

Australian Garden HISTORY

vol 30 no 4 April 2019

New Zealand – artists and an activist

A singular cabbage palm

Marsilea at home and abroad



1. *Loranthus solensol* 2. *Loranthus tetrapetalus* 3. *Loranthus flavidus*
2. (flow. 7/1861) WIST/17065



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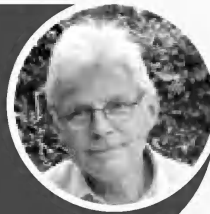
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Australian Garden HISTORY

quarterly journal of the Australian Garden History Society

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Cover

Watercolour by Sarah Featon (ca 1885) of *Peraxilla* (formerly *Loranthus*) *colensoi*, *P. tetrapetala* and *Alepis flavida* (*L. flavidus*). These species of native New Zealand mistletoe flower around Christmas time. In the past their blooms were picked for decorations.

Te Papa, Wellington

On page 6 we continue this year's New Zealand focus. Wellington-based historian Bee Dawson writes about the contribution of women to NZ botanical art from the 19th century to the present.

Editorial

Richard Heathcote, AGHS Chairman



I write this editorial after one of the Society's national management committee regular two-day meetings. This one was held in Melbourne in February 2019.

Not all members are able to be involved, or would want to be involved, in the Society's committee work, either at branch or national level. Some members are happy to subscribe without any involvement (beyond subscribing) in functions or activities – and we depend on all members, including these 'silent partners', for the Society's continued existence. But the AGHS branches, and the national management committee structure which underlies local arrangements of branches, are the life blood of the Society. You might like a brief glimpse of what we covered at the February meeting.

Branch contacts and state representatives, as well as the national management team (the details are given on p 35 of each issue of *Australian Garden History*) attended the February meeting. The agenda was coordinated by AGHS Secretary Bronwyn Blake and Vice Chair Jessica Hood. We discussed preparations for our 40th anniversary in 2020, and activities beyond it. Helped by funding from the national management committee, branches are developing ideas for celebratory projects that promote the Society's work and achievements. The achievements include our National Oral History Collection; advocacy initiatives; displays, publications and exhibitions.

As with our past annual conferences, the 2019 NZ annual national conference depends very heavily on a voluntary committee, led (in the case of 2019) by Lynne Walker, with support from Stuart Read, Richard Bird, and John and Ann Maurer. The committee has already made particularly strong links with the New Zealand Gardens Trust and BGANZ, the Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand. Our pre-conference and post-conference tours are visiting many private gardens. Links with owners of these gardens, and with the NZ speakers contributing to the conference program, form part of an exciting new network. The 250th anniversary of the visit of the expedition of Cook, Banks and Solander together with Maori perspectives will make it a lively and dynamic conference.

One of the aims of AGHS's 2019 NZ conference is to foster developing relationships with New Zealand gardening and horticultural organisations. The conference, with its theme 'Expanding Horizons', is also an opportune time for considering as a Society where we stand in the world, and where we wish to position ourselves as we move towards our fifth decade.

On the domestic front, I warmly congratulate Lisa Tuck, who in her first year in the role of national executive officer has brought quiet order and efficiency to the administration. One recent example of this is the improvements to the website, through which the conference booking demands were handled seamlessly. I also thank Melinda (Lindy) Neylan who assists Lisa in the Gate Lodge office one day a week. The other professional who performs remarkable feats is Bernadette Hince, our journal editor, who continues to create our vibrant publication. She is supported by the expertise of Roslyn Burge and the editorial advisory committee – another of AGHS's highly skilled voluntary committees.

I profoundly thank you all!



Office workers at Air Raid Precautions centre, somewhere in Australia during World War 2, ca 1941.

Much like these now anonymous workers, the hard-working AGHS office-bearers, national and local committee members give their dedicated toiling to the interests of the Society and its members.

Argus Newspaper collection of photographs, State Library of Victoria

Advocacy

This section reflects the Society's role of advocacy for significant gardens and cultural landscapes. As Annabel Murray from AGHS's Southern Highlands branch committee asks,

How do you feel about our changing landscapes?

What do you care about most?

Tell us about your success stories, and how we might ensure that meaningful places are enjoyed by future generations.

Proposed Hume Coal mine

A proposed new coal mine in the Southern Highlands of NSW has met with widespread community opposition accompanied by its initial failure to receive government approval. In late 2018 the NSW Department of Planning and Environment rejected the Hume Coal project proposal and the associated Berrima Rail project, referring them to an independent planning commission with a recommendation that the projects are not in the public interest and should not be approved. The department commented:

There is currently considerable scientific uncertainty about the level of environmental damage to both groundwater and surface water resources. The predicted drawdown impacts on the ground water aquifer would be the most significant for any mining project that has ever been assessed in NSW.

This 'predicted drawdown' – i.e. the predicted water use of the mine – would involve up to 47 metres drawdown from the aquifer for up to 77 years.

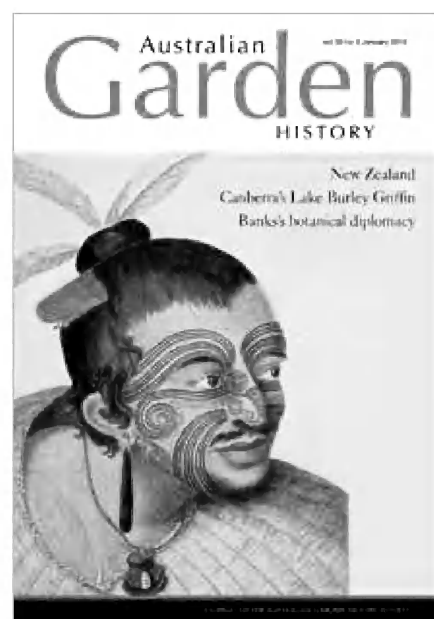
A departmental spokesman said that the department had received more than 12,000 submissions on the proposed mine, 96% opposing it. The planning commission's public hearing at Moss Vale in February 2019 heard from more than 40 people or groups including farmers, tourist operations and business groups. A final decision by the independent planning commission is likely to take until mid-2019.

The cover story

There has been much comment on the cover of the January 2019 issue of *Australian Garden History* (vol 30 no 3), writes Lynne Walker. She and the other conveners of our 2019 annual conference to be held in Wellington, New Zealand, spent many hours looking for an image which they felt illustrated where we are going for this conference. This image was chosen because it clearly represented New Zealand but also because it is a very early example of cultural interactions between New Zealand and Europe.

Sydney Parkinson (ca 1745–71) was draughtsman to the botanist Sir Joseph Banks on James Cook's first voyage to the Pacific in 1768. He made many sketches, including this portrait. Cook and those who accompanied him on the *Endeavour* had many sustained and friendly interactions with Maori – it is believed, for example, that this Maori chief was one of three invited on to the *Endeavour* while it was anchored off the coast of Gisborne on 12 October 1769, who all stayed overnight.

Parkinson died on the journey home in 1771. His portraits of Maori warriors were the first visual record of the physiognomy, tattoo patterning, dress and ornament of Maori to be seen in Europe.



'The head of a chief of New Zealand, the face curiously tataow'd or marked according to their manner, by Sydney Parkinson (1745–71) [detail]. T Chambers sc. London, 1784, Plate XVI.

Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington NZ



Bee Dawson

New Zealand's contributions to botanical art

Margaret Stoddart
'Godley House,
Diamond Harbour'
[ca 1913].

Stoddart lived in
Godley House with
her mother and sister
from 1907 until 1913.

The family were
keen gardeners.

Collection of
Christchurch Art Gallery
Te Puna o Waiwhetū;
purchased with assistance
from the Olive Stirrat
Bequest, 1990

The 18th and 19th centuries were a time of exploration, an era when the discovery of new plants caused huge interest and excitement. Strongly motivated by the financial imperative, expedition leaders such as Captain James Cook were continually seeking plants of potential economic importance. By the time European settlement of New Zealand began in earnest, botany was soaring in popularity in Britain.

Botanical paintings by artists such as Sydney Parkinson, who illustrated many of the plants collected by Sir Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander during James Cook's first voyage to the Pacific in 1768, awakened intense interest in New Zealand flora, an enthusiasm fuelled in the mid-19th century by Joseph Hooker's *Flora Novae-Zelandiae* and the *Handbook of New Zealand flora*, both illustrated by Scottish botanical illustrator Walter Fitch.

Although most early botanical artists (and certainly all those sent on voyages of exploration) were men, women became increasingly significant in this genre. Flower painting was considered to be a particularly desirable accomplishment for ladies. In Britain and continental

Europe, these lady artists painted familiar flowers from their gardens and countryside.

In New Zealand they captured the beauty and the scientific details of the native wildflowers. Martha King, who arrived in Wellington in 1840, travelled to Wanganui where she, her older sister Maria and brother Samuel lived in a tent before taking up residence in a *raupo whare* (a traditional reed dwelling). Unbothered by the lack of the most basic amenities, Martha produced the first botanical paintings by a resident New Zealand artist. Although her entire body of work was very small (it fits into just one box in the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington) the inclusion of some images in Edward Jerningham Wakefield's 1845 *Illustrations to Adventure in New Zealand* guaranteed a degree of immortality.

Botanical painting could be a surprisingly liberating occupation for the women of early New Zealand. Some took to their painting with such skill and style that their art became financially rewarding. Attractive presentation was necessary to ensure sales, but technical accuracy was essential if the work was to be respected in scholarly circles. Many had a deep interest in botany. When Gisborne settler Sarah Featon (1848–1927) was working on *The art album of New Zealand flora*, she invariably painted with her copy of Hooker's *Flora* by her side, intent on ensuring that every detail was as accurate as possible.

Flower painting also gave these women an excuse for expeditions that may not otherwise have been approved of. Painting trips into the New Zealand back country were considered respectable because the women were searching for exotic and rare botanical specimens to paint. However, due propriety was always observed: there's no suggestion that Canterbury artist Margaret Stoddard or Georgina Hetley (author of *The native flowers of New Zealand*) ever went so far as to actually remove her hat, never mind let her hair down!

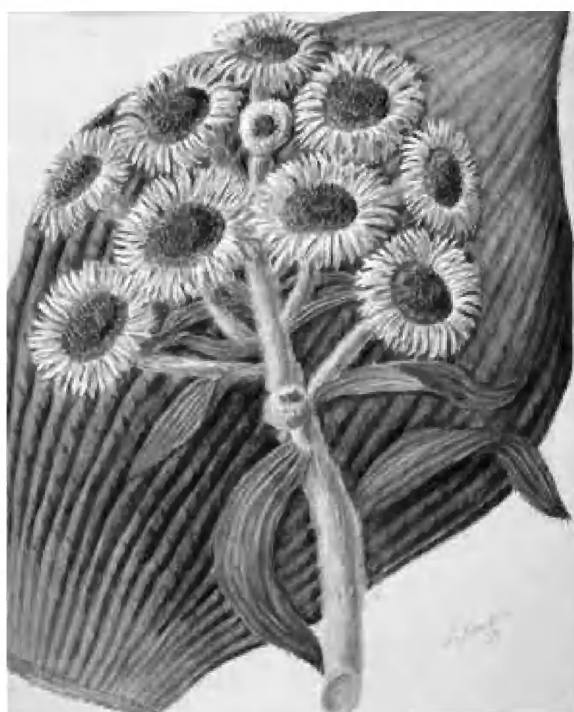
This enthusiasm for painting native New Zealand plants came at a time when many New Zealand gardeners were only interested in introducing 'foreign' plants to their newly established gardens and had little regard to growing, or even saving, native plants threatened by development. It was not until 1924, with the publication of Cockayne's *Cultivation of New Zealand plants*, that native trees and shrubs were truly appreciated.

This passion for painting beautiful and exotic specimens of plants and flowers has continued into the 20th and 21st centuries. In the wake of Thomas Cheeseman's *Illustrations of New Zealand flora* (1914), many remarkable botanical artists,

including Nancy Adams, Audrey Eagle and Brian Poole, have produced work of great beauty and technical accuracy. Botanical art has become a fine and enduring tradition in New Zealand. Sue Wickison and Denise Ramsay are among today's outstanding modern artists – both have won Royal Horticultural Society gold medals.

Sue Wickison

Sue Wickison, from the Ohariu Valley near Wellington, has a passion for natural history developed during her childhood in Sierra Leone when her father (a teacher, amateur botanist and artist) would take her on plant-hunting expeditions. After a degree in scientific illustration from Middlesex University, she spent nine years working as an illustrator at the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew.



Top: Watercolour (ca 1885) by Sarah Featon of the spectacular megaherb *Pleurophyllum speciosum*, the 'Antarctic daisy' of New Zealand subantarctic islands.

Te Papa, Wellington

Bottom: Georgina Burne Hetley (1832–98). *Pimelea longifolia*, plate 7 of *Native flowers of New Zealand*. Coloured lithograph, Leighton Brothers lith. [1888].

Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, 23194768



Sue Wickison's 'Dactylanthus taylorii', exhibited in 'Ngāi Tipu Taketake – Indigenous Flora', the New Zealand element of 2018's Botanical Art Worldwide. This work won the People's Choice Award at the show's Auckland exhibition.

photo Grant Lewis

Sue Wickison in her studio with the painting featured.

photo James Gilbert Photography Ltd

Her plant painting career has included travelling to the Solomon Islands to collect orchids for Kew Gardens on a Winston Churchill Fellowship and illustrating books for the Agricultural and Forestry departments in the Solomon Islands, Nepal and Vanuatu. She has produced over 50 natural history stamp designs for ten Pacific Island countries (including New Zealand). Sue has had many exhibitions and commissions, but the high point so far is undoubtedly her Royal Horticultural Society gold medal awarded in 2008.

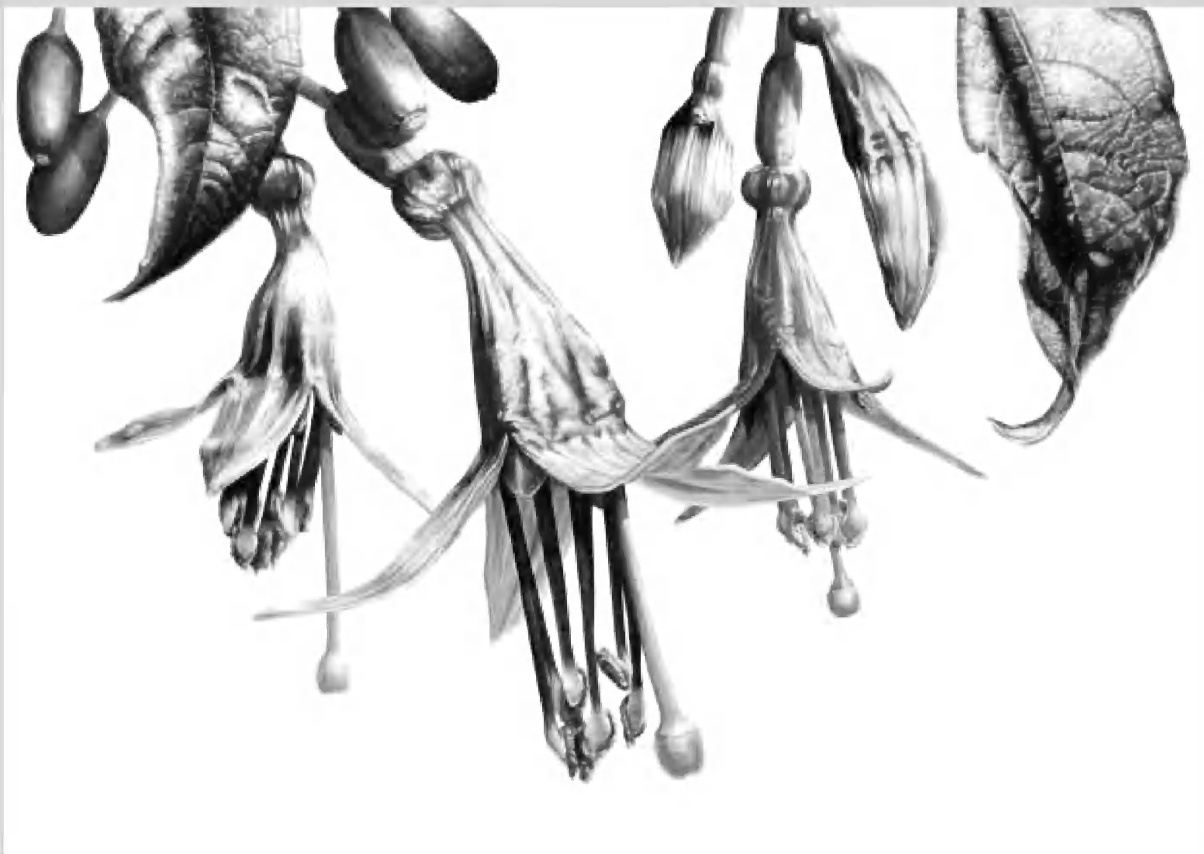
Her contribution to the 2018 Botanical Art Worldwide exhibition was a plant she found intriguing, *Dactylanthus taylorii* or 'flower of Hades'. 'It's parasitic and lives on the forest floor where it attaches itself to a host root of native trees such as lemonwood and lancewood. Once established it takes nutrients off the host and creates a burr which eventually turns into a "wood rose" such as those that were once prized by collectors.' Sue explains that while the flower's prime pollinator is the nocturnal short-tailed bat, moths, centipedes and wetas also come to the site looking for nectar and pollen. 'I wanted the painting to tell the whole story of the plant, its flowers and the pollination process, so depicted the feathery female flower and various stages of the developing seeds as well as the male flower with the weta looking for the nectar.'

Sue explains that when she was doing the painting of the *Dactylanthus* she applied the paler colours



first and then gradually built the intensity of the colour before adding the markings. 'Then I put on magnifying geeky glasses to do the dry brush work required for the finest detail. During the final stage I used the microscope to assist with the drawings of the flower dissection that I did as the scientific depiction of the plant at the base of the painting.' Sue estimates that that the painting took more than 450 hours to complete.

Sue is keen to give credit to David Mudge, a NZ Department of Conservation volunteer who has studied the *Dactylanthus* for more than eleven years. 'Not only did David take me to see the plant in its native habitat but he lent me his time lapse photographs of the whole sequence of the plant, bat and insect population around the *Dactylanthus* sites. His assistance was invaluable.'



Denise Ramsay

Denise Ramsay, brought up on the North Island, was always a lover of vibrantly coloured flowers. She began painting botanical watercolours when she did a three year course with the Society of Botanical Artists (UK).

I like showing unusual plants in a beautiful way. I use lots of colour so that the flowers in my paintings have an impact ... A picked flower will only last a few days, so I make a lot of painting swatches in order to get all the different colours and then take hundreds of photographs of the flower from lots of different angles. It's vital to have all the detail recorded because once the flower has gone it's hard to remember something as specific as how

a leaf joins a stem. ... So many layers are needed to capture the colour and drama of the plants that my paintings can take weeks or months to complete.

Denise won the Royal Horticultural Society gold medal in 2014 for 'A Brilliant Life – *Papaver orientale*', six works that depicted the stages of a poppy from bud burst through to the head surrounded by fallen petals.

Two of Denise's paintings featured in the 2018 Botanic Art Worldwide Exhibition. 'I chose *Fuchsia procumbens*, a tiny groundcover plant, because of its unusual flowers – I loved the sculptural shape, the blue pollen and the subtle colours. I've also painted the tree fuchsia – the largest fuchsia in the genus. Its flowers are very small but it's good to have some drama so I've made them super large in my painting. I hope that once people have seen these paintings they'll look much more carefully whenever they walk past a fuchsia tree!'

An earlier version of this article first appeared in *New Zealand Gardener*.

Bee Dawson (www.beedawson.co.nz) is a Wellington-based social historian who enjoys researching and writing books on the history of people, places and gardens. Her many books include six for the Royal New Zealand Air Force, three on rural topics, and one on gardening in New Zealand.



Denise Ramsay's 'The tree' [*Fuchsia excorticata*], watercolour on paper 22 by 30 inches, exhibited in 'Ngāi Tipu Taketake – Indigenous Flora', the New Zealand element of 2018's Botanical Art Worldwide. This work won the People's Choice Award at the show's Wellington exhibition.

Artist Denise Ramsay pictured in front of her painting 'Fireworks', watercolour on paper, 46 by 48 inches.

photo John Cheng



Stephen Utick

The camellia – suffragist symbol of womanly excellence

The Kate Sheppard Memorial Walk of white camellias in Christchurch Botanic Gardens. photo Stephen Utick

Detail: *Camellia japonica* 'Dorothy Culver' (US, 1978), one of many white camellias featured in the Kate Sheppard Memorial Walk. photo NZ Camellia Society

On 19 September 1893 with the passage of the *Electoral Act*, New Zealand became the first country in the world in which all women over the age of 21 years achieved the right to vote. At the election which followed a short ten weeks after the passing of the Act, it became the first country in the world in which women did vote. The camellia is very much a part of this story.

Camellia history

The camellia originated in China, Japan, Vietnam and other Asian countries, but it became a global flower from the 17th century onwards. It is an enduringly popular group of plants. Camellia trees

can live for hundreds of years, becoming centenarian sentinels which mark the passage of time – they can also become living antiques, opening a window to long-lost garden and nursery worlds. In Australia, camellias arrived from Europe and China almost 200 years ago and many still stand in the gardens of the colonial era.

In 2017 the International Camellia Society established a new global committee dedicated to the conservation of historic camellias around the world. The committee's work is illuminating thousands of years of unique garden history. Kate Sheppard's life in New Zealand is one example of the garden history stories coming to light in the process. (The committee's '*Significance of the camellia in garden history: ten fabulous tales*' offers a PowerPoint talk which covers stories from 1500 years ago to the 20th century.)

Kate Sheppard

Katherine (Kate) Wilson Sheppard was born in Liverpool in 1847. She arrived in New Zealand from Scotland in 1869 with her brother, two sisters and her widowed mother. Sheppard was a founding member of the New Zealand Women's Christian Temperance Union. The link between temperance issues, the welfare of women and children, and the need for a political voice led her to campaign for women's suffrage. In 1887 she became national superintendent of the union's push for franchise. The union presented strongly supported petitions to NZ parliament in 1891, 1892 and 1893. The success of this social reform was in no short measure due to the union's campaign.

Kate's passion for justice and humanitarian principles was accompanied by a love for white camellias. They became a symbol of womanly excellence in her campaign for the women's vote. She personally presented those members of the House of Representatives who supported the electoral reform with a white camellia bloom of *Camellia japonica* 'Alba Plena', a famous white formal double camellia brought from China to Britain in 1792, and by then one of the most popular camellias in Victorian gardens. According to some accounts, those who voted against the petition received a red camellia.

Sheppard's achievements

Kate spent much of her life promoting suffragist and related social reform causes. She was editor of the Women's Christian Temperance Union newspaper *White Ribbon*, inaugurated a women's page in the national temperance magazine *Prohibitionist*, and was elected inaugural chair of the National Council of Women of New Zealand in April 1896. She outlived two husbands and her immediate family, dying at her home in Riccarton, Christchurch, in July 1934.

In 1990, women's groups of the district of Canterbury gave a hundred camellias to the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. The Kate Sheppard Memorial Walk opened in the gardens that year. It commemorates Sheppard's fight for the right of New Zealand women to vote. The white camellia became a lasting symbol of women's suffrage and achievement in this country.



In 1992 a new camellia cultivar, a medium white anemone form *Camellia japonica* 'Kate Sheppard', was named in her honour by NZ Camellia Society member AP Gamlin of Manaia, New Zealand.

Plantings of this camellia and other white camellias took place at a sculptured memorial and in the Christchurch Botanic Gardens memorial walk. Kate and 'Alba Plena' also featured on the New Zealand ten dollar banknote.

In September 1993, to mark the centenary of the passage of the New Zealand legislation, a number of memorials to Kate Sheppard featured the plantings of white camellias in Christchurch.

Richard H Clere (1993) 'Kate Sheppard: a white camellia for celebration'. *International Camellia Journal* (October): 37–8.

K Malcolm Tessa (1993, updated May 2013) 'Sheppard, Katherine Wilson', *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* online.

Dr Stephen Utick is the elected chair of the International Camellia Society's Committee for Historic Camellia Conservation. For enquiries, including those about the 40 minute presentation 'Significance of the camellia in garden history', contact him at sutick@grapevine.com.au.



Kate Sheppard centenary memorial sculpture in central Christchurch, unveiled by New Zealand's Governor-General Dame Catherine Tizard on 19 September 1993.

Inset: Image of Kate Sheppard (1847–1934) as shown on the information board at the Kate Sheppard Memorial Walk, Christchurch Botanic Gardens.

photos Stephen Utick



Alison Pouliot

Rethinking garden fungi – a foray at Retford Park

Designed by David Wilkinson in 1992, the Knot Garden is planted with English box (*Buxus sempervirens*) and Japanese box (*Buxus microphylla* var. *japonica*), with mop top robinias (*Robinia pseudoacacia* 'Inermis').

all photos Alison Pouliot

This article reflects on an autumn foray through the stunning gardens of Retford Park, Bowral, in the Southern Highlands of NSW. AGHS conference-goers visited Retford Park in October 2018. It is a garden of surprises – of history and horticulture, of half a century of James Fairfax's passion and attention to detail, of art and design, and of organisms less often considered – fungi.

We are changing our thinking about the role of fungi in gardens. Once misunderstood and maligned as problematic and pathogenic, the greater beneficial significance of fungi in gardens is becoming better appreciated. Fungi are vital to healthy and resilient gardens. Beneath the

soil, clandestine fungal networks provide the supportive architecture of garden soils, increasing resistance to drought and disease. Fungi recycle organic matter, building soils. Progressive gardeners are rethinking ways to encourage fungi in gardens for the benefit of both soil and plants.

An autumn day

Sweeping up the red bauxite driveway on a gentle autumn afternoon, I was greeted by horticulturalist Rick Shepherd. Charming and philosophical about all things botanical, Rick has been head gardener at Retford Park since 2011. Rick led me on a tour of the ten hectares of park-like gardens and 'garden rooms'. Also accompanying us was James Fairfax's dog Selene, his sixth Rhodesian Ridgeback, named in honour of the Greek goddess of the moon.

European ownership of the property began in 1821, when Edward Riley was granted two parcels of land including Retford Park (then named 'Bloomfield') by NSW Governor Lachlan Macquarie. It was renamed Retford Park by stockbreeders Samuel and Jane Hordern, who acquired the property in 1887 and developed it as a premier stud property. The Victorian Italianate house and park-style garden were established by the Horderns and subsequently owned by three generations of the family until 1960. The transition from agricultural property to gentlemen's residence began in 1964 with the purchase of the property by James Fairfax AC (1933–2017), former chairman and director of the media group John Fairfax Limited. He purchased it for £15,000 as a country retreat for his mother who visited from England, and for the weekend entertainment of friends and business associates. He also opened the house to various art and garden societies and to raise funds for various charities. The property became his permanent home in 1995.

After initial misgivings about the purchase, Fairfax commissioned Donald Friend to paint two murals, and appointed designer Leslie Walford to do the interior redecoration. Walford's initial impression that 'the garden was choking the house' and 'the house was a sort of cow-pat colour' prompted his suggestion to convert the house into a 'wonderful villa' and paint it 'Portuguese pink'. The colour is retained today.

In 1967, Fairfax enhanced the park-like nature of the garden with advice from renowned English landscape architect John Codrington. It was James's mother who appointed Codrington to redesign the garden as a birthday present to Fairfax. Fairfax adopted some of Codrington's recommendations, which were in the style of 18th century English landscape designer Humphry Repton, but added many elements of his own, including the planting of more deciduous trees. These trees provide the stunning autumn hues of the garden today. The temperate (although increasingly dry) climate of the Southern Highlands of New South Wales accommodates a range of exotic species and Retford Park comprises a vast assortment of conifers and broadleaved trees. Rick took me to see the collection of unusual oaks, including spectacular Algerian oaks (*Quercus canariensis*) from North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula; a cork oak (*Q. suber*) from the Mediterranean; a daimyo oak (*Q. dentata*) that originates in Japan, Korea and China, with beautiful dentate (lobed) leaves; as well as a chestnut-leaved oak (*Q. castaneifolia*) from Iran, so named for its lanceolate serrated leaves, similar to those of the sweet chestnut. Three oaks



Above: Autumn colours of the maples adjacent to the Millennium Canal, with Selene on watch.

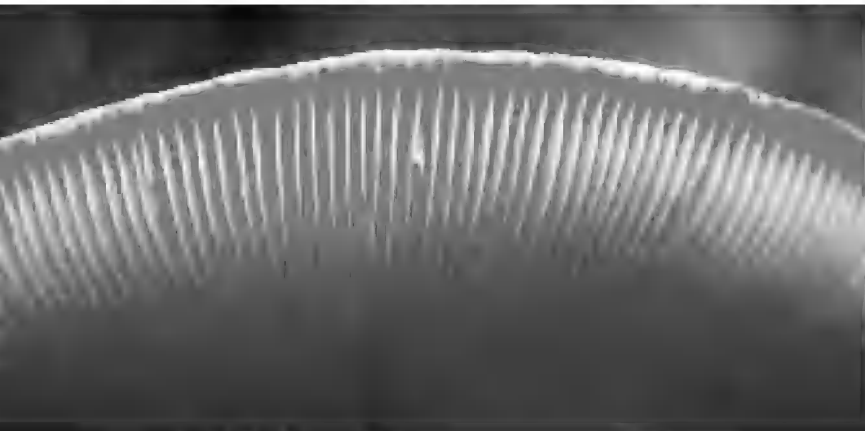


Left: The velvet shank (*Flammulina velutipes*) is an important recycler of hardwoods.

Below left: The redlead roundhead (*Leratiomyces ceres*) grows gregariously in woodchips and mulched areas.

Below right: Wefts of mycelium course through wood and other organic matter, dismantling it and releasing locked-up nutrients.





inoculated with black truffles (*Tuber melanosporum*) were planted at Retford Park in 2016. Other trees of special interest in the garden include an old redwood (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) and bunya (*Araucaria bidwillii*), as well as a bull bay (*Magnolia grandiflora*), deodar cedar (*Cedrus deodara*), linden (*Tilia platyphyllos* ‘Rubra’), horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), maidenhair tree (*Ginkgo biloba*), tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*) and weeping Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum* ‘Dissectum’).

The garden rooms

Retford Park’s garden rooms, each uniquely designed to showcase sculptures or other garden features, are meticulously hedged in combinations of cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), Western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*), photinia (*Photinia x fraseri*), English box (*Buxus sempervirens*) and Japanese box (*Buxus microphylla* var. *japonica*), to mention a few. We then visited a very special outdoor living room – Aunty Eileen’s best room. This enchanting and colour-coordinated room features a ‘rug’ of woolly thyme (*Thymus pulegioides*) and a steel-framed sofa of mattress vine (*Muehlenbeckia*) sporting a cushion of liquorice plant (*Helichrysum petiolare*). It has walls of clipped sasanqua camellias like floral wallpaper when in bloom. Rick conceived and designed the room as a sanctuary for his great-aunt and today his craftwork is a visitor highlight.

In the underworld

But what, if anything, did Fairfax and his predecessors think about fungi? The variety of trees and age structure of the garden provide ideal habitat for a diversity of fungi. Moreover, Rick has insisted on phasing out herbicides and other chemical applications, which is good news for plants, fungi and animals. Although usually overshadowed by the botanical and design elements of gardens, fungi occupy the dynamic interface between a garden’s plants, microbes, water regimes and soils. They are the key mediators of nutrient and carbon cycles. Fungi also form relationships that allow for the transfer of energy, information and materials between plants and other organisms. Over 90% of plants (about 330,000 species of vascular plants worldwide and many non-vascular plants such as hornworts and liverworts) form these relationships with fungi, including almost every plant species at Retford Park. At least 50,000 species of mycorrhizal fungi worldwide collaborate in these relationships. Collectively these fungi form an intermingling tapestry of hyphae, connecting the roots of diverse plants and partaking in networks of nutritional and energetic exchange.

From the end of the 19th century, about the time when Retford Park was being established, mycologists and botanists were increasingly recognising the significance of fungus–plant symbioses. The exact nature and complexities of these relationship are being explored in great detail today, aided by advancements in the field of molecular science. Relationships between fungi and plants known as mycorrhizas (*myco* meaning fungus and *rhiza* meaning root) perform some of the most relevant biological processes on the planet. Albert Bernhard Frank (1839–1900) was the first to recognise the widespread nature of fungus–plant alliances and first used the term *symbiosis* in 1877 (in the context of lichens) and in 1885 (in the context of mycorrhizas). Fungi coevolved with the rise of land plants. Growing understanding of fungal genomes provides illuminating insights into their evolutionary histories and how and why these relationships evolved. Scientists now consider symbioses with fungi to have been crucial to the initial colonisation and ongoing success of land plants. These findings are changing not just understanding, but also perception of the relevance of these relationships in underpinning the functioning of terrestrial ecosystems from gardens to grasslands, to forests and woodlands and beyond.

Scientists studying plant exudates are revealing ‘molecular dialogues’ of fungus–plant interactions. Fungi also communicate by releasing volatile compounds that, for example, induce lateral root formation, the first developmental cue in mycorrhiza formation. This secret signalling in the subterrain extends across further kingdoms to include other soil inhabitants such as bacteria and invertebrates. Also highly communicative and even less conspicuous than mycorrhizal fungi, are fungi called endophytes. First described by German botanist Heinrich Friedrich Link in 1809, entophytic fungi live within plant cells and enhance the plant’s tolerance of heat, cold, drought, salt etc.

Fungal functions

Gardeners and designers might think they are in control of their gardens, but other forces are also at play. It is now accepted that mycorrhizal symbioses influence plant biodiversity and ecosystem variability. They not only control plant productivity and nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, but also the survival of seedlings and soil aggregation. Mycorrhizas are now being used in horticulture and agriculture to minimise or eliminate chemical fertilisers and irrigation. Knowledge about mycorrhizas also helps us understand the adaptive potential of plants and how they might respond to climate change.



Natural ecosystems are not tidy places. Many gardeners struggle with the ‘natural mess’ in gardens, succumbing to a miscellany of machinery to mulch, chip and ‘manage’ unwanted organic matter. However, fungi will do the same job; just on different time scales. Various organisms are involved in decomposition including invertebrates and bacteria but as the only organisms capable of degrading recalcitrant lignocellulose in woody plants, fungi play a central role. Without the work of fungi, nutrients would not be recycled, ecosystems could not function and gardens would not exist. Retford Park has tremendous horticultural and heritage significance. The extensively landscaped grounds reflect the tastes and design sensibilities of a visionary man and dedicated gardeners. Fairfax had a strong desire that the property be preserved for future generations. On 19 April 2016 he consummated a lifetime of giving by gifting Retford Park to the National Trust of Australia (NSW).

James Fairfax died at Retford Park on 11 January 2017 at the age of 83.

Acknowledgement

Many thanks to Rick Shepherd for his kind assistance with the article.

Retford Park is hosting a special fungus foray on Thursday 9 May 2019. For details visit www.alisonpouliot.com.

Alison Pouliot is an ecologist and environmental photographer with a special interest in fungi. Her recent book, *The allure of fungi* (reviewed by Max Bourke in the January 2019 issue of *Australian Garden History*) documents a side of the natural world that is both beguiling, and fundamental to life.



Left: *Lycogala epidendrum*, also in shades of ‘Portuguese pink’, is a slime mould, not a fungus, and as well as perfectly matching the house, is an important part of the garden’s ecology.

Right: Pink bonnets (*Mycena*) adorn an old conifer stump.

Opposite page:
Top: The Fountain Walk, designed by John Codrington, leads to the house. Recently it has been reworked by Rick Shepherd, who refers to it as The Blobbery. The mushroom shaped ‘blobs’ include *Teucrium fruticans*, *Helichrysum petiolare* and *Podocarpus lawrencii*.

Second: The endearing ‘Aunty Eileen’s best room’ designed by Rick Shepherd.

Third: The iconic fly agaric (*Amanita muscaria*) forms mycorrhizal relationships with species of beech, fir, cedar, pine and spruce, among others.

Bottom: Each of the 26 species of conifers in the garden forms mycorrhizal relationships with fungi.



John Leslie Dowe and Boris O Schlumpberger

The Australian cabbage palm at Herrenhausen Gardens

Livistona australis,
Australian cabbage
palm, Bribie Island,
Queensland.
photo JL Dowe

For almost 100 years a single individual of the Australian cabbage palm *Livistona australis* reigned as the centrepiece of the Royal Gardens palm collection at Herrenhausen in Germany. It is one of the few cultivated glasshouse plants for which horticultural and botanical publications yield a continuous record of its life. Here we tell of the cabbage palm's unexpected acquisition by Herrenhausen in 1827, aspects of its horticultural and social history spanning almost a century, and its regrettable demise in 1920.

The Royal Gardens at Herrenhausen, Hannover, Germany, are among the most historically important gardens in Europe. The world's largest palm collection of the 19th century was

established there in heated glasshouses, including what was then the world's tallest glasshouse, the Berggarten's 'Großes Palmenhaus'.

Herrenhausen

The Berggarten is one of three adjacent gardens constituting Herrenhausen. The Great Garden established in 1666 by Elector Johann Friedrich encompasses 52 hectares of formal Baroque-style gardens and water features. To the north is the 12 hectare Berggarten, originally a kitchen garden for the royal court but subsequently developed into a botanical garden featuring tropical plants, with the first greenhouse constructed in 1686. To the east is the 56 hectare Georgengarten, laid out between 1835 and 1841 as an English-style landscape park.

Between 1778 and 1903, three successive generations of the Wendland family were court

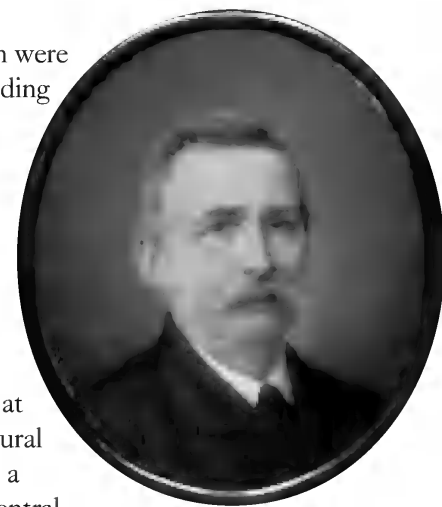
gardeners at Herrenhausen. In addition to their 'Hofgärtner' responsibilities, they all developed specialised interests in the horticulture and taxonomy of Australian plants. Johann Christoph Wendland (1755–1828) was the first of the family to be involved. He established the endemic Australian genera *Angianthus*, *Hakea* and *Waitzia*, and provided taxonomic work on *Melaleuca* and *Acacia* based on plants cultivated at Herrenhausen. His son Heinrich Ludolph Wendland (1792–1869) provided revisionary taxonomic work on *Acacia* and *Leptospermum*, again based on plants cultivated at Herrenhausen. The third member of the dynasty was Hermann Wendland (1825–1903), Heinrich's son and Johann's grandson. He specialised in palms of the entire world, both as a botanist and horticulturist, and was a very productive taxonomist, establishing more palm genera than any other botanist. He provided the foundational taxonomic work on Australian palms in his *Palmae Australasicae* published in 1875. Although the Herrenhausen palm collection had been established by Heinrich Wendland in the 1830s, it was Hermann who greatly expanded it to become the largest palm collection in the world, surpassing its closest 'rival' Kew Gardens in the number of species and diversity.¹

An accidental arrival

Livistona australis, the Australian cabbage palm, is Australia's most widespread palm species, extending from Paluma Range in north Queensland to east Gippsland in Victoria where it is Australia's most southerly palm species. This extensive geographical range has endowed the species with broad horticultural adaptability, including tolerance to heat, cold and drought. The first known successful cultivation of the cabbage palm outside of Australia was at Kew Gardens in 1824. Seeds were sent from Australia to England by botanist and explorer Allan Cunningham, not specifically as propagating materials but for drainage in the containers of other Australian plants, and by coincidence, germinated during the voyage.² Upon arrival of the plants at Kew, the germinated seeds were discovered and cultivated by John Smith, then overseer of the hothouses. Once these few individual palms were established as potted plants, they were distributed to a number of botanical gardens in Britain and Europe, including Herrenhausen.

Hermann Wendland reported that the species was first obtained by his father Heinrich from Kew Gardens in 1827 as 'a little 1½ foot high plant'.³ The palm was first grown in one of the small glasshouses at Herrenhausen where the

foundations of the palm collection were held. To accommodate the expanding tropical collection, a large heated glasshouse (the 'Palmenhaus') designed by German architect Georg Ludwig Friedrich Laves was completed in 1849. It was a timber beam construction, 35 m long, 10 m wide and 13 m high.⁴ The cabbage palm was maintained as a potted specimen at this time, a considerable horticultural feat for such a large specimen. As a feature plant, it was placed in a central position on a 1.5 m tall pedestal, with an overall height of 7.3 m and with 1.7 m of bare stem. It was to achieve rapid growth: in 1851 it was recorded at 7.6 m tall with 2.4 m of bare stem, and in 1858 at 12 m tall with 4.2 m of bare stem.⁵



Above: Hermann Wendland, miniature portrait, 1895.
with permission of
Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz
Library, Hannover

The expanding collection

An 1875 descriptive summary of the palm collection at Herrenhausen reported that it included at least 435 palm species, thus making it then the world's largest single collection.⁶ At this time, the cabbage palm had reached the roof and to compensate for its height the pot was placed deeper in the ground. By the late 1870s it had reached an overall height of 14.72 m and with 9.76 m of bare stem. Not unexpectedly, Laves's timber-beamed Palmenhaus was showing structural

Below: Herrenhausen Palm House designed by Richard Auhagen, circa 1890.
with permission of
Historisches Museum
Hannover



deterioration and the rapidly expanding collection had become increasingly overcrowded. By this time, the palm was in a large pot placed in a 7 m deep hole, and suffering from water inundation.⁷ A new and much larger palm house designed and constructed by the royal building overseer Richard Auhagen was completed in 1880. This glasshouse was a cast iron and glass structure with a length of 30.5 m, width of 28.5 m and a central height of 30.2 m, which made it then the tallest glasshouse in the world.⁸ The construction was described in the German architectural journal *Deutsche Bauzeitung* as a unique combination of industrial and artistic design. The additional space allowed many of the larger palm specimens to be planted directly into the soil which was heated by a system of ducts, heaters and pumps. The cabbage palm was carefully moved to the new palm house on a series of rails and pulleys, removed from its pot, and finally planted directly into the ground after almost 60 years as a potted specimen.⁹ The relocation prompted flowering for the first time, 'probably initiated by an increase in the amount of light', as Hermann Wendland observed.¹⁰

Illustration of Australian cabbage palm *Livistona australis* in the Herrenhausen Palm House, from *L'illustration Horticole* 29 (1882).
courtesy of Nicole Ceulemans, Belgium



Unpotted history

An inventory of the living plant collection in Herrenhausen in 1888 listed 85 large palm specimens in the Palm House of which the cabbage palm was the centrepiece.¹¹ Most of the palm collection was held in a number of auxiliary heated glasshouses and the display in the palm house was regularly supplemented by the potted collection, so only a small portion of the palm collection was on public display at any one time. There was an emphasis on a 'natural' display rather than one including large numbers of plants in otherwise crowded 'unnatural' arrangements.¹²

The cabbage palm continued its upward growth, and in 1898 was reported to be approaching the roof at a height of 23 m.¹³ In 1912 the crown indeed reached the roof and was 'threatening to destroy the glass'.¹⁴ Imminent removal of the palm was announced in local newspapers with regret and sadness, but it endured until 1920 when, at almost 100 years old, the palm was reluctantly cut down with direct permission of the Duke of Cumberland, then head of the House of Hannover.

It was felled in early March 1920 and was measured at 31 m tall, with 26 m of bare stem and a 5 m crown.¹⁵ Remnants of the palm, including stem sections, cross-sections and leaves were distributed to three museums and one university collection in Hannover at the Vaterländisches Museum and the Provinzialmuseum, and in Hildesheim at the Roemer-Museum. According to the current museum curators, the various preserved pieces of stem and leaves have not survived, and were destroyed during World War II. After felling, a Chinese fan palm (named then as *Livistona subglobosa* but now known as *L. chinensis*) was planted as a replacement. The Herrenhausen Palm House survived well into the 20th century but was damaged during bombing raids in World War II and demolished in the early 1950s.¹⁶

An unusual chronicle

It is unusual to be able to follow in chronological detail the complete life of cultivated plants let alone that of a particular individual palm, relocated a number of times and for a span of almost 100 years. The continuing health and longevity of the Australian cabbage palm (der größten europäischen Palme) at Herrenhausen was largely due to the foresight, technical ingenuity and horticultural talents of Herrenhausen's Hofgärtner dynasty – Johann, Heinrich and Hermann Wendland.

- 1 Sue Minter (1991) 'The Palm House at Kew: a new beginning', *Principes* 35(1): 9–18.
- 2 Berthold Seemann (1856) *Popular history of the palms and their allies*. Lovell Reeve, London.
- 3 Hermann Wendland (1852) *Die Königlichen Gärten zu Herrenhausen bei Hannover*. Hahn'sche Hofbuchhandlung, Hannover.
- 4 Georg Kohlmaier and Barna von Sartory (1991) *Houses of glass: a nineteenth-century building type*. MIT Press, Cambridge Massachusetts.
- 5 Karl Koch and Gustav Adolph Fintelmann (1859) 'Das Palmenhaus in Herrenhausen bei Hannover'. *Wochenschrift für Gärtnerei und Pflanzenkunde* 2(11): 81–4.
- 6 Georg Schaedtler (1875) 'Die Palmen des Königl. Berggartens zu Herrenhausen bei Hannover'. *Hamburger Garten-Blumenzeitung* 31: 20–27ff.
- 7 Franz Pick (1908) 'Die Geschichte der großen Palme (*Livistona australis*, R.Br.) im königlichen Berggarten zu Herrenhausen'. *Hannoversche Garten- und Obstbau-Zeitung* 18(1): 6–7.
- 8 Hof-Bauinspector Auhagen (1882) 'Das neue Palmenhaus auf dem Königl. Berggarten zu Herrenhausen'. *Garten-Zeitung* 1: 6–11.
- 9 Hans-Georg Preissel and Ulrike Preissel (1993) *Hannovers Berggarten: ein botanischer Garten*. Schlüter, Hannover.
- 10 Hermann Wendland (1882) 'Das neue Palmenhaus des Königlichen Berggartens zu Herrenhausen'. *Garten-Zeitung* 1: 143–47.
- 11 Katharina Peters (2013) *Die Hofgärtner in Herrenhausen*. *CGL, Studies* 12, AVM-Edition, München.
- 12 Carsten Stühling (2008) 'Naturvorstellung in der Geschichte der Herrenhäuser Gärten in Hannover'. Pp 173–80 in Bernd Hermann and Christine Dahlke (eds), *Schauplätze der Umweltgeschichte*. Universitätsverlag, Göttingen.
- 13 Ludwig Wittmack (1898) 'Herrenhausen'. *Gartenflora* 47, 345–47.
- 14 Hugo Fischer (1912) 'Vom Herrenhäuser Garten bei Hannover'. *Gartenflora* 61, 251–53.
- 15 Malmquist to Duke of Cumberland, 1920, 17 March: NLA HA, Dep. 103 XX, Nr. 616, Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv Hannover.
- 16 Sophie Gräfin von Schwerin (2013) *Der Berggarten*. *CGL, Studies* 13, AVM-Edition, München.

Dr John Leslie Dowe of the Australian Tropical Herbarium, James Cook University, Cairns, is a specialist in the taxonomy and history of Australian palms, and has recently completed research on the Wendlands' Australian plant specimens held in the herbarium at Göttingen University, Germany.



Dr Boris Oliver Schlumpberger of Herrenhausen Gardens, Hannover, Germany, is a cactus specialist interested in systematics, evolution and pollination ecology. In the Berggarten at Herrenhausen he curates one of the world's largest orchid collections, amongst other plants.



Nina Crone Award

FOR AUSTRALIAN STUDENT
GARDEN HISTORY WRITING



Nina Crone, headmistress of Melbourne Girls Grammar School 1975-94, pictured in the mid to late 1970s in the foyer of Merton Hall. photo: Melbourne Girls Grammar School archives

The **Nina Crone Award** is granted to encourage students in the writing of Australian garden history. The award comprises a prize of \$2000 and a certificate – and the prospect of publication in the Society's journal, *Australian Garden History*.

Papers should be for original research relating to Australian garden history and should be limited to 1000 to 1500 words. Photographs and illustrations may be included.

Closing date 30 June 2019

Expressions of interest, in the form of a brief abstract of 50–100 words, should be submitted. Submissions can be sent electronically to info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au or by post to:

- Australian Garden History Society
Gate Lodge, 100 Birdwood Avenue
Melbourne VIC 3004

Eligibility and basis of submissions

The award is open to **students only**, nationally. Articles must be on a topic related to Australian garden history and must not have been previously published. All associated research must have been completed within the last two years.



John Dwyer

Marsilea (nardoo) – in the Azores and at Coopers Creek

View of the art installation of Marsilea on Terceira Island.
photo Antonio Araujo

In the January 2019 issue of *Australian Garden History* (vol 30 no 3) I used the plant selfheal to look at a bias against plant species identified as non-native and often described as invasive aliens. This article follows on by examining some of the ways in which the native/exotic division is problematic.

The Marsileaceae are a large worldwide family of some 70 species of small perennial aquatic or semi-aquatic clover ferns often persisting in seasonally dry areas. They are sometimes called ‘water clover ferns’ because the leaflets resemble a four-leaf clover. The plants grow from a creeping rhizome, often in dense clumps in mud along the shores of ponds or streams but sometimes submerged in shallow water with some leaves floating on the surface.

An Azores endemic – or perhaps not?

Marsilea azorica was described in 1983 by Launert and Paiva as endemic to Terceira Island in the Azores, Portugal, where its one square kilometre of habitat contained an estimated 400–500 individuals. The species was listed as ‘vulnerable’ on the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List of Threatened Species because of potential threats ranging from changes in the hydrological regime to grazing and encroachment of grasses. It has been listed as a protected species and a conservation priority under the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats and the European Union’s habitats and species directive (1992).

Almost 20 years later, other scientists¹ proposed that *M. azorica* was the same species as the Australian native *M. hirsuta*, a plant locally



invasive in southeastern USA. They believe that the plants found in the Azores are most likely a recent introduction from Florida, and recommended removing the protected species status from *Marsilea azorica*.

This demonstrates the strange significance given to whether a plant is native or not. *M. azorica* when seen as a native deserved to be conserved. When the same plant growing in the same place was identified as the introduced *M. hirsuta*, it was seen as no longer worthy of conservation and relegated to the status of invasive weed, even though it had shown no sign of spreading in the Azores. How could the native/alien distinction be so important? There is a growing body of opinion that the distinction fails to provide a sound foundation for the science of invasion biology.

As the case of *M. azorica* suggests, the taxonomy of *Marsilea* species is uncertain. *M. hirsuta* was first described in 1810 by Robert Brown, the botanist on Matthew Flinders' expedition.

Art installation

Fortunately, the response in the Azores was not to exterminate the alien invaders, but to conserve them in an art installation on Terceira Island. The clover plants were carefully collected and transplanted onto three octagonal rafts lined with a substrate made from volcanic material to support their growth. The octagons float in a 17th century quarter-circle tank where they drift in the breeze in a slow, never-repeating movement.

Nardoo, an Australian relative

Nardoo resonates in Australian history. The pulverised fruiting bodies of *Marsilea* species known as nardoo were used by Indigenous people as a staple food, after careful preparation.

On their expedition of 1860–61, Robert O'Hara Burke and William John Wills were introduced to eating nardoo at Coopers Creek (which has

various spellings, but is officially Cooper Creek in modern usage) by Yandruwandha people, who showed them how to prepare it. When the men's rations were running out they survived for some weeks by supplementing their dwindling supplies of flour with nardoo. Ultimately it became their sole source of food, but both Burke and Wills died from starvation despite, or perhaps even because of nardoo, which contains thiaminase, an enzyme capable of breaking down thiamine (vitamin B₁). There are reports that sheep, horses and cattle have suffered fatal nardoo poisoning after extensive grazing on the plant.

Dr Herman Beckler, the expedition's medical officer and botanist, included nardoo among the 300 species he collected, describing it as 'a *Marsilea* (sp *hirsuta*)' in his *A journey to Cooper's Creek*. Beckler described the survival of expedition members MacPherson and Lyons by eating nardoo. Alan Moorhead's account of the expedition suggests that James King would not have survived without the nardoo cakes given to him by Indigenous people who cared for him after Burke and Wills had died.² The explorers' deaths have been attributed to beri-beri, a disease caused by vitamin B deficiency associated with thiaminase, but other causes such as scurvy, a lack of calories and hypothermia could have played a significant role in the deaths. The tragic loss of life shows how alien the explorers were in the environment at Coopers Creek.



Left: *Marsilea* growing in the art installation on Terceira Island. photo Samuel Alcobia

Middle: Two nardoo grinding stones used by Burke, Wills and King at Cooper's Creek, 1861. State Library of Victoria H5103

Below: Ambrotype photograph of William John Wills (L) and Robert O'Hara Burke. The figure of Burke is based on engraver HS Sadd's mezzotint (SLV H5411) after a daguerrotype by photographer Thomas Adams Hill in the Mitchell Library, Sydney. The figure of Wills may be based upon a similar source (H5412), but has been reversed. State Library of Victoria



Dieses Exemplar, welches Cooper's Creek, hatke ich für meine
Marsf. Howittiana
 von Cooper's Creek (Howitt's Exp.)
 Sie ist von der andern (unter andern oder *M. salutaris* und *M. drummondii*) durch Kleinheit der Frucht ausgezeichnet. Ich verfüge über Exemplare mit Frucht durch Wilhelmin
 J. Murray

MEL 52916

Herbarium specimen labelled '*Marsilea howittiana* from Cooper's Creek (Howitt's Exp)', collected at Cooper's Creek during Alfred Howitt's second expedition. *M. howittiana* is now generally accepted as a variety of *M. drummondii*.

Reproduced with permission from the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, with the assistance of staff at the National Herbarium of Victoria including digitising officer Angharad Johnson.

Surgeon and plant collector Dr James Murray was a member of a relief expedition led by AW Howitt. Murray's collections included *Marsilea howittiana* as shown in the image of the specimen sheet collected on the expedition, a plant later described as a variant of another species (*M. drummondii* var. *howittiana*).

As to the weed status of *Marsilea* species, two Australian species (*M. mutica* and *M. hirsuta*) occur in weedy, competitive stands in aquatic and terrestrial habitats in eight southern US states. They are thought to have escaped from horticultural cultivation, as they have been popular water garden plants.

In Australia two species, *M. drummondii*, and *M. mutica*, are listed as being poisonous to livestock, though neither is included in the 1997 CSIRO handbook of Australian weeds. The *Flora of Victoria* hints at escape from

cultivation in the spread of *M. mutica* in Victoria, pointing to the fact that many recent recordings include occurrences in farm dams and other artificial waterbodies, suggesting dispersal from cultivated plants, and questioning whether the first populations noted in 1964 are indigenous. The environment created in the cultivation of rice crops favours the movement of aquatic species from native wetland communities, so it is not surprising that the same two species (*M. drummondii* and *M. angustifolia*) have been recorded as minor weeds of rice crops in Australia.

As noted above, some scientists suggest that *M. azorica* should be treated as an invasive weed in the Azores on the basis of its potential to become invasive. I share George Seddon's concern about the word 'potential', so often used in weed definitions these days. He expressed this in *The Old Country* (2005 p 218), writing: 'I suppose we all have the potential to become criminals in certain circumstances; "potential" seems to me to be an awesomely inclusive term.'

Is a supposedly invasive potential a satisfactory way of dealing with plants that have naturalised in a region? I do not think so. It may cause harmless plants to be treated as invasive weeds, and I think this could well be the case with *M. azorica*.

The example of *M. azorica* suggests that there is something deeply unsatisfactory about the native/introduced distinction as the basis for conservation action. The valuing of indigenous plants and denigrating of introduced plants has become embedded in weed science. Much of the writing about 'invasive' plants moves from what is to what *should* be, undermining the distinction between fact and value that has been an important feature of the development of science since the Scottish Enlightenment, when philosopher David Hume established it in *A treatise of human nature* (1739). As Albert Einstein said, 'Science can only ascertain what is, not what should be'.

- 1 H Schaefer and others (2011) 'From European priority species to invasive weed: *Marsilea azorica* (Marsileaceae) is a misidentified alien' *Systematic Botany* 36: 845–53.
- 2 A Moorhead (1963) *Coopers Creek*, pp 138–48.

Dr John Dwyer is a retired QC and a former chair of AGHS. His publications include many articles in *Australian Garden History* about weeds and landscape.





Sandra Pullman

Melbourne's floral clock

The Domain Parklands [including the floral clock] is of historical, archaeological, aesthetic, architectural, scientific (horticultural), and social significance to the State of Victoria.

Heritage Council of Victoria Domain Parklands,
Victorian Heritage Database Report (online)

Many trendsetters might see Melbourne's floral clock as 'kitsch' – in *Australian Garden History* (vol 26 no 1, 2014), Silas Clifford-Smith described floral clocks as 'one of the horticultural oddities of the last century'. But Melburnians do not worry about what is fashionable – they love their clock.

Floral clocks have long been popular overseas. The idea has links back to 18th century Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus, as Clifford-Smith's 2014 article explains. In the 19th century, carpet bedding became the craze and an ideal match for floral clocks. They were planted with

exotic and brightly coloured annuals, creating intricate designs using new species discovered by 19th century plant explorers.

Floral clocks are found all over the world and are best suited to temperate climates, which makes Melbourne an ideal place. But there are also floral clocks in countries with extremes of heat and cold: in Edinburgh's City Park (1903), in Moscow on the Poklonnaya Gora (2001), USA, the Niagara Falls Flower Clock (1950) and in Tehran, Iran (2005). The present clock in the Melbourne Domain is not the first of Melbourne's floral clocks – a splendid example was produced, for example, for a 1930 Royal Agricultural Show.

Swiss movement

One would think soil, water, plants and a Swiss watch mechanism are not natural companions, but in 1966 Swiss watchmakers presented the City of Melbourne with a floral clock as a goodwill gesture. Honorary consul for Switzerland Mr Curt Mahnig presented the clock to the City of Melbourne. It was first displayed at an international trade fair in the Exhibition Building,

Melbourne's floral clock in 2019
photo Sandra Pullman



Top: Queenston floral clock, Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada, July, photo Rlevse Wiki Commons 2014

Middle: Building the floral clock in West Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh, photo Ad Meskens Wiki Commons 2014

Bottom: Melbourne's floral clock, 2019, photo Sandra Pullman

Inset: Cineraria, one of the plant species in the clock, photo Digigalos Wiki Commons 2008

Melbourne, in April 1966. It was unveiled in its King's Domain site on 4 November 1966 by Lord Mayor Ian Bearepaire. The clock mechanism located in the centre of the clock is encased in concrete to prevent soil, water and any pesky insects from interfering with the clock's movement. Originally the mechanism was a synchronous motor which moved the hour, minute and second hands by friction, but modern technology has caught up with the time and it is now controlled by computer. I have a vague memory in the 1970s of being told the clock was unreliable, often slow or not working at all. But since computerisation that does not seem to be a problem any more.

Site of the clock

The clock is in an area known as the Queen Victoria Gardens at the southern end of the King's Domain parkland, opposite the National Gallery of Victoria. The clock face is 9.15 metres in diameter and nestles in a horseshoe-shaped lawn embankment with horseshoe-shaped flower beds planted up with the same annuals as the face of the clock. The clock is on a slight slope and connects with the statue of Edward VII, who is mounted on his horse and is overlooking the clock.

Originally, the site was flat and low-lying. In the 1850s, as *Domain Parklands* reports, the colonial Victorian Government built the Immigrants Home which was crisis housing for an increasing numbers of homeless gold rush diggers. In 1913, the home was demolished, returning 0.8 hectares (2 acres) to parkland.

The clock and surrounding garden beds have high horticultural values (i.e. high maintenance requirements). The clock is managed by Kerry Furness, head gardener of King's Domain, and maintained by his talented team of six gardeners.

Each day Furness's team makes sure the clock is working, checks for possum damage, theft and weeds, and removes rubbish. On Mondays and Fridays a gardener with a leaf blower tidies up fallen tree leaves and rubbish.

Melbourne floral clock's planting is changed twice a year, once in autumn and once in spring, using approximately 7000 tiny plants called plugs. The theme is decided on and the plants ordered six months in advance, to allow the grower time to propagate all the species needed.

Behind the King Edward VII statue there are matching white and yellow jonquils. Spring is the time the clock's designers can let their hair down and go all out in combining colour, plant material (pansies, poppies etc.) and some zing to brighten up Melbourne's dull grey city and warm the hearts of Melburnians during an often chilly spring.

The autumn theme in 2018 was white and yellow violas, white alyssum and cineraria 'Silver Dust'.

In 2006 the summer design was for the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne. As Melbourne was on show to the world, the design had to be reviewed and approved by the Games committee. Another favourite of the gardeners was the winter 2005 design using two simple species, *Viola* 'Tinkerbell' and lawn or English daisy (*Bellis perennis*).

The clock has not always been able to avoid attacks. In 1991, members of the AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power (ACT UP) pulled out the annuals and replaced them with white crosses, a poignant statement which nonetheless upset many Melburnians. But the AIDS Coalition weren't completely thoughtless; they knew that the plantings for the clock were to be replanted in the coming weeks.

Choosing plants for the clock

When coming up with a theme it is not only colour and how to combine plants harmoniously or not. The designers also need to also think about species compatibility, and the ability to cope with extreme weather including cold snaps, heatwaves, frost, wind and heavy rain. There is another consideration – the plant material cannot grow higher than 20 cm or it will impede the clock's hands, and time will stand still. According to one source, in the 1970s sheep shears were the tool of choice to prune the hen and chicken plant (*Echeveria* sp.) if the leaves grew too tall. Hen and chicken is an excellent compact succulent which is used for lettering, detailed outlines or border planting.

Therefore, the range of bedding-out material is limited. The most popular choices are:

Summer
<i>Alternanthera</i> – used for its foliage
<i>Ajuga reptans</i> – used for its foliage, not so much now
marigolds
<i>Petunia</i>
<i>Begonia</i>
<i>Impatiens</i>
<i>Jacobaea maritima</i> (formerly <i>Senecio cineraria</i>) 'Silver Dust' (dusty miller or cineraria)
<i>Pyrethrum</i> 'Golden Moss' – grown for foliage only (often used as lettering and or detailed outlines, or border planting)

Winter
<i>Alternanthera</i> – used for its foliage
<i>Ajuga reptans</i> – used for its foliage
<i>Viola</i> – growers have developed more compact varieties
sweet alyssum <i>Lobularia maritima</i>
<i>Cineraria</i>
<i>Primula malacoides</i>
<i>Ranunculus</i>

Realising the plan

In the early 1980s black plastic templates were used. The gardeners would measure and mark out a grid, then draw the design with a yellow crayon marker onto the sheet of black plastic. Then they would use a soldering iron to burn a hole where each plant was to go. The next step was to peg the black plastic down over the clock face and with a broom careful spread lime over the plastic. It fell into each hole and when the plastic was finally lifted a dot of lime would show the gardeners were to put each plant.

Today a different less fiddly method is used. Furness's team moves in and the hard work starts. They remove the previous season's plant material, tilling the soil making sure all the compost and fertiliser are properly incorporated. It is then levelled off. To put in the new design takes three gardeners one day. Pretty impressive turn around. The first thing the gardeners do is identify the straight edges of the clock and then run five or six string lines across the face of the clock. These usually line up with the hour indicators on the clock face. Then the shapes of the design are pegged out with small bamboo stakes which are later used as trimming guides. Back at the depot greenhouse, spare plugs are kept to replace the ones that have succumbed to pests, disease or theft.

Melbourne is lucky to still have its floral clock, and that it has not been put into the 'old fashion and too high-maintenance' basket. It shows that Melburnians love their gardens, their colourful annuals and appreciate the skill and talent that the gardeners and designers put into creating and maintaining it.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following people for providing me with information: Cathy Kiss (City of Melbourne, Open Space, Planning Team, Urban Sustainability), Sam Davis (horticulture team leader, Serco), Ryan Brown (head gardener, Queen Victoria Gardens, Serco), Susan Reidy (social historian specialising in the history of Australian public parks and gardens), and an anonymous source with experience in maintaining the clock.

Mick Roe (2014) 'Remembering Melbourne's HIV/AIDS History', *Farrago* 26 May (online at <https://umsu.unimelb.edu.au/farrago/remembering-melbournes-hiv-aids-history/>).

Sandra Pullman is currently completing a Master of Architecture (Research) at Deakin University on Ina Higgins, an early 20th century Burnley Horticultural College graduate.





Juliet Ramsay honoured for heritage work

Congratulations to Canberra AGHS member Juliet Ramsay, who has been given honorary life membership of Australia

ICOMOS (the International Council on Monuments and Sites). The award acknowledges Juliet's outstanding contribution to Australia ICOMOS during her career in heritage, especially through the ICOMOS-IFLA International Scientific Committee on Cultural Landscapes. This is particularly evident in her willingness to lead initiatives for ICOMOS internationally and transfer knowledge to Australian heritage practitioners; her in-depth work on the aesthetic values of landscapes; and her persistent advocacy for Canberra's landscape heritage, particularly the Lake Burley Griffin cultural landscape. As a capital city designed by world-class architects and landscape architects, careful planning is needed to obtain the best results for the people who live and work in Canberra, and for all Australians.

See Juliet Ramsay and Anne Claoue-Long's article 'Public parklands traded for apartments' in the January 2019 issue of *Australian Garden History* (vol 30 no 3 pp 8–11).

New AGHS office-bearers, and huge thanks to our outgoing ones

AGHS relies heavily on the extraordinary dedication of its volunteer office bearers and state representatives. The Society is deeply grateful to retiring honorary treasurer **Elizabeth Teed** and honorary secretary **Roslyn Burge** for the brilliant (and careful) work they have done in these demanding roles. We thank you!

With equal gratitude we welcome new honorary treasurer **Graeme Caple** and new honorary secretary **Bronwyn Blake**.

WA branch turns 30

The Western Australian branch of AGHS was inaugurated on 15 November 1988 after a public meeting at Bentley TAFE in Perth. AGHS's Western Australian branch celebrated the 30th anniversary of its formation at a special birthday function on Sunday 9 December 2018 at the Mosman Park Golf Club in Perth.

In this time, as well as running regular functions the branch has hosted three national conferences, mounted two exhibitions on historic gardens of Perth, and held a seminar on trees, as well as restoring gardens. Members have contributed to the *Oxford companion to Australian gardens* and published *A guide to conserving and interpreting gardens in Western Australia*. We have produced an index to the *West Australian Gardener* magazine. We have also received three grants for garden restoration projects allocate, and provided advice and information on gardens of heritage-listed properties.

John Viska



Top: Branch members got together to celebrate WA's 30th anniversary birthday party, in December 2018.

Bottom: Current chair of the WA branch John Viska with previous chairs (L to R) Sue Monger, Caroline Grant and Tessa Watson, blowing out the candles on the celebratory cake.

photos Leon Tang

Helen Page on John Hawker's retirement

After caring for Victoria's trees and gardens at Royal Botanic Gardens and then with Heritage Victoria, John Hawker has recently retired (like William Guilfoyle, his career in this field spans 36 years!) He and I were on the Victorian committee of AGHS together. When I became Victorian chair, John was a constant support and adviser as we took on working in a range of old gardens, mainly in the country. A program of working bees continues with the Society to this day.

Many garden owners have benefited from John's support over the years. For most of John's time with Heritage Victoria, Janet Gordon owned the Guilfoyle garden Turkeith at Birregurra. John's practice of having groups of three working together – one in the bushes cutting back, one on the barrow and one on the truck loading – continues today during Landcare working bees at Birregurra. Jo Reid's family has owned the garden of Belmont at Beaufort for its whole life since the 1860s. John's knowledge has helped to nurture many of its old trees.

Gardens all over Victoria have stories of John's input and support, both its private gardens and in particular the regional botanic gardens which are close to John's heart. Many regional gardens might not have survived if it wasn't for John.

When the AGHS took on the restoration of the garden at Bishops court in Melbourne in 2001, John was always on call. Often on a working bee day I would ring John and suggest he stroll across the gardens at lunch time because I wanted him to check out a tree or something that needed his expertise.

Sometimes his answers weren't the one I wanted. The Wollemi pine in the south eastern corner of Bishops court's garden was given to us by Nina Crone's sister. In her retirement Nina threw herself into all things garden history – as a committee member, editor of *Australian Garden History* and regular at working bees including Bishops court. Nina's Wollemi pine was given to us after her untimely death. When I told John that we were going to plant it at Bishops court he was not in favour, because they weren't available when the garden was laid out. We went ahead and planted the tree, which is thriving today: John was gracious enough to comment favourably on it when he saw it.

AGHS garden booklets of some of our significant gardens including Bishops court are now on the website (go to www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au and then to the 'publications and projects' tab). The booklets give the history of each garden including a plan, early and contemporary photos, and a detailed plant list, most of these done willingly and seemingly effortlessly by John.

It is always it is a treat to walk around gardens with John. I believe he knows every significant tree in Victoria and many elsewhere too – including their provenance, history, vulnerability, and where others of the same species occur.



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

Formed in 1980, the AGHS brings together people from diverse backgrounds united by an appreciation of and concern for our parks, gardens and cultural landscapes as part of Australia's heritage.

Please phone **03 9650 5043**
or **1800 678 446** for more information.

Gate Lodge – 100 Birdwood Avenue
Melbourne VIC 3004

ABN 97 291 212 843

www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au

Would you like to donate to the Australian Garden History Society?

The Society is affiliated with the Australian Council of National Trusts and is thereby able to benefit from the Trusts' Tax Deductible Status.

All donations to the Trust are tax-deductible. The Australian Tax Office permits the Trust to extend this tax-deductibility to heritage-related appeals operated by other organisations. These appeals are known as 'External Appeals'.

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Cheque donations are very welcome and should be made payable to the 'National Trust of Australia (Victoria)' and forwarded with this form to AGHS.

Electronic Funds Transfer can be made directly to the Trust and return this form to AGHS.

Account Name: National Trust of Australia (VIC) **Bank:** Westpac bank

BSB: 033-000 **Account Number:** 937419 **Reference:** External Appeal 736_your surname

Credit Card Payment

Mastercard Visa Expiry date ____/____



For the bookshelf

Diana E Hill & Edmée H Cudmore, eds
(2017) *Mr Guilfoyle's Shakespearian Botany*
Miegunyah Press, Carlton, Victoria, paperback
219 pp \$45, ebook \$22.99

William Robert Guilfoyle was born in England and migrated to Sydney with his parents when nine years old. He was educated here by private tutoring with his uncle and later at Lyndhurst College in Glebe. His father, Michael Guilfoyle, was a nurseryman who founded his reputation as a landscaper working on Greenoaks, the large garden of Thomas Sutcliffe Mort at Double Bay, while establishing an exotic and tropical nursery.

Young William was obviously immersed in plants with his interest much encouraged by people such as William Sharp Macleay. He made expeditions to northern New South Wales and Queensland collecting specimens, some of which he sent to Ferdinand von Mueller in Melbourne to be identified.

He later participated in the famous HMS *Challenger* scientific expedition to the South Sea Islands. For a while he grew sugar and tobacco near the Tweed River then in 1873 he was appointed curator of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne, to succeed von Mueller. He remained there until his retirement in 1909 and brought his landscaping experience and an eye that delighted in the tropics he had seen to establish one of the most beautiful botanic gardens in the world.

This current volume is a collection of articles written by William Guilfoyle for the *Banker's Magazine of Australasia*, one a month, between 1899 and 1901. Each one is headed:

Shakespearian Botany

Written for this magazine by W.R. Guilfoyle, F.L.S.,
C.M.R.B.S., London

Director, Melbourne Botanic Gardens.

which tells us we are in the company of a distinguished botanist, but one who also displays a deep knowledge and love of all of Shakespeare's works. He humbly begins by acknowledging the Bard's powerful gifts and wonderful acquaintance with the plant world, and then beginning with *A for Aconitum* ('Wolfbane', 'Monk's Hood,

or 'Helmet Flowers') he alphabetically works through every botanical reference in every play, ending with *Yew* (which contains a narcotic).

This is not a book to read straight through but oh! the joy of dipping in and out, of following one lead after another, of finding treasures of botanical information as well as wonderful quotes, some familiar, others less so. Every plant is given its full scientific name (and author), put in its 'Natural order', lists of fabulous common names, where it is found growing naturally, medicinal properties, then a quote from Shakespeare, sometimes several. This is followed by a short essay on the plant's properties and habits, interesting facts with horticultural advice on growing it in Australia. Every name, scientific and common, can be found in the index and there is an appendix of all Shakespeare's plays with lists of plants mentioned.

I started with *Midsummer Night's Dream*, studied at school:

*I know a bank whereon the wild Thyme blows,
Where Oxlips and the nodding Violet grow;
Quite overcanopied with lush Woodbine,
With sweet Musk roses, and with Eglantine.*

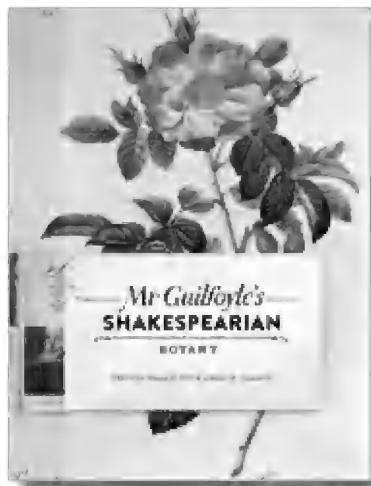
Woodbine is Honeysuckle, Eglantine the common bramble rose, Oxlip a flower related to Cowslip. I never knew.

Then *The Merchant of Venice* (which I have seen at the pop-up Globe Theatre), which mentions Apple, Pine, Wheat and Willow ... and so on.

During the 2017 annual national AGHS conference in Bowral we visited a garden called Southdown which included a Shakespeare garden of tangled honeysuckle, old roses, columbines and marigolds (*Calendula officinalis*) – 'Common Pot Marigold', 'Mary-bud', 'Golds' or 'Godlins'.

The book is beautifully illustrated with colour plates of old botanical drawings and line drawings. Each chapter starts with an illuminated letter. A lovely book to handle, to keep close on the shelf and to refer to often. William Guilfoyle, scientist, botanist, horticulturist with a genius for literature. Would today's education system create such a polymath?

Angela Low has worked as a hospital biochemist, biology teacher, and museum curator, and is a lifelong gardener.



David Kay Ferguson (2017) *Robert Fortune – plant hunter*

Anhui University Press, paperback, 438 pp + CD-ROM containing notes and references, \$66

A little over a year ago I reviewed Alistair Watt's groundbreaking biography *Robert Fortune – a plant hunter in the Orient* (*Australian Garden History* vol 29 no 3, January 2018: 33). The International Dendrology Society's Roy Lancaster says 'classic', and 'powerful resource for all who value our garden history and heritage'. Not long after that, a second book on this remarkable man turned up – by David Kay Ferguson. Pity that one review couldn't have encompassed both. Does it matter? Is he worth two books? Definitely. Should you read both? Do try.

They're very different kettles of fish, while covering the same man and life. Ferguson was born in New Zealand and raised in Scotland, studying geology and plant systematics in the UK and specialising in palaeobotany at Utrecht University. Between 1969 and 1980, having realised just how many Asiatic plants grew in Europe, he worked periodically with Lucien Lauener on Chinese plants in the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. He collaborates with Chinese universities and palaeobotanical institutes in his work: from 1992 to 2010 he was professor of palaeobotany at the University of Vienna. From 2007 he has travelled widely, following Fortune's homes and Eastern haunts, gestating this book.

His work is rich and methodical, with plenty of meaty detail behind each 'step' of Fortune. What is distracting is its structure, yo-yoing constantly as it does to explain (in 70 text boxes) characters Fortune meets, deals with (stays with, is guided or hoodwinked by). While these mini-biographies – some of ships – are welcome and give you the sense of an expatriate and trade network cast wide across the British Empire, South-East and Eastern Asia, even a cast of other gardener-characters (fascinating), their insertion alongside the text makes for jerky reading and slows any flow.

That said, you quickly build a picture of the societies, cliques, business clubs and shifting political, mercantile and social sands that Fortune had to deftly manoeuvre to pull off his various exploits.

There is fascinating detail on the key wheels within the UK Royal Horticultural Society, which in Fortune's era (the 1840s–60s) was the Horticultural Society of London. The society sent this young Scot to find novel plants to introduce into members' gardens. We all have some of his plants growing, still.

For instance, 'Fortune's Double Yellow' rose, which caused a splash when roses were thought white, red or pink. And major contributions to the range of camellias, rhododendrons, paeonies, chrysanthemums.

While not as luscious as Alistair Watt's book, Ferguson's is liberally supplied with images, perhaps losing something by small size, gaining something by quantity. Some are crisp botanical prints of the time and modern photos, while following his travels. Like Watt's book it represents years of toil, travels and sifting of diverse archives.

It presents as perhaps overly academic, which may win it fans but lose the general reader. The index of place names runs to 46 pages; one of persons, firms and vessels is 38 pages; one of plants and animals 32 pages – in all, 124 pages of indexes! Too much, or glorious and useful? Up to you to decide. They certainly make the book a reference. There is an additional CD-ROM just holding all Ferguson's notes and references!

Ferguson makes no mention of the biography of Alistair Watt – perhaps he was unaware of it being in preparation at much the same time?

Ferguson's 10 chapters chart Fortune's expeditions to China, trips to Japan and America, and his role in the East India Company's promulgation of that country's tea industry. Unlike Watt, he doesn't finish the book with a summary of Fortune's legacy – perhaps a weakness, given that it was a broad legacy, and that his light has been somewhat eclipsed by later, more 'industrial-scale' plant hunters/exporters such as Wilson, Rock and others? He lists some 110 Fortune introductions from the first three years of his time in China (pp 61–65: impressive enough!).

Of course, there are quibbles: Watt notes many references showing that Fortune moved to London in 1840, not later, meaning Ferguson has an error (p. 15). Typographical errors pepper parts of the text, unnecessarily.

It seems to me the times, prizing open a tightly closed Chinese economy and ports; opening its arteries to goods, trade and dangerous ideas from outside, were fascinating – and prescient, given China's rapid recovery in the late 20th century and resumption of its position as a major world power. It also seems to me that we underestimate our debt



to men like Fortune, and countries of such rich plant diversity and beauty as China – with some 33,000 species of flowering plants, and ecosystems ranging from some of the world’s harshest deserts to monsoonal tropical rainforests, it covers a lot of ground! Both books are well worth persevering with and dipping into. Highly recommended.

Stuart Reid is a landscape architect, horticulturist and garden historian with an abiding love of plants.

Lalage Snow (2018) *War gardens: a journey through conflict in search of calm*

Quercus Imprints, distributed in Australia by Hachette Australia, Sydney, 373 pp, paperback \$22.99, hardcover \$46

Until the publication of *War gardens* Lalage Snow was best known for photography, for example her portraits of British soldiers before, during and after war service, her pictures of refugee camps in Gaza or female soldiers in Iraq, and the videos she made for Oxfam of women in Afghanistan. She has been travelling to these zones of conflict since 2007, either ‘embedded’ in military units or as a freelance journalist in the places she has visited, and in so doing her photography reveals a different face of war and conflict, and throws light on the ways in which the participants and victims cope with the continual stress of living under such conditions.

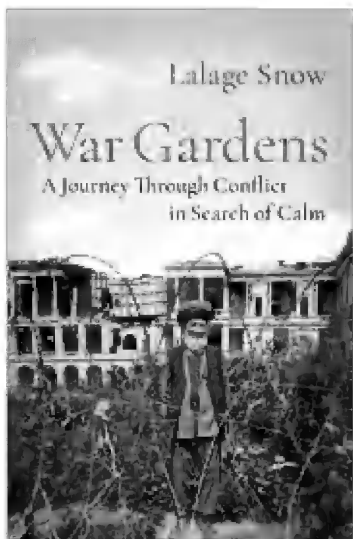
Now, more than ten years later, she has put together a book based on these experiences. It is richly illustrated with photographs but has

a different focus – gardeners and their gardens. The soldiers and civilians that she interviews show how cultivating flowers, planting trees and contact with the soil helps them to cope with violence, stress and the loss of loved ones. The gardens that she describes are, for her informants, a ‘search for calm’, but also an aspect of personal identity.

Growing plants, in the view of an Israeli settler in the West Bank, is a way of reversing the rootlessness of the Jewish diaspora. In Slavyansk, eastern Ukraine, she talks to men and women whose neighbourhoods were ravaged by fighting between Russian separatists and the Ukraine army. With the frontline and the sound of shellfire not far away, people return to their ruined properties to search for flowers, fruit and vegetables. They say that the loss of the gardens matters as much as the damage to their homes. Soldiers at a checkpoint search Snow’s camera for evidence of military spying, and find only endless photographs of roses.

Everywhere gardens prove to be an excellent passport into other people’s lives, revealing their often traumatic experiences and their hopes and dreams for a more peaceful future. Lalage Snow argues that gardening is always about putting down roots: ‘They connect us to something intangible – our ego and identity – and they connect us to our home’ (p 300). She is to be congratulated for providing this unexpected window into war and its victims, and showing also how she, as a war correspondent, survived the traumas of her profession.

Tim Bayliss-Smith is an English geographer and anthropologist based in East Anglia.



Top: Badria with onions on the edge of her allotment garden in Beit Hanoun, Gaza, April 2013. ‘I try not to stay inside in the darkness unless there is danger. It is very gloomy and makes me worry about my children.’

Middle: Mikhail on her porch in Sderodt, Israel, April 2013. ‘I think I’m the only person in the country with parsnips!’

Bottom: Ibrahim Jeradda MBE, custodian of the Commonwealth Gaza War Cemetery [Gaza], April 2013. ‘It is our duty to care for both the living and the dead. There are no borders here.’

all photos Lalage Snow

Dialogue



Left: Wellington Botanic Garden panorama. Wiki Commons, 2012

150 years for NZ's Wellington Botanic Garden

A year (plus)-long celebration of the 150 year old Wellington Botanic Garden is taking place through 2019.

The history of the garden and its land dates back well before 1869. When Europeans arrived, there were well established pas (Maori settlements) at Pipitea and Kumutoto. Te Ātiawa from the Pipitea Pa used the Botanic Garden for ngākinga (cultivated gardens), collecting native plants for construction, food, fibre and medicine and birds for food. They used extensive areas of the garden, and nearby Te Ahu Mairangi, firstly for their own use and then for trading until they were displaced from their pa in the mid-1800s.

In 1844 the New Zealand Company set aside a 5.26 ha strip of land, then densely forested with podocarps including rimu, totara and matai, for a botanic



Below: Botanical Gardens, Wellington, New Zealand, 1908. Muir & Moodie studio, Wellington. Image purchased in 1998 with New Zealand Lottery Grants Board funds. Te Papa

garden reserve. The garden was established in 1868 and managed by the New Zealand Institute. In the 1870s a further 21.85 ha of reserve was added to the site. Wellington City Council has managed the Botanic Garden since 1891.

Today the 25 hectare Wellington Botanic Garden is classified as a garden of national significance by the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (free entry, open dawn to dusk all year). Trees growing on Druid Hill and Magpie Spur are some of the oldest exotic trees in New Zealand.



photos Piers Laverty

Nooroo open garden

Nooroo, Church Lane, Mt Wilson NSW, entry \$10 until 26 May 2019 (daily 10am–4pm)

Nooroo at Mt Wilson in the Blue Mountains is one of Australia's best known gardens. It was established in 1880, and is known for its wisteria court and displays of colour in spring and autumn. Original plantings include English oaks, chestnuts, ash and cedars which are underplanted with thousands of bulbs including, bluebells, daffodils and crocus.

In April and May, white nerines create a memorable display with the garden's autumn colours, at their best in the ten days after 25 April.

Exhibitions

John Viska on 'Historic Gardens of Perth, Western Suburbs' exhibition

An exhibition on historic gardens of Perth was held from 7 to 16 September 2018 to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the formation of the WA branch of AGHS. The branch got funding from Lotterywest, local councils and the Society's national management committee. During the exhibition AGHS branch volunteers at three National Trust of WA properties – Gallop House, John Curtin family home and Wanslea – highlighted the important garden elements of each site.



Top: Historic aerial view of Overton Lodge, the exhibition venue.
Gove Community History Library

Middle: WA Chair John Viska at the welcome table, with information on the Society.
photo Patsy Vizents

Bottom: View of interpretive panels in Overton Lodge's beautiful jarrah hall.
photo Leon Tang

The exhibition was held in heritage-listed Overton Lodge, a large Federation residence and gardens established in 1897 by Judge Richard Pennefather. The extensive grounds of this residence included tennis courts and pavilion, belvedere, grotto, rockery, formal rose garden and balustrade terraces. Mining entrepreneur Claude de Bernales acquired the property in 1911; he extensively renovated the house in the 1930s in a Spanish mission style and extended the grounds. It was purchased by the Cottesloe Council in 1950 and is now a civic centre. Delegates to the 2005 National Conference in Perth may remember visiting the property and picnicking in the grounds.

WA branch members who lent their expertise to prepare the exhibition were historian Robin Chinnery, PhD student Elizabeth Hof, landscape architect Ann Forma, researcher Gillian Lilleyman, author of *A garden On the Margaret* and co-author of *Landscape for learning*, Lorraine Lingard, Lisa Williams and myself.

The exhibition followed an earlier 'Historic Gardens of Perth' exhibition in 2011. Coastal western Perth witnessed a suburban growth in the period 1890 to 1914. The availability of larger blocks, the laying out of parks and gardens, recreational areas, tree-lined streets and the ideals of the international 'city beautiful' movement all contributed to the desirability of the area, but with the government's policy of higher density housing and suburban infill, these aspects of Western Australia's garden history are now under pressure.

Displays featured representative examples of domestic gardens (including John Curtin's family home), parks and public open spaces (including Rankin Gardens and the garden suburb of Floreat Park), commercial and institutional gardens (including the former Osborne Hotel grounds and the National Trust of Western Australia's Gallop House), societies (the Cottesloe Beach Horticultural Society) and personalities (horticulturist Ernest Stringfellow, town planner William Ernest Bold, and architect William Garnsworthy).

After the event, we donated relevant panels to public libraries or local history centres. We now have PowerPoint presentations for both exhibitions, and we are investigating how the text and illustrations from the two exhibitions can be used for a publication to commemorate the Society's 40th anniversary celebrations in 2020.

Former horticulture lecturer **John Viska** is the author of *A guide to conserving and interpreting gardens in Western Australia*. He actively promotes WA's garden history through lectures to community groups and societies and articles for *Australian Garden History*.



The Woodend avenue of honour, August 2014

Sarah Wood Avenues of Honour photographic exhibition

Bendigo Soldiers Memorial Institute Military Museum, 37–39 Pall Mall, Bendigo

until Sunday 18 May 2019 (every day 10 am–4 pm)
(small admission fee)

Photographer, horticulturist and AGHS Victorian branch vice-chair Sarah Wood has been photographing avenues of honour since 2007. Her photographs have featured in exhibitions across the state and overseas. The Bendigo exhibition on current display was opened on 1 March 2019 by Robert Johanson (chairman of the Bendigo and Adelaide Bank). For further details on Sarah's photography, see www.swoodphotography.com.

250 years since Cook's Endeavour journey

Traditional knowledge of the flora of Australia and New Zealand has accreted over more than 40,000 years. Two hundred and fifty years ago, Australia's plants and animals blazed into the consciousness of western science. Botanic gardens today can be key places for working together towards reconciliation by presenting Indigenous and European history and the different cultural uses of native plants.



In 2019 and 2020, Australian and New Zealand botanic gardens and arboreta are marking the botany of Banks, Parkinson and Solander during James Cook's second voyage (1768–71).

In New Zealand 'Tuia Encounters 250' recognises the connections made by the Maori communities from Ngati Hei and Ngati Whanaunga with Cook and his crew.

New Zealand gardens involved include Hamilton Gardens, Whangarei Quarry Gardens, the Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin Botanic Gardens, Eastwoodhill Arboretum (the National Arboretum of New Zealand) in Gisbourne, and the heritage gardens of Tūpare, Pukeiti and Hollard Gardens in Taranaki.

The Queensland Herbarium at Brisbane Botanic Gardens Mt Coot-tha holds 135 of the original specimens collected by Banks and Solander. Queensland events in 2020 include a Banks and Solander display in the new Botanic Discoveries Garden.

Further details

www.bganz.org.au/assets/uploads/2018/03/Botanic-Endeavour-250-2019-2020.pdf, www.cooktown2020.com, www.botanicalartqld.com.au.

Janet Laurence: After Nature

Museum of Contemporary Art, 140 George St, The Rocks, Sydney
until 10 June 2019
(daily 10 am–5 pm, late closing Wednesdays 9 pm)

For more than 30 years Janet Laurence has explored the interconnection of all living things – animal, plant, mineral – through a multi-disciplinary approach. She has employed diverse materials to explore the natural world in all its beauty and complexity, and to highlight the environmental challenges it faces today, in the era of the Anthropocene.

The exhibition includes key works from the artist's career, with loans from public institutions around Australia. It is the first major survey of one of Australia's leading contemporary artists. The catalogue *Janet Laurence: After Nature*, ed. Rachel Kent (Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, 2019 hardback, 264pp, \$69.95) accompanies the exhibition.



Conferences



AGHS 40th annual national conference 2019

25–27 October 2019

National Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington New Zealand

Our first venture to New Zealand for an annual national AGHS conference includes beautiful gardens and expert NZ speakers in an outstanding venue, Te Papa Tongarewa.

Speakers include Dr Hamish Campbell on NZ's landforms, Stuart Read on keeping botanic gardens relevant, Louise Furey on Maori gardening, and Dr James Beattie on Chinese market gardening in New Zealand.

On Saturday 26 October we visit three Wellington icons – Government House, Otari-Wilton's Bush Native Garden, and Wellington Botanic Gardens, giving a first taste of New Zealand natives and exotics that flourish in these gardens. On Sunday 27 October we cross the spectacular Rimutaka Ranges to two large historic country gardens in the Wairarapa. Both wrap around stunning homesteads, one nearly 100 years old with a recent garden restored to its peak in the 1920s.

On the optional day, Monday 28 October, we explore three gardens on Wellington's outskirts, all gardens of excellent standard and listed by the New Zealand Gardens Trust.

Register at www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au.

Thrive Together: Diversity Grows Gardens, Washington DC

17–21 June 2019

American Public Gardens Association Annual Conference, Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington DC

Washington was planned as a beautiful city symbolising the ideals of democracy. Those ideals are evident today in the gardens that beautify and enrich the region – the National Mall (symbolic heart of the US), monumental landscapes, lush institutional grounds, grand national parks, and a range of beautiful public and private gardens.

Thrive Together: Diversity Grows Gardens is intended to push public gardens to be accessible and inclusive for all who work at them and visit them. The 2019 hosts range from the plant collections of the US National Arboretum to the 'outdoor museums' of the Smithsonian Institution, the garden rooms at Hillwood Estate, and the United States Botanic Garden, one of the oldest botanic gardens in North America.

See <https://2019.publicgardens.org/>.

AGHS post-conference tour of New Zealand's South Island

29 October–11 November 2019

This 14-day escorted tour commences after the 2019 annual national conference's optional day on Monday. Join Lynne Walker on a personal tour to New Zealand to visit her favourite gardens. Visit the best of the South Island's gardens ranging from grand and historic gardens to special private gardens not normally open to the public. Lynne will introduce you to her fabulous selection of private and well-known gardens and some passionate gardeners as well. See spectacular and dramatic scenery, castles and wineries, visit artisans and galleries and, along the way, enjoy delicious regional food and wine.

For information: email gardenwalker@bigpond.com, or phone Lynne Walker on 02 6775 0208.



BGANZ 9th Congress, Te Papa, Wellington New Zealand

20–23 October 2019

The 9th BGANZ Congress (Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand) will be held in Wellington, New Zealand, a few days before AGHS's own annual conference there.

See www.bganz.org.au/.

And do you know about Botanic Gardens Day on Sunday 26 May 2019? On this day botanic gardens, arboretum and gardens in Australia and New Zealand celebrate the vital work botanic gardens do for plant conservation. For details see www.bganz.org.au/botanic-gardens-day-2019-2/.



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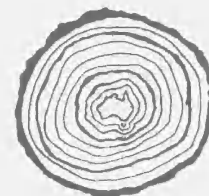
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AUSTRALIAN
**GARDEN
HISTORY**
SOCIETY

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To donate to AGHS, please visit

www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/donate/.

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The views expressed in this journal are those of the contributors and are not necessarily shared by the Australian Garden History Society.



EXPANDING horizons

AUSTRALIAN GARDEN HISTORY SOCIETY
40th Annual National Conference
FRIDAY 25 – SUNDAY 27 OCTOBER 2019

Te Papa Tongarewa
MUSEUM OF NEW ZEALAND
Wellington, New Zealand

Register at

www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au

or forward your completed registration form to:

Australian Garden History Society
Gate Lodge (Opp. Shrine),
100 Birdwood Avenue,
Melbourne VIC 3004

Refund Policy

80% refund until 31 July 2019,
no refund after 1 August 2019

**All delegates are strongly encouraged
to take out travel insurance.**

CONFERENCE DETAILS

Registration

FRIDAY 25 – SATURDAY 26 OCTOBER **8am** Te Papa Tongarewa

Conference Dinner

SATURDAY 26 OCTOBER **6.15pm** Te Papa Tongarewa

Garden Visits

SATURDAY 26 – SUNDAY 27 OCTOBER

Garden visits to two Wellington icons – Otari-Wilton's Bush Native Garden and Wellington Botanic Gardens, giving you your first taste of New Zealand natives and exotics that flourish in these gardens.

On Sunday we cross the spectacular Rimutaka Ranges to two large historic country gardens in the Wairarapa. Both wrap around stunning homesteads, one nearly 100 years old with a recent garden restored to its peak in the 1920s.

Optional Day

MONDAY 28 OCTOBER

A day exploring four gardens on Wellington's outskirts, all gardens of excellent standard and listed by the New Zealand Gardens Trust. These are an inspiration in layout and planting of varying sizes, all with exuberant knowledgeable owners.



Exterior of Te Papa Tongarewa museum at night. Courtesy Te Papa Tongarewa

THREE-DAY PRE AND POST TOURS
fully booked

SOUTH ISLAND TOUR

limited places available

Tuesday 29 October –
Monday 11 November

Lynne Walker invites you to join her on a personal tour of her home island exploring a wide range of extraordinary gardens from coastal to high country, castle to courtyard and enjoying great cuisine, wine and wildlife along the way. Tour begins in Christchurch and concludes in Queenstown, and is limited to 30 people.

For full itinerary see

www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au



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