

HILLVIEW SUTTON FOREST: A BRIEF HISTORY

The original house on the 150acre property was built during the late 1850s by R.P. Richardson of Richardson and Wrench and was then known as 'Prospect'. It was purchased by the Government of New South Wales in 1882 as a country house for the Governors and it was used as such until 1958.

The first alterations to the house in 1882 were carried out by James Barnett, Colonial Architect, however successive Governors also carried out many alterations. The Treseder Brothers of Armfield were responsible for the original layout of the garden. Charles Moore, Director of the Sydney Botanic Gardens, was also known to have given advice.

When the property was sold to MR E Klein in 1957 most of the house contents and the furniture, including a dining room suit by WE Verdich a Danish cabinet maker and many other pieces which have fine carvings of Australian flora, were retained in the house. In 1985 Mr Klein gifted the property back to the State Government and it has been administered by the Heritage Office of the Department of Planning since that time. In 1998 Expressions of Interest were called for in an effort to have the property better utilised and opened once more to the public. There was a successful applicant who is still in residence today but without a fully operational lease.



The Southern Highlands Branch of the Australian Garden History Society spent many years, during the 1990's fund raising to have a Conservation Management Plan written for the garden and undertaking remedial work in the garden, particularly tree surgery. The trees in the garden are a very interesting collection of predominately exotic deciduous trees and conifers many of which date back to the original garden layout of 1985.



The Latest News

Our efforts to secure Bong Bong Common, as our site for the Botanic Gardens, was unfortunately unsuccessful. With Council voting to continue further investigations into its Aboriginal significance it became apparent that we would be entering into a consultation process which would take many years with what could, and possibly would be, a very unsure outcome.

The committee resolved that it would be ultimately more sensible to withdraw our claims on Bong Bong Common and in return have Council fully support us in a move to a new site, potentially at 'Hillview' Sutton Forest. Councils unanimous support is always going to be of much greater benefit to our group, particularly when dealing with State Government.

It is disappointing to step away from the Bong Bong Common site as it had so much to offer and particularly as the committee and the Friends had worked extraordinarily hard to acquire the site. Pragmatically the potential move to 'Hillview' would provide us with a larger site, main road frontage, diverse topography and most importantly a core of an established garden with an extensive array of trees.

A NEW CHALLENGE BEGINS

Important Notice AGM and Information Evening

29 September 2008
See inside for details

Westonbirt Arboretum UK

Jim and Margaret Osborne recently visited the Arboretum and Jim took the opportunity to talk to the Curator, and gather some interesting information on the Arboretum, the recording systems used by the Commission and the activities of the Friends.

The Westonbirt Arboretum, Tetbury, (near Bath) in England was established in 1850 as a private arboretum, and passed to the State in 1956 and is now the National Arboretum. It covers 600 acres and is managed by the Forestry Commission. In 1985 the Friends of the Arboretum was formed and works in partnership with the Commission. There are now 20,000 Friends. There are over 300,000 visitors to the Arboretum annually, including 10,000 school children. Autumn is spectacular with over 100,000 visitors in October.

WE WANT YOU!!

With 'Hillview' being in State ownership, the Committee of the SHBG would be very interested in help from anyone who has experience in navigating State politics. If anyone has skills they would like to share with the Committee please contact the Secretary. Tel 02 48614899

Important Notice

**AGM and Information Evening
29 September 2008**

ALL WELCOME

Come and show your support

The AGM of the Botanic Garden Inc Committee and an Information Evening for the Friends of the Botanic Gardens Inc will be held on

MONDAY 29 SEPTEMBER AT 7PM

**UNITING CHURCH HALL
SUPPER ROOM**

BOOLWEY ST BOWRAL

Following the short AGM we will have an illustrated presentation by Jim Osborne on the 'Westonbirt Arboretum', Gloucestershire, the National Arboretum of Great Britain

Dennis McManus will also speak about the background to Hillview

Supper provided

RSVP 26th September
(for supper numbers)

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