

Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants



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Newsletter No. 70 – February 2005

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GSG Victoria Chapter

Leader: Neil Marriott
Ph: (03) 5356 2404, Mob: 0408 177 989
Email: neilm@netconnect.com.au

Convener: Max McDowall
Ph: (03) 9850 3411, Mob: 0414 319 048
Email: maxamcd@melbpc.org.au

VIC Programme 2005

Easter Friday, 25 – Tuesday, 29 March

SUBJECT: Grevillea Workshop and Excursions, Campout and Working Bee at "Panrock Ridge" near Stawell.

– see details of itinerary on page 2.

Sunday, 22 May

SUBJECT: Garden visits in eastern Melbourne combined with Australian Daisy Study Group

VENUE: 10am – Ben and Carolyn Somerville
18 Gwyn Rise, Vermont Sth.
Phone: (03) 9802 1281 (Melway 62 H5)

– a new garden of new members of both study groups

VENUE: 11.30am – Peg McAllister
61 Diane Crescent Croydon
Phone: (03) 9726 5061 (Melway 37 F11)

VENUE: 1.45pm – Elspeth and Gary Jacobs
377 Cambridge Rd Montrose
Phone: (03) 9728 3492 (Melway 50 C5).

Please register with Max McDowall
Phone: (03)9850 3411 or
maxamcd@melbpc.org.au

August

Still to be arranged – see next GSG Newsletter

Melbourne Cup Weekend

Hosting GSG Field trip to Western Victoria and SE South Australia

GSG NSW Programme 2005

For more details contact Peter Olde 02 4659 6598

Wednesday, 23 March

VENUE: Nathan Kirkwood
9 Corella Road, Kirrawee

TIME: 9.30am for 10am start

SUBJECT: An enthusiast at work in grafting and hybridising the Australian flora.

Saturday, 9 – Sunday, 10 April

Autumn Plant Sale

Sunday, 29 May

VENUE: Bushwalk, Darkes Forest

TIME: 9.30am for 10am start, bring lunch & water

SUBJECT: Search for *Grevillea caleyi*/*macleayana*

June – Merv Hodge

July – *G. phyllicoides* east side of Hawkesbury

August – Robinson Garden

September – no meetings as yet

October – Field trip

November – Christmas party

GSG QLD Programme 2005

Sunday, 24 April 2005

VENUE: Home of Laylee Purchase,
41 Rocklyn St, Toowoomba, 4350

PHONE: (07) 4630 2211

SUBJECT: Propagation by cuttings

Sunday, 26 June 2005

VENUE: Home of Denis Cox & Jan Glazebrook,
87 Daintree Dr, Logan Village, 4207

PHONE: (07) 5546 8590

SUBJECT: Propagation by seed

Sunday, 28 August 2005

VENUE: Home of Merv. & Olwyn Hodge,
81-89 Loganview Rd, Logan Reserve, 4133

PHONE: (07) 5546 3322

SUBJECT: Propagation by grafting

Morning Tea at 9.30am – meetings commence at 10am.

For further information and directions contact Merv. Hodge, PO Box 381, Waterford, Qld. 4133.

Phone/fax: (07) 5546 3322or

Email: mervhodge@quicknet.com.au

Inside this issue:

- Recovery plan for *Grevillea montis-cole*
- Field trip to WA part 1
- Profile – Bill Cane part 2
- and more....

Friday 25 – Tuesday 29 March
Easter Camp/Working Bee
Neil & Wendy Marriott's

“**Panrock Ridge**” Panrock Reservoir Rd (aka Sisters Rocks – Black Range Road), Stawell – on left 7 km from junction at highway south-east of Sisters Rocks. Phone 5356 2404 to register, advising optional planned arrival and departure dates/times. BYO food to eat/share, grog, camping gear/linen etc.

ACCOMMODATION:

Stawell Park Caravan Park phone (03) 5358 2709 at above junction or in motels in Stawell. Need to book early because of Easter Stawell Gift. Several beds are still available on-site.

Participants may arrive on Thursday if desired and stay on longer. Please bring slides for talks, specimens for ID, plants/cuttings for swap or sale etc. Come prepared with labelled

Illawarra Grevillea Park
OPEN DAYS 2005

April, Sat 23 & Sun 24
 April, Sat 30 & May, Sun 1
 July, Sat 23 & Sun 24
 July, Sat 30 & Sun 31
 September, Sat 24 & Sun 25
 October, Sat 1 & Sun 2

Each year the Park is open on the last full weekend in April, first weekend of May, last two full weekends in July, last weekend in September and first weekend in October.

Location

The Park is located at the rear of Bulli Showground, Princess Highway, Bulli. (Turn at the Woonona-Bulli Sports Club).

Admission

\$4 adults, children accompanied by adults are free.

Barbeque and picnics facilities available

Bring your lunch and make it a family day!

Special openings for groups

Special openings for tour groups (such as bus tours by Garden Clubs) can be arranged

The park is open from 10am to 4pm.
 For more information email at

grevil2@grevilleapark.org

tools such a trowel, weeding fork, spade, hedge clippers, secateurs, lopper bow-saw, chain-saw (by arrangement with Neil who will provide fuel), protective gloves, knee-protectors, (goggles or face-protector, and earmuffs for those using or assisting with power tools).

Programme (weather permitting)

Friday 25 March AM

Arrival from 9am and morning tea.

9.30–10.30am and 11.00–12.30pm

- informal tours of gardens.

12.30-1.00pm

- lunch.

1.00pm

- working bee in gardens followed by BBQ and social get-together, grevillea discussions.

Ideas for talks and discussions:

- Methods of propagation, grafting etc.
- Grevillea anatomy and identification – use of keys.
- Slide presentation of grevillea characters – e.g. styles, perianths, conflorescences, kinds of foliage etc.
- Grevillea taxonomy – where it's heading?

Saturday AM

Demonstration and Working Bee – garden bed preparation and planting.

PM Visit to Steven Smart's nursery, followed by dinner in Stawell.

Sunday

Working Bee – mulching demo and planting.

PM Trip to Grampians – Pomonal native nurseries, Redman Rd etc – *G. microstegia*, *G. alpina*, *G. aquifolium* etc

Shared dinner at Neil's followed by members' slide show etc.

Monday AM

All day trip to Mt Langi Ghiran (*G montis-cole* ssp *brevistyla*) and Mt Cole (*G. alpina* dwarf, *G. montis-cole* ssp *montis-cole*).

Meet at Neil's at 9AM.

Shared dinner at Neil's and Wendy's.

Discussions on future trips, new grevilleas etc.

Tuesday

Working Bee at Neil's.

Cutting collection.

Hi all

Welcome to another year of grevillea growing. We are still looking for a name for the newsletter. I have a couple of ideas but I would like to spread the net further. I have decided to hold a bit of a contest. Send in your ideas and suggestions to me via email or letter. The Study Group will give you five years free membership. Now that's an offer that is bound to get your brains ticking is it not? Entries close at the end of June.

I am looking forward to our plant sale this year (see page 4). I have spent a great deal of time organising a range of interesting plants. Don Burke has agreed to open proceedings again and some of the most knowledgeable people from Queensland (Merv Hodge) and Victoria (Neil Marriott) will be there to provide assistance. If any other interstate members will be coming to help, contact me as there might be some local accommodation available. Please note that the date is April 9 & 10. I had planned it for later in the month but it clashed with an interstate propagation conference that many of the nurserymen wanted to attend.

This year the major floral display (we have lost our helper, June Brooks, who is unable to assist any longer) will be a display of historical memorabilia associated with the Flinders expedition to Australia. Ray Brown will be mounting this exhibition and it should be most interesting. This will be in addition to all the displays of Grevillea.

We have some really interesting plants for sale that cannot be obtained elsewhere. I have spent weeks sourcing them through various catalogues, local and interstate. One of the most interesting is *Hymenosporum flavum* 'Gold Nugget'. I saw this plant on a recent visit with Don Burke. It only grows to 0.5–1m tall. It has beautiful foliage and yellow scented flowers in spring. It makes an excellent potted or garden specimen and is hardy. Keep it away from snails though. We also have a range of the *Acacia cognata* cultivars, including 'Green Mist', 'Limelight', 'Copper Tips' and 'Bower Beauty'.

Some of the new-release Grevillea cultivars will also be available including some of the new Coastal series. We will have 'Coastal Sunset', 'Coastal Twilight', 'Coastal Prestige' *NEW RELEASE, 'Molly', 'Flamingo', 'Peaches and Cream', 'Strawberry Sundae', 'Autumn Waterfall', 'Honeybird Pink'. All of these will be available in limited quantities, in addition to some of your favourites both old and new. There will also be an extremely interesting and wide range of *Grevillea* species and grafted plants available which we have never had before.

A catalogue of the incredible range of plants that have been sourced for the sale will be available to download from our website at <http://users.bigpond.net.au/macarthuraps/grevillea%20study%20group.html> at the end of March. Obviously there will be some last minute additions. Another feature of the sale this year is that you can place orders for plants which will be filled from what is left after the sale ends. We will also order plants in, if available, to fill the order where possible.

During the year, the Grevillea SG paid me \$3,173.56 which represents the cost of fuel and vehicle service to Western Australia in 2004 (Full report in future newsletter). This was a pre-approved expenditure and financed a very important trip which yielded at least one new taxon and enabled me to finally clarify some of the difficult areas I was experiencing in the taxonomy of *Grevillea anethifolia*.

Neil and I have finally started to write a book on the Grevillea cultivars and hybrids. This will be available hopefully in 2006. If you think some *Grevillea* species are endangered, some hybrids are extinct as far as I can tell. We will publish a list in the next newsletter of the ones we are experiencing difficulty in locating.

Until then, happy growing, Peter.

Autumn Plant Sale 2005

Mt Annan Botanic Garden

Mt Annan Drive, Mt Annan.

*The entrance is well signposted off Narellan Rd and the South-western Freeway between Campbelltown and Camden.
Bus from Campbelltown. Entry Fee is \$4.40 per person.

Saturday 9 April 10am to 4pm

Sunday 10 April 10am to 4pm

Featuring a Display of historic and modern memorabilia associated with the Flinders Expedition of Discovery to Australia 1801–1803, with Robert Brown and Ferdinand Bauer.

Come and meet Don Burke on Sunday 12 noon

Expert advice from Merv Hodge, Neil Marriott, Ray Brown, David Shiells.

New Release Plants – be early

- *Hymenosporum flavum* 'Gold Nugget' Native Frangipanni: grows to 1 m. Beautiful foliage, delicious perfumed yellow flowers in spring, ideal for a potted specimen, tolerates shade.
- *Eucalyptus* 'Summer Red': magnificent all-over display of red, spectacular small tree.
- *Correa* 'Federation Bells': gorgeous plant to 1m.
- *Grevillea* 'Peaches and Cream': brilliant low shrub with bright cream flowers ageing pink.
- *Grevillea* 'Autumn Waterfall': low cascading shrub with orange flowers.
- *Grevillea* 'Pink Midget': new from Merv Hodge – great plant for a small place, pink flowers all year.
- *Grevillea* 'Coastal Prestige': new release – shrub to 2 m with rosy pink flowers.
- *Grevillea* 'Molly': a Robyn Gordon look a-like but with broad leaves and masses of terminal flowers.
- *Grevillea* 'Amy Lou': lovely orange-pink flowers all year.

Also available in limited quantities

- *Grevillea* 'Coastal Sunset': bright tangerine flowers, *Grevillea* 'Coastal Twilight': 'TerraCotta' flowers. *Grevillea* 'Golden Yul-lo': gold flowers. *Telopea* 'Wirrimbirra White': the white waratah.
- **Largest Range of Native plants for sale – tumblers from \$4.**
- Unusual species – Rare plants – Old favourites and new-release hybrids.
- **Extensive range of Grafted grevilleas and other genera specially propagated for the show.**
- Landscape plants – Cold Climate Plants – Rainforest plants – Ferns – Native grasses – Native orchids – Ground cover and rockery plants – Local and Indigenous plants – **Interstate & Local Specialist Nurseries** from ACT, Queensland, Victoria, South Australia.
- **Cut Flowers – Garden Clinic – OUTDOOR Garden display – INDOOR Static & Interactive Displays – Floral Display – Guided Walks around Mt Annan Botanic Garden.**
- **Workshops and slide-illustrated talks.**
- **Family BBQ and refreshments available.**

Sponsored by: The Grevillea Study Group of the Australian Plants Society
P.O. Box 275 Penshurst N.S.W. 2222 Phone: (02) 4659 6598

All profits raised are used for scientific research or horticultural purposes.

Recovery Plan for *Grevillea montis-cole* subsp. *brevistyla* (Langi Ghiran *Grevillea*) 2004 – 2008

Oberon Carter, Judy Downe and Anna H. Murphy
– June 2003 Department of Sustainability and Environment, Heidelberg, Victoria.

Summary by Neil Marriott

Grevillea montis-cole subsp. *brevistyla* is a prostrate to spreading shrub to c. 1m high. A shorter pistil length combined with shorter and broader leaves distinguishes this subspecies from the type subsp. *montis-cole* (pistil 26–27.5mm long). Leaves showing some secondary division and relatively large floral bracts distinguish *Grevillea montis-cole* from other Victorian 'holly-leaved' *Grevillea* species (Walsh & Entwisle 1996). There are strong grounds for raising the status of this taxon to a species in its own right (N Marriott pers. comm.).

Conservation status

Grevillea montis-cole subsp. *brevistyla* is listed as Vulnerable under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* 1999, and is protected (but not specifically listed) under the Victorian *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act* 1988 (all Victorian *Grevilleas* are protected). There are approx. 25 – 50 plants remaining in one wild population.

Distribution

Grevillea montis-cole subsp. *brevistyla* is confined to a small area near the summit of Mt Langi Ghiran, approximately 200 km north-west of Melbourne, in Victoria (Walsh & Entwisle 1996).

The single known population of *Grevillea montis-cole* subsp. *brevistyla* occurs in open eucalypt woodland, among granite outcrops at c. 800 – 900 m altitude (Walsh & Entwisle 1996). Associated species include *Leptospermum turbinatum*, *Eucalyptus goniocalyx*, *Astroloma humifusum*, *Correa aemula*, *Dodonaea viscosa* subsp. *cuneata*, *Kunzea parvifolia*, and *Astrotricha* sp. (RBG herbarium specimen notes).

Biology and ecology relevant to threatening processes

There have been no targeted biological or ecological studies of *Grevillea montis-cole*

subsp. *brevistyla*. This species occurs where fires are unlikely to be common, however the sort of conditions required for recruitment events are unknown. However, seedlings of *Grevillea montis-cole* subsp. *brevistyla* were observed on Mt Langi Ghiran in 2002 (J. Downe, pers. obs.), suggesting this species may persist without fire. However, the long-term effects of lack of fire on vegetation community structure, and therefore habitat for this species are unknown.

Currently threatened by Cinnamon Fungus, and potentially threatened by accidental damage from recreational users of the park, inappropriate fire regimes and native herbivore browsing. As a result it is suggested that as this taxa to the best of our knowledge occurs nowhere else in the world, the site should be closed to hang gliders and ALL researchers attending the site should undergo shoe sterilisation before entering the area.

Recovery actions and performance criteria

- Acquire baseline population data by conducting detailed field and desk top surveys including (a) identification of the area and extent of populations; (b) estimates of the number, size and structure of populations and (c) inference or estimation of population change.
- Evaluate current reproductive/regenerative status by determining seed bank status and longevity, fecundity and recruitment levels.
- Determine seed germination requirements by conducting laboratory and field trials aimed to identify key stimuli and determine stimuli for vegetative regeneration.
- Establish cultivated plants ex situ for inclusion in living collections to safeguard against any unforeseen destruction of wild populations.

Post Script – As part of the recovery actions, Wendy and I were involved in a two day survey of the Mt Langi Ghiran mountain top searching for new populations. We discovered a new colony of approximately 1000+ plants several hundred metres south of the known population. We will be visiting this site to monitor summer survival during our Easter campout – shoe sterilant will be provided for participants prior to entry to site.

***Grevillea alpina* in NE Victoria**

Populations visited on Vic Chapter excursion, August 14 – 15, 2004. Mostly not in flower.

SATURDAY:**South Warby Range –
Old Glenrowan Recreation Reserve:**

Just west of Glenrowan via Boundary Road south of the Freeway in a cleared area around old tennis courts. Numerous healthy upright bushes 2 x 2m or more some in full flower, large red/deep orange & yellow flower heads of up to 30 flowers. A nearby population is known to have specimens with pure yellow flowers. Associated species include *Acacia paradoxa*, *Hibbertia sericea*, *H. riparia*, *Dillwynia phyllicoides* *Calytrix tetragona* (to 2m).

**South Warby Range – Eastern Slopes –
Sunrise Walking Track:**

About 8 km north of Glenrowan, western end of Deloro Road north of Taminack Gap Road turnoff. 1–2m remnants and seedlings from a once-vigorous population. Numerous stunted shrubs to about 1m among *Eucalyptus blakelyi*, *Acacia paradoxa*, *Brachyloma daphnoides*, *Calytrix tetragona*.

Everton Reserve:

Along rough vehicle track. 1–1.5 x 1m associated with a remarkable *Eucalyptus* woodland.

Whorouly: (led by David Shiells)

4 km west of Ovens Highway. Upright bushes to 1.5 x 1m. on gravelly rise south and east of road. Handsome upright bushes to 1.5 x 1m in *Eucalyptus* forest among *Acacia verniciflua*.

Beechworth – Malakoff Road:

In road side west of new Beechworth Prison. Broad-leaved low suckering plants 0.6–1 x 1–1.5m and seedlings.

Beechworth Gorge Road:

Natural low suckering *Grevillea rosmarinifolia* x *lanigera* hybrids with blood-red flowers, previously cultivated by Neil Marriott. In light rain and failing light we followed this scenic one-way drive, but were unable to relocate the plants. A more thorough search is warranted.

SUNDAY:**Old Highway near Winton power station:**

Roadside stop to see *Acacia aspera* 1x1m.

Reef Hills Park:

Tall form 2–2.5 x 1m, similar to Samaria Wells population with *Helichrysum scorpioides*, *Calytrix tetragona*, *Hibbertia sericea*, *H. riparia*, *Dillwynia phyllicoides*, *D. sp. aff. Sericea*, *Pultenaea procumbens*, *Westringia eremicola*.

Warrenbayne:

On private bushland property of John Gibbons' brother-in-law, including some non-indigenous planted species. *Grevillea alpina* 1.2–1.5 x 1–1.2m some in flower. *Dodonaea viscosa*, *Brachyloma daphnoides*, *Bursaria spinosa*, *Dillwynia juniperina* (in flower), *Hibbertia sericea* and *H. riparia*, *Persoonia rigida* (vigorous form), *Astroloma humifusum*.

Violet Town – Harrys Creek Road:

(led by David Shiells)

Beside roadside alongside cleared land about 3km south-east of freeway. Remnant population of three old dense shrubs 1–1.5 x 2m growing on steep bank facing east.



Grevillea alpina

continued

Grevilleas in Chiltern Water Trust Area, Barambogie Forrest: John Gibbons

Report on August 29 2004 field trip by Wangaratta District Group led by Peter and Joan Gotham following a guide-map sketched by Ray Purches.

We saw separate (and distinct) populations of *G. alpina* and *G. lanigera*. We think there was also some *G. rosmarinifolia* present (small almost like a groundcover – we will go back and check on it).

In one location we found a mixed population of all of the above plants with significant hybridisation. Some of the hybrids were up to 1m high and very attractive, distinctly different from the pure species, all growing on an area which had been disturbed by the laying of a water main in the forest. It seems likely that the disturbance has stimulated germination of otherwise dormant seeds and produced a small but interesting group of hybrids, all very different, of high horticultural potential. Certainly worthy of further investigation. I will try to find out more on the history of the area from the DSE.

Neil Marriott

Western Australia Grevillea research trip August – September 2003**Part 1****Background to the trip**

In mid August 2003 Wendy and I headed off to the West for our continued research into the genus *Grevillea*. Peter Olde and I are currently completing a major paper on the *Manglesia* section (our Group 1) of the genus. Peter could not make it to the West for this trip as he was in the UK with his choir as well as carrying out research on the same group at a number of the European herbaria including Kew.

The *Manglesia* section is typified by their usually filamentous, symmetrical white flowers and is dominated by several large, closely related but quite distinct groups including the *Grevillea anethifolia* group, the *G. biternata* group and the *G. paniculata* group. For decades this section of the genus *Grevillea* has been all but ignored by botanists, who generally lumped anything superficially similar into one of the above species. As a result the Perth herbaria in particular has a large number of misidentified specimens – for the last four years Peter and I have been systematically going through these, grouping them and separating out all those species that are clearly new, or suspected new taxa. These are then followed up with field work to check out the plants in the wild, collect more specimens, determine the size and extent of the population etc.

Don McGillivray, in his revision in 1984 actually did a superb job in starting this informal separation, but for some unknown reason never went on with the job – perhaps, like us he found that the group is far larger than is currently realised and that many of the taxa are represented by insufficient herbarium material. However I suspect that he did not pick up a number of the important character-states that Peter and I have found that are so critical in separating a number of superficially similar species. Characters such as ornamentation of the surface of the fruits, degree of exposure of the leaf lower lamina, attachment of the petiole onto the stem, location of the flowers beyond or amongst the foliage etc have proven to be critical. Populations that look superficially similar or the same to the untrained eye may in fact be quite separate taxa.

The first day

Having struggled across the Nullarbor fighting a howling head wind we breathed a sigh of relief when towards mid afternoon we reached the Fraser Range to the east of Norseman. Here we encountered our first white-flowered *Grevillea* – low rounded shrubs of *Grevillea anethifolia* in massed flower in several locations suckering right to the edge of the highway. We collected specimens before continuing on, finding further similar populations growing in open mallee woodland at Jimberlana Hill just to the east of Norseman. We noted that

continued

at both locations the grevilleas were growing with Spinifex Grass *Triodia scariosa* – this proved to be an almost foolproof indicator for this grevillea at numerous sites throughout the rest of the trip.

Next morning we headed north of Norseman through the spectacular eucalypt woodlands of the Goldfields belt. On a laterite and sandy rise at Widgemooltha ?? we stopped for morning tea – this is an outlier of the vast sandplains that become commonplace to the west of Coolgardie. At this site we found a multitude of lovely plants in flower including at least 7 grevilleas – *G. acacioides*, *G. pterosperma*, *G. haplantha*, *G. hookeriana*, *G. cagiana*, *G. didymobotrya* and *G. teretifolia*.

We continued on through historic Coolgardie before stopping for a walk at the Yilgarn Barrier Fence east of Southern Cross. Here we found a dense low heathy area with numerous plants of *Grevillea levis* – easily identified by a combination of characters including its smooth fruits, fine shortly divided leaves and glabrous branchlets – and usually found growing near or on granite!

An interesting find here was an unusual form of *G. didymobotrya* with short, silver leaves very similar to the beautiful form to the north of Bullfinch – this population probably warrants recognition as a new subspecies so these plants here at the dingo fence will require further investigation. Growing beneath these grevilleas was the beautiful *Philotheca* (*syn* *Eriostemon*) *coccineus*, with showy pink to red bell flowers. Also found here and common on most gravelly rises throughout this region was *Grevillea paradoxa*.

Continuing west we stopped for lunch in a bushland area just north of Morine Rock. Here we came upon beautiful little plants of *G. yorkrakinensis* in full flower. This is a delightful little plant that warrants far greater recognition as a showy small garden plant – we need to find suitable rootstocks for these small Western grevilleas – I have tried them on *G. robusta* and they never look good. Further on at Cunderdin we stopped at the cemetery to look at the very rare *G. roycei* – sadly this population is rapidly being swamped and destroyed by a combination of weeds and damage by workers at the cemetery! I am constantly staggered every time I visit the West

to see gazetted rare and endangered plants being wiped out by neglect and council workers despite being protected by supposedly strong legal legislation.

The Darling Range

Having caught up with fellow plant enthusiast and former leader of the Dryandra Study Group Keith Alcock we spent a number of days furthering our research in the Perth Herbarium. While working on *Grevillea hookeriana* – ‘forest form’ I found a specimen from Lupton Conservation Reserve near Brookton – this was a new population for us so on the weekend Keith took us down to check it out. On the way we came upon a population of a new subspecies of *G. monticola* – another species we are working on! This population has glabrous leaves and smaller white flowers – we found this taxa to be quite widespread throughout the forest, with its showy curved white flower racemes and attractive holly leaves.

We soon came upon the *G. ‘hookeriana’* population growing in an area where the forest suddenly gave way to open heathy woodland. This taxa is quite different to its namesake from the sandplains for apart from growing in a quite different climate, soils and vegetation community it also is a smaller shrub, growing to around 1–1.8m high and usually less than 1m wide. It has more spreading pinnatifid leaves and very showy flowers with a fawn to apricot perianth and black pistils which are slightly longer than the ‘real’ *G. hookeriana*. Growing in the same area were the beautiful *Grevillea tenuiflora* and *G. monticola*.



Grevillea hookeriana, *The Grevillea Book*, Vol. 2 (P. Olde)

continued

I had never been able to find the Tuttanning form of *G. leptobotrys* so Keith took us home via this fascinating and botanically rich forest reserve to show us this spectacular and distinct form. On Bandicoot Track we came upon *G. integrifolia* growing with *Dryandra ferruginea* ssp. *tutanningensis* and numerous other beautiful sandy heathland plants. Further on we came upon the *G. leptobotrys* – these were spreading low plants growing in shallow sand over laterite on the higher rises – drainage would be quite perfect!

Out into the Sandplains

Leaving Perth and the Darling Range we headed south-west in search of an unusual form of *G. anethifolia* with a hairy floral rachis that had been collected on Eujiny Rd NW of Bruce Rock. Shortly before we got to this site we located this taxon and found it to be quite widespread throughout this area. However apart from the hairy floral rachis it did not appear to be any different to the 'normal' *G. anethifolia*. In a nearby area of Sheoke woodland we found an attractive population of *Grevillea umbellulata* with its massed pinky-grey delightfully perfumed flowers. Nearby were several low shrubs of *Grevillea biformis*.

On a granite outcrop to the SE of Jillakin Rock Eucalypt expert Ian Brooker collected specimen of *G. anethifolia* – our research showed this to be a new species, but despite thorough searches throughout the area on two trips we have been unable to relocate this taxon. While searching in mallee scrub on Mallee Valley Rd we found beautiful pale pink flowered forms of *Grevillea stenophylla*, while in the open woodlands to the west of Jillakin Rock we found another form of *Grevillea anethifolia* and beautiful low forms of *Grevillea umbellulata*.

We camped at the base of Jillakin Rock – a delightful location with tables and fireplaces set amongst the most easterly population of Jarrah *Eucalyptus marginata*, surviving here due to the extra runoff at the base of the rock. After an exhilarating walk up over the rock in the morning we headed off south in search of another new form of *G. anethifolia* with distinctly hairy bracts.

This had been collected growing near Nyabbing, but well before we reached our goal we found this new taxon growing on Rabbit-Proof Fence Rd. The plants were dense and rounded to around 1.5m and just coming into flower. Continuing south we again located this unusual grevillea growing with *G. insignis* ssp. *insignis*, *G. umbellulata* ssp. *acerosa*, *G. hookeriana* – 'Southern Race' as well as numerous *Dryandra*, *Hakea* etc in a beautiful nature reserve to the north of Nyabbing.

Into the wetter country

Continuing south-west we made for Beaufort on the Albany Highway – just to the south of here Peter and I had stumbled on a new grevillea species the year before, and Wendy and I wanted to compare this population with what appeared to be the same taxon collected by Val Crowley on the Arthur River further to the west. The Beaufort population that we are to call *Grevillea imbricans* ms due to its large overlapping floral bracts is a root-suckering rounded shrub normally growing to around 1.5m. We found it growing in open damp heathland in white sand. Arriving at the Arthur River bridge we were amazed to find that the *Grevillea* here was the dominant plant growing in riparian Eucalypt woodland. They were large and spreading shrubs to 3m x 4m with masses of extremely prominent white bracted flower buds unlike any other grevillea I have ever seen – the buds made the bushes look like they were full of white furry caterpillars! These opened to long racemes of lacy white flowers. Unlike the Beaufort population these on the Arthur River reproduced entirely by seed. Clearly there are sufficient characters to describe this grevillea as a new taxon, probably a subspecies of *G. imbricans*.

Growing nearby was an extremely beautiful and unusual dwarf acacia growing amongst tetra-theca's and Semaphore Sedge. The acacia's grew to 0.4m with massed erect leafless stems totally covered in superb yellow bracted flowers. It would make a wonderful small garden plant, but unfortunately material sent back failed to propagate.

continued

We decided that it would be nice to have a look around the Stirling Range and so we drove up Chester Pass Rd and spent the night in the camping ground in the National Park. The next morning we headed down Stirling Drive to map the extent of another beautiful new grevillea in the Manglesia group. This we are to call *Grevillea pieronii* ms in honour of Margaret Pieroni, botanical artist in a wealth of WA books, floras and journals, leader of the Dryandra Study Group and the discoverer of numerous new taxa particularly Dryandra – a point that has failed to be recognised by other taxonomists! We soon found the population growing in winter-wet areas of the valley floor. They were in full flower and this made them easy to plot their distribution. Although more extensive than previously thought the entire population still extended for less than 2 kms and only several hundred metres wide. This makes the species quite rare and threatened – it is important that it be propagated and widely grown to ensure its survival as the Stirling Range has lost a number of its localised plants, primarily due to excessive wildfires and Cinnamon Fungus.

Further west along Stirling Drive we found a beautiful and distinct form of *Grevillea pulchella* which may well be a new subspecies. They produced attractive small shrubs to 0.5m with massed erect to spreading rich cream flower spikes, and were found growing on ridge tops in stony sandy loam. This is a most beautiful species but unfortunately has proven to be rather short lived and temperamental under cultivation. This is another of the Western dwarf species that requires a suitable root stock for grafting – an excellent project for members of the Study Group.

Albany and the south coast

A most distinct new *Grevillea* species originally collected by the late Ken Newbey at Boat Harbour in the 1970's and again by a J Mercer at Cheyne Bay in the 1990's, both of which were incorrectly identified as *G. paniculata* had eluded Peter and me despite concerted searches over several trips. However Wendy and I decided on another approach – we called in at Albany on good friends Nathan McQuoid and Keith Bradbey who work for Greening Australia and the Gondwana Link Project and told them about our elusive grevillea. It turned

out that J Mercer was a staff member with Keith and Nathan. Nathan gave Jack Mercer a call and within 10 minutes we were talking with him and planning a trip out to Cheyne Bay to relocate the new grevillea. Jack thought he could remember collecting it during flora surveys he carried out in the Cheyne Bay region in 1993??? All that would be needed would be to go back to the same transect line and we would be sure to find it. It sounded so easy!!

Early the next morning we met Jack and headed off in his 4WD – we had budgeted on hiring one but Jack insisted on taking us in his. When we got to the site I'm glad we did for the track in went over several extremely steep and rough limestone headlands. However Jack carefully picked his way over them and before long we were close to our destination. This area is extremely isolated and also extremely beautiful. It would immediately be made into a national park in any other state, as the soils are quite diverse, with acid sands and spongelite ridges interspersed with limestone outcrops, estuarine inlets and occasional freshwater streams running down to a spectacular, rugged and beautiful coastline. Setting this scenery off is a vast array of showy and often unusual and rare plants.

Leaving the car where the track eventually became too eroded we walked the last few kilometres through magnificent coastal heathland – where it changed to low mallee/heath we began our search for Jack's elusive grevillea. However despite the three of us thoroughly scouring the area we failed to relocate it, although I did get some fabulous views of the extremely elusive Western Whipbird!! We also found an unusual broad-leaved form of *Grevillea nudiflora* which was extensive throughout the area.



Grevillea pulchella subsp. *puchella*,
The Grevillea Book, Vol. 3 (N.Marriott)

Fearing we were to be defeated again we reluctantly began to head back to the car. Passing a high ridge to the north of the track Jack suddenly remembered that he had collected an unusual plant up on the ridge – this sounded most promising so off we headed, Jack heading one direction and me another while Wendy went in search of an injured emu chick we had seen earlier. Heading straight up the hill I pushed through a thicket of prickly hakeas and dryandra's and suddenly there before me was the new grevillea – a superb dense small dome with massed erect spikes of soft cream flowers standing proudly above the foliage. I could not believe we had finally found it after all these years of searching. I yelled out to the others who came running.

We agreed that all the effort was worth it for this new grevillea was unlike any other – it had amazing foliage, deeply divided into threes which bent more or less at right angles to the petiole. These three lobes then divided again into threes, again at right angles creating an almost perfect hexagon. These locked into

each other to create a dense tangle of foliage – quite reminiscent of the habit of *Grevillea intricata* but on a miniature scale. The flowers were arranged in attractive upright racemes and changed from delicate soft pinkish-apricot in bud to creamy-white when fully out. The shrubs were growing in an open rocky patch on the edge of a spongelite terrace – a strange, lightweight rock made of fossilised sponges.

After collecting specimens, recording the GPS location, associated vegetation and aspect etc we continued to scour the ridge for further specimens – despite a thorough search we only found 10 plants, all growing along the same terrace. Subsequent searches and discussions with Jack Mercer since then have revealed that the grevillea is confined to sand pockets in the spongelite ridges. This may allow us to discover the species growing in the same soils on other ridges throughout the district. However it appears that it will always be an extremely rare and localised plant. In recognition of all the work that Jack has done for this species we are going to call it *Grevillea merceri* ms in his honour.

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A short history of a pioneering Australian Plant enthusiast – Part Two continued from GSG Newsletter 69

In 1947, Bill bought two acres on Brewer's Hill, just out of Maffra, where he built a house, married Norah Linton in July of that year, and began to establish his Clearview Nursery. At the end of the block by the irrigation channel he built his honey processing sheds, and between those and the house, erected his glass and shade houses. It was also in 1947 that he met the botanist Jean Galbraith, with whom he enjoyed a close association for the rest of his life. Plant specimens which Bill collected were sent to Jean for identification and forwarding to higher authority. Although he accumulated a large library of plant books over the years, he credited Jean's field guides, plus his own powers of observation for most of his knowledge of botany and native flora.

Bill was now able to start propagating and experimenting in earnest, and soon was achieving results which were formerly thought impossible, for example growing selected forms of *Corymbia* (formerly *Eucalyptus*) *ficifolia* from cuttings. Always happy to share his knowledge, his method was published in *Your Garden* magazine in December 1958, where it was read by Russian botanists who contacted him for details, as a result of which, Eucalypts were successfully cutting-grown in Russia.

In 1944 Bill heard of George Althofer, obtained his catalogue, and corresponded with him for 15 years before actually meeting him. In 1947, George's Burrendong Arboretum was almost destroyed by floods, and suffered another very wet year in 1948. Bill propagated and sent hundreds of plants to George to help re-establish the Arboretum, and continued to do so till the end of his life. He also contributed plants to several other arboretums, and established one which bears his name at the Boisdale school.

continued

Also bearing his name is *Banksia canei*, named in his honour by the late Jim Willis, the Victorian Government Botanist. (see below). Bill also enjoyed a good relationship with Jim, and with a quiet grin confessed that he used to argue with him. Realising that this *Banksia* was different, Bill collected specimen material for Jim, and the new species was eventually described and named. It was only one of many undescribed plants, and new records for the state found by Bill Cane. Many new plants were introduced into the nursery trade by Bill, both manipulated hybrids, and naturally superior, variegated, or unique colour forms of species found in the bush and propagated from cuttings, an art he perfected by constant experimentation. Using his unique methods he was able to strike cuttings of notoriously difficult plants which defeated the efforts of others. Typical of these were the *Persoonias*, his last passion, and his collection contained species from all over Australia. He used to grow *Persoonia chamaepeuce* to order because of the perceived difficulty in striking cuttings. His secret was quite simple, take the cuttings from a dense part of the plant where the stems were blanched and tender. Another instance of his skill back in the 1950s, was striking cuttings of the Blue Tinsel Lily in two weeks, after being told it was impossible. A very modest man, he only tagged his own plants with the Clearview name under pressure from his family, his main emphasis was always to promote the growing of Australian plants, and to preserve them either in the wild, sometimes by replanting, or in gardens and arboretums. I was with Bill when he took plants of a semi double form of *Philotheca myoporoides* to replant on a ridge above the Insolvent Track north of Maffra, after a Forest Commission burn off caused a large burning *Eucalyptus sieberi*, or Silver-top to fall on the original plant with fatal consequences. He knew the burn off had taken place, and went straight up to check on what was one of his special plants.

Some of his plants are *Correa* Clearview Giant, *Leptospermum* Clearview Fairy, the Clearview *Grevilleas* 'David', 'John' and 'Robin', and *Grevillea* 'Crosbie Morrison'. He was apparently more stubborn with his hybrid

Crowea which was known in the trade as Cane's hybrid, and the double form of *Philotheca verrucosa*, which he found near Heyfield, was always referred to simply as the Heyfield Double Wax. Gaining personal kudos was never in the picture with Bill.

With Arthur Swaby, Bill was at the forefront of moves to establish the Society for Growing Australian Plants. In the early years he regularly travelled to Melbourne to attend meetings, sometimes as often as once a week, and also spoke at meetings in Sydney, and in Western Australia, while over there on collecting trips. Bill considered the part he played to be his main achievement, and in recognition of his services he was made a life member.

In 1985 Bill became ill, and was diagnosed with a terminal illness. A surgical procedure gave him an extra 12 months, and typically, he used this time to travel and collect, propagate, and send to Burrendong, as many endangered plants as possible, for he believed that no plant is safe in the wild. I enjoyed several field trips with Bill, and on one into the Moroka Gorge in search of a pink flowered form of *Zieria robusta*, we found *Persoonia asperula*, which has a very limited occurrence in this area. I also had the great pleasure of taking him on his last two field trips, to Mount Elizabeth north of Bruthen, and The Watchtower, high above the Moroka, to collect a few last plant species for George.

Bill Cane passed away in the Maffra District Hospital on the eighteenth of January 1987, and lies in the Maffra Lawn Cemetery, under a plaque adorned with *Corymbia ficifolia*.

Acknowledgement: *Much of the information in this account of Bill's life comes from a taped interview with Bill made by the late John Nicholls of Maffra, a retired teacher and keen gardener. I think John would approve of me using it in this way to place an account of this remarkable man's life and achievements before a wider audience.*

continued

The following was written by the late J H Willis, and was taken from a photocopy in my possession of an article which I believe was printed in an SGAP publication.

Bill Cane and his *Banksia Canei*.

I first met Bill Cane in the 1940s, at the National Herbarium of Victoria where he was an occasional country visitor, always bringing some plant of interest for inspection.

He once mentioned that he'd seen specimens of Hairy Boronia (*Boronia pilosa*) ten feet in height near Bengworden, south-east of Bairnsdale, intimating that we knew this heathland species only as a low bush up to knee-height, it was tactfully suggested that perhaps he was confusing it with some other taller plant at Bengworden, but Bill stuck to his guns.

A few weeks later, herbarium staff were amazed to see, through their library windows, what appeared to be an uprooted tree moving slowly of its own accord across the Domain lawns – one recalled the Shakespearean episode of Macbeth's Birnam Wood 'removing to Dunsinane'. In truth, it was tiny Bill Cane carrying, and quite obscured by, an enormous ten-foot specimen of undoubted *Boronia pilosa*, thereby proving his point! How he ever manoeuvred it into a Melbourne tram remains a mystery.

Bill delighted in refuting popular tradition that this or that plant could not be cultivated. Few gardeners have essayed to grow native cherries (*Exocarpos* spp.) because of their parasitic habits; yet I have a magnificent Cherry 40 ft tall that began as a tiny seedling, in Bill's 'Clearview' nursery at Maffra. As an apiarist he supplied us for years with delicious Yellow Box honey from his local hives.

Throughout eastern Victoria, Bill Cane was constantly on the lookout for ornamental native plants to enhance the garden. Those having unusual forms, – variegated foliage, deviant flower colours, superior blooms etc, were introduced into his nursery from cuttings, and he also collected much seed for propagation. In his wanderings among the mountains, Bill

made several new records for Victoria (e.g. *Eriostemon virgatus* at Mt. Kaye) and extensions to the known range of other plants.

Twenty years ago it was my pleasure to name a remarkable and undescribed *Banksia* species in honour of this enthusiastic, tough and nuggety, lovable plantsman; the formal description of *Banksia canei* appeared in Melbourne Herbarium's journal *Muelleria* Vol 1, pp 118 –120. (July 1967)

Photograph: This photo was taken by Peter Madden of Maffra, on a plant trip to the Little River Gorge in East Gippsland, and shows Bill gazing at the cliffs, doubtless wondering what new or rare plants are growing among the crags. I had noted a huge plant of *Persoonia confertiflora* while taking part in an SES exercise, and we took Bill up to see it. I had also collected specimens of a possible undescribed *Baeckea* in the gorge, and along the rim where Bill is standing, grows *Eucalyptus saxatilis*, which had recently been noted for the area.



Financial Report – February 2005

Income	
Subscriptions	\$290.00
Plants	650.00
Interest	231.75
Donations	10.00
	\$905.93
Expenditure	
Newsletter Publishing	\$240.00
Postage	147.10
Printing	165.00
Stationery	49.25
Merchant card fees	44.00
WA Field Trip	3,173.56
	\$3,818.91

\$10,441.89 in Interest Bearing Deposit till July 2005.

Balance in Current Account as at 22/02/05 is \$6,453.64

Balance in Business Cheque Account as at 26/01/05 is \$10,882.43

Office Bearers

Leader

Peter Olde
138 Fowler Rd, Illawong 2234
Phone (02) 9543 2242
Email petero@australians.com

Treasurer and Newsletter Editor

Christine Guthrie
PO Box 275, Penshurst 2222
Phone / Fax (02) 9579 4093

Curator of Living Collection

Neil Marriott
PO Box 107, Stawell 3380 Vic

Curator of Grevillea Park Bulli

Ray Brown
29 Gwythir Avenue, Bulli 2516
Phone (02) 4284 9216

Curator of Seed Bank

Matt Hurst
13 Urana Street, Wagga Wagga 2650 NSW
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1. President's email address
petero@australians.com
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grevilleas@yahoogroups.com
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