



GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP

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STUDY GROUP LEADER / NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Lawrie Smith
38 Sandpiper Avenue NORTH LAKES Q 4509
ph: 0411 228 900
email: lawries@live.com

TREASURER / MEMBERSHIP

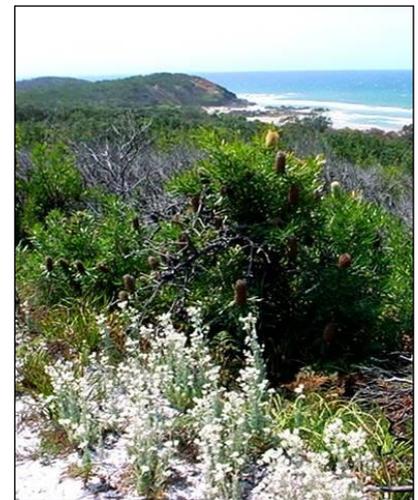
Carmel Smith
38 Sandpiper Avenue NORTH LAKES Q 4509
ph: 0411 228 900
email: lawries@live.com

Website: <http://anpsa.org.au/design/> or Google 'Australian Garden Design'

Theme for this Newsletter: 'Coastal Gardens – Sun, Sand & Wind'

CONTENTS

	page
About the Newsletter & Themes	1
Comments from the Editor	2
A Garden Beside the Sea Jane Burke	3
Extracts from Past Newsletters	3
Landscape Conference in Melbourne Diana Snape	5
Late Winter Garden Visits Diana Snape	7
Developing 'Terra Australis' Lawrie Smith	8
Bushland Garden at Logan Village Jan Glazebrook	10
Changes in the Garden Jo Hambrett	11
Pocket Handkerchief Rainforest Garden Jan Sked	14
From the Post Box	15
Coming 'Garden' Events	16
Treasurer's Report	16
Membership Matters	16



The high dunes of Broadwater National Park northern NSW provide a wonderful botanic orchestration composed by sun, sand and wind.

ANPSA Garden Design Study Group Newsletter

Published quarterly in February, May, August and November.

Copy Deadline: first day of the publication month, although earlier submissions will be welcomed by the Editor.

Newsletter Editor: Lawrie Smith, 38 Sandpiper Avenue NORTH LAKES Q 4509
Phone: 0411 228 900 Email: lawries@live.com

Receiving the Newsletter – are your contact details current?

Membership of GDSG covers a period of twelve months from July 1 to June 30

Please advise me if you wish to change your contact details, or how you wish to receive the Newsletter or to discontinue membership. Remember that membership and emailed Newsletters are **FREE!** However, **if you require a posted copy** there is an annual fee of \$20 to cover printing and postage.

Newsletter timing & Themes

These are the 2019 Newsletter dates and themes:

Issue	date	Theme
106	February	Naturalistic and Ecological Design
107	May	Sunshine & Shadow as a Design Tool
108	August	Incorporating artistic elements serious & whimsical
109	November	Framework trees and shrubs

Please ensure that your submissions reach the editor at least two weeks before the publication month.

Comments from the Editor

Hello everyone!

If you have been waiting for the October Newsletter # 105, you will be disappointed because it will not be published! It has become apparent that to produce Newsletters each two months, while not impossible was quite an effort to receive sufficient texts from members and to gather other appropriate articles. So from this issue our Newsletter will now be produced every three months in February, May, August and November. I hope you agree with this decision and look forward to producing a little more information in each issue.

One matter of vital concern that has the potential to affect every Australian native garden and many natural environments is the pathogen Myrtle Rust. Since introduction to Australia from South America eight years ago it has spread rapidly from the NSW central coast to northern Australia and as far south as Tasmania. The Federal Government has developed a Myrtle Rust Action Plan and in August asked for community comment - ANPSA has made comprehensive submissions.

What is Myrtle Rust?

- Myrtle Rust is a contagious fungal plant disease illegally introduced from South America eight years ago.
- It is now spreading rapidly around the continent by air-borne spores.
- It infects only plants in the Myrtaceae family or myrtles which includes eucalypts, bottlebrushes, paperbarks, Lillipillies and many others.
- So far it is known to affect over 350 species of the extensive myrtle family.
- The disease causes deformed & withered leaves, heavy defoliation, reduced flowering & fruiting, stunted growth - often leading to plant death.
- Many myrtles provide food and homes for nectar & fruit eating birds and mammals, as well as flowers for bees and other insects.
- In east coast forests, significant Myrtle Rust impact has been observed on more than 40 mainly rainforest species, pushing some to extinction.
- It is also attacking other plant ecosystems such as coastal heath.
- It is also attacking many myrtle plants commonly used in streets, parkland, gardens and home landscapes.

The most important thing we can do as members of GDSG is to keep watching our gardens for evidence of Myrtle Rust and immediately treat any infected plants. The new soft leaves are most infected; if infected twigs and branches are pruned off, this simply encourages more new soft growth, ideal for Myrtle Rust to infect and so the cycle continues and the plants become progressively defoliated, unhealthy and many will ultimately die! Currently there is only one product readily available to the home gardener for effective treatment of Myrtle Rust - *Zaleton*. Unfortunately it is expensive which probably limits its use to small domestic infestations only.

If Myrtle Rust continues this steady, unrelenting spread across the nation's forests and gardens unchecked, there will be irreversible physical and visual impacts on Australia's natural and built environments. Imagine your garden if you could not use many of the attractive and commonly used Myrtaceae plants!

Newsletter #105 theme: 'Coastal Gardens – Sun, Sand and Wind'

When we chose this theme subject at the ANPSA Conference in Hobart our GDSG members were sitting by large glass walls overlooking the Derwent estuary and that seemed to suggest to us that many members must have wonderful gardens in similar idyllic situations along our expansive coastline. We thought that many would want to share their garden design initiatives in dealing with constant strong sea breezes, salt laden winds and most importantly selecting appropriate species to thrive in the sandy soils. In the August Newsletter Jo Hambrett told us about her struggles in a new coastal garden combining new native species with existing exotic species. However this did not engender appropriate responses. Let's hope with the extended time between issues that the next theme "Naturalistic and Ecological Design" might attract some submissions from members – even it is only a paragraph comment!! *ED: Diana's article later in this edition might stimulate some interesting reactions?*

'A Garden Beside the Sea' - can be much less idyllic than it sounds Jane Burke, Victoria

ED: Delving back through past issues to see what has been recorded relative to coastal gardens I thought that this description was very appropriate. The following text is reproduced from GDSG Newsletter #24 February 1999 and comprises extracts from a larger article 'Dune Commune' written by Jane Burke in 'The Age Extra Gardening' earlier that year.

In this article Jane Burke describes a garden close to the ocean beach at Sorrento in Victoria, with a south-westerly aspect and exposed to relentless salt-laden winds and hot afternoon sunshine. This garden has made successful use of low growing local (indigenous) plants and local materials. It also incorporates rocks and modern sculpture. "Beach combed treasures decorate the gravel surface. Shell grit is used here, with sea-blasted, coloured glass fragments and a lifetime collection of marine flotsam. Seaweed is used as a fertiliser mulch.

Quaint, springy, rounded Cushion Bushes *Leucophyta brownii* are mixed with leafy shrubs such as Coast Daisy-bush *Olearia axillaris*. Coast Everlasting *Ozothamnus turbinatus*. White Correa *Correa alba* and Seaberry Saltbush *Rhagodia candolleana*. Various sedges and grasses grow among the shrubs, providing shape, texture and colour variation. Coastal dune plant communities present an interesting mosaic of generally glabrous (coated with a waxy secretion or hairs; pale grey to pale green leaves) with some glaucous foliage (without surface ornamentation - at least, the upper surface of leaves are shiny and usually darker green). Other characteristics include reduced leaves, succulence and salt glands.

Many coastal plants produce edible fruits and berries to aid seed dispersal. These are halophytes (salt tolerant plants), adapted to severe conditions of wind and salt spray, low-nutrient soils, and constant attrition of wind-blown sediments. The specific requirements of many seaside plants may prevent their growing successfully away from their natural environment, under less suitable and/or more competitive conditions. Dune communities rarely form a continuous canopy. Gaps are caused by treefall, sand erosion and deposition. This association includes few understorey plants, except for herbs such as Sea Celery *Apium prostratum* with ground covers Bower Spinach *Tetragonia implexicoma* and Coast Twin-leaf *Zygophyllum ballardieri*.

The majority of dune shrubs are adapted to maximum sunshine and good ventilation. Some may not flourish under canopy trees or in a site shaded from the afternoon sun. Some coastal shrubs do tolerate a broader range of environments. *Correa reflexa* (green flower coastal form) and Seaberry Saltbush, and tussocks of Knobby Club-rush *Isolepis nodosa*. Coastal Tussock grass *Poa poiformis* and Black-anther Flax-lily *Dianella revoluta* var. *breviculmis* are suitable for semi-shaded sites.

Extracts from Past Newsletters (Issues 13 to 16)

The GDSG Newsletter index on the ANPSA website is a great way to find out specific ideas and recommendations offered by members in relation to garden design over the years since the first Newsletter in May 1993. There are many gems of inspiration similar to the following excerpts that are worth repeating as they are still as relevant today as they were when first published.

Newsletter #13 – May 1996**Plant and Space** – Peter Brennan Vic

Peter began to think and work with a reinterpretation of an Australian landscape using native plant material which is as old as the continent itself, with its special characteristics and unique qualities. How could one design a garden for an Australian area using anything but Australian plants? For the same reason a designer shouldn't use mountain plants in planting up a wetland.

Australian Bulb-like Species – Geoff Simmonds Qld

One of the most spectacular features of exotic plants is the floral displays produced by the use of bulbs such as tulips and daffodils. By contrast, bulbs native to Australia are rarely seen and even less to any great effect. One can pose the question of why is this so?

Grey and Silver Plants in the Australian Garden – Doris Gunn Vic

Australia is a major contributor to the grey and silver scene as we have the conditions which produce grey foliage. In fact, the Australian flora is thought of as being more grey/blue than green. Actually, grey salt bush occupies some 5% of this continent. Drought prone regions such as deserts, shorelines, alpine herb fields and rocky, exposed limestone cliffs are the natural home of grey plants.

Newsletter #14 – August 1996

Awkward Plants – Plants for protection; Protection for plants - Geoff Simmonds Qld

Fortunately, Australia does not have animal species such as lions and tigers to be kept at bay by prickly acacias or other thorny bushes. On the other hand there are situations that may warrant the use of protective plants that do not have dangerous features but foliage with just enough stiffness to act as a deterrent.

Sculpture in Australian Gardens – Diana Snape Vic

Some of the garden sculptures really appealed to me. They did not necessarily have a particularly Australian theme or message but I thought they were both original and 'Australian'.

Newsletter #15 – November 1996

'Garden Maintenance', an untenable term? by John Sales – Barbara Buchannan Vic

The living (and dying) nature of plant material means changing situations calling for fresh consideration and decisions. It is important to keep seeing the garden as if with strangers' eyes (although we make our gardens primarily for our pleasure), to spot weak points and correct them, to recognize successes and build on them.

An Australian Landscape Design Ethos - Bruce Mackenzie NSW

It is pleasing to recall some thoughts of my friend and colleague, the late Alistair Knox. He would declare that the initial appreciation of the Australian indigenous environment is seldom an intellectual one but more an intuitive experience like falling in love.

Newsletter #16 – February 1997

Natural gardens? - Cherree Densley Vic

The romantic ideal of reproducing a "natural landscape" within our own contrived gardens and landscapes is almost impossible. I see the designing, planting and nurturing of an Australian garden as an exercise in the reproducing of only the desirable qualities of a natural landscape. Australian landscapes, whether they are coastal heathlands, dense warm rainforests or alpine bogs, appeal through their diversity, their beauty, their vivid contrasts, their biodiversity and of course, to GDSG members, their plants.

A school garden in the bush - Shirley Fisher W.A.

The school had plenty of the original trees for shade, the main challenge was to find tough shrubs that would survive the conditions (and the students) and which could be propagated cheaply.

Limits to design - John Hulme NSW

May I suggest that some of us find it difficult to stick to a theme or design plan. I know I visit a nursery to see if there might be that special plant available to have a go at. So I get it home and then find a place to put it.

GARDEN TIPS

A good tip -- the closer plants are planted to large trees the less water they need, as the trees main feeder roots are out under the trees 'drip line' and not close to the trunk. As well, when it does rain, a lot of water runs down the trunk to moisten the surrounding area of these plants. – Jeff Howes

I continue to garden for a range of reasons, and these have changed as I have aged and learned - and I suspect that this evolutionary process is true for many other amateur gardeners, whatever plant varieties they favour. I'm certainly challenged, both mentally and physically; gardening is literally wearing me out while also keeping me active! – Helen Kennedy

Landscape Conference in Melbourne

Diana Snape, Victoria

Photos: sourced from the WWW

Some months ago Diana attended an excellent Australian Landscape Conference in Melbourne, organised by Warwick Forge (the publisher of *The Australian Garden*) and his wife Sue. The theme was "Design with Nature: Reconnecting People and Place" and over 700 people attended. If you're interested, you can probably still go on line and find out about the Conference. You can certainly check the individual speakers on line and see more photos of their gardens, which I'd really recommend.

ED: The following text is the second part of Diana's article commenced in issue # 103

Naturalistic and Ecological Planting *(Comments in italics within the text are by Diana)*

Dr Noel Kingsbury from the UK is a garden designer, writer and lecturer who has written over 20 books on plants and gardens. He is described as "the great chronicler of contemporary planting design". He has a particular interest in the long-term performance of plants in designed landscapes and gardens.



Noel Kingsbury favours the recent trend of naturalistic and ecological planting design rather than simplistic formal planting design, which he called "green cement". *(More than other overseas speakers, what he talked about really resonated with me.)* He spoke of the aesthetic attraction of a naturalistic garden *(or landscape)* having ecological values and accepting the processes of change and regeneration. Planting is often dense and of value to wildlife and there can be the spontaneous addition of other species. He said this type of garden is becoming increasingly popular globally.

In the future, he sees the creation of artificial ecosystems for biodiversity with both native and introduced plant species and with reduced maintenance. The aesthetics are important, as gardens must have visual appeal to people. To establish such a garden, implementation of a plan, with intended planting and establishment, requires a lot of knowledge, both horticultural and ecological. *(Not all designers or gardeners have both.)* The garden will be an ongoing process, with plants seeding, spreading, dying, and probable introduction of new plants. Ongoing management is particularly important.

He mentioned the creation of perennial meadows, but said *(as we know here)* the grasses involved must not be too dominant. Even so, over time, there is always likely to be gradual loss of other species.



Noel Kingsbury said there is enormous potential in the planting of mixed seeds. This is dependent on both extensive research and the nursery industry. The seed mix has to be site-specific, for example one designed for the seaside has to be both wind and salt tolerant. Such a system reduces both cost and maintenance BUT it does require a lot of knowledge initially to establish a suitable seed mix.

A successful planting of wind-tolerant species was carried out at the Barbican in London. With 15 or 20 plant species in each planting area, the garden was able to function ecologically and became a dynamic community, with many seedlings coming up over time. It now looks naturalistic and needs very little maintenance.

He said in larger areas, this can be extended to modular planting, with 'tiles' of different patterns of species. This has been used on a very large scale in China. *(James Hitchmore, who was at Burnley, has worked in this*

area of design.) High density planting of seed mixes works well on poor substrates but is more problematic on fertile soil, needing a lot more management later on. Again, the diversity drops off over time.

In Australia, direct seeding of indigenous species is carried out a lot now in revegetation of large areas. In Victoria, small plants of mixed species (*usually indigenous*) are now used successfully by VicRoads in their roadside planting of highways.



Noel Kingsbury mentioned the influence of the designer Piet Oudoff, whose work is driven more by visual appeal than by ecology. His landscapes might have a matrix of a background mix of planting with a limited number of species (*in our gardens, these could be indigenous*). His landscapes might then include clipped woody plants, blocks of grasses, some 'scatter plants' and emergents. Note should be taken of the shapes and structures of key individual plants (*we used to call them feature plants and these might be non-indigenous, or exotic*) and there should be repetition of some elements of the structure. (*This description sounded appealing to me.*)



As with Miguel Urquijo, he emphasises structure and tonal depth and said a garden should look good in a black and white photo. In our planning, we ought to consider how long a plant will last before it needs replacing and also how it looks in its 'off season'.

An advantage of this type of design is that it is more closely related to a conventional planting design. The disadvantage is that it is likely to need more maintenance. Kingsbury said research needs to be done into the comparison between the ecology of a created landscape like this and that of a natural system. (*This is not an easy thing to do! It depends on so many factors, such as scale of the property and its degree of isolation.*)

ED: it is easy to see why Diana was so impressed by this conference! It puts your mind into overdrive wanting to gain inspiration and emulate in your own garden, the magic we see all around us in the Australian landscape, particularly that of the vast outback! Unfortunately we so seldom understand and apply what most attracts us, as we observe our unique natural landscapes.

Something I wrote several years ago!

Lawrie Smith, Qld

Nature is a wonderful source of inspiration for garden design ideas. Close observation will reveal interesting formal, geometric patterns - such as the symmetry of a Helichrysum flower; other natural elements suggest irregular or more abstract forms - such as the asymmetric Kangaroo Paw flower spike. Nature also suggests informal ways to plan your garden where garden beds, paths and lawns meander almost randomly, inviting you to 'walkabout' and discover your garden, progressing from focal point to special plant group, to shelter, to pond, to rockery or to other garden elements. Nature rarely uses straight lines and most Australian plants are naturally irregular in form, they also grow in random mixed grouping of species (never equally spaced!).

There is a wealth of design inspiration to be found in nature and if appropriately applied will create a truly Australian garden character, whether traditional or contemporary. Draw your inspiration from nature; take note of what you observe as you meander along bush tracks, waterways, rocky ridges and even sand dunes, then apply your observations to your personal garden design Design with Nature!

Late winter garden visits

Diana Snape Vic

During the last Quarterly Gathering held by APS Victoria, hosted by Foothills Group, we visited three gardens in, or close to, the Dandenong's. The GDSG Melbourne Branch visited each of these in the past and it was a delight to see them again, even in cold, wintry weather. Two of the gardens, those of Bev Fox and Shirley Carn, are naturalistic in style while the third, Val Henry's, is not formal but includes more garden furniture and sculpture.



In this first article, I'll comment on the two naturalistic gardens. Both are examples of what can be achieved in this style of garden with care and skill in design, plant selection and maintenance. The first was Bev Fox's lovely, mature garden, on a quarter-acre (1000 m. squared) block. I think the photos largely speak for themselves. With no lawn, the focus is certainly on plants, with gardens generally linked by gravel paths. The first photo shows part of her unfenced front garden, filled with a variety of plants. It incorporates her footpath garden and it's a shame 'nature strips' are rarely as attractive as this.



The path to the front door was a picture, bordered by late winter/early spring flowers (photo 2). The effect here is almost like a cottage garden, with many small plants flourishing amid a framework of larger shrubs. The garden is extremely well maintained, with mulch, quite dense planting and no weeds.



In the much larger back garden, paths are valuable in providing vistas (photo 3, looking towards and away from the house). Curving paths are always more interesting. Plants form a sculptured mass, ranging from trees to groundcovers with tufted plants and a wide variety of shrubs, too many different species to name. Bev is a plant expert. Throughout the garden there is repetition of a number of linking species, for example *Phebalium* (*Eriostemon*) species and *Orthrosanthus laxus* (favourites of mine too). Two of the many special plants include *Diplolaena grandiflora* and *Asterolasia hexapetala*, both in flower.

Bev's garden illustrates the fact that with maintenance, including pruning and replacement when necessary, a naturalistic garden can stay looking young and colourful after 18 years. It also has a 'Gardens for Wildlife' accreditation and there are bird baths, a pond and nest boxes.



Shirley Carns' garden is still young (4 years old) but already there is evidence of her green fingers. She has previously created a number of other lovely gardens. We visited early on a cold, rainy morning (temperature 3 degrees) and it was quite a brief visit. It was almost impossible to record in photographs (the first photo shows a rather wet back path).

Shirley is another extremely knowledgeable gardener. Many plants were in flower, including still a number of her beloved epacris, of which she has an impressive range. In the front garden, a flight of steps to her front door has been skilfully incorporated into a much safer, garden-enclosed ramp, recorded in September 2016.

Even on a very grey day, the tapestry of plants in Shirley's larger back garden is evident.



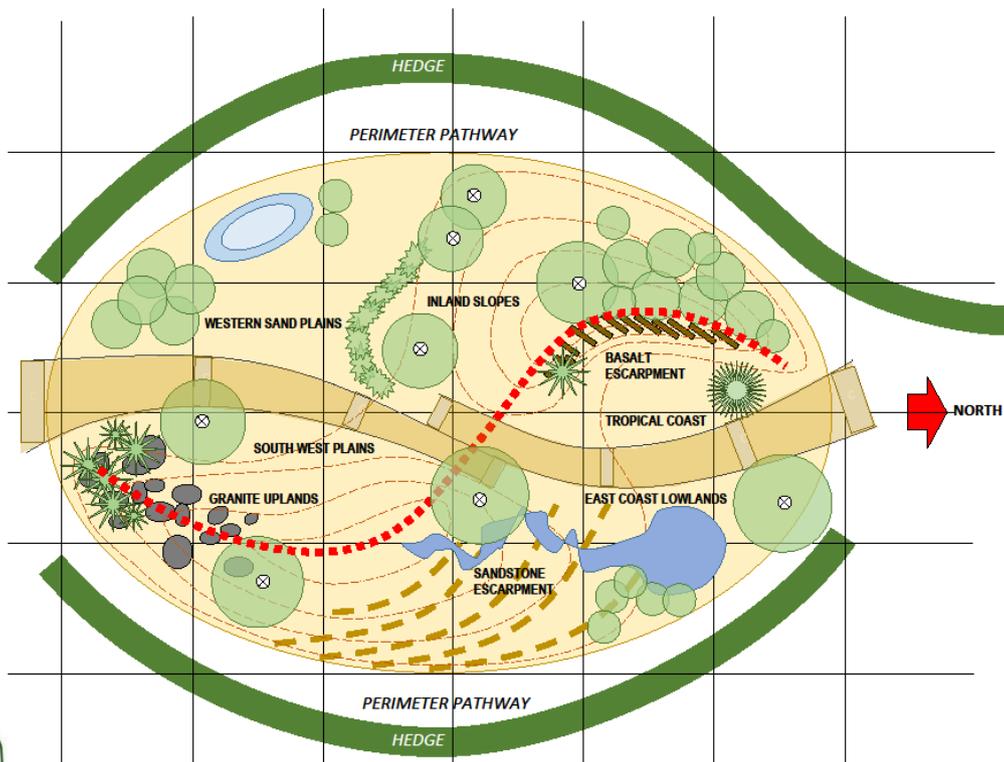
As in Bev's garden, there is no lawn and the back garden is divided lengthwise by paths. Particularly in the central area, Shirley is growing a selection of small mallee eucalypts, in appropriate scale with her garden. Among appealing plant combinations, one was of *Lomandra*, epacris and *Thryptomene* species (photo 10).

I hope my next visit to this garden will be before too long, when it has matured just a little, and in better weather so I can do it justice.

Developing Terra Australis

Lawrie Smith Qld

The Terra Australis garden developed by ANPSA, the Australian Native Plants Society, is planned as a stylised representation of the geography of Australia and the diverse flora of this island continent. It is located in the Australian National Arboretum in Canberra on a dramatic upper hilltop terrace adjacent the visitor centre.



Terra Australis

General enquiries info@anpsa.org.au



Northern garden entrance



Columnar basalt formation



Sandstone waterway



Granite boulder landscape

We invite you to explore *Terra Australis*.

First, follow the central or inland path along the landform which sweeps through the garden from the tropical north to the temperate south, to simulate the Great Dividing Range.

On each side of the path the varied plant communities south from the columnar basalt geology of Cape York and along the Pacific east coast are displayed.

The path rises beside the sandstone formation along the central section of the Great Divide to the lookout on top of the range.

The path then traverses the western plains sloping down from the granite boulder uplands of the Snowy Mountains, Grampians and Tasmania.

On the opposite side of the path, the inland slopes and western sand plains extend south and west to the coast.

Be sure to complement the inland experience by following the coastal path around the garden perimeter to fully appreciate the beauty, natural diversity and unique colours of the Australian flora.

The garden is currently under construction and has been funded by generous donations from various ANPSA regions and from throughout the membership of ANPSA as well as some other donors.

Thank you to all of those who assisted ANPSA in any way in the creation of this very special Australian garden.

Terra Australis will be officially opened on November 25, 2018. A small voluntary committee of ANPSA members has planned and developed the garden over the past eighteen months, led by Ben Wallace, and capably assisted by wife Ros who has sourced most of the plant material assisted by Angus Stewart and Bronwyn Blake. Lawrie Smith designed the garden and has carried out supervision electronically!!

A landscape contractor and an experienced rockwork expert have created the stylised landform, pathways and geological features. However it will be 'all hands to the shovel' for ANPS Canberra in the next few weeks to ensure that the garden is complete and planted before opening day.

These photos show the work in progress and as can be seen there is still more garden soil to be added to finalise the stylised landform; various mulches to be applied; and finally the planting of 162 carefully selected specimens to be done. It will take a few years for Terra Australis to mature and soften the constructed landscape. As you can imagine the most difficult plant community to select and establish on a hilltop in Canberra is the North Queensland flora!! So we would love to know from members experience any species that might cope well in the very different environmental conditions here?

Bushland Garden at Logan Village – Brisbane

Jan Glazebrook & Dennis Cox



Today's garden was a feast of garden design ideas and use of native plant material! Jan and Denis' bush retreat can really be termed a 'stroll' or 'walkabout' garden but more than that it is a collector's garden and a wonderful habitat for wildlife, where Jan has recorded more than 120 species of birds and a range of mammals and reptiles. The garden is made all the more attractive by the many innovative sculptures that Jan has created and placed in strategic locations.



We all felt that the dramatic sandstone ridges that cross this moderate size rural residential site was the most magnificent feature of this garden. Jan gave us a comprehensive outline of her approach to garden design and commenced by saying that this 'rock shelf' was the fundamental reason for purchase of the land some 30 years ago, but that it also gave some difficulty and also direction in planning and establishing the garden. These are some of the aspects that I noted from her presentation.



- The house was sited to face north east the best aspect for our climate;
- A tall perimeter screen was first planted for privacy and dust control;
- Pathways developed naturally through the garden by following 'desire lines'; generally across the slope to avoid erosion over the fragile soils;
- Surprisingly the conglomerate sandstone crumbles easily, hence the free draining soil;
- The rock shelves dictate the locations of the driveway and many garden pathways;
- The many and varied rocks used skilfully in the garden were collected over the site;
- The soil is relatively infertile and drains fast which requires careful water application;
- Mulch, Mulch, Mulch and more Mulch is the answer!
- Sawdust and cow manure used only in the kitchen garden and orchard;

- At planting, Bentonite (2 handfuls) is mixed into each oversize planting hole (BUT only good for free draining soils); this is pure clay and in other soils will cause waterlogging etc.
- Form a dish in the soil around the new plants to hold moisture for slow absorbing;
- The gardens are fertilized only once each year with CK88, if possible three days before heavy rain and in early to mid-summer when plants are in active growth; spread over the mulch;
- Plant location and massing is planned to create views and vistas within the gardens & house;
- Low plants are used close to the house to allow sun access in and views out to the garden;
- Tall shrubs and small trees used on the west side;
- Care is always taken to group plants with like water requirements together – Hydrozoning!
- Poor bore water with high salts levels is available but only used in extremes;
- Many many plants are propagated, collected from travels and from pruning;
- Plants in the garden are pruned occasionally, but growth is slow so this is rare; important to prune juvenile plants from the start to form the basic shape required;

- Jan showed us her special small robust spade, used for everything; it is slowly wearing down from the abrasive sand;
- Plants are selected principally for their foliage colour and texture NOT their flowers; leaves are always there flowers are seasonal!
- Planting in layers low to tall, is very important to take advantage of sun and shade variation;
- Strap leaf plants are used widely around the garden to give visual upward movement;
- There is no lawn on the block, instead Jan uses succulents like Carpobrotus in carefully located and shaped open areas between shrubs as a substitute; it works and does not need water like grass does!



As Jan spoke in my notebook I wrote in big letters “this is a garden DESIGN WITH NATURE”. Jan and Dennis have truly created a remarkable garden that not only looks wonderful from any position, it attracts you to wander through and find small native plant treasures and even large ones too. It is a garden of rooms each with its own palette of plants which complement each other and create a harmonious visual quality, despite the diversity.

In many ways it reflects a natural bushland setting but one that is far more varied and colourful than most natural landscapes. We certainly were able to see and appreciate how successful this logical design approach in working with nature has been over the past 25 years, since the garden was commenced.

Jan’s secret for successful ‘Cuttings on the Move’

- Automatically part of their touring equipment are newspapers, secateurs and plastic bags!
- First take your cutting material and trim off excess foliage;
- Sprinkle water lightly over a sheet of newspaper;
- Wrap one or more cutting samples very tightly in this sheet of newspaper;
- Don’t forget to write the species name and collection location on the paper;
- Place the wrapped cutting in an appropriate size plastic bag, exclude as much air as possible and fix with tape;
- Place in a cooler and store in a cool place; cutting material has been known to last for up to three weeks using this method;
- It is also possible to post the cutting material treated in this way, provided a person at home can do the cutting.
- Clonex – purple - is best for semi hardwood cuttings;
- Potting mix preferred - is equal proportions of peat, perlite and coarse sand;

Changes in the Garden

Jo Hambrett, NSW

The art of gardening presents us with huge opportunities to engage, embrace and enhance nature, honing horticultural and design skills simultaneously. Gardens are as varied as their owners’ taste, culture, ideology, needs, phobias, preconceptions and purse to name only a few. Change, large and small, comes inevitably to all gardens. Time, natural events (storms, fire, diseases) and new ownership are usually main drivers of change in gardens.

The gardens below offer examples of some of the processes at work (subconscious and conscious, practical and emotional) in the mind of gardeners when they make changes to an established garden, processes that inevitably shape the gardens future.

“The Practical Garden”

The gate sits in the middle of the front fence; a concrete pathway, flanked on either side by a large square of well - mown buffalo grass, leads directly to the front door steps.

In the backyard a similar concrete path runs to the clothesline.

The spryest of 90 year old lives there, and has done so for 65 years. His wife, who is no longer alive, was the gardener he says. He tends her favourite camellias up the back yard, they are massive and flowering madly; otherwise, alone now, he likes to keep things tidy, nothing higher than a metre or so. So you can see things, he explains. His eyes glance meaningfully upwards, two metres above our heads, to the wildly entangled tops of three large shrubs on my side of the fence - they then travel downwards to rest on the demure one metre high fence between us. That's the height, he says.

"The Rescue Garden"

Our daughter recently purchased a house in a large country town. It's a pretty brick 1920s home, rented for over a decade. It came with a typically rambling cold climate "garden", which on closer post sale inspection the emphasis was most definitely on rambling.

English Ivy strangled a grove of silver leafed pittosporums, as well as conveniently holding up most of the fencing. Potato vines adorned the large shed at the back of the back yard, the sheer thickness of their trunks providing access for a wild cat to have her four kittens on the shed roof, whilst the spread of their foliage provided dense shelter for nesting birds – a conundrum quickly solved in favour of the latter. There were climbing roses in much need of love and a good prune, sticky weed (*Galium aparine*), blackberries, privet name the weed, this garden had it.

As well, the newly acquired Plymouth Rock chickens, huge birds, which turned out to be roosters and then a casserole, were let into the garden ostensibly to attack the ivy but their interest was held far more by the about to burst iris bulbs. After a week of serious garden rampage (mingled with the odd bit of suppressed chicken rage on my part) and seeming to get not very far, it was heartening to look back at the photos and realize there was good reason for our excellent sleeps that week. Some months later, following a harsh winter, compounded by the drought, I returned for some more gardening.

Look! Our daughter wailed... it's so sad, the romantic wildness of the country garden has disappeared. I tried to explain ,unconvincingly I think, the two steps forward one step back that is gardening, the oh so familiar feeling that one just shouldn't have even bothered just left it alone, there is something liberating in letting nature take its course.

Its spring now and the indomitable spirit of Nature, is stirring once again. There will be enough for us to do when the good, the bad and the ugly begin their push through the soil again; and we will continue to hasten slowly and plan carefully...even a wild romance can be assisted with a little planning and judicious planting.

"The Ultimately Unsustainable Garden"

A friend bought a property in an area she had loved since a child. The owner was a distant relative and a very, very good gardener who gardened every day, not only with great joy but a well-developed aesthetic. My friend knew from the start that her ability to maintain the vision of the previous gardener was not possible. She acknowledged the considerable responsibility involved in taking over the care and custodianship of a well-known and favourite garden in the region.

She knew it would be some time before this garden became her garden, reflecting her aesthetic, the amount of time and money she had to spare on hard and soft landscaping and her particular management of resources (water, fertilizers, plant choices). Eventually the garden changed to reflect all of these things yet it didn't lose the essence which the previous owner had created, the magic was still there even though the garden had changed (less varieties of plants, less area under cultivation, large plants such as trees and shrubs succumbing to age or disease or being removed for other considerations, less water usage) in essence it wasn't very different. It's a sensitive and careful gardener who can, overtime, make the changes that have to be made to increase the sustainability of the garden but does not diminish the garden's spirit.

“Making Changes to a Well Designed Garden”

Unlike the gardens above this garden has well designed hard and soft landscaping components. The fact that change (horticultural not hard landscaping) is being wrought upon it, has forced an examination of my motives; what is driving this change and will the new choices and changes really make it any “better” practically or visually? Does the concept of “better” equate with a particular ideology?

Effective use of a single species *Pennisetum* “Purple” fountain grass.

(NB: I am unsure if *Pennisetum advena* “*Rubrum*” is the same plant or a variation thereof)

Practical Positives

- * Native animals will not eat (I cannot believe I actually read this now as a positive!)
- * Grasses are planted close together so they hold the sandy soil on the steep banks successfully preventing erosion.
- * Maintenance so far is a once yearly cut back to 12 inches.
I don’t know how many years the plants last. I suppose one can run it like a plantation - out with the old and simply replace?

Practical Negatives:

- * For 3 months of the year it looks very ordinary as it is cut back to 12 “ high to invigorate the plant and allow some rain to penetrate the sandy and leaning to hydrophobic soil.
- * It (or its parents) probably isn’t a native – an issue nagging me as there is so much of it.
- * It is also meant to be invasive. I haven’t seen signs of it so far in this garden but it’s a grass and has runners and a healthy root system so it certainly looks as though it could be.
- * Probably quite a fire hazard too.

Aesthetic Positives:

Back Garden: blends with the native grasses growing in the National Park at the back (blends because even though the new growth *Pennisetum* grass is black/purple it has a lot of older dry blond leaves at its base, the same colour as the blady grasses in the NP when they die off.

Front Garden: the mono planting in two large terraces, in front of a simple rectangular timber dwelling, emphasizes the simplicity of the house and drystone walls.

The black/ purple colour of the new grass growth combines well with the painted timber of the house and deck. From the road below, one looks over the swaying pale fluffy heads of the grasses and the house seems to float above them, it is a good aesthetic.

Replacement Plant Update:

Since GDSG NL 104 I can report that, in the back garden -

Boronia, *Phebalium*, *Backhousia myrtifolia*, NSW Christmas bush, Blueberry Ash, *Philotheca myoporoides*, *Kennedia coccinea*, and *Tetratheca thymifolia* have all proved to be delicious offerings to the wildlife.

Presently the back garden consists of bamboo stakes and plastic tree guards. I am unsure of the next step...will they leave the plants alone when they get a bit of age and the leaves toughen or will they always have a go at them? Endemic *Xanthorrhoea* major and minor, cabbage palms, burrawangs, crinums and *Lomandra* varieties escape the attention of the predators.

This sort of gardening is fast turning into a rather expensive experiment in which I am an unwilling participant!

STUDY GROUP IMPORTANCE: Early on in the Society's history it was realised that knowledge about the cultivation of Australian native plants was very limited and there was little published information available. One way to help overcome this deficiency was to set up specialist Study Groups whose aim was to record the successes (and failures) of growing Australian species in various localities. Over the years out Groups have contributed valuable data assisting today's growers – but there is still a great deal to learn...

Pocket Handkerchief Rainforest Garden

Jan Sked, Qld

My garden is now 52 years old! We live in Lawnton in the Moreton Bay Region of south-eastern Queensland. Our home is on an 800 square metres corner block, which slopes ever so slightly towards the north. The soil has a high



Garden 6 years old



Garden today

percentage of clay, which means that plants requiring very good drainage are difficult to maintain. When this estate was developed all the topsoil was scraped off and we were left with just the subsoil. It took many years of constant applications of mulch and leaf litter to provide a reasonable topsoil for all the plants that I have amassed.

The house is high-set timber. The front of the house on Myles Street faces east, with the Galvin Street side facing south. The garden surrounds the house on three sides, with a curved driveway running through the northern section of the garden. The entire property is fenced, with a 2 metre paling fence on Galvin Street extending to half-way along Myles Street, and a weldmesh fence along the rest of the boundary. This creates privacy around the dwelling, but opens it up for the northern section of the garden.



There is no lawn within the property these days. The driveway is concrete and any areas that are not planted are paved or gravelled. There are pathways of soft leaf litter to allow access through the various sections of the garden. Much of the wide footpath area outside our boundary on Myles Street is also planted and mulched on either side of the concrete pathway. My garden is a habitat garden and probably also a collector's garden, as I have sought out the rare and unusual plants.



Most of the garden is planted with rainforest species, which includes some quite large rainforest trees.

Beneath the canopy trees of the rainforest are a few smaller trees and shrubs with mainly ferns, *Cordyline* and *Plectranthus* as a ground layer. The Hills clothes hoist, no longer used to dry washing, has now become a perfect support for a number of Hoya vines. Garden 5 is devoted to open forest species and is dominated by eucalypts. I also have a number of plants in containers – ferns, lilies, ground orchids, a few shrubs. These are plants that do not do well when planted in the garden.



Because of all the tall trees, we experience very little direct sunlight. I have a propagation area beside garden 11, where I harden off seedlings and cutting grown plants. To entertain my granddaughters I have created a fairy garden under our front patio and there are various "creatures" hiding throughout the garden.

Having more or less run out of space within the garden, I moved out onto the quite wide footpath area, where I have mulched much of the area and planted a few shrubs and ground covers. Plants used here have to be tough, as they do not get watered and are subject to damage from passing foot traffic, and are sometimes stolen.

Honey bees have been conspicuous by their absence in recent times. This is probably due to the flood of development that is gobbling up all our



natural areas. We no longer get visits from koalas and other friendly fauna, but our possums have stayed with us and happily romp across the roof at night. Thanks to noisy miner birds taking up residence in our garden, we no longer have the smaller birds.

In recent times a number of my rainforest trees in the northern parts of the garden have died mysteriously (poison?). There would not be much point in replacing them with more rainforest trees, as I would not live to see them grow to any size. Therefore I am replacing them with wattles that will grow quickly and hopefully provide a bit of a screen in that part of the garden. Like my garden, I am growing old and not able to do a lot

of maintenance work, but luckily the garden requires very little attention now, just watering of my potted collection and blowing leaves off the concrete driveway and paved areas. Mostly when I am in the garden I just like to sit under my trees and enjoy the peacefulness. I do not think I could exist without my garden.

From the Post Box

The Importance of Water in the Garden - Pam Yarra, Heathmont, Melbourne

I would like to add my comments to those of Ros Walcott. I have only recently returned from Japan. I completed walking the Nakesendo Way, nine consecutive days from Kyoto to Tokyo. The walk dates back to at least the seventh century in parts & takes the walker through many post towns. The terrain varied with country lanes, gravel tracks & forest paths. Water was always significant in the landscape as we passed by rivers, lakes and waterfalls, ponds in gardens (some with carp), as well as the many rice fields, dependent on access to water.

Regarding photos in the NL – Diana Snape, Victoria

Verbal descriptions are vital of course but I do think photos are important too because the visual aspect of a garden is important. A photo really is worth quite a few words. Do you think it would be a good idea to differentiate between photos that just illustrate a point, tell a story, or a single plant (keep them small) from those that actually show something about the design and plant combinations of a garden (make these photos significantly bigger)?

I like the 'new look' front page of the newsletter and really enjoying the (frequent!) newsletters.



Raising the heights - Leanne Dunne, Brisbane, Queensland

Filling a 'gap' in an established section of the garden can be tricky. Often the soil conditions don't meet the needs of the replacement plant. There is always the option of installing an attractive pot plant but they are prone to drying out quickly.

Another solution is using 'tree rings' especially the attractive new rusty metal rings now available on the market. They particularly blend well with a natural bush garden design and they can be levelled and filled with the appropriate soil mix. The raised elevation provides better drainage while moisture may be readily accessible from the under-ground water table. Erosion is not a concern due to containment. This may not be a fail-safe method but is worthy of consideration in my opinion and in my garden it's proving a reliable option for a few awkward spots.

ED: This is an excellent example of how we can share facts and images with members!



Natives & Exotics – mixed together? Nooooo!!! - David Redfern, Wattle Glen, Victoria

From a design perspective I think it rarely works & upsets the flow of a native garden. A rose bush in the middle of a native garden looks totally incongruous. The colours of a Crepuscule rose can blend with the colours of some banksias, but it just looks un-Australian! We have such a great range of natives available to us now (compared to even 10 years ago) with a diversity of flower colour, foliage colour, fragrance & texture, that we need no other plant palette. A good example is Westringia 'Deep Purple' which is reasonably new to the market. With a height &

width of 1 metre it is an excellent replacement for agapanthus i.e. extremely hardy, copes with neglect & will grow just about anywhere. We don't need to compromise a beautiful native garden with exotics!

Covering a Vine Arbour - Susan Rouse, Brisbane

ED: Susan has been searching for 'just the right' vine to cover her large barrel vaulted pergola which is a major built element of her garden landscape. She has very specific criteria for the vine and our GDSGQ members have been suggesting many species that will give the deep green 'blanket' she needs – this is an update from Susan.

Thank you for your suggestion of *Parsonsia straminea* for the arbour - it would certainly cover it and possibly much more! Looking out our western kitchen window is a deep green leafy combination of *Hibbertia scandens* (Snake vine) and *Geitonoplesium cymosum* (Scrambling lily). They were initially trained up a wire diamond on opposite sides of a block wall at the end of the narrow garden bed on the western side of the house. Neither took much notice of the wire for long. The end result is a lush clump of a scrambling tangle, studded with bee attracting yellow flowers. It is so dense that my cat steps often out onto the green and gets such a surprise when she crashes through to the garden below. At the moment I am leaning towards using these to provide leaf cover to the existing *Pandorea pandorana* tangled nest of branches. They are both local and proven to be hardy. The *H. scandens* attracts carpenters, teddy bears, blue banded and several other solitary native bees, while the *G. cymosum* just hums with stingless bees when in flower. If they all grow the end result is likely to be a hairy mess on top, but a green hairy mess that provides some much needed shade.

Coming 'Garden' Events – check out the ANPSA Website for specific details and other events

Please send information for 'Garden events' in your region to promote in the next Newsletter

New South Wales: Get Together Loftus November 10 - refer to ANPSA website

Victoria: Garden DesignFest November 10,11 and 17,18 - refer to ANPSA website

South Australia: Autumn Expo & Plants Sale - April 13, 14 refer to ANPSA website

Tasmania: Garden Visit Hobart Howrah - refer to ANPSA website

Western Australia: refer to ANPSA website

Queensland: GDSGQ Christmas meeting December 1, 9.30am - Brisbane Botanic Gardens Mt Coot-tha

GDSGQ Meeting February 8, 9.30am - Reddick Garden 212 Ney Road, Capalaba Q

Treasurer's Report – November 1, 2018

Cheque account: \$ 6,288.37

Term Deposit: \$ 26,706.58

TOTAL: \$ 32,994.95

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Welcome to new members – we look forward to your active participation in the study group

Alistair & Kylie Barros, Pullenvale Q

Ann Huthwaite, Logan, Brisbane Q

Rebecca Cook, Banyo, Brisbane Q

Christina McMaster, Sunshine Coast, Q

Anita Smyth, Kallangur, Brisbane Q

Current Membership: 137 - including 23 posted Newsletters & 108 email Newsletters

Membership year July 1 – June 30

Membership dues payable annually as follows:

Email Newsletter FREE Paper Newsletter \$20.00

Concession paper Newsletter \$15.00 (for pensioners and full-time students only)

Payment by cheque or EFT to: ANPSA Garden Design Study Group BSB 032-729, Account 285 385

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Newsletter Editor: Lawrie Smith, 38 Sandpiper Avenue NORTH LAKES Q 4509

Phone: 0411 228 900 Email: lawries@live.com