



# GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP

ISSN 1039 – 9062

ABN 82 428 110 028

## Newsletter

### May 2014

# 86

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## Leader's message:

Please keep sending us your articles, short notes, observations, book reviews, quotes and photographs for inclusion in the *Newsletter*. The more of you who participate, even with small contributions, will provide us with a *Newsletter* that has a better variety of information and ideas. After all, the function of the Study Group is to exchange ideas and experiences to improve garden design using native plants.

## Sydney Botanic Gardens Trust releases new Master Plan

**Catherine Stewart** April 7, 2014 [gardendrum.com](http://gardendrum.com), 8/4/2014

The Royal Sydney Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust (well not exactly – *it's got a new name*) has released its new Master Plan for the Gardens and the Domain. And **it's causing quite a stir**.

Incorporating a new 5 star hotel, ferry wharf, buildings and a permanent concert sound shell, the Master Plan was released to the Fairfax paper the 'Sun Herald' ahead of other media, where it's (surprise surprise) received a very favourable write up called '*Paradise Found*' including a sub piece by journo Linda Morris, '*Native paradise to public park*'. Please Ms Morris do your research – the Botanic Gardens is a scientific institution that people happen to enjoy visiting. **It is NOT a park.**

While it's true that most of the new infrastructure and buildings are in the Domain rather than the Botanic Gardens itself, I think it's rather like introducing a swathe of virulent weeds to the fringe areas around pristine bushland. Those weeds quickly start to damage the periphery and compromise the quality of the interior.

The new Executive Director of '**Sydney's Parklands and Botanic Gardens**' (notice the absence of that inconvenient word 'Trust' in the new position), Kim Ellis, comes from a military and airport management background via Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust. He's not a scientist, unlike the previous Directors David Mabberley and Tim Entwisle. I'm not saying that means he can't be a good ED of the Gardens, but maybe it's a bit odd to have a non-scientist as head of a scientific institution.

Apart from the new buildings in the Gardens itself (and it will be a real shame to lose that lovely rocky area inside the QE11 gate, covered with Australian native plants), I'm worried about the proposed new 'viewing platform' around Mrs Macquarie's Chair. It's a natural, rocky headland with a spectacular view west towards the Opera House and Harbour Bridge, already much favoured by international bridal couples for that quintessential Sydney wedding photo, which causes a constant influx of noisy coaches and bridal cars around the point. A Master Plan for the Domain dating back several years recommended the phasing out of coach access, but then here we are in 2014 encouraging more of it by building special facilities for them.

## **A New Botanical Gardens for Regional Victoria** **Neil R Marriott (Vic), Honorary Leader WAMA Site Development Project** **Team**

WAMA, which stands for the Wildlife Art Museum of Australia, is set to become one of our great regional botanic gardens. It will be unique, by being established in a spectacular native garden setting just outside Halls Gap, at the foot of the Grampians/ Gariwerd Ranges in western Victoria. The site, which has been gifted to WAMA is superb; it roughly divides into three parts; the first supports the natural Grampians Heathy Woodland and includes an ephemeral creek that flows out of the ranges; the second is a large man-made wetland; these two areas are permanently protected by Conservation Covenants with Trust for Nature, Victoria. The third part is an open undulating paddock and this is where the galleries and the Botanic Gardens will be developed. In the covenanted areas we will grow only Grampians indigenous plants and I am currently urging the WAMA Board to call the gardens the **Gariwerd Botanic Gardens** because of our location and these links with the superb Grampians/Gariwerd Ranges.

The following are some excerpts from the WAMA Vision Statement;

“WAMA IS A PROJECT OF INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE. IT WILL RECOGNISE AND SHOWCASE THE WORK OF OUTSTANDING WILDLIFE ARTISTS, FROM THE EARLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF OUR FIRST INHABITANTS THROUGH TO THE PRESENT DAY. THEIR ARTISTIC WORK WILL BE DISPLAYED IN A NATIONAL ICONIC PURPOSE-BUILT MUSEUM AND GALLERY ON A SITE IN THE NORTHERN GRAMPIANS RANGES (GARIWERD) VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA.”

“As a major arts and cultural destination, WAMA will complement other tourism attractions in the region, sharing the spectacular backdrop of the Grampians Ranges.

The museum with its supporting studios and conference facilities will be surrounded by wetlands and Australian native gardens on 15 hectares of natural bushland.

The site in its entirety will be an educational, training and interpretative centre for wildlife art in all its forms. It will be developed to create a botanical landscape featuring the best of Australian flora, with a covenanted area dedicated to Grampians species. The grounds will incorporate sculptures and carvings reflecting Australia’s diverse natural history. “



WAMA wetland looking towards Grampians and protected bushland



Aerial Photo of WAMA showing potential Site Plan—all the open land in top left corner will become the Botanic Gardens. Open land in top right will become Grampians flora gardens

## Milestones

The WAMA concept arose out of discussions with local artists and founding members of the Grampians Wildlife Art Society when it conducted the first Grampians Wildlife Art Festival in 2009. The vision has rapidly progressed as a result of the involvement of diverse local groups and commitment from prominent wildlife artists, botanists, conservationists and tourism operators. Significant progress towards the vision has already been made. These are some of the milestones that have been achieved since the launch of the vision in April 2011

- WAMA vision statement released to local Grampians community at gala launch in Stawell.
- Halls Gap site acquired through donation from private benevolent contributor.
- Victoria's Governor Chernov visits site with Mayor and Chief Executive of the Northern Grampians Shire Council.
- Concept development plan presented to Chief Executive Tourism Victoria.

- Grampians Tourism recognises project as a strategic priority for the region.
- Prominent wildlife artists and major galleries publicly support WAMA vision.
- Support continues to flow in from prominent artists and galleries in the wildlife art field from Australia and overseas.
- Taxation Commissioner grants WAMA Deductible Gift Recipient and tax exemption.
- In September 2012 WAMA releases updated Vision Statement and Project Plan.
- Audit commences to record existing flora and fauna on site.
- Preliminary site works begin to protect indigenous species and consolidate wetlands.
- Commitment by the Royal Botanical Gardens Cranbourne to advise and support the development of the WAMA botanical gardens.
- Support from the Faculty of Architecture and the Faculty of Landscape Architecture of the University of Melbourne for the design of the WAMA Museum, Gallery and gardens.
- Support from local conservation groups to assist with the restoration and bio-diversity enhancement of the site.

It is most exciting to have John Arnott and Jill Burness from Cranbourne Botanical Gardens as strong supporters. John and Jill have already written up a Site Design paper for us, and facilitated a Collections Planning Workshop. The outcome of this is that we now have Rodger and Gwen Elliot as well as John and Jill and a number of other talented members in our Collections Planning Team. Once soil testing and site analysis has been completed we will meet and formulate our collections plan. This will become the template for just what we plant on the site.

It is also wonderful that we have the Honours Students from Melbourne University faculties of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, headed by Professor Phillip Goad and Ginny Lee, working on the site, with guidance from two top Melbourne Architecture and Landscape Architecture firms, developing in tandem, designs for the buildings and gardens. It will be very exciting to see the outcomes of these folios.

### **Concept Plans**

The notes and drawings below are part of concept plans drawn up by my son, landscape architect Gordon Marriott for the site:

#### Strategic Catchments

Give strong presence to the collection of water from site, its passage through site, the value of water to the landscape (ephemeral nature of creek) and feature the commitment to return water to the catchment in pure form after processing through catchment filtration system. Water would be collected from car park run-off, roof run-off and irrigation seepage.

Lined "dry" creekbed meanders landscape in prominent form, collecting water from critical areas and directing toward treatment facility.



### Zonal Experience

Rather than paths through landscape “seeking” out different landscape features and vegetation zones, the landscape planting is created in sinuous natural-appearing ‘climate zones’ where one could see a transition from low grassland, to medium, height heathland, to tall open forest. The paths can become an extension of the forms of the curvaceous building form, gently flowing around the site, but give a great experience of moving in an out of the canopy, shade and sun, as well as strategic views.

### Strategic Views

Capitalize on the vistas afforded by elevation of the museum site above the lake, and behind it to the Grampians Ranges. Siting of the museum and its entrance ways, and its immediate landscape design should emphasize the expanse of site by maximising long views, which may require strategic tree removal and planting.



### Topographic Arid Landscape

To the north west of site lies an ephemeral creek bed and gentle sloping valley. Much in the same way that Australia’s remote outback is shaped by the ephemeral flow of water, and the patterns marked by small elevation changes across the landscape, this area of site could be planted to represent that condition of mildly flourishing creek beds, open scrub slopes, and rocky upper hilltops. It would allow great emphasis on colour and texture as one moved through the area.

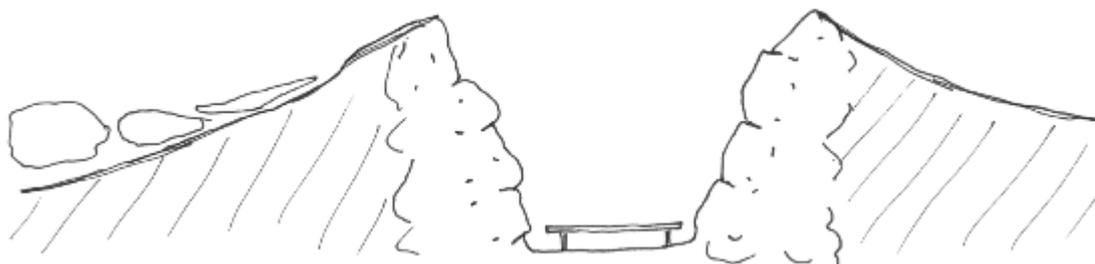
### Elemental Features

Strong simple landscape gestures such as the collection of large boulders and developed feature tree species create an emotionally evocative experience when recreating separate distinct Australian “landscapes”.



### Elemental Features, Grampians

Without doubt, the strongest feature of the Grampians is the way they rise, seemingly vertically out of an otherwise flat plain. The Grampians centric nature of the site is important, and highlighting areas of the garden that demonstrate the ruggedness of the sandstone cliffs is key. A pedestrian entranceway formed between two sets of vertical cliffs of reclaimed sandstone awes the visitor with scale as they enter, and as they pass through they are greeted with a wide vista of the museum complex.



It would be good to have members of the Garden Design Study Group visit the site and become involved. Please feel free to contact me at [neil@whitegumsaustralia.com](mailto:neil@whitegumsaustralia.com) if you would like to inspect the property or help out in any way. We will soon be setting up a 'Friends' group and I will keep readers informed of this for those of you who are interested.

# Burnley Living Roofs

Catherine Stewart, [GardenDrum](#) November 11, 2013

Burnley College in Melbourne has long been the home of horticultural training in Victoria. Now part of the University of Melbourne's School of Land and Environment, its old administration building is now a 500 square metre green roof laboratory designed by HASSELL Landscape architects.

One part of the green roof which is designed for access and also outdoor teaching features this beautiful, sinuous red-ribbon garden edging, made from foam and fibreglass. The garden beds are of varying depths created by a vertical wedge-shaped design and are further divided into irrigated and non-irrigated sections. Each is filled with a variety of experimental growing media like crushed tiles and ash waste. Green roof researchers are currently assessing a wide range of plants both Australian native and exotic, including edibles, for their green roof performance in these different conditions. As you can see, it was very wet and people-filled the day I visited as part of the Australian Landscape Conference garden tour but you can see the beauty of the design and how well the plants are flourishing in these exposed conditions.



## Quotes of the Season

Anne Latreille, *Garden Voices; Australian Designers – Their Stories*, Bloomings Books 2013

This marvellous book was reviewed by Diana Snape in NL85, pp. 5-6. Each major garden designer has an addition at the end of their section in the book called 'And in Australian gardens...' which has the most interesting and practical advice. I wish that I had known, and even better, understood the impact of these ideas a long time ago. Maybe true understanding comes only with experience.

Below are some examples:

### **Marion Blackwell, p. 13:**

'Always have an entry statement to give a sense of arrival.'

'Use plants to reinforce a design rather than create it.'

'Grow plants that are ecologically appropriate and that look after themselves once they are established.'

### **Fiona Brockhoff, p.25:**

'Work with a site rather than against it.'

'Choose materials that are practical and, where possible local – this saves time, money and makes a garden feel part of its larger setting.'

'Plan a garden to keep maintenance to a minimum.'

'Flower colour is almost always secondary to plant form, leaf colour and texture.'

'Buy the best quality plants you can afford, and don't be afraid to use tubestock.'

### **Craig Burton, p.37**

'Think on a large scale.'

'Add on rather than starting afresh.'

'Build stone and rock into your thinking.'

'If possible, keep one 'edge' of the garden open for borrowed views.'

### **Viesturs Cielens, p.57:**

'Understatement usually costs less than overstatement.'

'Think of gardens as a way of extending your relationship with nature.'

'Understand the soil that produces the plants in your garden.'

### **Walter Burley Griffin, p.69:**

'Carefully chosen Australian plants will provide a succession of colour all year round.'

'Don't think of a garden only in terms of open space beyond the house – use window boxes, roof gardens, terraces.'

'Bring the garden into the house through a belt of windows set at eye level.'

### **William Guilfoyle, p.83:**

'Ensure that paths are generous, in terms of width...'

'To show off light or bright flower colours, back them with plants with dark foliage.'

'Nature cannot be imitated with straight lines.'

**Kitty Henry, p.93:**

'Foliage is as important as flowers.'

'Grow plants with red flowers together.'

'Install groups of plants in odd numbers – 3,5,7,9 – the only permissible even number is 2.'

'Owners of large properties have a responsibility to provide big trees.'

'Gardens that look good in winter will look good at other times.'

**Karl Langer, p.103:**

'Observe plants in their natural habitat.'

'Note how rocks and stones are bedded into the ground.'

'Establish a good soil cover (natural mulch) before planting, use worms to condition the soil beneath.'

**David Leech, p.115:**

'Build your design around local materials.'

'Curves are preferable to straight lines – things need to flow.'

'Splash out on an advanced tree to get a bare new garden off to the right (visual) start.'

'Steps must be in the right proportion.'

'A small expanse of lawn helps you to see snakes coming.' (*very Australian advice!*)

**Bruce Mackenzie, p.127:**

'Never begin a design by choosing plants.'

'Spend money not on advanced trees but on what trees are being planted into.'

'Make sure the drainage is good.'

'Attack weeds relentlessly and pull out emerging weeds before seed heads form – after rain is the easiest time.'

'Occasional seats are a bonus.'

**Jim Sinatra and Phin Murphy, p.151:**

'Look for a central 'tug' to drive your design.'

'Think about looking down on a garden, as well as out into it.'

'Watch the way the shadows move.'

'Rocks make excellent ground cover, particularly if they are already on site.'

**Vladimir Sitta, p.163:**

'Ignoring the ecological conditions of a site creates a maintenance nightmare.'

'It's not enough to create a collection of plants and call it a garden.'

**Ellis Stones, p.177:**

'Think of a courtyard as a room without a ceiling.'

'Use timber for its beauty as well as its utility.'

'No garden is too small to have water in it.'

'When placing rocks, bury more underground than you will see above ground.'

'A garden should always have a sitting spot.'

**John Sullivan, p.189**

‘Restrained planting lets the landscape speak.’

‘Find a balance between allowing light into a building especially on the ground floor, and letting the garden grow – two levels of canopy work well.’

**Kevin Taylor, Kate Cullity and Perry Lethlean, p.203**

‘Frame vistas and objects to distill and concentrate the views.’

‘Receding layers of plants with different leaf textures give a feeling of distance in narrow spaces.’

‘Use plants that don’t need much attention – a garden should be forgiving if maintenance slips.’

‘Plan a large garden to allow for meandering as well as for walking in a straight line.’

**Bernard Trainor, p.213**

‘Respect the land with which you work.’

‘Be generous with space – make paths wide enough for people to walk side by side.’

‘Use layers, especially with low walls, to diffuse the edge.’

‘If you must have lawn, use a native grass.’

**Edna Walling, p.227**

‘Trees take up less room than shrubs.’

‘Dig a square hole when planting trees – in a round hole the roots will tend to coil.’

‘The secret of paved paths is to have joints running across the path (not too meticulously) and not to have stones of too even size.’

‘Allow creeping plants to edge garden pathways and to grow into gravel drives.’

‘A small garden needs nothing more than a tree, a boulder, a little pool, turf and some low-growing plants.’

**Research shows long term benefits of living near greenspace**

**Joseph Stromberg, smithsonianmag.com, January 16, 2014, quoted in GardenDrum**

**January 26, 2014**

Although we’ve known for a while that living near green space improves people’s mental health, new research show that this improvement persists for years, making it better than winning the lottery. The sustained mental health improvement runs against conventional wisdom about people’s happiness. It’s called the ‘*hedonic effect*’ which means that people have a baseline level of happiness and that any change in circumstances that increases or decreases it soon wears off, and there’s a return to the previous baseline happiness level. The study shows that moving to a greener area doesn’t just give a temporary boost in happiness, but a lasting one. So it’s way better than winning the lottery, after which baseline happiness levels soon return. How incredible is that! The research is from the *European Centre for Environment and Human Health* at the University of Exeter. The comprehensive longitudinal study followed participants over a 5 year period, addressing several hypotheses about how moving either to greener areas, or to less green areas, might effect their mental health. Each participant moved between the second and third year of the study. Those who move to a greener area had significantly better mental health for each of the following 3 post-move years – an unexpected result. Those who moved away to a less green area reported poorer mental health immediately preceding their move, but then gradually returned to base line.

The researchers concluded: *Moving to greener urban areas was associated with sustained mental health improvements, suggesting that environmental policies to increase urban green space may have sustainable public health benefits.*

## **Bees - a Worrying Compilation of Evidence**

**Ros and Ben Walcott, Canberra**

*To make a prairie it takes a clover and one bee, -  
One clover, and a bee,  
And revery.  
The revery alone will do  
If bees are few.* Emily Dickinson

*'If the bee disappears from the surface of the earth, man would have no more than four years to live', Maurice Maeterlinck, *The Life of the Bee*, 1901.*

This telling quote has been attributed to Einstein, Darwin, and E.O. Wilson as well as to Maurice Maeterlinck, but evidence points to Maeterlinck as being the original author. The quote points to the remarkable importance of the bee to all horticulture and agriculture. Without bees, no pollination, and therefore no fertilized flowers, fruit etc. 'One well-worn, and probably accurate, estimate says that one-third of the human diet can be traced directly, or indirectly, to bee pollination. This estimate is probably more accurate for human diets in developed countries.

(<http://interests.caes.uga.edu/insectlab/agimpact.html>)



Victorian bee brooch in diamonds and emeralds - precious indeed  
Photo by C. Walcott

There are over 1,500 species of native bees in Australia (probably many more that haven't yet been described) and most of them are solitary with the female making her own nest in the ground (*Insects of Australia* 1970). Many of these bees collect pollen and nectar from a variety of plants but some are quite specialized in the flowers that they visit. They build a nest burrow which can have a number of chambers each one containing an egg and food supply. The adults live only 3-4 months then die while the eggs hatch in the spring providing new bees for the summer months. In addition to the solitary bees, Australia has about ten species of stingless social native bees (genera *Tetragonula* - previously called *Trigona* – and *Austroplebeia*). These stingless bees live in large colonies and have a similar social hierarchy to that found in the introduced European Honey Bee. These stingless bees have been shown to be valuable pollinators of crops such as macadamias, mangos, watermelons and lychees. They may also benefit strawberries, citrus, avocados and many others.



Blue Banded Bee on *G. witteeri*, Photo by Wendy Marriott    Stingless bee (right) *Tetragonula*

Of the ten plants described as helpful to native bees, not surprisingly, seven of them are Australian natives, *Callistemon*, *Eucalyptus*, *Grevillea*, *Leptospermum*, *Melaleuca*, *Westringia* and all types of daisies. A complete list of the plants nominated by contributors as native bee-friendly was published in *Aussie Bee* Issue 6 (May 1998).

Australia's early European settlers introduced European Honey Bees (*Apis mellifera*) to ensure a good supply of honey. Naturally a few escaped and they are now wild throughout most of Australia's southern states. These Honey Bees play an important role as pollinators of crops and wild flowers. But some wild flowers have suffered from the presence of Honey Bees as their flowers can only be pollinated by native bees. Some native bees use a special pollination technique required by certain flowers called buzz pollination. Honey Bees do not use this technique and remove pollen without pollinating the flowers. (Australian Museum website)

European honey bees are incredibly productive. A single colony can easily contain 10,000-60,000 working bees. Each female worker lives for roughly a month and is so effective at pollination that she may forage at more than 500 flowers in a round trip.

Since bees travel anywhere up to 10km away to gather pollen and nectar, their pollination services extend way beyond your garden or those of your neighbours.

Australian farmers rely heavily on the introduced commercial bee, *Apis mellifera*, to pollinate their crops as do farmers in other countries.

The annual California springtime pollination ritual in almond orchards is the world's largest pollination event. California's almond industry is comprised of about 750,000 bearing acres plus about 80,000 non-bearing acres. On average, two hives are required per acre for almond flower pollination. About 1.5 million managed honey bee hives of the 2.5 million managed hives in the US pollinate almond flowers. More honey bees will be required in the future as California's almond acreage expands. Future plantings are expected to slow slightly in the short term.

An adequate and affordable honey bee supply is critical to the long-term prosperity of almond growers and beekeepers.

Worries continue over significant bee losses in the last five years linked to a phenomenon called colony collapse disorder (CCD). The disorder is about the loss of billions of bees over time which flew from hives and never returned.

"We have not figured out what causes CCD," Cummings said. "There is a very high correlation with the presence of the nosema parasite and the varroa mite."

Estimates peg annual bee losses in the 30 percent range in recent years.

**Cary Blake**, [Future demands keep almond industry, beekeepers abuzz](#)

*Western Farm Press, Jan. 24, 2012.*

**Bumblebees in Europe are in BIG trouble**, with 24% of known species now threatened with extinction from a combination of climate change, habitat loss and farming practices. Their loss will have flow-on consequences for both food security and associated plant species. [gardendrum.com/2014/04/13](http://gardendrum.com/2014/04/13).

Many of the 68 bumblebee species found in Europe are important pollinators, not just of European food crops, but of specific host plants, which will also become extinct once their pollinator is lost. Of Europe's 5 most important pollinators, 3 are bumblebees.

The Critically Endangered *Bombus cullumanus* has seen its habitat range shrink dramatically over the past decades as European farming practices have removed clover, its main food source. As a consequence, its numbers have declined 80% in the past 10 years.

Bumblebees like *Bombus hyperboreus* from the arctic and sub-arctic regions of Scandinavia and northern Russia are very susceptible to the effects of climate change, where increasing temperatures and more prolonged droughts will greatly reduce its habitat.

The EU has been taking steps to help all bees by banning certain insecticides, and bumblebees will be studied under the Status and Trends of European Pollinators, or STEP program.

"The contribution of bumblebees to food security and the maintenance of wider plant biodiversity is an essential part of Europe's natural capital," says Simon Potts, Coordinator of STEP.

While we are all so dependent on bees for pollination in our gardens and in agriculture, researchers are finding it very difficult to come up with methods to combat colony collapse disorder, nosema parasite, varroa mite, and the pressures on bees from climate change, habitat loss and agricultural practices. Please make your gardens bee friendly by having easy access to water and a variety of nectar producing plants year round. Keep bees if you can..



Foraging bumble bee from Gardendrum website

## **Horse Island – Quiet, Secluded, Beautiful**

**Ros Walcott, Canberra**

**Photos by Ben Walcott, Canberra**

Horse Island is an 80 hectare private island surrounded by the Tuross Estuary, located on the south coast of NSW near Bodalla. It was originally used for food crops and grazing, but for the last 25 years it has been lovingly cared for by Christina and Trevor Kennedy. When they purchased the island it was covered in weeds, particularly blackberry, which they have cleared. The island is now under conservation covenants, including all the foreshores. To get to the island you cross a private bridge at a narrow part of the river.

Over the years they have added three houses, a pavilion and pool, horse paddocks and stables, an airstrip, tennis court, a challenging golf course, various other buildings and oyster racks in the river. The garden is an enclosed area of around 20 hectares, wrapped around a picturesque bay of the Tuross Lakes. The buildings and gardens are on the highest part of the land, which does expose them to the winds, but also protects them from any frost. Different gardens surround each building and structure and are unified by mown lawns.



Pool pavillion



The most recent house with its two year old garden

The gardens around the original cottage are now about 25 years old and around the newest cottage only 2 years old, so the garden is evolving and changing over time. The original trees are the magnificent Spotted Gum, *Eucalyptus maculata*, Blackbutt, *Eucalyptus pilularis* and Southern Mahogany, *Eucalyptus botryoides*. Most of the plantings are shrubs, particularly grevilleas, banksias and baeckeas. The grevilleas grow marvellously in this garden, especially the dramatic large flowered ones, as you can see below.



*Grevillea* 'Golden Lyre'



Standard grevilleas and mature Spotted Gums

There are mature hedges of *Syzygium*, *Grevillea* and *Callitris*. One hedge around the tennis court is a 'tapestry' hedge of *Agonis flexuosa nana*, *Acacia baileyana* and *Callistemon* 'Great Balls of Fire'. It is a spectacular success as can be seen below.



Tennis court with 'tapestry hedge' of *Agonis flexuosa nana*, *Acacia baileyana* and *Callistemon* 'Great Balls of Fire'.

The 'Big House' has a croquet lawn surrounded by clipped Blueberry Ash, *Eleaocarpus reticulatus*, which is particularly restful spot. Christina has used many Kangaroo Paws in her garden design, particularly the series 'Bush Gems' by Angus Stewart.

Everywhere is the natural backdrop of foreshore growth of *Casuarina glauca* and some wonderful stands of Forest Red Gums, *Eucalyptus tereticornis*.



Grevilleas and Gynea Lily, *Doryanthes excelsa*

Christina has adhered to her Australian native plant palette almost exclusively, but has allowed some magnolias into her design, as they are a traditional tree with her family in this area. Christina is an adventurous gardener who loves to try difficult or newly developed plants. She has found a perfect spot for Peter Ollerenshaw's *Eucalyptus* 'Blue Veil' which hangs decoratively from this pergola.



*Eucalyptus* 'Blue Veil'

She has one garden, originally designed by Peter Olde, called by her children the 'Oldie Garden', which is full of interesting grevilleas. She also has many standard grevilleas and banksias along one path which gives another level of bloom to the garden.

The vegetable garden has a spectacular view of its own and consists of built up beds with hydroponic equipment.



There is one wall of enormous Macrozamia underplanted with Elkhorn Ferns which provides a magnificent picture.

## Open Gardens Australia

### “Natives on the South Coast with Angus Stewart”



On Saturday the 30<sup>th</sup> and Sunday the 31<sup>st</sup> of August 2014, Open Gardens Australia together with Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens, will host two workshops entitled “Natives on the South Coast with Angus Stewart”. The first half of the day will be held at the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens. During the second half of the day guests will be transported via hired mini buses to and from *Horse Island*, near Bodalla. The workshops will be a ticketed one day event for 58 paying guests. The Sunday workshop will be a repeat of the Saturday workshop.

#### TICKETS

\$125 Per Person. No concession rates. No children. Morning tea and lunch included.

## Report of Melbourne garden visit and meeting March 16 Diana Snape Vic

### Garden visit

We visited the garden of Michelle Gallant and David Rose, situated on a sloping block with adjacent woodland. Unfortunately neither Michelle nor David was able to be there but GDSG member Michael Cook acted as our guide. The meeting was held outside. The day had the sort of weather for which Melbourne was once famous, with blue sky and sunshine alternating with grey clouds and showers. Fortunately we were able to have lunch and walk around the garden before any rain but, for the meeting, coats were put on then taken off and chairs were moved in and out of shelter.

There was already a pond at house level, adjacent to a patio area, when Michael undertook the construction of two more pools at lower levels, with linking rockwork and water system. The largest pool was at the lowest level and the pools were connected by streams and a waterfall. Michael told us that control of water on the block was very important, to channel and retain water, preventing leakage from the system so water could be recycled between pools.

Two types of rock were already on site. Michael decided to use the flagstone rocks for steps and causeways, while he used large basalt rocks in construction of the pools.

Members commented on the tranquillity of the garden, with the presence and sound of both water and birds, including yellow and rose robins and an Eastern spinebill. The garden blends well into the natural environment, with woodland trees providing borrowed landscape. The owners' artistic interests were demonstrated by artworks such as sculptures and ceramics. Which members liked which artworks very much depended, as always, on personal taste.

We admired plants chosen by Michelle. In or close to ponds, there were *Baloskion (Restio) tetraphyllus* with its beautiful soft foliage and *Lythrum salicifolia* with deep mauve flowers. Two forms of *Lomandra confertifolia* were side by side, ssp. *rubiginosa* with blue-grey foliage and 'Little Con' with light green, an attractive contrast. Also with soft foliage, an isopogon grew next to a mature *Acacia cognata* 'Green Screen', another pleasing combination.

Several Hard Tree-ferns, *Cyathea australis*, near the patio and top pond had some fronds that clearly had been burnt during the very hot spell in January. There were also a number of green fronds. We

discussed whether the brown, dead frond should be removed by pruning. There were two sides to this question, the practical and the aesthetic.

Practically, we thought not before the hot weather finishes, as the dead fronds do protect the living ones. (New fronds will probably not appear until we have proper autumn rains.) Aesthetically, removing brown fronds leaving just the green would give a more formal look, consistent with some pruned plants around the patio. A general trend too is more formal near the house becoming more naturalistic further from the house. However, the brown fronds tie in nicely with nearby tall, narrow, rusted steel sculptures and also the browns of trunks etc. in the nearby bushland.

**Remainder of meeting** (in among the showers of rain)

There was a little discussion about the *Newsletter* and how much value the inclusion of photos added to the description of a garden. On the other hand, photos also benefit from some interpretation as to the aspects of design they may illustrate.

I asked members for suggestions of suitable nurseries where our GDSG bookmarks might be made available to customers. Several members volunteered to take a number of bookmarks to various selected nurseries to see whether the owners would like to display them.

Therese Scales has offered to write a letter on behalf of the Melbourne Branch of the GDSG to the Property and Campus Services staff about the restoration of the Ellis Stones memorial garden. The meeting voted in favour of this. I reminded Therese that our leader Ben Walcott had authorised the donation of \$1,000 from the GDSG towards the project, with Bev Hanson as the designer, providing the opportunity to get some matching funds hopefully to go towards completing the project. University wheels grind slowly!

We thanked Michael Cook for his organisation for the meeting and also those who kindly brought goodies for afternoon tea.

Photos by Nicky Zanen, Melbourne, rain one minute then sun the next





### **Next meeting**

A reminder that all Victorian members are welcome at Melbourne meetings - also, of course, GDSG members visiting from interstate.

Sunday June 15, at Lyhn & Gordon Barfield's, 10 Margaret Street Research (Melway 12E11). Lyhn is a member of the Study Group who has not yet attended any meetings, so everyone please wear a name-tag.

Their property is easy to find. Follow Main Road through Eltham, then turn L at the 2nd roundabout (there are two close together.) After about 1 1/2 minutes turn L into Margaret Street and it's second on the right.

Come for a BYO lunch at 1pm if you're able, otherwise the meeting (including garden visit) at 2pm and BYO afternoon tea afterwards. Please contact me by email (dsnape3@bigpond.com) or phone (9836 3916) to let me know if you're able to come.

Tentative date for the following meeting

Sunday August 3, at Barbara Rook's garden, Montrose  
November date and venue to be determined.

### **Canberra GDSG Visit to Carwoola, Tuesday 15 April 2014**

*On a sunny autumn day 20 members of ANPS Canberra and Canberra GDSG gathered at Carwoola to visit the garden and surrounds of Martin and Frances Butterfield's property. Below is Frances' description of their garden and its history.*

## Age of garden and history

## Frances and Martin Butterfield

We live on a rural 55 acre block. The garden is about 2 acres. We bought the property 7 years ago because we wanted somewhere quiet, with bush and a vegetable garden. We're the fourth sets of owners since the house was built in the 1980s. Each set seem to have had different aspirations and the result is an eclectic mix. We're told that the original owners wanted an English style garden and as a result, we have a large green lawn, daffodils, roses and deciduous trees in marked beds. We also have rampant *Vinca major*, which we weren't knowledgeable enough to tackle when we first arrived. Later owners seemed to like Australian natives, because mixed up with the roses are callistemon and this does neither justice.



Along the way a stable was built and horses were kept, on what we refer to as the Bald Hill. A vegetable garden and a dog run were enclosed with cyclone fencing, 2 and a bit dams were built, a good bore dug, hundreds of meters of irrigation pipes laid (most of which don't work now) and an automatic watering system installed for the lawns, run from bore water. We feel like archaeologists as we are constantly digging up old pipe or bits of concrete.

When we arrived the place had been rented for 3 years and was terribly overgrown and we have been fighting the weeds ever since. The first priorities were to try and improve the bush and grow some vegetables. We were fortunate that the soil in the vegetable garden had been improved; rocks removed and top soil added. Everywhere else is rock and clay with virtually no soil. We tackled the 2 barest areas first, with help from Greening Australia. The bare paddock at the entrance was direct seeded with acacias and eucalypts. This has been most successful, although there are only a few eucalypts and they look a little odd in their rows. We planted hundreds of bushes and trees on the Bald Hill, but it was a drought and the animals were hungry and so very little has survived. Recently we planted a small area of grevilleas which we fenced and watered for the first summer and this looks promising.

We retained the formal garden structure and tried adding more plants. Gradually we have learnt what will survive the kangaroos, rabbits and wallabies and live on limited bore water. It's colder than in Canberra, being 800 metres altitude, so more things won't survive the cold and the season starts later.

The current project is to create a new garden of approximately half an acre. It is to be a transition zone between the natural bush and the largely exotic garden. We'd like to:

- beautify the dam and create a quiet sitting place



- create a swamp / wet land in the area below the dam which gets seepage and run off from the drive and
- plant initially 3 areas which will not only be attractive, but attract wildlife, especially birds.

It would seem sensible to consider what already grows there in small numbers. Apart from the eucalypts and *Acacia dealbata*, there are clumps of grass (mainly *Joycea pallida*), *Kunzea ericoides*, reeds, *Hibbertia obtusifolia*, *Pultenaea procumbens*, *Lomandra longifolia*, *Brachyloma daphenoides*, *Leucopogon fletheri* and *Melechris urcuelata*. But these lack oomph. They could be tough contrast plants.

Characteristics that I'm aiming for are:

- It's a big area so I'd like the plants to be noticeable; no blushing violets.
- I like green, so some shrubs should be green green e.g. *Acacia rubida* has a bright colour.
- Contrast between lush green and dry, grey green would work.
- Contrast in heights and textures
- Would quite like to incorporate local and found materials e.g. our rocks to edge the paths. We also have star pickets, bricks, corrugated iron, tyres and wood.

The constraints are :

- the wildlife, so plantings will have to be fenced initially
- no top soil but lots of rocks.
- difficulty of watering the dry areas. Rainfall is ~700mm per year
- limited budget. We have killed too many plants to risk a lot of money.
- limited time and effort.
- eastern aspect so gets morning sun
- moderate slope from SW to NE

The constant joy from our block comes from what grows and lives here naturally, the birds, other wildlife and the plants. Lists are available of all we've identified so far. We joined the ANPS Canberra Wednesday Walkers to learn about the plants and have learnt that is a life time's task, but enhances our appreciation of what we have.

Martin has created lists of native plants on the property, birds seen, fungi, animals, reptiles and amphibians, invertebrates, and some interesting graphs of rainfall statistics. Anyone who would like any or all of these lists please contact Ros Walcott, [rwalcott@netspeed.com.au](mailto:rwalcott@netspeed.com.au).



Waiting for the school bus  
Kangaroos drawn by Lesley Page

### Treasurer's Report:

Bank Balance: \$ 9,283.12  
Term Deposit: \$23,811.05  
Total: \$33,094.17

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**ANPSA Garden Design Study Group Newsletter is published four times per year in February, May, August and November.** Copy is due by the first of the these months although earlier submissions will be welcomed by the Editor.

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