

ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS

GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP

NEWSLETTER No. 36

November 2001

Study Group Leader/Editor: Diana SnapeTreasurer/Membership: Bryan Loft

Dear Members,

I think September and October are always busy months for gardeners. There are so many things going on, so many gardens to visit (or to get ready for visitors). In Melbourne, Spring came very early (it started during Winter!) and the plants were quite confused as to when to flower. Our Open Garden Scheme weekend in late October went well, with many helpers contributing. Thank you very much to all who did. The visitors were very appreciative - we had about 650 this time and it's always remarkable that the next day there's virtually no sign that they have been there. Please write about any interesting gardens you've seen.

The ASGAP conference in Canberra was very successful - congratulations to the hard-working organizers. Sadly I missed a lot of it. I spent two days in bed and four days without a voice - so frustrating! Helen Morrow kindly gave my presentation and Helen and Barbara Buchanan answered questions afterwards. Brian also helped by being my voice when I had something to whisper. Many Study Group members enjoyed getting together when we managed to fit a brief visit to Shirley Pipitone's lovely small garden into the busy program.

Thank you for the notes on books - it's really beneficial to know what other members enjoy or find helpful and interesting. Our book is well underway now and I've been working with the editor. We have obtained an interest-free loan from APS Victoria to enable the publisher to produce a high quality book for a price that the general public can afford. The loan will be repaid from the royalties we receive for the book. We had hoped to receive a grant and would still like to do so. If any members know of bodies which might be willing to support the publication of our book by a grant, please let me know the details so I can put in an application with all the details. We are very grateful for the loan but it would be good to be able to begin reducing it soon.

NEXT MEETINGS

Please see details of these meetings on pages W - 20

NE VIC: Saturday November 10 - at Mary Ward's * *note Saturday*

SYDNEY: Sunday November 18 - please contact Jo Hambrett

MELBOURNE: Saturday December 1 - at Diana Snape's • *note Saturday*

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CORRESPONDENCE extracts

"Here is an article about Betty Maloney published in the Sydney Morning Herald that you may not have seen. Betty was a wonderful person. Among many other things that interested her, she was (as you would know) one of the pioneers in promoting a typical Australian theme in garden design.

The article refers to Betty's memorial service at Stony Range Flora Reserve. Tamara and I were there and it was very moving. The ceremony was held in a natural amphitheatre with a large water feature surrounded by rainforest that Betty helped create. It was certainly in typical Betty Maloney country. Speaker after speaker mentioned the inspiration derived from their experiences with Betty. Don Burke was a capable master of ceremonies." Ian Cox NSW

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Brian and I knew Betty when we lived in Sydney in the early 60s and belonged to the North Shore Group. Her (and her sister's) books crystallized the concept of the 'bush garden'. DS

"Maureen and I have been away for over two months travelling to far reaches of Australia. We took our own car and used a small tent for sleeping. We really enjoyed our trip and the varying landscapes we saw.

Came home to a lot of work in the garden and I have found it hard to regain enthusiasm." **Norm Webb NSW**

After a wonderful trip through all those beautiful 'natural gardens', it is very difficult to get back down to earth and pull out those weeds. I hope you'll soon regain your enthusiasm, Norm. DS

Special interests of Study Group members

It is always fascinating to read the wide range of special interests that Study Group members have, within the general field of garden design with Australian plants. The variety is quite surprising. Here are just a few, taken from recent membership forms:-

Lynne Boladeras, W.A. -1 work as a Gardener and Landscaper in a village of 450 people at a minesite in the N.E. Goldfields of W.A., using local, arid-land plants.

Catherine Drew, Vic. a professional member:- therapeutic gardens - spaces for gardening with special access for people with disabilities; restorative garden spaces.

Ted & Jenny Finnie, NSW - naturalistic gardens using logs and rocks; creating habitat for local wildlife, using local plant species.

Jan Hall, Vic (Nursery owner) - using Australian plants in new ways and widening their use in general garden design - seasonal effects, etc. The development of an Australian style which all Australians can be interested and proud to use, not only the converted enthusiasts.

John Hoile, NSW, a professional member - waterwise gardens with an "English look" to satisfy the market. Xeriscaping applicable to western slopes and similar climates.

Ann & Geoffrey Long, NSW - Ken Druse's concept of "Natural Habitat Gardens". (Ken Druse also wrote *"The Natural Garden"* Potter1989)

Margaret Moir, W.A. - the incorporation of non-mainstream Australian plants into the garden; native plant/exotic plant blending; colour and texture, harmony and contrast; formal design with Australian plants.

Barry Nilsson, NSW, a professional member - inner city gardens; expanding native plant corridors; creating gardens with biodiversity design (not only anthropocentric design).

Gordon Rowland, NSW, a professional member - achieving a sense of unity, integrating garden and landscape, promoting the aesthetic, environmental and economic benefits of indigenous plants.

Philip Tow, S.A. - Mediterranean climate gardens; use of adapted exotic species with Australian native plants. (The study of 'blended' gardens is vital to expand the use of Australian plants in gardens.)

Lucy Williams, NSW - I am interested in looking at established gardens to get some ideas for my own - any in Sydney or the far north coast (Usmore area).

Tim Wilson, Vic. a professional member - hard landscape - retaining walls, paving, pergolas, rock work, etc. (The important counterbalance to our plants.)

Lawns and God

Glenda DatsonNSW

Glenda sent me the following Irreverent piece from the Australian Institute of Horticulture ACT Newsletter July 01, apparently from Damien Andrews MAIH, Adelaide, though it has an American slant. Glenda said "I thought you might appreciate this." I hope it may give you a wry smile too.

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GOD Saint Francis, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there in the USA? What happened to the dandelions, violets, thistles and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect, no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type-of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long lasting blossoms attracts butterflies, honey bees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colors by now. But all I see are these green rectangles.

ST. FRANCIS It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers "weeds" and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.

GOD Grass? But it's so boring. It's not colorful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees, only grubs and sod worms. It's temperamental with temperatures. Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

ST. FRANCIS Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilising grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.

GOD The spring rains and warm weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy.

ST. FRANCIS Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it, sometimes twice a week.

GOD They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?

ST. FRANCIS Not exactly, Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

GOD They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?

ST. FRANCIS No, sir.... just the opposite. They pay to throw it away.

GOD Now, let me get this straight. They fertilise grass so it will grow. And when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?

ST. FRANCIS Yes, sir.

GOD These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

ST. FRANCIS You aren't going to believe this, Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.

GOD What nonsense. At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. Plus, as they rot, the leaves form compost to enhance the soil. It's a natural circle of life.

ST. FRANCIS You'd better sit down, Lord. The Suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and pay to have them hauled away.

GOD No. What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter and to keep the soil moist and loose?

ST. FRANCIS After throwing away the leaves, they go out and buy something which they call mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.

GOD And where do they get this mulch?

ST. FRANCIS They cut down trees and grind them up to make the mulch.

GOD Enough! I don't want to think about this any more. St. Catherine, you're in charge of the arts. What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?

ST. CATHERINE "Dumb and Dumber", Lord. It's a real stupid movie about

GOD Never mind, I think I just heard the whole story from St. Francis.

GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP presentation related to 'Australian Plants in a Changing World'
Diana Snape Vic

*With thanks to **Helen Morrow** Vic who presented this talk at the Conference when I was voiceless.*

PAST

SGAP and the work of Study Groups

SGAP began in the late 1950s, with the goal of growing Australian plants to help in their ongoing preservation. The emphasis has been on the cultivation of individual plant species (and often individual plants of those species). This is of course extremely important and the essential work of most Study Groups has focussed on this approach. There has been so much to learn about growing Australian plants successfully in gardens and, until recently, so little effort made by the majority of other possible contributors in this field. Garden 'experts', nursery people, horticulturists and landscape designers tend to stay well within their area of expertise and, with notable exceptions, this to date has largely meant exotic plants. Their area of expertise remains the dominant culture. In contrast, most Study Groups have worked to observe, record, correlate and expand knowledge of their area of study of Australian plants. Some have written valuable books so this knowledge can become more widely available and help widen the horizons of others, both inside and outside SGAP/APS.

Slowness of change

After 40 years existence of SGAP/APS, we might have expected its influence to have started to become more apparent in the general community, with increasing awareness and appreciation of Australian plants. I think in general it has not. What are the problems?

I think there are a number of problems contributing to the slowness of change. These include:

- the cyclic nature of influence in gardening fashions. All aspects of the nursery industry cannot change simultaneously - availability of plants in nurseries depends on their having been propagated for sale in sufficient numbers - those plants in nurseries must be bought by the public (or by professional designers) and people tend to copy what they are familiar with - the plants must be known and recommended by the writers, broadcasters, etc, who are influential in the gardening world - their influence was probably largely derived from knowledge of exotic plants. For a long while education and training of professional designers neglected or even ignored Australian plants.
- working from a small base, knowledge of cultivation of Australian plants has grown relatively slowly. One example of this was the lack of pruning in earlier years, which we now know is essential to replace the pruning of plants by marsupials in natural situations. Until the needs of Australian plants in gardens are understood and satisfied, progress will be slow. Also the needs of our plants contrast so markedly with many imported exotics, e.g. in the use of fertilizers.
- for many years, SGAP/APS members concentrated on growing individual plants in their gardens and many did not 'see' the garden as a whole. Other uncommitted gardeners are often more influenced by how our gardens look overall, rather than by the beauty of an individual plant. Even when gardens contain beautiful plants, if they lack design they don't do justice to those plants. It's not easy to do both well but we can all try.

PRESENT

The short history of the Garden Design Study Group

After recognizing the need to study garden design using Australian plants, I began the Study Group in 1993 with a small initial group who shared this interest. Its membership rose to 200 by 1996 and this membership of over 200 has been maintained since, with members in all States. This must reflect a need felt

by many Society members. We are very pleased to include both amateur and professional designers among our members. Most of those initial members still belong and there is a small yearly turnover as members' needs and interests change.

What do GDSG members actually do?

The concept of design and the knowledge of plants to implement that design are so closely woven together that they are hard to separate. There are many ways we try to advance our skills.

- Members study garden design in their own and others' gardens; they design (and re-design) their own gardens and/or help others design theirs. This process often takes many years to realize so results may be slow. The time varies with the nature of the garden, from a groundcover/grass/daisy garden (fast) to a tree garden (slow but long lasting). Changes can be made in a whole garden or just a section of a garden. Members also help those who are involved in designing gardens in public areas, when there is insufficient money available for a professional designer. The value of consultation with a professional designer is emphasized.

- Members read and review books, journals and magazines with articles on garden design. Hundreds of books have been written on garden design, especially in the U.K., but almost none have used Australian plants to illustrate design concepts. Also these books are written for a different climate, different soils and a quite different 'sense of place'. So we absorb interesting ideas from different sources and see if they have any application or relevance to designing with Australian plants. Often they need substantial 'translation'. Even most books about garden design written in Australia refer to exotic plants.

- Regular meetings are held in Melbourne, Sydney and NE Victoria, when members visit gardens of interest, contribute to designs and exchange ideas on numerous topics. However Newsletters are our main form of communication between all members - there have been 35 to date (August 2001), about 700 pages, and some members write articles for these. Some also write for magazines and newspapers and give talks on aspects of garden design with Australian plants.

Aims of the GDSG

- to improve the design of gardens of Australian plants by providing information that will help gardeners at any point in the lifetime of their garden. It's better if you can start at the beginning but it's never too late to start designing. The more creative aspects of maintenance itself are part of design - how you modify the garden as plants grow, how you prune, etc.

- to raise awareness of the importance of garden design among SGAP (APS) members. We all know individual Australian plants are beautiful but an Australian plant garden as a whole may not look as beautiful as it could. This loses opportunities to appeal to members of the general public (and potential new members of the Society). It's also more satisfying for the garden owner.

- to raise awareness of the value of showing beautiful gardens of Australian plants to the general public, as in the Open Garden Scheme. Many members of the Australian public (70% in a recent survey) are interested in gardening and thousands of Australians visit gardens in this scheme each year. Showing our gardens to each other is fine but it doesn't expand interest in Australian plants. If we want to influence other people who are not familiar with Australian plants, I think we must do a better job of showing off our plants in outstanding gardens. It varies markedly between States but currently only 5% or so of the gardens in the OGS are listed as featuring Australian plants.

- An editorial committee of the GDSG began writing a book on Garden Design with Australian Plants in late 1999 and we hope it will be published next year. The book is based on the ideas and experiences of our members as recorded in our newsletters.

FUTURE

~~Some aspects of design with "Australian Plants in a Changing World"~~

The following are just a few aspects relevant to garden design in the future.

1. Small gardens

In the future there are likely to be smaller blocks of land for many people (along with those huge houses!), so suburban gardens will tend to shrink. Due to the past work of APS (SGAP) and increasingly the horticultural industry, many more Australian plants are now available in nurseries. More recently, the Australian Cultivar Registration Authority and Plant Breeders Rights have given further incentive for the development of appealing new plants. These include wonderful small plants coming from anywhere in Australia and appropriate for the smaller gardens. Beautiful gardens displaying such attractive plants can help erase the bad impressions of those straggly, suburban 'bush gardens' of the 1960s and 1970s, and the myths of no maintenance. In small gardens, there can be concentrated focus on the design with extreme care taken both in the choice of plants from the abundance on offer, and their positioning in relation to the hard landscape.

2. Importance of indigenous plants

There is increasing interest in restricting the palette of plants for design to those indigenous to the area of the garden. Strictly speaking, plants from distant areas of Australia such as Western Australia can be as botanically distinct as those from Gondwana countries such as New Zealand or (horror!) South Africa. In the past, many of us have been fussy about growing only Australian plants. In the future, environmentally aware and sensitive gardeners may be equally fussy about growing only their indigenous plants, of local provenance. With a more restricted palette of plants, design becomes very important to achieve a pleasing, garden-like effect. Using the plants that belong in an area will certainly help give a 'sense of place'.

3. Greenhouse effects^ and plimate change

Climate change due to the greenhouse effect will bring challenges to everyone in the short or long term. Such changes will differ markedly in different parts of Australia. An awareness of this threat in the 'changing world' could influence our approach to garden design. It's hard to predict what will happen but grouping plants with similar needs in our gardens will be even more important and a readiness to be adaptable in our selection of plants will help.

4. Computer-aided design

A growing number of computer programs deal with garden design and an increasing number of gardeners are likely to take advantage of these in the future. It's possible to explore a number of different ideas before the work is put in on the ground. Programs also have lists of plants to suit different requirements. To date, only a limited number of plant lists concentrate on Australian plants but this emphasis should grow in the future.

5. An age of technology

To finish on a more philosophical note, the 'changing world' is likely to take people more and more away from the natural world we are fortunate to enjoy today. If populations keep expanding, natural areas will shrink even further. If the current trend continues, with more hours spent in front of computers, longer working hours for many people and more dependence on virtual reality, people will need gardens to help retain their love of nature and their humanity. Those gardens will be more rewarding, peaceful and harmonious if they are well designed, rather than just a jumble of plants.

A brief conclusion

Don't just grow Australian plants - grow an Australian garden.

DESIGN

Design as an ongoing experiment

Jo Hambrett NSW

In response to Barbara Buchanan's article in NL35, she is indeed correct in her assumption that designer Penelope Hobhouse is now more interested in foliage, form and texture than colour. I attended one of her Australian lectures last year and she actually said as much at the lecture - she stressed the importance of simplicity in design and even ease of maintenance - which could of course be relatively speaking!

Now, with the world trend seeming to be to value the indigenous species and therefore support the environment at a local level, Australian plant gardeners are finding themselves in the forefront of garden design trends. Barbara is absolutely correct when she states that the Study Group is well placed to successfully 'collect' and 'design' - as by experimenting with plants with design in mind a clearer picture emerges as to its reliability in a particular space and microenvironment. No Australian (plant) garden could be accused of being formulaistic - parts of our gardens are always an ongoing experiment, a continual learning curve - hence the need for that second lifetime!

On the subject of what makes a good garden may I quote two of my favourite passages on this subject by much better writers than I :-

Russell Page says -

"Analyse the underlying structure and rhythm of the scene. Is a feature there because it is necessary and useful underlining a compelling rhythm, form, shape, pattern of texture? Or is it a decorative whimsy copied from elsewhere with no real relevance? Stick closely to the material in use on the site and when designing details keep it simple."

Ferdinand Boe says -

"A garden is an art which builds up on all our nostalgic reminiscences of places where we would like to have set up our tent and remained, uplifted by beauty and strengthened by simplicity."

The 'Bush Garden' and other styles

Diana Snape Vic

To date, one distinct type of Australian garden with a recognized style has been established. This is the 'Bush Garden', inspired initially by the writing and garden of **Betty Maloney** in Sydney and the gardens of **Gordon Ford** in Melbourne. Now, sadly, with Betty's recent death, both Betty and Gordon are no longer with us but their legacy is well established and will continue.

Characteristics of the Bush Garden include:

- a naturalistic style, strongly influenced by a love of nature
- use of Australian plants
- informal, asymmetrical planting with much repetition of plants
- planting of trees, shrubs and small plants but probably not lawns
- use of rocks and logs in the garden
- minimum hard landscaping
- ideal use of indigenous plants

The Bush Garden is relevant to areas of shrubby woodland in Australia but less so to many other areas, e.g. grassland, heathland, arid areas, rainforest, coastal, alpine, and so on. In each of these areas, can a distinctive style be based solely on the look and ambience of the surrounding (or nearby) countryside? For

a naturalistic garden, is this all that is needed? If done faithfully and effectively, perhaps it is.

At the other extreme, there is the town or suburban garden with no surrounding countryside to copy or be influenced by. Here a style needs to be considered. On a relatively small block with more constraints, the style will almost automatically have more elements of formality. I think the challenge for many of us is the tension between the wish for a naturalistic garden and the amount of neatness or control we feel is needed to make the garden satisfying and beautiful. This is more obvious in small quarter acre gardens but also applies to larger gardens. As part of its experimentation and research, I think the GDSG has to explore this challenge. What do you think??

Blending with the Bush

Cherree Densley Vic

When I wrote the article on landscaping around my little house on Mt Clay (NL 27/9) (and a covenanted area) a priority that I didn't list and probably, in hindsight, the most important - was that I wanted my garden area to 'blend in with the surrounding bush'. I didn't give this a great deal of thought except to write that I didn't want anything planted to escape into the bush to become a 'feral'. Since that article, I have thought hard and long and have come up with a plan of action. The plan is two parts at present - more may follow.

Firstly, I have put together the following formula which I shall try to follow in order to make the garden beds 'blend' into the naturally regenerating area free from weeds and thus back into the true bush area.

Zone 1 Bushland

Zone 2 Regenerating bushland - free from weeds

Zone 3 Regenerating bushland - weeds removed and replaced with propagated indigenous plants

Zone 4 80% indigenous plantings/20% exotic Australian plants

Zone 5 50% indigenous 50% exotic Australian

Zone 6 20% indigenous 80% exotic Australian

The last three zones - 4, 5 and 6 - are 'the garden'. (Remember that I have decided and indeed wish to grow lots of other Australian plants on Mt Clay - just adjacent to the house - which I cannot grow successfully at Killarney - many of them from different parts of Australia from alpine to desert areas. Both Mt Clay and Killarney are very different in aspect, soil, climate, rainfall and temperatures even though they are about 60 km apart.)

Secondly it is of great importance to KNOW what is and isn't an indigenous plant, it has taken me quite a long while and lots of studying the plants carefully, studying available books and using the resources of some good friends who have helped me; together we have come up with the following listing of plants which are indigenous to the immediate surrounds of the house in the NE corner (approx. 0.5ha) of the 187 acre block. I am still learning of course and may have some of the following species incorrect, but it is a start. (The naming of the grasses, sedges and rush-like plants is a continuing challenge.) In the past 12 months I have been able to propagate some of these plants in order to reintroduce them to some of the areas which are now prone to weeds. I have been successful with some and not so successful with others but I expect to keep trying. I am keeping the cleared area free of trees to keep it safe from fires and any regenerating eucalypts and most acacias are being removed or pruned heavily.

Cherree's list of plants, excluding acacias and eucalypts, is about 2.5 pages long! A wonderful achievement, as is her well considered, responsible and admirable approach to her planting at Mt Clay. If any member would like a copy of Cherree's list please let me know and I will send you one. DS

A topic that has considerable importance for Australian garden designers is the possible lack of water at times. Reticulated reservoir water supply is often subject to restrictions, may not be able to supply all the plants but only a few selected prize plants, and this water may have sufficient chlorine or other minerals to have a long term deleterious effect on many species.

There is a distinction between low rainfall areas and those that suffer unpredictable periods of low rainfall. It is in the context of the latter that the following comments are made.

An example is my own case - average rainfall over the last 18 years was 1340 mm but with a low of 830 mm and high of 1951 mm. In 2000, 868 mm was recorded and this year the summer rains normally expected were minimal. In 1994 the dryness resulted in severe bushfires in and on the bushland of properties of this area that takes in the Glasshouse Mountains. The same conditions prevail at present with the associated high fire danger warnings.

What happens at these times of low rainfall usually at the hot seasons of the year? The native trees of some size shed most of their leaves and the remainder droop. This opens the ground to increased light and heat so there is less growth of low ground growing plants especially grasses. Grazing fauna such as wallabies forage more extensively so that plants destined for garden areas or planted where water can be supplied by hand are attacked with gusto. Emerging leaves or bark can be stripped off, resulting in retardation of growth or death.

What can be done to ameliorate these conditions in which prolonged low rainfall occurs?

1. Plant trees in years of good rainfall so that roots have time to grow down to tap moisture at deeper levels. For the first year or so, hand watering may be needed, thereafter water sparingly to encourage deep root growth. The ability of trees or shrubs to tap deeper levels depends on the characteristics of the soils and the ability of the species to produce long roots that can deeply penetrate the soil. I was amazed at the long roots produced by seedlings of *Citrus glauca*, and this seems to be a factor in the survival of about 20 seedlings planted and existing under what I consider drought conditions.
2. For a few years protection can be supplied by wire netting with or without a covering of shade cloth or any of the commercially available plastic plant protection devices.
3. The most obvious thing would be to choose plants from low rainfall areas. However this is not always desired and there are examples of the successful planting of rainforest trees under these conditions. In fact one of the most annoying species growing in my garden at present is the Umbrella Tree - seeds presumably carried by birds are deposited in the most unwanted places such as within the leaves of a low growing palm. Presumably the tiny amount of dew is sufficient for germination of the seeds.
4. Pruning may be considered beneficial to reduce transpiration but whether it is effective when leaves are already being starved of moisture must be debatable. It may be the time to cut back branches for the cosmetic effect to shape the tree.

There is light at the end of these periods as trees often quickly produce new foliage once good rains fall.

Readers of earlier NLs will remember Colleen Keena 's articles about her '3-bucket rainforest'.

I think Geoff's points are valid for many areas of Australia. 'Low' rainfall is so much a matter of perceptbn, for example Melbourne's average annual rainfall is about 600 mm and for the last 4 years it has been much less. DS

GARDENS

That narrow courtyard garden

Caroline Gunter NSW

Here are my suggestions for planting your narrow courtyard garden. To suit the shaded conditions and to provide a lush but subtle environment for viewing from inside and a cool spot for summer seating, my plan includes rainforest species, many from Queensland. It's anticipated that the microclimate created by the walling will allow them to thrive, as the already planted *Austromyrtus dulcis* (Midgen Berry) does as it hales from similar climes. The lush and variously shaped foliage will provide a dense green screen, with new foliage colour highlights during the year. The winter flowers of limey-green *Correa baeuerlenii* (Chef's Cap Correa) with some additions to the two already there and the taller *Correa lawrenciana* will be echoed in summer by the *Abrophyllumornans* (Native Hydrangea), with its impressive leaves adding value the rest of the year.

White flowers of *Baeckea virgata* (Tall Baeckea) - it's happy with controlling pruning to keep it in bounds - and *Crinum pedunculatum* (Swamp Uly), which adjusts well to not swampy conditions, will provide more summer highlights and the gentle jasmine (*Jasminum suavissimum*) flowers will gleam through the warm months. To repeat the coral of the bricks and the painted walls I've selected *Grevillea longifolia* which has good contrasting foliage and its flowers are subtle and just palely coral in semi-shaded conditions. It too copes with control-pruning but naturally assumes a nice straggly form. New midgen and doodia foliage will also add more coral. A still or trickling water-bowl could be fitted in the central position on the garden edge and the jasmines encouraged to wander up the support posts. The pandorea could be restricted to growth up 'espalier' type wires straight up the back wall. Two additional fern varieties, *Adiantum formosum* (Giant Maidenhair Fern) and *Pellaea falcata* (Sickle Fern) are to provide contrasts and groundcover.

Caroline provided a detailed plan - unfortunately too detailed to copy clearly in the NL-but I can just picture her lovely lush garden, with low growers in the front, taller behind and repetition of ferns in clusters to fill the gaps. In the next NL I'll tell you about our courtyard design. DS

Australia's Open Garden Scheme

This Scheme clearly indicates how conspicuous gardens of Australian plants are (or are not) to the general public. I know that in Victoria at least the selectors are always looking for new, well designed gardens featuring Australian plants. I have been a selector and it is not an easy task. It is nice if all the plants in the garden are Australian but this is not necessary as long as a significant number are. (After all blended gardens are far more typical.) **Are we - GDSG and APS/SGAP generally - making any progress?**

Jeff Howes NSW writes: *"I am on the Sydney committee of the Open Garden Scheme and I am trying (with not much success so far) to get the NSW Groups to nominate some of their members' gardens to be assessed regarding suitability for the Open Garden Scheme, as there are only 10 gardens listed in NSW under the native plants category for the 01/02 season. I am not sure what percentage of the plants in these gardens are native. I am assuming they are predominantly native. NSW I am sure can do much better."*

I haven't checked the statistics for a while but thought it was time to do it again. The following shows the number of gardens in the Open Garden Scheme for each State and the percentage listed as featuring Australian plants. There are some interesting comparisons. When the population of the States is taken into account, Tasmania and S.A. are outstanding. APS Tasmania members deserve special recognition for 5 out of their 7 gardens featuring indigenous Tasmanian plants.

12

State	No. of gardens open	No. featuring Aus.plants	% gardens featuring Australian plants
NSW(incl.ACT)	252	10	4
Qld	99	3	3
S.A.	64	5	8
Tas	98	7	7
Vic	141	11	8
W.A.	73	2	3

When we look at percentages of gardens, we obviously still have a long way to go. In all States more than 90% of the open gardens still feature exotic plants. As Jeff says, we can do much better. However gardens featuring Australian plants should be well designed and show Australian plants to best advantage. Jeff also commented on the ageing and static membership of APS NSW (probably similar in some other States), which provides a real challenge as it takes a lot of energy to prepare a garden for general opening! Members doing this need support. DS

BOOKS, MAGAZINES & the INTERNET

'The Vision of Edna Walling' by Trisha Dixon & Jennie Churchill (Bloomings Books) 1998

Jan Fleming Vic

This the second book about Edna Walling, Australia's most significant landscape designer, by Dixon and Churchill (in 1988 they published "Gardens in Time: In the Footsteps of Edna Walling"). The book aims to ensure that what remains of Edna Walling's life's work, her plans, writing, photographs and gardens, are both valued and preserved.

Following a short biography, 47 of Walling's beautifully subtle (mostly) watercolour plans are listed. They appear in chronological order commencing with her first known plan for Mr L Heath of Toorak, Vic in 1920. Evocative photographs accompany the plans and descriptions where the gardens are intact or remnants still exist. Unfortunately the current status of many of these Walling gardens is unknown.

Edna Walling's gardens can teach garden design enthusiasts much about essential design principles such as organised, usable space, texture, unity, form, formal/natural contrast, restraint, and the blending of house/garden/landscape. Her plans are works of art in themselves and stand out in these days of computer-aided drawings.

The preservation of natural bushland, roadside vegetation, water conservation, the selection of plants in tune with the environment, and especially the appreciation of indigenous plants are very up-to-date concepts that Edna Walling pioneered so many years ago.

Although Edna Walling designed more than 300 gardens only a tiny percentage survive either partially or fully intact. This book presents a compelling argument for the preservation/ restoration of the few survivors.

TRISHA DIXON - Editor "Australian Garden History", columnist to "The Australian Gardener" and "Country Gardener" and author.

JENNIE CHURCHILL - Recently became 'Gardening Australia' presenter, Vet, author, lives in an Edna Walling garden, "Kiloren".

Order from: Bloomings Books, 37 Burwood Rd, Hawthorn 3122. Ph. 03-9819 6363; Fax 03-9818 1862.

'The Looking-Glass Garden: plants and gardens of the Southern Hemisphere' by Peter Thompson. (Timber Press 2001) 401 pages
Diana Snape Vic

This fascinating book looks at plants and gardens of the Southern Hemisphere - the Gondwana plants of Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and (to a lesser extent) South America. It is interesting to see our plants included with many of their closest relatives, a new context for ours which have traditionally been compared with European and Northern Hemisphere plants and gardens. However it is the plants and gardens of New Zealand and South Africa that feature most prominently in this book. As usual, Australian plants register largely with close up photos of flowers, or occasionally single plants. I know it rained for at least one of Peter Thompson's days here in Melbourne, but one of his very few photos of Australian gardens is a disappointing one of our back garden in the rain! Although I am always writing that we should do better with our garden design, there are many outstanding Australian gardens and their lack of representation in this book is a pity.

Peter Thompson writes well and with perception. He visited more than 350 gardens and "places where wildflowers grow" and it is interesting to see these through his eyes. He shows special interest in "plants with attitude", i.e. feature plants with strong sculptural forms (that do show up well in photographs). New Zealand and South Africa are rich in these. In passing he comments on the lack of logic of someone in eastern Australia refusing to grow 'foreign' plants from N.Z. but happily growing plants from W.A., which is much further away. (He asks what if W.A. had been colonized by the French?) Whereas Peter Thompson warns that the different conditions required by Gondwana plants are "opposite to the northern gardener's orthodox creed", Australians have been finding this out the hard way for 200 years. (This book would have been a useful guide in the past.)

Peter Thompson's aim in the book is to encourage gardeners in the Northern Hemisphere to consider growing plants from 'down under'. There are many beautiful photos. From our side of the "looking-glass", I enjoyed the book even though I felt Australian gardens were poorly represented. However, on the other hand, I think our serious concentration on design is still in its very early days. We really do need to develop "fresh and innovative styles of gardening" that shout *Australian!* Using Australian plants is just the start.

Some books that I recommend

Tarn Kendall Vic

These are not necessarily design specific but useful for that purpose - in no particular order:

Top End Native Rants - John Brock

Field Guide to Australian Trees - Ivan Holliday

Plant Indigenous; a Guide to Whitehorse - Blackburn Tree Preservation Soc. & Whitehorse City Council

Allan Seale's Companion to Native Plants - Allan Seale

Australian Vegetation - edited by R.H.Groves

Flora of Victoria, Vol. 1. Introduction - edited by D.B.Foreman and N.G.Walsh (Inkata Press 1993)

Gardens in Miniature - Sue Forrester and Bill Molyneux (Nelson 1986)

Growing Australian Plants for the Garden - Gwen Elliot

Australian Plants Identified - Gwen Elliot (Hyland House 1990)

Growing Australian Plants - John Mason

Wildflowers of Victoria - Margaret Corrick and Bruce Fuhrer

All of Diane Greig's books

Also, I find the APS Container Study Group inspiring. (*A nice tribute to Pat Webb! DS*)

'Taken for Granted - the bushland of Sydney and its suburbs' by Benson & Howell

Jo Hambrett NSW

Highly recommended - very informative, providing great lists of indigenous species for specific areas of Sydney. A "must" for Sydneysiders.

(Similarly **'Flora of Melbourne'**, by the Maroondah Group of APS Victoria, which is now in its third (revised and extended) edition, is a "must" for Melbournites. DS)

'Green world' April/May 2001

At the NE Vic meeting, **Jan Hall** produced a most interesting article based on a paper at the Landscape 2000 Conference given by Michael McCoy. From the opening sentence "The ability to design private gardens professionally has little in common with the ability to make good gardens as an amateur", as Barbara Buchanan says the article abounds with food for thought for future discussion topics. That initial idea has already been referred to in our NL by Paul Thompson, Geoff Simmons and others.

The article, entitled 'Living, growing plants - who needs them?' presents various options from overseas to achieve "dynamic gardens with low or simple maintenance requirements". It then says:

"To explore such options, and their relevance to Australia, we must know our plants better, and gain a greater clarity about what it is that we are trying to achieve. Unfortunately, the most experimental garden designers are known for their design capabilities, and not their garden craftsmanship, and plants are therefore not well explored - are not part of the experimentation."

Of course this is precisely what the GDSG is trying to do! DS

DESIGN IDEAS

More ideas for courtyards

Tam Kendall Vic

I am not very good at visualizing space but I have tried to think small, shaded and fairly tidy for your 'courtyard' area. These thoughts led me to think of using sparse materials with a large rock, boulder or fallen log, or maybe a chrome 'bumper bar' from an old fashioned car; you could half bury some VB cans to make it look like an authentic Aussie bush setting! (Just kidding.) Cover the area with large-grained sand with a few plantings of clumping grasses (poa, lepidosperma, stylium) or prickly looking shrubs (*Acrotiche serrulata*, *Coprosma quadrifida*, *Boronia pilosa*, or *Bauera* sp., *Cyathodes juniperina*). Tiny to small alpine shrubs and herbs are gaining in popularity with courtyard gardeners and as a consequence are becoming easier to find in nurseries.

If you want a retreat from the heat I would recommend large containers with *Archontophoenix alexandrae* (Alexandra Palms), *Archontophoenix cunninghamiana* (Bangalow Palm), *Cyathea australis* (Rough Tree fern) and *Cyathea tomentosissima* (Highland Lace Fern), *Davallia pyxidata* (Hares Foot Fern), *Hypolepis punctata* (Downy Ground Fern), *Microsorium howeanum* (Creeping Fern), as far as I know they are all Australian; *Alpinia caerulea* (Native Ginger), a few *Dendrobium* species, maybe a dwarf *Syzygium* species or the fascinating *Elaeocarpus reticulatus* (Blue Oliveberry). You could add a *Hoya australis* or *Billardiera* species for a climber and Bob's your uncle. Alexandra palms seem to grow fairly quickly but mine have produced a lot of young'uns which I transplant to pots; if the older ones get too big for your space you can always give them to friends or op-shops and replace them with the smaller ones.

My partner and I made a water feature out of a half circle fibreglass insert for a pond. We placed the upturned part of an acacia stump (with roots cut off but base still intact) in it and ran irrigation tubing up the back of it and added a water pump so that water in the pond is pumped to the top of the log and trickles down

the front and over the bole. We call it 'The Crying Log'. Tiny little plants migrated to the pond without asking and have slowly covered the surface (I scoop a percentage out every now and again and add them to the compost pile); also a moss is forming over the trunk and the whole thing is looking very groovy. Around the base of the 'pond' I've placed largish volcanic rocks and one day I may plant some alpine plants, or maybe orchids between the rocks. Part of the initial idea was that the log would slowly disintegrate and in doing would be a reminder of the transience of nature and not to cling to material possessions... but we regret this now as we have become attached to it (!) and, although it hasn't deteriorated much over two years, its time is limited. If we make another one to replace it I would probably varnish/seal it with some kind of marine strength varnish.

I think Tarn could write a moving short story (with that ironic twist) about her 'Crying Log'. It sounds great. DS

How close to plant?

Barbara Buchanan for NE Vic Branch

Discussion of the general topic was limited by our general agreement. Obvious factors are the size of the plants and the effect aimed at. In some instances it is desirable to let the shape of individual plants be seen, other scenarios and other more twiggy plants call for a close interweaving where individual shapes are submerged in the overall effect. If water is limiting, spacing should be adequate to reduce root competition, yet as much as possible of the ground should be shaded to reduce water loss. If water is freely applied there will likely be need to trim and prune more.

Because we grow shrubs which grow in size more or less indefinitely as opposed to herbaceous plants which shoot again from rootstock annually as in many cottage exotic gardens, it is impossible to allow perfect spacing - which age of garden do we allow for? Again pruning is important. We admit a tendency to overplant - the best solution is to use a lot of annuals, ephemerals and short lived plants which can be easily propagated and used lavishly for instant colour. We must accept the idea of using some plants temporarily (several years).

PLANTS in DESIGN

Why is it so?

Ivan Holliday S.A.

An article by the well known author Ivan Holliday in the May 2001 APS S.A. Journal discussed surprising losses (and also survivals) of plants under recent drought conditions - reminiscent of Chris Larkins' article in our NL 34.

Ivan says "This summer - the worst in my 40 years of growing Australian plants - has taught me I know less than I thought I did, and that is very little." He gives examples of plants from naturally wet habitats which survived in Adelaide's dry conditions and arid area plants which did not. "Losses in my own garden include most *Correa*s (but then I always lose these most unreliable plants, despite all the guff which is written to the contrary), all *Prostanthera*s except *P. nivea* var. *induta*, *Chorizema cordatum* in full sun (OK in part shade)," and several others.

His list of successful plants in his garden which have tolerated heat and long, dry spells includes: most *Melaleuca* & *Callistemon* species; *Chamaelucium uncinatum* (all forms); *Scholtzia oligandra* & *parviflora*; *Hardenbergia violacea* (all forms); *Acacia ashbyi*, *cognata*, *convexa*, *cometes*, *imbricata*, *microcarpa*, *redolens* (prostrate), *cardiophylla*, *boormanii*; *Grevillea thelemanniana* forms; *Phymatocarpus maxwellii*; *Templetonia retusa*; *Hibbertia aspera* (but likes some shade); *Darwinia oldfieldii*; *Hypocalymma angustifolium*; *Eucalyptus pyroformis*; *Pittosporum rhombifolium*; *Hakea purpurea*; *Senna* species; and the climbers - all

Pandorea species.

Ivan says "Sennas, with *Chamelaucium uncinatum* forms and scholtzias are all long flowering and successful, requiring only a good pruning after flowering. These are the plants I intend to add in numbers in the future, while avoiding all of those unreliable species I have attempted to grow for too long. This article is based on my experience only. No doubt others have experienced quite different results, especially where conditions differ markedly."

Wise words from a very experienced and knowledgeable grower. DS

What is an Australian garden? Arthur Dench NSW

Replying to your question - because of Australia's size, the replies you get will be as diverse as the country itself.

For me here is NSW some 20 km as the crow flies from the stored waters of Warragamba dam (Sydney's water supply) there is always (or mostly) the humidity that is associated with the east coast of NSW. My garden has been a mixture of exotics and natives, the latter to encourage birdlife. I took heart whilst listening to your talk on garden design at the NSW Regional meeting at Ermington some time back on the blending of both types.

Here I digress on to an aspect that I have not heard raised before, the reason being fairy wrens. If I were able to give an honorary listing as an Australian plant to an exotic it would have to be the artemisa (Wormwood). It is the equal of any native that grows here for hardiness, colour, longevity, regeneration, drought resistance, etc. I found that fairy wrens preferred to nest in it rather than other species. I extended the plantings along a new boundary fence of some 110 metres with the result that there are now 4-5 distinct breeding families with their own territory. It grows to 2 metres, excellent windbreak, does not need watering, doesn't die and when cut back to ground level grows a luxuriant silver foliage to a metre in 6 months. So much for a plant that can take its place in our often harsh climate and perform as well as most natives, in fact better than many.

Now to the design aspect, your challenge to us to improve and perform, it certainly stirs us into action. My ability in designing is very limited - I have to wait until maturity before I am sure that what I planted harmonises with the rest of the garden. My limited application of design is of two different garden beds on either side of a path, with an acacia planted at the entrance on opposite ends so as to contrast the green and gold. The two acacias used are *A. cognata* (Bower Wattle) and *A. wilhelmiana* (Dwarf Nealie). Off to the side I have planted some 12 *Banksia spinulosa* (Hairpin Banksia) in a half circle which I will hedge at the appropriate time to appear as an entrance to the bulk of the garden.

I enjoyed Cherree's advantages of lining pathways with logs and rocks. Here at Werombi I finish mine off with crushed sandstone from the quarry, about 300 mm high by 150 mm thick, mainly for the drying winds which test all of the garden.

I'm not familiar with artemisa but if it brought fairy wrens to nest in my garden I think I'd grow it (assuming it has no bad habits). DS

Alternatives to garden escapees - a worthy request from 'Gumnuts'

Paul Lewis is the coordinator of a project called "Discovering Alternatives to Garden Escapes - Stopping the Spread of Invasive Plants". The project has been commissioned by the Nursery and Garden Industry of Australia (NGIA) with joint funding from the Nursery and Garden Industry of

NSW Limited (NGINA), Department of Land and Water Conservation (DLWC), Cooperative Reassert Council for Weeds (CRC), and the National Heritage Trust (NHT).

The nursery industry is well aware that over the years some of the plants that it has sold have naturalised themselves, by one way or another, to become weeds. As a result the NGIA has decided to take a proactive stance and commissioned this project to work out a strategy to minimise the growth of the problem. Initially the focus is on the Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment in NSW. However, the intention is to develop a strategy that can be used nationally in the future. Paul has produced a list of known weedy species in the catchment and is seeking advice on possible alternatives.

The list is:

Acacia podalyriifolia (Mt. Morgan Silver Wattle); *Acacia baileyana* (Cootamundra Wattle);
Acer negundo (Box Elder); *Acer pseudoplatanus* (Sycamore Maple);
Arecastrum romanzoffianum (Cocos or Queen Palm); *Asparagus* spp (Asparagus ferns);
Buddleia davidii (Butterfly bush or Buddleia);
Coprosma repens (Mirror Plant); *Cytisus scopaha* (Scotch Broom);
Hedera helix (English Ivy); *Ilex aquifolium* (Holly);
Lantana camara (Lantana); *Lilium formosanum* (Formosa Lily);
Pennisetum alopecuroides (Swamp Foxtail); *Phoenix canariensis* (Date Palm);
Tecoma stans (Golden Bells); *Thunbergia alata* (Black Eyed Susan); *Tritonia xrocsmiifbra* (Monbretia);
Zantedeschia aethiopica (White Arum Lily)

What do you think can be sourced and sold instead of the plants listed above? If you have an idea, even for only one of the above, please let Paul know.

Sparse, fine or twiggy

Diana Snape Vic

Many Australian plants belong to a group of shrubs that, because of their fine foliage, might be described as sparse, fine or twiggy. One on its own looks somewhat lonely, as though it needs friends. These are much better used in the garden in clumps, groups or drifts. One alone has insufficient substance for its form to be significant and is usually satisfying only when in flower, a relatively short time of the year. Even then, it looks better with the company of others. The form of these plants often benefits from regular pruning to keep it compact.

Just a few examples of such plants might be acacias such as *A. acinacea* (Gold Dust Wattle) & *A. gracilis*; *Chamelaucium uncinatum* (Geraldton Wax) & *C. ciliatum*; *Hypocalymma angustifolium* (White Myrtle); melaleucas such as *M. lateritia* (Robin Red-breast Bush) & *M. fulgens*.

These plants are shown to disadvantage planted next to large leaved exotic plants. If you want to include both types of plants in the one garden area, have a buffer zone of plants with intermediate leaf size, or plant the sparse plants among those of intermediate leaf size.

***Orthosiphon aristatus* (Cat's Whiskers)**

Colleen Keena Qld

Colleen mentioned *Orthosiphon* as being one of her favourites so I asked her about it. This is her reply - she says from a chilly and frosty Brisbane Valley.

Orthosiphon aristatus (Cats Whiskers) strikes easily in water and flowers madly throughout the warmer months. It is usually white or mauve (have heard of pink but have never seen this form). It is a great filler for positions where it gets moisture. The plants that I've seen flower the best were in full sun but it performs well in part shade or even shade.

I doubt it would grow in Melbourne unless in a very protected situation or in a pot.

SNIPPETS

In *'The Age'* Saturday 25-8-01

Sarah Guest devoted her whole column to the subject of indigenous plants. She mentions "ordinary gardeners who, even if they grow roses and camellias, also want to do their bit for the benefit of the local birds, beasts, butterflies, plants, world health, clean air, plant preservation and local authenticity". In Victoria, to locate the indigenous Nursery that serves your area, contact Greening Australia on (03) 9457 3024.

Self sown plants

In his article (see page 15) Ivan Holliday writes "Self-sown plants always seem tougher than those raised in containers and planted out (probably one would expect this to be the case)." I have always believed this but was surprised (and disappointed) when, during our dry autumn, a self sown and well established *Correa reflexa* and *Darwinia citriodora* both died. This might have happened because I had too much faith in their independent survival and neglected watering them! DS

MEETINGS**NE Vic Branch****Report of NE Vic meeting on Sunday September 23 at Elizabeth Brett's**

Barbara Buchanan Vic

Only a few of us were able to meet at Elizabeth's new home in September. We hardly had to walk to see the proposed planting areas, our strolling was to enjoy the bank of the Murray River. At this stage in their life the Bretts do not want a large or elaborate garden - some shelter belts to screen the road, an orchard and vegie patch and some pretties in the turning circle close to the house. The front view to the river must be kept clear at all costs. All that we can contribute is suggestions of plants that will attract birds, look good for much of the year and do well. So what should be in the screens and small garden?

After lunch we went to see how our other Murray River garden is developing, i.e. Jennifer Davidson and Ian Fraser's. The change in the few years since we were last there is amazing, the growth of most plants astonishing. There is already talk of the need to thin. It is a somewhat parallel situation with the clear river frontage, shelter belts and small pretties close to the house.

For details of the selected topic 'How close to plant' see page 15.

Next NE Vic meeting: Saturday November 10 at Mary Ward's

Please phone **Barbara Buchanan** to indicate whether you can come.

Sydney branch**Report of meeting on Sunday August 19**

Jo Hambrett NSW

Clear blue skies, water and white sails provided the backdrop for our August meeting. Weeklong winds had suddenly stopped that morning to reveal a glittering Sydney coastline. Outshining even the weather and the views was the hospitality extended to us by our three host gardeners - good cooks and good gardening seem to go together.

Cheree Hall's garden is, in its oldest part, just 6 years old and incredibly is a first attempt at creating an

Australian garden which responds to the site and the needs of a young family. Her garden is an acre in size with views to Pittwater and was in the 'Australia's Open Garden Scheme' this year. She is blending an old established garden with a new garden and using both Australian and exotic plants. The block is set between two diagonal streets - a great position to advertise the beauty of Australian flora - and the design addresses family needs such as space, privacy, play and contemplative areas very well indeed. The garden is on a clay base with thin sand overlay and Cheree and Ken have gone for underground drainage and raised beds to ensure maximum results. The plants that thrive in this garden are perfect for suburban and inner city gardens as they are suitable to that scale - oh that all of Sydney suburbia could look like Cheree's garden.

Pam Renour's garden was a near vertical sensorial journey from shadow to light, moist to dry, enclosed to exposed - the house linking the opposite spaces. Two huge rocky outcrops, one damp and moss-covered, the other bare and warm, dominate each space giving it magic and drama. The planting echoes the sense of place, a deep green *Synoum glandulosum*, phebaliums, baeckneas, orchids and rock lilies in the back area and a small eucalypt and banksia reaching skyward at the front, where the ocean view is so expansive one doesn't begrudge them their space. Below, underneath the rock, a little chair above the cliff face, to sit amongst the wattle and contemplate eternity.

Roz Andrews' garden (Roz is a horticulturist and AOGS selector) A gently sloping acre, sheltered and protected, bathed in sun and facing Pittwater - the garden was rescued by Roz four years ago and is now quite beautiful despite some areas being still in the renovate - restore - create stages. Old exotic trees have

- been kept as they relate to the house - the grey silver of the large courtyard deodar is echoed in the side westringia hedge running down the hill to join the native garden at the front of the block. Roz actually had no idea what the front of the property was like, so massive was the lantana infestation; its removal revealed a 20ft (6m) banksia and magnificent, huge, wave-shaped racks! This area is now a thriving garden of Australian plants - mounded beds and rocky outcrops providing efficient drainage systems for the grevilleas, poas, hakeas, banksias, *Angophora hispida*s (Dwarf Apples) and many others. A fledgling rainforest runs up the hill on the other side to join up with the older, established exotic plantings at the back of the property. Roz will use the blended garden concept to link the exotic and Australian areas.

The rude health and amazing growth rates of her plants (a doryanthes flowering within 12 months of being planted!!) had most of us blinking in disbelief. She is well on the way to creating her very own paradise.

Next Sydney meeting: Sunday November 18 - venue to be determined

~~Please phone Jo Hambretton~~ to say whether you'll be able to come to this meeting and to obtain details.

First meeting next year: Sunday March 3 at Geoffrey & Ann Long's place

Melbourne meetings

The meeting on Sunday August 5 at Chris Owens' was cancelled almost at the last minute because very few people could come. Too many winter viruses going round and too many other activities and commitments - lots of apologies! Chris Owens said he'd be happy to have us come some time next year instead and said it was good that the garden would be a little more mature then. So we'll try again and investigate the fascinations of frog ponds then.

Next meeting: Saturday December 1 at 12 noon at Diana Snape's, starting with a BYO picnic lunch in the garden (tea & coffee provided as usual). I hope as many members as possible will be able to come to our Christmas break-up. If you feel like bringing 'a plate' for afternoon tea that would be most welcome.

We had been planning to end the year with an evening meeting in the Botanic Gardens, South Yarra, being shown around some of the areas which have Australian plants. (Daylight saving is a bonus.) However we were unable to finalize arrangements for this, so instead we'll have a more informal end-of-year get together. I hope we'll be able to welcome some new members who have not been to a meeting before, in addition to those who come more frequently.

~~Please Phone Diana Snare~~ or ~~Jan Fleming~~ to indicate whether you can come to the December meeting. ***Please note that It's a Saturday.***

Shepherds Bush Local Plant Garden Extension - Progress Report

Bryan Loft Vic

At the May 6 meeting and site visit to Friends of Dandenong Valley Park Shepherds Bush Garden, the group provided many useful insights and suggestions. These were subsequently accepted by the Friends and the Park Managers. Like most design exercises we ran out of time and hopefully will be adding to the design at subsequent meetings. The present garden, which is predominantly naturalistic in style (see plan page), uses only plants from the Dandenong Valley, i.e. typical of eastern Melbourne. We agreed that the new garden needed to be very low maintenance and semi-formal in style so that visitors could relate it to their own suburban gardens.

It may seem strange to start a garden design exercise with a car park out, in her briefing, the Park Ranger's main concern was to extend the existing carpark to accommodate 8-10 cars belonging to new park staff, so we set aside an area for the extension. My subsequent discussions with Park Rangers have focussed on the carpark. The GDSG's main comment was that the present carpark was an inefficient use of space (10 cars angle parked); my subsequent investigations in the local shopping centre carpark showed that the present area could accommodate 20 cars with 90 degrees parking and still retain a 5m wide garden bed along one side. This releases the area alongside the carpark for more gardens.

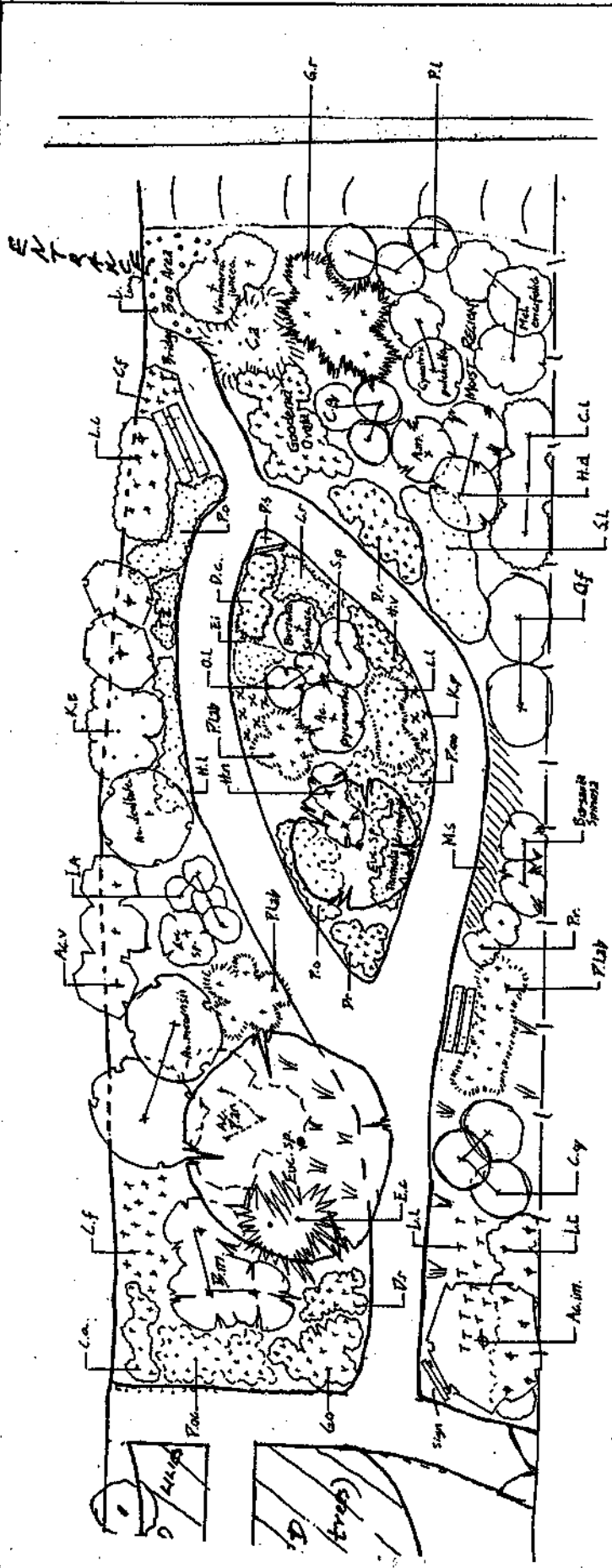
One of the GDSG's key suggestions - making the two 9m x 4m concrete slabs into a formal garden by paving them and having low plants between the two - was supported by the Rangers as was the concept of a mound to the south providing a vista over the formal area. Contiguous groups of *Brachyscome multifida*, *Hibbertia stricta*, *Chrysocephalum semipapposum* and *Lomandra filiformis* forming a pattern were suggested between the paved rectangles. The paved areas will have seating as well as becoming part of the path system. Screening shrubs or a low wall will surround the paved area; the paths will be edged with low plants.

An information shelter utilizing the existing prefabricated roof will be placed at the entrance to the extension at the side of the path leading to the paved areas. This will have posters and take-away sheets describing local plants and their cultivation, which will be prepared by the Friends of Dandenong Valley Park.

Most of the garden will have paths surrounding beds of under-storey shrubs and ground flora. A particular challenge will be a wet area garden displaying the many sedges and herbs of the riparian areas in an attractive, semi-formal style.

The Friends of Dandenong Valley Park appreciate the suggestions made so far and look forward to more visits and suggestions for the many design challenges remaining.

The plan of the first section of Shepherds Bush Local Plant Garden is shown on page 21.



SHEPHERDS BUSH
BOTANICAL GARDEN

SYMBOL BOTANICAL NAME

- Ac. imp *Acacia implexa*
- Ac. m *Acacia melanoxylon*
- Ac. par *Acacia paraolaxa*
- Ac. p *Acacia pycnantha*
- Ac. v *Acacia verticillata*
- Bm *Banksia marginalis*
- C. a *Carex appressa*
- C. f *Carex fascicularis*
- C. l *Casuarina littoralis*
- C. q *Coprosma quadrifida*
- C. r *Correa reflexa*
- P. c *Phyllyria linearis*

- D. r *Dianella revoluta*
- D. s *Dichapogon strictus*
- E. c *Excelsarpus cupressiformis*
- H. a *Hymenanthera dentata*
- H. l *Hovea linearis*
- H. n *Hakea nodosa*
- H. y *Hardenbergia violacea*
- G. r *Gahnia radula*
- I. a *Indigo australis*
- K. e *Kunzea ericoides*
- K. p *Kennedia prostrata*
- L. c *Lepidosperum continentale*

- L. l *Lepidosperum laterale*
- L. long *Lomandra longifolia*
- M. c *Melaleuca ericifolia*
- M. s *Microlaena stipoides*
- Q. f *Ozothamnus ferrugineus*
- Q. l *Olearia lirata*
- P. Lab *Poa Labillardieri*
- P. l *Prostanthera lasiantha*
- P. Oz *Pteronemia occidentalis*
- P. o *Platylobium obtusangulum*
- P. r *Romadaria racemosa*
- S. l *Solanum launiatum*
- S. p *Spyridium parvifolium*
- V. j *Viminaria juncea*
- W *Timalea humilis / Astroblema humifusum*
- V *Acrotrich serrulata / Billardiera scandens*

L. J. B. 1952

TREASURER'S REPORT

Bryan Loft Vic Treasurer

Financial Statement 30 September 2001

BALANCE 30 June 2001	<u>\$4121.06</u>		
Plus INCOME		Less EXPENDITURE:	
Advance royalty on book	\$1000.00	Newsletter expenses	\$377.04
2001/02 Subscriptions received	<u>\$ 808.60</u>	Sub to Friends of RBG Cranbourne	\$25.00
	\$1808.60	Sub to Friends of Kawarra Gardens	\$20.00
		Sub to Illawarra Grevillea Park Soc	\$ 25.00
		Secretarial Expenses	<u>\$ 9.35</u>
			\$ 456.39
BALANCE 30 Sept 2001	<u>\$ 5473.27</u>		

MEMBERSHIP**New members**

A warm welcome to the following new members of the Study Group. We hope you enjoy your membership and look forward to sharing ideas with you.

Bettina Digby
 Pamela Finger
 Annie Treasure
 Win Main
 Margaret Milburn

New addresses

Mark Burns
 Kris Schaffer
 Rosalind Smallwood

Renewals for 2000-2001

Mark Burns, Jane Calder, Lindsay Campbell, Peter & Wilma Garnham, Paul Kennedy, Kris Schaffer, Gloria Thomlinson, Christine Wadey, Norm & Maureen Webb, Pat & John Webb; APS NSW, APS S.A., APS Vic.
Please let us know if your subscription has been sent in but not acknowledged in the NL. My apologies to members to whom this has happened.

I hope all members enjoy a happy and peaceful Christmas in these not so peaceful times, when I think we appreciate our gardens even more than usual. We are so fortunate to enjoy the luxury of having a garden. Summer is generally a quiet season - just a little pruning and weeding, not much planting. It's a good time to think about design. I (and other members) always look forward to hearing your ideas and seeing plans or pictures of your new designs. Questions and practical problems are stimulating too, so please send these in.
 Best wishes



Diana