



Promoting awareness and conservation of significant gardens and cultural landscapes

## Media Release 12/24

### *Garden transmissions*



In the January 2025 issue of *Australian Garden History*, Prue Slatyer reviews a collection of essays that emerged from a conference called ‘Garden Transmissions’. This term encapsulates one of the fascinations of garden history, namely the imports and exports – of plants, garden elements, designs – that diffuse knowledge within our cultural landscapes.

This two-way exchange took place in Australia, including with several countries in Asia, as three articles in this issue reveal. Christopher Cheng shows how Chinese market gardeners managed to thrive in Sydney thanks to valuable skills and attitudes they brought from China. Helen Armstrong reveals the different motivations for first-generation Vietnamese refugees to build gardens in Brisbane, as tributes both to old traditions and to the communities who welcomed them in Australia. And the gift of 1899 Yokohama Nursery catalogues led Trevor Nottle to delve into the export of Japanese plants.

Those catalogues contain exquisite wood block illustrations, a form of art that inspired the art of science illustrator, Iliana Oakes, who created this issue’s cover. Oakes is intrigued by the duality of allure and danger inherent in carnivorous plants like the Cape sundew (*Drosera capensis*).

Raymond Madden shows how art can also contribute to the historical archive. A painting by Eugene von Guerard, commissioned by colonist, James Dawson, records what the extinct volcano at Tower Hill near Warnambool looked like before the pastoralists moved in. Dawson was a man of contradictions: an admirer of the local Aborigines and a hater of the Irish. Madden discusses Dawson and his daughter’s appreciation of Aboriginal land management.

Garden history can be fun. So Kylie Jones, now a landscape architect student at Queensland University of Technology, found when she started playing the video game, *Animal Crossing*, during the COVID-19 lockdowns. Her essay discusses how such games can become a portal to gardening and more.

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*Australian Garden History* is the quarterly journal of the Australian Garden History Society (AGHS). It is available at <https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/shop/> To arrange an interview with any of the journal’s authors, contact Francesca Beddie, [editor@gardenhistorysociety.org.au](mailto:editor@gardenhistorysociety.org.au) or 0418 645 181.