



GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP

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71

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Dear Members,

On matters financial first - could members please check the list of names in the Treasurer's report? It appears there are still quite a few renewals yet to come. Please note, the NEW subs, which have been increased. Royalties from our book, *The Australian Garden* have been subsidising members' fees for some time; in the short term this was not problematical, however, long term, the money can be put to much better uses.

This year, we have had the expense of Indexing all the Newsletters; a worthy achievement in itself and one which will serve members and non members alike for years to come. See non member Matt Mason's letter in Correspondence to read about the (much appreciated) benefits of our online indexed newsletters. Members should feel proud that their subs are working in various ways to spread the word on designing gardens with Australian plants. As well, we have budgeted to support three other worthwhile projects. An expenditure of \$5000 will go towards reprinting *The Australian Garden*. Barbara Buchanan (see page 7 this NL.) will steer the production of an elegantly simple and relatively inexpensive Garden Design booklet with line drawings only, no photos. It is be aimed at APS members or similarly informed people who are looking for a "how to" guide from the experts; those who already know and love Australian plants and don't need glossy pics to be convinced or motivated. The glossy, coffee table book on small and courtyard gardens is still on the table and we should aim to have a committee beginning to work on it from next year with publication hopefully 2013/14.

It is excellent news re the two Victorian groups getting busy producing a format for use in recording our Australian plant gardens. Please see the Correspondence section for further information. Once we have a suitable format and criteria established (which will be used nationwide) we need members in ACT, NSW, QLD, TAS. SA and WA to begin to think of which gardens in their State they would like to see included. Even if you simply write in, stating its name and the gardener's name and why it should be included - at least, in a very small way, the garden is recorded for posterity in this newsletter. Why are we doing this? Pretty much because no one else is; ideally, it probably should be a sub committee of ANPS (Aust.) consisting of members from each State region and maybe it will come to that. However, gardens disappear whilst we do nothing so I am delighted that the GDSG branch leaders have been very supportive of the idea and I thank them for that. Also, don't forget, we have a Guest Editor for the November Newsletter. Please send all those interesting articles, thoughts, ideas and opinions to Chris Larkin at: celarkin@bigpond.com. Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year from me in advance; I am hoping for a white Christmas in Germany so, till the Feb 2011 newsletter.....au revoir.

INDEX

CORRESPONDENCE 3

WEB MATTERS 9

DESIGN 10

Propagation, repetition and design,

Diana Snape Vic.

Change and redesign to recapture garden peace.

Pam Yarra Vic

GARDEN VISITS & MEETINGS 12

TREASURER'S REPORT 19

CORRESPONDENCE

I am a garden designer with a preference for native garden plants, even though I love all plants. I find the clients who prefer native gardens are not as concerned with the wow factor and want to create habitats for eco-system function encouraging birds, insects and view native plants as a good way of using drought tolerant plants. However, I must say that mass planting of native plants does give a wonderful wow factor!

I have noticed that slowly clients are asking for more native plants in their gardens. It has taken a long time for people to see the benefits of incorporating native plants into gardens. Perhaps they are sick of looking at tired exotic gardens over a 14-year drought. I try to incorporate native plants into every garden I design, even when the client claims to hate native plants. I always slip one in. They never know!!

Some recent clients, who live in a new housing estate in Melbourne, have a rear yard, which backs onto a native reserve, which is habitat to many birds. The brief was as well as creating a garden for small children, to bring the birds into their garden (which was a blank slate).

They believe living in close proximity to a large area of remnant vegetation has had a profound and significant affect on their well being and that of their small children. One day the 3-year-old daughter of the clients said Mummy why do the bossy grey birds (miners) chase away the beautiful colourful birds? (Lorikeets). It was wonderful to hear this coming from a small child. Many adults would never realize this occurred. I would love to see more people realizing the benefits of native and indigenous plants and the advantages they bring to eco-system function,

On the subject of drought tolerant gardens. I have been listening to Caroline Blackburn on the radio, when asked about the use of water saving products in the garden she replied, the best natural water saving method was to use good humus in the soil to open up the soil making it open and friable thus improving the aeration to plant roots and the water holding capacity of the soil rather than using a 'product'. The basics of a healthy and beautiful garden is the soil. Get that right and the rest will follow.

Therese Scales Vic.

Dear Jo,

I am a member of APS Bacchus Marsh/Melton, an Arborist and a student at Burnley College. As an assessment task I am creating a design for my own back yard which will essentially be an arboretum on a micro scale. I have called it a trunk garden – thinking I had coined the phrase. Out of curiosity, I typed “trunk garden” into Google and guess what popped up.

My disappointment over not coming up with new terminology quickly faded as I read about what you are creating. Is the term something you came up with or do 'trunk gardens' have a

history? My tree list was remarkably similar to yours with the addition of *Corymbia ficifolia*, *Eucalyptus sideroxylon*, *Eucalyptus caesia* subsp. *magna* and *Eucalyptus forrestiana*.

I am keen to know how it is going. The last Yanderra news seemed to be in 2005 so I am well behind your current progress. Have you written any more on it?

Thank you for your prompt reply Jo. I have all the numbers of applicable newsletters thanks to your (and others) amazing efforts at indexing the newsletters. It is truly wonderful resource for people like me. To click on a newsletter and have people like Rodger Elliot and Diana Snape (the first two articles that popped up in my first searches) doling out advice on garden design and plant selection was extraordinary.

Kind Regards,

Mat Mason Vic.

We (Melbourne branch meeting) spent a lot of time discussing the best way to implement Jo's request in the newsletter for in-depth studies of gardens. Recording a garden is not an easy thing to do. We decided that, rather than members trying to work individually from the start, it would be better for the group to work together on this project. So we brainstormed which Victorian gardens should be recorded (including those that have been in the Open Garden Scheme) and prepared an initial list, with others to be added over time. Five members volunteered to record one garden each for a start, including talking to the owner.

We decided to work as a group on recording gardens, rather than risking more than one person working on a particular garden & other gardens possibly missing out; it takes time to record one garden thoroughly, both for the recorder & the garden owner. (I think the garden owner needs to be involved when some-one is writing up their garden.) Also not everyone in the Melbourne group felt they could manage the task - & it isn't easy. I'm sure a number of NE Vic members will participate too.

Chris & I (possibly with others) are going to do some more work on developing a format, which I think will be helpful. We'll send it to you as soon as we have done it.

Diana Snape Vic.

Recording gardens: When embarking on a project of such importance as recording the most important Australian plant Gardens of the 20th C., it is absolutely necessary to have appropriate guidelines, or set of criteria, which the gardens should meet in order for them to be eligible for recording. Also, it needs to be said, that I am speaking of PRIVATE gardens - public spaces change much more slowly than private ones and are generally well recorded by people who work there paid and unpaid; it is in the private garden domain where most is lost.

A garden thought suitable for nomination and subsequent recording may not necessarily tick all the boxes however, a garden worth the subsequent effort involved in recording it, should go very close to satisfying the guidelines eventually decided upon.

I thought the criteria we applied to choosing the gardens for our book “ Passion For Place - Gardens of the Blue Mountains “ would bear repeating here as we try and develop the definitive list.

NB. No 5., was NOT used in our Blue Mountain Garden criteria.

1.AGE

The garden should not be less than 10 years old.

2.HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

Relates in part to No.1. Australian native plant gardens began in earnest in the late 1950s. There is already half a century of garden recording to be done. All gardens (and if we are lucky the accompanying house) will show influences, pertinent to the time and place, on their plant palette and garden design. The age of the garden(and its house), providing it meets most of the other criteria laid down, then the more important urgent the need to record it.

3.THE GARDENER

Ideally an individual well respected within their particular plant niche. Nurserypersons, propagators, bush regenerators, plant breeders, writers, conservationists, garden design etc. Someone who has earned the respect of fellow gardeners in any particular way whilst creating their garden.

4. OPEN GARDENS ETC.

The garden should have been judged by other bodies to be worthy of being in an educational program such as the Open Garden scheme. The gardener would ideally see this as a way to both promote Australian plants and possibly mentor inexperienced gardeners

5.THE GARDEN

Should be an excellent example of its type. Possibly, a pioneering garden, in its day showing others the way forward, or one where well known plants were bred and cultivated or an experimental garden horticulturally or artitically. One which takes biodiversity, sustainability and other environmental factors into consideration with its choice of plants and design. Relationship to the landscape could also be an important factor.

Naturally, rules are meant to be broken and we will no doubt come across some exceptions to them as well. However, they provide a good starting point and stimulus for a daunting exercise. We welcome all your ideas and suggestions for this important task.

The Monaro branch of the Australian Garden History Society published a booklet by Richard Ratcliffe in 1998 called “Recording Gardens - A Guide to Measuring and Drawing Gardens based on an AGHS Seminar”. I am trying to track down further copies in case other people would like it or, at the least, receive permission to copy it in this newsletter.

Jo Hambrett

There was another interview on the By Design program on the ABC – a discussion with Simon Taylor who calls himself a Landscapist. I found it interesting. Here is the link:

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/bydesign/stories/2010/2875235.htm>

Janet Russell ACT

After the fires last year, a number of people expressed their interest in helping out down the track when those affected were in a position to decide what was needed.

Through friends in Hurstbridge, I have made contact with two new gardening groups that have started up in St Andrews and Strathewen, organised by 'survivors' and focussed mainly on supporting each other in rebuilding their gardens. A PlantAid group has been running in Marysville and is supplying plants/co-ordinating support there, so am concentrating on other areas for now. They have some good plants lists on their website: www.plantaid.com.au/ <<http://www.plantaid.com.au/>>

The St Andrews/Strathewen groups would appreciate any help anyone can offer but, as a starting point, felt getting some design advice would be a good boost, as many are exhausted and need an injection of enthusiasm and some direction before they start replanting.

Ideally, it would be good to get enough volunteers to establish a one-to-one allocation/match so those helping could visit, talk residents through what features/style they're hoping for and sketch up a couple of layout suggestions with possible plant lists to get them started, then maybe even keep in touch over the next year or two to see how the implementation is going. Others may prefer to help by growing plants once a few lists have been drawn up [I have warned them we're not keen on exotics - but we need to acknowledge residents may prefer them or want a mix], while some may prefer to donate a few hours of their time to planting or preparing sites later on.

If anyone has specialised knowledge they can share on fire-retardant plants, obviously this would be very welcome. I am trying to source lists from other groups/DSE etc and we can always refer to the 'Grow What Where' section for this.

Would be delighted to hear any offers or suggestions.

Jane Canaway Vic.

Fire retardant Plant Suggestions:

Myoporum insulare Boobialla
Enadia nutans Nodding Saltbush
Rhagodia parabolica Fragrant saltbush
Zygophyllum billardieri Coast Twin-leaf,

Ros Nataprawira Vic.

THE BOOK(S)

For Book 2, I, personally would like to provide a practical guide to garden design for people already interested in/growing Australian plants.

I have taken as a model of a simple inexpensive production *Collect and Grow that Seed : Small Australian Plants* which has been written and illustrated by 5 Melbourne APS members. A4 in size, soft covered, 122 pages with many black and white line drawings it provides much useful information to encourage gardeners to propagate their own plants and enrich the variety of plants they grow. The aim was not to make a profit or convert the public, just help novice growers. The price was fixed at \$23, which includes a very modest profit margin. The original print run was 250.

The book was sold through APS Vic book sales through the post and at meetings and plant sales. When the first 250 sold a second run of 50, which were slightly cheaper per copy, was printed.

When this run sold the financial backer recouped all his outlay and another run of 50 is in process with orders for more than half of them. The readership is APS members and the interested public who attend plant sales, there is no move to reach further.

I feel the GDSG could offer similar help to already motivated novices which might ultimately have the missionary effect of impressing Joe Public with the attractiveness of native gardens. The Group would have control of the whole project which could mean some hard yacker, but the product would then be available for reprint runs as necessary and not dependant on a publisher's whim. There will always be a steady stream of newcomers wondering how best to organise their new native plant gardens. One aspect I have not investigated is the ability to make corrections to later runs, e.g. add new cultivars as they appear on the market, but I think it should be possible with modern printing techniques.

Such a book would be simple to produce given willing illustrators to make the line drawings needed. Given access to such skills we need not be held up by lack of relevant photographs, or the cost of their reproduction. As a first draft the book could include:

1. Basic design as in the APS Vic Resource Book, but in a much easier to read form.
- 2 Design roles of plants
- 3 Plants as design elements, form and texture with diagrams and examples for each State i.e. lists of plants in each category.
- 4 Plan suggestions for several shapes and situations of small suburban blocks. Plant suggested indicated by numbers.
- 5 Plants appropriate for the various numbers in each capital city and specified inland areas
- 6 Picture making or plant associations
- 7 Year round interest.
- 8 Gardens to visit for inspiration
9. Maintenance

As one of the authors of *Collect and Grow that Seed* told me, they wrote the book they would have loved to have had access to when they began trying propagating small plants.

Can we produce the equivalent for designing an Australian garden? What would have helped us?

In short I am suggesting we offer Book 2 as a service to APS members and the 'fringe' who support their sales, and do not regard it as a revenue producer or an attempt to convert the general public.

Let's see what the group thinks.

I do also realise it is a great amount of work for an initially small audience which is why I look on it as a service to APS members and the 'fringe'. My experience is like Jo's, many growers become interested in design as a further development of their interest in the plants. They are not necessarily going to develop an interest in design for its own sake, only as a means to an end, a more attractive garden. Like I said, I would have loved such a book to guide me. The early design books I read were English of course, mainly text and any photos black and white, all there was.

It is only by staying black and white it can be economic which is great loss, but given readers should have some familiarity with Aus. plants, not fatal. Collecting the right photos is also another amount of work and time. The project would depend heavily on illustrators who may not be able to commit to such a lot of work, that is something we would have to look at closely.

One positive I hope would follow would be involving members in the under represented states. Jo, could we work on the gardens to visit as a start, which would be useful on its own? Do we get members to nominate possibilities with a description of the particular design features evident, plus agreement from the gardener to go on our list (how openly publicised?) as willing to show visitors around by appointment or at certain set times. In support of line drawings, When seeking to identify a flower, a line drawing which includes the distinguishing features beats a photo be it ever so beautiful. When I wanted to represent a bower Bird's bower in embroidery I couldn't begin until an artist friend made a sketch and i could see at once the lines to be stitched. The artist's eye finds the essentials and can pass them on to us. This is what I would hope we could offer. Still as I said, in the 50's books about design relied largely on words, e.g. Russell Page. I remember Paul Thompson talking at that first Garden Design seminar at Burnley and the use he made of shapes, just outlines and diagrams. Sticking to diagrams gets away from the instinctive urge to concentrate on individual plant choices until the final step. Anyway I can't make them myself and maybe no=one else wants the work.

How many photos do actually illustrate a design point? I suppose one could always have the photos available on the net, it's the way the young gather info, but I like something I can hold in my hand.

There is room for any number of books with selected slants. I am just suggesting one alternative.

Barbara Buchanan Vic.

It would indeed be a very useful book, especially, as Barbara says, for APS people who are already converted to Aus plants & know them. APS people in any area could substitute their own suitable plants into plans, or categories, for themselves. I agree about there being a market among the converted, it's just the size of that market I'd be concerned about. I still think Barbara's idea is a good one, for that market. I can certainly see a need for the book Barbara describes, directed primarily at APS members who don't have to be sold on using Aus plants, just the idea of designing with them.

I'm also keen on (& see a need for) the book I envisage, focussing on small gardens (or smaller spaces in gardens) & aimed at a much wider audience.

Some thinking to do.

Diana Snape Vic

WEB MATTERS

Members,

The revised Index to Newsletters 1-68 is now online. Let me know if you see any problems.

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

(or use link from the Study Group home page)

Glenda Browne, our Indexer, has supplied an updated index for the Study Group newsletters so I've put it and issues 1-60 on line.

You'll find the index here:

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

It would be good if you could spend a few minutes with it - test some of the links and confirm that it all works as intended. In particular, could you look at the text at the top of that page and let me know if it doesn't make sense...

Another relevant page is:

<http://asgap.org.au/design/des-news.html> <<http://asgap.org.au/design/des-news.html>>

This is where people can download the newsletters if they don't particularly want to use the index.

Brian Walters

Australian Native Plants Society (Australia) <http://asgap.org.au>

DESIGN

Propagation, repetition and design.

Repetition of plant species is, I think, important in good garden design, whether formal or naturalistic. Formal gardens have obvious repetition but it's less so in naturalistic gardens. However, no matter where you go in the natural environment, the local species of plants are repeated in greater or lesser numbers to give that particular area a distinctive 'sense of place'. In different areas there will be varying proportions of trees, shrubs, creepers and other types of plants (almost always including some monocotyledons among the often more conspicuous dicotyledons).

It helps to keep costs down if you can propagate at least a few of the plants you want to repeat in your design. Some are easy to propagate (I like these!), some more difficult, others impossible without special equipment, care, time and determination. Of course, competing with the requirement for repetition, there's also the desire to grow a variety of different plants. Using plants with, eg, similar form and/or leaf colour, achieves some sense of repetition, but it's still not quite the same. We each find our own balance here.

As a broad generalisation, the smaller the plant, the greater the number you can use for design purposes. They might be in drifts, in patches, in irregular borders or rows, or dotted around in ones, twos or threes. While Brian grows eucalypts and shrubs (plus vegetables) from seeds, I grow shrubs, groundcovers and creepers from cuttings. For many years my equipment consisted of a couple of fruit boxes with home-made plastic lids, requiring spraying by hand for misting. In those days I put cuttings in individual little pots. This really worked remarkably well. Now I am lucky to have a unit with bottom heat and automatic misting; the trays are at waist height (better for my back) and I use group pots. My rate of success is not very different but I do propagate more plants and it's all a lot easier.

In the natural world, repetition of tree species is noticeable. In a small garden like ours, it's possible to include a few trees of the same species but not too many, unless you have a shady woodland garden devoted to them. In our front garden, we have six *Eucalyptus leucoxylon* (Yellow Gum), one of the indigenous trees, including two coppiced and two (not local ones) grown from seed.

With shrubs, the larger the size, the more difficult it is to fit in a number of the same species. One large shrub we've repeated is *Grevillea endlicheriana*, with several in an informal hedge. Its fine, silvery foliage means it's not too dominant. Among medium shrubs, we have four Chef's Cap Correas (*C. baeuerlennii*) (three relatively close, one separate) and five Geraldton Wax (*Chamelaucium uncinatum*) (3 + 2). The latter really enjoys the dryer climate.

I've grown many of our shrubs from cuttings. Our most popular small shrub is probably *Correa pulchella* and we have lots of those, of several different forms. Some are together in groups, others scattered. We've also repeated certain forms of *Correa reflexa* and a compact, purple-flowered *Westringia glabra*. For dry, sunny areas, I propagate *Leucophyta brownii* (Cushion Bush) and two compact forms of *Eremophila glabra*, among others. I also

obtain cuttings from specimens (at APS meetings or from friends) to get an individual plant for a special spot.

I remember Jeff Howes writing a while back that he used the groundcover *Brachyscome multifida* as a linking agent through his garden. It's one of the groundcover plants I use widely too, especially forms I've found to be hardy - one with white flowers, another large lilac flowers and a third, small purple flowers. It's an easy plant to propagate from cuttings, so each year I grow some more. This also applies to forms of *Chrysocephalum apiculatum* (some with wonderful silvery leaves), *Myoporum parvifolium* (with a range of foliage types) and *Scaevola aemula*. In recent drier times, I've used *Rhagodia spinescens* (Hedge Saltbush) for low, informal hedges. Annuals or biennials like white *Isotoma anethifolius* and a purple *Isotoma axillare* grow from both cuttings and seeds.

It's quite hard to find a creeper that does well but isn't too vigorous. For sections of our fences, I've used cuttings to grow the handsome Gum Vine (*Aphanopetalum resinsum*) and several lovely billardieras.

If you've never tried propagating by cuttings, you could choose a suitable small plant you'd like to repeat in the garden. In warmer weather than it is now in Victoria, try some cuttings in a container inside an inverted, clear plastic bag, in partial shade. Give them just an occasional squirt of water. Formerly I used coarse sand plus a little peat moss, now I use a mix of 60% vermiculite and 40% coconut fibre. (If that's successful, you might graduate to using a fruit box.) Good luck.

Diana Snape Vic.

Change and redesign to recapture garden peace.

For over 30 years my husband Jim & I have lived without two boundary fences between our neighbour's two acre battle axe block. We built our house to face the side boundary to borrow the neighbour's bush landscape, including a barrel drained creek. In fact we were not exactly certain where the boundary markers were & our relationship with our neighbour was such that it was never an issue.

But change came with a new neighbour who is boundary conscious and territorial. While not wanting fencing, we accepted this but after many changes wanted by neighbour, the issue remains unresolved. This fencing issue, together with the neighbour's application to council to sub divide her block into two, with removal of 31 trees, has impacted on our environment.

In the May newsletter Nicky Zanan asked "what created a feeling of peace in a garden"? We have always had a feeling of peace in our garden but had not thought to analyse why, until we realized that we had lost it to a large degree. I believe that trees & birds are contributing

factors but it is more than that. It is also the relationship with the surrounding environment which can include people.

Can this peace and tranquillity be reclaimed? This is the challenge with a whole rethink & redesign of a strip of garden just on 46 metres long. I, with husband Jim, redesigned this boundary strip of garden with the main focus of using large shrubs as screening. We sought some professional advice from Bev Hanson to discuss our plans and more specifically drainage, to ensure that any rain run off remained on our property.

By June, after 6 months of frequent changes to the fencing wanted by our neighbour and no resolution, it was time to start planting before the hot weather arrived. The timing has been good with really high rainfall during June, the highest in area in June for 10 years. The clay soil had been well treated with gypsum and all plants had been tip pruned while waiting to be planted. A mixture of indigenous plants, *Prostanthera Lasianthos*, *Pomaderris Prunifolia* plus *Correa lawrenciana* and *Acacia boormanii* were planted in from the boundary line. In from this planting, small shrubs were planted with a variety of tufting/clumping plants, edging a newly formed curved path.

It will be interesting and useful to re evaluate our feelings in about 12 months time. Will we have regained the feelings of peace and tranquillity?

Pam Yarra Vic.

Both Nicky Zanan's article last NL, and now Pam's, caused me to reflect. Peace and tranquillity are at the top of the list of attributes I want my garden to possess and I garden accordingly. There are many ways of achieving emotional responses in a garden. I would welcome input of members as to the ways, if any, they design their garden to accommodate emotions; and, if so, what emotions in particular? JH

MEETINGS

NORTH EAST BRANCH VICTORIA

Next meeting Sat. Aug7th 10.30am for 11 at Glenda and Bernie Datson's

4 Wickham Court Baranduda ph02 6020 8103

For those of you who have not been there, and as a refresher for those who have, I suggest you consult Google maps rather than try and describe the route. The discussion will include an update on Book 2 proposals and the Willows reserve project, which latter we can see on the way home.

Report of April meeting.

We could not win with the weather but nevertheless had a warm and lively discussion session. This was based on plans for a small Melbourne garden for my grandson. I had given him a rough design and his mother and I had been to Park Lane to get starting material for him. The meeting added further ideas which are being incorporated, but I have to confess that his mother accepted his request for a Weeping Flowering Cherry which I understand is now in the middle of the front garden. This is an area with north and west exposure I had allotted to eremophilas, I am not too sure how it will all work out. I console myself with he has to begin somewhere.

One suggestion we have taken up is to seek red foliages to pick up on the roof and window awnings and will use red as a general theme with flowers and foliage. This includes the use of *Leptospermum* Copper Glow and *L. petersoni* trained as small trees as a variation to mallees. The security aspect of having a dense shrubbery filling the front was raised. I am horrified that this should be necessary but the concern is noted. It will be a while before the growth is sufficient to be a problem so there is time to adapt. I remember Hazel Blackney, earlier leader of the Hakea Study Group recommending prickly Hakeas outside bedroom windows!

Other contributions included use of Maireanas in the hot spots as a variety of forms are becoming available, the use of plenty of daisies as fillers in the early stages especially and the appeal of small rounded shrubs and tufties growing through mulch.

The rain seemed to be arriving so we decided to hurry out to the Open Garden Marangy. By the time we had arrived there (only some 10k) the rain had increased and was very solid all of our stay. There was some difficulty in leaving the car park after our visit due to boggy conditions, yet when I drove past about half an hour later the sun was coming out! So my impressions of Marangy are much influenced by having seen it through a grey sheet with the additional handicap of peering from under a hood which seems to restrict one's vision to the ground and straight ahead.

Imagine my surprise leafing through a John Brookes book and feeling something familiar about a photograph introducing the chapter on Environment. It was not identified, but obviously an Australian idyll in warm sunlight, a pastoral background, summer yellowed paddocks and hay shed, shut out from the exuberantly planted foreground by a curved wall. In fact the Herb garden of Marangy looking as if taken from the roof of the house, and with the planting in much better condition than when we saw it but the wall and brick edged beds quite unmistakable. And in sunlight. Disappointingly there is no reference whatsoever in the text apart from attributing the photo to Marangy's owners.

The Herb garden when we saw it certainly impressed with its semi-circular wall and slightly raised beds giving formal shape but by late autumn the planting was past it. It obviously has potential to be stunning. This was one contained area of the garden, together with the swimming pool in an adjacent compartment for protection from the cold sou-westerlies, otherwise the garden is open to the farmland around it. This gave me the feeling that there were no hidden surprises, everything was in full view although this is not strictly true, it opens up as one walks around the house. There is a magnificent remnant red gum which

needs no adornment, large areas of gravel with plants growing through, a look I admire. I was very envious of the extensive gravel, what a magnificent fire safety feature apart from the mulching value and the aesthetics.

Marangy is a garden which is only recently becoming aware of Australian plants and their potential. In the entrance area *Indigofera australis* and *Goodia lotifolia* were used extensively, together with some *Acacia glaucoptera* and *Eutaxia microphylla* for their blue foliage, which indeed makes an impressive understorey to the gums there. One bed of the acacia under a group of fastigiate oaks we felt a bit boring, we would prefer a tapestry of different foliages, but maybe this has proved difficult to achieve as there were gaps in the bed. We did feel the same about other areas devoted to sedum Autumn Joy. One other small quibble was a clump of strikingly variegated leaf cannas, most dramatic but with no links elsewhere.

One feature I would gladly take home was the stone sphere, made from chips of stone from a local quarry. I've seen such spheres in gardening magazines, but never in the flesh before. As a group we tried to appreciate the garden as it is, but found ourselves wondering how we would achieve a similar result with native plants. The driving rain not only made us uncomfortable, but limited our ability to see form and foliage patterns, there was little flower colour due to time of year. I feel sunlight and shadow patterns would also be important in this garden most of the time. It is an impressive achievement and I shall try and see it again in better conditions.

NEXT MELBOURNE MEETING

Our next meeting at Karwarra has been changed from Sunday August 29 to Saturday August 28. (This change of date has happened because Sun 29 is the Karwarra AGM.) For anyone who has not been there before, the address is Mt Dandenong Tourist Rd, Kalorama.

We'll meet in the hall (indoors!) at 1 pm for lunch, or 2 pm for the meeting. Lindy Harris, the horticulturist, will talk to us about her plans for the Garden & tell us what she & the gardener have achieved so far. Then we'll rug up (it gets cold in the Dandenongs!) & have a look around to see the big changes that have already taken place. I'm sure those who haven't been to Karwarra for a while will be impressed with the progress since we last met there. As usual, bring along the August NL (& your ideas) for discussion too.

I'm sorry that this new date (a Saturday) will not suit everyone but hope that as many people as possible are able to come. Please let me know if you can (dsnape3@bigpond.com or 9822 6992).

Report of GDSG Melbourne Branch Meeting 16/5/10 at Pam & Jim Yarra's

After a picnic lunch at 1pm, the meeting began at 2 pm. Pam told us about the proposed sub-division of their neighbour's block and we were also shown a plan. We pictured the

impact it would have on their place, especially the removal of more than 20 mature indigenous trees (plus other vegetation). These are a key part of their borrowed landscape as well as environmentally important for suburban habitat. The proposal will probably go before VCAT and we certainly hope it is not allowed. Then we walked around the garden and considered the shaping of a path near the front boundary. We admired the attractive, asymmetric shaping of a new T-junction of a pathway near the side boundary. We also looked at the back & side boundaries where new fences will go, all the while enjoying both new and established plants.

We spent a lot of time discussing the best way to implement Jo's request in the newsletter for in-depth studies of gardens. Recording a garden is not an easy thing to do. We decided that, rather than members trying to work individually from the start, it would be better for the group to work together on this project. So we brainstormed which Victorian gardens should be recorded (including those that have been in the Open Garden Scheme) and prepared an initial list, with others to be added over time. Five members volunteered to record one garden each for a start, including talking to the owner.

We thought that it would be helpful to develop a format for all to follow. As well as a written report, gardens should also be recorded in photos illustrating what are seen as the best aspects. At some stage (probably in spring), a professional photographer could be paid for one day to photograph highlights of those gardens already recorded. Ideally, there should also be a simple plan, showing the location of buildings & paths and, if possible, main areas of the garden - more difficult for large gardens. Our initial thoughts were:

A number of facts should be recorded for each garden:- area, orientation, slope, rainfall, soil type, climate.

The following aspects should be commented on where applicable:

- * setting - borrowed landscape
- * significant design challenges
- * estimation of time spent working in the garden
- * any professional help in the design of, or help with work in, the garden
- * proportions of sun & shade
- * watering details - tanks, any watering system
- * type(s) of mulch used
- * areas of lawn or grass
- * use of rocks
- * any specific features of the garden
- * management, pruning, rejuvenation

Owners should be interviewed about the history of the garden, and their aims & objectives. The recorder can write their description & assessment of the garden in terms of design. Finally, they could mention any problem area they notice (or future challenges).

The meeting closed at 4pm (with a delicious afternoon tea).

Report of GDSG Melbourne Branch Meeting 14/2/10

After a picnic lunch at 1pm, the meeting began at 2 pm.

At the first meeting for the year, as a starting point, individual members said what it was they enjoyed about their membership of the Study Group. Apart from reading the newsletter, the emphasis generally was on seeing other gardens, talking to people with similar interests, and getting new ideas. You learn something from every garden you visit. People spoke of their interest in the 'feel' of a garden, the different spaces in a garden, and the microhabitats created, not just the plants. Merele Webb commented on the sudden changes you observe in natural areas and how these can be reflected in our gardens. Chris Larkin emphasized the importance to her of structure in a garden.

People can contribute through visiting gardens, through their ideas, writing articles for the newsletter, taking photos of gardens, or (for a few) opening their gardens for the AOGS or other worthy causes. Some members are reluctant to continue opening their gardens because of the work involved and we said we should offer them more support (or APS members generally). We decided to have a shared email list so that someone who wanted help could easily let others know (alternatively by phone).

We discussed garden visits both in Melbourne and in country Victoria and Nicky Rose reminded us that all APS Vic weekends include garden visits. So it would be helpful if GDSG members attended these weekends whenever possible and we could even stay on for the Sunday night to compare notes on the gardens visited (and possibly even see extra gardens). It's very easy to miss out on actually discussing the design of a garden after a visit. I think it was Bev Fox who suggested that members could bring photos of their gardens along to a meeting for comment or discussion. If they're on a memory stick we could use a computer or even TV to enlarge them (or you might bring a laptop). Of course we have always been ready to offer help to members with garden design (and we could make this more widely known in APS Vic).

Nicky also asked whether the GDSG might host an APS Quarterly Meeting, as we did in the early days at Burnley. We said it might be a possibility in a couple of years time. However with a relatively small group of members (compared with a District Group), I think it would be an onerous undertaking ... and we were 15 years younger then.

With the impending sale of the Jacobs garden and the Blake garden, we talked about the importance of recording significant gardens during their lifetime with their creator. I have always thought this was a valuable thing to do. This was then linked to Peter and Wilma Garnham's suggestion of producing a coloured 'magazine' for sale in newsagents. We could begin by trying to produce one based on just one garden, for example the Jacobs garden. I'm sure hundreds of photos have been taken of this garden but we'd need photos of professional standard, so it would be good to use a professional photographer. I'll talk to Elspeth Jacobs and Jo Hambrett about the possibility. Of course some owners might be reluctant to 'go public' in this way.

We looked at how information about garden design with Australian plants can be spread and the lack of this in the general community. Nowadays most new gardens are small and many people have no idea of the range of small Australian plants. If the 'magazine' idea proved feasible, the second one could be on a small garden. We looked at Paul Urquhart's book 'Small by Design' and noted that the gardens shown in it almost all used exotic plants. (Only 8 pages out of 242 refer to Australian plants).

The booklet on waterwise gardening brought out by Wangaratta APS (for which two NE Vic GDSG members drew four designs) is an excellent example of another way the message can be spread. This is now apparently on the net. Articles and pictures are also put on the GDSG website which is available to all who use the web. Even the whole newsletter could be put there, with members having a key or password. Of course not all members are on the net, so hard copies of the newsletter would still be needed, just like books for those who prefer to read in comfort.

Meetings:

It was suggested we try again to organize a meeting with the NE Vic Branch, probably looking forward to next year.

We noted the dates of the APS Vic weekends for the year:

April 17, 18 Geelong

June 5, 6 'gardens for wildlife', Foothills

August 21, 22 the Fred Rogers lecture

November, Hamilton

Nicky asked if the GDSG might host an APS Vic weekend meeting some time in the future, as we did in the early years. Maybe in a couple of years time?

Proposed dates for our meetings for this year (all Sunday afternoon at 2 pm) and suggested venues (to be confirmed) are:

August 29, at Karwarra

November 7, at Helen Kennedy's, with Bev Hanson to discuss the design of one new section

At the end of a pleasant and productive meeting we had a wander round our garden, which is less stressed than usual for mid-February after having good summer rain. However there are gaps because we're waiting until autumn before we do any planting. There wasn't time for any general discussion about the garden's design.

THE NEXT MEETING / GARDEN VISIT FOR THE SYDNEY GDSG WILL BE:

NEWCASTLE 21/22 AUGUST 2010.

Our member, designer and horticulturist, Maree Macarthy has very kindly offered to organise a weekend tour of Newcastle gardens that she has designed (see NL 69). Maree will also be with us throughout the weekend to talk about her designs and plant choices. She is an incredibly knowledgeable and accomplished plantsperson and an informative experience is guaranteed.

We begin the weekend at her house 14 Margaret St., Highfields, (off Kahibah Rd, off Pacific Hwy, just past Charlestown) meeting there at 11.30 am., BYO lunch and after that we shall see her garden before visiting 2 or 3 others (which appear in the list in NL 69). We stay overnight in Newcastle, no doubt enjoying one of our now famously fun & friendly dinners at a local restaurant. The next morning we are up and at 'em to see 3 gardens or so, possibly more, before lunch and the journey home.

Maree has suggested you ring her (0410 405 815, 02 4943 0305) and she can help with suggestions about nearby accommodation.

Please let me know too if you are coming. Our getaway garden weekends are always great fun and never fail to be an enjoyable and social experience as well providing a real learning experience. My mobile is 0411 253 410.

PS: DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!

TREASURER'S REPORT

1. PLEASE NOTE : New annual subscription charges for the FY 2010/11

Your membership was due on 1st June 2010. This will be your last newsletter (NL) if you are still unfinancial at time the Nov NL. Is printed.

- \$20 Paper newsletter for overseas members.
- \$15 This covers up to two members at the same address to receive paper newsletters.
- \$ 6 This covers up to two members at the same address to receive newsletter by email.
- \$ 10 Concession for pensioners or full-time students – only -- to receive paper newsletters.

2. Limit to the number of years payable in advance

This year, Jo Hambrett and I decided that GDSG **members can only pay for two financial years at once**. This has been caused by the large amount of members paying many, many years in advance. Any cheques, notes of postal orders for more than two years will now be returned with a request to amend the amount and resend back to me.

3. A reminder – to belong to the GDSG you must be a member of your State Native Plant Society (or whatever name it goes under).

4. Thank you **Anne Neild** for your donation - much appreciated.

5. The audit report of our finances will appear in the November NL No 72 as in past years.

The following list contains the names of all the 78 unfinancial members who need to join before the Nov NL 'send out' to continue receiving the NLs:

Membership form attached.

Surname	First Name
Anderson	Ian
APS Victoria	Annie Treasure
APS Victoria	Phillip Robinson
APS Blue Mountains	C/- Charles Farrugia
APS Keilor Plains	Secretary

APS Maroondah Group	Hon Treasurer
APS NSW SG Officer	
APS NSW	<i>Secretary/Office</i>
APS NSW	Editor NSW Plants
Artis	Kerry
Avendano	Maree
Baghurst	Judy
Banks	Alison
Barrett	Joan
Berenyi	Dora
Buchanan	Barbara
Cox	Ian & Tamara
Cullen	Christine
Datson	Glenda + Bernard
Davidson	Jennifer
Dempsey	Kay
Denton	Betty
Evans	Wendy & David
Farrer	Jennifer
Finnie	Jenny
Fox	Beverley
Garnham	Peter & Wilma
Gough-Watson	Jan
Graham	Mary
Gornall	Ron
Guard	Carol
Hall	Cheree
Hambrett	Jo
Hanson	Beverley

Harris	Trish & Brian
Herrmann	Monika
James	Margaret
Jones	Julie
Karwarra Aust Garden	Lindy Harris
Leearne	Neal
Lee	Vickie
Loft	Bryan
Lovelock	Judy and Alan
Main	Win
McCarthy	Maree
McColl	Sue
McIver	Doug & Margaret
Mills	Ann & Ray
Miyazaki	Koji
Morris	Gillian
Nataprawira	Roslyn
Page	Leslie + Neville
Persse	Georgina & Jonathan
Peterson	Thelma & Don
Pezzarini	Janina
Pymble	Michele
Rigg/Leggatt	Martin/Diana
Roberts	Tony & Joy
Rose	Philip & Julia
Rowland	Danial
Rowland	Gordon
Russell	Andrew & Janet
Scales	Therese

SGAP QLD	C/o J.Sked
SGAP QLD	C/o J.Sked
Simpson - Lee	Sheila
Smith	Lawrence
Snape	Diana & Brian
Tucker	Samantha
Verbeeten	Rosemary
Walker-Cook	Chris
Webb	Merele
Webb	Maureen & Norman
Wildflower Society of WA	Julie
Wilson	Tim
Wodrow	Beverly
Zouliou	Aliki

Also a warm welcome to the following new members:

Gary Smitherman, Julie and Anne Hinchey and Jane Canaway

Jeff Howes

GDSG Treasurer,

e-mail: gdsgmembership@yahoo.com.au

