



GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP

ISSN 1039 – 9062
ABN 82 428 110 028
Newsletter
February 2010

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Dear Members,

Long time members, Win and Jim Main's beautiful garden Treetops (see NL 53 Feb 06) in Cootamundra has been in the print news lately - both in The Land and local papers. Win held an open garden and attracted over 200 visitors, all no doubt, very keen to know how not only she grows such a lovely garden in often very testing conditions but one that is also habitat, waterwise and fire smart! Hopefully Treetops will become a regular Open Garden at Cootamundra so its practical beauty can be shared and emulated

Whilst in Melbourne recently I took the opportunity to meet with Diana. We discussed the book at length. The ideas so far are - to gather photos of small spaces (whether within large, medium or small gardens it matters not) which illustrate an interesting design principle and/or paint a beautiful picture. As well, photographing the seasonal changes of relevant plants within such spaces. These photos will be used to illustrate ideas for using Australian plants in small gardens. The quality of the photography is paramount and we literally need 100s of photos - ideas and suggestions welcome, on text and photos. We would love to hear especially from great photographers who have time to search out interesting gardens! And of course information on interesting and suitable gardens from the great to the quirky will be most welcome.

Whilst on photos, Diana and I also discussed what to do when a wonderful Australian plant garden is sold - there should be a suppository for any photos, plans and writings that the gardener has accumulated over the years, thus ensuring the garden is not lost to posterity for ever if, as is almost eventually inevitable, subsequent new owners are not sympathetic or developers swoop. Ideas welcome on this important topic.

Still on photos - can members send their photos to Brian Walters - a man whose talents equal his addresses! em: brianwal@westnet.com.au web: <http://asgap.org.au> Blog: [http://www.blognow.com.au/gumnuts/Australian plants online: <http://asgap.org.au/apol.html>](http://www.blognow.com.au/gumnuts/Australian%20plants%20online%20http://asgap.org.au/apol.html). with the article and NL they pertain to and with appropriate captions and he will put them up on our photo site: <http://asgap.org.au/design/picasa.html>

Paul Kennedy, the President of ANPS Aust., has kindly written offering SGs more support. I have suggested to him that we need support in two areas - Treasury and the Web. It seems to me these are two areas where single individuals are worked pretty hard, especially in the bigger SGs. I would dearly love to see ANPS Aust have a website as efficient as Bird Australia's, whereby members can join or rejoin online with ease. In a perfect world I can see all the State societies and Study Groups on the *same* website (wow indeed!!). It would increase the Society's membership by 20% at least. I think our web address needs changing as well - it's far too complex. Hopefully he isn't sorry he asked!

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MEMBERSHIP & TREASURER'S REPORT

CORRESPONDENCE

Nature gardening in Australia is so cool! I've been telling people that native plants attract other gorgeous things besides beautiful birds - don't forget the beetles!

People have been asking how 'my' lizards are going... well, (WOW), yesterday I saw for the first time what was making the shallow crescent-shaped holes in my rhyolite pathway - it was Lady J! I looked out the kitchen window and was first upset because I thought I saw a dead Dragon on the ground - then I realised it was Lady J with her head down the hole and, whilst just scraping out a few grains of gravel at a time, she was slowly digging the hole. I knew they dig holes to lay eggs so I watched - but she stopped after a few minutes, ran down the path to the forest at the back, and then came back again a few minutes later - but no sign of laying.... Maybe they take a while to get their holes ready? I'll keep you posted.

I was talking to my neighbour a couple of days ago - she said she had been sad that 'Lizzy-lizard' - the one with the chip out of the tail had disappeared. She was really happy when I told her I'd seen her - that I had named her 'Lady J', and she had been residing in the bank between my other neighbour and I. She had almost grown back the chip in the tail - making identification more difficult.

Meantime, I have 2 baby dragons (only about 2months old now) playing around the pond in the garden. One had ventured up to the front gate yesterday! Quite a journey up the steps for a little tyker!

On another note: Yesterday, I was working in a garden at Cardiff and noticed an unusual lizard - the owner of the garden called it a young Blue-Tongue Lizard. But I'm pretty sure it is actually a Pink-Tongued Lizard.. Very exciting!! These are longer and thinner and have a pink tongue. It disappeared before we could see. They love eating snails and slugs too, but can climb a little so they also eat some faster-moving insects. We are watching more closely now. The garden-owner is hoping for some Dragons though as she has Stink Bugs on the Citrus - but no sign yet..

Maree McCarthy NSW

Re Newsletter subscriber only membership of the GDSG

You may remember a poll on this subject was carried out a few NLs ago – the overwhelming opinion among the members who replied was that since all Study Groups and regional A P Societies are under the umbrella of ANPS Aust., it should not be an option to be a NL only subscriber, that is to have no affiliation with the ANP Societies, national or state.

We do have a few NL only subscribers (16) left over from the days when it was possible to do so and we do not intend enforcing the above decision retrospectively, but rather the NL only subscribers category will not be an option after this financial year (09-10).

Jo Hambrett

I am pleased you have decided to do the right thing with Study Group members belonging to ANPS groups. ANPSA By-Law III(1) states that "A Study Group shall consist of individual members of Member Societies, Member Societies, local groups and branches."

ANPSA provides some financial and other assistance to Study Groups and it is therefore reasonable to limit the benefits of study group membership to members of ANPSA member

societies. Insurance coverage for activities is the other main reason for the By-Law. We should most certainly not allow NL only members to attend Study Group activities and I know this has happened in the past, including the recent past. The risk of being sued personally for accident/injuries is way too great.

Shirley Pipitone ACT

Canberra Region GDSG Convenor and also ANPSA Public Officer

I really enjoyed going to the conference in Geelong, and sat in on my first GDSG meeting there. It was great. Obviously it is hard to get to the meetings, being in Tassie, but I love the newsletters; and have put into practice one idea in particular which was one that struck me when I first started getting the newsletters. I should write about it for a forthcoming newsletter shouldn't I?

Sharon Percy Tas.

I am currently researching the topic of *'Relandscaping Heritage Gardens in Australia'* for my MA in Landscape Architecture and believe that the Australian bush garden should be a standard for all Australian gardens - and with climate change - there will be opportunities to correct other vernacular choices which don't work in Australia.

If you happen to know any heritage garden that is being relandscaped (i.e. as Neil Marriott is currently working his magic on the Royal Mail Hotel in Dunkeld), I would love to know.

At present this is one of my better examples; others include Taronga Zoo and Canberra street tree plantings - so the range is quite diverse.

Olga Blacha Publicity Officer **NSW APS**

With email newsletters now available it would be great to have colour photos (and) a members section of the website (in order to) to have discussions/easy access to the newsletters - a link rather than the email would need to be sent. It is a great Newsletter - well done.

Pam Finger ACT

We have just experienced our first ABC Open Garden. Our garden has been open for a local charity in the past but not the pressure that comes with the ABC AOGS. I've yet to write some reflections on the experience - generally positive, but exhausting! We'll do it again in a few years time.

Helen van Riet Vic.

I love the newsletter. I would also like to see some photos in colour on the net - no need for paper printing. I love to read of people's innovative ideas; plants for dry areas and people's methods of overcoming difficulties eg: holes left by drought deaths becoming infested with pasture grass and weeds the following wet season.

Judith Baghurst S.A.

I would love to come to a meeting but they are always so far away; any chance of a more central Melbourne location or one on the northern side of town?
It would be good if we could pay electronically.

Dora Berenyi Vic.

I enjoy the newsletter and appreciate the work that is involved. I like to have a hard copy as it is portable and always to hand. I wonder if, in the interests of reducing paper use whether the lay out could be compressed to some extent while maintaining readability?

Jennifer Davidson Vic.

I have been a member of APS Tas North for about 5 years. I borrowed GDSG Newsletters from a fellow member and friend. Once I started reading them I realized what a valuable resource of information they were. I joined the GDSG in Oct '08. I have already improvised an idea from Newsletter No. 32. - Allocassuarinas underplanted with small acacias and ground covers of scaevola and native primrose.

I live in a dry sclerophyll area of Northern Tasmania, and am developing about an acre of native garden. The front of the garden was previously established with mainly exotics, but I am transforming the back garden and the front as ideas and gaps appear. I have *Allocassuarina litoralis* on my property and they are coming up naturally in a corner of the garden, so I have underplanted with 2 *Acacia mucronata*, 2 *Acacia suaveolens* & 2 *A. cognata* "Green Mist" and an *A. crispula*, with mauve scaevola and yellow *Goodenia ovata* underneath. I can't wait for these plants to become established and see how the colours and textures go together. I particularly like yellow in the garden and love it with mauve and white. Also coming up naturally in this area of the garden are lovely small blue stars, possibly *Chamaescilla corymbosa*; *Thysanotus patersonii*, (the twining fringe lily); *Arthropodium strictum* (the chocolate lily); *Dianella tasmanica*, (Tasman flaxlily); *Goodenia lanata* (the native primrose); *Boronia nana*, lots of Drosera, Burchardia and some Diuris which are all flowering now as I write, in early November. *Comesperma voluble* (the blue love creeper) and lots of *Viola hederacea* and *Pimelea humilis* are also flowering. It is quite a special corner in the garden.

Sharon Percy Tas.

At our last meeting (N.E. Vic) we discussed seeking involvement with landscaping around building developments as a way of showing what Australian plants can do. Glenda has since emailed me a copy of a design competition (prize \$2000) for a landscape plan at Willow Park in Wodonga. Some info can be found at Friends of Willow Park org.au.

I have spoken to several members about giving it a go and consequently sent off an expression of interest. The details are expected mid Jan. and the plan is due at the end of April.

Barbara Buchanan Vic.

We think the newsletter is excellent as it is. We do not think photographs, either black and white or colour would be a useful addition. Let's stay with the good old fashioned written word. Thanks especially to Jo for keeping the group together and the wonderful quality of the Newsletter. We both wish we had more time to contribute to it but we always enjoy the read. Our other environmental activities here in Lane Cove seem to take up so much of our limited time, but we will try to get to the next Sydney group activity.

Ron and Barbara Gornall NSW

DESIGN

Informal gardens - natural by design

Sometimes when I visit a nursery I have a particular plant in mind, intended for a particular spot in the garden. Occasionally I yield to temptation and buy a new plant (nowadays a small one), for which I must then find a home. My garden is informal, so either method of plant selection can work for me. Most of us admire formal gardens, from the grand to the simple. With their shapely plants, geometry of straight lines and circles, and over-riding symmetry, they have a classical beauty that is usually very photogenic. Their design is obvious, as is the evidence of control over nature. If necessary, plants are pruned to maintain the size and shape required. However there's a corollary. Once the design has been chosen and put into effect, it could remain more or less unchanging, with the same pattern and the same plants. Apart from pruning and weeding, what does a poor gardener do? Is there no excuse for

visiting a nursery?

Formal gardens are often designed by landscape architects or professional designers, while we gardeners generally create informal gardens. So people may assume that lovely informal gardens are not designed - they just happen. This is particularly true for naturalistic gardens, which aim to **look** natural. If the design succeeds, the garden is assumed to **be** natural. I think it's really more of a challenge to design a beautiful informal garden than a formal one, as there are no set rules and "beauty is in the eye of the beholder".

Still there **are** many informal gardens we recognize as beautiful. Are there any guidelines? Landscape designer Gordon Ford stressed the importance of a balance between mass and void (or vegetation and space) and I think 'balance' is a key factor. It does not have to mean symmetry, for asymmetry can be appealing too. A tree on one side of a path can 'balance' a group of several shrubs on the other. The old golden mean, roughly two-thirds, often produces a pleasing ratio. For example, two-thirds of an area might be lawn and the rest garden, or vice versa. Much of our garden is divided approximately into thirds, with beds (and spaces) running north-south for maximum sun penetration.

Some proportions look right, pleasing to the eye. It might be the height of a tree against a house, or a tufted grass against a rock. It might depend on the grouping of several shrubs, some large, some small, with their comparative heights and separation. More complex still would be the arrangement of a tree with different shrubs and grasses.

A formal garden bed might feature one straight row of shrubs of a single plant species. In an informal garden, the outline of a pleasantly curved bed can be set out using a hose. Here, there may not even be definite rows and the plants used can vary. A three-dimensional grouping might be complex, having some taller shrubs behind, then intermediate, with groundcovers mainly in the foreground. Repetition of particular species, or of plant forms, or foliage or flower colours, can help link the groupings together.

In one section of our side gardens, tall melaleucas form the back row and, in another, mixed callistemons. In front of them are medium-sized shrubs, here some Mint-bushes (prostantheras) and thomasias, there correas and philothecas. Lower plants, such as Guinea-flowers (hibbertias) or daisies and tufted lomandras or strap-leaved dianellas, form irregular borders. With creepers and trees nearby, such groupings help attract a diversity of insects and birds to even a small garden. In an informal garden, how much we control our plants by pruning is largely a matter of taste. Plants inevitably grow and their form may change. They might then block an attractive vista (bad!), or improve one by framing it (good!). The growth of plants of the same species can be variable, depending on soils and

microclimates. A flexible design can evolve as we respond to changes in the expected outcomes. A 'difficult' plant may surprise us by flowering magnificently, another 'reliable' plant disappoint us by dieing ahead of its time.

So designing an informal garden is an ongoing process, never really finished. The compensation is that we can occasionally introduce a special new plant we have seen in the nursery, with a clear conscience!

Recommended for design

Shrubs: Large - Bottlebrushes (callistemons)

Medium - Chef's Cap Correa (*C. baeuerlenii*)

Small - Fringed Heath-myrtle (*Micromyrtus ciliata*)

Groundcover - Creeping Myoporum (*M. parvifolium*)

Tufted - Mat-rush (*Lomandra confertifolia* 'Little Con')

Creeper - Gum Vine (*Aphanopetalum resinosum*)

Diana Snape Vic.

A Discussion on The Bush Garden....

In our discussion (NE Victoria GDSG Branch) we found nostalgia,(see NL 67, A conversation with Barbara Buchanan) as we understand the word, to be quite inappropriate to the origin of Bush Gardens. It fits more with the persistence of the suburban gardens we grew up with, beds and lawns, populated by exotic plants; or with the total clearing of very steep hills around Yea, said to remind early Scottish settlers of the bare hills of home. It is a feature of Australia that a high proportion of our population has been born overseas (currently about a third) so their nostalgic thoughts would not turn to the bush.

With diversions, such as a lament that general nurseries still do not stock the Eucalypts suitable for the suburbs and that our unique and most diverse flora is still largely untamed horticulturally, we suddenly realised we had no definition of a Bush Garden. None of us thought of our gardens as such. It was even pointed out that Gordon Ford's gardens were essentially Bush but included exotic plants, especially as the range of Australian plants available was limited when he was working.

The best we could do is come up with a few attributes one expects in a Bush Garden. These include a lack of formal structure and hard surfaces, curving paths, no lawn, leaf litter left to accumulate on the ground and of course largely Australian plants. One interesting slant was the concept that what set a Bush Garden apart from other gardens with native plants was that it contains largely or wholly indigenous plants.

Most of our gardens, which we don't think of as Bush Gardens, would in fact fit these criteria. All except one of us started out with the usual garden bed and lawn type structure with increasing use of Australian plants as they became more available and with moving to new gardens enabling the removal of lawns.

The day after the meeting I was browsing through Gardens of Inspiration a BBC – DK book edited by Erica Hunningher and in the chapter by Stephen Lacy about the sources of inspiration for his garden found a description of Portmeirion in Wales which seems remarkably relevant, part of which follows.

This is what everyone imagines a Himalayan forest to be like, an exotic wilderness full of floral ambush. Weaving through the leaf litter and ducking under branches, you get little idea what you are going to meet next in the shadows:.....And here and there you step out of Asia into a sunlit glade of yellow acacias, or a little swamp of gunnera. Over the past 20 years Philip Brown has been developing the naturalistic theme in wonderful ways, inspired by his visit to Yunnan. So now you meet rhododendrons like 'Saffron Queen' clinging for dear life to steep rock faces among mossy boulders, and dells of huge leaved R. sinogrande hybrids wedged between knolls colonized by ferns and rough woodland grasses. Red berried skimmias are arranged in scattered drifts up bare slopes; weirdly exotic perennials like Fascicularia bicolour sprout from high rock ledges; and ground-cover plants filter at will among native wildflowers. Everything he plants looks as if it has seeded itself just where it wanted to be.

This is a planting style drawn from nature, steeped in local character, and less demanding in maintenance, but still with all the luscious, theatrical qualities of a Sissinghurst or a Powis border. This has to be the way forward for the home gardener, too, don't you think? Everything he plants looks as if it has seeded itself just where it wanted to be.

Allowing for the different plant palettes and the greater use of exotics in Wales the description fits the rationale behind what is developing as my view of a Bush Garden and I see a crucial feature to add to our list - a concern for choosing plants to suit the existing conditions rather than modifying the garden to suit the plants.

This confirms my view that there is nothing completely new under the sun, gardeners have been creating their own paradises for so long that the basic ideas have already been considered, albeit with different terminology and in different contexts. All that is new is the detail, in our case the plants, and we build on the work of our predecessors. One source of Bush Gardens has to be our growing environmental awareness and desire to act responsibly in our own back yards.

For my part I started growing Australian plants because they interested me and from what could have been a now very politically incorrect, jingoistic sentiment, 'they're our plants'. It could also have been a colonial revolt against everything from the Motherland. Almost all our reading matter was UK based, from children's books to gardening ones. For a time I envied

those able to enjoy an English spring, then it struck me that we had our own burst of new life, the autumn break. (This is very marked in Perth, where I grew up, possibly not such a feature in the Eastern capitals.) When this is added to the floral display of spring in the bush, we have a double dose of excitement. In my first gardens I had no concept of design or a style, only the hope of creating separate pictures. I wanted to grow Australian plants in the only way I then knew, beds defined by lawns. Arriving at something like a Bush Garden is the result of continuing horticultural education and development.

There has been a lot written about recreating a bit of bush in the backyard, going to the bush for inspiration, trying to reproduce nature, but this has always seemed misplaced to me. Some small vignettes can be copied maybe, but not the whole scene. We do talk poetically about natural gardens in the bush, but a garden by definition is man made and a Bush Garden a contradiction in terms. Still it is a convenient term to apply to other gardens, remember the group members did not originally apply it to their own.

Barbara Buchanan Vic.

ALL OUR FORMAL GARDENS

(One of the first things I learned in Philosophy was it is important when having any disagreeable discussion to first try to agree on what meaning you are going to give the terms that will pepper your discourse. And here in often lies the heart of the disagreement.)

It is good to be reminded (through the Newsletter) that ALL our gardens are formal and the extent to which any garden is formal is just a matter of degree. The more formal the garden the more likely the hard structure – shape of paths, garden beds and water features – will adhere to some simple geometric pattern of straight lines, squares, rectangles, circles etc. Symmetry is king in these gardens. Curved garden beds occur in parterre gardens but the overall design will generally be repeated like a frieze motif.

The more formal the garden the fewer different plants will be on show and these plants will be repeated and arranged with some mathematical precision. Pruning and topiary can be essential to maintain discipline and order in this kind of garden.

I have often referred to Australian gardens like my own as being 'naturalistic' but they are nothing of the sort. Are they gardenesque? If only I knew more I could answer this question with confidence! Gardens I have been in the habit of referring to as 'naturalistic' have curved paths and flower beds not easily described geometrically; they are usually gardens dominated, in this part of Australia at least, by flowering plants from a range of habitats from different areas of Australia. They in no way resemble any natural area I've ever seen. The only gardens that could more correctly be described as 'naturalistic' are gardens making a greater effort to replicate a natural environment like the Rain-forest Gallery in the Melb

Museum or indigenous gardens restricting themselves to the palate of plants that would grow naturally on that site.

In Urquhart's book my garden was referred to as a 'Stroll Garden' and on reflection this is an appealing description as it suggests the garden invites you to move through it. I like that. I certainly want to move through my garden to experience it from different angles as I walk the paths in different directions. I do have some seats in the garden but I find it difficult to sit when there is so much to see and enjoy by walking around and pausing here and there as I go. I am out there looking in different seasons and at different times of the day getting most enjoyment from the effects of light and the beauty of rain – when it comes.

Chris Larkin Vic.

GARDEN SERENITY

(Everything that follows is predicted on the idea that plants are integral to a garden. In other words I'm not talking about a concrete jungle or a sculpture garden, or a Japanese stone garden etc.)

It was something said on the radio this morning that got me thinking. The person being interviewed on Radio National's Design program, an eco-architect, referred to a statement made by another architect. The statement was something like the main point of (good) architecture is to produce a feeling of serenity. I like this idea; I relate to this idea. Whether you agree with it or not what informs this idea is the notion that architecture has the ability to move us, to work on our emotions. By implication architects design environments that will make us feel . . . something. Garden design can and will also make us feel something. There are lots of questions that need to be answered when developing a garden. One of the overarching questions is 'how do you want to use the garden?' Another arguably more difficult question is 'how do you want the garden to make you feel?'

I am sitting here watching a family of superb blue wrens hop around the garden, drink and bathe in a large terracotta bowl. Their wren-hopping ways interspersed with short flights makes me smile. One of my favourite little birds, a spotted pardalote, has landed on the edge of another bowl. I'm privileged but not entirely lucky unless you count the fact that cats haven't dispatched these beauties yet. I created this garden to provide a haven for birds and other wildlife like frogs and lizards and insects. It makes me feel good to share my space with the natural world because I see that as important.

Wildlife habitat is just one of the things that underpinned my choice of garden design and plant selection. Just as much I wanted a garden that makes me feel relaxed. How to achieve this effect is much, much more complex as for me at least it relies on so many things like:

- Curved pathways and/or foliage creeping out onto pathways to soften hard edges
- Soft foliated plants that weep; growth habit that is decumbent and relaxed

- Areas of dappled shade balanced with open sunny areas for seasonal amenity and light effects
- Plant choices and arrangements that create an increased sense of open space
- Pleasing arrangements of plant foliage to complement and contrast-enough variation to be interesting and enough sameness to soothe
- Sufficient repetition of the same or like plants to produce a feeling of ease rather than something that is overly busy

And this list could go on and on. This is the complexity of garden design.

Chris Larkin Vic.

PLANTS

Sub Tropical Rainforest NSW

Following our visit to the Mackenzie property in November (see write-up, Meetings section) Bruce Mackenzie has submitted the following information for our edification.

As Maree Avendano wrote in the last NL, it is vital information (practical and scientific) that ideally is included each time a plant palette or list is submitted.

“ The plateau top is around 600 metres above sea level, the accessible land immediately below the escarpment cliffs is at 400 metres and our plot is at approx. 200 metres.

Rainfall on the plateau is 1800mm annually reducing fairly evenly down to the coast at around 1000mm. Our plot would be in the 1500mm zone.

The forest type at the house is sub-tropical rainforest and on the slopes immediately under the escarpment, temperate rainforest.

The sub-tropical type includes for example the Cabbage Palm, *Livistona australis*.

The temperate rainforest is home for the Coachwood... *Ceratopetalum apetalum* which on the way to the Longs can be seen flowering profusely on the slopes ahead and above. Like the Christmas Bush, its smaller relative, the creamy flowers will turn at Christmas time to the familiar show of brick-red sepals providing a grand panorama of colour. Coachwood within the forest can display intriguing patterns of lichen growth on its bark.

Temperatures at the house under the canopy are typically in summer 7-8 degrees cooler than at the coast. Winter temperatures are consistently cool.”

In regard to species that might be drawn from the local community some probabilities** as well as known items are:

Cabbage Palm...	<i>Livistona australis</i>
Illawarra Flame Tree...	<i>Brachychiton acerifolius</i>
Lilly Pilly ...	<i>Acmena smithii</i>
Coachwood...	<i>Cerapetalum apetalum**</i>
NSW Christmas Bush...	<i>Cerapetalum gummiferum</i>
Scentless Rosewood...	<i>Synoum glandulosum**</i>
Red Cedar ...	<i>Toona ciliata</i>
Sassafras...	<i>Doryphora sassafras**</i>
Pidgeonberry Ash...	<i>Elaeocarpus kirtonii**</i>
Blueberry Ash...	<i>Elaeocarpus reticulatus</i>
Sandpaper Fig...	<i>Ficus coronata**</i>
Port Jackson Fig...	<i>Ficus rubiginosa</i>
Rough-fruit Pittosporum	<i>Pittosporum revolutum</i>
Sweet Pittosporum	<i>Pittosporum undulatum</i>
Whalebone Tree	<i>Streblus brunonianus**</i>
Bolwarra...	<i>Eupomatia laurina**</i>
Soft Tree Fern...	<i>Dicksonia antarctica</i>
Rough Tree Fern...	<i>Cyathea australis</i>
Bird's-nest Fern:	<i>Asplenium australasicum</i>
Spiny-headed Mat-rush...	<i>Lomandra longifolia</i>
Settlers Flax...	<i>Gymnostachys anceps**</i>
Ivy-leaf Violet	<i>Viola hederacea</i>
Twining Guinea Flower	<i>Hibbertia scandens</i>
Climbing Fishbone Fern...	<i>Arthropteris tenella**</i>
(wrongly referred on site as Kangaroo fern)	
Giant Maidenhair	<i>Adiantum formosum</i>
Prickly Rasp Fern...	<i>Doodia aspera**</i>
Many others of course	

Bruce Mackenzie FOXGROUND NSW

***** Bolwarra, Foxground Plant Species List

Geoff and Anne Long have a *very* comprehensive list of plants growing at their property Bolwarra, just up the road from Bruce and Laraine's property.

Space does not permit publishing of the entire list in the NL however I am very happy to email a copy through to interested members.

MEETINGS

NEXT MELBOURNE MEETING

Sunday February 14 - at Brian and Diana Snape's place 3 Bluff Street, Hawthorn East.
Eitherbring a picnic lunch at 1pm and / or the meeting begins at 2pm.

NORTH EAST VICTORIA MEETINGS

Report of meeting at van Reit's 22/8/09.

The main activity of the meeting was to familiarize members with the garden and help in the weeding, clipping and planting needed in preparation for the Open Gardens weekend in September. It began as a lovely day to be in the garden and we put in a couple of hours outside before lunch. Over post lunch cuppas we thrashed out ideas in the NL 67 based on a conversation with my namesake Barbara Buchanan (see PLANTS section this NL). Then another hour was spent filling vacant spots, overfilling even, to impress the hordes we hope are going to visit in September. Helen had propagated trays of pink everlasting daisies, a sure recipe for colour, and other more permanent plants from her own work and nursery crawls. The weather had turned, it was bleak and gently spotting when we called it a day, a very enjoyable day.

Report of meeting Nov 6th 09.

We met at Jan and Alan Hall's garden in Yarrowonga and were quite amazed at the growth that has occurred. It should not have surprised, given all the preparatory work that has gone on, but it certainly is satisfying to see it rewarded. The better winter rains have helped, the best for quite a few years. However it seems the tap has been turned off already and the heater up a few notches so the Spring colour has faded since I was there a fortnight ago, as indeed it is doing everywhere.

Next meeting

will be mid to late February 2010 in Shepparton details will be notified early in the New Year. It is proposed we look at housing developer's gardens, currently selling and after a period of 5-10 years. Gloria and Kay will suss out what is around. There is some thought we may be able to influence standard gardens supplied by developers. We are also interested in the treatment of the very small blocks that are typical today, and the landscaped reserves that are legally required in new estates.

There was also much discussion on Book 2 and regret that individuals had not answered the questionnaire. (I am sure I did send a group response, for a web page I think). We went

round in circles exploring other means of popularising Australian plants as there was some feeling there are already heaps of books out there. Magazine format and web page had advocates

We have contemplated preparing material for inland gardens as opposed to the coastal fringe. We are aware this limits the readership but feel a lot of advice available is based on kinder conditions than we experience and more specialised information would be well received. Our plan was to accumulate the necessary information and photos over several years and see how best to use it. It could be an addition to the information APS Vic is /has prepared for each district which should be available soon and will be on the web. The web seems to be where the coming generations look for information, but there are still old codgers who like to curl up with a book they can hold in their hands. There are also 2 target readerships, the unconverted general public and those who have decided, maybe are even trying to grow native plants. I think they ideally call for slightly different approaches.

So there you have it, we are keen to produce something on using native plants in an attractive setting in inland gardens. Maybe a section of Book 2?

We could develop the theme of a small booklet Wang group produced with council and water trust help on waterwise gardening. This was reprinted and is on the net. After a few general design rules, steps on making best use of water, etc. 4 different types gardens to meet different family needs were designed as a streetscape by 2 of our members and plant lists supplied.

I think we don't hold copyright, but the girls would be happy to do another version which did not have to be so cramped and reduced. We also want to emphasise plant groupings, picture making with plants.

After all this talk we headed off to the site of a new home for Malcolm and Judy Homes in Mulwala. Judy had site plans and a list of conditions and their needs which we discussed and brought away with us to ponder. The whole house is oriented to a view of river red gum forest which obviously is borrowed landscape but would it benefit from framing with additional gums? We should enjoy hearing solutions for this and the use of space generally at our next meeting.

SYDNEY MEETINGS

LAST MEETING: FOXGROUND-GERRINGONG, NOV. 21.22.2009

A report of our visits to the Mackenzie, Long and Dix gardens will be in the next Newsletter - May 2010.

NEXT MEETING: CENTRAL COAST, SAT. 27TH FEBRUARY 2010

We shall meet at Nola Parry's (see Book Review NL 66) "The Wildflower Place" 453 The Entrance Rd., Erina Heights at 10.30 am. From there we shall visit a garden Nola has designed at Bateau Bay and then move onto Tom and Anne Raines' garden - 71 Brush Rd., Wamberal for lunch (BYO) with a walk and talk to follow. It will be 5 years almost to the day since we last visited the Raines; its always fascinating to follow a garden's progress.

FUTURE MEETING: NEWCASTLE, AUGUST 21/22 2010

Member Maree McCarthy is organising for us to visit some of the many gardens she has designed in the Newcastle area. Details are still to be arranged AND WILL APPEAR IN THE MAY NL, however I thought you would enjoy reading about some of these gardens together with some comments and brief descriptions. Photos of some of them are on our website, they can be accessed via the "February 2010 Images" link at:

<http://asgap.org.au/design/picasa.html>

Maree McCarthy's gardens:

I have about (at least) 10 gardens that people might care to see. All have quite different aspects, challenges and points of beauty.

A Summary:

My own

- Native front - pink colours, habitat, low maintenance.
- - Organic food garden at back - permaculture, rain gardens, me, water dragons and frogs co-habitate, bush foods
- - Rainforest far back (bush food) with reserve behind.
-

Merewether Garden

- Colourful front native garden
 - food gardens,
 - steep back native garden with viewing deck at top (magnificent views to Newcastle and beaches).

Redhead Garden(see pics)

- rear native garden on headland overlooking beach
- all lawn changed into native garden (see pics)

Grave Garden (Sandgate Cemetery) (see pics)

- Client wanted natives on double grave to remember a loved one who loved natives.
- Sandy - very dry conditions (even weeds have trouble growing)
- Clients live in other cities - no maintenance possible really!
- included the rare prickly Grev leptobotris.
- doing quite well after 2yrs with no maintenance at all! (see pics - Sept 07, and Sept 09)

Hunter Valley Private Hospital (Shortland)

- peaceful native gardens established over the last 8yrs since I've been consulting.
- interior courtyards with fruit trees.
- colourful native garden courtyard overlooked by Same-Day Surgery Waiting Room.
- Frog Bog Garden by entrance.
- Indigenous and native 'grey' garden along shady front of building.
- staff very proud of gardens.

Charlestown Garden

- converted old garden with a broken waterfall into native garden with frog pond.
 - re-use of existing rocks.
 - created frog habitat whilst eliminating difficult to maintain weedy and lawn areas.
- mulched and planted steep bank - much better now.
- food plants for native bees (has native bee hives)
- permaculture garden at back.

Litchfield-Belmont Garden

- large 2m wide boardwalk over rainforest (on 2ha).
 - native gardens with 'English Garden'.
 - old broken-down sulky draped with Hardenbergia set in mix of Brachyscome, Scaevola 'Purple Fanfare', Heartsease and 'English Garden'.
- large pond/dam.
- best in Spring.

Medowie Garden

- Sandy soil - small front, and back garden
- dry 'watercourse' made from pebbles.
- Dwarf natives harmonise with colours of new house.

Putting Green Garden

- Colourful native (large front garden)
- Bush food gardens
- Frog Pond
- Putting Green
- next to Reserve

Caves Beach Garden (see pics)

- 'Boat House' theme
- large Tug Boat chain
- Sandy - close to beach
- natives successfully mixed with exotics, whilst coping with severe winds, salt, and

sand.

Gardens and challenges faced/opportunities created (from last 2 gardens):

Putting Green Garden:

The garden with the Putting Green of artificial turf surrounded by a low maintenance garden has some interesting elements. It is perhaps best to view it in late Winter to Spring as there are many Grevilleas and Geraldton Wax in flower then.

Caves Beach Garden:

A garden I just completed 3 months ago has different kinds of challenges -

- soil is pure sand,
- close to beach with strong salt-laden winds,
- brief was to blend existing exotics of Palms and Cycads with natives to make a low maintenance garden that complimented the boat-stylised house,
- needed to widen the driveway.

In this garden I advertised on 'freecycle' and had people dig up and remove the existing turf for free. Then I created garden beds around the fencelines, and casual 'beach-like' pathways with Rhyolite Dust.

I used native cycads to blend the natives and bushland reserve at rear, with the front garden. I found a fantastic old Tug Boat chain and shakel destined for scrap metal and placed it so that looks as if it was washed up on a 'beach' of Rhyolite dust, pebbles, and rocks near the front entrance. Under the Rhyolite dust I put concrete 'drive-on' pavers - effectively widening the drive without having to replace or change the existing paving.

I also found some 100yr old timber beams from an old building and used them decoratively in the garden.

To plant in the sand, I dug very large holes (much bigger than the pots), lined the holes with newspaper, then backfilled with the sand again, and planted and mulched. This prevents water from draining away too quickly whilst the plants are establishing through summer, but breaks down into compost eventually.

There is also a vegetable garden built in a similar way but the (VERY) large hole was backfilled not with sand - but with lots of manure and compost. It is also screened from winds with Tea-tree screen draped with off-cuts of large, black commercial fishing net.

Very low maintenance garden. No need for a lawn mover now!

Many native plants including:

Grevillea 'Candelabra' (what I call a Waratah substitute), *Banksia integrifolia*, *B. marginata*, *Melaleuca viridiflora*, *Hibiscus tiliaceus*, *H. insularis*, *Allocasuarina distyla*, *Westringea 'Zena'*, *Lomandra 'Lime Wave'*, *L. 'Nyalla'*, and such small plants as Patersonia, casually growing in the path of Rhyolite Dust.

MEMBERSHIP & TREASURER'S REPORT

AS AT 18 DEC

Total membership = 131
 30 are email at \$6 = \$180
 99 are paper NL at \$10 = \$990

Total membership fees income for the 09/10 Financial year (FY) = \$1170

Total postage of 100 envelopes four times a year = \$600
 Total printing costs of 125 NLs four times a year = \$1000

Total printing and postage costs = \$1600

Net operating loss on printing and postage (not including \$250 per year audit costs and anything else) = \$430.00

Book Royalties income

June to Dec 2008 = \$880
 Jan to June 2009 = \$600
 Total = \$1480

Lost future subscriptions because members have paid in advance (must stop this practice)

By FYs

10/11 by email = 12 (\$36)
 10/11 by paper = 11 (\$110)
 11/12 by email = 5 (\$30)
 11/12 by paper = 4 (\$40)
 12/13 by email = 2 (\$12)
 12/13 by paper = 1 (\$10)
 13/14 by email = 1 (\$6)
 13/14 by paper = 1 (\$10)

Total of above = \$254

Of course we may still get a few # pay over the next month but this will not change our financial position much.

CASH at Hand

\$6794.57

TERM DEPOSIT

\$32,452.61 + interest on maturity at 13 MARCH 2010

SUMMARY

The royalties are subsidising our membership expenses.

The paying in advance of more than 2 years, is unworkable for the following reasons:

- It will over time erode finances.
- It makes my spreadsheet and my job more complicated.
- MOST importantly -- members tend to forget they have paid so far in the future and pay again OR ask me to clarify their financial position and often disagree with my records! As well, email/postal addresses change and we are not aware of such as an annual membership form is not filled in.

Words from the Treasurer as at 19 January 2010

Members who are financial for the 09/10 Financial Year (FY) since the last Newsletter are:APS (NSW), Chris Walter-Cook, Georgina and Johnathon Persse, Bryan Loft, Ross Smyth-Kirk, Don and Thelma Peterson, Julie Jones, Hazel and John Sullivan #, Christine Cullen, Gloria Thomlinson, Janet Schapper #, Dora Berenyi, Helen Van Reit, Jennifer Davidson, Beverley Fox, L M Webb, Leeanne Neal, Laurie Smith, Ruth Caple #

Shirley Pipitone # # # Carol Guard, Wendy and David Evans, Gordon Rowlands, Margaret Lee, Margaret James, Brenda Moore, Tim Wilson, Colleen Keena #

Pam Yarra, Judith Baghurst, Percy Sharon, Paul and Barbara Kennedy # Therese Scales, Leslie and Neville Page, Maureen Mallard, Glenda and Bernard Datson, Janina Pezzarini, Doug and Margaret McIver, Pamela Finger # # # # Ron and Barbara Gornall Els Wynen # # # #

If you see # after your name you are financial for the FY 09/10 and 10/11

If you see # # after your name you are financial for the FY 09/10 and 10/11 and 11/12.

If you see # # # after your name you are financial for FY 09/10 and 10/11 and 11/12 and 12/13.

If you see # # # # after your name you are financial for FY 09/10 and 10/11 and 11/12 and 12/13 and 13/14 (hope your memory is good if you are in this group?).

Also a warm welcome to the following new members: Glenda and Bernard Datson, Ruth Caple, Leslie and Neville Page

Membership payment changes: Whilst it is extremely pleasing that members have such faith and interest in the Study Group's longevity, Jo and I have decided that members should only pay for two financial years at once. Please see above for our reasons in making this decision, and we hope it doesn't inconvenience members.

Jeff Howes.

