

GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP**Newsletter No. 55****August 2006****Study Group Leader/Editor: Diana Snape****Treasurer/Membership: Bryan Loft**

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<http://asgap.org.au/design.html>
Website: <http://farrer.csu.edu.au/ASGAP/design.html>

OR google 'Australian Garden Design'

Dear Members,

The big garden event of the year/decade (lifetime?) for me was the opening of the new Australian Garden at Cranbourne in May. It was good to see other members there, sharing the air of excitement prevalent on the day and enjoying the beauty and potential of this special young garden. More than 10,000 people came to celebrate - there were even traffic jams on the highway and unfortunately some people had to be turned away (they were given free entrance tickets for another time to compensate). I think the day was just as important for Victoria as the day 160 years ago when the Royal Botanic Garden was opened at South Yarra. I hope members from elsewhere who visit Melbourne will take the opportunity to see the new garden at Cranbourne. It is laid out in terms of landscape - and an Australian landscape at that! I have written briefly about it in this NL and hope in the future to hear other members' response to this unique Garden.

The emphasis in this newsletter seems to be on gardens, with some wonderful descriptions and ideas. A garden is the end product which combines our interest in, and love of, design and plants. We want to achieve the best we can in our gardens - 'best' in terms of giving satisfaction and pleasure, in many different ways, first to ourselves (who live with them) and then to others (who visit them). We can always learn more about both design and plants! Here Chris Larkin considers renewal as part of both maintenance and design while several members turn our attention to particular categories and species of beautiful plants.

A new project suggested by a number of members of the Study Group is to consider the design of small areas. Once before, a long time ago (1997, in fact, and unsuccessfully!) members were asked to design a hypothetical small garden, approximately 5m x 5m. The idea is, you choose the shape, aspect and other variables. The style is up to you. You design any hard landscape involved and specify the number and species of plants. You can have just one tree and a pool, or dozens of small plants, or anything in between. It can be a group effort or solo. As an alternative, you can show us in a plan what you already have in a small area. Please draw it more or less to scale (say, 20mm represents 1 m) and send it in. It's quite a while since we've had a plan in the NL - a long time for a Design Study Group. How about it? Maybe we can do better than last time! if you really are too daunted by drawing a plan, you can send a written description instead (or in addition). Please try it.

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NEXT MEETINGS

Please see details of meetings and contacts on pages 20 - 22
NE VIC: Saturday August 12 at Paul & Barbara Kennedy's
CANBERRA: Thursday August 17 at David Mackenzie's
MELBOURNE: Sunday September 10 at Jan and John Camell's
SYDNEY: Sunday October 8 at Jenny and Mai Johnson's
 Visiting members from other areas welcome!

CORRESPONDENCE

Some comments on GDSG NL 54 -- Am I correct in reading that the GDSG has a website and if so can you publish the address please? *Yes, the website address is now given on the frontpage. DS*

An index

As I have a paper copy of all NLs I am willing to help in whatever capacity is needed.

The index would be a valuable and necessary tool to accessing past articles/comments/ advice/ reflections, otherwise a lot are lost, especially for members who do not have access to all paper copies of our NL. Even if they have all paper copies they may not have the time to look through all of them to find what they are after, if it exists, eg we have 54 newsletters @ (at least) 20 pages each = 1080 pages ... wow.

In compiling an index I think it is important to highlight designs that have or are trying to solve difficult sites i.e. steep, rocky, shady, etc and/or have been clever in the way they have used hard landscaping. I am trying to get the Australian Open Garden Scheme to emphasise these points in their garden descriptions as I am sure visitors to gardens under this scheme would like to see more than plants.

Shirley Pipitone's description of the Russell garden was just magic - well done and an excellent example of the last point I was making in my little ramble about the index needing to describe the site, aspects and problems as well as plants used. **Jeff Howes** NSW

A great NL Diana, the GDSG goes from strength to strength - just to mention tho', there have been articles from the past NL put up on the website from the beginning. I send Brian Walters the NL electronically so he just pastes the article in.

So very dry up here, I have lost all my young Sydney Blue Gums (*Eucalyptus saligna*) -am thinking of giving up gardening and collecting stamps! **Jo Hambrett** NSW

We should all get to know the website! Don't give up on your garden, Jo - it needs you. DS

Aims of the GDSG

Dear Diana, Welcome back. Jo did a great job in your absence.

Apropos GDSG Aims (NL54 p7) I would add preservation of the gene pool of Australian plants. A garden is a bit like conserving animals in zoos. Good for the population's knowledge and enjoyment and sometimes the only way to hang on to/preserve the genes. However the best conservation is to keep enough of the natural environment. Most people can do little to preserve a piece of natural bush. Where they have enough land it would be good to use a bit to preserve the local plant gene pool. It would make an interesting comparison with the 'gardened' areas.

Best regards, **Geoffrey (and Ann) Long** NSW

I couldn't agree more about preservation of the gene pool of Australian plants in the natural environment. I think (in different words) that is one of the aims of APS (by its different names). Should it be a specific GDSG aim also? What do other members think? DS

Dear Jo, What a nice day we had yesterday. Norm and I thoroughly enjoyed the difference in both gardens and were delighted that the new owners of Betty Maloney's garden were so committed. We both hope it doesn't overwhelm them, making them feel responsible for the well being of the plants. It appeared they were learning more and more and will feel confident in the future to prune when necessary. Ros's garden was just up our alley, and we loved the feeling of the garden (especially the native sections with the rocks and grass trees). Walking through inside

the house I noticed how the garden was featured through the windows. The weather was wonderful and the day was exceptional. We hope to get up in October also. **Maureen Webb** NSW

The Centre is more a respite centre for carers to drop their loved ones for a little r&r themselves. Having said that, the garden should still be a garden for surprises and intrigue so that these patients really want to go each week. If the garden (and indeed the centre) was interesting inside and out, they would probably WANT to go there. Grasses are great, however they must be kept well off the paths as they could cause a trip hazard. These people LOVE colour. Shane and I have discussed plantings of Lagerstroemia for shade and summer colour. I've struck some salvias - again for colour as well as hardiness. I've been a hard slog as the coordinator wants all - colour, fragrance, paths, but NO bees. I've told her bees go with flowers. They just want birds and no bees. It's not easy being green (said a famous frog).

Anyway, the existing garden, with mostly natives and a touch of the exotic are all doing well - except the *Philotheca*. It can drop dead when you look sideways at it. **Suellen Harris** NSW

Use of royalty money

I would like to see an extension to the book, maybe in magazine style, showing garden design in plans, planting schemes, grouping of plants in garden situations or plant associations occurring in nature. This could be a quarterly publication covering the seasons, also highlighting the different geographic regions of Australia. Would like to see this publication stepping out of the confines of the APS/ANPS/SGAP, being shared with the public. Should be sold at newsagencies, booksellers, airports.

Let's face it, we have something to share. Why do we hide it? **Ingrid Adler** ACT

An excellent idea, Ingrid, and a worthwhile project for members - but quite an undertaking. I think such a publication would need colour photos as well as the information you suggest. What do members think? DS

I live on a farm in north west Victoria. As we will be replacing an old rainwater tank this winter on the south side of the house, I am making the most of the opportunity to "revamp" the south garden. This will include spraying out some old buffalo lawn and replacing with a wide sand path that will meander through the garden. However I do wish to create a low spot/depression area so that when it was wet the water will drain to there, filling that pond or depression area (maybe growing some Nardoo (*Marsilia*) there). We have heavy, grey cracking clays here and I was wondering if you had any info, or pointers to keep in mind when laying out/re-modelling garden beds, their drainage and where/how to guide that water to not only be utilised in a small wetland area but also to prevent garden beds from becoming water logged when we actually do have a downpour. Any tips or suggestions would be appreciated.

Meredith Farley Vic

DESIGN

The following was the introduction to a talk I gave recently at the Royal Botanic Garden, Melbourne.

Garden design using Australian plants: why such a late start?

Diana Snape Vic

I think most of us are probably gardeners. Just as we are the products of our genetic inheritance and the environment we live in, so our gardens are the product of our cultural inheritance and our environment. For over 200 years it's our cultural heritage that has dominated gardening in Australia. Only lately have we begun to acknowledge the realities of our Australian environment - the very different plants and colour palette of this country, as well as the practical considerations. These include shallow, infertile soils and erratic climate, with unreliable rainfall and the current 10-year drought.

From the very first settlement, some people saw the beauty of Australian plants, so perfectly adapted to this sometimes challenging environment. Most settlers were understandably nostalgic for the gardens and plants they had left behind in the cool, moist, fertile soils of England. These were the gardens they bravely tried to recreate here. Research has shown that most people are influenced by their parents' garden and, in turn, influence their childrens' gardens and their childrens' childrens'. This pattern was repeated and reinforced by later waves of immigrants. So here we are, 200 years on, with most gardens in Australia still firmly nostalgic, looking way back to the British Isles on the other side of the world. For many of us, 'sense of place' is English rather than Australian, at odds with the country we live in.

It's not just the private gardens of course. The horticultural industry in Australia also carried on with the English tradition. Even today it largely consists of horticulturists, nursery owners, gardeners, designers, writers and television presenters whose expertise lies in plants from elsewhere, not Australia. This industry has become entrenched, a long-established closed loop.

As late as 1960, when Brian and I started our first garden in Sydney, we could find only two gardening books with information about Australian plants. There was so much to learn - about the plants themselves and the sometimes unexpected results when they were grown in garden conditions. The Australian Plant Society was started in 1957 (as SGAP) to do just that.

The breakthrough of interest in Australian plants in the 60s and 70s was limited by four main factors:

- first, a lack of horticultural knowledge;
- second, the small range of Australian plants available in nurseries;
- next, the fact that many of these were trees and large shrubs, too big for small suburban gardens;
- and fourth, the 'no maintenance' myth - for example people didn't realize that Australian plants had always been pruned - by storms, wind, fire, salt air, insects and marsupials.

So the fashion in Australian plants was short-lived.

Over the last 46 years, since that first garden of ours, this situation has changed dramatically.

- First, an enormous amount of research work has been carried out by members of organizations such as APS and a small number of Botanic Gardens and Universities. Literally hundreds of books have been written, including the wonderful 8-volume Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants. Information on their cultivation is now readily available.
- Second, there are now superb specialist nurseries with a marvellous range of Australian plants of all types, in all shapes and sizes. These include selected varieties, hybrids and cultivars. Even many general nurseries stock a modest range.
- Next, this availability is also true for numerous small plants - shrubs, groundcovers, daisies, annuals, lilies, orchids, grasses and many more.
- Fourth, people realize maintenance is important, for example pruning.

In addition, gardens of these plants can now be visited in the Open Garden Scheme.

And all this means we can at last design a garden using Australian plants.

and - not in my introduction - this is our opportunity as members of the GDSG to show what can be done. If we don't do it, who will?

Renewal and garden design

Chris Larkin Vic

Every year some parts of the garden need renovation. I would love for everything to be 'perfect' for a season but the reality is quite different and something for me to get my head around. I need to 'zen out'; accept that my large garden is going to need constant reworking both on a small and large scale. Some parts of the garden are going to be 'past

it', in some sections the plantings will be too new thanks to renovations carried out in the previous couple of years, while other sections will be looking perfect. If the garden didn't need reworking then my role would be nothing more than sweeping paths (curse the blackbirds) and pruning.

At our last Melbourne meeting we visited Cheryl Southall's garden at Mooroolbark in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges. During the meeting we had a very interesting discussion arising from Cheryl's comment that to some extent she was bored with the garden as the design work was complete - the exciting times were in the past - and from here on in it was largely a matter of maintenance. In there somewhere was also a certain frustration in dealing with the effects of mature trees. And there is no doubt a young garden, with young trees, can have enormous appeal and sensual excitement.

Never before had I felt quite so challenged by the idea that after garden design comes the tedium of garden maintenance. As passionate plants-people, GDSG members probably see themselves as much more concerned and much more qualified to discuss, share ideas and even advise each other (or any willing audience) on plant design or plant-scaping. That's not to say the design of the hard structure isn't a very important component in enabling a vision of a garden to be realised: but it is just one of the components. Once you've finished with the hard structure of the landscape you may do little more than refine it, but the part of garden design that we must engage in, in an ongoing way, concerns the plants.

In the last few months I have tackled a couple of sections of the garden that exemplify two of the main reasons that keen gardeners get stuck in and have another go at planting for a desired effect. As our gardens mature, and as we mature as gardeners, then we are likely to respond with new ideas. I'm not trying to achieve the same effect, that's simply not possible, and anyway I always think I can do better - I can achieve something more harmonious and beautiful.

The first section of garden I'll talk about isn't being renewed because plants had died - oh, no. In fact the opposite was the case; two plants in particular had grown enormously large. They weren't tall but these two prostrate correas were very big blobs indeed and still spreading thanks to layering so they just had to be removed. Mature plants surround the area they were removed from and it borders a pathway with a seat close by, so I will now plant a greater variety of small plants - like *Crowea exalata* prostrate, *Grevillea* 'Pink Midget', *Philotheca verrucosa* double-flowering form - to scale-back the area and increase the visual interest and sense of intimacy. At the same time, I have changed the hard structure a little with the addition of some more rocks to help retain soil and frustrate the blackbirds.

The second section of garden is being renewed because of increasing shade and dry conditions due to a very healthy and now very large *Eucalyptus mannifera*. The change in growing conditions for neighbouring plants had resulted in the death of one plant and the stressed appearance of another. As has been mentioned many a time, dry shade is a challenge. The plant genera that will cope with that regime and springs immediately to mind is correa, although my experience is that not all correas are happy in that situation. I do think if you can possibly bring light into a shaded area then it will brighten things up considerably. A plant like *Spyridium vexilliferum* (which will also take sun) or *S.* parvifolium* prostrate will brighten things up with their white flowers; *Lasiopetalum involucreatum* will have an effect because of its grey-green foliage as will *Lasiopetalum floribundum* because of its light green foliage. In making use of this latter plant I am hoping it will be a foil to the beautiful and useful but dark and brooding foliaged *Lasiopetalum macrophyllum*. (There's a 15 year old *Lasiopetalum macrophyllum* in the oldest section of the garden which has

large, felty, pale olive green foliage but I have now acquired a Tasmanian species which has much smaller and darker foliage; a better scaled plant for my purpose.) I will also use fine foliageed *Persoonia nutans* which I know from experience will take the dry and for a tufting plant *Lomandra confertifolia* ssp. *confertifolia* which appears to tolerate anything but wet. The lighter, brighter foliage of this lomandra is also a bonus. *Phebalium lamprophyllum* is good value too as its apparent shiny green leaves always gives it the appearance of lush good health and its flower is a good clean white. I already have a couple of correas in this area and I'm a little unsure if I'll use any more.

I guess we are all interested or excited to different degrees by the many and various aspects of garden design. I find the plant design the most interesting, frustrating and rewarding part of it all. Choosing the right plant for the conditions of moisture and sun (or lack of it), with an appropriate growth habit for the purpose I have in mind, while contrasting or blending foliage with its neighbours' so that there is sufficient variety and interest while still retaining a feeling of peaceful cohesion is challenging. And I'm sure that this kind of mental challenge should not merely be dismissed as maintenance.

Do odd numbers count?

Leigh Murray NSW

We love our two scruffy, higgledy-piggledy gardens (one is inland on a few acres of bushland, the other on a 900 sq. m. coastal block). They're a great success at achieving their main goals of attracting wildlife and providing privacy for us. But show ponies they are not. Appearance - quite clearly - ranks a distant third in our priorities. Years ago as novice gardeners, we tried one of every feasible plant. This looked bitty but it did teach us what we could and couldn't grow. Since then, I've learnt to replant losses with multiples of species, and I began that way in our newer garden.

I'm not able to visit many gardens to see first-hand what appeals to me visually and to train my eyes. So I'm seeking opinions on planting multiples. Here are a few questions that occur to me:

- When planting, is it really best (as some garden designers insist) to plant in odd numbers?
- Is planting in threes and fives, for instance, a good idea? I've been doing this lately but the plants are still too small to judge the effect.
- When one *Melaleuca fulgens* turned into a raging success - constantly attracting our attention from indoors with its stunning pink flowers and attendant honeyeaters - I planted two more nearby. Would three more (ie, a total of 4) not look as good?
- If odd numbers are indeed desirable, then within a length of say, 10 metres beside a driveway, does it really matter if there are 6 rather than 5 or 7 of one species?

It's been a struggle to find the right plant for each spot in our gardens, with heavy frosts and chomping wildlife in one garden, salty gales and *Phytophthora* in the other, and drought in both. There have been disappointments galore, and many planting schemes have gone phut. For instance, I edged a driveway with *Brachyscome multifida*. The plants were coming along nicely and flowering well until one night a passing rabbit knocked off the lot, pruning thirty-odd plants to ground level. Exit Plan A; go to Plan B! In other cases, plants that do well in one area fail in seemingly similar conditions in another part of the garden. With tricky conditions and few gardening skills, replacements would inevitably have been needed, no matter how good the initial design.

After years of trial and error, our gardens are starting to function well. My gardening time is now very restricted so I

don't wish to do major revamps for purely aesthetic purposes. What I'd like to do is improve the overall look as I replace losses in a patchwork way (if that is possible). It is for these patching purposes that I'm most interested in whether odd numbers count.

Inside looking out

Jeff Howes NSW

I have found that the view of my courtyards from inside my house is better in most cases than when viewed from outside the house. The difference is very great. Much to my surprise and when I am undertaking any new plantings I always check the view from inside before making the decision about final plant placing.

From what I have observed a lot of people place more emphasis on their front garden that can be viewed from the street and it is often this garden that is completed first, even though they spend the majority of their time in their backyard. In many cases their front garden is only partially viewable from inside the house due to the placement of windows or tall shrubs etc.

So to summarise: yes - the view from inside the house must be considered when designing any gardens and it is great to see this issue raised and discussed.

Way-finding

Shirley Pipitone ACT

In April, the Canberra Branch visited John Knight Memorial Park, a large public park in Belconnen designed by landscape architects Denton Corker Marshall in the 1980s and named for former ACT Senator John Knight. The park makes brilliant use of its location on the north-east edge of Lake Ginninderra and is immensely popular with families, walkers, joggers, cyclists and picnickers. For example, an extensive chain of ponds flows into a small beach and provides a wonderful playground with its large rock edges and water steps just perfect for children to clamber on and around. A mystery peninsula was popular with my children for imaginary pirate games. Over a footbridge and surrounded by large melaleucas at the water's edge, the path leads around corners and up steps to a small, secret lookout which could be the captain's deck, a prison, a bushranger's hide, or even just a house. With concerns for safety so uppermost in contemporary designers' minds, such an adventurous playground would not even be contemplated these days.

I chose John Knight Park as our second meeting venue partly because, being a public place, it was easy to arrange at short notice - no owners to negotiate with, etc. However, the park also offered an opportunity to open up discussion about the purpose of a garden, and way-finding in a garden. There is quite a body of literature on way-finding which I may get around to writing about in a future newsletter but, at this time, I was interested in stimulating discussion about way-finding in private domestic gardens, particularly finding our way from the street to the house entrance. John Knight Park leads visitors around in great comfort, with no directional signposting yet at no time does a visitor feel lost or unsure of their bearings. The network of paths and occasional views from one area into another enable visitors to find their way around the park easily. I haven't been able to find out its size since I left writing this article until the last minute, but it is of the order of 10 or 20 hectares, i.e. not a little suburban park tucked in between streets.

However, finding the park is not that easy as some of our non-Belconnen members discovered. The sign on the street signpost is small and insignificant, and a large sign at the same intersection is only visible from one direction - the opposite direction from which most non-Belconnen visitors would arrive. The large sign on the opposite side of the street from the park leads visitors to look to the wrong side of the street for the entrance. Finally the entrance is not highly visible: some rocks and a low sign. Subtlety is appropriate to the style of the park but that level of subtlety is subterfuge.

Finding a suburban address can also be difficult and obviously street signs and numbers help. But how is it that some suburban gardens are unable to lead you to the front door yet others can? In a tiny front garden, opening the gate and walking up the path may be all it takes because you can see all. Or you may be drawn to an obvious front porch or brightly coloured door, an archway, some symmetry in the placement of plants, or lighting along a path.

Why is it that sometimes you subconsciously want to take a different route to the obvious one? Often front paths branch off from a driveway but if the driveway feels unsafe or is occupied by vehicles, people will seek another route. In a friend's garden, a steep driveway runs down to a garage under the house. A few metres down the drive some exceptionally narrow, steep and angled steps lead up to a narrow path to the house. Going down and then up is not enticing, and the steps are positively prohibiting. My friend won't mind my saying it. So people walk across the front lawn until the entrance is redesigned to match her welcoming nature. Does your garden entrance reflect your personality? If you want to be a recluse, you can create an entrance which says keep away. Or you might want an entrance which embraces you as you return to its sanctuary at the end of the day.

When you first visit a garden, does it give you a sense of arrival? How does it achieve that?

PLANTS

Plants for a dry shaded garden with clay soil

Pam Yarra Vic

Following the Melbourne Branch's November 2005 lunch in our garden in Heathmont, an outer eastern suburb of Melbourne, Chris Larkin has requested a list of plants that survive and even thrive in our garden. Also a list of the plant combinations that work well in our garden.

After the last large pine tree was removed many years ago, the following indigenous plants continue to regenerate, *Gahnia sieberiana* (Red-fruit Saw-sedge), *Lomandra longifolia* (Spiny-headed Mat-rush) and *L. filiformis* (Wattle Mat-rush). These plants define the pathways with the addition of other clumping plants & grasses such as *Poa sieberiana* (Wiry Tussock-grass), *P. labillardieri* (Large Tussock-grass), *Thelionema caespitosum* (Tufted Lily) and *Orthrosanthous multiflorus* (Morning Flag).

The indigenous *Prostanthera lasianthos* (Victorian Christmas Bush) often does not survive drought conditions but does regenerate. Some grevilleas have not survived the current drought, but a long living survivor is *G. arenaria* and it is also available in a dwarf form. Its flowers are inconspicuous, but the birds always find them. Another long-lived thriving plant, *Chorilaena quercifolia* with its small greenish yellow flowers is a constant source of food for the bees. It, too, is available in dwarf form.

Callistemons all thrive, as do the many forms of *Banksia spinulosa* (Hairpin B.), *B. integrifolia* (Coast B.), *B. blechnifolia* (Fern-leaf B.), *B. paludosa* (Marsh B.), *B. canei* (Mountain B.), *B. ericifolia* (Heath-leaf B.) and *B. penicillata*. Correas thrive with *C.* 'Duskybells', *C. decumbens*, *C. baeuerlenii* (Chef's Cap C), *C. calycina*, *C. alba* (White C), *C. glabra* (Rock C.) and *C. pulchella* being a constant source of food for the numerous eastern spinebills and other honeyeaters visiting the garden.

Lasiopetalum floribundum (Velvet-bush) is variable, however *L. macrophyllum* (low form) with its reddish new growth combines well with *L. floribundum*, *Thomasia foliosa*, *T. rhynchocarpa* and *T. laxifolia*. Although these plants all have small, almost insignificant flowers, the leaf variations make them an attractive combination. Not to be overlooked is

Phebalium squamulosum (Forest Phebalium), with its small oblong leaves complementing the narrow-leaved *P. stenophyllum* that forms a screening hedge.

Many other plants have survived in our suburban bush garden and the remnant eucalypts deserve a mention as they convinced us to buy the block and they define the framework of the garden.

Lomandra

Colin Turner Vic

Lomandra are perennial rhizomatous herbs with linear or terete leaves forming rush-like tussocks, commonly known as mat-rushes. All 50 species are native in Australia with two also occurring in Papua New Guinea and one in New Caledonia. All species are dioecious, with male and female inflorescences either similar or dissimilar. Lomandra are important butterfly food plants. Indigenous species have been the most widely available and cultivated in the Melbourne area. Introduced from wild seed, subsequent multiple plantings are a mix of male and female plants ensuring seed production for ongoing reliable propagation.

L. longifolia subsp. *longifolia* is the most widespread and the most commonly planted. Local forms have smooth green strap-like leaves and form robust tussocks of about 1m x 2m. Yellowish flower spikes are visible amongst the outer foliage, as are the shiny brown seed capsules that are often retained for much of the year. It is a common component of indigenous plantings and re-vegetation works.

L. longifolia subsp. *exilis* is sold as *L. longifolia* "fine leaf". Recently a fine-leaf dwarf selection has been marketed under the name "tanika". All forms are adaptable and hardy in full sun or part shade and are useful for dry under-tree plantings.

L. filiformis subsp. *filiformis* is often available in indigenous nurseries. It has channeled flat, bluish-green to dull green leaves and forms small, sparse, mostly erect tufts 15-40cm. x 15-30 cm. The short yellow flower spikes are not particularly showy but the species is hardy and tolerant of dry conditions. It is useful in containers, mixed in with small shrubs and groundcover plants, or when planted amongst rocks.

L. filiformis subsp. *coriacea* has firm flat shiny green leaves to 20cm. in length, often curved. It forms a low dense mat of interesting shaggy texture 15-30 cm. x -50 cm.

L. filiformis "Mondra", with short yellow flower spikes and fine leaves 15-20cm long, spreads by short underground stems to form small mats.

L. multiflora subsp. *multiflora* is occasionally available in indigenous nurseries. Rigid narrow dull green leaves form open rounded tussocks 30-50cm x 30-50cm. Both male and female flowers are arranged in whorls at intervals along the flowering stem producing an attractive pompom appearance. The female flower is larger than the male but sessile while the smaller male flower is produced on a stalk about 1cm in length. The male inflorescence is therefore the more noticeable but both are interesting. Color varies from yellow-brown to orange-brown as the flowers age. It is worthy of much wider cultivation.

L. micrantha ssp. *micrantha* and *L. nana* occur to the west of Melbourne and are small grass-like plants that may be available in indigenous nurseries in these areas.

A number of forms of *Lomandra confertifolia* have been cultivated in Melbourne gardens for 20 or more years but

their use has been limited by irregular availability.

L. confertifolia ssp. *confertifolia* is a branched species and can be readily propagated from cuttings. It has been available more regularly in specialist native nurseries and has been sold in recent years as "little con". It forms a low compact tussock of 30-40cm x ~1m. Narrow light green leaves hide short pale yellow flower spikes. It is hardy in semi or part shade and tolerates seasonally dry conditions.

L. confertifolia subsp. *leptostachya* forms a low tussock 20-30cm x ~1m of long fine deep green leaves with long, fine flower spikes tipped by a few yellow flowers. Hardy to seasonally dry conditions but less vigorous in dry under-tree plantings, it is best grown in dappled shade.

L. confertifolia subsp. *rubiginosa* has narrow blue-green leaves and forms low rounded tussocks 40-50cm x ~1.5m. Attractive cream flowers on purplish spikes about half the length of the leaves display well and have an interesting scent (juicy-fruit chewing-gum and nail polish). It is hardy in full sun, semi and part shade and tolerates seasonally dry conditions. *L. confertifolia* subsp. *rubiginosa* "green form" has recently been introduced to cultivation. *L. confertifolia* "wingarra" is a recent P.B.R. introduction.

L. confertifolia subsp. *pallida* has light green strap leaves and forms an erect rounded tussock 60-80cm x ~1 m with dull yellow flower spikes. Sold under the name "little pall" it has so far been reliable in harsh, full sun positions but is also recommended for part shade.

L. confertifolia "Bateman's Bay" has short fine pale green leaves and short yellow-brown flower spikes. It has a less erect habit and may be a semi mat forming type. Hardy in part shade but slow to develop it is said to grow to 30 x 30 cm.

A few other species of limited availability are also in cultivation. *L. fluviatilis* has deep grey-green leaves with a smooth waxy appearance and forms neat erect clumps of 30-40cm. x 30cm. An uncommon and rare species found growing in stream beds and along stream banks and in shaded sites, it has so far been reliable in protected shady sites subject to less severe seasonal dryness.

L. hystrix forms large robust tussocks of 1.5-2m x ~2m. Pale cream flower spikes, as long as or sometimes slightly longer than the dark green strap leaves, display well. It is hardy to seasonal dryness but intolerant of exposure to long periods of direct sunlight that can bleach the foliage. It is often used in plantings with ferns and rainforest plants.

L. sp. aff. cylindrica has very fine grass like leaves and forms a soft pale green low rounded tussock 40-50cm x 0.8-1.2m with long fine flower spikes tipped with a few yellow flowers. Initially grown in part shade, recent plantings in full sun have established quickly.

Lomandras are easily grown from fresh seed or by division and rarely by cuttings. Species and forms selected for their flower form (usually being males) require a vegetative (clonal) method of propagation. Division is a slow multiplication method and may account for the limited availability of many desirable forms in specialist native nurseries and their absence in the general nursery trade. Some forms are being tissue-cultured in N.S.W. but attempts in Victoria have so far been unsuccessful. A reliable supply of good selections is the first step in making them popular garden plants. With a range of sizes and forms, foliage colors and textures, interesting flowers and general reliability, lomandras deserve to be more widely grown.

In the next NL, Colin will write about the use of some of these appealing lomandras in design.

Small eucalypts for small gardens

Paul Kennedy Vic

This extract is taken from an article Paul wrote for the Eucalyptus Study Group, which contains a much longer supplementary list. Some eucalypts on his shortlist may be difficult to obtain.

Everyone equates eucalypts with Australia but advice on suitable eucalypts for people's gardens, and also nurseries stocking suitable plants, seem to be sadly lacking. How often have we seen large eucalypts planted in small gardens, creating many problems? Hence I put forward a list of small eucalypts suitable for small gardens or courtyards based on climate and rainfall.

The list below needs to be considered in conjunction with a number of criteria:

- a) natural soil profile Plants grown in soil close to their natural growing conditions will do well. The further you move away from the ideal soil profile, the less the chance of success.
- b) frost tolerance Inland and high country eucalypts are generally more frost hardy than coastal eucalypts.
- c) effect of humidity This is unknown for WA species which are grown north of Jervis Bay NSW, on the coast and adjacent ranges.
- d) rainfall Inland eucalypt species have adapted to growing in low rainfall areas and generally do not survive in high rainfall areas.
- e) need for heat Inland eucalypts generally need lots of hot weather to flower well.
- f) need for cool summers Eucalypts from high country/cool summers generally do not like the hot summer days of the inland and often show heat burn and need regular watering to survive.

The eucalypts I would wish to grow in a small garden in my dry, inland conditions, subject to frost, would be:

1. *E. youngiana* (Large-fruited Mallee) from SA & WA. This mallee has everything you could wish for in a eucalypt. It has lovely light green, broad, lanceolate leaves which are not crowded. The bark peels revealing lovely tan-coloured new growth. The flowers, which are long-lasting, can vary from yellow to pink to red and are up to 10cm across. The buds have pointed caps which can be deep pink in colour. The large seed capsules can be quite reddish-brown and are very ornamental.
2. *E. synandra* Originates from sandy soils near Shark Bay, WA. One of the very dainty species. The flowers change from cream to pink and hang down. The seed capsules are also ornamental.
3. *E. diptera* (or *terebra*) (Two-winged Gimlet) from WA. These have intense coppery trunks and bright green leaves. Flower buds, flowers and seed capsules are in sessile clusters along the branches.
4. *E. orbifolia* (Disc-leaf Mallee), *E. websteriana* (Webster's Mallee) and *E. kruseana* (Book-leaf Mallee) All from very dry regions in WA and all have attractive glaucous, orbicular foliage and yellow flowers.
5. *E. oldfieldii* (Oldfield's Mallee) (WA), *E. burracoppinensis* (Burracoppin Mallee) (WA) and *E. sessilis* (Finke River Mallee) (WA & NT) generally form rounded bushes with open green foliage. They have large cream to yellow flowers and large, ornamental seed capsules with the rim thick and protruding. Buds can be very coppery in colour.

(In NL 8, February 1995, other members' different favourite small eucalypts were listed. E. orbifolia was the one of Paul's selection mentioned there too. DS)

Australian native grasses

Diana Snape Vic

If you are interested in growing Australian grasses in a lawn or grassland, you might like to contact Native Seeds Pty Ltd. I recently received an excellent booklet from them containing a great deal of useful information, from sowing guidelines to issues of local provenance. They currently supply seeds of at least ten different types of grass

and the booklet has photographs of all these grasses - both close-ups and in areas planted in gardens and for revegetation.

It is a commercial business of course, with which I have no connection! However I have wished for so long for a range of Australian grass seeds to become available that I thought some other members might also like to know about it. Their contact details are: phone: (03) 9555 1722
email: <enquiries@nativesseeds.com.au> website: <www.nativesseeds.com.au>

I thought you might like their 'recipe' for successful native grass sowing and establishment in pastures (maybe it applies to other aspects of gardening too). The 'recipe' is to add:

- 5 parts weed control prior to sowing
- 1 part soil preparation
- 1 part seed application
- 5 parts good quality seed
- 2 parts weed management after sowing
- 2 parts weed control at sowing
- 10 parts patience

GARDENS

Australian Open Garden Scheme

Jeff Howes NSW

The 2006-07 Australian Open Garden Scheme guide book contains details of 680 quality gardens that are open all around Australia. The guide book lists 26 gardens that are native or predominately native gardens in NSW, not only Sydney but Mudgee and Gunnedah to name a couple of the country towns. As well, there are only 17 native or predominately native gardens open in Victoria - quite a turn around to the last few years.

For more details I would suggest that members purchase the Guide book which will be available in August from all ABC shops and most newsagents. Great reading, excellent photos and detailed descriptions of all the gardens. The guide book cost around \$15 to \$17 last year.

Xeriscape Garden

Jeff Howes NSW

I recently had a short three day break from Sydney and one of the places I visited was the fabulous Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens situated a short drive off the Princes Highway south of Bateman Bay. For those of you who have not visited this garden, it displays only the flora of the NSW South Coast and adjacent ranges. It is 42ha in size and the development commenced in 1988. It has a modern visitors' information centre which provides: information, plant sales, herbarium and light refreshments and lunch. As well, there are extensive walking trails and display gardens on various themes.

Their latest garden that they have added and the reason I am writing this article is the **Xeriscape Garden**. The word Xeriscape is a merging of the Greek word 'xeros', meaning 'dry', with the word landscape. It was coined in Colorado USA in 1981 and is pronounced 'Zerascape'. It's a method of landscaping that can be applied to any garden or landscaping style and can be used to save water in new or established gardens. It's easy to do in your own garden and provides many benefits.

The Xeriscape display garden at Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens is planted with drought tolerant local Australian native plants and is an excellent example of what you can achieve. They also have many smaller display areas each showing various native grasses and types of mulches that can be used. This type of garden is one we should all consider as the days of unlimited cheap water are fading fast and we need to change our gardening style to

suit this.

The Xeriscape fundamentals outlined by Xeriscape Colorado Inc are:

- Planning and designing for water conservation
- Create practical turf areas of appropriate grasses
- Selecting low water requiring plants and group plants of similar water needs together
- Use soil amendments ... like compost
- Use mulches to reduce evaporation
- Irrigate efficiently
- Maintain the landscape properly by weeding, pruning, fertilising and mowing.

More information is available on the web and if you type 'Xeriscape gardens' in Google you will get over 262,000 sources of information including: <http://www.xeriscape.org/> (a Colorado site)

or <http://www.actewagl.com/default.aspx?loc=/Environment/xeriscape.htm> (an ACT site).

Healing gardens

Therese Scales Vic

I read with interest and some concern of Suellen's problems with the aged care facility in N.S.W. I have recently returned from a three and a half month stay in the U.S. with my family. In my spare time (of which there was plenty) I did some reading on Healing Gardens with an emphasis on aged care facilities. The thing that kicked off my interest was an article in the American magazine; "Landscape Architecture" on Therapeutic Landscapes in aged care, Teresia Hazen, a registered horticultural therapist and coordinator of therapeutic gardens and horticultural therapy for Legacy Health System in Portland, Oregon, was interviewed for the article. She emphasized the importance of a well thought out design with attention to small details to make the environment a comfortable and beautiful place for residents. She sites three examples where she lists good and bad points of the designs. One thing she talks about is a beautiful modern design that is wonderful to look at but not so pleasant to sit in! This is one example of her knowledge in a very interesting six page article (including pictures).

Some resources at the end of the article are:

"Healing Gardens: Therapeutic Benefits and Design Recommendations", by Clare Cooper Marcus and Marni Barnes, Wiley Series in Healthcare and Senior Living Design, 1999.

Therapeutic Landscape Data Base; www.healinglandscapes.org.

Another book I found interesting is "Healing Gardens" by Romy Rawlings.

If you google Healing Gardens you come up with some interesting sites.

Some design guidelines suggested in the last book are:

- Provide a homelike environment
- Provide places for privacy (with sparse and low to medium screening for privacy)
- Provide sensory stimulation to increase mental alertness
- Provide opportunities for socializing (with shade!) Perhaps umbrellas can be used in the interim!
- Provide places to be with family
- Provide space for outdoor activities eg. bocce or bowls and grandchildren to play
- Pathways should contrast in colour with planting areas to help define the boundary between path and garden beds
- No dead ends; paths should be circular so they lead back to the starting point with visual reminders along the way such as small sculptures or birdbaths.
- Lots of seating both in socializing areas and along path ways

- Plants to give reminders of the change of seasons.

These are just a few ideas. The references go into far more detail. I understand Suellen has professional help now and that all the above guidelines would be taken care of. I'm happy for you to pass my email address on to Suellen as I have notes from Healing Gardens I can pass on to her. I am interested to see how the garden progresses. Aged care is a growing area which requires a lot of attention if we want our relatives to be cared for in a lovely environment, and gardens are one way of doing this.

Thank you Therese for those very helpful ideas and resources.

I do wish more gardens in Australian retirement villages consisted of Australian plants rather than exotics - much better for the national soul! DS

Cheryl Southall's garden

Margaret James Vic

Cheryl Southall's Mooroolbark garden is approached down a narrow winding road through large blocks with mature gardens mostly concealing the houses. From the street it is apparent that the garden is encircled with mature eucalypts and slopes down from the road towards the west. With a frontage of about 50 m, the one-acre garden is larger than it appears from the road. The house nestles into the site, with a small garden in front and the back garden slopes gently down through winding paths and mostly low plantings to a grassy knoll and random-shaped pools.

Cheryl treated us to a brief slide show and talk, explaining how the garden has been developed over twenty years, from remnant bush. Surviving eucalyptus were incorporated into the design to frame the garden and the plentiful dianellas transplanted to make part of the first planting. Some of the early planting still survives. Cheryl's interest in structure and balance in the design shows particularly in the grassy knoll and the pools, which create a void to balance the mass of tall trees and bushes. This gives a resting point to the eye and provides emphasis and contrast.

The plants include correas, acacias, grevilleas, banksias intermingled with grasses, the latter used to unify the design. Many of the plants were propagated by Cheryl, who used to grow so many she sold them at the market. The bushes have been well-pruned into agreeable shapes which merge well together. The pools are edged with carex and other water plants. We all enjoyed the views from the house, especially with the late afternoon sunlight on the eucalypts, accentuated by a brief shower of fine rain. Parrots and magpies flew in to feed, creating movement in the midst of tranquility.

In discussion over afternoon tea, it seemed there was a shared preference for the mature garden, as it provides the necessary element of height, along with the shape and texture of tree trunks and spreading plants. The mature garden creates its own challenges of maintenance and renewal but has the advantage of evolution over time, as a result of acquired knowledge of the site, much experimentation, failures and successes. There was a shared dislike of the emphasis of current landscape design on hard landscape which seems to ignore or minimise the value and interest of plants.

As we left we noticed the many everlastings self-seeding in the nature strip, waiting to be transplanted to new homes - a nice symbol of renewal in a mature garden.

Sydney's relentless spell of fine weather did not break for our Group's revisit of two coastal gardens we had looked at six or so years ago. Our first stop, a pilgrimage really, was at the shrine to the spirit of the Sydney Bush garden; of course I mean the Frenchs Forest garden, created by the late Betty Maloney and now, so fortunately, lovingly cared for and appreciated by Mark and Nayana Iliffe. Previously Mark and Nayana had lived in the inner city. They were looking for more space and were initially attracted by the Maloneys classic, 1960s, functional weatherboard cottage. They didn't have many thoughts on the type of garden they wanted but on seeing the garden around the house, Mark thought "this makes sense". The space felt like a retreat, the city was left behind. Betty's house and garden were lucky to find their new owners - young, sensitive and environmentally aware, they understood clearly the garden's conversation; they have an ongoing dialogue with their house and the garden based on a respect for and understanding of, its previous owner's environmental and design philosophy.

Both admitted to a steep learning curve and mentioned how generous people had been with information and articles which, along with internet research, considerably added to their understanding of their garden's history and *raison d'etre*. They have struggled, along with every other Sydney gardener, to manage the garden in the drought. Betty had a now outlawed sprinkling system for the masses of orchids, so a drip system had to be installed which is not as efficient, especially for a time-poor, working, young family. Dendrobium beetle and the unusually hot weather have been other challenges for these new gardeners to face. They dislike spraying and manually remove the pesky critters. "Betty had lots of stuff under the house but it wasn't named so we didn't know how to use it."

Both agree that a Bush garden "is more work than you'd think". Mark concedes he should tip prune more but he likes the shade, appreciates foliage over flowers and enjoys the garden's exuberance. Nayanna, on the other hand, would like the paths a little more defined and a heavier hand on the secateurs! Perhaps when their little boy is up to exploring the garden she may get her wish! They have found that the orchids respond to chook manure and, during summer, they allow the garden to grow over the orchids and ferns to shield them from the heat.

Mark pointed out the existence of quite a few turpentines in the old plans, sadly none remain - it is interesting to conjecture why. Some tips courtesy of our members were: Jeff Howes advised them to cut the crinum's affected by the caterpillar back to ground level - and next season three will sprout from where one was. Mare McCarthy was interested in the use of *Podocarpus spinulosa* as an effective hedge. The owners found *Ziera granulate* to be a most rewarding plant.

I found the council strip outside the house very interesting - small pebbles had been spread over the sandstone soil creating a veritable seedling nurse - hoveas, popping up everywhere - the use of pebbles as a mulch is a great idea if you wish to encourage self seeding over a large area - I find at home many plants seed in our pebble drains.

Ros Andrew's garden, 'Corymbia'

Jo Hambrett NSW

It was a joy to stand under the silver/green deodar listening to Ros speak so knowledgeably and entertainingly about her gardening experiences and adventures at 'Corymbia'. She has kept the exotics in the top half of the garden - she saw her job as rationalizing the existing plantings to put in the lines and bones of the garden, rather than bits and pieces which it had been previously. Our group had last visited this garden 6 or so years ago when Ros was just

beginning her native planting adventure on land on the bottom half of the sloping block, reclaimed from the grip of lantana and banana trees. The garden does not look as if there is a drought - mulch, mulch, mulch says Ros - she will only use eucalypt mulch.

She had three garden design challenges for us and I must say I thought we rose to the challenge magnificently.

1. A shady, dry corner at the bottom of a broad walkway flanked by large, beautifully clipped, rotund balls of westringia - a corner that cannot avoid examination so what to put there? Maree McArthy says look what's doing well there - *Casuarina torulosa* and gahnia so plant more and add *Leperonia articulate* to contrast with the gahnia.
2. The death of a tree had exposed the beautifully contorted shape of a *Banksia oblongifolia*, a species so slow growing that Maree felt it could be easily 100 years old. Ros loves this banksia and visibly blanched when Maree suggested cutting it back to the lignotuber! "I hear what you are saying but I don't think I can do it!" responded Ros. (Of course I haven't seen the tree but, from the description, I'm all for Ros's response! DS) Nearby a huge grafted *Grevillea caleyi* [indigenous to the area, but occurs naturally as a small plant] sprawls across its rock, felty pink tip ends reflecting the afternoon sunshine.
3. An iron sculpture from bits and pieces found on the Ghan's route, a silver stump and logs and a clump of agave. Solution - accent silver-grey foliage, remove parsonia vine - too vigorous - add flannel flowers - don't mulch them. Add *Grevillea thelemanniana* [grafted prostrate] and prostrate *Banksia integrifolia*. Oh, and the agave clump has to go - Michelle Pymble and I thought they may be sufficiently odd to warrant saving but Maree was having none of that!!

Ros summed up the main problem now with her native garden area - essentially a few things are reaching their use by date - stuff needs to be removed and areas replanted. The difficulty now is that, unlike 6 years ago, when she was planting into prepared mounds of soil [following weed infestation removal], now she is replanting into root filled soil and growth rate is not nearly as spectacular. She finds this situation far more challenging. I found this very enlightening - I had always wondered why my growth rate was so slow, it's nice to think that real gardeners are similarly challenged.

Ros has become very interested in Biodynamics in the garden, a philosophy espoused by Rudolf Steiner in the 1930s. It is a complicated philosophy but a lot of it has to do with the relationship of the moon with plants and movement of moisture through the soil. She plants by a waxing moon and purchases a manure concentrate of cow's horns buried in the soil over winter, adds them to water, dissolves the mixture by vortexural stirring [anti clockwise followed by clockwise] for an hour. After 3pm in the lead-up to the full moon she flicks the mixture, 17L, in a bucket, over the garden.

Some great discussion followed, exercising the minds of those of a more scientific bent. However, standing in Ros' very beautiful, impossibly lush garden I must admit to feeling an overwhelming compulsion to order some buried, over-wintered cows' horns!

The Australian Garden at Cranbourne

Diana Snape Vic

It is difficult to know where to start when commenting on the 'Australian Garden' - it is such a huge project. Created on the site of an old sand quarry and surrounded by natural bushland, the newly completed first stage covers 11 hectares out of a final total of 21 ha. There is the overarching, complex design and then all its separate component

pairs, each worth a description in its own right. So far 100,000 plants (including 2,000 trees), representing 1,000 species and varieties, have been planted. Careful research identified the most suitable organic matter to be added to help the sand retain nutrients. Much of the planting is highly experimental, using many plants that have been Mailed but have not been in cultivation before. It will be fascinating to see how they prosper. In contrast, all plants used in the five quarter-acre display gardens (designed by separate designers) must be currently available from nurseries. The aim here is to encourage and enable members of the public to plant these in their own gardens.

I'd just like to comment here on the central theme, which I think is very well chosen - the role of water in the Australian landscape. This is represented in the Garden in a highly stylized way. To the left of the attractive visitors' centre is a vast area of red sand (obtained from just down the road!), with curved sand ridges ('lunettes') along one side and sparsely placed, circular gardens of blue-grey salt-bush. Beside this is the dry river bed leading to a sculpture (flat on the ground) representing a series of ephemeral lakes (or wavy-edged salt pans). This is in front of the visitors' centre. Then to the right, a group of low, bubbling fountains in a shallow pool spring to life erratically. They are designed to produce an intermittent flow of water down the 'rockpool waterway', where slightly raised, sawn stone squares of three different heights create a wonderful rippling effect in the water. Alongside this on the left is the massive 90-metre 'Escarpment Wall' sculpture in red rusted steel. On the right are the five display gardens. Finally (in this stage) the water falls into a body of water called The Waterhole.

A serpentine path climbs up from this water level to the arid garden, with curved, blobby (Leunig-style) beds and fascinating plants. A pathway completes the circuit through five successive gardens, each featuring one type of eucalypt (stringybark, bloodwood, etc), past the dry river bed on the left. The design of the whole Garden is based on landscape rather than botanical classification and I think is the richer for this.

Finally, watering in the Garden depends on a complex, computer-controlled irrigation system. In the arid garden, yet another role of water presented itself, when an impervious clay layer hidden under the sand caused initial drainage problems. Extensive drainage had to be introduced to this area.

Lots in this Garden for members to write about later with respect to both design and plants!

SNIPPETS

"I really like to be in a situation where I can meander between chance and control. It's an interesting place to be."
Vera Moller, Artist, 2006

"Style is a matter of taste, design a matter of principles." Thomas Church, *"Gardens Are for People"*, 1955

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

MEETINGS

NORTH EAST VIC BRANCH

For information ring **Barbara Buchanan**

Next meeting: Sat Aug 12, not Aug 5 as previously advised.

Location: Paul and Barbara Kennedy's,

Time: 10.30 for 11am.

Sunday November 29: The final meeting for the year is to be combined with APS Wangaratta, a visit to Glen Wilson's garden in Benalla on

Report on last meeting

Barbara Buchanan

Discussion began with the aims of GDSG again, as this had been raised in the main NL. I don't think there was any disagreement with the drift of the original aims. We see two areas of activity for our group, trying to improve our own gardens and our knowledge of design principles and offering help to newcomers whose previous gardening experience, if any, is likely to have been with exotic plants.

With regard to the latter it is important to stress that we are largely a bunch of amateurs with no formal qualifications. I don't think we clash with professional designers because I don't think many of the people we have worked with would consider a professional, but we should always stress the value of getting expert advice. Also we are often invited in after basic decisions have already been taken and what is really wanted is a planting list. What we can do, and I think do well, is throw around a lot of suggestions for the gardener to accept or reject. Even a lot of repetition of an idea is helpful, because it indicates that probably that idea will work. Exercising our brains to come up with solutions for problems is all aiding our own expertise, so everyone should have a crack at every job. Having said that I find some situations really stir the grey matter while with others I hit a brick wall. These are probably the times I should work hardest.

For the first part of the aims we have two activities, our little thought problems, such as "Seasons" for this meeting and simply seeing as many gardens as possible, Australian and exotic and preferably together so that we can comment on points of interest.

Helen was the only one with a plan for the Davenports, but then they had done a lot of sound thinking themselves. I raised the clumps of grass waving in the wind that Paul Kennedy would like and the best means of achieving and maintaining them, but the discussion got a bit side-tracked onto grasslands generally, I don't think we offered concrete advice. Jan Hall was the only one with prepared thoughts on seasons, a series of photos suggesting ways to maintain year round interest.

The topic for next meeting is 'Inside looking Out, plan a scene from one of your windows. Older - no, longer term - members will recall we did this some years ago, but there are more than one window in a house. Will we be any better at it now? Bring along your ideas for the Miles too.

MELBOURNE BRANCH

For information ring **Chris Larkin**

Next meeting: Sunday Sept 10

Location: the home of Jan (Bev Fox's sister) and John Carnell

Time: meet at 2pm

Chris Larkin

This garden was originally designed by Roger Stone. After this visit we will go to Bev Fox's home (close by) at 6 Camelia Crescent, The Basin for afternoon tea. During afternoon tea please be prepared to discuss what 6 plants you would include in a palette of plants for a very small garden. Also I will be looking for ideas from members for future discussions at meetings - topics that will be of interest and value to the group as well as newsletter readers bearing in mind we have flagged the possibility of a publication at some time in the future on small gardens.

Last newsletter I wrote about designing views from the windows of a building - for instance your home. I do hope some members will have responded in this newsletter. In the meanwhile as I work outside redesigning parts of

the garden, it strikes me that I'm often trying to create both the window and the scene beyond. That is, framing the view rather than blocking it and making sure there is something of interest in the view line - a vista.

Last meeting for 2006: November 26 (proposed) A Christmas lunchtime meeting at the home of Margaret James,
More details in the next newsletter.

SYDNEY BRANCH

RSVP: Jo Hambrett

Next meeting: October 8

Location: Jenny and Mai Johnson's 'Boongala' gardens at Kenthurst (with a new rainforest, grevilleas, and various other species). There is a gold coin donation.

Time: We can meet at the Gardens at 11 am. and picnic in the grounds.

The Johnsons owned Annangrove Grevilleas Nursery until recently and have been huge supporters of APS. They have been working on the gardens for years and have now retired from the nursery and concentrating on developing them to further educate the public on gardening with native plants.

Sprinkled throughout the garden are old farming implements the couple have collected over the years from fauns and orchards long since gone in the Hills District area. They often have plants for sale as well. I can assure members it will be a most informative as well as an entirely pleasurable visit.

Report on Sydney meeting and garden visits May 28 Please see articles pages 16 & 17

CANBERRA BRANCH

For information contact **Shirley Pipitone**

Next meeting: Thursday August 17

Location: Garden of David Mackenzie,

Time: 9.30am - 12pm

Future meetings:

Sun Sept 17 Ian Anderson's Burra property Contact Shirley for details. 10am - 2pm BYO lunch

Thurs Oct 19 tba 9.30am - 12pm

Sun Nov 19 Vaidehi & Brenden Sargeant's garden - tbc

Sun Jan 21, 07 Pamela Finger's garden,

Secrets and surprises

Shirley Pipitone

In Barbara Daly's garden we found secrets and surprises. A tiny lawn hidden in the midst of large old shrubs in her front garden, a huge old banksia arching over the entrance to her house, bits of post-and-rail fence tucked into the back garden and, most of all, a rainforest lurking in a far corner. Barbara described how the garden was just a bare block 30 plus years ago when she moved in, yet some of our members still had difficulty realising the power we have to create something so totally alien to its surroundings yet make it look as though it really belongs there. A rainforest in Canberra? With Blueberry Ash, orchids, *Rhododendron lochae*, a pond, all manner of other rainforestry plants and that feel of rainforest underfoot.

Barbara's rainforest grew like topsy and she is still an inveterate collector, but the transformation she has wrought is quite incredible. I think we all went away feeling anything is possible.

In the next newsletter I will write about the gardens we visited in June and July.

INCOME

Book Sales	\$ 429.00
Royalties on Book	\$ 2853.00
Bank Interest - Society cheque account	\$ 17.09
Bank Interest - Term Deposit	\$ 1065.00
Unsolicited Donations	\$ 46.00
2005/06 Subscriptions received	\$1361.00
2006/07 Subscriptions received	\$ 935.00
2007/08 Subscriptions received	\$ 79.00
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$ 6785.09</u>

EXPENDITURE**Newsletter expenses:**

Printing	\$ 1357.52	
Envelopes & postage	\$ 558.00	\$ 1915.52
Sub to Friends of RBG Cranbourne		\$ 25.00
Gifts to meeting hosts		\$ 62.95
<u>Total</u>		<u>\$ 2003.47</u>

Operating surplus for year \$ 4781.62

Balance sheet as at 30 June 2006

<u>Balance 30 June 2005</u>	\$ 24,709.33
<u>Plus operating surplus for year</u>	\$ 4,781.62
Balance 30 June 2006	<u>\$ 29,490.95</u>

Represented by

<u>Westpac term deposit</u>	121,723.59
Westpac Society Cheque account	<u>\$ 7,667.36</u>
	<u>\$ 29,490.95</u>

Note:

Our Subscriptions and Newsletter expenses are finely balanced, most of the operating surplus is derived from our book in the form of royalties, sales and interest from the term deposit based on previous royalties.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Bryan Loft

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.

Meredith Farley

Raye S. Johnston

Sue McColl

Leslie & Graham McKenzie

06/07 Subscriptions Received

Please check this list to see that your subscription for 2006/07 has reached Bryan Loft either by payment for two years during 2005/06 or for one or two years recently. The names are given in alphabetical order of surname.

Ingrid Adler, Ian Anderson, Sally Arnold, Joan Barrett, Michael Bates, Sue Bendel, Carol Bentley, Dora Berenyi, Judy Boldiston, Elizabeth Brett, Leeanne Brockway, Barbara Buchanan, Ray Brown, Jane Calder, Shirley Cam, Dianne Clark, June Copeland, Ian & Tamara Cox, Ruth Crosson, Christine Cullen, Heather Daly, Glenda & Bernie Datson, Jennifer Davidson, Dominic Delia Libera, Kay Dempsey, Arthur Dench, Betty Denton, Bettina Digby, Shane Doherty, Glenys Eskdale, Wendy & David Evans, Meredith Farley, Jennifer Farrer, Ted & Jenny Finney, Linda Floyd, Beverley Fox, Christine & Angelo Gaiardo, Peter & Wilma Garnham, Paul Godwin, Jan Gough-Watson, Caroline Gunter, Cheree Hall, Jo Hambrett, Romaine Harmor, Beverley Hanson, Suellen & Brian Harris, Monika Herrmann, Carol Hogg, John Hoile, Annette & John Houseman, Jeffrey Howes, Charles Hrubos, Margaret James, Fiona Johnson, Raye Johnson, Julie Jones, Allan & Helen Joyce, Bev Kapemick, Colleen Keena, Paul & Barbara Kennedy, Joan Knight, Faleiry Koczkar, Nadia Lalak, Chris Larkin, Mollie Lau, Margaret Lee, Diana Leggatt, Bryan Loft, Geoffrey & Ann Long, Maree McCarthy, Thea McCarthy, Sue McColl, Leslie & Graham McKenzie, Doug & Margaret McIver, Neil & Wendy Marriott, Hillary Merritt, Ann & Ray Mills, Brenda & Tony Moore, Gillian Morris, Helen Morrow, Diedre Morton, Alex Moutsatsos, Leigh Murray, Leeanne Neil, Anne Neild, Barry Nilsson, Neil Palframan, Georgina & Jon Persse, Thelma & Don Peterson, Shirley Pipitone, Michelle Pymble, Lynette & Peter Reilly, Pam Renouf, Martin Rigg, Tony & Joy Roberts, Philip & Julia Rose, Gordon Rowland, Paula Rumble, Karen & Geoff Russell, Gwen Sanders, Kris Schaffer, Janet Schapper, Therese Scales, Peter Shannon, Shiela Simpson-Lee, Anne & Graham Smith, Ross Smyth-Kirk, Diana & Brian Snape, Joy Stacey, Carmel Statham, Irene Stocks, Hazel Sullivan, Ross & Elaine Sullivan, Stephen Thomas, Gloria Tomlinson, Philip & Margaret Tow, Jennifer Towell, Leigh Tuck, Helen Van Reit, Rosemary Verbeeten, Christine Wadey, Rosalind Walcott, Jillian Walker, Jeff Wallace, Mary Ward, Jim & Pat Watson, Merele Webb, Maureen & Norman Webb, Tim Wilson, Debbie & Rudy Youssef, Nicky Zarrer, Alike Zouliou.

APS groups who have subscribed are: Armidale & District, Maroondah, Blue Mountains, NSW Region, SA Region, Canberra Region, Keilor Plains, Warnambool & District.

2007/08 Subscriptions received:

Joan Barrett, Carol Bentley, Linda Floyd, Caroline Gunter, Bev Kapernick, Margaret Lee, Geoffrey & Ann Long, Ann & Ray Mills, Anne Neild, Karen & Geoff Russell, Peter Shannon, Rosemary Verbeeten, Maureen & Norman Webb.

If you know of any errors in these listings, please let Bryan Loft know the details.

Thank you to those members who have also given donations to the GDSG.

Membership renewal *If you haven't yet renewed for 06/07, please wait no longer - do it now!*

usual subscription \$10; email \$6; concession \$5; overseas \$20.

We really appreciate it when members who do not wish to renew let us know.

Thank you very much to all contributors to this NL. The suggested deadline for the next one, especially for long articles, is the end of September.

I hope you enjoy a beautiful spring - it's so exciting to see the buds colouring up now, in the middle of winter. To those like us who are still waiting for decent rain, good luck. (To any who've had too much, I hope it did no harm.) Until November, happy designing and gardening.

Diana Diana