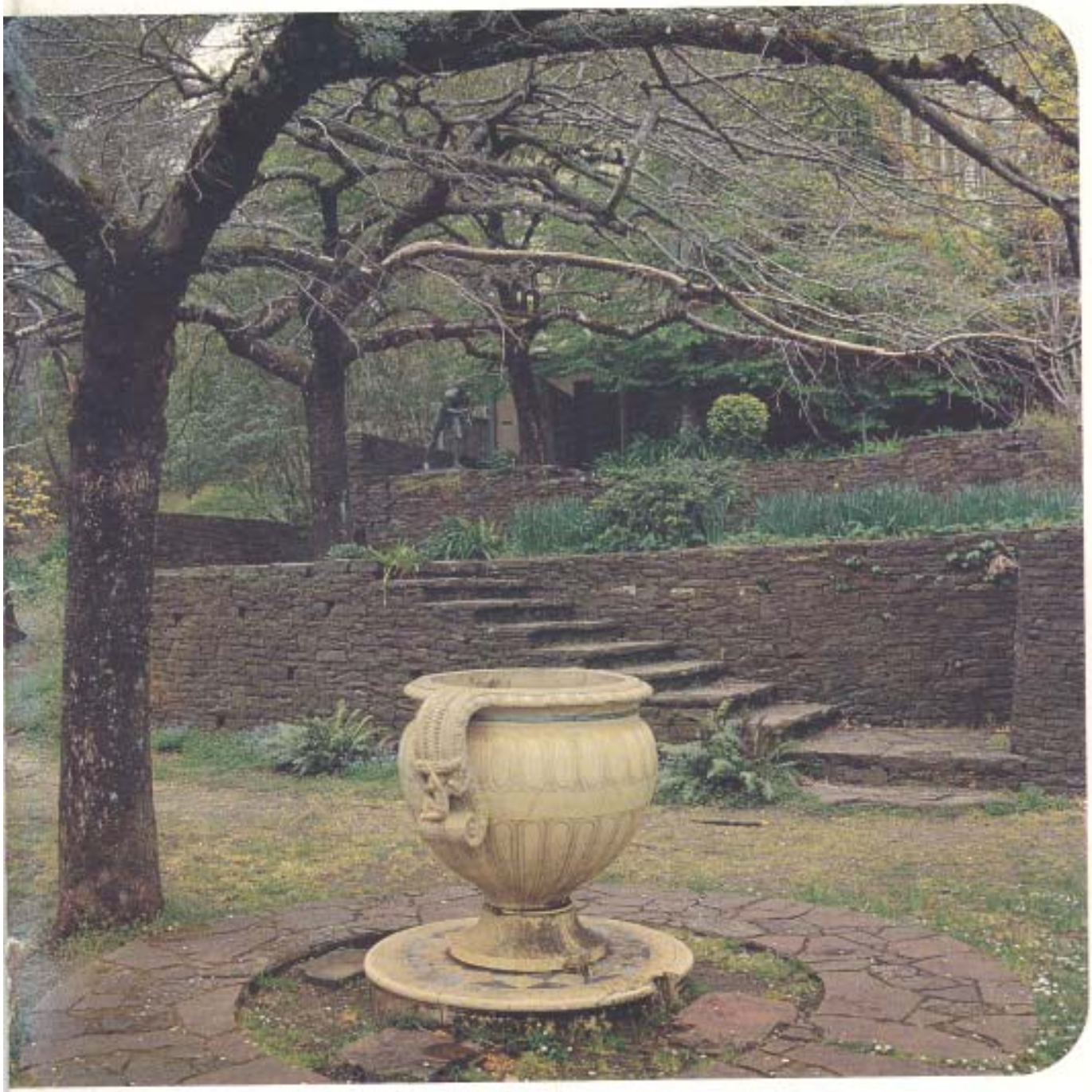
Gardens of HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE



A collection of essays on the history, conservation & management of our garden heritage

NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (NSW)

Gardens of heritage significance

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Foreword

WARWICK MAYNE-WILSON

Garden lovers in New South Wales, particularly those who visit the many gardens under the Open Garden Scheme, will be aware of the great number of fine historic parks and gardens located in this state. What may surprise, however, is that while the residences which those gardens enhance may be listed on the Trust's Register of places of heritage significance, very few of the gardens themselves are.

Over the last decade it has become increasingly recognised that not only buildings have heritage value, but also their surrounds and landscape setting, particularly if these have been well-designed and lovingly maintained. There are also some parks and gardens which have historic, aesthetic or social significance in their own right, irrespective of any buildings which may or may not be present.

However, in contrast to buildings, parks and gardens are dynamic – growing, maturing, decaying and (if permitted) reverting back to nature. This applies particularly to the great parks and gardens laid out in the 19th century, whose mature trees are starting to die off, whose fabric is worn out, and whose design aesthetic may have been lost.

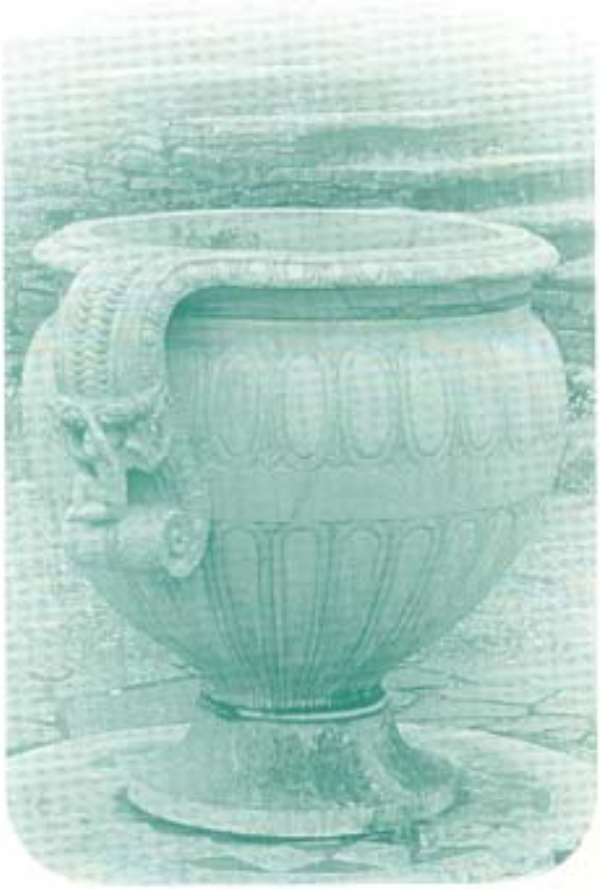
The National Trust is concerned that such parks and gardens should be identified as part of the State's heritage, lest they disappear. Accordingly, it has set up a committee to undertake that task as quickly as possible.

This booklet outlines the methods used in the classification process. It shows representative examples of parks and gardens which have recently been listed. In addition, it contains articles on related topics such as the kind of measures which are available to protect such places, the various types or classes of gardens that exist in the state, and some methods of researching, conserving and managing historic gardens.

The National Trust's Parks and Gardens Conservation Committee, created in 1991, developed out of the Urban Parks Committee (established in 1986). It comprises landscape architects, horticulturalists, planners, historians and architects.

The main work of the Committee is to identify parks and gardens in the State which may have heritage significance, to research their history and record their present state, and to consider whether they should be listed on the Trust's Register. The Committee may also make recommendations to their owners or managers on the future, conservation and management of those parks and gardens.

As there are many such places, the Committee is giving priority to those parks and gardens which are under threat, in danger of disappearing through neglect, or widely recognised as having considerable heritage value. It is also recording those places where access is available at only very limited times, such as during the Open Garden days. The Committee is also recording the work of highly regarded Australian garden designers such as Paul Sorensen, Edna Walling and Jocelyn Brown.



Another part of the Committee's work is to inform and educate the public about the importance of conserving parks and gardens that are part of our heritage, and to encourage individuals to come forward with their own nominations. It also hopes to encourage owners of historic parks and gardens to contact the Committee and seek advice whenever difficult conservation problems arise. At the same time, it is hoped owners will make those properties available for inspection, and join in the work of assessment and classification.

The Committee liaises with other bodies, such as the Australian Garden History Society, the Historic Houses Trust, and the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust, in order to cooperate in the conservation and management of our parks and gardens heritage.

Methods used for identifying, recording and classifying parks & gardens of heritage significance

WARWICK MAYNE-WILSON

The question is often asked: How do we know whether a park or garden has heritage values worthy of listing on the National Trust's Register?

In mid 1993, the Parks and Gardens Conservation Committee of the Trust held a workshop to discuss and refine the methods it should use to identify, record and evaluate parks and gardens which may have heritage significance. Participants in the workshop came from a wide range of backgrounds, including persons well versed in heritage conservation principles and methods of interpretation, especially those outlined in the Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) Act, the NSW State Heritage Inventory Program (SHIP), and the Burra Charter.

As a result of the workshop, the Committee drew up guidelines for this work, and these are summarised below. There are broadly three stages in the processes of classifying a place – identifying it, researching and recording it, and evaluating it.

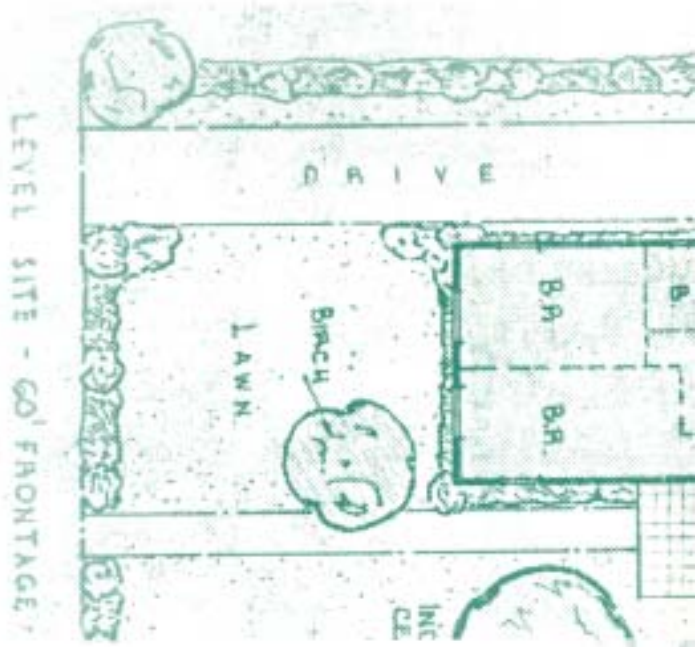
Identification

The first step is to identify which parks and gardens may be worth recording and evaluating. The Committee draws on a wide variety of sources for this: suggestions from Committee and regional Trust members, nominations from the public, mentions in published surveys, AHC and SHIP lists, Australian Garden History Society sources, Council heritage studies, and even literary works. It also monitors information on places recently written about, or listed in the Open Garden Scheme. Generally, the places should have some historic, social or aesthetic value that would justify the effort of researching and recording them. Those facing an imminent threat of redevelopment, destruction, or demise through neglect should clearly be given priority.

Recording

This consists of two interrelated steps: that of researching any documents available about the places, and of making a detailed field study of their existing physical fabric. Important materials may be located in state and municipal offices and libraries, in local historical museums, family collections, or personal reminiscences. The resultant information is organised and recorded in such a way that it is easy to use later in the processes of assessing significance. It gives an early indication of what contributes to the value of the place, and helps to guide further investigations in the field.

For the field investigation, Committee members take maps, aerial photographs, sketch pads, markers, note



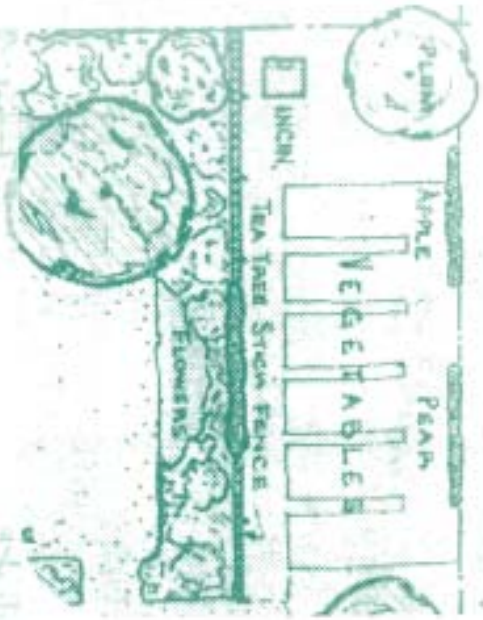
pads, tape measures, cameras, and so on. They listen to the owners, and try to understand the history of the place, and the place itself. Oral histories may be the primary way of discovering the details and intricacies of a place, as well as the ways in which it has changed over the years. But it is necessary to check and countercheck any information. What you see on a fifty year-old photograph or drawing is not what you will see today. Trees will be larger, or may have died, others may have been added; groundcovers may be different, buildings may be moved, fences may be lost or in relic condition. Owners, uses and functions change too. Natural events and forces also cause change.

All this information is recorded on a user-friendly form so that, with the help of explanatory notes, any interested person can fill in many of the details. However, there are two somewhat more difficult parts: how to assess a place's heritage significance, and what kind of recommendations should be made for its future protection and conservation. (The next article explains how this is done.)

Once completed, the nomination forms are then forwarded to the Committee for evaluation. The Committee, which consists of well qualified experts, examines all the data on the form, and if necessary will ask for further information. The Committee then tests the nomination against the Burra Charter criteria of historic, social, aesthetic, and scientific/technical value, and if the committee is satisfied, it is then referred to the Trust's Conservation Committee and then to the Board of the National Trust of Australia (NSW) for formal Classification and inclusion on the Trust's Register.

Assessing the heritage value of a park or garden?

WARWICK MAYNE-WILSON



Although there has been a good deal of debate and even heated argument about how one determines the heritage value of a place, there has been a growing acceptance in the last few years of the criteria used in the Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) Act, which in turn were reflected in the Burra Charter. This Charter was drawn up in 1978-9 at the instigation of the AHC, in order to develop a method for determining the significance of heritage places, and to provide a basis for developing policies to conserve them.

Although various heritage bodies have sought to develop their own criteria since then, rigorous academic analysis and testing of these in practical situations has led to the conclusion that those spelt out in the Burra Charter are, in fact, the most usefully generic and broadly encompassing criteria.

Cultural, or heritage, significance is simply defined by that Charter as meaning places that have *historic*, *aesthetic*, *social*, or *scientific* value for past, present and future generations. Significance is tied inextricably to the concept of a 'place', particularly its fabric, but also encompasses its setting and its contents, its use, the associated documents, and people's memory or association with a place.

The four criteria listed above are now the most commonly used. There is a fifth category, 'other', which was added in case the previous four did not adequately provide for a place's particular significance.

A place may have *historic* value because it has been influenced by an historic figure, event, phase or activity. Historic values do not always reside in material objects themselves, but in other evidence such as development patterns, books, diaries and paintings.

Social or *cultural* value includes the qualities for which a place has become a focus of spiritual, political, national or other cultural sentiment to a majority or minority group. It includes community feelings and attachments to particular places over time. Certain landscaped settings may contribute to a special sense of place, while recreational settings may be the focus of special, long-held attachments.

Aesthetic value has been much debated. According to the Burra Charter it includes aspects of sensory perception for which criteria can and should be stated. It must be based on existing physical fabric, not simply on a person's perceptions or emotional reactions. It is not confined to places that might be picturesque, or constitute 'beautiful scenery', or fit the precepts of some school of landscape painting. Generally, aesthetic value alone is not considered a strong enough reason for classification: some other value should also be present.

Scientific value is usually equated with research and educational value, and depends on the importance of the data involved, and on the degree to which a place may contribute further information.

All these values are considered when drafting the statement of significance of a park or garden. This statement is not simply a recapitulation of its physical description or history, but clearly states the principal bases for its classification. The statement can also indicate the level of the place's significance (i.e. local, state or national), and the degree of that significance (i.e. whether it is *rare*, or *representative* of its class or type of place).

The statement must also be sufficient to suggest broadly the appropriate thrust of National Trust policy towards the conservation of the park or garden. This can be amplified in recommendations following the statement of significance, which can be passed on to the body responsible for protecting, conserving or managing the place.

Classification gives recognition to the heritage value of parks or gardens, helps to publicise their value, and encourages conservation. Although classification does not offer any legal protection, it does alert government bodies, developers, property owners and planners to the nature and degree of heritage significance, and may lead to statutory protection.

What are garden typologies?

COLLEEN MORRIS

Discussing garden typologies can send many of us into a spin of confusion. For a start, the mere words sound complicated, very academic and designed to be understood by only the cognoscenti.

Garden typology is a sophisticated way of referring to garden *type*. Gardens are classified into different types by their function and size. For present day purposes the precedent for this was set early in the 19th century. In 1819 a garden designer called Gabriel Thouin in France published a book called *Plans Raisonnes de Toutes les Especes de Jardins* which presented plans for different types of gardens according to their function. This notion captured the attention of the British garden writer John Claudius Loudon who even went to the extent of classifying suburban gardens according to their size as being first, second, third and fourth rate in his 1838 publication *The Suburban Gardener and Villa Companion*.

Garden type is often confused with *style*. The style of the garden provides a further description of it. For instance, a homestead garden (which is the type classification) may be designed for example, in a geometric, a gardenesque or picturesque style; or as is often the case, especially as a garden develops over time, a combination of several styles.

Even further description can be made in classification if a garden has been designed by one of our better known designers such as Paul Sorensen, Edna Walling or Ellis Stones who had their own distinctive style. However, this is not the type classification, as designers may have worked on different types of gardens during their careers.

An excellent handbook when trying to unravel the intricacies of garden classification is the Australian Heritage Commission's publication *Parks, Gardens and Special Trees – A Classification and Assessment Method for the Register of the National Estate*. The Australian Heritage Commission's criteria and the way the National Trust of Australia (Vic) classify garden types have formed the basis of classification.

Why type classification?

The main reason to make lists of different garden types or typologies is to facilitate comparison. It is easier to compare one institutional garden to another if there is a list of those that have been classified. The other reason to make lists is to target areas where gardens have not been identified. It has recently been noted that there are very few historic cottage gardens which are listed in New South Wales. In addition, as a result of the National Trust garden typologies it has been established that there are few industrial gardens listed in this State. This makes the task of presenting an argument for the conservation of this type of garden easier and more importantly, imperative.

There are 'problem' gardens, of course, provocatively defying categorisation. Occasionally there is a garden which has been associated with a large urban-residence (which is a type) becoming an institutional garden (another type). The garden often reflects both uses or functions, making it difficult to classify.

There is a process of review as garden classification is a relatively recent innovation. In 1993 The Parks and Gardens Conservation Committee visited some gardens which were found different from other types. These were gardens attached to executive housing built for the employees of a large company. They weren't strictly suburban gardens, they were almost too small to be termed 'landscape estates' and they had a sense of enclosure, of being cut off from the rest of the world. This led to discussion as whether to identify a new type which has been termed 'corporate compound'. It was eventually decided, however, that to further complicate the classification system would be undesirable and these gardens are included in the category of 'landscape estate'.

Generally garden type is easier to identify than style. It is not hard to pick a suburban garden from a homestead, a public garden or an institutional garden.

Historic Australian garden styles – and their identifying features

JUDITH RINTOUL

Australia's major influence in gardening styles was derived from England where over the centuries the pendulum of fashionable taste had swung many times between freedom and formality in garden design. Before the great waves of botanic collecting in the 18th and 19th centuries, a limited range of plants were available to English gardeners, so ornament, in the form of man-made objects, provided the main focal points of interest in grand gardens. This focus upon exotic or unusual plant forms became a characteristic of Victorian gardens.

The following outline of landscape styles in Australia is intended as a general guide to assist in the identification of historic gardens, but caution should be exercised when using these classifications as many gardens have been overlaid in time with accumulated stylistic trends from several eras.

Early colonial gardens 1788–c1810

Food production was critical to the survival of the first settlement established at Sydney Cove in 1788 but only the hardiest of English plants flourished in Australia's arid and harsh conditions. There were many crop failures but melons, cucumbers and pumpkins were especially prolific, and vines, citrus and fruit trees were successfully established. However, all required the backbreaking work of hand-watering.

Horticultural experience was limited in the new colony, but some plant hunters found Australia very interesting due to its unique flora. Botanists such as David Burton (1791), George Caley (1800), Robert Brown (1801) and George Suttor (1801) collected and propagated plant material and set-up acclimatisation gardens.

For practical reasons, the first gardens were based on simple geometry, usually straight walks with squared plantings of fruit and vegetables. William Bradley's 1791 watercolour illustrated above shows a large vegetable garden surrounded by a picket fence with sentries to guard against theft.

By March 1792, a watercolour by Thomas Watling of Governor Phillip's house shows two small circular beds containing a pair of valued exotic trees. This is possibly the first conscious attempt at a decorative garden layout in Australia. Another watercolour by G.W. Evans in 1808 shows the beds sown in rows suggesting a continuing utilitarian purpose, but as leisure time increased, flowers such as roses, lavender, lupins, pinks and stocks took pride of place in the simple squared garden beds and roses and creepers were trained about the verandah. Favourite trees at this time included Norfolk Island Pines and Stone Pines.

1791 – Arthur Phillip's original house by William Bradley, courtesy Mitchell Library Australian Research Collection.

The Landscape Style c1810–c1860

By the mid 18th century in England, a new form of gardening called the Landscape Style had become widely accepted and began to replace the formal avenues, terraces and parterres common to the grand gardens of 17th century England. Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (1740s-1783) became the leading exponent of the Landscape Style, shunning all forms of garden ornament. He created 'the landscaped park' with grass sweeping right up to the house with gently rounded slopes, clumps of trees and glimpses of water features created by damming streams. Brown would often move vast quantities of earth to create the desired topography of gently undulating and rounded slopes.

Governor William Bligh may have acted under a Brownian influence in 1807 when he 'improved' the grounds around Old Government House by removing natural rock outcrops and laying the garden out in walks with lawns and clumps of trees, the result of which can be seen in Augustus Earle's 1830 lithograph. Meanwhile in England, Humphrey Repton became a sucsessor of Capability Brown and introduced devices to lessen the austerity of the Brownian landscape, advocating the connection of the house to the garden by means of a terrace and admiring the picturesque natural landscape effects of rocky formations and forests. Carriageways, paths and lakes were curved into the contours of the land.

There were two enthusiastic advocates of the Repton Style in the Colony in the 1820s, the first being Thomas Shepherd, a nurseryman who had arrived in Sydney in 1824 and later gave lectures and wrote of the suitability of the Repton Landscape Style to the Australian situation. The second major advocate of this style was Alexander Macleay who received his land grant at Elizabeth Bay in 1826 where he proceeded to establish his famous garden.

1830 Government House and part of the town of Sydney, New South Wales. Lithograph from Earle's Views of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land Scrapbook published 1830.

An early recorded example of the Repton Style in 1825 was that of 'Captain Piper's Naval Villa' at Eliza Point near Sydney. Joseph Lycett's watercolour reveals a classic villa opening onto a lawn interspersed with occasional trees and a serpentine path winding down to the rocky foreshore. Native trees were retained as a backdrop.

Generally, gardens of this time retained a simple form and many were arranged so that the main house elevation opened onto a framed axial vista of a landscape or harbour view. Gravelled and brick-edged driveways and paths led up to the house. Norfolk Island Pines were commonly planted as landmark trees.

The 1830s have been described as the 'Golden Decade' of wealth and prosperity and many magnificent properties were constructed during this decade.

The Colonial Greek Revival style of architecture (1810-1850) and the Repton Landscape Style are displayed to an extent at Camden Park, built for the Macarthurs between 1832 and 1835, with its long colonnaded verandah enclosed by a hedged border with a backdrop of Pines.

Brownlow Hill, built in 1828 by the Macleays, also retains a typical treatment about the verandah of banked grass with low hedging. Vines and creepers were trained about the verandahs.

The Picturesque Style 1820s–1860s

In England, the Repton Style was mostly replaced by a fashion for rustic ornamentation known as the Picturesque Style which promoted picturesque effects contrasting nature's wildness with man-made contrivances such as rustic bridges, summer houses and half-timbered cottages.

The Picturesque Style lent itself to Sydney Harbour's natural scenery, and a number of gothic style houses in picturesque surrounds, such as Vaucluse House and Carthona, were constructed using trellis work, corner pavilions, pointed roofs or castellated forms, climbing plants, creepers and shrubberies. Gothic lodges often marked entrances and octagonal summer houses were focal points in gardens while paths lined with glazed terracotta tiles or dished brickwork led through wild and romantic gardens to ponds or woodland (bush) clearings.

View of Captain Piper's Naval Villa at Eliza Point near Sydney, New South Wales by Joseph Lycett – published 1825. Courtesy Mitchell Library Australian Research Collection.

The Picturesque Style was a significant swing away from the simplicity of the former Landscape Style and influenced the Victorian Gardenesque Style.

The Gardenesque Style c1835–c1890

By the 1820s, formality was again returning to English gardens. Newly-discovered exotic plants became the focus of interest in fashionable gardens instead of architectural contrivances. John Claudius Loudon, architectural and horticultural writer, whose books were known to be available in Australia in 1837, wrote that the Gardenesque is

> *the production of the kind of scenery which is best calculated to display the individual beauty of trees, shrubs and plants in a state of culture; the smoothness and greenness of lawns etc., in fact a style to display the art of the gardener.*

'Specimen planting' is one of the main identifying features of the Victorian Gardenesque Style and was introduced into many earlier gardens of previous styles.

During the early part of the Victorian era in Australia, gardening styles were influenced by the architectural styles of Victorian, Georgian, Regency, Classical and Italianate. Each of these classical styles lent themselves to a more formal landscape treatment with the consequent parterres, Italian walks and fountains influenced by the famous gardens of Mrs Lawrence in England.

Gardening styles during the latter part of the Victorian era were influenced by The Great Exhibition held in London in 1851 where Paxton's famous Glasshouse promoted a fashion for glasshouses, exotic plants, ferns, rockworks and carpet bedding of flowers in often intricate geometric shapes.

Surviving rockworks in the harbourside garden of Tresco, Elizabeth Bay, NSW, designed by Thomas Rowe in 1865.

During the 1880s town water supplies became available to the inner suburbs and consequently, with the advent of the lawn mower, lawns and shrubberies became more popular.

Victorian Wild Gardens c1870–c1915

A reaction against over-ornamentation began in London when William Robinson published his book *The Wild Garden* in 1870, where he despised the crude colours of carpet bedding, topiaries and rustic pergolas and instead described flower-draped hedges and meadows of violets, crocus, tulips and narcissi.

Elements of this style were adapted to the country retreats favoured by the wealthy of Australia in the Blue Mountains in NSW, at Mt Macedon in Victoria, Toowoomba in Queensland, Ferntree in Tasmania, and in the Adelaide Hills.

Suburban gardens from c1890–c1914

In the 1890s Sir Reginald Bloomfield published his book, *The Formal Gardens of England* where he nostalgically described Mediaeval English gardens with their axial planning, stately terraces, herb-filled knots, parterres of coloured gravels, rectangular ponds, arbours, palisades, dovecotes, sun-dials and old-fashioned flowers. Gertrude Jekyll, influenced by William Robinson's 'wild gardens' and William Morris of the Arts and Crafts movement, established her famous garden, Munstead Wood in Surrey between 1890 and 1914 and became well-known for her 'border planting' in drifts of colour and 'woodland' gardening.

The development of a suburban network of railways in Australia spurred the growth of many new suburbs of middle-class houses and gardens with tree-lined streets and elaborate fences. Because gardens were generally smaller, shrubs such as hydrangeas, poinsettias and frangipani were popular, surrounding lawns dotted with trees such as jacarandas and cypresses.

Streetscape of the Appian Way, Burwood, NSW.

Haberfield was Sydney's first model garden suburb developed by Richard Stanton from 1902. It is characterised by street trees planted in nature strips, detached houses and wide roads. The Appian Way, in Burwood, is an exclusive precinct of Federation-style houses developed by industrialist George Hoskins from 1903. It features brushbox street trees, a central communal croquet lawn, picket fences and hedges.

Garden styles in this period generally fell into two types. The first was the Formal or Geometric Style which was advocated by architect Walter Richmond Butler who arrived in Victoria in 1889. He often used geometric flower beds set out in lawn or gravel with hedged enclosures that were often divided into 'garden rooms' using box edging, trellises, walls or fences, pergolas and hedges. Small trees and shrubs were established in lawns, with flower beds, topiaries and herbaceous borders.

The second was the Informal or Natural Style which was used in Melbourne in the 1890s by William Guilfoyle who developed the Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens. Charles Bogue Luffman wrote many articles and enthused about 'informal' or 'natural' garden design for smaller suburban blocks. He wrote of 'shade gardens', a 'wilderness' garden, 'pergola'd walks' and water gardens. Tree planting and shrubbery were brought up close to the house in these gardens. Hedges and topiaries were avoided and there was less use of flowers or roses as separate items.

Gardens of the Inter-War period c1915–c1940

Initially in England during this period, the Surrey School of Garden Design, a collaboration between Gertrude Jekyll and Edwin Lutyens, was a major influence followed briefly in the 1930s by the International Modern Movement. Blocks of flats erected in London at this time were often provided with tennis and squash courts, and swimming pools were included in the better schemes. Rooftop gardens were fashionable as advocated by Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier.

Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe was a further major British influence on garden design. He favoured white borders, fountains and cascades and landscape sculpture to create manmade landforms on a massive scale.

Due to the rapid proliferation of magazines during this period, overseas influences helped create a wide range of garden styles in Australia, reflecting the diversity of the architectural movements.

The gardens of California Bungalows, prevalent in the 1920s and 30s, often had spacious lawns of couch or buffalo with curved garden paths and geometric garden beds with standard roses or shrubs surrounded by annuals. Cement statues were also popular garden ornaments.

Driveways often doubled as a pedestrian entry and initially garages were located at the rear, but by the 1930s the garage had taken pride of place at the front of the house.

Edna Walling wrote many magazine articles during the 1920s and 30s outlining her approach to gardening inspired by Robinson and Jekyll. She favoured stone or brick-lined paths, herbaceous borders sweeping into large and open lawns, carefully placed trees and shrubs, stone walls covered by *Erigeron*, sunken pools, hedge-screened driveways to create a sense of seclusion and areas of woodland.

At Bickleigh Vale, her own small residential development, she attempted to create harmony between home and landscape in an English manner. Formality dominated her gardens until the 1940s when she explored the possibilities of a 'native garden' in one of her magazine articles.

Gardens of the Post-War period 1940s – 1960s

The typical Australian front garden of this period was generally designed as the display garden, and usually consisted of a lawn with shrubs and trees grouped in a natural fashion, often with a front path merging with a concrete driveway. Swimming pools and barbecues were common in the back yard by the mid 1950s. Concrete crazy paving was often used to create outdoor entertainment areas.

In the 1950s 'native gardens' were enthusiastically taken up by Edna Walling and culminated in an all-native garden at the Freiberg residence in the traditional Melbourne suburb of Kew providing a low-key, low-maintenance bush garden.

Betty Maloney and Jean Walker of Sydney developed their design philosophy of a 'bush garden' during the 40s and 50s, laying the foundation for an original Australian garden style which was prominent in the 60s and 70s. Their own bush gardens, which were occasionally opened to the public, were unique in that there were no lawns to mow or use up valuable water supplies. Boulders and natural rock forms were exposed and emphasised with native planting. Lawns were replaced with natural ground covers and bush tracks, constructed of stone, pebbles or compacted earth, were installed.

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The conservation and management of historic gardens

BARBARA VAN DEN BROEK

The grotto at Dame Eadith Walker Hospital, NSW. The property is protected by a Permanent Conservation Order.

Introduction

Gardens present special challenges for conservation, being particularly vulnerable to neglect and to inappropriate management. Neglect can result from financial pressures on garden owners, who may be unable to keep up the levels of maintenance required, or it may result from a lack of understanding of a garden's particular significance. Gardens also face threats from increasing population growth and subsequent development pressures. These include the demand for subdivision of large estates, and more recently, the application of the urban consolidation policies.

One of the main characteristics of gardens is their capacity for change – seasonal change, growth and decay. While this is one of their attractions, it can cause significant problems for their ongoing conservation and management and for appropriate protection.

There are however a number of ways in which the conservation and management of historic gardens can be assisted. Some of these are discussed below.

Listing of historic gardens

Listing is a process of recognition of individual items of heritage significance. Existing Lists and Registers include parks, gardens and cultural landscapes, although in the case of gardens, the emphasis has often been on buildings rather than the associated garden. Most Registers or Lists do not confer statutory protection, but do provide recognition, and in some cases information on why a garden is significant. This can be useful in determining appropriate management policies and identifying the need for further research for proper decision making.

Major Registers include:

- Permanent and Interim Conservation Orders under the NSW Heritage Act, 1978. Council consent is required for changes to any item on the Register.
- Heritage and Conservation Registers, under Section 170 of the Heritage Act, identify heritage items controlled by State Government Departments.
- Schedules of Heritage items where these are included within Local and Regional Environmental Plans (LEPs,

The summer house at Rouse Hill House, NSW. Protection of this property has been assured by its acquisition by the Historic Houses Trust.

The garden at Elizabeth Farm, Parramatta, NSW. Ownership of the property by the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning ensures its protection.

REPs). Local Council consent is required for changes to listed heritage items.

- Register of the National Estate (RNE). The Australian Heritage Commission has an advisory role in relation to Commonwealth development.
- National Trust Register. The National Trust classifies items of heritage significance, giving no statutory protection but can influence authorities in a position to provide this protection.

Information & technical advice

Information and technical advice is available from bodies such as the National Trust, the Heritage Council, the Australian Heritage Commission, the Historic Houses Trust, the Australian Garden History Society, and the NSW Heritage Office, by way of publications, occasional seminars and in some cases individual advice. Garden owners can undertake their own historical research through libraries or local history societies, or can utilise the services of specialised consultants who can prepare conservation and management plans and arrange for appropriate maintenance or restoration work to be carried out. In addition the Royal Australian Historical Society has computerised its local history collection.

The pleasure garden at Rozelle Hospital. The property is listed by both the National Trust and the Australian Heritage Commission.

Financial assistance to garden owners

Financial assistance to garden owners is very limited, but some may be available through the NSW Heritage Assistance Program and the NSW Small Grant and Emergency Program, administered by the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning. Some Local Councils have set up their own heritage funds and may make small grants for individual properties or provide limited rate relief. In addition the Land Tax Office may review valuations on properties listed in LEP Schedules.

Acquisition

Acquisition is not generally an option for most historic gardens. Both the National Trust and the Historic Houses Trust have a limited number of properties with important gardens, but these are relatively few in number and are restricted by available finance. They serve a valuable educational purpose, being open to the public and, in many cases, have well documented gardens. The Department of Urban Affairs and Planning has also acquired a number of properties, many of which have significant gardens, for example Elizabeth Farm and Hillview.

In summary, the protection of gardens is not as comprehensive or as well understood as the protection of historic buildings. This is partly due to the different nature of gardens but also due to some lack of awareness on the part of both Governments and the general public.

The main hope for historic gardens lies with informed and concerned owners, and with supportive public opinion. Nothing can replace the benefits of an informed owner who wishes to conserve a garden and a community which understands and supports this aim.

Recording our significant parks and gardens

DAVID BEAVER

There is a great wealth of parks and gardens in NSW worthy of classification by the National Trust. The National Trust's Parks and Gardens Conservation Committee has visited, surveyed and classified many significant examples of our garden heritage over the last few years and has developed recording and assessment guidelines for significant parks and gardens in NSW.

The Committee's work, assisted by funds made available under the National Estate Grants Program, has aimed to record a cross-section of garden types and styles. The parks and gardens surveyed by the Committee include a wide variety of type and styles. This article provides a brief commentary on some of the gardens classified to date.

From the 1890s into the 1920s the Federation Style garden developed. This style is associated with the Garden Suburb Movement which transformed the way people approached the planning of urban areas. Technological advances enabled new suburbs with generous lot sizes to develop, serviced by reticulated water supplies and linked to employment areas by efficient public transport. Greater attention was paid to providing municipal parks and street tree plantings to further enhance the amenity and beauty of new garden suburbs. Excellent examples survive in Sydney of garden suburbs developed in the Federation period such as Daceyville, Haberfield and Strathfield.

Hand-tinted photograph of Wistaria Gardens, c1930 showing Domain Creek draped in wisteria vines. Courtesy of Cumberland Hospital Museum.

Wistaria Gardens in the grounds of the Cumberland Hospital, Parramatta, is a grand scale garden of the Federation period. Wistaria House was designed in 1906 by the Government Architect, Walter Liberty Vernon, as the residence of Dr William Charles Williamson, the hospital's superintendent at the time. Dr Williamson was interested in gardening and was inspired by a visit to Japan in 1907 to give Wistaria Gardens an oriental flavour by including elements such as timber arbours in the shape of Japanese Tori gates. The famed wisteria vines which adorn many of the garden structures are said to have originated as cuttings brought back from Japan by Dr Williamson. Wistaria Gardens contains a wide variety of palms and native rainforest trees and previously had extensive rose plantings. The annual Wistaria Gardens fete, which commenced in 1930, ensures that large quantities of spring flowers are still planted to provide a stunning display.

Also of particular interest are regionally distinct gardens. In Commonwealth Avenue, Lithgow, a group of three Federation Style houses with gardens demonstrate the regional characteristic of cool climate plantings of the Blue Mountains. This group was owned by the Lithgow Small Arms Factory from the time of construction, which has enabled the gardens to retain a high degree of intactness. The gardens are unified by a common front picket fence backed by a clipped privet hedge. Federation elements such as chain wire gates and timber arbours are set amongst specimens of Camellia, Rhododendron, Prunus, Photinia and Cypress pines.

Row of three highly intact Federation cottages and gardens, Lithgow, NSW. The picket fence and clipped privet hedge extends along the frontages.

The Theatre Garden at Everglades, Leura, NSW, designed by Paul Sorensen in the 1930s. This famous garden is now owned by the National Trust of Australia (NSW).

Cherry trees bloom along the Cherry Walk at Everglades, Leura, NSW.

Ironstone walls follow the sinuous curves of the cliffs to form The Lookout at Everglades, Leura, NSW.

Paul Sorensen (1890-1983) made a significant contribution to garden design in NSW and many of his gardens have recently been investigated by the Committee. Among those recorded include the former Sorensen's Nursery, Everglades, Blue Mist and Saskatoon which are all situated in the historic garden township of Leura.

The former Sorensen's Nursery contains a large arboretum area with a substantial and well-documented collection of mature cool climate ornamental trees. A number of carefully crafted walls and water features built by Paul Sorensen also exist on the site.

Sorensen's mastery of stonework and in particular his use of dry stone walls built in ironstone, is seen in the magnificent garden of Everglades, built in the 1930s for Henri Van de Velde, a Sydney business man. Much of the garden of Everglades is arranged in a series of formal terraces. These link with a range of garden areas, each with a different character, such as the Cherry Terrace, Alpine Garden, Rhododendron Walk and the Grotto Pool.

Some of the later gardens of Paul Sorensen at Leura are more subtle in character. The gardens of Blue Mist and Saskatoon do not contain extensive stone terracing as at Everglades, however the garden spaces are structured through use of carefully arranged plantings of ornamental trees and shrubs. A characteristic of Sorensen's design

Superb craftsmanship is displayed in the massive dry stone walls at Everglades, Leura, NSW.

philosophy was to retain existing natural site features such as trees and rock outcrops. This has been accomplished admirably at Blue Mist where the main garden path meanders over and under bold sandstone outcrops. In places the path is enclosed by the profusion of intermingled foliage and flowers of Azaleas, Rhododendrons and the native Waratah.

It is clear that the surviving gardens of Paul Sorensen attest to his impressive capabilities as a garden designer. It is hoped that through recording and classification the Trust will assist in their retention.

The environment movement of the 1960s and 1970s strongly influenced the way we viewed the natural environment. This is illustrated by the bush garden movement that distinguishes many gardens of this time, particularly in areas such as the Hawkesbury sandstone plateau of Sydney's north that were rapidly undergoing the effects of urban expansion. Betty Maloney's garden at Frenchs Forest was found to be an intact example of one of the early bush gardens in Sydney.

Her interest in native flora was developed in the 1960s through involvement in the regeneration work carried out at the Stony Range Flora Reserve at Dee Why. After designing and building a number of bush gardens, Betty Maloney and her sister Jean Walker, with scientist Don Sands, published a book on the topic in 1966 and it became an instant success. Betty Maloney advocated the use of purely native plants arranged in a manner that was not an imitation of nature but an abstraction of it. Betty Maloney's garden displays the skillful combination of native plant textures, forms and colours recognised in the best examples of the bush garden style.

The activities of the Parks and Gardens Conservation Committee coincide with an increased community appreciation of our garden heritage. The Committee will continue to play an important role advising the community of the best ways to conserve and manage our significant parks and gardens to ensure that they continue to enrich the fabric of our cities, towns and cultural landscapes.

Garden elements – not only plants!

CHRISTOPHER BETTERIDGE

Introduction

A garden is made up of many parts. Landscape architects refer to soft and hard landscape elements, the former being the trees, shrubs and lawns, the latter being the walls, gates, paving and structures.

Equally important but often overlooked elements are the setting of the garden and the vistas to and from the site. In many rural properties the setting of the house and its garden in the landscape and the views to distant hills or other prominent landmarks are among the most significant elements.

These elements are all important, and it is worthwhile to discuss them in some detail to see why they may be significant, and how they may be conserved and managed.

Vistas and views

Everyone likes a view, if they can afford one, and our forebears were no different, although they often had more choices than we do today. Properties were chosen for the quality of their soil, the availability of pasture and the extent and permanence of water supplies. Homesteads were sited to take advantage of expansive views, to catch cooling breezes in the heat of summer or to shelter from the worst excesses of the Australian climate – harsh winds and devastating floods.

Many early properties have important vistas to hills, rock outcrops or the village church. These views may have become obscured with time by plant growth or by development. While it is difficult to control what happens outside one's own boundaries, it is often possible to regain significant vistas from within by judicious pruning, provided tree preservation orders are not violated.

In the Mulgoa Valley south of Penrith, on the western edge of the Cumberland Plain, the pioneering Cox family first built a cottage by the creek, then a family church, then, as their fortunes improved, they built a Regency villa, 'Fernhill' atop a hill to the west. These three buildings were linked by road and by line of sight.

There is documentary evidence that the Cox family systematically removed eucalypts but retained the local *Angophora* trees which to their eyes looked more like the English oaks with which they were familiar. The original entrance drive wound up the hill, affording visitors changing glimpses of the house as they made their way from the front gate. Small creeks were crossed lower than might have been necessary so that fine stone culverts could be introduced into the landscape. Sadly, this rare example of an Arcadian landscape in the English tradition has been compromised severely by recent developments including the construction of an extensive stone wall along the old drive and by the introduction of exotic ornamental tree species.

At Camden Park, the seat of the Macarthurs at Menangle, there are important views within the property, from the main house to the village church at Camden and to nearby Mount Gilead.

View from Hillview, Sutton Forest, NSW. Many rural properties have 'borrowed landscapes' of surrounding countryside.

At Milton Park, Bowral, NSW, the more formal areas of the garden give way to woodland with a carpet of Bluebells and Forget-me-not.

Making an entrance

The entrance gates and fence are important elements in any property whether it is rural or urban. Impressive front gates create a sense of arrival in more ways than one. Not only do they indicate the entrance to a property but they also indicate to passers-by that the owner has truly 'arrived'.

For many rural properties the front gate is nothing more than a cattle grid flanked by timber posts. It is often the mailboxes or the sculptures of silver-painted farm equipment that are the visual clues to visitors that they have reached their destination after many dusty miles on a gravel road!

The fine timber fence and gate of this Federation residence in Arden Street, Coogee, NSW, complements the restored house and garden on a prominent corner site.

Fences and gates vary enormously in scale, design and materials but were often constructed in sympathy with the style and period of the house. In urban areas there was often a certain consistency within a suburb and the visual integrity of the streetscape may be lost when traditional fences are replaced with low-maintenance modern alternatives. Perhaps even worse is the recent trend to give all old houses a picket fence, when they may not have had one originally – and the new pickets are very often wrong for the period. Acorn pickets are not appropriate for Federation houses but seem to be proliferating at an alarming rate in many old Sydney suburbs.

Better education of home owners and the manufacturers and suppliers of such renovation products would seem to be the answer. The same applies to the colour-bonded steel fencing now available. It would have been easy to make these fences in traditional styles rather than the 'almost but not quite right' patterns which have been produced.

It is worth spending the money on the correct front fence and gates for they set the tone for the rest of the property and could add considerably to its resale value. There are some excellent publications available on this subject, including *Getting the Details Right* and the book, *Fences and Gates*, by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria).

Hedges and windbreaks

Hedges and windbreaks are also important landscape elements, particularly in many rural properties and country towns. Hedges, either alone or with fences, define boundaries, keep out intruders, human and otherwise, and introduce decorative elements into the landscape.

Australian plant species, including some of the saltbushes, were sometimes used for hedges in drier areas, but whatever plants are used, owners should ensure that they are kept clipped. Many of the urban weed problems in Sydney have resulted from the spread of seed from once-popular hedge plants such as privet which have been allowed to grow unchecked and produce their annual abundance of offspring. There is usually a suitable alternative available if you wish to reinstate a hedge but want to avoid using problem plants.

Hedges can impart a special quality to an urban streetscape and their loss can have a devastating effect. When the maintenance of hundreds of miles of hedges in Canberra finally became too much of a drain on Federal finances, leaseholders were given the option of keeping and maintaining their hedges or removing them. Many opted for the latter course of action, with the result that some streets in the older parts of the Nation's Capital now look like mouths full of missing teeth!

One decorative hedge treatment seen in some early properties such as Rouse Hill House, between Parramatta and Windsor, was the use of more than one plant species, a technique traditionally used in the hedgerows of England. At Rouse Hill a clipped hedge of African Olive lining the entrance drive also contains plants of pelargonium, the bright red flowers of which provide a splash of colour among the dark green foliage.

Trellises and lichgates

Entrance gates, both vehicular and pedestrian, sometimes have ornamental structures built over them. These may be simple timber trellises or elaborate covered gates as seen in old churchyards and cemeteries. The term *lichgate* or *lychgate* is often applied to any covered gate but is more correctly reserved for those in cemeteries. It was a structure under which the funeral bier or coffin was rested until the clergyman was ready for the burial service.

Any timber structures, whether they be gates, fences, trellises, pergolas, summerhouses, lattice screens or aviaries, are liable to decay. If they survive it is important that they be maintained or repaired. If they are beyond repair it is essential that the location and remains be recorded carefully and any documentary or photographic evidence consulted so that an accurate replica may be made. This policy applies to all conservation works. Do your research first. The end result will be better, and in the case of significant gardens, it is essential that sound conservation planning and practices should be adopted if that significance is to be retained.

Drives and paths

Once inside the front gate a driveway or path is encountered. Surface finishes vary from place to place and according to the period and style of the house and garden. Traditional paving materials include gravel, split or sawn stone, brick, decorative tiles and, in more recent years, bitumen and concrete.

As with gates and fences, the quality and materials of paving can make or break a garden. The final decision will depend on a number of factors including cost, availability, appropriateness for the period and other

practical considerations such as suitability for the application. Paving around swimming pools and in other damp areas needs to be selected very carefully not only for the sake of appearances but also for safety.

The success of any paving depends on the adequacy of the site preparation, the right choice of materials and the skill of those carrying out the work. Careful consideration of soil characteristics and drainage requirements will help to avoid costly failures. The use of gravel on sloping surfaces can present problems but these may be overcome with stabilised products. Care should be taken to ensure that the mixture does not contain too many 'fines' or the end result may not cope well with heavy rain.

Drains and edgings

Paths and drives were often bordered with drains or decorative edging tiles. These have most likely been damaged over the years by lawn mowers or removed by previous owners as tastes, fashions and maintenance routines changed. Where they survive it is important to record them and, if possible, to repair or replace them.

Many a drainage problem has been caused by an accumulation of soil and litter over the years, resulting in clogging of old drains. When these are uncovered or cleaned out the results can be astounding. At Gore Hill Memorial Cemetery on Sydney's lower North Shore, the low-lying parts of the site had been waterlogged for years, resulting in subsidence, collapse of monuments and difficulty of access. Once the network of drains had been cleared of soil and tree roots the drainage improved dramatically.

Drains and tree roots don't mix. Old earthenware sewer and stormwater pipes may have cracked or broken over the years as a result of soil movement or root damage. Even a slight leak from a broken seal will be sufficient to encourage root penetration into an old pipe. Some tree species such as Moreton Bay Fig can have huge roots well beyond the dripline of the tree.

Once a sewer line has failed it is difficult to repair it, particularly if the offending tree remains. Every problem of this nature will need to be examined individually, but as a rule, avoid planting those tree species which are known to cause problems near sewer lines and drains. Your local water authority should have a list of species to avoid and it will probably include the large ornamental figs, willows, poplars and liquidambar.

New pipes in gardens with lots of trees should be PVC laid in long runs with the minimum of joins. If offending trees are self-sown woody weeds they should be removed or cut down and their stumps poisoned. This maxim applies to vegetation posing a threat to other garden elements including paths and structures. If the path or structure is deemed to be more significant than the plant then the plant should go. Such a decision is not always easy, especially for a garden lover, but sometimes the bullet just has to be bitten!

The statuary at Everglades, Leura, NSW, complements the fine stone walls and ornamental plantings in Paul Sorensen's best-known garden.

The extensive grotto work at Yaralla, Concord, NSW, provides niches for many ornamental plants as well as interesting passageways and cool caves in which visitors can admire this recreation of nature.

Walls

Walls are a major feature of many gardens and heritage landscapes. Some of the world's most famous gardens such as Sissinghurst in Kent and Hidcote Manor in Gloucestershire derive much of their charm from the use of walls to create a series of outdoor rooms, each with its own special character. Of course, such spaces may be created with plantings and other devices such as arbours and screens. Nevertheless, walls are important elements to define boundaries, to handle changes in levels, to create surprises and to provide opportunities for growing climbing, trailing and espaliered plants.

The use of local stone for walls imparts a particular flavour to gardens and landscapes in certain areas. Many of the beautiful gardens in the upper Blue Mountains of New South Wales have walls and terraces constructed of the local Narrabeen Series sandstone. In the Illawarra region, around Kiama, many old property boundaries are defined by the local volcanic rock employed in drystone walls.

The ha-ha is a landscape device popular in the English landscape tradition. It is based on the use of a ditch, a

wall, or a combination of the two, to provide uninterrupted views from a house while keeping grazing stock away from the immediate vicinity of the residence. While ha-has are rare in Australia there are some examples such as that at Merrang, Hexham in Victoria.

For centuries garden designers have sought to modify nature or to mimic it on a smaller scale. The use of existing rock outcrops or the importing of large rocks has enabled gardeners to recreate alpine rockeries, caves and grottoes.

Such features were common in many Victorian and Edwardian period gardens and should be conserved although they may appear kitsch to modern eyes. Yaralla at Concord, New South Wales has extensive grottoes dating from the early 20th century when the owner Dame Eadith Walker, inspired by her overseas travels, introduced garden ideas from different countries. She even imported an Indian house and a Norwegian house and had them erected in the garden.

Grottoes were constructed from concrete over steel frames and contained cool passageways, small caves, pools and plenty of opportunities for plant growth. The grottoes at Yaralla are planted with palms, orchids, bromeliads and succulents which give them an exotic, tropical look. The old animal enclosures at Taronga and Melbourne zoos were constructed in a similar manner.

Such artificial landscapes are still being developed to great effect in places such as the Sydney Tropical Centre at the Royal Botanic Gardens where the 'mock rock' of a miniature Kakadu and tropical streams has fooled even professional geologists!

Summerhouses, aviaries and pavilions

Many large old gardens contain structures such as gazebos (the word gazebo is said to mean, in Dog Latin, 'I will gaze' and refers to a summerhouse or pavilion sited to take advantage of more distant views), aviaries, glasshouses, conservatories, arbours, potting sheds and tennis pavilions. These may be constructed of timber, stone, brick, iron or steel, wirework, glass, or a combination of two or more of these materials. Their location, design and condition should all be recorded accurately and comprehensively before any repair or reconstruction is contemplated.

Some gardens have unusual structures like the castellated gentlemen's smoking room at Woolmers near Longford in northern Tasmania and the magnificent oriental-inspired tennis pavilion at Eryldene, the Gordon residence of the late Professor E.G. Waterhouse. Camelot, the magical Queen Anne Revival house at Narellan, on Sydney's southern outskirts, had an aviary, glasshouse, tennis pavilion, smoking kiln and other structures, many now, sadly, in ruins.

The boundary between true garden elements and what may be considered outbuildings may be blurred. Outbuildings often combine with the main house to create garden spaces important in the overall landscape of the property. At Bella Vista, Kellyville, a property once owned by John and Elizabeth Macarthur, and that was later, under the Pearce family, a major citrus orchard, the 19th century farm buildings are clustered on a hilltop, surrounded by magnificent Moreton Bay Fig trees. Bella Vista is notable also for its stunning entrance drive of Bunya Pines.

Statues, fountains and other ornaments

Ornamental features have embellished gardens for centuries. In Australia their use reached its zenith in the late 19th century when so-called 'Boom' style houses and gardens reflected the enormous wealth generated by the gold rushes and pastoral expansion. Grand private gardens and public parks were filled with statuary, urns, fountains and other decorative elements in a sometimes exaggerated and ostentatious display of wealth and social status.

Among the many features in the garden at Camelot, Narellan, NSW, are flower beds in the shapes of the suits in a pack of cards – diamond, heart, spade and club.

Tastes and fashions change very rapidly. We should not criticise our forebears for what we may deem to be their bad taste but, rather, wonder at the skill of the sculptor who made a marble statue and the technologies which produced a Colebrookdale cast iron fountain or a Lithgow pottery urn. The use of garden ornaments declined through the middle decades of the 20th century but has seen a significant revival in recent years. While surviving original ornaments should be retained and cherished, great care must be taken with the introduction of new ornaments into historic gardens. With the current fad for retro-fashions there is a risk that every garden may soon look like a mini-Versailles or a Tuscan villa.

Provided ornaments are chosen with reference to historical traditions and adherence to good design principles, they can be very important elements to contain or complement garden plantings and to establish points of interest in the landscape. The carefully-placed statue or

splashing fountain can create a mood for a garden which sets it apart from others. The sound of water, the breeze whispering in the trees, the song of birds and the play of shadows cast by trees on building walls are all less tangible elements of gardens which good gardeners will strive to achieve.

Water features, ponds and bridges

Water has been an essential component of gardens since the days of ancient Persia. In a predominantly arid continent like Australia, the use of water features in combination with plantings can create a cooler, moist microclimate around a house, imparting an oasis-like effect in an otherwise dry environment. Of course, this presupposes the availability of water – not always possible in a land of frequent droughts.

Existing streams may be incorporated into gardens or diverted for that purpose. Many great gardens have ornamental lakes, ponds and streams to add a picturesque touch to the landscape. Farm dams can double as garden elements and havens for native wildlife by judicious planting of damp-loving species and creation of artificial islands to protect nesting birds.

The decorative impact of a watercourse can be created by the use of carefully arranged rocks and pebbles to suggest a stream, a technique common in the Japanese garden tradition. Examples are sometimes found in old Australian gardens and should be preserved.

The reflective pool is an important element in the 20th century garden at Micalago, an early house at Michelago, NSW, south of Canberra.

Water bodies also provide opportunities for introduction of decorative crossing features such as bridges and stepping stones. Bridges may be simple stone slabs or highly ornamental structures in rusticated or Chinoiserie styles such as those at Sydney's Royal Botanic Gardens or at Rippon Lea in Melbourne.

Garden furniture

There is little point in establishing a garden if one cannot sit in it to admire the view, take in the perfume, listen to the birds, enjoy an outdoor meal or simply contemplate nature, the meaning of life or whatever takes one's fancy. Garden furniture was an important element of historic gardens and came in a wide range of styles including simple wooden seats, elaborate cast iron and timber benches, and sometimes whimsical rusticated 'bush furniture'.

A mind-boggling array of outdoor furniture is available today but much of it looks out of place in old gardens. Unless your garden is High Victorian, Boom Style or perhaps Federation it's probably better to avoid very elaborate designs and opt for something simple. A basic teak or stone bench will last for years and will not look out of place in most gardens. Cast aluminium reproduction Colebrookdale furniture and Lutyens seats can look decidedly odd in some gardens!

Tennis courts and croquet lawns

Tennis courts and, less commonly, croquet lawns were features of many larger historic gardens in both suburban and rural environments. While it is generally easier to incorporate a court into a homestead garden where space is not a problem, it is quite a different matter to squeeze a full-size court into a suburban garden which may have already been decimated by subdivision. Retractable screens can help to reduce visual intrusions and a half-size court may be an acceptable space-saving alternative for some keen tennis players. There will be sites, though, where a tennis court can simply not fit in, and the owners may need to join the local club to play.

Swimming pools, multi-car garages and satellite TV dishes

Many wealthy home owners aspire to a lifestyle which demands swimming pools, multi-car garages and satellite TV dishes. These elements are often squeezed into significant landscapes which were never designed to take them.

Swimming pools should be sited with ease of construction and maintenance in mind, and with careful attention paid to choice of finishes and integration with the existing house and garden. Where possible they should be designed and located to reduce visual impact to the minimum. In some cases swimming pools were features of old houses as with the harbourside pools in Sydney Harbour, dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In-ground pools did not start to appear in any numbers until much more recently although some grander houses had them as early as the 1920s. At Boomerang, the Hollywood Spanish Revival home of the Albert music publishing family at Sydney's Elizabeth Bay, new owners wished to install an in-ground pool in the garden. There were two choices. One, to tuck it away to one side of the garden and try to make it as recessive as possible. The

In the early 20th century car ownership was restricted to the wealthy but as the middle class increased in size and cars became more affordable, space in the garden had to be found for a garage. The two-car 'motor shed' at Yaralla, Concord, NSW, is an early example of its type.

trouble with this option was that it would have destroyed the very strong spatial symmetry of the house and garden. On the assumption that a house of Boomerang's period and grandeur may well have had a swimming pool in the first place, the decision was taken to design a pool which adhered to the existing symmetry and which paid reference to the reflective pool on the other side of the house. The end result is a pool which looks as though it has always been there.

Not every home owner wants or needs a 6-car garage but they are not unknown, especially in upmarket residential areas such as parts of Sydney's eastern suburbs. Slotting a garage or carport into an existing garden can destroy the character of the house and the landscape unless it is handled with considerable care. Nothing jars as much as a flat-roofed steel carport plonked in front of a Victorian Gothic cottage or a Californian Bungalow. There are many appropriate design solutions for accommodating motor vehicles in old gardens. While they may still detract slightly from the building they not only provide housing for the car but may also provide opportunities for planting of climbers and other ornamentals.

If someone in your household is determined to see live overseas television beamed in from space via satellite, then you may have problems. Satellite dishes do not sit easily in period gardens and cannot have vegetation overhanging them or planted too close to them. The best hope is that the dish can be sited in an out-of-the-way corner and painted a recessive colour.

Conclusions

As discussed above, there are indeed many parts to a garden, and without even considering the layout and plantings. The important things to be remembered are that all these elements combine to make a good garden and that it is the way in which the parts contribute to the whole that can make a good garden great or an historic garden significant.

Suggested reading

PERIODICALS

Australian Garden History, Journal of the Australian Garden History Society; *The Cottager*, published by Wild Woodbine Studio, Bowen Mountain; *New South Wales Historic Environment*, published by the Council for the Historic Environment.

There are often articles on historic gardens and their elements in issues of the broad circulation gardening magazines such as *Gardening Australia* and in journals such as *Belle*, *Vogue Living* and the *Lifestyle* series of publications.

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The role of government in garden conservation – a case study

SUSIE HOPPE

Introduction

All levels of government can play an important part in the ongoing conservation and protection of gardens of heritage significance in New South Wales. The role they play varies with the level of government, can be statutory or non-statutory and depends also on the nature and significance of individual gardens.

The potential for government to take action in the conservation of gardens may be demonstrated by looking at an example. Combewood at Penrith illustrates well a variety of ways their conservation could be assisted by government.

The heritage significance of Combewood garden

Combewood has strong historical links, which continue today, with the Woodriff family, to whom it was given as part of a much larger land grant in 1804. The original land grant of 1,000 acres was subdivided last century. One branch of the family took over the northern half and completed the house, 'Combewood', in 1890 with the layout of the garden following.

Although a late example of its type, it is of significance as it demonstrates the plantings, garden layout, landscape and utilisation features associated with 19th century pastoral estates on the Cumberland Plain. The rural setting, garden and buildings enhance each other and are significant as a whole. The property is held in high esteem by the community as a link with early settlement, and this is demonstrated by being much visited on open days and by the support the local community groups and council have shown for the ongoing conservation of the property.

Issues in relation to the ongoing conservation of Combewood

The Royal Army Engineers took over land on the southern boundary of the house and garden in 1938. In 1960 Council rezoned the land for industrial use, the State Government resumed land for service corridors and the property was sold.

The garden of Combewood, Penrith, NSW.

Further subdivision and the building of Coreen Drive cut into the garden to the north.

The Woodriff family later reacquired the house. Council bought the lots containing the carriage loop, whilst a service station was built on the lots on the corner of Castlereagh Road and Coreen Avenue which also retain the original entrance driveway and associated plantings.

The industrial lands in the Penrith local government area have recently been the subject of a draft local environmental plan (LEP) which included Combewood. The property was then excluded from the plan by Council following consideration of the National Trust's submission to the exhibited plan. Development of appropriate controls and management for the property will be part of the study of the Army lands to the south and south east.

More detailed information on Combewood is now available to Council following the preparation of a conservation plan for the property, including the house and garden, by Sydney University heritage conservation students in 1994.

Possible conservation action by government

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Penrith Council, as the local authority, has the responsibility for the protection of the heritage of its area. Through the acquisition of the carriageway loop, and the undertaking of a heritage study of the local government area and the subsequent listing of Combewood in Council's Heritage LEP 1991, the Council has already recognised the significance of Combewood. An incentives clause, enabling Council to vary the uses designated for the industrial zone to enable conservation of the property, is already included in the heritage LEP.

In reviewing the current zoning of the property and planning controls, there are a number of actions open to Council. These include:

- Rezoning of the land to a more appropriate zone;
- Rezoning of the land to the south to a zone sympathetic to the ongoing conservation of Combewood;
- Identification and protection of an appropriate curtilage to respect the significance of Combewood house and garden in its setting;
- Inclusion of early trees in a schedule of significant trees, including those along the original entrance driveway, in the Army land to the south along Boundary Creek and on other lands subdivided since the 1960s; and,
- Protection of any archeological remains, particularly in the old stables area.

A development control plan (DCP) could be prepared which could include:

- Protection of the visual links from the property to the river and the Blue Mountains and to any other sites with historical links to the property;
- Maintenance of a relationship to other heritage items in the area, for example Thornton Hall on the Army land to the south, and to any plantings and features which were part of the original land grant;
- Identification of appropriate siting, height, mass and scale of new development in surrounding areas; and,
- Reinforcement of the 19th century character of the existing vegetation by developing planting schemes for surrounding lands which were part of the original land grant.

In addition, a more detailed management and maintenance plan could be developed for the property which could include recommendations for long term and day to day maintenance. Interpretive materials for the site could be prepared.

STATE GOVERNMENT

The NSW Heritage Office and the Heritage Council are concerned to ensure the ongoing conservation of items of heritage significance. Ministerial Directions issued under Section 117 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 can direct councils to protect heritage items included in any LEPs. The Heritage Office has developed standard heritage clauses for LEPs.

In addition, the Heritage Office manages the Heritage Assistance Program – a grants and loans program. Council could apply for grants for study of or work to heritage items under this program.

The Heritage Council can recommend to the Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning the making of a Permanent Conservation Order over items of heritage significance. Where such items are protected through LEPs, the Heritage Council usually considers that this provides adequate protection for the conservation of these properties.

COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT

Combewood is listed on the Register of the National Estate. This not only is recognition of its heritage significance but also gives an advisory role to the Australian Heritage Commission when the Commonwealth is involved in a development which could affect the significance of an item on the Register. The Australian Heritage Commission thus has a role in commenting on any proposal by the Army land to the south of Combewood.

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On being a garden detective

COLLEEN MORRIS

Numerous problems can arise when researching the history of a garden. Often it is claimed, or known, that a prominent garden designer was involved with a certain garden, and it is often difficult to substantiate exactly what this involvement was. If the intrepid explorer is lucky, some sort of plan for the garden will have been drawn. The next step is to ascertain to what extent this plan has been implemented. In general, few records are kept of a garden's development. The following example is a recent experience while drafting a listing proposal for the National Trust.

The farmborough road experience

In 1993 the Committee decided to investigate some of the sites listed in the Wollongong Heritage Study with a view to listing gardens in that area. One of the sites visited was a group of four cottages built as employee housing in the late 1940s near Mt Kembla, and now Crown Land. Our main interest in this site was that it is a small landscape estate by the prominent landscape designer Edna Walling. Walling would most probably have called it a village and it is the only example of her concept of a designed village, apart from Bickleigh Vale in Victoria, that was built.

Information was sketchy. The local council seemed to know very little about the site and the National Trust is not in the habit of putting advertisements in the local paper for information. Peter Watts, in his book *The Gardens of Edna Walling*, quotes Walling's description of directing a front-end loader while it shifted boulders around the house sites. Unfortunately the company that had the estate built, Broken Hill Associated Smelters, was taken over by BHP making the search for records pertaining to the building of the estate difficult. The librarian at BHP Archives in Melbourne was extremely helpful: 'The mystery Edna Walling gardens – if only we knew!' This was not their first enquiry on the subject.

When Peter Watts was contacted he was able to provide the name of an architect in Melbourne who had the rough sketch plans of the site. Several telephone calls to various people in Melbourne later it was confirmed that yes, there were plans. This information was very exciting! In addition, it was discovered from an officer at National Parks and Wildlife, who manage the site, that a student had used the cottages as an example in an Advanced Study Report (ASR) for her Bachelor of Architecture degree. After tracking down both the ASR and the now practising architect, it was confirmed that the plans she had used were the same as those in Melbourne and neither of us had been able to ascertain to what extent the plans had been implemented. However, the plans were extremely useful in the understanding of Walling's concept for the site, especially when viewed in conjunction with a later publication by Thistle Y. Harris, *Australian Plants for the Garden*, for which Walling had supplied the garden plans.

It seemed hard to believe that there was just no additional information available on these gardens. People lived in these houses. How many birthday party photos or photos of the pet dog or the new car were framed with a background of these gardens?

The difficulty of researching in one's spare time and at a distance was underlined. If the garden is a local one, contacts are available and old newspapers in the local history files at the municipal library can supply snippets of information. Miraculously a contact was found through a chance remark in Canberra by a Committee member – someone knew someone. More telephone calls – a very good invention, the telephone.

The couple eventually contacted had lived in one of the cottages for 18 years, from the mid 1960s until the early 1980s. Active members of the Australian Garden History Society, they had been eager to have the gardens officially recognised and had argued for them to be included in the LEP. They were able to supply important information about the gardens' development. They apparently have a photo album which highlights the deteriorating condition of the gardens and the need for a management strategy for them, although it would be difficult to maintain them to the standard which BHP set: a gardener one day per week for each cottage. They also thought that someone from Wollongong Botanic Gardens had done a horticultural survey of the site.

So, this story has a relatively happy non-ending, for the researcher, not the gardens, as yet. There must be someone whose knows someone... who moved into the cottages when they were first built, or who knows the gardener that worked there...

It is hoped that the National Trust heritage listing for this landscape estate will emphasise its importance. The historical research is always important, despite the difficulties encountered, as it provides a sound basis for the Trust's arguments.