

Inflorescence

February 2025

The Newsletter of the Southern Highlands
Branch of the AGHS



**Berrima District Museum 1 (A) Market Place
Berrima**

Now open Friday, Saturday and Sundays

**Come and see *Gardens and Landscapes in the
Southern Highlands Then and Now***

Upcoming Events 2025

19 February - Movie 'A Little Chaos' at the Empire Cinema, Bowral

27 March - Bus trip to Bundanon

8-10 April - Bus Tour to the Blue Mountains and Mayfield Garden

Report from the Chair

Inflorescence is running a little late this month as our editor Bud Townsing is taking a short break. I volunteered to create the newsletter with the assistance of the Committee.

We had a wonderful Christmas celebration at the home of Eleanor and John Dartnall on 8 December which ended and very busy but productive 2024.

Our first event for 2025 is the movie at the Empire Cinema Bowral called **A Little Chaos**. It is this coming Wednesday 19 February at 2-4pm. This is an opportunity for us to raise some funds to support our advocacy initiatives.

In this issue of *Inflorescence* more detail about each of the efforts the AGHS-Southern Highlands Branch (SHB) Committee (as well as some individual members) has been included so all of our members are aware of our efforts on behalf of the branch. There have been some positive outcomes for several of our advocacy initiatives especially where we have assisted other stakeholders.

The Land and Environment Court did not approve the DA for the **Berry Hotel** modification much to the delight of the Berry community. Bud Townsing supported the efforts of the townspeople with a slide presentation which, using Nearmaps and some strong arguments, clearly demonstrated that the town would be significantly altered if the DA was approved. [Berry Hotel DA Blocked](#)

The objection to the **Plasrefine** facility in Moss Vale has been upheld by the NSW Independent Planning Commission. Bud sent in his objection together with many members of the community at large (many members of the AGHS sent in their objections as well). [See Plasrefine Objection Upheld](#)

Blue Sox, the new owners of the Berrima gaol are providing an opportunity for the Southern Highlands community to provide input on their development plans for the site from 22 February. The details of the timing of the Blue Sox plans are found in the *Inflorescence* section titled [Berrima Gaol Development Feedback Sessions](#).

As you will see from the last page of *Inflorescence* we have a packed monthly schedule of events for the coming year. While many members already have a copy of our schedule please note there is a new event highlighted in **RED** on 8 July at the Berrima Museum.

Looking forward to see you all at some of our events this year!

Best wishes,

Ruth Bailey
Chair

Movie - A Little Chaos at the Empire Theatre Wednesday 19 February 2-4pm



King Louis XIV of France assigns the design and construction of the Gardens of Versailles to his head landscape architect Andre Le Nôtre. Already overwhelmed, managing numerous large-scale projects, Le Nôtre interviews several other landscape designers to whom he might be able to delegate some of the work. One of the candidates is Sabine de Barra, who is that rare thing in the 17th century: an independent professional woman.

Even if you've seen this movie previously please consider coming again as it promises to delight all who attend. This is also an opportunity to help support the advocacy activities of the AGHS-Southern Highlands Branch. The price of the ticket includes the movie as well as either a choc top or a bottle of water.

Please invite your friends, they don't need to be members of the AGHS-SHB to attend. Tickets can be purchased at the theatre or through Humanitix. The access to Humanitix is easy to locate in our recent emailing to members.

Christmas Celebration

By Chris O'Brien

Thanks to the generosity of Eleanor and John Dartnall our Christmas celebration was held at Tavistock in Exeter. The event was attended by 80+ members and friends who thoroughly enjoyed the many places to relax and enjoy the garden despite the intense heat of the afternoon. The delicious food was provided by Greer Worsley of Delilah Catering. Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to catch up with friends and meet new members in these beautiful surroundings.

The garden, with a recently completed water feature (converted swimming pool) and fountain, showcased a variety of gorgeous roses in many beds but especially alongside the verandah. The garden was a spectacular display of a variety of other flowers, trees and shrubs and demonstrated the meticulous design and management by Eleanor and John.

Rain had been forecast and various towns and villages were being hit with rolling storms but we remained dry until the very end of the day when light rain started to fall just as the last guests were leaving.

On behalf of all members and friends, I would like to thank John and Eleanor for providing a great venue and being such gracious hosts.



ADVOCACY Activities

Berry Hotel DA Blocked by Land and Environment Court (LEC)

(Excerpt from Land and Environment Court New South Wales before C. O'Neill 30 January, 2025)

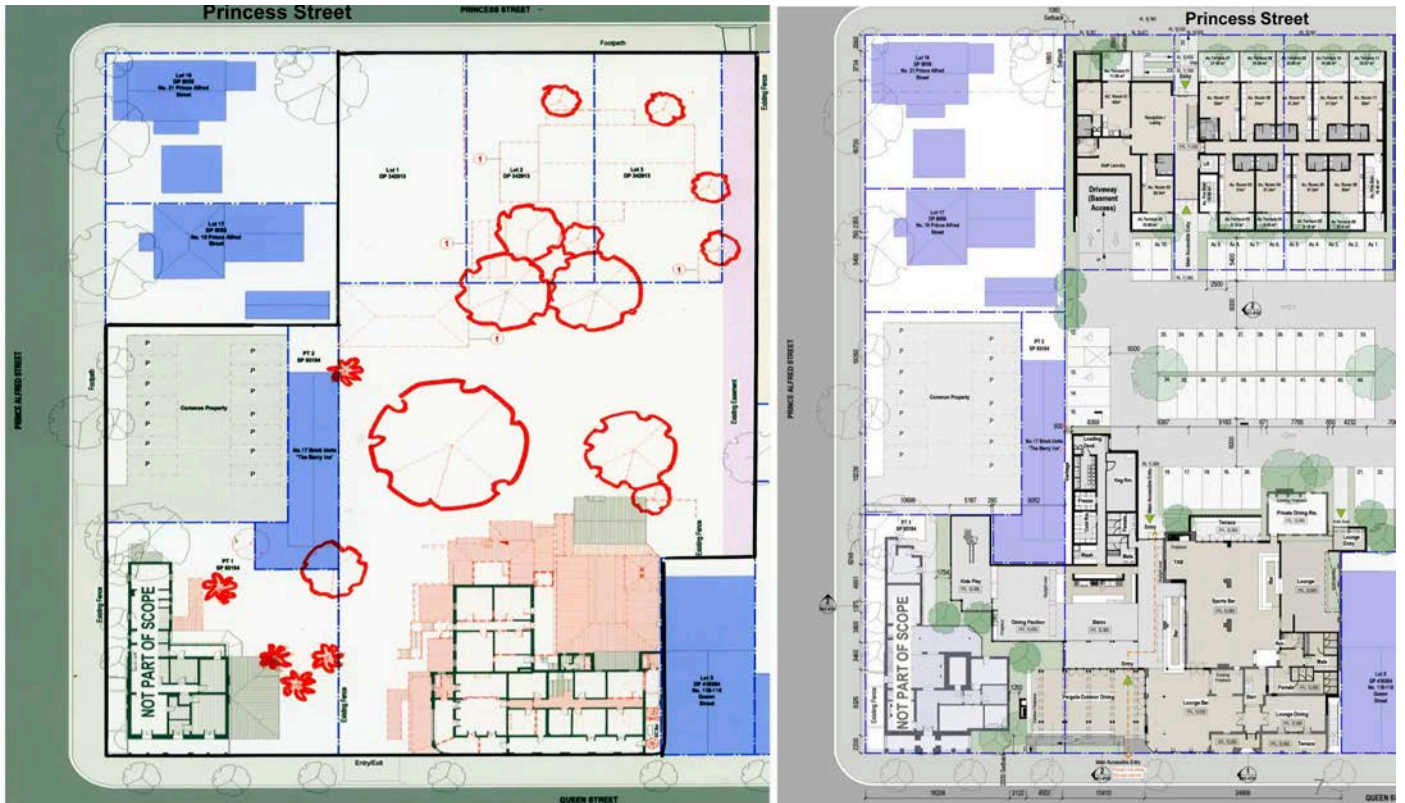
The Feros Hotel Group Pty Limited submitted a DA to the Shoalhaven City Council. The company declared a deemed refusal and took the decision to the Land and Environment Court. A final decision was made by the Court. The appeal was dismissed as the DA, which involved alterations and additions to the Berry Hotel at 120 and 122 Queen Street and 79-83 Princess Street, Berry including expansion onto 122 Queen Street Berry, construction of new hotel accommodation, consolidation of 4 lots, associated parking and landscaping and formalisation of access and parking on 77 Princess Street, Berry, was refused.

The Conclusion of the LEC was as follows:

- The proposed alterations and additions to the hotel building would result in an adverse heritage impact on the fabric and on the legibility of the hotel, as the proposal involves the removal of an excessive amount of existing fabric of the hotel, contrary to the heritage clause to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings and view, at Clause 5.10(1)(b) of LEP 2014.
- The proposed hotel accommodation building is not compatible with the historic residential character of Princess Street; and contrary to the objective for the Berry Town Centre at Chapter N2 of DCP 2014, to ensure the new development is complementary, and respect, the heritage characteristics of the town.



The Berry Hotel site is made up of 4 lots (120 and 122 Queen Street and 81 and 83 Princess Street)



The plan on the left shows the current hotel, the area to be demolished in red and trees to be removed are also shown in red. The plan on the right shows the planned works, with three storey accommodation on Princess Street and an extended hotel across the Queen Street frontage with a new Sports Bar, Bistro and Dining Pavilion.



The Berry Hotel is one of four key buildings in the entrance to Berry



The existing Berry Hotel and the CBC Bank building in November 2023 courtesy Google Earth.



An extract from the plans showing the new bistro and dining area building between the Berry Hotel and Bank building.

The original CBC Bank iron fence has been removed.



A sketch of the proposed accommodation building, three storeys on the left side and two on the right side with a swimming pool on the top

Plasrefine Recycling Application Rejected

(Excerpts of Moss Vale Plastics Recycling Facility SSD-9409987 - Statement of Reasons for Decision, 24 January 2025 - Executive Summary)

The New South Wales Government Independent Planning Commission (Andrew Mills (Chair), Janett Milligan, Clare Sykes) has determined to refuse consent to the Moss Vale Plastics Recycling Facility SSD- 9409987 (The Application). The application was made by Plasrefine Recycling Pty Ltd for the construction and operation of a plastics recycling facility with the capacity to accept up to 120,000 tonnes per annum of mixed plastic such as bottles and containers, for reprocessing into a range of recycled plastic products including plastic flakes, pellets, powder and new products (The Project).

The Commission found that the amenity of these residential and other uses would be significantly impacted by the Project , due to:

- **noise and vibration** during the 15 month construction phase and the ongoing 24 hour, 7 day a week operations of the waste and resource management facility, which is incompatible with established residential land uses in the C4 zone and imposes constraints on existing and future residential land uses and the adjacent Australian BioResources facility;
- **traffic and transport** associated with the construction and ongoing operations, with approximately 40 heavy vehicle movements and up to 60 light weight vehicle movements per day during construction, up to 100 heavy vehicle movements (Monday to Friday, 7am - 6pm) and 280 light vehicle movements per day during operations, which would exceed an acceptable volume of traffic for Braddon Road and create local traffic conflicts, and
- **visual impacts** on the locality related to the bulk, scale and form of the building, particularly to the south of the site. These visual impacts are considered to be excessive for a development at the interface with the C4 zone and RU2 zone and unable to be adequately mitigated by landscaping.

In reaching its determination, the Commission Panel met with key stakeholders including the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, the Applicant, Wingecarribee Shire Council, as well as Water NSW, Health NSW and the EPA, conducted a site inspection and locality tour, held a public meeting over 3 days and received written submissions on the Application form from 2,844 members of the public.



Image sourced from the Application

We would like to congratulate the new Wingecarribee Shire Council members who advocated for the refusal of this application as well as the community members (Bud Townsing was included in this group) for their activism as the

Project would have had a profound impact on the Southern Highlands Community as stated above. It demonstrates that grass roots activity is absolutely necessary to overcome many development proposals. There were so many public objections and desires to attend meetings that the meeting had to be extended to 3 days!

If you would like to read the complete Executive Summary as well as other documents relating to the Application please see www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au and scroll to INDUSTRIAL - Moss Vale Plastics Recycling Facility - SSD-9409987.

Working with other Community Groups

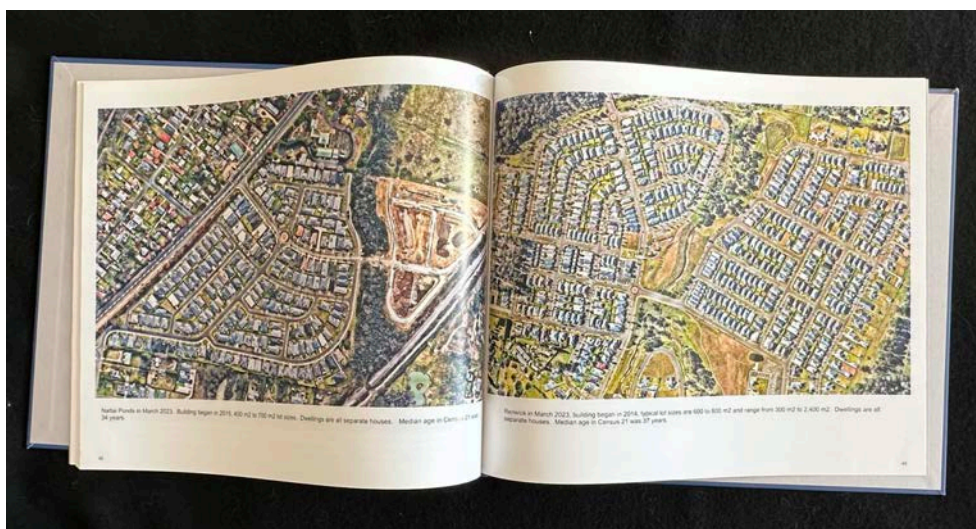
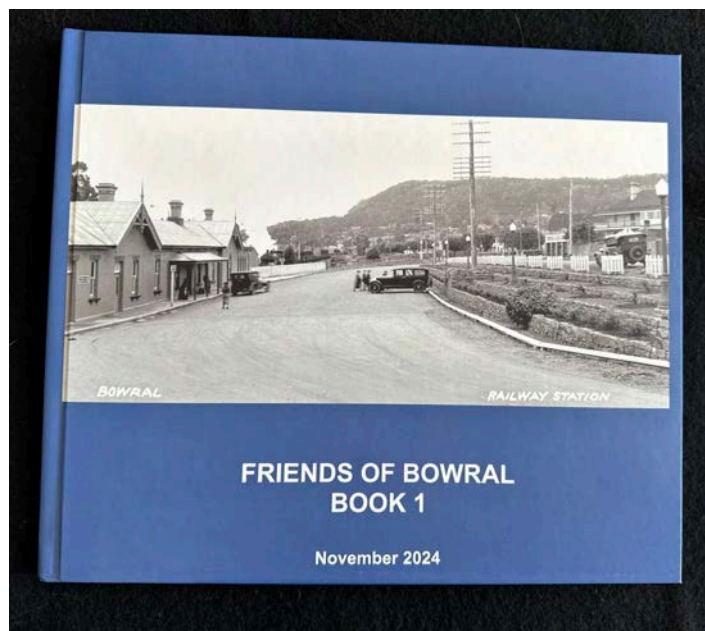
AGHS-SHB works closely with other community groups such as *Friends of Bowral (FOB)*, the *Berrima Residents Association* and the *Berrima District Historical & Family History Society*.

Nearmap images, historic photographs and census data are some of the tools we use to assist them. The Nearmap images have proved a particularly valuable tool for advocacy and Land and Environment Court Hearings.

In November *FOB* wanted to brief each of the ten new Wingecarribee Shire Councillors so we undertook to prepare a 46 page, large format hardcover book called *Friends of Bowral* as briefing material for a meeting with the new Councillors. This was published by Bud Townsing who had printed copies available in just three weeks.

It has, as the introduction, the October 2024 *Australian Garden History Journal* Good News article which describes the formation of *FOB* and the key role *FOB* played in saving the Bowral Station Street precinct. A key objective of the book was to correct the widespread misconception that only 9% of the dwellings in Bowral are medium density. Using Nearmap images to count medium density dwellings and census data we were able to demonstrate that 40% of the dwelling stock of Bowral (not including East Bowral) is actually medium density, a huge difference to the normally quoted 9%.

Bud Townsing has a few spare copies of the *FOB* book, they are \$100 each. Please contact Bud on metow@bigpond.com if you're interested or just wish to look at a copy.



An example of the Nearmap images in the book

Berrima Gaol Development Feedback Sessions

The following information sessions are an opportunity for all people in the Southern Highlands to review the potential plans for re-development of the Berrima Gaol which is now called the Berrima Quarter. Please attend if you would like to learn of the owner's plans and then you will be able to provide feedback on the design concept in writing both positively or if you feel some plans need to be modified or eliminated.

The Blue Sox Group, the owner of the Berrima Gaol, is holding community information sessions in a few weeks.

The design concept for the adaptive re-use of the Berrima Gaol site will be on display and you will be able to ask questions about the proposal and complete a survey to provide your feedback.

All are welcome to attend one of the dates and times at the locations listed below.

Berrima

Saturday 22 February, 11:00am - 4:00pm
Holy Trinity Anglican Church Hall, Argyle St, Berrima

Bowral

Wednesday 26 February, 10:00am - 12:00pm
Bowral Memorial hall, 16 Bendooley St, Bowral

Moss Vale

Wednesday 26 February, 2:00pm - 4:00pm
Moss Vale Senior Citizens & Community Centre, 14 Queen St, Moss Vale



The design concept will be available on the website <https://www.theberrimagaol.com.au/southern-highlands-community-drop-ins/> from 22 February to 19 March 2025.

On this website there is also a Community Update dated September 27, 2024 which describes the due diligence studies being undertaken by the Blue Sox Group.

Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) Free Course for AGHS-SHB Members

Whenever alcohol is served where an entry fee has been paid to attend an event all servers of alcohol are required by law to have a certificate stating that they have a current Responsive Service of Alcohol Competency Card. These cards are valid for a 5 year period at which time your RSA can be renewed.

Usually to attend a course to obtain an RSA Card it will incur a fee of approximately \$130.00. The Branch is will to pay this fee for any AGHS-SHB member who would like to help us at events where alcohol is served. As you know this is usually only at our Christmas Celebration and the time needed to serve would only be short.

Nearmaps for Personal Use

A reminder that you can obtain a Nearmap of your property from Bud Townsing. It doesn't matter if you have a town block or a large property in the country it will give you a snapshot in time of your house, garden, trees and general layout of your property.

We all make changes to our living areas over time so from a garden history historical perspective this will reveal your thinking and approach to living in your defined space.

A financial contribution that you feel is appropriate is all that is needed. Bud Townsing creates beautiful glossy photographic images for framing if you wish as well as electronic copies to keep in your files.



Nearmap image of private home on a town block

New Berrima Museum Exhibition

By Bud Townsing

A new exhibition is in development at the Museum and the AGHS-SHB will be having a special showing on Tuesday 8 July from 10:30-12:30pm at the Berrima Museum.

In 2021 I acquired a box of 50 glass magic lantern slides from the UK. The photographs are located on glass slides and were shown on a device a device called a Magic Lantern Projector.

Research showed the slides were of an 1891 lecture called *A Tour Through New South Wales and Queensland* by R. Lean of Sunny Corner NSW. The slides were made by the Riley Brothers.

The quality is amazing considering these slides were created 130+ years ago! When searching for further information about the slides enquiries with the Magic Lantern Society in the UK revealed that they had in their archives the Riley catalogue. Learning of the title of the slides the lecture notes were found in the NSW State Library that had originally accompanied these same slides. Quite an amazing find as the Library does not have the actual slides!

These photographs provide exciting information about the landscapes in Sydney and many smaller towns throughout NSW as well as Brisbane in QLD in 1891.

Here is a selection of the photographs which will be in the exhibition. It is amazing to see the buildings, landscapes and trees at this time and realise how they have developed over this time period.



8. Circular Quay.

Our next picture brings before us the most important piece of water in the Australian Colonies, Sydney Cove, generally known as Circular Quay, at which the principal wool stores, and the largest steamers of the Orient and P. & O. Companies come alongside the wharfs.



11. George Street.

George Street, which is the principal street of the city, and is chiefly occupied by wealthy tradesmen whose stores and shops are fully equal to those of a principal street in any English city.

In this street, land has been sold for very high prices, which within the memory of many of the citizens still living, was exchanged for a bottle of rum.



18. Hyde Park.

There are a number of public parks in and around the city, the principal of which is known as Hyde Park, a fine open space on rising ground in the heart of the city.

A monument is here erected to the memory of Captain Cook.



19. Farm Cove and Botanical Gardens.

The Botanical Gardens are among the most interesting and picturesque of their kind in the world.

Situated along the shore of Farm Cove, near the city, they are an especially favourite resort of both residents and visitors.

There are 50 slides in total and the exhibition will incorporate the original lecture given by R. Lean.

AGHS-SHB Committee

Chair	Ruth Bailey
Secretary	Olga Birrell
Events Coordinator	Eleanor Dartnall
Events Coordinator Assistant	Sue Trudeau
Treasurer	Lynda Cowley
IT Coordinator/Research	Vacant
Editor/Research	Bud Townsing
General Members	Chris O'Brien
	Pamela Jane

Associate Members

Tours	Ray Bradley
NMC Representative	Eleanor Dartnall
WSC Heritage Representative	Laurel Cheetham
Oral History	Heather McIntyre

The Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens Autumn Gardens Weekend and Plant Fair

This eagerly awaited event is just around the corner. It will be held on Sat 26 and Sun 27 April 2025 and will feature three private gardens in Burradoo and two in Exeter. Ticket are available online and full details of the event can be found at www.shbg.com.au.

TICKETS

Weekend Ticket to 5 Gardens
+ Plant Fair - \$50

Single private garden ticket - \$15

Single entry to the plant fair - \$10

Group discounts for the 5 private gardens
+ Plant Fair entry - \$48 per person
A group is 10 or more people.

No dogs at the Plant Fair or the private gardens
except registered assistance dogs.

Tickets available online.
Full details at shbg.com.au
or **SCAN QR CODE** below.



SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS
**AUTUMN GARDENS
WEEKEND + Plant Fair**

SAT 26 & SUN 27 APRIL 2025 | 9AM-4PM

Join us for a weekend of exclusive access to three private gardens in Burradoo and two in Exeter, all in aid of SHBG.

Don't miss the live jazz music at the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens Plant Fair on Sunday 27 April, featuring *Short & Horny*.



1 Old South Road Bowral NSW 2576 | Ph 0456 752 595
admin@shbg.com.au | shbg.com.au  





Southern Highlands Autumn Gardens Weekend

Discover five stunning private gardens, each with its own unique charm.

Burradoo Gardens
Explore three distinct gardens: a grand estate with sweeping rural views, a historic garden surrounding a heritage-listed home, and a charming cottage garden brimming with fascinating plants.

Exeter Gardens
Wander through a vast country garden, where winding paths lead to hidden groves, whimsical sculptures, and a serene pond. Nearby, a modern two-acre garden bursts with botanical treasures, including an impressive rose garden and hydrangea collection.

Garden Accessibility
All gardens are gently undulating with no steep slopes. Paths are mostly lawn or mulch, with some paved or gravel sections. Steps can be avoided via alternate routes.

List of individual garden addresses will be available on the website closer to the open weekend.

(Front & Top Photographs by Tony Sheffield - HighLife Publications)

Southern Highlands Plant Fair

Saturday 26 & Sunday 27 April | 9am - 4pm

The SHBG Plant Fair, marking its 14th year, will host stallholders from across NSW and Victoria, as well as local nurseries, presenting an array of plants, including those cultivated by the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens.

- ✓ Collectors Plants, Trees, Perennials & Bulbs
- ✓ Plants from the 'Growing Friends' of the Gardens
- ✓ Garden Art
- ✓ Tools & Accessories
- ✓ Refreshments available.

The Plant Fair will take place at the **Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens, 1 Old South Road Bowral.**

No dogs at the Plant Fair except registered assistance dogs, as the gardens are a protected bird habitat area.





Sunday Jazz @ the Botanic Gardens

Catch the swinging sounds of *Short & Horny*, a lively jazz band from the Illawarra, live at the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens Plant Fair on Sunday 27 April from 10am-2pm.

Event Schedule 2025

SAVE THE DATES

SUMMER	February Wednesday 19th	Film at Empire Theatre – <i>A Little Chaos</i> (Kate Winslet & Matthias Schoenaerts) <i>When King Louis XIV announces a project to build a garden at Versailles palace, he employs two artists to work on the project...</i>
	March Thursday 27th	BUS TRIP Bundanon Gallery, Exhibition, Riverside Boyd Homestead and Café lunch
AUTUMN	April Tues-Thursday 8th, 9th, 10th	BUS TRIP Blue Mountains: 2-nights' stay Lithgow Richmond: Secret Garden, Mt Wilson: Windyridge, Nooroo, Little Hartley: Gory'u Japanese Gardens & Maple Springs Nursery, Leura: Everglades, Oberon: Mayfield Garden Other gardens are planned, and full programme to come.
	May Thursday 1st	SELF DRIVE Denbigh Cobbitty and Brownlow Hill, Camden Picnic
WINTER	June Sunday 22nd	Winter Solstice Talks – Burrawang School of Arts Hall Stuart Read <i>'The History of garden design using native plants'</i> Ruth Bailey <i>'The Evolution of a Plant Collectors' Garden'</i>
	July Wednesday 16th	Webinar (Zoom) <i>The presenter will be a person who has been supported by the 'Nina Crone Writing Fund'</i>
	July Tuesday 8th	SELF DRIVE Berrima Museum - A Tour of NSW and Queensland - Slides were created in 1891 on glass plates and are amazing!
SPRING	August Sunday 3rd	Annual General Meeting - East Bowral Community Centre Planning with speakers Owen Bolitho – Horticultural Manager, Canberra Arboretum <i>'Caring for an Arboretum'</i> Flavia Scardamaglia <i>'A re-introduction to Leslie Wilkinson, a discussion about his ideas and role as a garden maker and designer'</i>
	September Thursday 18th	SELF DRIVE Canberra: Tulip Tops, National Arboretum Canberra Café or Picnic
	October Thursday 2nd	SELF DRIVE Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan and Seed Bank
SUMMER	November Saturday 8th	SELF DRIVE Morning tea at Exeter Hall & Exeter Ramble with Linda Emery (event to be confirmed closer to the date)
	December Friday 5th	SELF DRIVE Christmas Party at Deirdre Hill's Garden <i>Quindalup</i>