
colonnade in spring 1991

Photos: Noelene Drage

Plan Showing the Water Courses in Araluen



With great confidence I sat down to write to Carmen Lawrence, the new Lady Premier, never dreaming she would not think it was obvious that her government had to buy Araluen. She thanked me for my interest and said she had passed my letter on. To the Minister for Racing and Gaming! Now I know some people do look on gardening as a relaxation and a bit of a gamble – but Sport? Gaming?

I then wrote to most of the Cabinet. I received polite letters all saying the same thing. They thanked me for my interest but at that stage they were not considering buying Araluen. I started talking about Araluen to friends and anyone else who would listen. They all thought it should be saved. In late April the young agent handling the sale, who knew of my interest, told me I was likely to miss out.

On 2 May Mrs Ann Cullity, then president of the Board of the Western Australian Botanic Garden, Dr Paul Wycherley, the Director of King's Park Botanic Garden, the agent and I met.

The King's Park people were sympathetic but said they could not help. I asked if there was a way of 'buying' time. The agent told me I could put a holding option on the sale for 30 days. A sum of \$8,000 to \$10,000 was mentioned so I wrote a cheque for \$8,000 and 'bought' breathing space.

The following week several things happened. Peter Thorn, president of the Tree Society and I decided to call a public meeting for Monday 14 May. I thought I had better see a lawyer to establish my position as one thing was certain, I did not have \$1.4 million. I did not even have \$1.3 million, my option! The Tree Society arranged for me to meet with a lawyer, a delightful man who looked slightly amused, or amazed, and said 'I think you need some publicity'. He picked up the phone and rang the *West Australian*.

On Friday 11 May at Araluen I met with Michael Zekelich, an investigative journalist, and Nic Ellis, an imaginative photographer. The next morning their article and photo generated unbelievable interest. The phone rang all through the weekend.

One hundred and seventy people attended the public meeting sponsored by the Tree Society on the following Monday in the Chalet at Araluen. A Steering Committee was formed. The campaign to save Araluen was off and away. Somewhere in those early weeks, Ian Blackburn, the Mayor of Armadale told Dave Everall, of the Department of Planning and Urban Development, about the Chalet meeting. Everall agreed that Araluen should be bought for the people. For the next three and a half months there were Sunday traffic jams because of the number of people 'going back' to Araluen.

On 11 June, Kay Hallahan, Minister for Planning and Urban Development and a YAL member in her youth, announced that the government would buy Araluen. More photo opportunities for Nic Ellis! Later Kay Hallahan told me that she had more letters concerning Araluen than on any other subject during her ministry. Our Steering Committee metamorphosed into the Araluen Botanic Park Foundation, Incorporated. From September 1, 1990 when the Lawrence Government officially took over the Park, the Foundation assisted the Department of Planning to make it 'fit for its purpose'. Five years later the Foundation leased Araluen from the Government for a tulip bulb rental and, with a descending grant, it has been running the park ever since.

Paradise Regained

The Park is now cleared of its honeysuckle, well almost. It has a six-week Tulip Festival every year, concerts and other musical activities including a magical 'Carols by Torchlight', a 'Midsummer Night's Dinner' (again magical) under the colonnade beside the pool and many other 'happenings'. Last year 92,000 visitors came to the Park and the numbers increase each year.

There is a dedicated staff, not nearly enough by Botanic Garden standards, but all are young, enthusiastic professionals who can change hats at a second's notice. One moment a seedling planter, the next a train driver. Another heartening thing is the volunteer support that has been generated - the philanthropist spirit of J.J. Simons continues after all these years. There are the weeders (The Wednesday Wonders), shop keepers, train drivers (we acquired a little 3-carriage train last year) and there are gate keepers, tulip bulb planters, traffic facilitators, gardening groups and many more individuals who help in different ways. There are Community Service, Work for the Dole and Job Training schemes in operation. A nearby prison also helps with manual labour.

Some of the early planting has survived notably a Moreton Bay Chestnut (*Castanospermum australe*), a Burdekin Plum (*Pleiogynium timorense*), huge clumps of *Doryanthes palmeri*, a magnificent stand of *Eucalyptus viminalis*, quite a lot of *Ceratopetalum gummiferum* and a dozen or more rhododendrons.

Literally tens of thousands of bulbs have been added to those surviving in 1990. This year 100,000 tulips were planted by volunteers over two weekends to give spectacular displays. Six years ago we planted a large area of roses towards the eastern boundary – a big bed of Alister Clark's strong growing creations, and another area of Tea roses. The kangaroos loved them. For four years the Teas did not get above 30cm, and the Clarks looked like moulting fowls most of the time, but when the park was fenced the roses grew so well that maybe the kangaroos did us a favour.

The Simons Pergola was said to have had 80 climbing roses growing on it in the early years. Now there is quite a lot of shade but we are trying roses again – there were four or five still there from 1938. We actually have copies of the working notes used to plant the roses on August 29 and 30, 1938 in 'Boss' Simons' handwriting, and one of the three original suppliers of those roses is still one of our leading nurseries. This year they have re-supplied two of each of the same roses on the 1938 list apart from three varieties that are now unobtainable. Their donation is typical of the way the garden is being restored and supported. Another rose nursery gives us end of season treasures, mainly older, obscure roses.

There is no space to list all the planting of the last 10 years, but magnolias are 3-4m high already, Japanese maples are thriving, birches are growing happily beside the stream and the camellias become more spectacular every year. We have planted some WA wildflowers, but not a lot as King's Park specialises in those. Our aim is to grow exotics for people who cannot always go elsewhere to see the beauty of a magnolia in full bloom or a sweep of tulips on a rock terrace.

Our garden project at the moment is a contour walk which will become 'The Bark Walk', featuring varieties of trees with interesting trunks or bark. The path is so constructed that you will be really close, within hugging distance of most of them, except the *Chorisia* maybe.

Also exciting is the fact that there are lots of early gardening records that have not been published or even read by most people. In August this year Cyril Ayris wrote a small book on Araluen which is available from the Foundation.³ It contains quite a lot of early history of the League and good 'then and now' photos of the garden.

Postscript on campaigning

I am often asked whether I would do a 'save the garden campaign' again. I honestly do not know. I was completely ignorant of the way politics actually work then (not now!) and I sometimes think that is why the project succeeded. My action was absolutely apolitical. At the time, early May 1990, all government response had been NO. There was not even mild interest expressed in any of those ministerial letters. I consider my response a desperate Irish action to give us time to find a miracle. Maybe it was the unusual nature of the issue that caught people's imagination and caused the Government such surprise. My own friends were variously aghast, shocked, intrigued, enthusiastic - but all were supportive and that definitely helped me through those months. People still ask if I got my money back. Yes, I did, eventually, although at one time I received a letter pointing out that I must come up with the \$1.3 million. More lawyers!



From Left: Mrs Noelene Drage (Perth), Mrs Billie Hamilton (AGHS, Victoria), Mrs Mary Hargreaves, (AGHS, WA) and Mrs Heather Thompson (AGHS, WA)

I hope you have realised that I love gardens, and all that goes with gardening, far more than politics! To see Araluen re-blossom and be loved, enjoyed and valued is the greatest reward an innocent, unintentional lobbyist could ever hope for. Now I see Araluen as our contribution towards trying to keep a balance of beauty in this poor old post-September 11 world that we all share.

¹ Courtney, Victor, *The Life of J. J. Simons*, Halstead Press, Sydney, 1961

² As above

³ Araluen Botanic Park Foundation Inc., 361 Croyden Road, Roleystone, WA 6111. Ph: (08) 9496 1171 Fax: (08) 9496 1081 Email: info@araluenbotanicpark.com.au

Noelene Drage spent her early years on a wheat belt farm at Yuna, 70 miles east of Geraldton in WA where there was only a garden for the four winter months every year. She always loved flowers so after this deprived floral childhood she bought a florist shop in 1970 after bringing up a family. She has been involved with roses and is presently jointly writing a book on Tea Roses.



Best-Kept Secrets

Footscray Park is one of Melbourne's best-kept secrets. In 1996 Heritage Victoria classified it as having State Significance considering it the largest and most intact Edwardian park in Victoria.¹ Its making falls within the second phase of development of public parks in Victoria. The English Arts and Crafts movement of the 19th century, made popular by Reginald Blomfield and Thomas Mawson, influenced the design of Footscray Park. Victoria's Edwardian gardens were also influenced by Charles Bogue Luffman who designed Burnley Gardens and the Metropolitan Golf Links, Melbourne, Hugh Linaker who designed King's Domain Gardens in Melbourne, and Edna Walling.²

Footscray Park is an evocative park. To visit it is to step back in time since much of the Edwardian structure and planting is still intact. The magic of the garden lies in its rustic stone structures, lily ponds where which fish dart about, Arcadian bridges, flights of steps flanked with classical urns, and a richly diverse plant collection.

The park is of horticultural merit having trees and shrubs listed on the Victorian Significant Tree Register. There is the rare *Brahea armata*, the Blue Hesper palm (there are only two in Australia) that curator David Matthews brought back from the Adelaide Botanic Gardens. It is still in its original circular bed at the top of the main axial path. There is the unusual *Angophora hispida* (Dwarf Apple), the graceful *Cupressus macrocarpa* 'Hodginsii', *Ficus microcarpa* var. *Hilli* (Hill's Fig) and the beautiful *Ulmus glabra* 'Exoniensis' (Exeter Elm). The shrubs are *Vitex agnus-castus* (Chaste Tree) and *Brunfelsia paciflora* var. *calycina*. Other plants of interest are the three remaining *Populus deltoides* (American Cottonwoods) and the very graceful *X Cupressocyparis leylandii* 'Casterwellan'.³ The park follows the contour lines of the steep banks of the Maribyrnong River opposite

Flemington Race Course and it has a wonderful view of over the racetrack. The Victorian Racing Club (VRC) originally owned the land and leased it to Angliss and Co. for grazing. In 1908-09, the VRC was considering selling the land for housing subdivision⁴ but local residents, with the help of the Footscray Council, prevented this. They lobbied the State Government, which was at first reluctant to engage. The local press, *The Advertiser* of Footscray, took up the cause reporting, on 5 May 1909, that the 'State Treasurer was Lying Low'. The State Treasurer, who was also the premier, finally agreed to pay half the cost of purchasing the land, and, on 30 October 1910, a formal ceremony was held dedicating 38 acres to the park.

With the City Engineer and William Guilfoyle, the former Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, as distinguished judges, a competition was held for a design for the park. Messrs. Klingender and Alsop, architects, were awarded the winning prize, named 'Eucalyptus Globulus' with prize-money of 20 guineas. Guilfoyle remarked 'that it was a worthwhile design, while the others weren't worth considering'. The City Surveyor agreed that Alsop's plan was superior, but he felt that Contour's plan was favourable and it was awarded second prize. Alsop's plan was budgeted at £4,000 and Contour's at £44,000.⁵

How much of Alsop's design was implemented is one of the great mysteries of Footscray Park. *The Advertiser* reported on 4 March 1911 that the local surveyor cheerfully combined the ideas of the two winning designs and submitted them to Council. The new plan had hardly any features contained in either of the two successful designs and *The Advertiser* stated that it was an improvement.

Instead of expensive walks, flowerbeds and lawns, space was provided for park-like areas with thickly



By **Sandra Pullman**

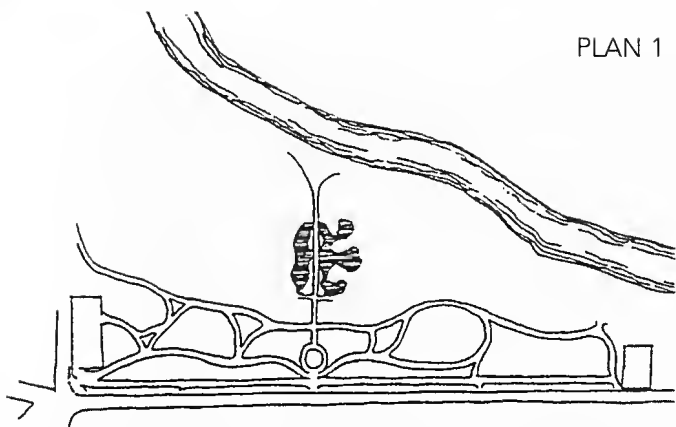
Top left:
Upper terrace with shelter
Footscray Park c.1927

Top right:
Nymphaea stellata,
Footscray Park c.1927

Contents page:
David Matthews, 1916

Hand-tinted glass slides by
David Matthews, courtesy of
Footscray Historical Society,
David Matthews Collection

PLAN 1



The ornamental garden area of Footscray Park as depicted in Matthews' 1948-49 plan.

planted shade trees. Beds for annuals were placed in more convenient locations and, instead of a rustic lake with bridges set in Arcadian loveliness, the area was to be laid out as sports grounds. To be included in the design, when Council had the money, were a grandstand and small lake. Yet it seems that this plan was not followed either because, when the Lily Pond was built in 1931, rustic bridges and volcanic rock edging were used to create an Arcadian atmosphere.

From 1912-1916 development of the park was very slow. The Council had no money and so it appointed a Beautification Committee consisting of local residents to raise funds. It was an enormous task and the public-spirited citizens did a marvellous job, considering they had to cut through solid rock. They held theatre nights and weekend working bees that planted almost 1,000 trees and shrubs. Through the boulder-strewn ground they made an avenue nearly one third of a mile long and 20 feet wide, they laid water pipes, constructed irrigation channels and paths, and provided 50 seats.⁶

A first-class curator - David Reeves Matthews

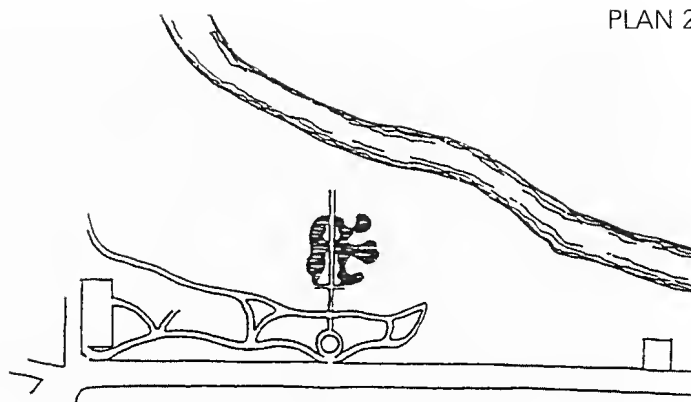
In 1908, before the VRC proposed selling the land for housing, the Footscray City Council commissioned a report from D.M. Horsfall of the Royal Melbourne Golf Club at Sandringham. He reported that the Council's parks and reserves were 'in a very bad condition' and he recommended Council employ a first-class man as Curator. Eight years later the Council followed his advice. In 1916 they indeed appointed a first-class curator. He was David Reeves Matthews.⁷

Born in 1890 in Amherst, just outside Ararat, Matthews was the son of James and Jane Matthews, née Reeves. He served his apprenticeship at the Ararat Botanic Gardens under the curator Hugh Linaker. Matthews became curator when Linaker left to take a more senior position as the Landscape Gardener of the Lunacy Department at Mont Park. Linaker thought highly of Matthews and took great care to support him giving him a glowing reference when he applied for the job at Footscray.⁸

David Matthews came to Melbourne with his wife, Anna Elizabeth Matthews, née Ritter, and their first son Gilbert. Their other children – Anna, Keith and Sidney – were all born in Footscray. When Matthews arrived at Footscray Park what he saw was an avenue of Sugar Gums planted along Geelong Road, some flowerbeds and spacious lawn. Over the next 14 years, with the help of the noted orchidologist, William Nicholls, it was transformed into an aesthetically pleasing park.

Many of the features Matthews incorporated in the design are still there today, although on a somewhat reduced scale. The informal pathway that lazily meanders around the perimeter of

PLAN 2



The same area in 1967, by which time the Garden was considerably reduced.

the park remains with the more formal, grassed terraces symmetrically planted with trees and palms. At the old Moore Street entrance the north/south central path creates an axis leading down to the river and providing a spectacular view over Flemington Race Course.⁹

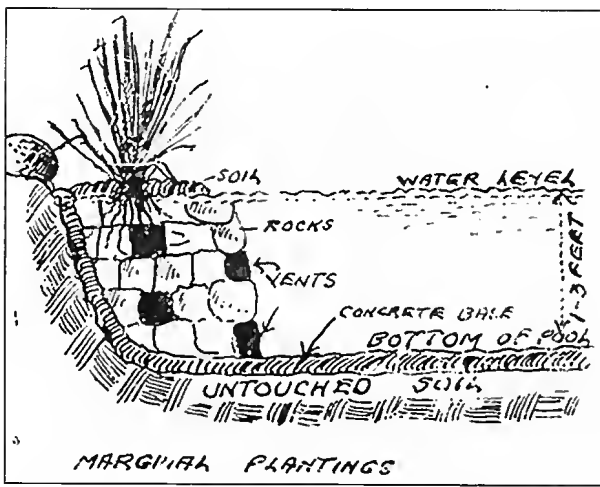
As you look down the central path another of the park's well-kept secrets is revealed – the wisteria-covered Drew Walk Pergola and Lily Pond. "Susso" workers during the Depression built the Lily Pond in 1930-31. A plan recently found at the Public Record Office shows that there was a gravel path winding around the pond together with stone seats, Arcadian bridges, steps, shrubberies, lawns and trees. In 1935 Mrs A. Green, a local resident of Footscray, presented a granite fountain to the gardens in memory of her husband and it was placed in the Lily Pond. It incorporated a platypus in the design and is the only known example of the Australiana theme in Victoria.¹⁰ The pond was one of David Matthews' favourite places and during summer it is a picture when the water lilies are flowering.

Traveller and Photographer

Over the 48 years Matthews was Superintendent of Parks and Gardens, he recorded the development of Footscray Park, and of many other parks around Melbourne, on glass lantern slides which are now in the possession of the Footscray Historical Society. They date from 1916 and are a fascinating form of early photography that captures a period in time long since gone. Among the subjects are Burnley Gardens in Richmond, Treasury Gardens in Melbourne, Maribyrnong Park in Essendon, Central Park in Malvern, Wattle Park and King's Domain.¹¹ The slides are made of glass, 8cm x 8cm, and have a black and white image on them. To preserve this image, there is a backing glass making the slides about 2cm thick. Without the backing glass the slides are very thin, fragile and easily broken. Some of the slides were hand-coloured, presumably by Matthews, and others have hand-drawn diagrams used to illustrate points made in talks and lectures.

The glass slides also capture David Matthews' amazing outback expedition through central and north western Australia in 1924. It was a trip like those of the early explorers - Matthews knew where he was going but he experienced many of the same hardships, the unrelenting sun, the isolation, the dust, the heat, and the flies.

His photographs capture the people he met and places he visited. They record the hardships of life in the outback - the poisoning of cattle by *Indigofera* sp., the miserable life of the Aborigines with lubras waiting for their rations, and an Aboriginal in his traditional walking costume – stark nudity. In June 1930, Matthews made a similar trip with Lord and Lady



Hand-drawn glass slide used for lectures by David Matthews.
Courtesy of Footscray Historical Society, David Matthews Collection

Somers and according to his diary they 'were very anxious to have someone with them who could tell them the correct names' of the birds and plants. They visited Lake Eyre, Palm Valley near Stuart (Alice Springs), Hermannsburg and Barrow Creek.¹²

Matthews was a member of the Field Naturalists' Club that had an association with the Lord Somers camp on Westernport Bay. A neighbouring property was Coolart, and, in 1939, Matthews was invited to do a design for the redevelopment of the garden there. His design included a small pond and arbor of stone and wood. It was similar to the pond at Footscray Park but smaller. In 1941 he was asked to prepare a plan for an arboretum. Both plans were partially implemented by the then owner of Coolart, Thomas Luxton.¹³

Matthews led an extraordinary life. He served on the Save the Forest Campaign Committee, he assisted the State Nursery at Macedon at various times and according to the Footscray City Engineer had 'advised on so many questions and served with distinction the faculties or schools of botany, agriculture and

entomology at Melbourne University'. He was heavily involved with the Scouting movement, and in 1965 he was awarded a British Empire Medal for community services.¹⁴

In 1964, David Reeves Matthews retired, but he kept his ties with Footscray Park for many years afterwards. He had created that garden out of nothing and today it is still a magnificent park. A visit to Footscray to see this wonderful park is most rewarding because I have not revealed all its secrets. An ideal time would be this summer, when the water lilies are flowering. And do take a picnic hamper.

- 1 Footscray Park, Maribyrnong Council, Napier Street, Footscray
- 2 Heritage Victoria, 1996, *Victorian Heritage Register*, Maribyrnong Council, Napier Street, Footscray
- 3 Whitehead, G., 1998, *Footscray Park, Conservation Study*, for City of Maribyrnong, Maribyrnong Council, Napier Street, Footscray
- 4 Whitehead, G., 1998, *Footscray Park, Conservation Study*, for City of Maribyrnong, Maribyrnong Council, Napier Street, Footscray
- 5 Whitehead, G., 1998, *Footscray Park, Conservation Study*, for City of Maribyrnong, Maribyrnong Council, Napier Street, Footscray
- 6 Whitehead, G., 1998, *Footscray Park, Conservation Study*, for City of Maribyrnong, Maribyrnong Council, Napier Street, Footscray
- 7 Horsfall, D., 1908 (?), *Letter to the Footscray Council*, Footscray Historical Society, Maribyrnong Council, Napier Street, Footscray
- 8 Whitehead, G., 1998, *Footscray Park, Conservation Study*, for City of Maribyrnong, Maribyrnong Council, Napier Street, Footscray
- 9 Whitehead, G., 1998, *Footscray Park, Conservation Study*, for City of Maribyrnong, Maribyrnong Council, Napier Street, Footscray
- 10 Heritage Victoria, 1996, *Victorian Heritage Register*, Maribyrnong Council, Napier Street, Footscray
- 11 Matthews, D., *Glass Lantern Slides*, Footscray Historical Society, Council, Napier Street, Footscray
- 12 Matthews, D., 1930, *Extracts from his Diary*, Footscray Historical Society, Maribyrnong Council, Napier Street, Footscray
- 13 Heritage Victoria, 1996, *Victorian Heritage Register*, Maribyrnong Council, Napier Street, Footscray
- 14 Whitehead, G., 1998, *Footscray Park, Conservation Study*, for City of Maribyrnong, Maribyrnong Council, Napier Street, Footscray

Sandra Pullman is a student in the Bachelor of Applied Science (Horticulture) course at Burnley College, University of Melbourne. She has been cataloguing the David Matthews Photographic Collection for the Footscray Historical Society.

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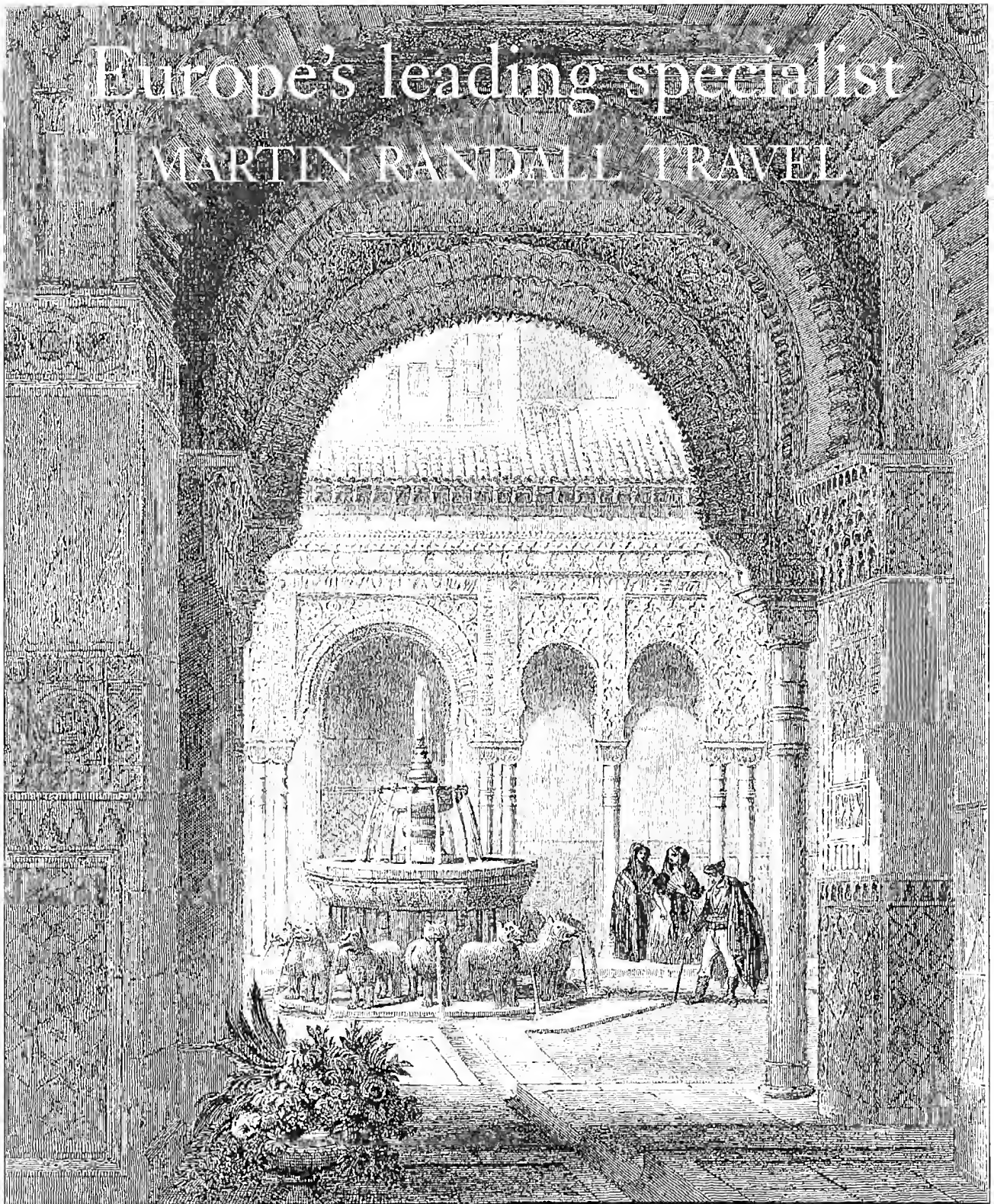
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Valete

Barbara van den Broek 1932 – 2001

Architect and landscape designer

Born in New Zealand, Barbara van den Broek graduated in Architecture from Auckland University prior to moving to Brisbane where she was to add post-graduate diplomas in Town and Country Planning, Landscape Architecture and a Master of Science in Environmental Studies to her qualifications. In 1963 she attracted press attention when she won an open competition to design the area around the lagoon at the University of Queensland, perhaps as much for her status as a working mother of four young children as for her skills as an architect and landscape architect.

A Council Member of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (1975-79) and the Queensland Division of the Royal Australian Planning Institute, Barbara was an active member of the National Trust of Queensland from 1976, and the first chairperson of its Landscape Sub-committee where her work included a survey of street trees in the Brisbane City Centre. She moved to Melbourne, working with Loder and Bayley, and became a member of the Trust's Landscape Committee (1981-83) and was elected to the Trust Council (1982-3)

Always a person open to new experiences, Barbara moved to Sydney in 1983 to become the first landscape architect employed by Blacktown Council, at a time when landscape architects were rare in local government. Barbara became a member of both the Landscape Conservation and Landscape Assessment Committees in 1984. She transferred to the Urban Parks Committee when it was formed in 1986. Its task was to assist a consultant funded by a National Estate Grant to research and document parks throughout NSW. After that consultancy was completed, Barbara was one of the few members of the committee to remain when it extended its brief to become the Parks and Gardens Conservation Committee in 1991, a committee she chaired from 1995 to 1998.

After moving to Sydney Barbara had added teaching to her already multi-faceted professional career and she joined Ryde Horticultural College where, while teaching design, she encouraged students to appreciate the heritage aspects of parks and gardens. Public parks and open space remained her primary interest and in addition to contributing to all of the Parks and Gardens Conservation Committee's publications, in 1997 she co-authored the National Trust's Sydney Playgrounds Study, which captured the attention of the media during Heritage Week 2000.

Apart from her role with the technical committees, Barbara actively assisted staff in the Conservation Division, attending additional meetings, speaking at conferences and providing technical advice. In recognition of her work for the Trust she was awarded the Voluntary Service Silver Medallion for 1997.

Barbara kept abreast of current developments in architecture and landscape, locally, and overseas, and translated this knowledge to her students. Her approach was based on the understanding of place, a detailed knowledge of plants, and collaboration with colleagues. Her belief in the value of experience was combined with a love of excursions, far and wide, at the slightest provocation.

Barbara van den Broek was a skilful and artistic designer. Professionally, she was involved with a wide range of landscape design projects in several states, the Northern Territory and Papua New Guinea. Her work included the complete establishment plantings for parks and open spaces in the first neighbourhoods at Tuggeranong valley, ACT; the Civic Square in Alice Springs, the setting of the Bathers Pavilion at Balmoral; the Olympic Basketball Stadium at Blacktown, and numerous private gardens.

Barbara van den Broek never did anything for appearances or her own professional self-aggrandisement; she accomplished things quietly without fuss. She cared deeply about issues, had incredible endurance and knew how to keep a sense of humour. She knew we would not always win battles but had the capacity to do her best, and go on to make a stand on yet another issue. She could always be relied on for a careful, considered opinion. Warm, reserved and sociable, her over-riding quality was one of gentle strength and honesty. We'll miss our friend for her commitment, honesty and for her gentle dry wit.

Colleen Morris and Meredith Walker



Eucalyptus macrocarpa

From Betty Maloney and Jean Walker
More About Bush Gardens,
A.H. & A.W. Reed Pty Ltd, (Sydney), 1975

Betty Florence Maloney 1925 – 2001

Botanical artist and pioneer in bush garden design

It was a beautiful spring afternoon on Saturday 22 September when over 100 relatives and friends gathered amongst the wildflowers at Stony Range Flora Reserve, Dee Why, to pay tribute to Betty Maloney who died on 28 July 2001.

Widely known for her exquisite drawings and paintings of the Australian flora, Betty Maloney was sought by many botanical authors to illustrate their publications, and she established herself as one of the nation's foremost botanical artists. For example, her 86 paintings for the limited edition book *The Proteaceae of the Sydney Region*, by Alec Blombery, published in 1992, was presented to the State Library of New South Wales, by Esso Australia, as a bicentennial gift to the nation. Together with her sister Jean Walker, also a botanical artist and bush garden enthusiast, Maloney was equally well known for her pioneering work in promoting the theory and practice of Australian bush gardens.

Born in Colac, Victoria, Jean and Betty Brown studied art at the Melbourne Technical College before moving, with their husbands, to Sydney, where they were all captivated by the Hawkesbury sandstone landscape and its unique flora. They joined the Society for Growing Australian Plants (now the Australian Plant Society), and each created a garden of entirely native plant species around their respective houses – Jean and Ralph at Balgowlah Heights, Betty and Reg at French's Forest. In 1964 the two sisters formed a landscape design consultancy and began designing gardens as abstractions of the Sydney bushland, planting only indigenous species and using local organic materials for construction. Their gardens were always consciously designed with an emphasis on aesthetic composition and human use, their stated philosophy being 'naturalness with order'. Betty Maloney and Jean Walker are probably best known for their delightful books *Designing Australian Bush Gardens*, first published in 1966, and *More About Bush Gardens*, published a year later. Designed and illustrated by the authors, and based largely on their own gardens, the books appealed to readers who found their ideas practical and easy to emulate. Many of the illustrations have a unique visual texture which brings the plans to life and allows the reader to use them literally as working drawings. At the time, these publications helped stimulate a wider interest in the preservation of native flora and the use and value of indigenous plants in suburban gardens, and today are seen as seminal works among the body of literature on bush gardens.

The Maloney garden at 18 Hurdis Avenue, Frenchs Forest, became a model for those interested in creating a bush garden of their own, and it was regularly open to the public. It became something of a mecca for all bush garden enthusiasts, and is now classified by the National Trust of Australia. I have fond memories of my own visits to this garden, talking with Betty amongst her beloved plants, and I will always treasure my copies of those two little books, each now signed by both Betty and Jean.

The contribution to botanical art and to Australian bush gardens made by Betty Maloney and Jean Walker has been recognised by an entry, which I have had the pleasure of writing, in the forthcoming *Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens*. I was also privileged to be asked to join the many speakers who shared their memories of Betty at the memorial gathering at Stony Range. Vale Betty Maloney.

Allan Correy

Plan for Fern Garden

From Betty Maloney and Jean Walker
More About Bush Gardens,
A.H. & A.W. Reed Pty Ltd, (Sydney), 1975



Items Of Interest

Birthday Celebrations in Portland

The Portland Botanic Gardens will hold a celebration on Sunday 18 November to commemorate 150 years since land was set aside for the creation of a public garden.

With Geelong, the Portland Botanic Gardens share the honour of being jointly the second oldest botanic gardens in Victoria. The oldest are the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne.

A guest speaker for the event will be John Hawker from Heritage Victoria who will highlight the significance of the gardens. The celebrations will focus on the community with historic photograph displays, a free sausage sizzle, entertainment and Devonshire teas.

Arthur Streeton: The passionate gardener

Knowing garden-lovers watch out for the special exhibitions of garden paintings which the Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery offers. This summer's exhibition focuses on the significance of the still life and garden subjects of Arthur Streeton in terms of his intimate knowledge of the natural world and his technical virtuosity as a painter.

From the 1920s Streeton divided his time between his properties in Toorak and Olinda, where he lovingly nurtured and tended his expanding gardens. His obsession with gardening led him to comment that he was often too busy planting bulbs to take up his brush to paint.

Curated by Geoffrey Smith and the artist's grandson, Oliver Streeton, *Arthur Streeton: the passionate gardener* can be seen from **9 December to 17 February, 2002** at the Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, Civic Reserve, Dunns

Road, Mornington. Opening times are 10 am to 5 pm Tuesday to Sunday (Closed Monday and some public holidays). Admission (including GST) is \$3.30 for adults and \$1.65 for students and concession holders.

A Working Holiday on Norfolk Island

Helen Page is considering organising a visit to Norfolk Island. It will be a combined guided discovery tour and working bee in the Norfolk Island Botanical Gardens & National Park. Half of each day will be spent working and the remainder of the time touring or relaxing. The envisaged duration is approximately 10 days in September/October 2002. There is the possibility of some sponsorship to reduce costs in exchange for hands-on work. AGHS members who are interested in this activity should send their name to helenpage@bigpond.com or contact her by telephone on 03 9397 2260.

What's in a Name?

The ACT/Monaro/Riverina Branch covers a fine tract of territory and it works hard to justify its triple name. The Branch organised a major event, a bus trip to Griffith along the Burley Griffin Way from Canberra to Griffith, to coincide with the Griffith Garden Festival (October 13 and 14). This excursion allowed the Branch to earn its Riverina name and at the same time show members the culturally and climatically different gardens of the MIA (Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area).

Thanks

Thanks to Jane Bunney, Nina Crone, Di Ellerton, Jane Johnson, John and Beverley Joyce, Laura Lewis, Cate McKern, Ann Miller, Helen Page, Annie Pyers, Kaye and Mike Stokes for packing the last issue of the journal.

Heritage Victoria

Directory of Heritage Consultants & Contractors

To assist property owners, government, community groups and others, Heritage Victoria maintains a Directory of heritage consultants and contractors. Anyone wishing to be considered for listing must demonstrate relevant qualifications and heritage experience.

Applications are invited from

- architects
- builders and associated trades (painters, slaters, plasterers)
- engineers (civil, structural & mechanical)
- planners
- arborists and horticulturists
- garden/landscape designers and planners
- archaeologists (historic and maritime)
- historians
- materials conservators
- exhibitions and collections management specialists
- cultural resource managers
- valuers and economists
- craftspeople and artisans

For application forms and other queries, please contact Angelique Ward on (03) 9655 9766 or email angelique.ward@doi.vic.gov.au

Forms may also be down-loaded from the following website www.heritage.vic.gov.au

Garden Plans for ANZAC House, Mount Hawthorn

The Western Australian Branch has agreed to offer some planning assistance for the garden at ANZAC House. This cottage is of national heritage importance being the first memorial in Australia to recognise and commemorate the Anzacs who served in World War I. It was built in Mt Hawthorn and took the practical form of a home for wounded soldiers.

It was constructed with community support on Sunday, 12 February 1916 when up to 4,000 local men and women set to work so effectively that by the end of the day even the lawn had been laid and fencing erected. Private Porter was selected as the first wounded Anzac soldier to be given ownership on condition that the house could never be sold and must always remain a memorial to the Anzac landing.

Tessa Watson will report further developments in this project.

Adding to Publications

The ACT/Monaro/Riverina Branch has begun work and another publication in its series on regional gardens. It will document 'Fifield' on the outskirts of Yass and it has the enthusiastic support of the private owners of this garden. The aim is a 'launch' towards the middle of 2002.

Reprint

The reprint of **Recording Historic Gardens** by Richard Ratcliffe has now been done by Victor Crittenden and his Mulini Press. The ACT/Monaro/Riverina Branch has supplied copies to the National Office for sale. The above branch can also be contacted for copies through mebourne@ozemail.com.au. At only \$8 including postage in Australia the booklet represents excellent value.

Mailbox

The subject of Chinese market gardens in Australia continues to generate recollections from readers. Following Oline Richards' article [*Australian Garden History*, Vol.13, No.1 July/August 2001] **Frank Atkins of Waramanga, ACT** wrote of a move to a new housing development in Victoria Park W.A in 1926.

The Victoria Park house was in Thoroughgood Street, which ran directly into the Chinese gardens running around the marshy shoreline below the old Red Castle Brewery, Rivervale Station and a large dairy farm with an early brick homestead.

Melanie Kinsey of Riddell's Creek, Victoria e-mailed

*'I was tickled pink to read the article on Tay Creggan [*Australian Garden History* Vol.12, No.6 May/June 2001], as I used to be head gardener at Strathcona 1988-1990 and had nominal charge over the two guys who looked after the grounds at Tay Creggan. I used to think what a wonder it must have been, and how good it could look again.'*

Melanie is now the President of the Friends of Gisborne Botanic Gardens.

From Queensland, **Bob Dobbs**, curator of the new Roma Street Parklands in Brisbane reminds us of another site renewal. Between 1874 and 1992, the Roma Street railway station, a block from Brisbane City Centre was a thriving hub of the Queensland rail network. The area also had housed the Brisbane Markets between 1884 and 1964, and air-raid shelters during the Second World War. In 1999, taking advantage of its natural reservoir and central location, the area was developed into 16ha of public gardens, recalling its pre-rail days as a meeting place for a number of local indigenous groups.

The Roma Street Parkland Precincts all have their own self-guided walks – the Spectacle Garden Walk, The Forest Walk, The Lake Precinct Walk and the Roma Street Parkland Art Walk.

On-line

Fernery Restoration Rewarded

Twenty years ago when Wallace and Katherine Fyfe bought Ascog Hall on the Isle of Bute they stumbled on a derelict structure in the overgrown garden. There was one clue to its identity. A rare specimen of *Todea barbara* was found under the debris.

The sunken fernery which was the subject of a detailed article in an 1879 edition of *The Gardener's Chronicle* has been awarded the Historic Gardens Scottish Prize for 2001. The fascinating story of its meticulous restoration can be found on the Historic Garden web-site.

www.historicgardens.freemove.co.uk

And...

For more on **Araluen**

www.araluenbotanicpark.com.au

For more on **Norfolk Island** and its flora

www.anbg.gov.au/norfolk.gardens

For more on **The Roma Street Parklands**

www.romastreetparkland.com



Above: Arthur Streeton, the artist's home, Grange Road, c.1935
Private collection

Contents page: Arthur Streeton, *Roses* 1929
Collection, National Gallery of Victoria

Diary Dates

NOVEMBER

3 Sat
Victoria, Daylesford Working
Bee - Wombat Park Helen Page
(03) 9397 2260

4 Sun
Tasmania, Hobart Garden Visits
to Highpeak and Kibbenjelok
11 am \$12 members,
\$15 non-members. Bookings Deidre
Pearson (03) 6225 3084 or Monica
Harris (03) 6331 3679

11 Sun
Victoria, Mt Macedon Stately Events
- Al fresco Lunch at Duneira. For
bookings, contact Dominic Romeo
0401 057 059

12-16 Mon - Fri
Leura, NSW, The Australian Garden
To-day, a Fund-Raising Seminar at
Everglades For details contact
Diane Mansell (02) 4784 1938

16-18 Fri-Sun
Queensland, Warwick, Stanthorpe &
Tenterfield Weekend Garden Visits
include 'Braeside', Chauvel Garden,
Granite Gardens and Glenrock
Gardens Wendy Lees (07) 3289 0280

17 Sat
ACT/Monaro/Riverina, Cooma
Visit to Open Gardens in
Cooma Area
concluding with drinks
at Bobundara.
Contact Gabrielle Tryon
(02) 6286 4585

18 Sun
Victoria, Portland
150th Anniversary
Celebrations in
Portland Botanic
Gardens.

21 Wed
Victoria, Melbourne Working
Bee - Bishopscourt Helen Page
(03) 9397 2260

24 Sat
Victoria, Beaufort Working
Bee - Belmont Helen Page
(03) 9397 2260

28 November - 2 December
in ADELAIDE
Australia ICOMOS National
Conference '20th Century Heritage:
Our Recent Cultural Legacy' Further
information available from All Occasion
Management Ph: (08) 8354 1465 or
E-mail: occasion@camtech.net.au

29 Thurs
Victoria, Beaufort/Caramballac
Country Garden Christmas Fair
10 am to 5 pm at Mawallok in the 5
acre garden designed by William
Guilfoyle in 1910. Entrance fee \$10 to
aid CARE Australia. For further details
contact Susannah Kruger on (03) 9819
1212 or Jocelyn Mitchell on
(03) 5349 8233

DECEMBER

Queensland, Ravensbourne, Christmas
Function at 'Cloudlake'. For further
information, contact (07) 4697 8266

2 Sun
Western Australia, Perth 'Sundowner'
Christmas Celebration 5 p.m. at
St Georges College. Elizabeth Hof
(08) 9427 2770

6 Thurs
Victoria, Melbourne Christmas
Function at Heide 1. Please refer to
the flyer in the journal for details or
contact Elizabeth Peck (03) 9867 8180

9 - 10 December, 2001 in ALBANY,
Western Australia
'Investigator 200 Symposium'
celebrating the bicentenary of the
voyage of Matthew Flinders and the
botanical work of Robert Brown,
Ferdinand Bauer, Peter Good, and
the landscape art of William Westall.
Organised jointly by the Australian
Systematic Botany Society, the
Western Australian Herbarium, CALM
and the Wildflower Society of Western
Australia. For more details visit:
<http://florabase.calm.wa.gov.au/events/investigator200/>

9 December - 17 February, 2002
Victoria, Mornington Arthur Streeton:
the passionate gardener An
exhibition of Streeton's flower
paintings at the Mornington Peninsula
Regional Gallery, Dunns Road,
Mornington, 10am to 5pm Tues. to
Sun (closed Mon). Admission (includes
GST) \$3.30 Adults \$1.65 Students &
Concession

15 Sat
ACT/Monaro/Riverina, Captain's Flat
Xmas Party at Mitta Mitta and Turalla
(02) 6247 4630

JANUARY 2002

16 Wed
Victoria, Melbourne, Working
Bee - Bishopscourt Helen Page
(03) 9397 2260

27 Sun
Victoria, Castlemaine, Working
Bee - Buda Helen Page
(03) 9397 2260

FEBRUARY

7 Thurs
Victoria, Melbourne, Walk & Talk
at Bishopscourt Helen Page
(03) 9397 2260

15 Fri
ACT/Monaro/Riverina, Reid Ramble
led by Shibu Datta. Maura O'Connor
(02) 6262 1280 (w)

MARCH

3 Sun
Victoria, Woodend Open Garden Day
at Flint Hill 11am to 5 pm in aid of
Help to Hear & Bionic Ear Institute.
Further details from Virginia Simpson
on (03) 9283 7507

ADVANCE NOTICES

20 May - 8 June 2002
Tour of England, Wales and Scotland
with the English Garden History Society

4-6 October 2002 in Hobart
AGHS - 23rd Annual National
Conference

2003
11-13 July in Brisbane
AGHS - 24th Annual National
Conference