



GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP

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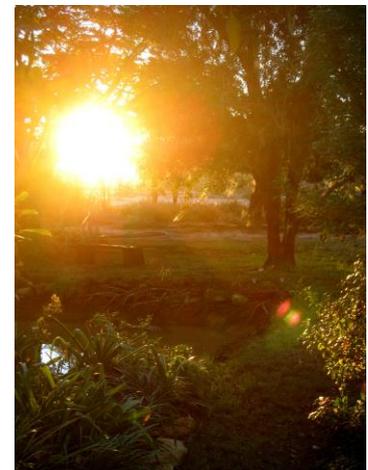
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Theme for this Newsletter: 'Sunshine & Shadow as a Design Tool'

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The sun is the main source of energy for almost every living thing on Earth. It gives a plant the light energy it needs to photosynthesize, which converts light energy into a storable form (glucose) that keeps plants alive. Oxygen needed by all animals to survive is a by-product of photosynthesis.

ANPSA Garden Design Study Group Newsletter

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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 2019/20 Newsletter dates and themes:

Issue	date	Theme	Issue	date	Theme
			110	February	Courtyard & Patio Gardens
108	August	Incorporating Artistic Elements - serious & whimsical	111	May	Planning for Garden Colour
109	November	Framework Trees and Shrubs			

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

The Editor Comments



Hello everyone!

When travelling overseas I always watch for Australian plants used in streets, gardens and landscape and it is amazing just how widespread they are! *Eucalyptus* species are found almost everywhere as are *Brachychiton*, *Callistemon*, *Scaevola* and many others. However I could not resist adding this photo of the spectacular Australian garden within the Mediterranean Biome at The Eden Project, Cornwall UK. It far outshines similar gardens at Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, Gardens by the Bay Singapore and other larger gardens elsewhere. I know I am biased but no other garden north of the equator either native or exotic surpassed this spring display.

Sunshine and Shadow as a Design Tool:

The following random thoughts on this Newsletter theme were inspired by local landscapes and gardens as we moved around the Mediterranean, Egypt, England and Singapore recently. In design terms there are many applications, these are a few:

Never static, ever changing: The effect of the sun's movement on a landscape of any scale impacts on a range of planning and design initiatives that effectively define the environmental, structural as well as the aesthetic components of a garden. To analyse and understand the ever changing way that sunshine and shadow interact across a site throughout each season and each day is fundamental and should define the design process for both hard and soft landscape elements from the outset. Without a detail understanding of these factors it is almost impossible to achieve a design outcome that will react logically to all of the physical, functional and aesthetic factors that influence garden design.

Analyse sunshine exposure patterns: For the past two years since leaving our five acre 'walkabout' garden after forty years, to recreate a new garden on 880 square metres, the 'laws' of sunshine and shadow have been forcefully thrust on me! Not that I discounted them previously, far from it but extensive rural gardens are so very forgiving as far as sunshine is concerned. As always as a designer whether the project be a personal garden, a client's garden or even the gardens of World Expo 88, my first step is to develop a series of analysis plans that plot the pattern of sunshine at 9am, noon and 3pm mid-summer, mid-winter and the equinox – Yes! That is twenty seven times! Amalgamating these on one plan clearly shows where and when site areas receive maximum sun, also illustrating every varied exposure between full sun to full shade. Of course you can identify or surmise from irregular observation what the pattern might be but nothing compares to a really detail analysis to define exposure extent exactly.

Sunshine patterns change with time: Of course such analyses are only true for the first year or so of either a new or redeveloped garden. The sunshine exposure patterns change with plant growth or perhaps newly constructed items added in your garden or in an adjacent one (don't overlook this!). Once armed with this basic information you can plan every aspect of your garden in detail - for instance: to build a pergola to provide instant shade; to plant an evergreen tree in just the right location to provide summer shade over a patio but allow the winter sun to penetrate; determine which area will have the most shaded and cool conditions to support rainforest species, and so on. The list really is yours to define.

Seasonal change: obviously the patterns and locations of sunshine and shadow change progressively with the seasons. Your favoured warm sunny spot to read the Sunday paper and sip coffee in winter will be absolutely no use in mid-summer when you need shade for the same activity. So plan locations for these special elements of your garden from the outset. Make a list of all those functions that you need to consider when planning to control sunshine and shadow. Plan also for the degree of sun exposure requirements required by plants you intend to incorporate in the garden. Yes you can control the sun if you plan well!

Response of plants: obviously sunshine is paramount for plant growth and health but intensity varies at differing seasons and times of the day. Knowing how the patterns of exposure vary in your garden over the seasons will help you decide just where in the garden to plant that special specimen you just had to buy on impulse. First you need to be certain you know it's preferences for tolerating sunshine, then you can determine the most appropriate location. Always keep in mind that a garden is a living changing environment and that the location that had appropriate sunshine exposure at planting may no longer be suitable when adjacent growing plants or new structures change conditions over time. But then that is the beauty of a garden – ever changing. Respond positively to that . . . I call it 'design with nature'.

Magic of a developing native garden: However I imagine most of us aspire to create our garden to be an expression of our personal interest in native plants and establish a garden plan that generally applies the principles of plant association that we observe in nature. Certainly as it establishes, a 'natural' garden will change progressively and sometimes radically over time. That is the 'magic' of a native garden. I'm sure we have all returned from a society plant sale with boxes of 'must have' plants, then with very limited research or thought, planted many of them in what turns out to be inappropriate locations. Perhaps too close together (which forces upright spindly growth); probably in too much sun (the delicate plants brown off and die); maybe over an underground or overhead service (hand up who has done this?); most likely too close to a path (requiring constant pruning or alternatively path relocation); or even a forest giant centrally in a suburban garden (the developing shade canopy changes the whole garden character and plant palette; to say nothing of safety and scale!). These are just a few of many problems that we can give ourselves in terms of the unconsidered impact of sunshine and shadow exposure. Always research and identify the specific species requirements with the conditions you know to exist in various parts of your garden. A word of warning! Don't believe everything you read in books; the author may be familiar with performance in a region that is very different to your garden. Best advice - be your own researcher of plants by walking around and closely observing successful (or unsuccessful) species in your local area.

New garden evolution to mature garden: When developing a new garden much of the initial planting design will of necessity need to be tolerant of full sun. As the larger specimens in the garden grow and develop, the patterns of shade will change and some adjacent smaller species will be in too sunny or too shady conditions. This offers the opportunity to fine tune the garden species progressively and by this provide garden diversity and interest. A garden, new or old, is never finished and is always changing, that is part of the beauty almost as a by-product. Perhaps you will need to research or experiment by trialling selected species you are unfamiliar with to identify the range of sunshine and shadow conditions that some will tolerate.

Tropical v temperate issues: No doubt everyone is aware of the sometimes quite significant differences between the effects of and response to sunshine exposure in tropical / subtropical gardens in comparison with those in temperate regions and also in inland areas. The shade patterns are largely defined by the varying altitude of the sun as it tracks east/west across the sky. From Brisbane north the sun actually shines from the south in mid-summer, so gardens on both the north and the south sides of the house receive full sun and heat in that period. The extent of the shade pattern will obviously depend on the latitude of the garden and the height of the obstruction (house or tree) blocking the sun's rays. The further north you are the greater is the effect of the sun exposure throughout the garden. Whereas in temperate areas, the sun shines only from the north, consequently gardens on the south side of the house are shady and cool, these conditions increase progressively with latitude as you move south. This combination of sunshine patterns (light and shade) and temperature variation perhaps explains why a tropical garden has a very different character (usually more intense colour) in comparison with a temperate garden (generally pastel shades predominate).

Perhaps while travelling I may have simplified the principles of 'sunshine and shadow' too much, so I'd like to see discussion between members about their personal experience. Thank you to those of our members who have prepared the very pertinent, in depth and interesting submissions for this Newsletter theme.

Native Plants Queensland - *Wildflower Spectacle*

Each year Native Plants Queensland stages a Wildflower Spectacle in September with a specific theme and one of our local Brisbane groups mounts an appropriate display garden to greet patrons at the entrance. This year the theme is '**Colour your Garden with Native Plants**' and the members of GDSGQ have accepted the opportunity to do the special display. It will centre around ten A3 colour photos each with short descriptive text under to show some garden design initiatives. If you have a suitably eye-catching photo of your garden that fits the theme we would love to consider its use. Desirably the photo should be of a special section or detail of the garden that illustrates an innovative design concept or principle e.g. predominant colour theme, colour harmony or contrast, colour as a focus; etc etc *I look forward to receiving a selection of photos in the next month.*

Newsletter #108 theme: 'Incorporating Artistic Elements - serious & whimsical

Focal points in the garden are very useful in garden design to attract attention and encourage exploration or contribute a special character. They can take the form of a unique plant form, moving water, sculpture, mosaic, almost anything of interest will give a garden added character. Let's have your thoughts and images of how to select, locate and integrate an artistic element to add vitality and interest in the garden.

Extracts from Past Newsletters (Issues 21 to 24)

The GDSG Newsletter index on the ANPSA website is a great way to search 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 below that are worth repeating as they are still as relevant today as they were when first published. *Make sure you read the full article of these references and other articles on the GDSG Newsletter archives section of the ANPSA website.*

Newsletter #21 – May 1998

Three "R"s of garden design

Diana Snape Vic

I was wondering recently whether it was possible to generalise about key factors which should be given consideration in garden design, and came up with these three "R"s. They aren't necessarily factors which spring immediately to mind.

Influence of demographics on Australian garden design

Geoff Simmons Qld

Australia is recognised as a country with a high proportion of the population born overseas or first generation citizens. Although the current intake of about 70,000 persons per year is well below that of some previous years, there is no doubt that this constitutes a large pool of people who are either not interested in gardening or have memories of garden plants that are not Australian native plants

Hibbertias - "You light up my life"

Jan Simpson ACT

Hibbertias well deserve this name, as they look like pieces of sunshine lying on the ground and light up the shady places under trees and leggy, bare-ankled bushes. They are a perfect species to add to a garden, about five years down the track, to give it a lift without having to totally change everything.

Newsletter #22 – August 1998

What is a garden?

Faisal Grant Vic

Many would argue that a collection of Australian plants, grown without consistent reference to original (indigenous) habitat can be called a garden. But I would say that such a definition belongs to an age when specimens stripped from their landscapes ended up in desultorily-maintained suburban plots, and when natural unity was traded for artificial appearances.

Coping with constraints

Diana Snape Vic

We're lucky if Australian plants predominate in the garden we inherit, or in neighbouring gardens. So I think most of us work under constraints of one kind or another. We are familiar with the recognized constraints of climate and soil but there are many others just as important in terms of design, especially for a small suburban block.

'The Book of Garden Design' by John Brookes (Macmillan 1991) *Shirley Pipitone ACT*

I found the most interesting concept in the book to be the way he categorises plants for the purpose of designing with them. His categories are very much for aesthetic purposes rather than practical design uses such as shade, windbreak or screen

Newsletter #23 – November 1998

Containers in garden design *Diana Snape Vic*

A container is often a small formal structure which can be an echo of the house (or other building) in the garden scene. There are many different types of containers - barrels (or half barrels), pots of all shapes and sizes. They may be of more natural materials such as terracotta, ranging from low bowls to tall pipes, or else

A salt lashed garden *Trevor Blake Vic*

Some years ago a group of us bought a parcel of land adjoining the coast which was lashed from two directions by salt laden winds. We camped on this block, 5 acres of which was natural vegetation and the other 5 was cleared farmland

Preparing your new garden *Gordon Rowland NSW*

If you have plans for a new garden make sure you eliminate perennial weeds The Bradley Method is one manual method of weed control, developed for use in natural bushland. It involves minimal disturbance to the soil and is rather slow and labour-intensive. It is described in detail in Joan Bradley's book 'Bringing back the Bush' published by Lansdowne Press

Newsletter #24 – February 1999

Horizontal divisions in a garden *Diana Snape Vic*

Geoff Simmons' article on width of paths in NL23-16 introduced ideas which had not occurred to me before. I like the idea of narrow paths as 'wallaby paths', similar to those we often follow when wandering in the 'bush', and not just because that's how many of my paths develop

Simple Classification of Garden Styles *Jeff Howes NSW*

As one who has no formal training in landscape design (although I do have a keen interest in this area), I have had great difficulty interpreting the words that describe the categories when trying to decide what style my home garden is

Member's thoughts on Sunshine and Shadow

Light Brings a Garden to Life

Ruth Crosson, Gladstone, Q



Photo Granite Creek - Sunlight and Shadow in Nature

This is a reminder of how light makes a photo come to life as it does in the garden landscape. In my bush, a Land for Wildlife Garden, on a steep hill side facing east, I have many tall lemon scented gums *Eucalyptus citriodora* that cast shadows over all the garden area and buildings. It is a great benefit to have these trees as they provide a windbreak from the northerly and easterly gales. Also they save me the electricity for air conditioners as the shadows they cast cool the house. The heavy shade does limit what will grow and flower in this situation. However the movement of shadows, and shafts of sunlight make a magic scene that is

always changing in the different seasons as the sun moves north in winter and south in summer.

Sun and Shade

Diana Snape, Vic

Sunshine and shade of course play an enormous role in garden design. Obviously there are the practical requirements of plants. One of the first things we look up about a new plant (before we decide where to plant it) is whether it prefers sun, semi-shade or shade. Most can cope with semi-shade but many do best with either more or less sun than that middle-of-the-road situation. A minority are very fussy.

With climate change there will be some tendency for the plants we already have to need a little more shade than they have now. There will also be a change in the palette of plants we use, which will need to come from drier, sunnier areas. A more demanding factor will probably be water and there will be different solutions to dealing with that problem.



I looked at sun and shade in design from an aesthetic point of view. My first photo shows the beautiful effect of natural tree shadows in a large garden (the Jacobs' garden). This contrasts with the second photo which shows striking striped shadows in a pattern created by hard landscape, in one of the small demonstration gardens at the R.B.G.



Cranbourne. It doesn't have to be as imposing as that!

The third photo, also taken at RBG Cranbourne, shows the use of light coloured, hard surfaces (rock and gravel) to maximise the sunlight for a group of Kangaroo Paws (*Anigostanthos sp.*) which are thriving. This contrasts with Maidenhair Fern (*Adiantum sp.*) growing in a

moist, shaded position in our old garden.

Sunny and shady areas bring different atmospheres to a garden. The bright light, warmth and openness of a sunny area (especially in winter) creates a different mood to the dim light and coolth of a shaded place, with its feeling of seclusion. It's nice to have a balance, rather like the balance between plants and open space, or mass and void.

Sunshine and Shadow

Jane Fountain, Brisbane

This topic encourages me to think about looking at it in two ways. Aspect is one of the most important considerations of house and garden design – and it should be easy in Brisbane to build to take advantage of the summer breeze and winter sun, and that is to face the living area North East. It's sad to see whole estates built with the main areas of the house facing the street, no matter which direction that is. That's why decks and terraces are often stuck onto the north-east side later, after the residents have found out where the best living area is. And this direction is also most beneficial to the garden – many plants prefer morning sun, as the afternoons can be rather severe.

Then there is the difference between summer and winter sun. I was very surprised when I realised how much variation there is between the summer sunrise and sunset positions and those in winter. I noticed that in summer, the sun rises facing my property (straight down the driveway), passes over the house and sets behind the property. But in mid-winter it has moved to rise at the corner of the street – 100m north, stays low in the north and sets north west of the house. So my garden is a challenge; near the house it is very sunny in summer over midday and very shady in winter, as the sun is just below the tops of the gum forest on the north.

So I end up wandering around with a plant, thinking about summer sun and winter shade patterns and find it a bit challenging to find a perfect position. At the moment (early March) the sun has crept along to the northern corner of my property – I noticed because the early sun doesn't shine in the bedroom window in the morning.

Playground Design

I have been very excited lately to see the amazing makeover of the playground in the school where I am a Teacher Aide. The area is optimistically called the 'Rainforest' and has gums, figs, *Harpullia*, *Buckinghamia* and other shade trees. Children are very hard on a play area, and for years I watched the roots of trees being exposed more and more, by the constant running of hundreds of children with hard-soled joggers.

Over summer there was a total makeover with the idea of 'nature play' as the focus. Large rocks infilled between with gravel, to keep out rodents, snakes and small feet, provide challenging walking. Big logs, rescued from a nearby subdivision, are used for sitting, walking on or jumping to or from! Rocks have also been placed in circles for group chatting or performing. A great deal of mulch has been added, with coir logs being used to try to stop the slip down the slope. We are very lucky to have this area and that the P&C is prepared to invest in its enhancement and protection, as well as giving the kids opportunities for great fun and exercise.

Some of the elements of this play space could be translated into suburban gardens – wouldn't it be great to have a handy huge rock and log or two, and a machine to put it all in place! Here are a few pics to inspire you.

Modify the Temperature of a House - Sunshine and Shadow

Colleen and Geoff Keena, Glamorgan Vale, Qld.

Since moving here in 2000, the temperatures have varied from 47 C in Summer to -6 C in Winter. The use of appliances to modify temperature, such as an air-conditioner or heater, impacts on expenses and on the environment. However, their use can be minimised or even made unnecessary, by planting deciduous native trees, *Melia azedarach* along the north of the house.

In summer, *Melia* trees are a mass of foliage, so reducing the heat that can enter the house. In winter, the trunks are completely bare, thus allowing full sun into the house for winter warmth. Planting a row of *Melia* to the north of the house has meant that in summer, a comfortable temperature is reached with the use of fans or an evaporative air-conditioner. There is no heating in winter, other than in the bathroom for early morning showers.

Melia azedarach not only modifies the temperature of our house but provides seasonal changes not often seen in the sub-tropics. The perfumed flowers in spring attract a range of butterflies. The stunning foliage in autumn is a reminder of the bare branches to follow in winter.



Row of Melia to north of house



Perfumed flowers in Spring



Lush foliage in Summer



Bright Colour in Autumn

The Procession of Light and Shade through the Days and the Seasons

Words Ros Walcott, Canberra Photos Ben Walcott, Canberra

The play of light and shade in a garden is very important both for technical, horticultural reasons - how your plants grow - and also for their aesthetic beauty; how the foliage and flowers are lit by sun and shade. Some sites immediately suggest a need for shade.

Russell Page finds himself compelled to provide shade in a hot site in the Nile Valley.

'the hot blue sky, cloudless all the year round, offered an easy answer – shade. A garden should be devised through which one would always walk in shade. Shade implied trees. A mango grove became the main focus of the garden and all its parts and details were subjected to the over-riding theme.'

Education of a Gardener Russell Page 1962, Collins, p. 46

He adds later

'A hot climate is no place for ... a sand garden unless its pale surface, otherwise reflecting too much light and heat, be broken by shadows for the greater part of the day.' p. 103

I remember seeing a very simple layout in a garden of an oblong of mop-top acacias, evenly spaced, to show both daily and seasonally the play of light and shade. This very pared back garden feature gave endless delight as the patterns of light and shade changed minute by minute. Shadows of both round tops and thin stems interwove with each other in a complicated pattern on the lawn.



Shadows on walls are always appealing and change each day and season.

There are many types of shade in a garden and these different types must be managed carefully to achieve the desired result for both growth and appearance. As Donald Wyman says

'There are all degrees of shade, light shade caused by high branches of an open- growing tree, dense shade caused by a grove of evergreen trees, and intermittent shade caused by a building or trees interrupting continual direct sunlight on a certain garden spot. Shade caused by trees or tall shrubs brings another growing hazard

– that of root competition...The deeper the shade, the fewer the plants which can be selected to grow in such situations. Soil in the shade should be very well prepared.'

Wyman's Gardening Encyclopaedia Donald Wyman, Macmillan 1971, p. 1029.

The choice of plants is more limited in shade and certainly attention must be paid to the soil preparation and cultivation of these plants. Most plants do not thrive in deep shade, although some will tolerate it better than others. Some correas, for example, will grow in quite deep shade although they probably will not flower as well.



The Encyclopaedia of Garden Design makes the point that colour is perceived very differently in sun or shadow,

'Light and Shade Responding to colour is a sensory reaction, like smell and taste, and the way in which our eyes read a colour is dependent upon the amount, and intensity, of light that is reflected from that colour. Sunny areas make colour appear bolder and more concentrated while shaded areas reflect more muted hues. That means that flat areas of colour – for example, a painted wall may look quite different depending on their aspect and orientation. Similarly, the hues of flowers and leaves will change depending on the location, the degree of shade cast on them, and time of day.'

Encyclopaedia of Garden Design Ed. Chris Young. Royal Horticultural Society 2009, p. 47.

Russell Page also makes an interesting distinction between looking up into a garden rather than down and over a garden.

'Since I enjoy plants, I also like working on a site where the ground rises away from the house. Such a situation enables one to see more of one's plantings, and the play of light and shade seem richer and more interesting when one looks up and through rather than down and over.' p. 69.



The Encyclopedia of Garden Design makes the following points about modernist garden design.

Asymmetry is key to Modernist designs which are also characterised by free-flowing space and the play of light and shadow. Views through these gardens are complex, as opposed to the more controlled vistas of the classical, formal garden. p. 157. Our front garden is a good example of dappled light making complicated patterns throughout the day. The shadows from dense clipped hedges are much more sharp, static and deep than those from airy open bushes which move and change their patterns in the wind.

There has recently been a move away from complex mixed border schemes to a more limited planting palette, such as the architectural hedges and monocultures typical of Jacques Wirtz's designs or the large drifts of colour evident in the work of Piet Oudolf. Both designers rely on the movement and light-capturing qualities of grasses, which provide a long season of interest.

The following description of a garden in Arizona demonstrates the effect of sun and shade on a group of indigenous plants and animals.



The Garden of Cliff Douglas, Mesa Arizona
'In April, the late-evening sun lights up the bright red of the chuparosa (hummingbird) and the brilliant yellows of the brittle bush. Framing this flower show is a saguaro cactus, an ocotillo (buggy whip) and creosote. All of these plants are indigenous. In front of the west-facing library window, a mesquite tree provides much-needed shade; under its branches a microclimate shelters understory plants. The seed pods of the mesquite are a favourite food of our many rock and antelope squirrels, and at night we sometimes turn on the lights under this tree to watch wild javelinas gorging themselves.'

The American Man's Garden Rosemary Verey Little Brown, 1990 p. 159-163

The title quote is again from Russell Page, p. 147
'procession of light and shade through the days and the seasons' which is the essence of this subject.
Ros and Ben Walcott, Light and Shade in the Garden, GDSG Newsletter 83, August 2013 pp.13-14.

Dry Rainforest section of my Garden

Leanne Dunne, Brisbane Qld

The canopy of my neighbour's tall and dense *Syzygium* overhanging the fence in the far rear corner of my garden is coupled with our own mature form of *Callistemon viminalis* (8m H x 8m W) situated opposite. These trees create a micro-climate permitting me to use some dry rainforest and shade loving native plants. Plant selection has been a long drawn out affair but I feel at last it is heading in the right direction. Given the weather changes it is a blessing to have the natural slope allowing me to run a hose in gravity mode from our rainwater tank at the top of the yard to slowly moisturize this lower zone when needed.

For height and to disguise the timber paling 2m high fence, I have chosen *Alpinia caerulea*, *Cordyline stricta*, *Hovea acutifolia*, *Alpinia acutifolia* and *Graptophyllum illicifolium*. Understorey plants are *Asplenium australasicum*, *Davallia pyxidata*, *Lomandra hystrix* 'Tropic Cascade', *Calostemma luteum*, *Davallia pyxidata* and *Plectranthus* with *Rubus rosifolius* tucked in the corner. Newly acquired species waiting for planting are

Psychotria loniceroides and *Abelmoschus moschatus* subsp. *tuberosus* which I'm very enthused about for that hit of red blooms to brighten the picture!

From Light to Dark

Wendy Johnston, Buderim, Qld

When we moved in here 10 years ago we created a new garden on the south side of the house. The garden has a triangular shape, with an established *Acmena smithii* at the southern-most point, and slopes down towards the west. There had previously been a line of Hydrangeas and maiden hair close to the house but they had long gone. As the garden was to be enjoyed from the windows above as well as around a small courtyard, we wanted a mixed planting at the bottom and spear lilies across the top.



We planned for some shrubs that would cope with the harsh sun in summer and no sun in winter, under-planted with ferns. Initially the garden was very bare so we planted yellow button daisies with large heads (*Chrysocephalum apiculatum*) and *Scaevola aemula* purple fanfare where there would always be sun, tubestock of *Syzygium Pink Cascade* and *Eugenia reinwardtiana* in the areas which would get the harsh sun around midday in summer, and spear lilies (*Doryanthus palmeri*) across the top.

What we underestimated was the ever-increasing shade from a large White Booyong (*Argyrodendron trifoliolatum*), 20m further down the slope, so that when the sun gets low in winter parts of the garden weren't going to get a very long period of sun at all, and that the light differential summer to winter would be experienced over a much bigger area of the garden than just the bit nearest the house. Booyong (Sterculiaceae family), also known as Brown Tulip Oak, is a very attractive park and timber tree with a straight buttressed trunk to 40 metres, with clusters of cream bell flowers over the foliage canopy in winter.

The first summer brought a wonderful show from the daisies and *Scaevola*. However the *Scaevola* was short-lived and as soon as some shade persisted the daisies went backwards and became shabby. Unfortunately myrtle rust took its toll on the *Eugenia reinwardtiana* but the pink cascade came on well. The ferns we planted, maiden hair and rasp ferns, weren't initially a success. The spear lilies however excelled and have since flowered.

We have planted a *Callistemon Reeves Pink* and a *Grevillea forest rambler* which are happy with full sun and part shade. They have done well. The maiden hair and rasp ferns have rejuvenated. In the darkest areas, *Bowenia spectabilis* and *Eupomatia laurina* are doing really well. Most impressively some of the original maiden hair from long ago has re-established itself and other ferns, *Zieria prostrata*, and *Graptophyllum spinigerum* are volunteering and growing on. The shrubs are pruned regularly to keep them in check.

As ever, the garden is continuously evolving and we have an enjoyable space.

Sunshine and Shadow as a Design Tool

When we moved into our home almost twenty years ago we inherited front and side gardens that were almost blank sheets, and a back garden with 'potential'. Our 1/3 acre home in Yorke Peninsula is in a hot Mediterranean climate, has limestone sandy soil, and is a couple of blocks from the windy coast so we knew we had some challenges ahead of us. We drew up designs for sections of the garden with a focus on coping with the heat (intense, sustained light) and wind.

Caption: Our Flinders patch in a section of the garden that gets lots of sun. Tall trees and shrubs are in the background, which is at the very front of the garden

Lib Bartholomeusz, Yorke Peninsula



The front garden is north facing so we planted quick growing eucs and acacias to create some shade, and gratefully nodded to the tall, bushy grevilleas that were already there. We wanted a light and cheery garden and managed to create this by selecting medium and small shrubs and ground covers that would hopefully benefit from the part shade that would eventuate. Our collection of tags of deceased plants show just how many plants struggled in the early years but at last we have the effect of shade and light we were looking for.



Changing the shade in a garden can have unforeseen effects when not considering all aspects in the new design. One section of the garden was nicely developing as a sheltered correa patch and I was keen to replace a tired rosemary hedge with bursarias. So down came a section of the hedge. However I'd ignored the fact that we'd also removed a tall eucalypt several metres away. Big mistake. The tall tree and rosemary hedge had been providing just the right amount of light and shade that helped the correas thrive. Come our long, hot, hot summer and seven correas disappeared before our eyes.

Caption: Don't try this at home. The correa patch, minus most of the correas

We are pleased with the use of light and shade in our fernery. Our region is not suited to subtropical plants because it is too dry in summer, and too cold in winter. We wanted to create a microclimate in an area that would be open to view, and covered by something other than shadecloth. So a shelter was built using 2x2 slats cut on the diagonal. It has worked a treat, creating different shadows over the seasons and providing enough shelter, shade and humidity for subtropical plants to grow. However the last two summers have been so intense we've had to rig up temporary shadecloth tents over the most delicate specimens. Grr

We've a good collection of Aussies in the fernery, including various ferns, violets and lemon myrtle. This section is also the right spot for our Asian herbs. However, it proved too shady for our finger lime. That's now on wheels and is moved with the seasons, and produces delicious fruit. Next phase is to replace the exotic palms and broad leafed plants... and restore the mild summers.

Caption: Changing shadows in the fernery created by the diagonal slats

We started our garden with designs that we thought would best use the shade and light available while creating other shade and light spaces where we wanted them. However, it is easy to forget basic principles and make mistakes. The good thing about creating a garden is that it is always a work in progress.



Garden in Full Northwest Sun

Brenda Meehans, Brisbane

With the end of another hot summer in Brisbane I've been thinking about what to do with my hot, dry, northwest facing front garden that tends to look very uninteresting in the heat. I recently read the 'Native Art and Design with Australian Plants' book by Herd & Ivankovic-Waters about native garden design. It has suggestions grouped by the required garden 'look' including 'Shapely low cover', 'Sculptural forms and 'Shady spaces'. The one that appealed to me was the 'Flowering meadow' style. I was impressed with the idea of having a meadow look instead of my preferred shrub border idea that is really more suited to temperate climates. I already have some of the suggested meadow species including a hardy *Dianella (caerulea/brevipedunculata cross)*, *Bulbine bulbosa*, *Scaevola*, Yellow Buttons, daisies and will plant more of these to fill the spaces amongst the existing shrubs. The existing three Cousin It's will fit in nicely with this look. Many of the listed plants are not for Brisbane including

Burchardia or don't cope with the heat like *Swainsonia* although it does very well with morning sun or they need moisture like *Brachyscome*. Not that I won't be watering but some plants just get too parched looking in the sun and I like the garden to look green and thriving.



Portulaca filicifolia self-seeds readily in the future meadow

< *Senna clavigera*

Rhodamia anthemoides >



One of my best flowering hot weather plants is *Senna clavigera* that repeat flowers all summer and attracts lots of bees, the blue banded ones particularly. It doesn't need much water and self seeds easily for the next year so that the older, woody plant can be removed. *Sauropus albiflorus* (has a newer species name now), *Portulaca filicifolia*, *Calotis lappulacaea*, *Melaleuca violacea* and *Callistemon viminalis* Little Silver are also hardy small shrubs to fill out my meadow.

Elsewhere in the garden I've been planting more of anything that copes well with the heat including *Podocarpus elatus* (Plum Pine), *Syzygium aloratum* (Tinkling Satinash), *Bulbine bulbosa*, *Melaleuca armillaris*, *Hakea actites*, *Dianella brevipedunculata*, *Alchornea illicifolia*, *Callitris columellaris* (Bribie Pine), *Indigophera hirsute*, *Melaleuca* Little Red and *Graptophyllum spinigerum* (Samford Holly, in part shade). The grevilleas are such good bird attractors that I'll take the time to keep the water up to them. I'm looking forward to how my meadow looks by Christmas-time.

Sunshine and Shadow as a Design Tool

Jo Hambrett NSW

"The dance between darkness and light will always remain. The stars and the moon need the darkness to be seen."

Man Ray, the famous 20th C. photographer and artist, once said that photography was like painting, but he was painting with light instead of paint. Sunshine (light) and shadow (darkness) are amongst the most profoundly beautiful effects produced in nature. A full moon silvering the seas, a night sky full of stars, sunlight shining on a snow covered mountain – Nature evokes feelings of peace, delight, wonder and joy within us humans; as gardeners we could do worse than trying to elicit such sentiments, albeit writ small, within our gardens.



Generally most gardens look better in sunlight than on an overcast day. To my eye, native gardens benefit from rather more sun than less, the size and arrangement of their blooms and leaves tends to fracture the sunlight into tiny shards, so there is tremendous sparkle thrown off, whereas the exotic species with (mostly) tighter, larger and showier (bred for purpose) blooms tend to be perceived in blocks of colour or texture and don't need as much bright sun in which to shine. The amount and type of sunlight though is important - we all know the dead hand of the relentless afternoon summer sun flattening perspective and bleaching colour.

Climate too – the same amount of sun (strength and time on the plants) will affect the appearance (as well as the health) of the dry sclerophyll, the tropical or the desert garden quite differently. We really are gardening with a paintbrush dipped in light here!



The house and garden of Frank Lloyd Wright and the Botanic Garden (both in Scottsdale, Arizona) come to mind as examples of gardening in a desert climate where there is very little in the way of shade – here, the house and garden design (both the hard and soft landscaping) are the design tools responding to the climate. The plant palette is essentially native (small trees with sparse leaves, cacti and palms) and the provision of small shady corners within the garden is more to do with artful design than nature. In the case where large shrubs or trees are not possible don't forget that back lighting (grass heads, cacti needles) is also using light, as the sun is getting lower in the sky and evening approaches.

Gardening is all about working with what we have got - soil, climate, space and time available, whilst producing the most beautifully possible effects in an environmentally responsible way! No problem I hear you reply! Most of us can only enjoy the sublime effect of the sun shining through a mature grove of trees flinging their shadows across the grass or rocks beneath, in a large park or on a bushwalk, not in our own garden. The challenge to utilize the dramatic effects that light and shade provide becomes more of a challenge as the size of the garden decreases. That said, I can think of no better a challenge to take on.

A garden with varying amounts of shade from very deep, to dappled, to full sun is potentially more interesting both visually and horticulturally, as well as appearing to be larger than it is. The viewer wants to venture into the shadowed spaces, physically, if possible or visually, if not, either way– there is a reward – semi darkness is soft, restful and contemplative, especially under an Australian summer sun. The classic (and utterly gorgeous) cottage gardens and perennial borders of the northern hemisphere are examples of garden styles which thrive in full sun and have no need of shady pockets. Their future and sustainability in countries such as ours in these times of what appears to be ongoing weather changeability is questionable.

HOW TO DEAL WITH EXTREMES OF SUN AND SHADOW IN THE GARDEN

Work within your constraints. It will make the end result look a lot more natural, more site specific. Suitable plant choice - very important, form, colour & conditions to thrive.

- Know the trajectory of the sun over your garden (both summer and winter) so suitable plant choices are made for: the aesthetic effect; the suitability effect (longevity and robustness of the plants); for practical (hard landscaping) considerations.
- Changes due to time – always remember The Fourth Dimension!
- Growth changes the light to shade ratio which will influence plant choice going forward.
- Increasing light penetration – under pruning, maintaining height
- Decrease light penetration – the opposite
- Spreading trees and shrubs encourage the dappled effect, by exposing more surfaces and blocking more light.



SHADE:

Using variegated plants in shaded areas and/or plants which have leaves which allow the light to shine through them brings a sense of light into a shady spot – of course not every variegated or translucent leaved plant will necessarily enjoy deep shade; experiment with just one plant initially.

Planting a variegated yellow and green shrub (bright and largish) or a clump of variegated plants at the end of the shade tunnel or the edge of the shaded area (ideally where the sun can strike it) will entice the eye through the shaded garden to the lit plant(s) at the end or edge.

Alternatively, placing an interesting feature such as a statue, pot, with or without plant or a garden bench or seat- your choice as to degree of subtlety (bearing in mind that the things people enjoy in a garden is discovery).

Make use of reflective surfaces such as smooth river pebbles, mirrors (birdsafe), ceramics or glass mosaic tiles (applied to terracotta dishes, birdbaths or pots) and of course the ultimate...water ...reflecting its surrounds in a pond or birdbath.

SUN:

Extreme sun, especially if water is not available or is scarce, calls for extreme plants, ideally native and specific to the area. However it really will be trial and error depending on so many other factors.

If there is water and will power then soil can be improved and quick growing pioneer species can be planted and cared for to get a bit of shade happening.

Coastal species which grow in sand dunes could be helpful, but of course they live in a mild coastal climate, benefitting from not infrequent light coastal showers.

Extreme inland sun is a definite challenge! One can do no better than read about gardens and their gardeners on the edge of difficult climate zones and what their owners have attempted and achieved.

Sunshine and Shadow @ British National Gallery

Lawrie Smith, Brisbane

Late one afternoon the National Gallery beckoned from Trafalgar Square. As luck would have it, a special collection of landscape paintings was on display, including many works of art most of which are very familiar. So I immediately surmised that this might offer some insight into our GDSG May Newsletter theme. The exhibition of landscape paintings by well-known European and British artists was arranged chronologically for comparison.

In the seventeenth century French artists Claude Lorraine and Nicolas Poussin were among the first to move toward naturalistic landscape painting of classical and biblical subjects with dark, misty environments and shafts of light highlighting the subject.



Later Dutch painters Rembrandt and Peter Paul Reuben's developed evocative, very detail, large, dark and moody pastoral works which use light skilfully to create depth and texture. These works contrasted with the sylvan or romantic style of English artists John Constable and Gainsborough where rural or country subjects featured people and animals highlighted in broad landscapes by sunlight. It is said that these works influenced Capability Brown the great English gardener.

The more modern landscape impressions by Paul Cezanne, Claude Monet and Turner were vibrant and filled with light catching the essence of the natural world. Vincent van Gough took the extra step of using abstraction to dramatically interpret nature and landscape to shine dramatically out of the canvas. Unfortunately his 'Sunflowers' was out on loan!

Then at the end of the gallery was a stand-alone work, with strong sunshine, clear blue skies, purple shadows, rocky cliffs, ultramarine water and informal shade trees ... Could it be ...? Yes it is! An Australian work 'Blue Pacific' by Arthur Streeton of sandstone cliffs near Bondi. Our landscape is truly unique and sunburnt in comparison with that of Europe. For me the lesson of this collection in London was that no matter in what region of Australia you are developing a garden - tropical or temperate - sunshine will enliven the garden physically, visually and aesthetically to create a unique garden character.



GARDEN TIPS

- *Plants will bring your garden to life, softening the hard landscape, affecting light and shade and changing the perspective of everything as they grow, placing or even nestling, your house into a garden context. One of the real challenges in garden design is being able to imagine how the plants will grow and change your experience of light and space.*
- *In design a whole lot of things, like unity and balance, come before excitement, so when making decisions about how to use a particular plant, concentrate on its form and function, growth habit, leaf texture and colour in relation to other plants in the design.*
- *Unity is important when selecting species to achieve gardens where the plants seem to belong. A good start is to establish a backbone of taller foliage plants, then fill in the lower-growing feature plants later.*
- *Weather patterns are now a lot less predictable. It's becoming equally important to select plants that tolerate more extreme conditions.*
- *It is important to preserve a feeling of space in a garden; some hard structure elements of the design, such as paths, paved areas and ponds do just that.*

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

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: refer to ANPSA website

Victoria: refer to ANPSA website

South Australia: refer to ANPSA website

Tasmania: - refer to ANPSA website

Western Australia: Sept 29 – Oct 4, 2019 ANPSA 'Blooming Diversity' - refer to ANPSA website

Queensland: GDSGQ Meeting May 24, 9.30am - Schwarz Garden, The Pocket 69 Maskell Court, Draper Q

As you possibly recall, membership of GDSG covers a period of twelve months from July 1 to June 30 so this May Newsletter # 107 will be the last one for the 2018/2019 year. There is no need for you to do anything UNLESS you want to change your Membership status. You will need to do this now or before June 30, 2019.

- If you wish to terminate your Membership & Newsletter by email, then please advise me; OR
- If you wish to continue your Membership & Newsletter by post, then forward the annual subscription \$20

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

Daryl Radnell - Moe South, Victoria

Current Membership: 139 - including 22 posted Newsletters & 115 email Newsletters

Treasurer's Report – May 9, 2019

Cheque account: \$ 5,510.88

Term Deposit: \$ 27,320.83 (reinvested for 12 months to Jan 25, 2020)

TOTAL: \$ 32,831.71

Membership year July 1 – June 30

Membership dues payable annually as follows:

Email Newsletter FREE Paper Newsletter \$20.00 per annum

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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This is a selection of photos taken recently while overseas that may be of relevance & interest.



The Australian collection – Flower Dome - Gardens by the Bay, Singapore



The Australian collection – Mediterranean Biome - The Eden Project, Cornwall UK



The Australian collection – Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew