



GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP

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Newsletter
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Leader's Comments

It certainly is spring time and with it numerous garden visits. Given the closing of Open Gardens Australia, we no longer open our garden to the public but we do have many garden clubs and groups come through. Recently the Garden History Society held its national conference in Canberra and all 300 delegates came to our garden for a visit and afternoon tea. Fortunately, it was catered and all we had to do was to talk to the delegates. A group of us from Canberra visited gardens on the coast (see later in this *Newsletter*) which varied in style and scale but all utilized native plants. I have come away from all this activity with an encouraging feeling that many people do appreciate native plants and that there is an almost infinite variety of styles of garden design using native plants. Many people appreciate the more formal tidy style of garden design that typifies European gardens but this certainly can be achieved using native plants. We still need to convince people that if you prune, water and fertilize your native plants, they will respond accordingly just like roses and azaleas.

Correspondence

Ingrid Adler, Canberra

Thank you very much for the last *Newsletter*. I enjoyed reading all the contributions. I am glad that you feature fungi as well as plants. I am fascinated by them. I have created some ceramic fungi as a sculpture. They are diverse, widespread and very colourful. They belong to all of us regardless in which continent we live.

Pam Yarra, Vic

I have attached a flyer (about our open garden) FYI. Gardening with one hand certainly has limitations, but many plants friends have helped out. Today the garden looked good in dappled sunshine for the visit of the Age garden editor & a photographer. We also discussed our own experiences of visits to Tresco Abbey Garden & she was delighted to see the last GDSG *Newsletter* & asked if she could have it. I am hopeful of increased publicity for Australian plants, especially focussing on sustainable habitat gardening.

We had our open garden on September 10th & 11th, promoting a sustainable habitat garden. Including quite a few families with children, we totalled 500 people over the 2 days. We also raised \$4000 for Oxfam- gate admission (\$6), refreshments (by Oxfam) & 50% of profit from APS plant sales. Kurunga Nursery kindly donated 100 vouchers, valued at \$10 each. In all, a worthwhile experience, especially as all money went to Oxfam (Victorian open garden program get 50% of takings). (*Ed. Congratulations from us all on such a great effort!*)



Tapestry of plants at Horse Island

Carol Bentley, NSW

Congratulations to you both, each *Newsletter* gets better

Jill Mitchell, Vic

I do enjoy the *Newsletter* particularly the photos. Good luck with cleaning up your trees which have fallen. I have had a *Grevillea petrophiloides* with a broken root which is now horizontal, a *Grevillea arenaria* similarly and a largish flowering gum which has left a big hole about a metre or so across. Added to those is a snapped Snowy River Wattle. I'm busy with the secateurs and pruning saw.

Fiona Johnson, Canberra and NSW

I received the GDSG *Newsletter* this week and was shocked to learn of your pine tree drama. What a mess! It obviously caused massive damage and the loss of well-grown trees and shrubs, but hopefully by now you are appreciating the joy of contemplating planting instead of mourning the losses that occurred.

That Friday night in July was horrendous in our area too - we lost about 8 significant trees just on our block, including (sadly) two 10-year old trees I had planted. Driving to Bathurst showed tree after tree after tree that had come down. Only one tree on our place came down over a fence and about half of them are good firewood trees so things could have been worse. In the garden two beautiful *Leptospermum rotundifolium*s twisted off at ground level which was sad.

I was interested in your comments about correas and which ones had performed well in your garden and which hadn't. I have found 'Catie Bec' excellent, hardy and very long flowering, but some others ('Canberra Bells', 'Jezabell') have not performed well at all. I have them in a number of different sites, sunny/part sunny etc, but they don't appear to appreciate my conditions. They look a bit weedy and flower for about 3 minutes. For some reason I have an expectation of correas flowering for long periods and these ones don't. I expect I will replace them eventually. 'Marian's Marvel' does really well here and one new one to my garden that has impressed me is 'Ring-a-Ding-Ding'. I can nearly forgive the name as it's been flowering for several months now and doesn't look like its ready to stop yet.

I've taken out several swathes of plants that I either don't like or have outgrown their allotted spaces and I'm looking forward to replanting them, and just doing some general garden maintenance. I did so little last spring so I'm really looking forward to getting down and dirty in my patch this year.

Jan Hall, Vic

Your fallen tree certainly changed your landscape and I am sure this wetter than usual Winter has affected a lot of gardeners. I am pleased to have had an above average rainfall for once, but on our northern Victorian clay plains we have to manage drainage issues.

After 12 years we can now see if the original plan for rainfall management is coping. We were in drought at the time and wanted to capture every drop. Occasionally we experience a deluge which takes longer to drain away than many desirable plants will tolerate.

My original plan called for treating the soil with gypsum, sand and compost, mounding garden beds and my husband dug lots of ditches with agricultural pipes. All rain was to be held on the 1 hectare block and most into tanks. Part of the roof drained to 2 pond systems, which could overflow to temporary ponds and dry creek beds. A 20m rubble drain/swale connects some of this. The aim was to ensure adequate soil moisture to last through long dry Summer/Autumn seasons. I would have chosen a well-drained sloping block like some the lovely gardens pictured in the *Newsletter*. That was not to be. I am therefore on a constant mission to find more adaptable and attractive plants. Many treasures are in pots, which can then be a maintenance issue in Summer.

On average the systems work well, but we have to expect losses in very wet years, or after weather events such as the 2011 summer floods.



PS. I have been to visit the Farley garden near Kerang, some three hours drive west, (Meredith Farley, Member GDSG died in June aged 49). Andrew and Meredith created a mostly Eremophila and local plants garden, also on the northern plains in saltbush country, but the soil is blackish clay/loam and the



same treatment as mine is required (drainage from built-up beds seems to work quicker for them). The garden is thoughtfully designed to suit th rural landscape with sweeping paths, views from inside, and

it seems to be the local oasis for bird life. This garden is in fact a lovely memorial to Meredith and Andrew is keen to keep it going as she would have wished.

I should explain. Meredith Farley was my husband's niece. Meredith and I shared a lot with Australian plants and particularly with Eremophilas but also garden design and plants suited to our challenging climate and soils. She had no children but she and husband Andrew created a lovely garden on what I call - the saltbush plains, near Kerang. I was helping Andrew sort the plants she had grown or collected to keep on following their design. As it happens, Andrew is the designer and builder of features in the garden. He is now president of the Lodden Murray APS Group and says he enjoys *GDSG Newsletters*. The garden is a great solace for him and we are all pleased he is keeping it going around their farm cottage. I just mentioned it as I think planning our Australian Gardens is so compelling and healing in times of loss. I know my ongoing involvement has given me much to enjoy or just think about on a daily basis.



Photos of Jan's garden by Jan Hall

Christine and Richard Cullen, NSW

What a great job you two do. The "Reports" which you send to my wife Christine never fail to excite her and of course, she, naturally, passes on to me for a look-see. We visited you so long ago now that you'll both have no memory. All the best Christine and Richard
(Ed. Not so – we remember you well. We both enjoyed the Christmas card of your garden.)

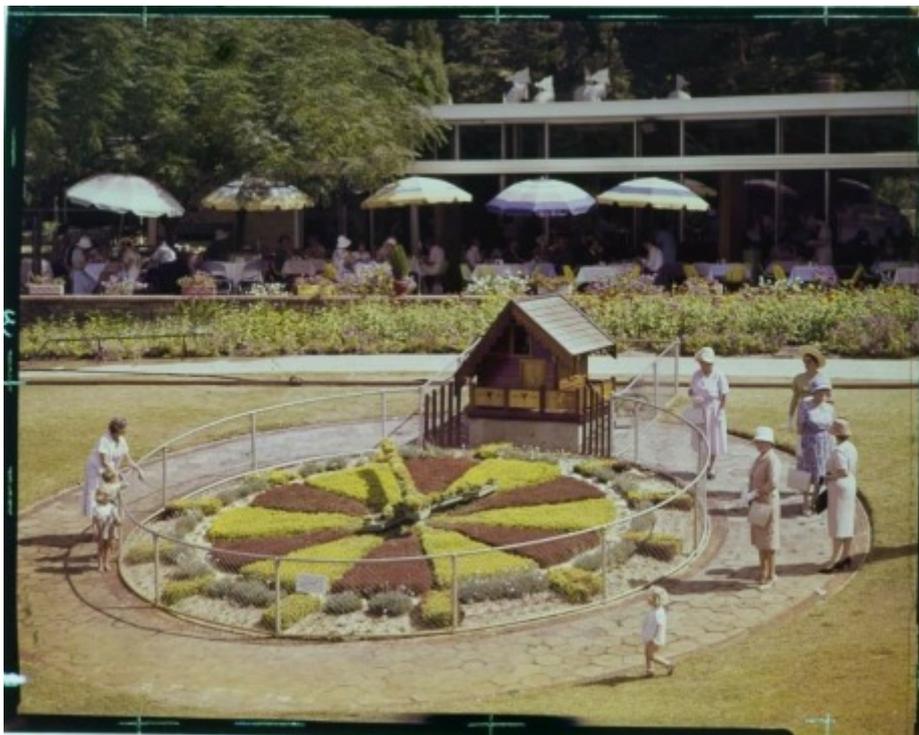
King's Park floral clock restored

GardenDrum June 14, 2016 (reprinted in part)



The floral clock at King's Park in Perth has been rejuvenated using Australian plants and newly restored original hands. The botanical timepiece was originally unveiled in 1962, and over the years has been relocated and updated from its initial cuckoo clock style design with Swiss Chalet near the former tearooms.

The newly renovated clock is opposite the entry to the Western Australian Botanic Garden, featuring new garden beds planted out with a cottage mix of Australian natives with emphasis on Western Australian plants. Bright yellow *Chrysocephalum apiculatum* (Yellow Buttons) sit proudly in the centre, surrounded by a range of show-stoppers including *Anigozanthos*, *Xanthorrhoea*, *Conostylis*, *Verticordia*, *Banksia* and *Chamelaucium*., *Westringia fruticosa* 'Smokie' and *Sannantha similis* are clipped to form the roman numerals and were chosen for their strong colour contrast.



Kings Park floral clock and tearooms 1963. [pic WA State Library]

Team Leader John Henson has restored the clock hands over the past 24 months after discovering them in a dilapidated condition in a storage shed. Embellished with designs from the early 1960s of koalas, kookaburras and kangaroo paws, the clock hands are an intricately carved celebration of Australian flora and fauna with a nostalgic appeal.

'They were in three or four pieces each, mixed together with the other carved clock hands that had been commissioned around 1996 as the originals had been deemed too far gone to resurrect', he said. And so began his labour of love to bring the intricately carved timber hands back to life.

'I glued all the pieces together then hollowed out a central seam and placed a stringer along the length of the most vulnerable part of the hand. The hour hand was not too bad due to the width in relation to its length but the minute hand was very unstable.'

Once restored they were reinstated by John along with watchmakers Derek Morrison and Hudson Gale and the clock is now ticking again.



Australian native plants for pots, courtyards and small gardens

Brian Roach (Australian Plants Society NSW) GardenDrum July 16, 2016 (reprinted in part)

Over the past 20 years, I've been richly rewarded speaking with over 100 gardening groups and clubs about our wonderful and unique Australian flora. Lest there be any misunderstanding, my being 'richly rewarded' has come from the enthusiasm from my audience when hearing about Aussie plants and seeing some pretty mediocre photographs I've taken of them!



Ceratopetalum 'Johanna's Christmas', a dwarf form of the NSW Christmas bush with dark red flowers, that are the sepals. The plant grows to 1m. Photo courtesy Ramm Botanicals.

In recent years, my audiences have become increasingly fascinated by the topic: *'How do I grow natives in pots, courtyards and small gardens'. As well as hanging baskets!* So why grow a plant in a pot? Of course, nature has been growing plants in pots (of sorts) for millennia.



(Left) *Lechenaultia biloba*, a stunning blue flower on an open shrub, generally about half a metre high. Photo by Brian Roach

(Right) *Lechenaultia formosa* - Lechenaultia grow well in hanging baskets Photo by Brian Roach

But in our more cultivated environments, the first question I pose when speaking with people is, 'Why grow a plant in a pot?'

Three simple answers: display, mobility and nurture!

These are self-explanatory and there may be other reasons, but considering these three reasons:

Display. What better way to focus attention on a particular plant in a pot than to stick it in a prominent spot to really show it off. And when it's not looking at its best, just get it out of the way until the time is right. For example, boronias put on a brilliant display in pots – here's three that work well!



(Left) *Boronia pinnata*



(Right) *Boronia crenulata* Photos by Brian Roach



Boronia denticulata

Photo by Heather

Mobility. It means of course that we can move the pot around to take advantage of the prevailing weather and aspect.

Nurture. There can be no doubt that plants grown in pots, especially over any extended period demand TLC in the way of water and fertilizer that established plants in the garden do not. It can be easy to overlook the needs of the many plants in the garden but those special plants in pots stay under notice, especially if they're placed to trip over to get your attention. So on our back steps, care has to be taken not to fall over a variety of pots, very strategically placed to grab my attention. In some respects, a more pertinent question is why NOT grow a plant in a pot. Of course, any plant can be grown in a pot for a limited time until it starts to walk off with the roots coming out the bottom. To state the obvious, some plants simply cannot be successfully grown in a pot for any length of time. But even for those plants that lend themselves to pot culture, vigilance is essential. What do I watch for? Water, weeds and weevils.

There's a delicate balance in watering potted plants. This is particularly so in times of extended heat but even then, discretion is called for. A good drink occasionally is far better than a regular tipple. Something I try to emulate.

Weeds in pots seem to spring up overnight and if potted plants are to be kept in fine tilth, vigilance is needed. This seems to be particularly so if hanging baskets are involved.

Okay, so I don't know that weevils are a problem in potted plants but I like the alliteration. What I particularly address under this heading are curl grubs and earth worms. Both are a menace in pots. On one occasion, I spotted the tell-tale fluffy surface of the potting mix in a 140mm pot and when I knocked the plant out of the pot, I dispatched 22 curl grubs. Can anyone beat that?

There are commercial products around to control curl grubs. And while earth worms are simply wonderful in the garden, in a pot they devour the potting mix and the resulting poop will quickly become the predominant composition of the pot. Best to keep pots off the ground to keep the earth worms at bay.

Which plants are suited to pots?



(Left) *Crowea* 'Summer Star', a compact shrub with masses of bright pink flowers from October to June

(Right) *Blandfordia* (Christmas Bells)

Photos by Brian Roach

There's an almost bottomless pit of Aussie plants eminently suited for pots. As well as the one shown above, here are some others which work really well. ***Blandfordia* (Christmas Bells)**. Dainty plants with orange and yellow bell flowers which flower at Christmas time! ***Eremophila maculata***. A fantastic plant which grows over much of inland Australia in a multitude of flower colours – red, pink, orange, yellow and white! (Photo below left by Brian Roach)



***Hardenbergia violacea* (Native Sarsparilla)**. A vigorous vine from the pea family, but when grown in a pot, it forms a beautiful mound. (Photo above right by Brian Roach)

Without fail, I always finish my presentation with these words:

"Australian flora has developed in isolation from the rest of the world over millions of years – LET'S SHOW IT OFF!"

Alison & Daryl's garden, Queanbeyan NSW

Alison Roach and Daryl Crapp, Canberra

Our garden is a work in progress, with some areas now grown, some just beginning, and some not thought about yet. We both work fulltime, and garden in between. We moved into our house at the beginning of 2011, and it was built in the mid 90's. A few things that attracted us to the property were: the 10 or so remnant gum trees and numerous local *Acacia pycnantha* in the back yard; the block size (~1500 sq.m); its proximity to Mount Jerrabomberra Nature Reserve (one block away); and the existing garden was simple and composed of mostly non-natives (and, to be brutally honest, that meant no guilt about getting rid of them!).

We counted at that time 10 species in our front yard, and about the same in the back. These included: 3 different conifers (50 of), *Vinca*, *Agapanthus*, one rose bush, one silver birch, *Pittosporum*, one *Acacia mearnsii* (probably an original from when the block was cleared) and one smooth barked *Eucalyptus*. Photo (1) (pointing north) shows the garden 'décor' at that time, and no view!



Before (2011)



After (2015)

The first two years kept us busy chopping conifers down, poisoning *Vinca* and digging out *Agapanthus* (horrible to dig out, but composts beautifully!). The *Acacia mearnsii* and eucalypt stayed put (although, after the eucalypt grew 15 metres in one year and its roots started causing cracks in the house, it also got the chop). We did map out a garden plan, and try to stick to it. Our main considerations were: fire danger (we live near bushland), we didn't want an irrigation system but installed a 10,000 litre rainwater tank for hand watering when needed, incorporate local natives where possible, bring back the birds, grow as much food as possible, and keep our views.



Winter's morning—
Coombean Nature Reserve
in the distance

Our block is on the eastern side of Mt Jerrabomberra (the western backdrop of Queanbeyan), so has quite a degree of slope that the previous owners had thankfully terraced. One important design feature was keeping lower-growing, or prunable, screening plants on our eastern boundary so that we could maintain our view of the undeveloped eastern ranges (Cuumbean Nature Reserve), sunrises, etc. Oh, and our 'soil' is heavy clay/shale/rock, so plants have to cope with that, with minimal watering once established.

We didn't try to alter the soil, and left all conifer stumps and logs in place to help with slope stabilisation. Some of the garden had originally been turfed, so had a layer of shop-bought soil, which was almost biologically dead because of the thick layer of pine chips on top. We scraped back the pine chips and replaced them with 'woodland' mulch—and now have worms, fungi and other critters (centipedes, scorpions, slaters...) making the soil come alive again. Our 'design' has adapted from what was strictly intended, because we're now practicing the time-honoured approach: plant it, and if it dies, try something else. If it thrives, plant more. We also decided that our garden would be only native or edible, and uprooted a few ornamentals that other people would gasp about (camellias...).

The formal part of the front yard has a couple of foundational mallee eucalypts, various yellow paper daisies, local *Wahlenbergia* (collected from seed in the reserve), *Craspedia variabilis* buttons, *Dianella*, blue devils, lilies (chocolate, vanilla, bulbine) along with some kangaroo paws, *Xanthorrea*, and *Scleranthus* for fun. We tried to stick to yellow and blue flowers, and mostly did... (Photo 2). We think we have over 120 species of plants in the front yard now, and the associated increase in biodiversity in insects and birds is astonishing. I have to point out—I'm an entomologist by training, so any increase in insects is a happy thing for me. We also purposefully steered clear of red nectar producing flowers (except for a couple) as we have aggressive wattle birds that would take over if we had too many grevilleas.



Happy raffle plant



Correa selection



Our garden narrows from this point, and this is where we have used multiples of mallee eucalypts interspersed with Acacias, and then lower flowering shrubs in the front (*Correa*, *Olearia*, *Prostanthera*, *Kunzea*, etc). A *Calothamnus* (above left) won in our monthly ANPS Canberra Region raffle has done very well in clay and builder's spoil! Some other things haven't done well (Banksias for one), and we keep replacing them until they do. Another that we've had good success with is most Correas (two on right), and they attract the Eastern Spinebills in winter.



To the backyard: citrus in pots, so we can cover them in our -4 degree frosts (above left)) and terraces (above right).

This spring we'll embark on installing lots of climbers—purple and white *Hardenbergia*, *Pandorea*, and *Clematis* to try and soften up the edges of the terracing.

The year after we moved in, we rescued a lot of smaller plants from a next door block being developed. Out of that we got many foundational *Dianella*, *Lomandra* and red-anthered wallaby grasses. Most of these went along our long battle-axe driveway. We also discovered many hidden things starting to pop back up in the backyard, after we stopped the chickens from freely roaming (chickens are dreadful gardeners!). This includes one of our local threatened species, *Leucochrysum albicans* (below left, that thrives in our exposed soil and rocks. We've also begun edging some paths in our local stone below right), dug up on our own land (which appears to be mostly rock...).



Leucochrysum albicans



Local stone path edging, remnant gums and *Exocarpus*

Having grown up in the Canberra/Queanbeyan area, we do curse the gardening shows that say 'just dig a hole', and they use a post hole digger to do so! Photo 10 is Daryl digging post holes for raised vegies beds (note the jackhammer and different grades of stone size). Photo 11 is our first 'wicking' vegie bed in full success.

So, 5 years or so later, we've made a difference, and increased the biodiversity on our block, and begun to grow some serious food. Give us another 5 years, and hopefully there'll be more progression, more year round spread of flowering natives, better success with some tricky plants for us like *Banksias*, and more food. So far we have a fig, double graft apple, 2 pears, quince, double graft nectarine, olive, 3 hazelnuts, feijoa, orange, 2 lemons, mandarin, Tahitian lime, finger lime, kaffir lime, raspberries, strawberries, lots of

herbs and seasonal vegetables (tomatoes, pumpkin, zucchini, eggplant, cucumber, broad beans, peas, beans, corn, garlic and onions a speciality!).



Hole digging



Full wicking bed glory!

Garden visit on August 28 to Shaws Road Winery and the garden of George Apted and Jan Miles Diana Snape, Vic

We had a triple treat for this last meeting - a visit, unfortunately brief, to Lyhn and Gordon Barfield's garden (followed by lunch there), then a pleasant drive through beautiful green countryside to visit a winery belonging to George Apted and Jan Miles. We did *not* try the wine as the garden there was the focus of our meeting!

Lyhn's garden

We were keen to see the development in Lyhn's garden since our last visit in June 2014 (reported in the *GDSG Newsletter* August 2014, plus photos in November 2014). Some members had missed the previous visit and were very glad to see and admire the garden, which will be in Victoria's Open Garden Scheme next year. There are many beautiful plants in a well-designed garden (please see the earlier report). Outstanding in flower now were *Chamaelucium* 'Purple Pride', which Lyhn prunes heavily each year after flowering, and *Eremophila cuneifolia*.



Garden and borrowed landscape



Chamaelucium 'Purple Pride' flowering well after pruning

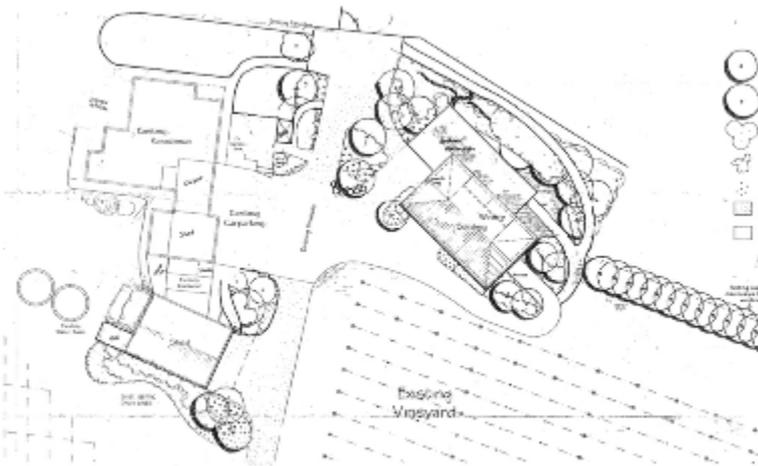
The winery

The winery buildings were completed in 2007, when Robert Boyle designed the initial landscaping. Plantings included saltbushes and there are now substantial areas of these, plus westringias, which Jan Miles is shaping by pruning. There are some fine older trees around the buildings. In 2014, a garden was planted as a windbreak along the north side of the house. In May this year, Lyhn advised on recent plantings and these are looking good.

Jan is very keen to get advice to help her create an attractive Australian plant garden around the winery and she provided us with the following information to brief us.

Factors that may influence the plant choices and design:

1. This is a high-wind area, capable of twisting plants off at the base. Wind-breaks are used to protect more tender plants
2. Prefer plants that require zero water if at all possible – the water in the dam is reserved for the vines in Summer – the dam gets down to critical levels late in Summer.
3. Soil is shallow loam over rock – hard, hard, hard



Winery Garden Plan



View of Winery and new garden from the north



Section of garden and view to the north

4. Native plants preferred around the winery – trying to achieve an “Australian” look, to tie in with the landscape and the red-gum fence, the tank-stand etc
5. A bit of wow factor needed
6. Domestic gardens out the back of the house – making way for a new extension early 2017
7. We need help – very little knowledge about native gardens. We are a bit hit and miss. Mostly miss.
8. Open to any and all suggestions – many thanks!!

We walked around the buildings and Jan explained her ideas and showed us where in particular she needed suitable plants. Their winery is situated at the top of a hill, with lovely views. The strong winds come mainly from the north.

General suggestions

We advised Jan to wait until next autumn to plant, in the meantime improving the soil structure by using gypsum on heavy clay and fertilizers such as blood and bone and composted cow manure. Apart from the Proteaceae (grevilleas, banksias, etc) Australian plants don't mind phosphorus. Mulching with porous organic materials is beneficial to the soil and also retains moisture. (In one particularly hard, dry spot, where the soil is almost impossible to dig, we suggested it would be safer to have a metal sculpture rather than attempting to grow a feature plant!)

Being patient and avoiding overplanting saves time and effort later on, as maintenance is a big job. Repetition of plants is important in any garden but particularly in a large garden. There still needs to be



Drive and shed (seen from entrance drive) Photo by Nicky Zanen

sufficient variation to add interest, in height, foliage colour or texture, with special individual plants or small numbers of contrasts. Of course there can be smaller, isolated areas in any garden, often near the house, that can be treated separately.

With grapevines on either side of the entrance drive, this has to be kept fairly clear so machinery can work there. One suggestion by Bev Hanson that appealed to Jan was to give the drive a slight curve, reducing erosion. This would also enable some planting to improve the appearance of the entrance. It would be good to repeat the two beautiful eucalypts, *E. rubida* (Candlebark Gum) and *E. polyanthemos* (Red Box), growing near the shed.

Against the shed wall in a built-up bed, the colours of a lovely *Eucalyptus caesia* tone well with the shed. Two more would form an attractive group, with just a few small, light shrubs (or grasses)

underneath, or a few large rocks. To hide machinery, Jan is thinking of a gabion. A colourful Native Hibiscus (*Alyogyne huegelii*) would be striking in front of this. Therese Scales suggested a copse of *Allocasuarina torulosa* (Rose She-oak) or *A. verticillata* (Drooping She-oak) in the open windy area beyond the house, for the enjoyment of the sound they make.

Suggested plants

In general, plants need to be reliable and either individually large or massed to suit the scale of the area. For a large, dry, sloping bank hardy spreading prostrate plants were suggested. As it may be helpful to others too, I'll list them. (When you are starting, Latin names are difficult to learn, so I've included common names.)

Groundcovers

Possible grevilleas: *G. 'Royal Mantle'*, *G. obtusifolia*, *G. synaphaea*, *G. tridentifera*;

Prostrate versions of large shrubs: *Banksia integrifolia*, acacias eg *A. pravissima*.

Other prostrate plants: *Eremophila debilis*, *Chrysocephalum apiculatum* (Yellow Buttons), the edible Warrigal Spinach (*Tetragonia tetragonoides*);

Rounded Noon-flower or Pigface (now *Disphyma crassifolium* subsp. *clavellatum*), with its bright pink or purple flowers, or other similar Australian succulents.

Slightly higher groundcovers: *Dodonaea procumbens* (Trailing Hop-bush), *Ziera prostrata*, *Correa decumbens*, *Veronica perfoliata* (Digger's Speedwell).

Shrubs

Low shrubs include *Eremophila glabra* and *E. maculata* (Spotted Emu-bush), *Correa 'Dusky Bells'* and *C. nummularifolia*, plus the low form of *Templetonia retusa* (Cockies Tongue).

Taller again, the local acacias - *acinacea* (Gold Dust Wattle), *myrtifolia* (Myrtle Wattle) and *paradoxa* (Prickly Wattle) are valuable, plus the local (Hurstbridge) cream form of *Grevillea rosmarinifolia* (Rosemary Grevillea).

Philotheca myoporoides (Long-leaf Waxflower) is a must for its reliability and long flowering period.

For larger shrubs (wind-breaks, but also susceptible to wind), Chefs Cap Correa (*C. bauerlenni*), callistemons, acacias (especially local) and *Banksia integrifolia*.

Monocotyledons

Jan is keen on massed grasses and already has some growing, e.g. *Themeda 'Mingo'* as a groundcover, plus lomandras such as *L. 'Little Con'* - *L. 'Tanika'* was also recommended.

The local indigenous plant nursery is a good source for grasses, e.g. the local Wallaby-grass (*Rytidosperma* species).

Kangaroo Grass (*Themeda triandra*) and an attractive taller form, 'True Blue'.

Spear-grasses (*Austrostipa* species) are also very beautiful.

Other monocotyledons such as dianellas and *Anigozanthos* species (Kangaroo Paws) (both already growing) could be repeated, especially the taller, hardier Paws.

We enjoyed the challenge of thinking about a garden area with great advantages but also some disadvantages. We thanked Jan for inviting us to come and hope to see the garden again in a couple of years' time.

Coming garden visits

APS Maroondah Group is visiting Shirley Carn's garden on Sunday September 18 and we are welcome to join them there.

Next meeting Sunday November 27

We'll be visiting the new Children's Garden at the Children's Hospital Parkville. John and Bev Hanson have very kindly supplied all the following directions that they investigated in preparation for a previous APS Maroondah Group meeting.

This garden and playground have been built on the site of the old hospital, next to (SE of) the new hospital. It is an extensive well planned area with 1100 indigenous trees, 17,500 other plants and grasses, huge rocks and large overlooking hill.

We will meet at 2 pm on the corner of Flemington Rd and Gatehouse St (Mel 2A J6); visitors are welcome. After viewing the gardens we will have afternoon tea (and a short meeting) in the hospital kiosk, probably about 3.30 pm.

Suggested areas for parking are: Errol, Murphy and Harcourt Streets to the south; Gatehouse St, Flemington Rd and Molesworth, Curzon and Erskine Streets to the south-west. (Try closest streets first.) Public transport: Catch tram 59 via Elizabeth St and Flemington Rd to stop 16. If parking at the zoo catch tram 55 to stop 16.

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We'll be visiting the new Children's Garden at the Children's Hospital Parkville. John and Bev Hanson have very kindly supplied all the following directions that they investigated in preparation for a previous APS Maroondah Group meeting.

This garden and playground have been built on the site of the old hospital, next to (SE of) the new hospital. It is an extensive well planned area with 1100 indigenous trees, 17,500 other plants and grasses, huge rocks and large overlooking hill.

We will meet at 2 pm on the corner of Flemington Rd and Gatehouse St (Mel 2A J6); visitors are welcome. After viewing the gardens we will have afternoon tea (and a short meeting) in the hospital kiosk, probably about 3.30 pm.

Suggested areas for parking are: Errol, Murphy and Harcourt Streets to the south; Gatehouse St, Flemington Rd and Molesworth, Curzon and Erskine Streets to the south-west. (Try closest streets first.) Public transport: Catch tram 59 via Elizabeth St and Flemington Rd to stop 16. If parking at the zoo catch tram 55 to stop 16.

Visit to Shirley Carn's garden

Diana Snape Vic

Some members were able to visit the latest garden of Shirley Carn, in conjunction with a visit by APS Maroondah Group, on September 18 - a showery Sunday afternoon. Our Melbourne group of the GDSG visited previous gardens of Shirley's way back in October 1998, then again in November 2003. My earliest photo of one of Shirley's gardens dates back to before 1992 and I also have a set of photos from 2013. All her gardens (four at least) have demonstrated her energy, enthusiasm and rare abilities as a plants-woman.

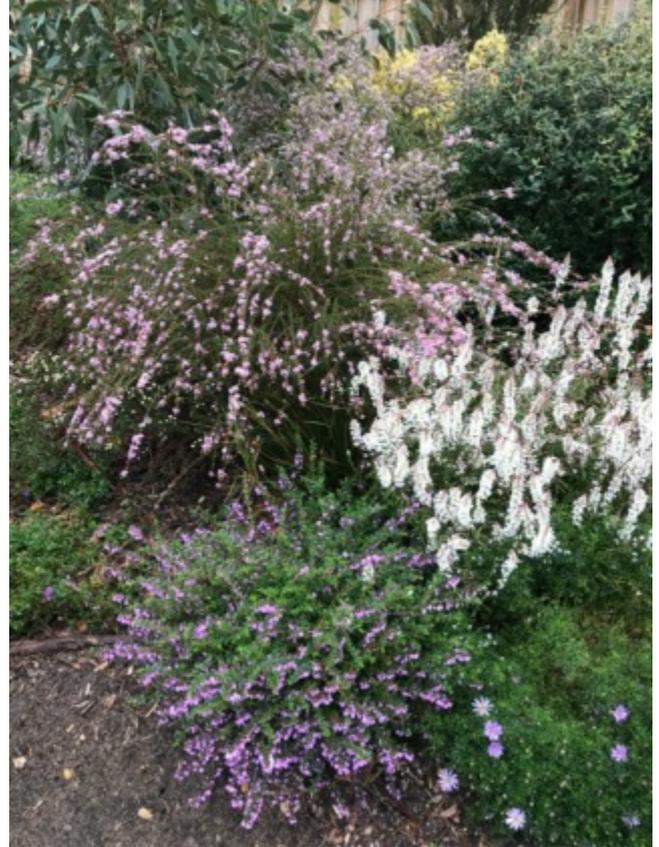
Shirley's current garden is not large but contains many special and very attractive forms of plants. I think she must know every specialist Australian plant nursery and grower within cooee of Melbourne. The garden is only about two years old but already many plants are looking mature, growing in perfect conditions with fertile volcanic soil, good drainage and (mostly) full sunshine. They look in perfect health for several reasons - Shirley knows the right conditions for plants, she tip-prunes regularly and, if a plant isn't doing well, it is transplanted or removed altogether.



Raised garden with created path to front door and rockery

The block slopes slightly down from north to south along its length (with the back of the garden to the east). In the small front garden, a bed has been banked up with soil and rocks to completely cover the old front steps. This created a sloping path to the front door and a rockery ideal for small plants. A beautiful *Hardenbergia comptoniana* is eye-catching in flower.

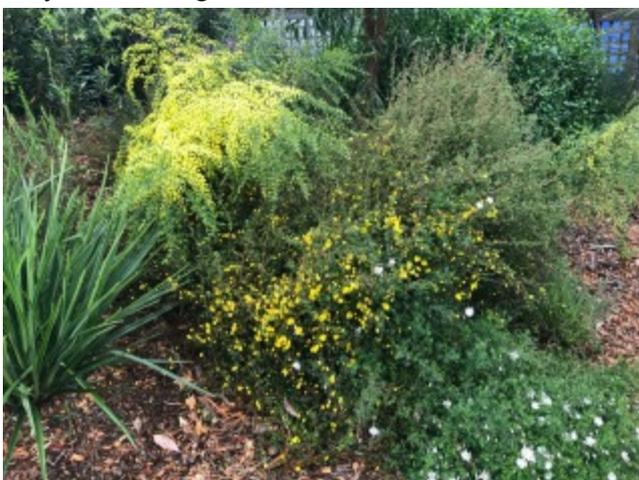
In the back garden, three long paths, connected at their ends, have been levelled out to wind between three long mounded beds. Most plants are low and/or small, keeping beds open, with the next highest number of plants medium in size and few larger shrubs or trees. The latter are mainly in the lowest (southern-most bed). Shirley has extensive collections of genera such as epacris, eremophilas and correas, with a variety of other genera too.



Left: Lowest path with larger shrubs and trees (mainly next door).

Right: Beautiful plant combination - a brachycome, a tetraheca, an epacris and a baeckea (or astartea).

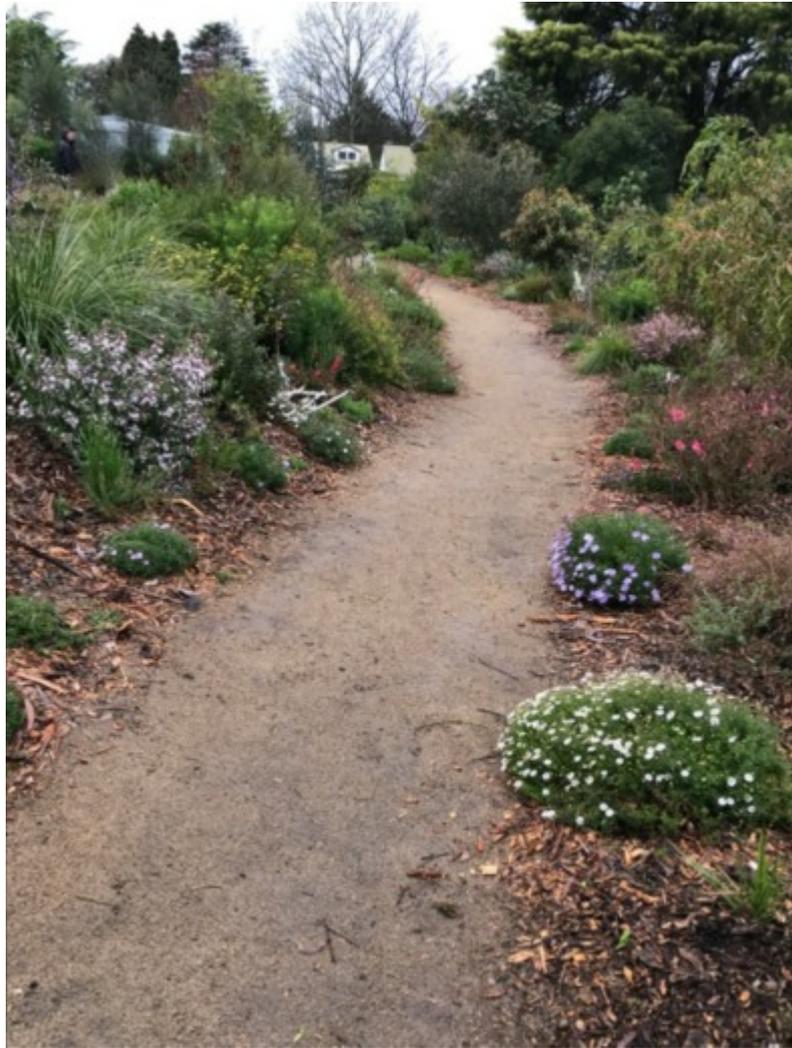
To some extent this is a collector's garden but with repetition of selected plants, plus sensitive arrangement of plants producing lovely colour schemes and complementary or contrasting foliage. Unfortunately the variable weather restricted photography but a few photos give just a glimpse of this very attractive garden.



Left: Colour scheme of white, yellows of hibbertia and acacia, and different greens

Right: Low water-baths with epacris and a variety of monocotyledons, including *Orthrosanthus laxus* in foreground

Right: Middle path in garden



A bird sculpture stands between a philotheca and a small, compact thomasia (fine-leaf *Thomasia grandiflora*?).

Visit to NSW South Coast, 17-19 October Ros Walcott, Canberra

The Garden Design Study Group (Canberra) together with the Daytime Activities Group (ANPS, Canberra) were fortunate enough to visit three marvellous and different gardens on the south coast of NSW this spring. There were about 25 members who met at Phil Trickett and Cationa Bate's garden in Milton Tuesday morning to see the continuing development of their superb garden, now over six years old. For a previous write-up of this garden see GDSG *Newsletter* 89, February 2015, p. 21. In the afternoon we met at the garden of Mark and Carolyn Noake near Moruya. The description of this garden follows on page . Wednesday morning Christina Kennedy generously welcomed us to her garden, Horse Island. For more about this garden see GDSG *Newsletter* 86 May 2014, p. 14 and Christina's newly published book *Horse Island*, photography by Jason Busch, Zabriskie Books, 2016.



View from the Noake's house towards dam showing many of the trees and large shrubs that have been planted

Noake's Garden, near Nowra, NSW **Carolyn and Mark Noake, NSW** **Photos by Ben Walcott**

What started as an urgent need to provide shelter from strong winds and blistering sun has evolved into a garden with a framework inspired by lowland grassy woodlands. It is designed to encourage exploration in search of the little treats and surprises provided by Australian plants, along with a sense of peace and reflection.

The garden relies on species plants to provide interest for Aussie plant lovers, but we do have some cultivars. Our natural inclination to collect, and a strong sense of the need to protect and nurture native species, has driven our desire to build small collections of certain genera.

Situated on a gentle slope at Glendeuart and looking south over the small town of Moruya on the far southeast coast of NSW, the garden is about 8kms inland from the ocean. We live in a coastal valley adjacent to a Lowlands Grassy Woodland EEC. A five minute drive to the west finds you in a series of National Parks and State Forest reserves.

Our soil is mainly decomposed granite with a Ph of around 5.5 with a very thin, depleted layer of hydrophobic topsoil. Average rainfall is around 950mm with the driest months falling between July and September. Rainfall patterns have changed noticeably in recent times with long dry periods



View across dam towards the house

broken from time to time by intense rain events. Temperatures range from 45°C to just below zero with regular frosts occurring particularly around July.

The three and a half acre property was purchased in 1984 as a parcel of sadly degraded pasture. Predominant vegetation was cured pasture grass and weeds, with blackberries and fleabane being the tallest vegetation.

The immediate task was to slash the weeds to ground level then plant a screen of something tough, particularly to the west of the residence. A gift of seeds for *Hakea salicifolia* and a fortuitous purchase of commercial seed packets for *Corymbia* (then *Eucalyptus*) *citriodora* and *Callistemon viminalis* got us started. By the time we had added *Eucalyptus globoidea*, *Corymbia maculata* and *Melaleuca hypericifolia* to the mix we had literally hundreds of plants to put in, and share with our neighbours who were in a similar fix.

So it was for the first twenty-odd years. The garden was limited to the top acre with the downhill section fenced off to carry a small herd of Angora goats. We soon learnt that plants appreciate company so small communities of trees and shrubs were our favoured method of planting, with some added to the lower paddock within small fenced-off areas. Those trees are now twenty to thirty metres tall.

More recently, a heavy coating of Eucalyptus mulch and use of seaweed extract at time of planting have opened the soil up and brought it back to life. We delight in a wide range of fungi and microorganisms are obviously back at work. Drainage has been improved by swales which direct runoff around garden beds sensitive to water and into a dam for future use.

Early retirement some eight years ago led to a stint as volunteers at the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens. Staff and fellow volunteers were keen to share their wealth of knowledge and experience in propagating and growing Australian plants, concentrating on preserving locally indigenous flora. Membership of the APS further fuelled our enthusiasm and it soon became obvious that resistance was futile. We were hooked.

The past eight years has seen a marked increase in floral diversity. *Grevillea* represent a particular passion inspired by membership of the *Grevillea* Study Group. The garden now supports over 50 species of *Grevillea* with an emphasis on east coast varieties, particularly those found in our local area. *Isopogons* and *Petrophiles* started as a mild interest but have become a bit of a passion under the influence of our friends who co-convene the IP study group. Around 10 species of *Persoonia* and *Hakea*, and several *Banksias* add to the list of *Proteaceae*.

Proximity to the EEC has encouraged moves to support the return of native grasses which seem keen to repopulate the property. In a recent FOG visit, about thirty species of local grasses and forbs were identified, along with some most attractive terrestrial orchids. Very selective mowing and weeding have strengthened their foothold in recent years.

To add garden colour and interest we use the usual culprits like *Acacia*, *Callistemon*, *Melaleuca*, *Anigozanthus*, *Westringia*, *Leptospermum*, *Epacris*, *Thomasia*, *Stylidium*, *Lechnaultia*, *Platysace*, *Crowea*, *Correa*, *Goodenia*, *Baeckea*, *Philothea*, *Hibbertia*, *Rulingia*, *Goodenia*, *Xanthorrhoea*,



Isopogon anemonifolius

Eucalyptus, *Corymbia*, *Angophora*, *Ceratopetalum*, *Crinum*, *Elaeocarpus*, *Acmena*, *Hymenifolia*, *Calytrix*, *Zieria*, *Kunzea*, *Exocarpos*, *Indigofera*, *Micromyrtus*, *Olearia*, *Derwentia*, *Darwinia*, *Stackhousia*, *Backhousia*, *Macrozamia*, *Alyogyne*, *Babingtonia*, *Libertia*, *Prostanthera* and *Scaveola* to name a few .

Increased biodiversity has seen the return of wildlife with birds, frogs, lizards and snakes finding homes on the property. Dragonflies and a few turtles are particular favourites around the dam and we are happy to leave stumps in the ground to encourage native bees. A few kangaroos and at least one master sculptor wombat have added interest without too much damage to date. Our itinerant echidna passes through from time to time to keep the larger ant hills under control.

Because this has mostly happened during the past five years, many of the plants are just getting established. As biased observers, we are excited as much by perceived potential of the garden as we are by the more mature plantings.

Current projects are directed towards propagating and growing backup copies of the collection and adding colour and variety around the human residence. Wildfire is an ever increasing danger so new plantings in this area tend towards lower shrubs and we have been systematically pruning harder to reduce the height of some overgrown *Callistemons* and *Melaleucas*.

Removal of senescent plants creates planting opportunities and opens up vistas and pathways to tempt the wanderer deeper into the garden. We have quite deliberately been improving the flow sight lines and movement between points of interest.

There is much to be done, but for us gardening is as much about the process as it is about the finished product. As with any labour of love, this garden will never be finished. Planning, evaluating, revitalising



Left: Grevillea flower in the Noake's garden



Right: Telopea flower in Trickett/Bate garden



View across new terraced garden towards neighbouring landscape



Some of the large grevilleas

Treasurer's Report:

Cheque account: \$ 8,461.89
Term Deposit: \$ 25,368.38 (Renewed end of January)
Total: \$ 33,830.12



The garden of Phil Trickett and Catriona Bate in Milton, NSW. Photo by Ben Walcott

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