

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 28 April 2016

We love our roses at Old Parliament House!

Roses have been associated with Old Parliament House for decades. In 1927 Banskia roses were planted over the courtyard pergolas, in the early 30's the exquisite rose gardens were established under the guidance of Broinowski, and in the 80's a number of rose garden beds were created in front of the building.

There are roses on three sides of the building in varying degrees of health. In 2014, Old Parliament House commissioned GML Heritage (a heritage specialist consultancy organisation) to review Old Parliament House gardens and plantings, and recommend a strategy for managing them in a heritage context. The review considered the front and rear gardens, the east and west facade gardens, and internal courtyards.

The report took into account the historic chronology of the plantings at Old Parliament House; referencing plans, historic photos, archival reports, heritage reports and news clippings. There is an early planting plan existing from 1927 showing the original design intent of the immediate surrounding landscape. Photographs taken at intervals during the 20th century provided references of these gardens.

“The courtyard and garden settings are integral to the building. Old Parliament House style of architecture included the inference of Garden City ideals,” said Ms Daryl Karp, Director, Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House.

This report is also consistent with the *Old Parliament House and Curtilage Heritage Management Plan (2008 – 2013)* which identifies the National Heritage values and provides management policies for this iconic building.

The report recommends restoring the plantings as much as possible to the vision of John Smith Murdoch, the architect of Old Parliament House, and Charles Weston who designed and oversaw the planting of much of the surrounding area of Canberra.

There are two rows of roses at the front of the building, and based on the recommendations of the report, the front row of roses will be removed and replanted—replacing diseased rose bushes in the back row—and filling gaps where roses have died elsewhere, as determined by specialist horticulturalists with whom we are working.

This is part of a long term management plan for the plantings in and around Old Parliament House, and no immediate date has been set for the removal of the front row of roses.

A magnificent national icon, Old Parliament House is home to the Museum of Australian Democracy. www.moadoph.gov.au

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