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

PUBLICATION
Australian Garden History is the official journal of the Australian Garden History Society and is published six times a year.

ENQUIRIES
Toll Free 1800 678 446
Phone (03) 9650 5043
Fax (03) 9650 8470
E-mail info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au
Web-site www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au
AGHS Office Gate Lodge, 100 Birdwood Avenue Melbourne 3004
Postal Address As above

SUBSCRIPTIONS (GST inclusive)
For 1 year Single $48 Family $63
Corporate $75 Youth $20
(under 25 years of age)

ADVERTISING RATES (GST inclusive)
1/8 page $132 (2+ issues $121 each)
1/4 page $220 (2+ issues $198 each)
1/2 page $330 (2+ issues $275 each)
Full page $550 (2+ issues $495 each)
Inserts $440 for Australia-wide mailing
Pre-rate for state-wide mailing

EDITOR Nina Crone, 15 Acacia Rd, Promontory Views, VIC, 3959
Ph: (03) 5663 2381 E-mail: ncrone@dsci.net.au
DESIGN Small Dog Design E-mail: design@smalldog.com.au
PRINTING FRP E-mail: frp@netconnect.com.au
ISSN 1033-3673

Contents

4
The First Fine Drop
Geoffrey Bishop gives an overview of his research on vine-growing and wine-making in the Adelaide Hills from 1834 to 1937

7
Apples for Gold-Diggers
Nina Crone tells the story of pioneer orchardists at Harcourt in central Victoria

10
Planting and Planning Victorian Ferneries
Ken Duxbury concludes his series on ferneries in Victoria

13
J.H. Maiden and Sydney's Public Domain
Colleen Morris recalls Australia's debt to Joseph Maiden

19
The Bookshelf
Timothy Hubbard reviews Planting the Nation, published by AGHS to celebrate the centenary of Federation

21
Bookmarks
Australian, English, French and American garden writers comment on fruits and autumn

22
Items of Interest • Action • Online • Mailbox

24
Diary Dates

Cover
Langdale, Harcourt showing the old orchard and original granite cottage Photo: Nina Crone
Foreword

'It is remarkable how closely the history of the apple is connected with that of man' wrote Henry David Thoreau. He could well have said the same thing about the grape. Perhaps more than any other fruits these two have a rich history.

Interest in Australia’s apple heritage has been growing. While we do not have the wassailing traditions of Europe, we have an increasing number of heritage orchards – Petty’s Orchard and the Rippon Lea Orchard in Victoria, the Loriendale Orchard in the ACT and the Heritage Orchard of Bob Magnus in Tasmania. On a practical level Clive Winmill at Badger’s Keep, or Nick Dudley in Wild Dog Valley, or the Grove Research Station at Huonville ensure a supply of heritage scions to interested home gardeners.

From the days of John Evelyn’s Pomona, apples have always had a literature. Two recent additions are Michael Pollan’s The Botany of Desire which offers not only a fascinating re-assessment of the American folk hero, Johnny Appleseed, but an explanation of the apple’s dependence on bumblebee humanity. Allen Gilbert’s more practical All About Apples provides a good reference with its list of heritage varieties, its glossary, bibliography and comprehensive resource information.

T.R. Garnett writing in the Age in early June 1992 reminded us that ‘apples . . . belong to the up-market branch of Rosaceae’ - a consideration that immediately spins us off to the pears, loquats, and rowan berries of the most munificent season.

Today that season of brings apple-tasting days, open days in heritage orchards and grape-grazing weekends, allowing city dwellers to connect with the productive bounty of orchards and vineyards.

Nina Crone

Next Issue: Going Native: design and planting with Australia’s indigenous species
Over the past decade the Mount Lofty Ranges, often referred to as the Adelaide Hills, have become well-known for their cool climate wines, but in fact this is the rebirth of an industry.

The First Fine Drop
Grape-growing and wine-making in the Adelaide Hills 1839-1937

By Geoffrey C. Bishop

The Mount Lofty Ranges ‘... may be expected in the future to grow crops of grapes that will give some of the best light wines of a claret and hock type in the whole of Australia.’ George Sutherland wrote these prophetic words in 1892 about a region that had then been growing grapes for over 50 years. Grape-growing in the region survived into the 1930s, then foundered, and it was not until 1971 that viticulture was revived. The period 1839 to 1937 is practically a forgotten era.

First plantings
The story of grape-growing in the Mount Lofty Ranges begins at North Adelaide in 1837. In that year the Adelaide merchant John Barton Hack planted vines and fruit trees at his 17-acre property, Chichester Gardens, in lower North Adelaide. These were some of the first vines planted in South Australia. Early in 1839 Hack took up land in the Three Brothers Special Survey (near Echunga) and there established a 10-acre garden, removing plants from his North Adelaide property. The vineyard he planted there was to become the Colony’s first commercial vineyard.

The suitability of the Mount Lofty Ranges for grape-growing was recognised early in the era of European settlement. Robert Cock, whilst exploring the area near Mount Lofty in 1838, observed that ‘the sides of many of the hills seem well adapted for vineyards.’ Cock gave his name to Cock’s Creek, which was soon corrupted by early settlers to Cox’s Creek.

By the 1850s Adelaide had many experienced horticulturists so advice on what grape varieties to plant in the Mount Lofty Ranges was not difficult to come by. In July 1858 the Farm & Garden journal published a list of grape varieties suitable for the Hills areas, and in June 1859 the Farm & Garden’s editor responded to ‘Tiersman wanting names of the earliest ripening wine grapes.’ The reply, retaining the original spelling, was:

Frontignac, Shiraz and Riesling are the earliest, and perhaps, the best of the winegrapes. After them come the Madeira, the Tokay and the Chardenay. For the Tiers it is useless attempting any late varieties.
Significant expansion
The suitability of the area around Mount Barker for viticulture was commented upon by lecturer and writer George Sutherland, MA in his book *The South Australian Vinegrowers’ Manual* (1892):

...[on] the higher slopes, such as those round about Mount Barker, it is very much to be desired that the experience of Continental vigneron should be taken into account. This and similar localities may be expected in the future to grow crops of grapes that will give some of the best light wines of a claret and hock type in the whole of Australia.

In the same report, Sutherland listed 21 grape-growers in the Adelaide Hills.

For the period 1840 to 1900, around 225 grape-growers have been identified in the region. Many of these were also winemakers, perhaps not on a commercial scale, but they made wine for their own use, or for sale in the local area. The area devoted to vineyards is difficult to quantify because of changing local government boundaries (these formed the basis for the collection of statistics), but vineyard area would appear to have peaked in the late 1860s at around 1400 acres, with 200,000 gallons of wine being produced.

Grape-growers were fairly evenly spread through the region with perhaps a concentration around the townships of Lobethal, Hahndorf, Gumeracha, Nairne, Mount Barker and Woodside (the same areas that are now being replanted). A number of growers at Highercombe, Norton Summit and Clarendon were associated with the large estates of Highercombe, Morialta and Gillard’s Clarendon Vineyard, respectively.

The national background of the growers is also of interest. Of the total, 173 were from Great Britain, 46 from Germany, 2 from France and 2 from Italy. The German-born growers were mainly at Lobethal, Blumberg and Hahndorf, and nearby areas.

Diminution
Vineyard acreage fell from 1025 acres in 1876 to 565 acres in 1890. These areas partly reflect changes in statistical boundaries as much as changes in vineyard size and the area for the District Council of East Torrens included the extensive Penfold and Auldana vineyards at Magill. However, local government records show a significant fall in vineyard area in the period 1885 to 1900 in both Onkaparinga and East Torrens.
Many of the vineyards were small, from less than an acre to five acres in size, and probably provided enough fruit for the grower's own use. Little is known about most of the region's winemaking enterprises, except for some of the larger winemakers who made wine on a commercial scale, some for over 50 years.

Early commercial wine production in Adelaide Hills

R.B. Andrews, Monalta
F.R. Hunt, Yantaringa, Hahndorf
George A. Anstey, Highercombe
F.A. Kumnick, Lobethal
John & Isabella Baker, Morialta
Alexander & Elizabeth Lorimer, Elderslie, Woodside
Charles H. Barton, Bridgewater
George McEwin, Glen Ewin, Houghton
Francis Duffield, Cobden Grange, Blakiston
John Monks, Shady Grove, Blakiston
Walter Duffield, Echunga
E.W. Schroeder, Rabensberg, Hahndorf
Joseph Gillard, Clarendon
Charles Burney Young, Holmesdale, Kanmantoo
Alexander Greig, Dirleton, Gumeracha

It should be noted that Highercombe, Clarendon, Glen Ewin and Kanmantoo are outside of the central Adelaide Hills, on the western or eastern boundaries of the area, but they influenced what happened elsewhere within the Adelaide Hills region.

The grape varieties and the resulting wine

Space does not allow more than a cursory look at this early period of grape-growing, but, with all these vineyards scattered through the Adelaide Hills, the inevitable questions arise: 'What were they growing? And how good were the wines?'

Some of the 'better sorts' of grape varieties (cultivars) were grown but many vineyards had types such as Mataro, Sweetwater, Black Portugal, Frontignac, Muscatel and Madeira that were better suited to the warmer districts of the Adelaide Plains or the Barossa Valley. Vintage reports often stated that some varieties did not ripen or were spoiled by rain.

Based on contemporary descriptions, it is difficult to determine the styles of wines being produced; however, the best guide to wine styles and quality comes from comments made at local wine shows. It would appear that most of the wines were dry red or white table wines, though there were also some fortified styles and spirits produced.

Quality ranged from creditable to first class, with very few wines being described as unmarketable. The results from the Mount Barker Agricultural & Horticultural Society Shows from 1861 to 1871 witness the fact that winemakers of the calibre of Patrick Auld, William Murray and Joseph Gillard were judging some extremely good wines.

At the Mount Barker Show in 1867 the judges stated that:

... though some samples of very inferior wines were exhibited, they have seldom seen finer wines that those which have taken the prizes. In some cases especially, as will be seen by the award in old red wine [class], they had great difficulty in coming to a decision.

For the most part the growers were producing good, saleable wines and it would appear that many were their own winemakers. Undoubtedly some of the larger vineyards such as Monalta, Morialta, Elderslie, Arthur Hardy's Mount Lofty and Highercombe employed a winemaker. It seems likely that Thomas Hardy of Bankside was involved with winemaking at Elderslie at Woodside prior to actually conducting the vintage there.

Disappearance and renaissance

The region's vineyards started to disappear from the late 1880s, probably due to poor demand for the wine styles being produced. Sunning Hill Vineyard offered various wines for sale, and if you were interested, the vineyard was also for sale! The last of the operating vineyards were at Kanmantoo and Paracombe. Kanmantoo's last vintage was in 1937 but the vineyards at Paracombe survived though somewhat neglected. Douglas A. Tolley Ltd of Hope Valley purchased grapes from these growers in the 1930s and 1940s and Head's vineyard was a source of Shiraz grapes for Penfolds famous Grange Hermitage.

The revival of the Adelaide Hills region began in 1971 when Leigh and Jan Verrall began planting a vineyard on their property Glenara at Hermitage. The rebirth of the region has been impressive - and so are its wines.

Later this year the Mount Lofty & Districts Historical Society will publish an expanded history of the viticultural districts in the Adelaide Hills.

Geoffrey Bishop has a background in commercial and ornamental horticulture which he has combined with a career in writing and editing biological, historical and educational publications and resources. He is a council member of the Historical Society of South Australia, a Member of the Australian Institute of Horticulture, and of the Conservation Society of South Australia, the Australian Conservation Foundation, Trees For Life, and the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand.
Apples for Gold-Diggers

Proud of its apples, its pioneers and its granite cottages, Harcourt lies in a quiet valley 133 kms NNW of Melbourne. Here, five generations of the Lang family have grown fruit. The story of patriarch James Lang encapsulates the early development of the area.

Fresh food for the Mount Alexander diggings

William and Ann Lang arrived in Australia from Lanarkshire, Scotland in the ship Catherine Glenn on 30 April 1853. With them were their three children: 8-year-old James, 12-year-old Samuel and 15-year-old William. It was James who was to make his mark in Harcourt.

My first experience of Harcourt was during my Christmas holiday in 1856 at the time my elder brother was going to the diggings at Campbell’s Creek and my mother sent me for company in Cobb’s coach to Castlemaine.

The journey took six hours for a cost of £3/10/0, and James later recalled that ‘the countryside was then primitive forest, and it was quite evident that any produce won from the soil would only be accomplished with much patient labour’.

Two years later, with his mother and his elder brother he came to settle in Harcourt where his bed was ‘a sheet of stringy bark nailed to four posts.’

At that time Harcourt was a mixed community – there was Dr Barker who employed three shepherds and a bullock driver on his large sheep run; there were railway construction workers toiled to build the local viaduct; there were dairy cows grazing at Faraday, and there were the early orchardists. Nathaniel Vick, William Eagle and the Elsies, - Henry and William – jointly bought a 36-acre block and subsequently divided it into three 12-acre holdings. Before their trees began to bear fruit, these early pioneers grew vegetables: principally turnips, carrots and peas that they carted to the market in Castlemaine.

By 1861 James Lang and his two older brothers had established the Talbot Nursery, growing fruit trees, shrubs and flowers, particularly chrysanthemums and daffodils, and selling seedling trees for 3/6 and 5/- each at the Castlemaine market. Initially work in the embryonic business was largely experimental and two acres were planted with plums, apples, and pears. Peaches and apricots were tried but were subsequently cut out because of an inability to control the Peach Aphid. However the small yellow apple ‘Lemon Pippin’, and the pear ‘Eyewood’ began to bear well. Then, the two older Lang boys moved on and Samuel later became proprietor of the Ezwalkin Boot Company.

By Nina Crone

Australian Garden History Vol. 13 No. 5 March/April 2002
Thus at 20, James Lang was left in charge of a fledgling business. He found the horticultural work congenial, and he read widely to improve his knowledge while studying the natural conditions around him. His commitment to Harcourt was cemented at the Harcourt Methodist Church in October 1869 when he married Eliza Ely, the eldest of Henry Ely's thirteen children. Five years later James had built Langdale using granite taken from a local hill and the young couple had three children.

There was some attempt to develop vineyards in the area but it proved more profitable to grow vegetables and fruit. Gooseberries were a good seller, particularly if taken to the more distant Bendigo market. James Lang recorded how he ‘started at midnight and arrived safely at Bendigo market at 5 o’clock in the morning . . . [where] I was rushed and easily sold at high prices.’ Thereafter Harcourt growers tended to desert Castlemaine in favour of Bendigo where the market was open on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

A community grows
By 1862, there was local agitation to improve the water supply. When a dam was finally constructed on the Coliban River in 1868, water was brought by channel to Castlemaine. James Lang realised the importance of a dependable water supply. As a member of the Irrigation Committee he worked for four years before the channel reached Harcourt. In 1881 when it was taken through to Specimen Gully Lang acknowledged the value to Langdale. ‘As the channel ran by the top of my orchard, I tried irrigation and the trees so benefited that the adoption of irrigation became general.’

James Lang was active in local affairs. At 32 he became a Justice of the Peace, and he represented the West Riding on the Metcalfe Shire Council for 12 years. In 1891, 114 signatures on a letter assured him:


... you still continue to command our unabated confidence and respect for the gentlemanly manner in which you have fulfilled the position, and [for] the assiduous attention, business head, and tact you have at all times displayed in the performance of your duties as a Councillor.

Lang was a life member of the Royal Horticultural Society, serving as vice-president for two years and as a committee member for 12. The Victorian government appointed him to the Pomological Committee of Australia and he sent samples of apples to the Victorian Museum to serve as models for wax copies which can still be seen at the Scienceworks Museum and in the Children’s Corner of the Melbourne Museum. Another contribution to the apple industry was as director of the Victorian Orchardists’ Co-operative Association Ltd.

All for apples and apples for all
At the Castlemaine market in 1868, some fine apples on a stall impressed Lang. They had been grown by Mr Munroe at Strathlodden from whom Lang obtained scions which he worked, eventually sending the resulting fruit to the Burnley Gardens, then under the care of the Royal Agricultural Society. The curator, Mr George Neilson, declared it a new apple, suggesting the name ‘Munroe’s Favourite’. However, subsequent investigation by the Pomological Society suggested the source of the apple was in South Australia, where it was known as ‘Dunn’s Seedling’. Lang believed the two apples were identical as a leading South Yarra nurseryman, Joseph Harris, had imported thousands of trees from South Australia around 1863 and ‘Dunn’s Seedling’ was likely to have been among them.

Other names by which the apple was known, were ‘Garibaldi’, ‘Corowa’, ‘Prince Albert Victor’. The name also varied in different districts: in Diamond Creek it was called ‘Golden Cup’, while in Doncaster it was known as ‘Gander’s Seedling’.

The Victorian Government offered a bonus for planting fruit-trees, and in 1880 the scheme was extended to include a bonus for fruit exported. Further encouragement to export fruit came from the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, held in London in 1886, which invited the imperial colonies to send produce. In Victoria, the Royal Horticultural Society chose Mr George Neilson, curator of the Burnley Gardens, to select the fruit exhibits. Harcourt apples from the Lang, Eagle and Ely orchards went to London. They arrived:

... in first-class condition and were sold at £2/- per lb, ... some sent from Mr James Lang, Harcourt, the ‘Gloria Mundi’ variety actually turned the scale at 14 lbs and were sold at 1/- each.

Each apple was wrapped in cotton wool, with a layer of cotton wool between each row of apples. Lang received a diploma and a bronze medal for this exhibition. The fruit was kept at a temperature of about 40° F [5° C] during the voyage, opened up safely in England. The varieties were – ‘Worcester Pearmain’, ‘Blue Pearmain’, ‘Cleopatra’, ‘Sturmer Pippin’, ‘Dumalow’s Seedling’ and ‘Scarlet Nonpareil’.


8  
Vol. 13 No. 5 March/April 2002  
Australian Garden History
The century old cypress and Liquidambar tower above the Langdale orchard.


Langdale c. 1917.

Harcourt orchards in 2002.

According to a report in the Argus in 1886 the English consignee sent a selection of the fruit to Windsor Castle, and the Queen, through her private secretary, expressed her thanks for the present, and her admiration of the apples. Commercial success came in 1888 when '400 cases (200 cases from Mr Lang and 200 cases from Mr Henry Ely) were sent to England.' Lang later said there were many initial difficulties in exporting apples.

I went to Melbourne and tried to get shipping space, but as the Tasmanian fruit was then going to England, there did not seem much chance of getting them on board. I got some 200 cases on P & O Line and, with the exception of one lot, they were taken down the hold as ordinary cargo. On reaching England they were all condemned, and tipped into the river. As for the other lot, the man in charge did not look after the refrigerator, and the apples were turned out half frozen. For these I got £1 per 100 cases . . . I went to the Orient Co. and told them I would take legal proceedings if something were not done. They offered me half of what the fruit would have realised in England . . .

Apple pests
It was found that trees on seedling stock took the woolly aphis badly at the roots. This threatened to extinguish the business until a nurseryman at Ballarat, also named Lang but not related to the Harcourt Langs, discovered that 'Northern Spy' was blight proof so that new varieties budded onto 'Northern Spy' stock produced a healthy tree.

The orchardists also had trouble with parrots eating the ripening apples but James Lang's advice on overcoming the problem, published in February 1908 in the Journal of Agriculture, caused some anxiety. A local press report found it 'extraordinary' that Mr Lang said the best way to protect orchards from parakeets was 'to deal with the pest with strychnine. Crush the strychnine crystals into a fine powder-like flour, then dust a little of it on to the apples the parrots have partially eaten.' The Minister of Agriculture, Mr Swinburne, said there was no greater authority on apples in the State than Mr Lang, and he was usually prepared to take what he said about apples as gospel. But the Government Entomologist, Mr. C. French, insisted the Department of Agriculture did not recommend the practice because 'there was some amount of danger attached to it'.

A notable speech
On 19 June 1918, at the age of 73, James Lang gave a memorable account of the early days in Harcourt. A reporter from the Fruit World of Australasia conscientiously recorded the pioneer's story – of 14 cases of peaches from one tree, of 19 bushels of apples, from another, of apples, (each weighing 2 lbs), sent to London.

He spoke of personalities – William Schier the cherry-grower, and the Irishman Charles Thacker, who planted the first vineyard in the Harcourt area before he became bankrupt. He described the early granite cottages – Pine Lodge where William Eagle gave away plant cuttings and seedlings from his much-loved garden, William Ely's Rose Hill set on the northernmost of the three original orchard blocks and of Henry Ely's Cairn Warren and Wickham.

These houses can still be seen in Harcourt while, at Langdale, Gavin Lang now cares for his great-great-grandfather's original orchard.

Acknowledgment
The assistance of Marjorie Lang and her son Gavin in providing information, access to archives and family photographs is gratefully acknowledged.
By Channels of Coolness – Part 3

Planting and Planning Victorian Ferneries

By Ken Duxbury

In the final article of his series on 19th century Victorian ferneries, Ken Duxbury considers fernery planting and design.

All ferneries generally featured a large number of tree ferns. These were usually local south-east Australian species brought in from the wild as mature specimens, sometimes more than 10 feet or 3 metres tall, and perhaps several hundred years old. The most commonly grown species were the Smooth Tree Fern (Dicksonia antarctica) and the Rough or Hill Tree Fern (Cyathea australis). The Australian King Fern (Todea barbara), similar to a tree fern in general appearance but with a shorter, thicker trunk, was also widely used.

Exotic species such as the Black Tree Fern (Cyathea medullaris) from New Zealand, Dicksonia bertasoona from Juan Fernandez Island, Cyathea robusta from Lord Howe Island and Cyathea excelsa from Norfolk Island often augmented and diversified the collections.

Smaller growing ferns like Kangaroo Fern (Microsorium diversifolia), Common Ground Fern or False Bracken (Culcita dubia), Soft Water Fern (Blechum minus), Bird’s Nest Fern (Asplenium nidus var. australasicum), Ladder Fern (Nephrolepis cordifolia) and Maidenhair Fern (Adiantum aethiopicum) were used as in-fill subjects.

Epiphytic species, notably Staghorn Fern (Platycerium grande) and Elkhorn Fern (P. bifurcatum) were often attached by wire to the trunks of trees or, particularly in latticework ferneries, grown in hanging baskets.

Palms
Palms were a major feature of most ferneries, both open air and latticework. These occasionally tended to dominate the scene and an article about the great Raddenberry Fernery in Geelong in the Australasian in 1889 observed it to be ‘more a palmery than a fernery’.

The most widely grown palm was probably Archontophoenix cunninghamiana. Many specimens were planted in both the Melbourne and Geelong Botanic Gardens. Livistonia australis, the only palm tree indigenous to Victoria, albeit with a very restricted occurrence in East Gippsland, was frequently used. Arecastrum romanzooffianum and the tall-growing Washingtonia robusta were also sometimes planted.

Where cooler conditions prevailed, or in areas subject to heavy frosts and occasional snow such as Daylesford, Ballarat or Kyneton, a palmy ambience was provided by the hardy Chinese Fan Palm and by palm-like species such as Cordyline australis. Palms and palm-like plants were often planted adjacent or in close proximity to ferneries. The Palm Lawn in the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne is alongside the Fern Gully, while a large number of cordylines, including an avenue, grow near the fernery in the Ballarat Botanic Gardens.
Geelong’s great fernery was built around a pre-existing Jubaea chilensis. This palm outlived the fernery and still flourishes today as a National Trust registered significant tree. In 1873 Hodgkinson recorded cycads in the Fitzroy Gardens fernery and they may also have appeared in other ferneries of that period.

**Understorey planting**

Much understorey planting in ferneries had a tropical or subtropical character. It included Pandanus (Pandanus forsteri), a northern Australian species with a flexuous trunk supported by prop roots, the Ginger Lily (Hedychium flavum), the Chinese Rice Paper Tree (Treparanax paperyfera) with its impressively large palmate leaves, and Trachystemon orientale, a ‘foliage plant’ from the Middle East which thrives in damp soil.

Other typical understorey plants appear to have included banana plants (Musa spp.), various varieties of bamboo, and lower-growing plants such as Aechmea spp., Vriesea spp., and Tillandsia spp. The important thing seems to have been that the plants should present a tropical or paradisiacal appearance and thrive in damp and shady conditions. The general appearance sometimes resembled the exotic landscapes of Henri (le Dousanier) Rousseau.

Various climbing plants and lianas were grown in many ferneries, especially those associated with botanical gardens. The species comprised Australian species native to cool climate fern gullies and to subtropical ‘jungles’, and exotic species such as Ficus pumila.

A Wonga Wonga Vine (Pandorea pandorana [formerly Tacoma australis]) grows luxuriously in the Fern Gully at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne. This species is indigenous to the fern gullies of Victoria’s Eastern Highlands. Many ferneries, especially those in cooler climates, also used various types of ivy as a subject. The Bendigo and Eaglehawk ferneries are examples.

Hardy, shade tolerant and sometime potentially ‘weedy’ ground cover species like clivea lilies, acanthus and Vinca major are now a feature of many outdoor ferneries, notably the fernery in the Domain. Some of these species may be of recent origin, having been planted as a low maintenance method of filling gaps. Unfortunately these plants have a tendency to take control and suppress the growth of other plants.

**Shelter**

Usually, tall-growing, high-branching species were used to provide shade and shelter for the ‘open’ ferneries. They comprise a surprisingly disparate and eclectic assortment of deciduous, evergreen and coniferous species, often having no obvious visual or ecological affinity with ferns or other fernery subjects such as palms. In some cases it is likely that the trees were planted first, and were therefore already semi-mature when the fernery was developed.

The fern gully at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne is shaded by a very mixed collection of trees which includes some northern Australian rainforest species – the Morton Bay Fig (Ficus macrophylla), the Light Yellow-wood (Daphandra micrantha) and the Kauri Pine (Agathis robusta). Among the Norfolk Island species are the Norfolk Island Pine ( Araucaria heterophylla) and the Norfolk Island Hibiscus (Lagunaria patersonia), and at least one New Zealand species, the Tikoki (Alectryon excelsus).

Other species come from around the world – the Florida Swamp Cypress (Taxodium distichum), one of the world’s few deciduous conifers and also the tallest tree in the Melbourne’s Royal Botanic Gardens; the Monterey Pine (Pinus radiata) and the Silver Poplar (Populus alba).

Interestingly, no cool temperate rainforest and tall eucalypt forest species, which naturally shade the fern gullies of South Eastern Australia, ever seem to have been planted. A recent management plan (Royal Botanical Gardens, 1998) recommends that ‘non-conforming’ plant species be gradually phased out and a more naturalistic ‘rainforest’ character be established.

The nearby Domain fernery is shaded by Lilly Pilly trees and by some tall specimens of Pittosporum undulatum, two species that occur naturally in the cool temperate rainforests of East Gippsland. An 1873 sectional plan for this fern gully, prepared by William Guilfoyle, shows a very eclectic assortment of trees – Ulmus [chinensis], Agonis [flexuosa], Corynocarpus sp., [possibly New Zealand Laurel (Corynocarpus laevigatus)], Cupressus [semprevirens] and Araucaria [heterophylla]. Guilfoyle’s intention appears to have been to create clearly defined contrasts of form and foliage rather than creating more ecologically based plant associations.

At Fitzroy Gardens the fernery area along the creek was shaded by weeping willows, Bunya Bunya Pines, Norfolk Island Pines and Weeping Lilly Pilly. There is also an early record of the planting of the important cool temperate rainforest species Myrtle Beech (Northofagus cunninghamiana). This species is rather slow growing and may have been more of an understorey subject. It appears to have disappeared from the fernery many years ago.

A recent master plan (1997) for these gardens recommends the adoption of a more naturalistic and ecological approach to planting, including some south-eastern Australian cool temperate rainforest species such as Blackwood, and also the extensive planting of Cabbage Palms (Liv斯顿ia australis).

At Bendigo, the extensive fernery area is shaded by such exotic trees as elms, oaks and various conifers, Pittosporum undulatum, and a number of remnant indigenous blackwoods and River Red Gums.

**Fernery paths**

The path systems of the outdoor ferneries tended to be winding, convoluted and sometimes almost maze-like in character. This created an element of anticipation, mystery and surprise as of a gradually unfolding revelatory experience. Walking along narrow paths overhung by ferns, palms and other luxuriant vegetation, visitors could imagine, for just a few minutes, that they really were in a fern gully, or a subtropical jungle, or a fantasy paradise far removed from their day-to-day life.
With curving paths and hairpin bends crossing and re-crossing the little stream, the Fern Gully at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne is an excellent example of a convoluted path system. The dense foliage cuts off any views of the surrounding landscape of sweeping lawns, garden beds and ornamental lake.

In Bendigo the large open-air fernery is another example of dense planting, and a complex, maze-like path system creates the illusion of a separate world. However this fernery does not have the same sense of subtropical luxuriance partly because of the significantly colder climate. It differs from the Melbourne Botanic Gardens in that it features more formal and geometrical layout elements especially around the main path leading into the fernery from its entry gates and archway.

Likewise, the open air fernery at Eaglehawk included more formal design elements. It had an entry featuring a circular bed, planted with cordylines and fan palms, surrounded by a path, and defined by a clipped miniature hedge.

The steep slopes upon which the ferneries at Daylesford and Kyneton were established dictated to a great extent the nature of their path system. Nonetheless the characteristic twisting and winding pattern of paths was apparent.

The fernery which once existed at the Victoria Gardens in Prahran featured narrow paths winding in ascent to the small artificial mountain in a fashion similar to that existing today in the Fernery at the Rippon Lea estate.

Understandably the path systems within latticework ferneries were generally simpler and more formal with a rectilinear character. They were softened by the luxuriant and rampant growth of ferns, palms and other plants and were often embowered by hanging baskets.

Water features
Almost all the major ferneries contained some type of water feature. Sometimes it was highly formal and ornamental in character, at other times it was more informal and naturalistic, often simulating, with various degrees of success, a small mountain stream.

At the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne a small watercourse has been converted into a ‘mountain stream’ by the use of rockwork, by making its course more convoluted and winding, and by the creation of miniature waterfalls and rapids. In the neighbouring Domain, there is a ‘mountain spring’ emerging from the south face of the old quarry hole, a little stream embowered by tree ferns and, finally, a small pond.

The small stream in the Fitzroy Gardens does not have such a clearly defined character. Overhung with weeping willows, amid a dense planting of Livistonia palms and subtropical rainforest species including tree ferns, it seems to be part mountain stream, part tropical rainforest, part English brook and also – in Victorian times – an open sewer.

The water feature in the Bendigo fernery is different again. It incorporates an extensively re-aligned and greatly modified natural watercourse crossed by several bridges, and incorporating a small pond and a fountain.

Latticework ferneries generally made a feature of water. The focal point in the great fernery at Geelong was a circular lake, in its centre was a tower of rockwork, surmounted by a Jupiter Pluvius fountain. The fountain no longer exists but the rockwork still remains, overgrown with Ficus pumila. The pond has been filled in and converted to a garden bed.
At Ballarat the water feature was outside the fernery. It was a small lily pond stocked with goldfish. Although the fernery has been entirely renewed, the original pond still exists.

All ferneries required some sort of watering system. In Victorian times these were quite simple affairs with sprinklers attached to vertical poles and probably with the summer use of moveable sprinklers attached to hoses. In recent years more sophisticated automatic watering systems have been developed incorporating computer controlled programming.

Rockwork, bridges, seats and labels

Many ferneries featured various types of ornamental rockwork. It was used to define paths, make steps, form water features and support raised planting beds. The rockwork generally had a rather artificial appearance as it usually featured small volcanic rocks but the fernery at Geelong used local limestone.

For seclusion and security, the open air ferneries were sometimes fenced off from the surrounding gardens. This was especially true of ferneries located in public gardens that, unlike most botanical gardens, did not usually have a boundary fence.

In some instances there were ornamental entry features such as the cast iron gates and ivy-covered archway at the entrance to the fernery at Rosalind Park in Bendigo.

Rustic bridges, made from bush timber were not uncommon. At Fitzroy Gardens, however, an apparently rustic bridge on closer inspection proves to be made of cast iron modelled to simulate timber. Similarly made bridges can still be found crossing parts of the lake at Rippon Lea. Today most of the original rustic bridges have been replaced with cruder and less sympathetic structures in concrete (at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne and at the Fitzroy Gardens) or in steel (at Bendigo).

The ferneries generally featured seating along pathways and in shady, secluded retreats away from the main circulation routes. The seats were sometimes made of cast iron, and sometimes of timber in rustic design.

The plants growing in many ferneries, especially those in the Melbourne and the provincial botanic gardens, were often labelled, initially with hand-painted wooden labels. However labelling was not restricted to botanic gardens – the more important plants in the Fitzroy Gardens fernery, including tree fern species, were labelled in 1900 by John Guilfoyle. In recent years there has been a tendency to use anodised aluminium plant labels. Although informative, these labels strike a jarring, discordant and anachronistic note.

While the concept of ferneries has changed since the 19th century, the popularity of ferns in modern garden design is gathering momentum. A widely read garden periodical claims Dicksonia antarctica 'has become a mainstay of avant-garde gardens.' This renewed interest in ferns has again focussed attention on the issue of removing ferns from their natural habitats and the conservation of species in the wild.

2 G. Whitehead, Civilising the City, City of Melbourne and Public Library of Victoria, Melbourne 1998
3 Jane Owen 'Fern Fanciers', Gardens Illustrated December 2001/January 2002, pp 84-89

Ken Duxbury holds a Master of Landscape Architecture degree. He has worked in urban planning and as a consultant on historic gardens. Of archival interest is his remarkable collection of historic postcards showing Victoria’s public gardens.
JH Maiden and Sydney’s Public Domain
By Colleen Morris

In this, the first of the unpublished papers presented at the last National Conference, Colleen Morris considers the role of J.H. Maiden in giving Sydney’s streets, parks and gardens a notable appearance characterised by native and subtropical species.

Joseph Henry Maiden was Director of the Sydney Botanic Gardens and the Domain from 1896 – 1924. He succeeded Charles Moore, who had served for almost 50 years. The way the two men conducted themselves in this role could not have been more different. Moore was a competent horticulturist and had overseen massive changes to the Botanic Gardens, including the staging of the International Exhibition in 1879 and the later transformation of the site to the Garden Palace Grounds, in addition to laying out Centennial Park. However, he had an aversion to recording these events and he rarely tendered official reports. Under Moore, the herbarium and botanical museum were maintained in the manner of the times but were not a primary concern.

Maiden was first and foremost a sound scientist but he was also a competent administrator and a fastidious historian who recognised his place in the continuum of scientific endeavour, which the Botanic Gardens signified. His first task was literally to re-establish the herbarium and botanical museum, in particular ensuring that parliament voted funds for a new building.

One of Maiden’s early innovations was to introduce a display of fresh wildflowers to the museum, a practice he had established while curator-director of the Sydney Technological Museum. Maiden was not alone in his interest in Australian flora. His interest was representative of a growing number in both scientific and artistic communities in the latter years of the 19th century. A recent paper by Dr Ian Hoskins on Centennial Park observed that:

These recent historical representations have tended to focus on the park’s association with Federation and its broader history, rather than on its symbolic relationship with the commemoration of colonisation in 1888.

Likewise, the relationship between changes in attitudes to Australian flora and Federation, whilst symbolic, cannot be linked solely to growing nationalism as Australia faced a more unified future. Australian society was looking at itself in broader terms, establishing a sense of identity, a...
was one cause for reflection on the future and the dawn of a

...the most popular of our national parks...

Although the general layout of the Domain was well established when Maiden took up his position, changes to the boundaries were to come during his directorship. Parts of the Domain would be ceded to the Botanic Gardens, Macquarie Street would be widened, and the sandstone wall that partially incircled and defined the edge of the Outer Domain would come down.

During Maiden's directorship the Sydney Domain was the subject of a number of proposals that would alienate parts of the Domain from their use for public recreation and enjoyment. In his defence of the Domain, Maiden enunciated some of his ideas on park design. In effect the Domain became the focus where Maiden tested his ideas. Both it and Centennial Park were where Maiden and his overseers experimented with trial plantings. In 1900, when the Domain was proposed as a suitable spot for engine sheds for the City Railway, J.H. Maiden gave evidence before a Public Works Committee. He was adamant that the Domain was a 'unique people's park' and that the first essential of a park was its 'inviolability.' The Domain belonged to all, and had to be treated 'as one harmonious whole.' Maiden stated it would be a sign of 'national decadence in New South Wales if feelings of sentiment in regard to the beautifying of their beloved city were to be blunted. It was only the smug and untravelled provincialist who said that Sydney had open spaces enough and to spare.'

Maiden later published clear guidelines for the management of the public parks of Sydney in the Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of NSW for 1902, referring to the Domain as the 'most popular of our national parks.' By stating the way in which they should be managed Maiden placed Sydney's parks within the context of contemporary international thought, and the politicians of the city on notice. Maiden held liberal views as to the objects of a park, expressing the opinion that;

...since the parks belong to the people, their enjoyment of them should be catered for to the fullest extent, and there should be no interference with free action on the part of a citizen in his enjoyment of his park other than is necessary in the interests of the citizens as a whole.

The inclusion of the assertion that, for modern times, the laying out of parks should be 'as much like Nature's landscape as possible', indicates the approach that Maiden favoured. He thought that bandstands (and frequent musical performances), areas for children's play, and the provision of toilets were part of the functioning of parks. To Maiden the provision for games in a park was a necessity. Strictly speaking the Domain by-laws could be construed to prohibit all outdoor games, a situation which gave rise to debate on occasion. But since 1856 cricket had been played in a small area of the outer domain, and in other parts cricketing was permitted as Maiden wrote 'in so far as it does not interfere with the comfort of other citizens who desire to use the Domain.'

Maiden was of the opinion that any introduction to a park that damaged it from an aesthetic point of view should be prevented. He based his philosophy on contemporary American thinking, with direct reference to the final (1897) edition of the American journal Garden and Forest, conducted by Charles S. Sargent, founding Director of the Arnold Arboretum, Professor of Arboriculture in Harvard College and friend and colleague of Frederick Law Olmsted. In quoting Professor Sargent, Maiden reiterated the ideal of early 19th century reformer Jeremy Bentham that our parks 'exist for the greatest good for the greatest number', an ideal also espoused by J.C. Loudon. The one-year run of this journal held in the Sydney Botanic Gardens Library includes a number of articles subtly marked by an unknown hand, but in my opinion that of Maiden, defining the concept of a park and discussing the threats that were facing American parks at that time.

Within his own paper Maiden quoted a number of passages from Garden and Forest on this issue;

It is high time that the public should awaken to the fact that no buildings whatsoever, except those absolutely required for park purposes proper, should be allowed within a park, and that the projectors of all others should buy their own sites or, if these must be purchased with public money, they should be placed outside park limits. Almost without exception, our pleasure-grounds are works of landscape-art in the exact sense - naturalistic parks - and are necessarily injured in their artistic character by the intrusion of buildings even of the most beautiful kinds. This is the point which many artists do not understand, and therefore as they are naturally regarded as the highest authorities in artistic matters, the damage which may be done to our parks by those who have not a true comprehension of them is, perhaps, more to be dreaded than from any other class of men.
... a sound scientist, a competent administrator and a fastidious historian ...

Maiden’s labouring of this threat was related to the expansion of the Art Gallery, to the proposed railway and, in the south-west of the Domain, to the construction of law courts. During the 20th century the inviolability of the Domain as a public park became an increasingly vexatious issue for successive directors. Although Maiden expressed the desire for parks to be fenced only with a dwarf stone wall, allowing free access to the place, he stated that ‘the time was not ripe yet’ for his democratic ideas. Maiden’s emphasis on the overall design of a park landscape, crystallised through dealing with proposed intrusions on the Domain, is arguably just as pertinent today as it was one hundred years ago:

if a man sets himself to improve a certain area from a landscape point of view, his plans may be destroyed, and the money expended on the park largely thrown away if an area be excised or the park cut in two. New conditions thus arise and he has to prepare new plans with the view of meeting the changed conditions. And while he is progressing in this matter there is no guarantee that a fresh interference with the park may not again destroy what has been done...The resumed area may become an eyesore to the main portion, distinctly injuring it from an aesthetic point of view."

As part of his research, Maiden assembled information on the whole of Sydney and its municipalities - listing parks, their area, how they were acquired and at what cost. The planting of parks was not discussed in depth, but his advice was to conserve the indigenous trees if possible.

... the focus of the celebrations surrounding Federation ...

Curiously Joseph Maiden was defending the Domain at the very time that it, and Centennial Park, were the focus of the celebrations surrounding Federation. The Annual Report for 1901 states:

Perhaps the two grandest processions ever seen in New South Wales, namely, at the inauguration of the Australian Commonwealth, on the 1st January, and at the Duke of York’s visit on the 3rd of June, had their starting point in the Outer Domain, the processions wending their way through the beautiful park before entering the gaily decorated streets of the city of Sydney."

As predicted there was a flurry of activity in preparation for these events, just as Sydney prepared itself for the Olympics almost one hundred years later, and wisely Maiden took six months leave and sailed away to the United Kingdom and Europe. He returned just a few days prior to the big event. The old corrugated iron fence between the Domain and the east side of the Botanic Gardens had been replaced by a dwarf stone wall and iron palisade fence, one of the lasting improvements occasioned by the celebrations. The lower lawn of the Botanic Gardens sported an enormous carpet bed in the design of a map of Australia, showing the names of the federating colonies, and bearing the words ‘Federated Australia, 1900.’ Such schemes were not usually to Maiden’s taste but he conceded that ‘the event commemorated in the present instance is altogether exceptional, and the design and execution of the bed in question have been warmly commended by the public’.

For the arrival and landing of Lord Hopetoun, the first Governor-General, on December 15 1900, evocation of an antipodean Venice was the theme. Mr Cavill’s outdoor baths were replaced by a floating landing stage, decorated in:

... Venetian style. A portion of the dwarf seawall was transformed into a handsome balustrade, with two Doric columns, surmounted by Roman cressets in bronzed metal, giving quite a Venetian appearance to the locality."

... a playground and new plantings ...

The day was reported as witnessing ‘the greatest concourse of the highest dignitaries in the land that ever was seen in the Outer Domain.’ From an octagonal Reception Pavilion a broad flight of temporary steps ascended to the carriage road and the procession proceeded along a ceremonial route through the Domain to Government House. And Maiden missed this extravaganza; but not January 1, 1901 when yet another procession wended its way through the park and the streets of Sydney to Centennial Park. The streets of Sydney were decorated with symbolic arches, among the most curious was one of Newcastle coal in the Outer Domain near St Mary’s Gate, and the Domain was a centre for public festivities, just as it is today.

But for Maiden the event in March 1901 that must have eclipsed all was the official opening of a new National Herbarium in the Botanic Gardens. It incorporated part of Charles Moore’s old museum and lecture hall into the National Herbarium Herbarium, Library and Museum.

After the excitement of 1901, one of Maiden’s more significant innovations in the Domain was the introduction of Sydney’s first playground. A fenced enclosure, with a juvenile gymnasium fitted with swings, trapezes, seesaws, parallel and horizontal bars, and ladders of rope and wood, became the precursor for the establishment of playgrounds throughout the City of Sydney. Practical matters, and his concern for the Domain to function as a public park, were balanced by a methodical approach to scientifically surveying the plants of the Domain. And in 1902 the much-quoted ‘List of Plants Growing Without Cultivation in the Outer Domain’ was published as part of the Annual Report. This has since formed the basis for later directors and staff to monitor the gradual loss of indigenous species from the Domain.

Over his career Maiden gradually developed a personal philosophy on the planting of parks and suburbs. In a paper published earlier this year, Ian Hoskins has discussed Maiden’s approach in relation to Centennial Park. There, Maiden’s early choice of plants had a distinctly Australian bias, and stately groves of paperbarks (Melaleuca quinquenervia) remain testament to this wise choice along some of the watercourses. Among the plantations
Over the years staff at the Botanic Gardens have been able to monitor the gradual loss of native species from the Gardens through reference to the 1902 'List of Plants Growing Without Cultivation in the Outer Domain' compiled by Maiden and Julius Camfield.

established in the Domain in the early years of Maiden's directorship was a wattle plantation at the corner of the Domain near Governor Bourke's statue on the site of the Mitchell Library. This was progressively enlarged until it consisted of 120 trees of 'seventy-eight distinct species' but was removed when the construction of the library commenced in 1906. Another 'small but important plantation' was made in 1900, opposite the principal entrance to the Domain at St Mary's gate, and was to be mostly palm-trees and roses. Although Maiden did not feel flowerbeds were appropriate for the Domain, a rosarium established near the St Mary's entrance during 1896-97 had proved a popular feature with visitors, and the inclusion of roses in this plantation was likely a response to their appeal. In 1901, after reporting that four young gum trees had been planted near Governor Bourke's statue, Maiden added that it was 'intended to make further plantations of Australian gum-trees in the Domain as opportunity offers'.

8 . . . transforming the horticultural face of Sydney . . .

Despite Maiden's interest in native flora, an analysis of plantings undertaken in the Domain during the first ten years of the 20th century indicates a fairly eclectic approach which was quite changed by the close of the decade. Among the plantings undertaken were Oriental Plane (Platanus orientalis) and Sugar Maples (Acer saccharinum) for experiment, Brushbox (Lophostemon confertus) to replace a failed experiment, eighteen clumps of oleander (Nerium oleander) under the shade of fig trees opposite Farmer's Baths (1905) on Woolloomooloo Bay, seven Queensland Lacebarks (Brachychiton discolor) by the side of the road opposite the Baths, and a Port Jackson Fig at the north end of the Art Gallery (1906).

By 1908, Maiden was entranced with palms. A new trefoil-shaped plantation was created nearly opposite the Botanic Garden gates and planted with:

1 Phoenix sylvestris, for centre of plantation;
3 Seaforthia elegans, as centres of bays;
6 Kentia Forsteriana; 3 Chamaerops excelsa;
2 Rhapis flabelliformis, 2 R. humilis and 2 new palms; Aspidistra lurida. Also, 5 Phoenix canariensis at corner of central avenue and fig-tree path.

In January 1909 a wide range of palms were planted in the newly enlarged plantation opposite the Municipal Baths, and on the 15th October, the palm most associated with Maiden, Phoenix canariensis, was planted at a spot overlooking Woolloomooloo Bay, and nearly opposite the director's residence. On the same date, four of these palms were planted singly in protected squares on the eastern side of Macquarie Promontory, overlooking Garden Island. On the rising corner slopes at Fleet Stairs, the permanent formalisation of the official landing-place for distinguished visitors, a substantial palm group was planted in August and September with the comment that within a few years they would give the locality a more semitropical aspect.

Included were:

4 Phoenix sylvestris, 2 P. reclinata, 2 P. rupicola,
2 P. canariensis, 2 Ptychosperma Alexandrea, 2 P. Cunninghamii,
or Bangalow Palm, 2 Kentia Belmoreana, 2 K. Forsteriana,
2 Chamaerops humilis, 2 C. macrocarpa, 2 cocos Alexandrea,
2 Jubea spectabilis, 2 Brahea or Washingtonia filifera,
2 Livistona australis (Cabbage-tree palm), 2 Rhapis humilis,
2 R. flabelliformis, 2 Areca Baurer, 2 Erythoea edulis,
2 Latania borbonica, 2 Sabal Adansoni. Also Aspidistras,
Dracenas, Yuccas, Phormiums, Alpinias, &c.20
This paper draws on research undertaken as part of the Sydney Domain Site Master Plan for the Royal Botanic Garden and Domain Trust.

The group of palms planted in 1900 opposite the main entrance to the Domain at St Mary’s Gate. The latter toilet block was sited according to Maiden’s principle that “a building in a park is an item in a landscape and it must be subordinated to the park as a whole.”

After reporting on the various palms planted in front of the north and south wings of the Art Gallery, and the preparation of two circular palm beds opposite the Municipal Baths, Maiden concluded:

The year 1909, therefore, will be known as the year in which very large additions were made to the palms already planted in the Domain. I want Sydney to present a more semi-tropical aspect, and the planting of palms will help this.21

Although no new major plantations were made in the Domain, Maiden commented in 1911 “the palm, Phoenix canariensis, is being freely introduced as opportunity offers.”22

What Maiden had done would transform the horticultural face not only of the Domain, but also of Sydney. The trialing of palms in the Domain was accompanied by the establishment of the avenue of Canary Island Palms (Phoenix canariensis) in Centennial Park in 1908, and followed by the avenue planting of Macquarie Street, commenced near the Mitchell Library in 1911. In the ensuing years Maiden’s ambition for Sydney was replicated in the gardens of numerous public institutions and in suburban parks. A mixture of natives- eucalypts, brushbox and silky oaks for example - combined with palms and other subtropical species blended with the already-established aoracarias, Moreton Bay and Port Jackson figs. To many horticulturists today this would seem a curious combination, but the character of some country towns throughout NSW and many parts of Sydney - its streets, its schools, its hospitals and especially the Domain - owes much to the period when Joseph Maiden was director of the Botanic Gardens and Domains.

Colleen Morris is a landscape heritage consultant and a member of the National Management Committee of AGHS. She has a particular interest in the proposed publication of Studies in Australian Garden History, a series of refereed occasional papers on landscape and garden heritage subjects.
Across its distances and within its states and territories Australia as a country embraces a wide range of climates and environments. Perhaps it was optimistic of the Australian Garden History Society to attempt to cover the diverse theme of gardening between 1890 and 1914. But optimism was one significant characteristic of that period and gardens are deeply symbolic of nationhood, being planted for future generations in the country's soil. This book has met the challenge.

The introduction provides a useful snapshot of a budding nation at Federation. Hard economic times, drought and the dichotomy between the city and the bush are the backdrop for a fresh, even suburban, sense of democracy. The Federal Era was not just a moment of transition, but a period of debate when the outcome was by no means certain. The snapshot model continues throughout the book and some, but not all, of the chapters take up the theme of debate.

Of all the authors, Jeannie Sim writes with the most enthusiastic voice, like that of a hands-on gardener working in harsh tropical conditions and reflecting the optimism of the period. The chapter 'Symbols of a New Nation' traces the struggle between the waratah and the wattle to become the national flower. Strong arguments were put for each. The trowel used to lay the foundation stone of Canberra in 1913 was decorated with both. The debate was really a struggle between two colonies, New South Wales and Victoria, or, more cynically, between two cities.

There was another debate too in the suburban garden, between the formal and the natural, the European and the Australian. The point is made that both approaches were used during the Federation period, and that this was the seeding ground for developments in the interwar years when grand suburban and homestead gardens, especially under the influence of Edna Walling, were more truly Australian.

There is some useful analysis and reflection on the political context of gardens and landscapes, and on the role of politicians. One chapter outlines the history of public parks in Western Australia and demonstrates how they crossed such class divisions as existed in that most optimistic colony. Another chapter on active and passive recreation in public parks emphasises the egalitarianism of sport although it does not follow through with any discussion of the class-levelling principles of cricket or Australian Rules football. These ideas deserve to be taken further.

The chapter on the work of Charles Robinette, the builder of grottoes, rockeries and ferneries does not make a clear association between his designs and the task of nation building. There is mention of Stourhead, a garden whose 'series of emblematic buildings' is loaded with meaning for eighteenth-century English politics, but there is no discussion of any deeper meaning in Robinette's work or of his clients' intentions. Was his move to the Ovens goldfield so late in life and on the eve of Federation optimistic or the product of pessimism?

The editor, Georgina Whitehead, has used the first and last chapters to balance the book. It does seem appropriate that the 'Arbour Day' innocence of primary school gardens should introduce the book's themes. The photographs chosen to illustrate the first chapter show how domestic those gardens were. Even the photograph showing 'Our Native Land', a naive map of Australia laid out in the dirt of the schoolyard and surrounded by pupils en tableau, is at an appropriate scale for them.

The last chapter's discussion of the nascent town planning movement concludes the book at a very different scale. Optimism becomes idealism. And, notwithstanding the usual British and American sources, some truly Australian values and characteristics emerge here. Our Federal capital was perhaps the most important product. This is where the built landscape of the nation embraces the natural topography of the country with geomantic symbolism.
A fanciful design by Frenchman Lucien Henry who supported the case for the waratah as Australia's national floral emblem.

Photo: courtesy Powerhouse Museum Sydney.

Planting the Nation is well produced, attractively illustrated, and very readable. Importantly, the book is rigorous enough in its academic approach to be useful as a basis for further research. Individuals, like old Robinette and those anonymous school children, emerge from the pages clearly enough to make the reader wonder how they felt about the Federation process and debate. It is clear much more could and should be written about the period. And may debate and optimism inform Australia's move towards Republicanism. How will it be shown in the nation's planting?

Timothy Hubbard is a heritage architect with a personal and academic interest in gardens and landscapes. His firm is currently undertaking a Heritage Study of the Shire of Southern Grampians.

Planting the Nation can be purchased for $37.40, (GST incl. and post free) from the AGHS Office, Gate Lodge, 100 Birdwood Avenue, Melbourne 3004. See order form enclosed in this journal.
Throughout the ages writers, in different ways, have always shown an interest in the seasons and the natural bounty of fruit.

... a model fruit garden along the lines of the model fruit gardens at Wisley or at East Malling is the one I would try and plant, a garden which has been carefully planned for the maximum of fruit to the area and the minimum of difficult operations, and in the planting of this I would always give preference to the dessert varieties over the cookers...

The dessert apples should be planted in varieties which will mature for a succession of fruit from September until April.

Patrick Synge, *A Diversity of Plants*

---

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom friend of the maturing sun,
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run,
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core...

John Keats, *Autumn*

---

... some exotic trees and shrubs may be desired, and if selection is careful they should harmonise with the natural landscape quite pleasingly. There is no doubt about it that apples are better, more picturesque landscape blossom trees than some.

Edna Walling, *A Gardener's Log*

---

Stand fast, bear well top,
Pray God send us a bowling crop,
Every twig, apples big,
Every bough, apples snow,
Hats full, caps full,
Full quarter sacks full.

Wassailing song from Devon

cited by Allen Gilbert, *All About Apples*

---

The climate, however, of Port Jackson, is not altogether congenial to the growth of the apple, currant and gooseberry...

W. C. Wentworth, 1820

---

Somewhere in Trollope... there is a description of a Tuscan property to which the unhappy English heroine is obliged to retire, her misery greatly increased by the dreariness of terraces planted in olives and grapes, and vegetables quite near the house. Trollope hasn't a good word to say for this earthly paradise.

Eleanor Perenyi, *Green Thoughts*

---

Yet a fruit tree's glory, the most lasting image it leaves us, the one we look back on most passionately, is the memory of its ephemeral flowering... the apple trees white as roses, rosy as snow at dawn...

Colette, *Flora and Pomona*
Congratulations

AGHS members were delighted to see Norah Killip's name in the recent Australia Day awards. Norah received an OAM for 'services to recording the history of Parkville'. The Society sends its best wishes and congratulations to Norah on this well deserved recognition.

Apple Days, Autumn 2002

ACT – 6 April from 1.30 to 5.00 pm at Loriendale. Travel along the Barton Highway, north of Canberra. Turn right at Spring Road (2 km north of the ACT/NSW border).

Tasmania – 31 March from 10.00 am to 4.30 pm at Dan and Jude's Heritage Orchard, Flowerpot. The half-acre site was established in 1896. The layout has remained unchanged and many of the original apple trees are still bearing fruit. Heritage apple grower Bob Magnus will present a selection of classic and historic apple varieties for tasting and the old apple shed will be open to view. From Hobart take Huon Highway (A6) to Kingston, then Channel Highway (B68); the garden is 5 km south of Woodbridge.

Victoria – Petty's Orchard - 16 and 17 March from 10 am to 4.00 pm, in association with the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival. For further details: (03) 9431 3657 or 0438 943 196.

Victoria – Rippon Lea Heritage Orchard – every Sunday in March from 10 am to 5 pm, in association with the Slow Food Festival.

- 3 March – The Real Tomato
- 10 March – Backyards Revisited: heritage seeds
- 17 March – Grapes and Wine
- 24 March – Olives and Olive Oil

For further details: (03) 9523 6095.

Reading Recommendation


Thanks - and an invitation

Thanks to Beryl Black, Nina Crone, Diana Ellerton, Jane Johnson, John and Beverley Joyce, Laura Lewis, Sandi Pullman, Ann Rayment, Mike and Kaye Stokes and Georgina Whitehead for packing the last issue of the journal. Anyone who has recently joined the Victorian Branch may find that this voluntary task is a good way to meet other members of the branch. The work involves about two hours (5 pm to 7 pm) at the RBG Melbourne every second month. Anyone interested in being added to the list of volunteers should contact Jackie Cournidas on (03) 9650 5043.

Meet the authors

Tim Bonyhady and Paul Fox will present stimulating lectures in a programme arranged by the Victorian Branch. Tim's prize winning book *The Colonial Earth* has been enjoyed by many members. In his lecture he will focus on the garden, and the use of the gum tree, as an expression of colonial regard for the environment. Paul Fox's forthcoming book *Clearings* argues that mid and high Victorian empire, rather than nostalgia for home, was the driving force in clearing and planting the Australian landscape in the post-gold era.

Victoria's plants first revealed

In April 1802, Robert Brown, naturalist on Matthew Flinders' expedition, first visited Port Phillip Bay. HMS Investigator, remained in the area for a week and during that time Brown and the natural history artist Ferdinand Bauer ascended Arthur's Seat and explored the heathlands of the Mornington Peninsula.

A symposium celebrating Brown's time in Victoria and his lasting scientific contribution will be held under the auspices of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, the School of Botany, the University of Melbourne and the Australian Systematic Botany Society.

It will include talks on Brown's influence on botanical systematics, on changes in the vegetation of the southern Mornington Peninsula since Brown's visit and on the challenges for biodiversity research and conservation. Professor Robert Mabberley will give the Keynote Lecture on Bauer: 'Nature revealed, art concealed'.

Time: 2.00 – 8.00 pm, Thursday, 18 April, 2002
Venue: KPMG Conference Room, Level 5, 161 Collins Street, Melbourne
For further details please contact Karen Lockyer on (03) 9252 2355 or email: karen.lockyer@rbg.vic.gov.au
‘Fifield’ booklet launch in May

The ACT, Monaro, Riverina Branch will launch a further booklet in the series describing historic gardens in their ‘patch’. Branch members have been working on this plan and identification of plants in the garden at Fifield for the past twelve months.

Encouragement from the RACV

Those who have worked on the Bishopscourt garden in East Melbourne were delighted and greatly encouraged by a grant of $4,500 from the RACV (Royal Automobile Club of Victoria). The money will buy plants, employ a professional gardener for specialised work where appropriate, and has already subsidised the publication of a descriptive brochure. The garden is a particularly effective site for AGHS activity as the Victorian Branch links in with other like-minded community groups.

Recreating a miner’s cottage garden in Castlemaine

Later this year the Victorian Branch will add a new site to its growing list of working bee properties. Tute’s Cottage in Castlemaine offers a great contrast to the Buda, the other Castlemaine garden where regular working bees occur. Victorian member Mandy Stroebel researched historical and horticultural records of the goldfields to prepare a comprehensive garden plan and specific planting for this small, domestic garden that provided fruit and vegetables for a family. We look forward to an article from Mandy in a future issue of the journal.

A pioneer horticulturist

A reminder that Melbourne also had its pioneer apple growers came from Bruce Draper whose forebear Charles Draper arrived in Melbourne in April 1853 from the Charnwood Forest area of West Leicestershire. After time as a wheelwright at Plenty Bridge near Eltham in 1863 he selected land under the Duffy Land, choosing a block in the headwaters of Arthur’s Creek where he planted fruit trees. He called it Charnwood and twelve years later it had increased to ‘320 acres in one block and another 196 acres at a short distance’.

In 1871 Charles Draper had been elected to the Practical Committee of the Horticultural Society of Victoria, and he became a Trustee of the Society’s Experimental Gardens at Richmond. He is reported to have exhibited 97 varieties of fruit at the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia in 1876, and he won a silver medal at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition (London) 1886. At the 1888 Melbourne Exhibition Charles Draper exhibited 200 varieties of fruit and was awarded First Prize for 50 varieties. But Bruce Draper added ‘the first orchardists to export fruit on a commercial basis to London were Mr James Lang and Mr. H. Ely* of Harcourt.’ However, Charles Draper and Charnwood were to become known for far more than apples. That is a story for another issue of the journal.

On-line

Switch on to Apples

This is not a plug for a brand of computer, but for web-sites for people interested in Malus spp.

www.hort.cornell.edu

A most enjoyable site emanating from Cornell Orchards, Ithaca, New York, USA. Here the Department of Horticulture at Cornell University provides a good account of its programmes and research projects on a clear and easily navigated web-site. Browsers can enjoy the horticultural image collection, check out Project Promise (the education programme for gifted and talented children), brief themselves on new trends in commercial fruit production and read the reports of trips to Kazakhstan to collect germplasm of Malus, notably *Malus sieversii* in 1993, 1995 and 1996.

www.loriendale.com.au

Another clear and well-designed site from an ACT organic farm specialising in fruit and vegetables. The varieties of apples in the heritage orchard are listed, a history of the farm is given and details of the Apple Day programme are provided.

A needy garden

Jean Walker, wrote of the difficulty in maintaining her sister’s garden saying ‘We need to borrow your Noelene Drage for Betty’s lovely, lovely garden’. She also recalled her early life in Colac. ‘My father planted gum trees – about twenty – and the townspeople thought he was crazy. They are big trees now’.

Historic arboretum

From Tumbarumba, Vanessa Ranken provided information on the Jephcott Arboretum, at Ournie on the Murray River. This will be open on 30 and 31 March. Edwin Jephcott established it in 1864 as a trial garden for many of the species collected by his friend Baron von Mueller of Melbourne’s Botanic Gardens. Described as ‘a living ark of botanical history’, the site is currently being restored. Details for reaching the arboretum can be found in the Australian Open Garden Scheme Guidebook 2001/2002, page 54.
MARCH 2002

10 Sunday
Western Australia, Perth, Talk by Rita Erickson at the Historic Society Headquarters in "The Old Observatory", West Perth. Contact: Tessa Watson (08) 9384 7429

Sydney and Northern NSW, Vaucluse House Up the Garden Path - a monthly series of garden talks and tours presented by AGHS and Vaucluse House, a Historic House Trust of NSW property.
10 a.m. to 12 noon at Vaucluse House
Reclaiming the Scrub: Pamela Young introduces Aboriginal aspects of the Vaucluse area before gardener Naomi Jeffs takes a theoretical and practical tour to meet the weedy of Vaucluse House. Information on 'resiliency assessment', seed-banks, wild life habitat and various methods of bush regeneration practised around the property. Members $15, General $20, Family $45 includes refreshments. To book, phone (02) 9518 6866.

19 Tuesday
ACT, Monaro, Riverina Branch, Canberra, Illustrated Talk by Joy Larkom, respected authority on vegetables and kitchen gardens, at University House, ANU. Cost $15. Contact: (02) 6241 6464

20 Wednesday
Victoria, Melbourne, Working Bee - Bishopscourt Contact: Helen Page (03) 9327 2260

24 Sunday
Tasmania, Maria Island, In the Footsteps of Nicolas Baudin. Baudin visited Maria Island in his ship Naturaliste and Geographe in 1802. The island was established as a convict settlement in 1825, four years before Port Arthur. Meet at Trifinna for 10.30 ferry departure. $20 fare and $3.50 park entry fee. Further details from Deidre Pearson (03) 6225 3064

APRIL

10-14 Wednesday to Sunday
Melbourne, Royal Exhibition Building & Carlton Gardens, Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show. Among the usual attractions will be a celebration of Peter Rabbit’s 100th birthday.

13 Saturday & 14 Sunday
Victoria, Melbourne, Autumn Plant Sale - RBG Growing Friends, 10 am – 4 pm Saturday, 10 am – 3 pm Sunday. Entry from E Gate, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra. Enquiries: (03) 9836 2662

13 Saturday & 14 Sunday
Queensland, Ipswich, Weekend in Ipswich with trip to Fassifern and the Lockyer Valley, organised by Elspeth Douglas (07) 3282 9762

14 Sunday
Sydney and Northern NSW, Vaucluse House, Up the Garden Path – The Head Gardener Digging Around England 10 a.m. to 12 noon at Vaucluse House. An illustrated talk by the Historic Houses Trust’s Head Gardener, Dave Gray who takes participants from Hidcote to Heligan, and from Biddulph to Boxalnent considering comparative garden designs and curatorial practices. Members $15, General $20, Family $45 includes refreshments of herbal teas and unusual biscuits. To book, phone (02) 9518 6866

15 Monday
Victoria, Melbourne Lecture Series – Reviewing the Colonial Landscape. Lecture 1: Tim Bonyhady - The Gum Tree in the Garden 6.30 p.m., State Library Theatre (entry Door 3 in La Trobe Street). Admission: $12 for AGHS members, $15 non-members. Contact: Suzanne Hunt (03) 9827 8073

18 Thursday
Melbourne, Robert Brown Symposium. To mark the bicentenary of the famous botanist’s landing on Port Phillip’s shores early in 1802, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne and the School of Botany are organising a symposium. Papers will cover Robert Brown, his Victorian explorations, botanical collections and achievements, botanical art in the nineteenth century, and Brown’s legacy to plant science in Victoria. The concluding public lecture will focus on the present and future prospects for the native flora of the Melbourne region.

21 Sunday
Tasmania, Hobart Working Bee – Narryna Heritage Museum, 103 Hampden Road, Battery Point at 2 p.m. Contact Deidre Pearson (03) 6225 3064

27-28 Saturday-Sunday
ACT, Monaro, Riverina Branch Weekend Visit to Tumut & Tambarumba to inspect historic gardens in the area and enjoy the Festival of the Falling Leaf. Participants will need to book own accommodation. Enquiries: (02) 6241 6464 or (02) 6286 4585

28 Sunday
Victoria, Creswick Working Bee – Creswick Lake Park. Contact: Helen Page (03) 9397 2260

MAY

16 Wednesday
Victoria, Melbourne Working Bee – Bishopscourt Contact: Helen Page (03) 9397 2260

19 Sunday
Sydney and Northern NSW, Vaucluse House, Up the Garden Path – Centenary of Federation Contest 10 a.m. to 12 noon at Vaucluse House. Peter Watts, director of the Historic Houses Trust and AGHS National Chairman will discuss the 150-year history of the Government House garden and the Trust’s challenge to landscape architects to design an apt contemporary component. See the very different, highly creative approaches taken by five competitors. Members $15, General $20, Family $45. Refreshments include an elaborate tart. To book, phone (02) 9518 6866.

25 Saturday
Victoria, Camperdown Working Bee – Purrumbete Contact: Pam Jellie (03) 9836 1881

ADVANCE NOTICES

2002
4-6 October in Hobart
AGHS - 23rd Annual National Conference ‘Gardens of the Imagination’

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

PRINT POST NO. 345842/0016