



GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP

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Newsletter
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Leader's Comments

We would like to thank Lawrie Smith (see next page) for getting started on organizing a garden group in Queensland and for his enthusiastic support of the Study Group. It would be a great addition to have some tropical gardens in our mix and show that native plants are versatile no matter what your climate. Those of us with zone envy can also enjoy and learn from experiences in other parts of the country. We would encourage any group to go and visit gardens and write them up for the *Newsletter*. A few pictures and accompanying words can give others a feeling for the garden. In Canberra, for example, we have a once a month daytime activity which often visits a garden and serves as a Garden Design visit. These visits usually attract up to 20 people. Thanks to Brian Walters, we have added a section to the garden visit area of our website (www.anpsa.org.au/design) which is called "Garden Snapshots". These are short pictorial reports of gardens that have been visited by members of the Study Group or reports from the gardeners themselves. We would encourage all of you to take a few photos of your garden and send them along with a bit of a description so we can show the diversity and interest that gardens have when using native plants.

Ros and I attended a gathering at the National Arboretum Canberra recently that included the Executive Manager. The former Open Gardens Australia has donated funds to create one of 7 gardens located between the Village and the Margaret Whitlam pavilion. We discovered that one of the gardens has yet to be claimed and so we suggested that it be a formal garden using exclusively Australian native plants. It would complement the Southern Tablelands Ecosystem Park at the Arboretum which also features native plants but in an ecosystem park with an informal setting. Of the 100 forests of trees, about 1/3 are native Australian plants so a formal garden of native plants seems appropriate since all the other formal gardens are mostly exotic plants. The proposal which we have sent to the Executive Manager has the support of ANPSA, the Australian Native Plants Society Canberra Region and Angus Stewart. Our first task is to get an in-principle agreement from the Arboretum for the development of the garden then we have to identify funds to accomplish it. The idea would be to have a national competition for the garden design. The garden would be maintained by the Arboretum with help from volunteers. We will keep you posted as matters develop.



Templetonia retusa

Garden Design Study Group – Queensland Chapter

Lawrie Smith, Queensland

Every issue of the GDSG *Newsletter* is filled with discussions, descriptions and photographs of how members are creating wonderful gardens where our native plants provide a unique Australian character which enhances the surrounds of their homes. I am always envious at the quality of the plant material, the diversity of the textures and colours, particularly in the smaller plants, that are available to work with in the temperate areas of the continent. There is a radical difference to the native gardens we establish in the subtropics and tropics where our plants are generally larger, with robust textures and scattered intense colour in flower and foliage. Nevertheless the many wonderful native gardens I have seen from the NSW border to north Queensland and inland all exhibit that special and unique character that defines a 'sense of place' that positions them firmly in the locality or region in which they thrive. Their tropical aesthetic qualities are equally inspiring but can certainly never be confused with the gardens in the southern half of the continent – they are complementary and it is important to ensure that an optimum range of 'Australian native gardens' is covered by the GDSG.

At the recent National Conference in Canberra our own Jane Fountain was elected as ANPSA Study Group Coordinator and what a sterling job she is doing already! At the meeting of Study Groups there was enthusiastic support from those present to expand the activities and interest in gardens to other regions. As in all activities, it takes someone to serve as a catalyst to get things started, therefore I volunteered to encourage members in Queensland to join this Study Group and meet together several times a year to visit selected gardens and write reports for the GDSG *Newsletter*.

If you have not seen a GDSG *Newsletter* why not scan through the whole collection which is freely available on the ANPSA website. They are all indexed and so it is easy to find appropriate articles on what interests you particularly - (link to the index <http://anpsa.org.au/design/GDSGnews.html>). If you scan through issues of the GDSG *Newsletter* you will see that we in Queensland do not readily share our northern garden efforts with others elsewhere in Australia. Some of our local members have said to me that '*no one would want to see my garden, it is not designed or comparable with others*' – but don't be put off - you probably have natural design flair as you mix and match various plants and experiment with aspect and soils. It is important to share this knowledge. You will find much invaluable information as a member of the GDSG and most of it will apply equally well to us in Queensland. So please consider joining the Garden Design Study Group and in the first instance contact me so that I can organise a local Queensland Chapter and commence the process of garden visits and adding your comments to a local news sheet to keep us all in contact and informed.



Banksia menziesii dwarf (left)
Syzygium australe (right)



Correspondence

Diana Snape, Vic

Hi Ros,

Thank you for the last *Newsletter*, full of beautiful and interesting gardens. Keep up the good work!

Fiona Johnson is to be congratulated on her recording of her wonderful garden throughout the year. Gardens of Australian plants are great in this respect, with winter usually being just as exciting a time as spring, though maybe not in the cold and snow of a winter near Blayney! The quietest time in the garden is often summer but, even then, there are always plants in flower - or doing something else interesting.

Jeff Howes' garden with its orchids still looks lovely - I haven't seen it for many years. The Melbourne GDSG group visited Chris Larkin's garden, of course, and also the garden of Greg and Glenda Lewin. This was reported in the *Newsletter* of November 2014. The Lewin garden was rather dry when we visited, though very attractive, and it looks in the photos as though it has benefitted from some rain in the intervening year or so.

I don't think I commented after the November *Newsletter* on your delightful article on contrasts of flower and foliage. I find such contrasts really important when choosing plants and, as always, enjoyed Ben's photos in illustration. Congratulations to Ben on the success of the ANPSA Conference in November, with over 200 registrants. It takes a lot of work to bring that about. Congratulations also for the very good attendance at the GDSG meeting at the Conference and on his election as President of ANPSA. Our Study Group Leader certainly has a number of achievements!

Brian and I have visited the Olive Pink Garden in Alice Springs a couple of times, the first being not long after it opened. I remember the second time it was a very hot day and there was no delightful Bean Tree Cafe then! It's good to hear that more is being done to attract visitors to this special garden.

Fiona Johnson, Canberra and NSW

At Cloudy Hill, we have a couple of small tank-ring garden beds (which are only partially successful, but that's another story) next to an area frequented by eastern grey kangaroos. We do not want to fence the roos out completely but do want a visual barrier to discourage them from bouncing across the beds. Alex had some old timber so built a rustic fence, complete with kitsch fence-sitting chooks. Works a treat.

The unexpected outcome is that the new fence also de-emphasises the unattractive shade house that previously stuck out like a sore thumb, even though partially obscured by shrubs. It's still ugly, but seems to have retired just a little more into the general scene now. Good job!



Sarah Cains , NSW

Many thanks for your excellent NL, Ben. I have taken the liberty of forwarding to a landscape architect pal here who is keen to learn more and plant Aus plants on her projects - hopefully we can lure her into joining!

My membership in the mail.

Thanks for all your efforts for the group

Bev Lockley, Vic

Eucalyptus tetraptera an open mallee with huge leaves to 25 cm long and red buds. Usually from coastal locations but growing okay in Katanning. I could supply seed if any one wanted to have a go at growing this species. Bev Lockley (bev.lockley@gmail.com)



Caroline and John Gunter, NSW

Dear Ben and Ros,

Thank you for your *Newsletter* wonderments and your great efforts at making native plants for gardens so desirable and attractive. I loved Fiona Johnson's Cloudy Hill seasons article. Will someone else step into the role to follow? (*Any offers? Fiona has demonstrated how to share a seasonal story with us. Ed.*)

Nicky Zanen, Vic

I love seeing native plants being used around commercial buildings, and a hedging comprising *Correa alba*, Ovens Wattle, a grevillea and a banksia caught my eye recently. The area covered was very narrow and the plants well pruned. (Wantirna, Victoria)



Grasses and other monocotyledons

Diana Snape. Vic

I recently attended a workshop on grasses and other monocotyledons, held by the Friends of RBG Cranbourne. We were ably led by experts through the details of classification of grasses (Graeme Lorimer), then other monocots (Neville Walsh). I started off with optimistic determination to finally master classification of these marvellous plants but rather lost my confidence along the way. I am certainly not going to write about taxonomy. Two other speakers in particular touched on aspects more related to garden design.

Cultivating (mainly) grasses

One speaker, Brian Bainbridge, talked about cultivating (mainly) grasses. He structured his talk under four Rs - repetition, reference, rejuvenation and residence.

His first advice was to use repetition of as many plants of a single species as possible in an area, to achieve different rhythms and patterns with the different foliage, flower and seed-head types. He used very beautiful photos as illustration and inspiration. It was fascinating. Some patterns were soft and curved, some stiff and straight, some dense, some more sparse, with different colours, different types of flower or seed-head - no two looked exactly the same, all had their own beauty.

Such areas of a single species of grass make a wonderful matrix or background for any colourful forbs, whether in nature or a planted garden. (Brian said like a chorus behind soloists.) They look fantastic backlit, or with dew or frost, and their movement adds another dimension to a garden.



Woordoo Grasslands in Victoria

Using references is obviously important, to choose reliable species to suit the growing conditions. References can be books, knowledgeable people, or reference sites. In a wetland area, for example, just a few inches difference in height means different species will prosper. (One species mentioned that was tolerant of a variety of conditions was *Rytidosperma duttonianum* or Brown-back Wallaby-grass.)

Rejuvenation is essential for grasses, for biomass reduction - "they were made to be eaten". The growing point of a grass is near its base but may migrate up through dead leaves if no rejuvenation occurs. Fire is ideal but normally unavailable. Grazing animals such as kangaroos are rarely there. Most of us have to rely on cutting back or mowing at a suitable height, at a suitable time of year. An annual mow might be carried out after flowering and seeding, or mowing done once every three (maximum five) years.



(Left) Patch of *Austrodanthonia racemosa* (Slender Wallaby-grass) in our old garden ,
(Right) Unknown orchid

The last R is as a residence for a myriad of residents - mainly insects, also spiders and birds such as finches. Grasses are the basis of a whole fascinating ecosystem.

(Re)creating natural grasslands

Sue Murphy and colleagues at Burnley College have done a lot of work on trying to (re)create natural grasslands. They have found it difficult. Grasses grew well - often too well - but forbs were more difficult to maintain.

Grasslands once covered one third of Victoria. However, sadly, as they grew on rich volcanic soils, almost all were replaced quite rapidly by pastures for livestock. Now only tiny areas remain. Natural grasslands grew in areas with an annual rainfall between 250 and 750mm. Common forbs included daisies, orchids, lilies and peas. A grassland can be more 'grassy' or more 'forby'.



Walcott meadow (above)

Caesia parviflora var. *vittata* (Pale Grass-lily) (right)



For natural or created grasslands, burning is a good management tool. It can be timed to remove annual weeds and it kills tree seedlings to keep the area open for grasses. It also kills superficial soil seed banks to reduce biomass.

A single annual weed species can be eliminated in one year by removal of all flower stems before seeding occurs. In areas over-run by a variety of weeds it's too difficult to remove them selectively. One extreme solution is to 'scalp' the upper layers of soil in that the area, removing the soil completely with all its seeds and start again with the seed mix of the wanted grasses and forbs - a lot of work!

In question time, some-one asked about the loss of the mycorrhizal fungi in the soil with scalping. Graeme Lorimer said this was an area of which almost nothing was known - micorrhizal fungi, bacteria, possibly other soil micro-organisms, all played a part in the ecosystem underground and almost no research had been done on this. Who knows just how important this is?

Creating a grassland, how realistic and authentic do you want it to be? Do you want a predominance of colourful forbs, which can look stunning - but probably for a relatively short time each year? You need to balance authenticity and aesthetics.

As Ben and Ros have found, managing a large grassland area in a garden over many years is a challenge. For those of us with smaller gardens, where closer maintenance and specific weed removal is possible, just trying a small patch of a grass with a few selected forbs can give a lot of pleasure.

Other monocots

Little was said about the use of all the other monocots in garden design, though much of Brian Bainbridge's talk is applicable. Many pictures were shown by Rodger Elliot (and others) to illustrate the superb range of monocots we have in Australia. They add a distinctive element to our gardens and I think their use should be encouraged. They occur virtually everywhere in Australia and are an important part of our natural environment. A garden of shrubs without any monocots is 'unnatural'. In the plant family tree, I was rather tickled that orchids are now considered a very 'primitive' monocot whereas grasses are the most 'developed' of all! Go the grasses! Unfortunately, being wind-pollinated, that's just what they do, so there was much discussion about their potential as weeds. Graeme said they have spread world-wide and colonised wherever conditions suited them, but we still should be very careful about introducing foreign grasses into our own area. (How foreign is foreign? How long is a piece of string?)

The final speaker, Ian Clarke, talked about his illustrations and photos for his impressive new book "Name Those Grasses". I'm not sure I'm any closer to doing that but I am sure his book would help. I think the first step is to make sure I know all the locals.

I recommend Native Grasses for Australian Gardens by Nola Parry and Jocelyn Jones, 2007 as an excellent introduction to the use of strappy leaved plants in gardens. Ed.

How Marbled Geckos Are Helping To Design Our Garden

Shirley Daniels, Canberra

We had a few ideas about what our garden should be like, as well as what it should not be like. First and foremost it had to be environmentally friendly. No poisons were to be used. To be sustainable no irrigation system was to be used. Australian native plants including native grasses were our first choice but there was to be no mowing. Occasional use of a hand slasher and pruning are acceptable.

A mix of native and exotics were quite acceptable as people and their movement around the planet are part of the ecosystem as we see it. Exotics detrimental to our garden would eventually be removed and natives would dominate. Needless to say our mistakes were many but they would require a book called "What I have Learned From My Mistakes."

We have tried to include plants to attract birds, insects, lizards and mammals. We have also included people-friendly Australian native food plants such as *Austromyrtus dulcis*, *Solanum*, *Billardiera*, *Rubus* and a few others. The birds and mammals seem to get to them first and I am not game to eat my native tomatoes, although I have a good supply of dried tomatoes from Alice Springs which I use occasionally.

On summer nights we often see marbled geckos on our screen doors, obviously attracted to the insects and spiders that were attracted to the lights. We were pleased that they seemed to have made our garden a permanent home, although we didn't know where they sheltered from predators during the day.



Photo by Dr. S. Chyb, Australian Museum

Back to the garden, which was a bit of a mess and needed a second opinion to make it more people friendly. Paths seemed to be the most interesting feature of the gardens we had admired or read about. It was time to talk to a garden designer.

We very quickly became aware that our budget of \$5000 was not sufficient to pay for the required work. Later, a neighbour, who had some very fine work carried out on their garden, told us they had spent \$45,000!

The only solution was to do it ourselves and allocate tasks as money became available. Our first job was to move a step leading off a deck. It was made of concrete paver set on hollowed concrete bricks and had sunken and looked untidy. At no cost, it could be lifted to make it tidier and the the path leading from it defined with pebbles at a small cost. What could be easier?

On lifting the paver I was met by the big blinking eyes of a marbled gecko. There are only two types of gecko found in the Canberra region and *Christinus marmoratus* was one of them. The paver had to be replaced immediately and left as it was, apart from a few extra rocks from my rock collection added as wedges. This paver is now carefully stepped on to avoid any movement that might disturb a sleeping gecko.

The paths are now mainly defined with raked casuarina needles and eucalypt leaves. We need to build more rock and fallen timber shelters. Perhaps this is how we will eventually edge our paths, thanks to our designing marbled gecko, *Christinus marmoratus*.

Banksias in Pots and in the Garden

Words Ros Walcott, Canberra

Photos Ben Walcott, Canberra

I love banksias, not only for their distinguished foliage, colourful cones and variety of form, but particularly because they bloom in winter. In Canberra our banksias flower all through the winter providing nectar for the birds and a feast for our eyes. From the very earliest bud through to the shaggy end of flowering, banksias are a joy in the garden. They change slowly, which gives us a chance to really appreciate each stage of flowering.



Banksia attenuata

We have tried growing 90 different species and cultivars of banksia in our garden over the last 13 years with mixed success. We have planted 225 different banksias and about half of them are no longer with us. Some have died quickly, others after many years of growth, and some have inevitably been removed for failure to thrive, outgrowing their space or during reorganization of the garden. We have 40 different banksias growing in our garden at the present and 17 species in pots. I only grow those banksias in pots which do not like our soils or our frosty winter conditions. Most of the banksias in pots are from Western Australia. They do not like our clay soils and need to be moved under the eaves in winter. I would be very reluctant to forego their beauty just because they do not appreciate our conditions. We have had spectacular flowering from *B. attenuata*, *B. brownii*, *B. grandis*, *B. lindleyana*, *B. menziesii*, *B. oreophila*, *B. ornata*, *B. pilostylis* and *B. victoriae*. In fact *B. brownii* and *B. grandis* have grown very large in their pots and seem quite happy there. Both these plants have been planted in pots for over seven years and are still thriving.



Banksia lindleyana



Banksia victoriae

The soil mix in our pots is one third washed coarse river sand and two thirds native planting mix. I fertilise lightly once a year, as I do not want lots of foliage growth and no development of cones. You have to be patient. Some of my pots are seven years old and still have not bloomed – not too many of those, I am happy to report. Many of the West Australian banksias are fussy in the east. Some appear perfectly content then die overnight. Those of you who came to the ANPSA Conference in November 2015 would have seen a pot in our garden of *Banksia attenuata* in full lime-green splendour. That magnificent plant died in the heat before last Xmas and will need to be replaced. On the other hand several of our banksias in pots have been flowering prolifically for seven years and show no signs of slowing down.

I also have two *Banksia brownii* in the garden. These are grafted plants from Phil Trickett (thank you Phil) and so far they are doing well. Frosts do not appear to bother them, but our clay soil does – hence the grafting. I had a magnificent *Banksia verticillata* which outgrew its pot. I planted it in the garden and it leapt up only to succumb to the frosts a few months later. I am happy to say that Phil Trickett took cuttings from that plant, so it lives on. I also have *B. occidentalis* and *B. pulchella*, which are grafted, both growing well in the garden.



Banksia oreophila



Banksia pulchella

Two of our desert banksias, *B. ornata* and *B. lindleyana*, are incredibly popular with both birds and insects. *B. ornata* is the only reason that New Holland Honeyeaters come to our garden in the winter. Both these plants were grown from seed by Mark Clements. Ben has also tried growing banksias from seed from The Banksia Farm, near Albany, WA with mixed success. Many of these banksias, such as *Banksia sphaerocarpa* var. *latifolia*, are incredibly slow growing, while others, like *Banksia seminuda*, shoot out of the ground. We have yet to have continuing success with the coveted *Banksia audax*, *Banksia cuneata*, *Banksia nutans*, and *Banksia plagiocarpa*.

Our local *B. marginata* is in flower at present and is full of Eastern Spinebills, Grey Fantails, Silvereyes, Leaden Flycatchers and Superb Fairy Wrens, all attracted either to the nectar or to the insects buzzing around the nectar. Spinebills are particularly bold birds and come to feed on banksias in pots right near the house. They are not bothered by our presence at all. *Banksia praemorsa*, which reaches its highest magnificence on Kangaroo Island, at the Stokes Bay Bush Gardens, (according to me), is somewhat of a conundrum for us in Canberra. The tree is growing well each year, with plenty of new foliage, but the cones

develop to about 2-3cm long then fail to develop any further. Is it our frosts? At Stokes Bay Bush Gardens these banksias develop into large trees covered in both red and gold cones. What a magnificent sight they are with the birds fighting each other for ownership of those prolific sources of nectar.



Banksia media



Banksia paludosa



Banksia menziesii Young (left) and mature (above)

The best performing banksias for us in the garden are *Banksia* 'Bulli Baby', *Banksia cunninghamii*, *Banksia ericifolia*, *Banksia* 'Golden Girl', *Banksia marginata*, *Banksia paludosa*, *Banksia* 'Red Rover', *Banksia robur*, *Banksia serrata*, *Banksia spinulosa* 'Honey Pots' and *Banksia* 'Yellow Wing'. In pots we have had success with *Banksia brownii*, *Banksia grandis*, *Banksia lindleyana*, *Banksia menziesii*, *Banksia ornata*, *Banksia telematiaea* and *Banksia victoriae*.

I encourage you to try some different banksias in pots if they do not appreciate your garden conditions. They can be very rewarding.

Making Australian gardens with a sense of place

Dr Anne Vale Reprinted from GardenDrum, February 6, 2016

The images through this story demonstrate the diversity of three of our contemporary Australian garden designers whilst the story pays tribute to those who laid the foundation for their particular design style.



2007 image of 'Karkalla' a contemporary approach to nature like design by Fiona Brockhoff (Anne Vale)

In recent interviews, many of our most successful designers have told me that through social media tools such as Instagram they have instant access to contemporary design from all over the world. This combined with the sheer diversity of the Australian landscape from the Top End to Tasmania; from Perth to sub tropical Queensland makes the concept of 'Australian Style' nonsense to many.



A lake side garden at Main Ridge that enclosed and encompassed the house, designed by Fiona Brockhoff. (Virginia Cummins)

The aspiration to establish an 'Australian style' has largely evolved into the more realistic and meaningful philosophical and ecologically sustainable goal of creating a 'Sense of Local Place'. This means that today we have a great diversity of garden design styles which reflect the designer's style whilst taking into account their clients brief, the location and climate. In Victoria we have a number of designers who are particularly keen to apply strong, interesting design ideas to nature like settings. They don't want to copy or emulate but what each have discovered along the way is that their philosophies are in part founded on the endeavours of their predecessors. Sam Cox, Fiona Brockhoff and Philip Johnson have all been inspired by the Australian landscape in much the same way as Ellis Stones, Gordon Ford and sisters Betty Maloney and Jean Walker were in the 20th century.



Ellis Stones loved to create dry creek beds like this lovely example at Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne (Anne Vale)

Ellis Stones (1895-1975) utilised rocks and water in his garden designs to replicate the way they formed naturally in the landscape. He complemented these elements with a mix of Australian and exotic plantings. Stones career began when he crossed paths with Edna Walling sometime during 1934-35 when they were both working for the Donaldsons in the Melbourne suburb of Heidelberg. Walling was designing the garden and Stones was doing some carpentry work in the house. When Stones overheard Walling bemoaning the fact that she couldn't find anyone with the skill to build a stone wall, he offered his services. Rather dubious at first, Walling allowed him to try his hand. She was so impressed with the result that she persuaded Stones to exchange carpentry for stonework and a beneficial working relationship ensued.



Informal stone steps by Sam Cox who credits his training with Gordon Ford for his successful practice in the naturalistic landscape school (Anne Vale)

Stones, nick-named 'Rocky', progressed from working for Edna Walling to developing a garden design business of his own. His two guiding principles were 'nature is the greatest teacher' and 'gardens are for people.' He created places to sit and relax—places to eat outside on a sunny morning—shady nooks to escape summer heat. Screening was utilised for privacy and windbreaks, and to create a feeling of enclosure. His courtyards were simple, uncluttered and tranquil places. Seats were incorporated into the courtyard structure utilising materials appropriate to the building and the landscape. (Ellis Stones, *Australian Garden Design* (Melbourne: Macmillan, 1971, 42-58). This is in the 1970s yet his description could easily apply to contemporary courtyard design.



Informal swimming pool by Sam Cox (Anne Vale)

Stones believed that water in the garden was a very desirable element; he took particular care to site his pools within the natural contour of the land. Another favourite technique was the use of pebbles and boulders to create a dry creek bed in a sometimes wet area. His preferred building materials included locally sourced rocks, timber, gravel and brush fencing. Although not directly influenced by Stones, award winning designer Philip Johnson applies the same principles in the 21st century.



Meandering path through Goodenia in a Sam Cox designed garden (Anne Vale)

By the 1950s, Stones was well established in his own landscape business and providing a mentoring role for others including Gordon Ford (1918-1999).

Ford created large landscapes dominated by rocks, trees and water. His nature-like gardens were informed by the texture and structure of indigenous vegetation and the ecology and the geology of their local landscape. Ford started working for Ellis Stones in 1950 and very quickly he realised that he had 'discovered his niche in life'. In his autobiography Gordon specifically detailed the lessons he learnt in the two years he worked for Stones at the start of his career;

'Ellis Stones was my mentor and friend. I worked for him for two years in the early 1950s when he was doing some of his best work. He taught me the principles of the naturalistic school of landscaping. He taught me how to design and construct rock gardens using Melbourne basalt boulders and granite from Bendigo and surrounding districts. He taught me to simulate natural rock outcrops. He taught me about lava flow that formed the natural basalt outcrops and although the 'planes' of the rock are generally imperceptible, after some time I learned to place the rock in a horizontal manner to achieve a natural look.' (Ford and Ford, 1999, 13).

Ford went on to establish his own landscape design business and gradually his work became widely known and highly desirable. Ford pioneered the bush garden concept in the 1960s, along with Glen Wilson and others. He subsequently produced around 2000 designs between 1950 and his death in 1999, (Ford, 1999). He developed his own particular natural style in which the emphasis was on design rather than horticulture.

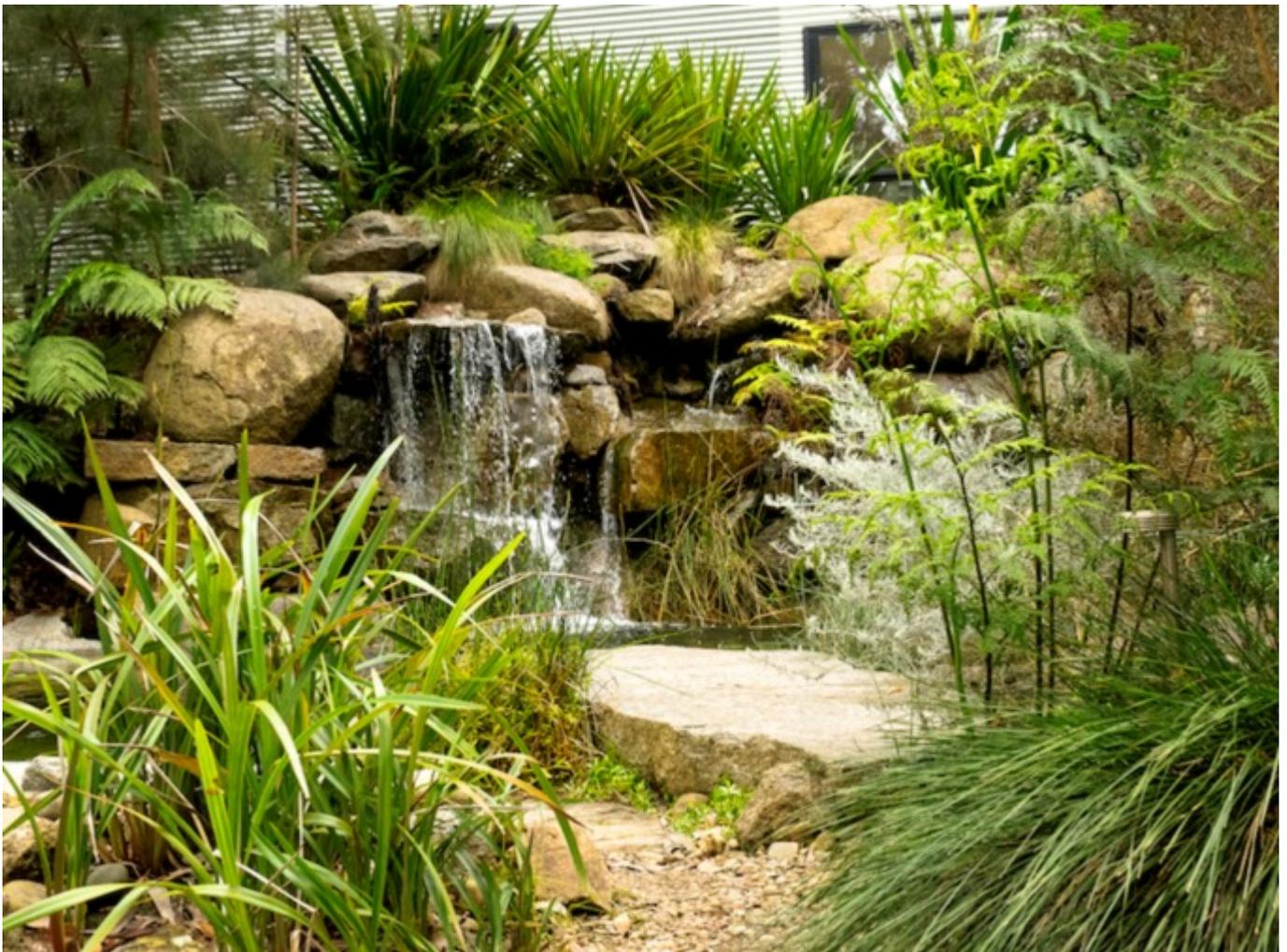


This lovely waterfall forms a spectacular and ever changing view from the living room of Sam's home. Designed by Sam Cox. (Anne Vale)

Sam Cox, who trained with Ford, has continued with his philosophies to establish a very successful landscape design business creating beautiful nature like landscapes in both urban and rural localities.

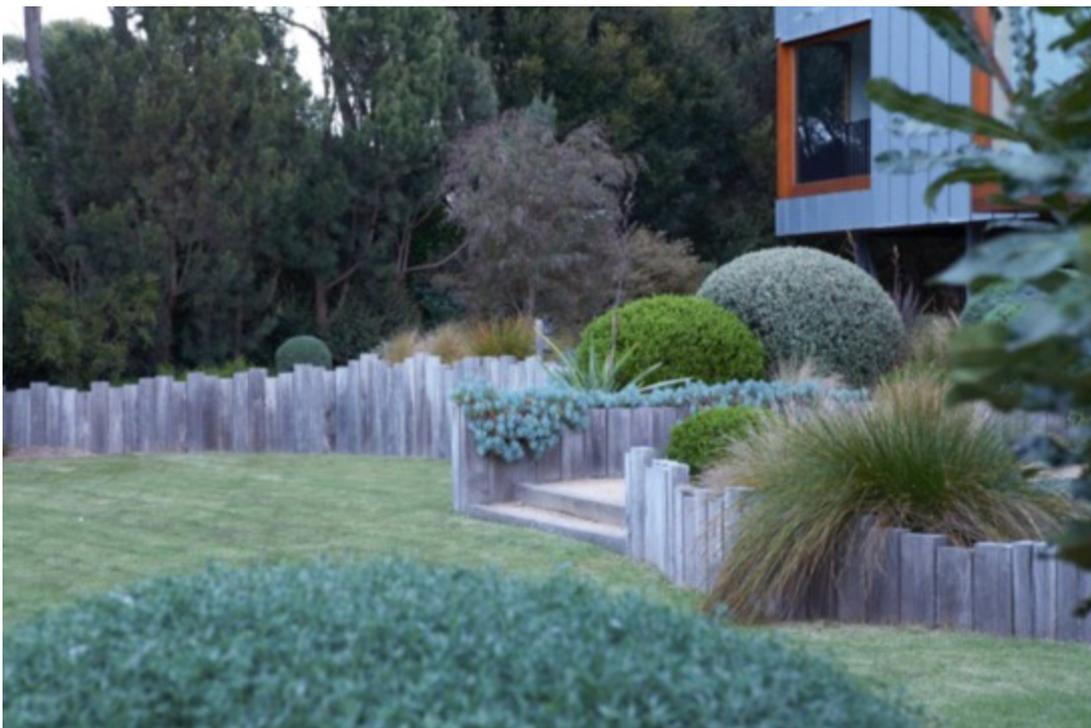
Jean Walker and Betty Maloney were proponents of the bush garden so popular in the 1960s and 1970s. The sisters instigated a completely new approach to using Australian plants in domestic gardens by emulating the Australian bush, rather than simply replacing exotic plants with Australian plants within a conventional garden design.

The sisters grew up in Colac, Western Victoria. But by the 1960s they had both moved (as newlyweds) to the Hawkesbury region on Sydney's Northern Peninsula. The bushland of the Hawkesbury sandstone is rich in native flora, a significant contrast to the green and lush landscape of Western Victoria. They were astounded by the beauty and diversity of the indigenous vegetation and immediately joined the local group of the Society for Growing Australian Plants. Botanist Alec Blombery mentored the two newcomers, helping them to become familiar with the nomenclature and growing habits of the local plants.



Johnson's stunning waterfall has been designed with secure planting pockets to allow plants to establish. (Anne Vale)

Betty became a talented botanical artist, and subsequently illustrated a number of books and book covers for various authors and regularly provided illustrations for the Society for Growing Australian Plants journal *Australian Plants*. She became the curator of the seed bank for the Society for Growing Australian Plants and organised many of the society's floral exhibitions.



This sculptured garden at Flinders is offset from the house, the main views are from the first storey, designed by Fiona Brockhoff. (Virginia Cummins)

The Maloneys and the Walkers both established their own private gardens using indigenous plants and local organic material for construction. Their philosophy was founded on 'Naturalness with Order'. The Maloneys built a new house on a vacant block of land. Maloney tied torn pieces of old sheet around all the trees she wished to retain and banned the builder from damaging them or the garden they encircled. In this way, the original native bush on the block formed the nucleus of the garden. (John Patrick, *The Australian Garden: Designs and Plants for Today* (Melbourne: Nelson Publishing, 1985, 20-23). Maloney and Walker opened this garden in aid of the local Steiner School, they expected forty or so visitors, instead, over 800 turned up, such was the growing interest in bush gardens and native plants at that time. (Betty Maloney and Jean Walker, *Designing Australian Bush Gardens*, Sydney: Horwitz Publications, 1966, 60-85).



Contemporary artwork creates a splash of colour amongst the ferns on a bush path in Philip Johnson's garden at Olinda. (Anne Vale)

The Walkers took a different approach. They had purchased an established house and garden but Jean promptly set about demolishing the garden. Wire fence, concrete fill, ornamental plants, even the lawn were all advertised free of charge to be taken away. When the space was just rubble and bare earth, she was ready to begin. The rocks were pushed to the outer edges to form a basin and sandstone boulders were exposed. Jean planted the crevices with native ferns and bracken. Banksias and tree ferns formed the basis for the planting in the surrounds. One can just imagine how much Gordon Ford and Ellis Stones would have enjoyed both the process and the result. Ellis Stones and Gordon Ford, Betty Maloney and Jean Walker, had a heightened sense of being Australian and living in the Australian landscape. They had a passion for creating gardens with a 'sense of local place' rather than that of an 'imported ideal'. Sam Cox, Fiona Brockhoff and Philip Johnson are continuing these philosophies while applying their own unique contemporary style.



Philip Johnson designed waterfall and pool at Lubra Bend in the Yarra Valley off set with 'hand selected boulders to showcase nature's sculptural brilliance' (Johnson). (Anne Vale)

[This article is derived from Anne's award winning book **Exceptional Australian Garden Makers**. Anne is currently working on a sequel (Due late 2016) **Influential Australian Garden People** which will focus on the current generation including the designers showcased in this article.]

Report of Melbourne visit to June Cherrey's garden, Sunday March 6

Diana Snape, Vic

On a very hot day, after quite a long period without rain, we visited the garden of June Cherrey. The garden is on a steeply-sloping, south-facing site, so conditions there are tough for plants. Despite that, June has also extended her garden to take over -- with the encouragement of authorities - in the front, what was council land and in the rear, an area of the neighbouring golf club.

June is to be congratulated on creating a lovely garden and maintaining it for 58 years. She does almost all the work herself, apart from tree maintenance. The golf club occasionally supplies her with mulch. The front garden was designed initially by Tony Mugg but of course has evolved since then. It has a central open area next to the house, with paths and steps leading up through the garden. Rockwork helps stabilise the slope and small waterfalls link pools, one near the open area. Initially there was a lawn, long since replaced by garden. A magnificent, large *Corymbia citriodora* dominates the front garden (and would absorb a lot of water).

Having had some recent plant losses, June was interested in suggestions. For the front garden, the main one was repetition of successful plants. For example, considering small plants, *Acacia glaucoptera* is growing beautifully near a pool. *Grevillea obtusifolia* the prostrate form of *Goodenia ovata* and dianellas are also doing very well. The dwarf form of *Templetonia retusa* is a particularly beautiful small shrub, even when not in flower. Rather denser planting around the pools and waterfall would soften the structural elements.

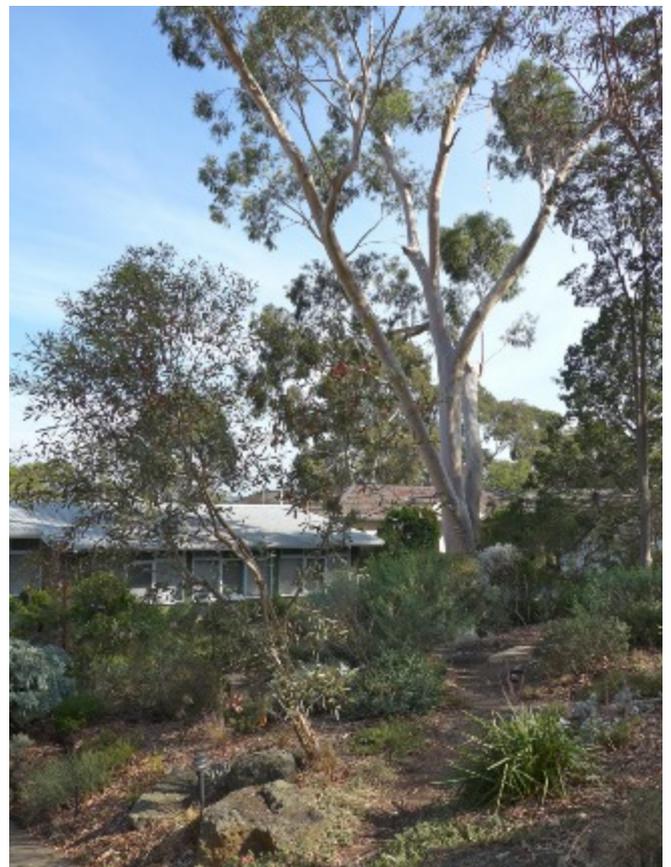


Part of front garden - looking down on it minimises the slope. A variety of low to medium shrubs cope with difficult conditions.

The front of the house is screened by shrubs, including several of the local *Acacia acinacea*. The Bendigo form of *Acacia acinacea*, which is smaller and more compact, was recommended. Other suggestions included the beautiful low forms of *Acacia cognata* and *Baeckea virgata* (now *Sannantha virgata*!) as reliable green, low, mounded shrubs. In addition to *Correa alba*, *C. pulchella* is more tolerant of dry conditions than *C. reflexa* and a number of appealing forms of *C. pulchella* are readily available. *Dodonaea procumbens* is a very attractive, low-growing (groundcover with decorative foliage and hops).

Margaret James was unfortunately unable to come to the meeting but kindly sent her suggestions. Among salt-bushes, *Rhagodia spinescens* and *R. parabolica* were both recommended, though Margaret said they needed regular pruning. (June is an excellent pruner, so this should be no problem.) *Maireana oppositifolia* is another. For a groundcover, *Einadia hastata* spreads out nicely and self-seeds. This makes it less suitable for a small area but, as it is indigenous to Melbourne, it could be used on the extensive slope down to the golf course. There are two forms of Kangaroo Grass (*Themeda triandra*) tolerant of dry conditions - tall *Themeda* 'True Blue' and prostrate, lilac-grey foliaged *Themeda* 'Mingo'. Instead of using grasses with their seasonal variation, another option is to grow lomandras such as *L. confertifolia* : *ssp confertifolia* has green leaves, *ssp rubiginosa* lilac-grey.

Lyhn Barfield has added several more suggestions of low to medium shrubs. *Kunzea baxteri* (~ 2m) is readily available and *Melaleuca linariifolia* 'Claret Tops' (~1 metre) forms mounds and has reddish tips. *Hardenbergia violacea* 'Regent' (1 - 1.5m) has deep purple flowers and is tough. *H. violacea* 'Meema' is a new cultivar (~ 0.5m tall, 2m spread). Lyhn also suggested planting another small eucalypt in the front garden towards the top, for some shade but also for height variation in the garden.



Above: Screen of medium shrubs in front of house includes several acacias

Right: A mature, tall *Corymbia citriodora* dominates the front garden while, in the foreground, *Eucalyptus forrestiana* is much smaller in scale.

Among larger shrubs, *Alyogyne hakeifolia* and *Eremophila nivea* were suggested. June already has a few eremophilas and more species could be tried. *Banksia marginata* dwarf (2m) is a lovely shrub but it does need water in dry periods.

In the large back garden area, for plants growing on the slope, Bev Hanson suggested hollowing out of soil on the high side and building it up on the low side to retain water. Using plants with a large spread would reduce the number of plants needed in the larger space. Among acacias, *Acacia boormanii* will spread by suckering and *A. howittii* has both dwarf and spreading prostrate forms, as do some other acacias. A few such as *A. baileyana* do grow very big and it is not indigenous. I'm sure there were more ideas I've missed and June would welcome other ideas too!

(I think that a person who has maintained a garden for 58 years, doing most of the work themselves, deserves some sort of medal! Ed.)

Report of Melbourne meeting, Sunday March 6

After our discussion about the garden, Nicky Zanen told us of the visit to Monash University gardens which she is writing up for the *Newsletter*. She suggested it as a venue for our group in February next year.

We all really appreciate having photos of gardens in the *Newsletter*. The value of these could be increased by having captions that pointed out significant design aspects shown in the photo. Also close-up photos of flowers could be linked to where they are in photos of gardens. Photos of groups of flowers/plants in close-up are also helpful in showing pleasing combinations. Topics of interest suggested for future newsletters were the use of water in a garden (especially with climate change) and ways of balancing horizontal and vertical elements in a garden.

Next meeting On May 22 at 2pm we'll join the Maroondah Group visit to new member Mirini Lang's garden. Her address is 25 Kennedy Street, Glen Waverley, Melway 71D1. We decided we should wear name-tags (APS or other) to all our meetings, for the benefit of new members and visitors.

For our August 28 (or early September) meeting, Lyhn Barfield is investigating a visit to the garden of A.B. Bishop in Kangaroo Ground. There are a number of possible alternatives for this meeting, or for our November meetings. Details to come.

Other coming garden visits members might like to attend.

* Lubra Bend, with design work by Phillip Johnson, will be open on Easter Saturday.

* Pam Yarra's garden will be open on September 10 and 11, as a biodiversity garden.

After a delicious afternoon tea, we thanked June for her kind hospitality.

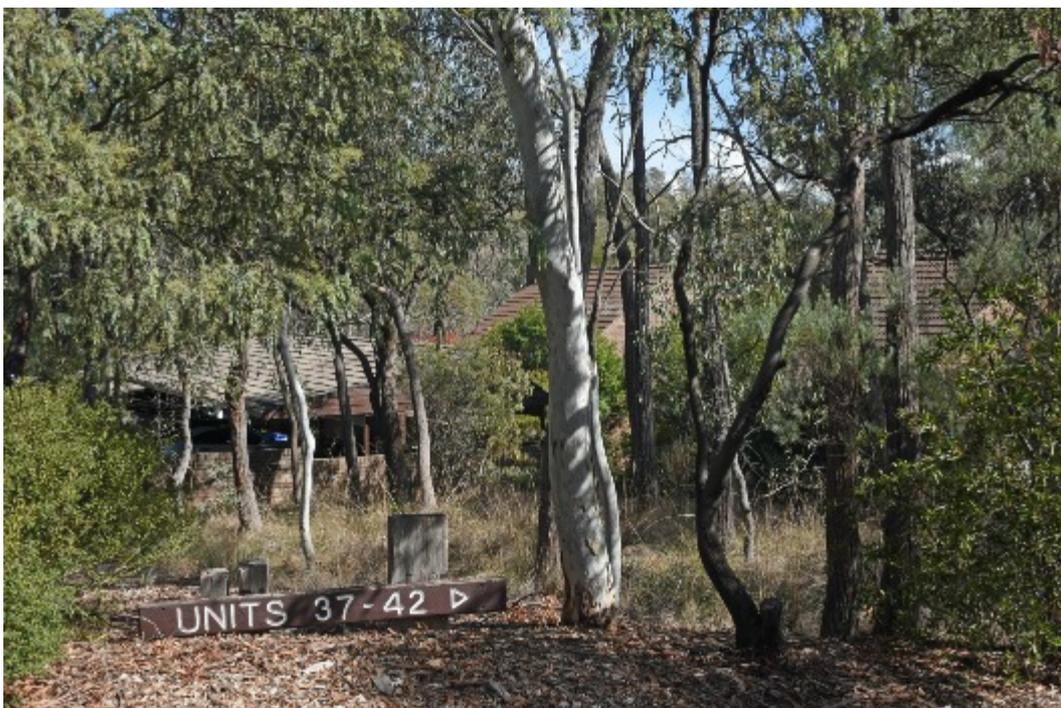
Visit to Wybalena Grove by Canberra GDSG

Ros Walcott, Canberra

Photos by Lucinda Royston, Canberra

On Tuesday 19 April about 20 members of the Garden Design Study Group and Daytime Activity Group from Canberra ANPS visited Wybalena Grove on a magnificent mellow autumn day, ably hosted by Julia Zachara. Wybalena Grove is a community housing development established in the Canberra suburb of Cook in 1975, and comprises 105 townhouse units in a bushland setting of 11.5 ha (30 acres). The townhouses vary in size between 60 m² (6.5 squares) for a single bedroom unit to 180m² (19.5 squares) for a five bedroom unit. All townhouses must be painted either Mission Brown or Ochre, supposedly to fade into the bush background. Units are grouped in twos, threes, or fours. They are stepped back such that each unit has privacy from its neighbours and unobstructed views. All units have a northerly aspect. Shared facilities include a playing oval, tennis courts, a barbecue facility, and children's playgrounds. A solar generation system sufficient to match the site's requirement for public area lighting is installed.

Each townhouse has an area around the house ten metres wide in which they can establish their own choice of garden. Some of these gardens were full of standard Iceberg roses, but others continued the surrounding bush garden into their own space. We all appreciated the lack of traffic and the subsequent quietness of the area. The shared bush garden is carefully maintained and has grown well over 40 years. It consists mostly of indigenous species and has attracted a wide variety of birds to the Grove.



View of some units in the surrounding bushland



“Kookaburras” in one of the private gardens



Public path through landscape. Note that the light is powered by a solar system

Treasurer's Report:

Cheque account: \$ 7,832.16
Term Deposit: \$ 25,368.38 (Renewed end of January)
Total: \$ 33,200.59

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ANPSA Garden Design Study Group *Newsletter* is published four times per year in February, May, August and November.

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