

**S.G.A.P. ACACIA STUDY GROUP
NEWSLETTER NO. 11
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I thought we needed more members in Queensland and WA, so a brief article was sent to Editors of their respective journals. No response from WA; perhaps they didn't publish it, but from Queensland we have a total of 7 new members, several of whom have already been most helpful, particularly Mr David Hanger who has sent a lot of useful information as well as seed of several species, including *A. amblygona* prostrate. As Mr Hanger is a nurseryman I think this is particularly generous. Another generous gesture comes from Mrs Abraham who has issued an invitation to anyone going up as far as Townsville to visit her. She is only ¼ mile off the main highway. Enquire at Bluewater Store and you will be told exactly where to find her. A complete new list of members will be sent with January N/L. Meantime here are the newcomers:-

Abraham, Mrs J.	Box 1264, Townsville, Qld 4180
Bedford, Mrs K.	PO Box 12, Kenmore, Qld 4069
Banks, Mrs A.	32 Sunningdale Ave, Rochedale South, Qld 4123
Conrick, P. E.	Box 88, PO, Lucindale, SA 5272
Costin, R.	48 Real Avenue, Norman Park, Qld 4170
Daniels, D.J.	Research Station, Box 201, Biloela, Qld 4715
Hanger, D.	Cloverdale Park Nursery, Cloverdale Rd, Oxley South, Qld 4075
Maloney, Mrs P.	Arilaringa Nursery, 4 Neich Rd, Glenorie, NSW 2157
Stephens, Ian	Box 116, Caboolture, Qld 4150
Wyld, A. T.	"Invertroys", Glossop Rd, Gamesley, Glossop, Derbyshire, England

FINANCE:

Balance at date of April N/L		\$33.97
Subs		27.00
Donations		<u>1.00</u>
		61.97
1000 Seed Envelopes	4.48	
Postage on N/Ls 9 and 10	11.47	
Foolscap Envelopes	.90	
Record Sheets	<u>3.39</u>	<u>20.24</u>
Balance in hand		<u>\$41.75</u>

This looks like a big balance but some of it represents subs paid in advance, and by the time we've paid for new seed list, members' list etc, there won't be an awful lot left. Incidentally I am still waiting for the 1972 Index Seminum from King's Park to see whether there are any interesting ones available for purchase.

Seed envelopes cost double the previous purchase. They told me I got the first lot at half price by mistake. Oh well, you can't win all the time!

SEED LIST: New seed list attached. Please destroy the old one.

HOMEWORK: A number of Report Sheets have not been returned. Please do this now before you get involved in the Christmas rush.

What's happened to all the enthusiasm? Reports not coming in. Seed requests well down on last year. I hope you didn't have so many failures that you've all got disheartened. Perhaps I can cheer you up by telling you about some of mine. So here goes.

A. alata. Two planted; both died. Mrs Kennedy has two magnificent plants which flowered profusely this year, so it is possible. She has light sandy loam, well drained; plants in half shade.

A. blakeleyi. Nil germination from 9 seeds.
A. browniana. 100% germination. Planted out 7 in different situations. Two only left and looking miserable.
A. cedroides. Planted out three. One alive, looks healthy but still only about 8cm high. Very shaded.
A. cuneata. Planted two. One alive, looks quite good, about 15cm with 3 stems. Comes from sea coast in southwest WA.
A. cupularis. Two planted. Growing like mad. Strongly suspect this is not true to label.
A. decipiens. 3 planted. All look good. About 18cm high at 5 months. This is somewhat similar to *A. cuneata* and grows in similar situations. Remains around 60cm in WA on the coast. I saw one in a Sydney suburban garden recently about 2m high, very bushy and well-grown. It gets a hefty pruning every year.
A. filifolia. Two planted. Looks quite good at about 20cm.
A. glandulicarpa. Many attempts with this one. Have not yet succeeded in keeping it for more than a few months. Yet another lot of seeds now germinating, I hope.
A. glaucoptera. Germination 100%. Planted 5, all flourishing, up to 30cm.
A. gunnii. Three OK, but still in pots and only about 6cm at 11 months.
A. holosericea. Planted two. Very slow and don't think they will live.
A. lanuginosa. Planted two. Looking healthy although only 15cm at 11 months.
A. ligustrina. Planted one. Looks good at about 20cm. I'm now told this is uninteresting in flower.
A. multispicata. Two just planted, seven months from seed.
A. lasiocalyx. Germination in February this year, all died in time from damp-off. Second planting in March produced 4. Just planted out two looking very good about 15cm high. Other two also very healthy.
A. mitchellii. Very difficult. 2 planted, one alive, unhappy.
A. continua. 2 planted and one kept in bucket-size pot. All died from too much humidity and/or damp conditions.
A. nervosa. 4 doing well about 20cm. I've tip pruned these.
A. restiacea. One planted, doing well, about 45cm.
A. dura. Planted five. All look good at 6cm. 12 months old!
A. shuttleworthii. Two planted. Doing well about 30cm.
A. stenoptera. Magnificent but not *A. stenoptera*.
A. tetragonophylla. One planted. Looked very good but something chewed its root and it died.

Everyone who has tried any of these or any other small species is asked to report current progress, please. In particular please advise on the following because I suspect the seed is not what it purports to be, although yours may be from a different batch from mine. If you could send a phyllode or twiglet from any of these it would be helpful:-
A. cupularis, *A. incurva*, *A. sclerophylla*, *A. stenoptera*.

As there have been few comments from members these last 3 months I'll tell you about some more of my failures.

ACACIAS IN TUBS FOR SHOW PURPOSES: This time last year, according to N/L No. 7, I had the following going well:- "Several *A. drummondii*, and one each *A. amblygona*, *A. continua*, *A. colletioides*, *A. pulchella* and *A. sclerophylla*." By the time the Annual Show came round this year I had one left – *A. pulchella* – strong, large, healthy and actually flowering, but not well enough, I thought, for Show purposes. Of the others, all but one *A. drummondii* succumbed to a record wet, one carried on and flowered too early; *A. continua* died in the pot, also during the "big wet". *A. amblygona* looked as though it wouldn't flower, was planted out and died immediately and *A. sclerophylla* grew too large, was planted out and is galloping along – only it isn't *A. sclerophylla*! So as far as I'm concerned the idea of acacias in tubs is a dead duck. And how wise you all were not to be bothered trying!

BURRENDONG ARBORETUM: And now to some more cheerful news. Although not confined to acacias I hope you'll find it interesting.

Early in September I had a letter from George Althofer which said "It would do you good to see the Arboretum now. Despite the drought many acacia species, including some rare ones, are in full bloom." So I went. Home again two days later the speedometer showed almost exactly 500 miles, and apart from a stretch of about 20 miles between Terrey Hills and Parramatta I was hardly ever out of sight of acacias. They lined the roadsides, went deep into the valleys and crowned the hilltops.

Some I identified were *A. baileyana*, *A. botrycephala*, *A. buxifolia*, *A. dorothea*, *A. verniciflua*, *A. diffusa*, *A. dealbata*, *A. echinula*, *A. asparagoides*, *A. gunnii*, *A. deanii*, *A. ulicifolia*, *A. lanigera*. Many of them continued for mile after mile. Others were only in small isolated patches – amongst the latter a very low growing form of *A. lanigera* only a couple of feet off the ground, with a mass of deep golden flowers so dense that only on close inspection could one see that the plant had phyllodes hidden under the flowers.

This was my first visit to Burrendong Arboretum, which covers about 340 acres of the total 1,000 acres (approx) which form Burrendong Dam Park. George Althofer is Director and Chief Botanist.

The Arboretum is maintained with the absolute minimum of funds and an incredible amount of voluntary labour by about half a dozen people. To convey the merest glimmer of what they achieve I quote a brief reference from the Burrendong Arboretum Brigge of July 1969. There are many such. "The Association pays particular tribute to Mr and Mrs Peter Althofer for the almost unbelievable amount of work they have done for the Arboretum; between them they have raised over 7000 plants for planting this year; they have cut about 3¼ miles of old fencing wire into 52" lengths and bent them into frost bows for covering plants; they have cut the greater part of 2000 plastic superphosphate bags into two as covers for use with the frost bows; and in addition they have each given a day's work at almost every one of the Association's plantings."

These Burrendong people are stout-hearted. They have to be to take the knocks. The first planting was 4000 plants in autumn, winter and spring of 1964. All but 60 of these were wiped out by bushfire the following summer. Over the years there have been substantial losses due to frosts, droughts and rabbits, and recently to an over-enthusiastic grader driver who arrived unbeknown to anyone and in one day put out of use most of the subsidiary roads in the Arboretum by blocking them with loose soil or by leaving a deep blade cut. In addition he rooted up a complete row of 7 year old callistemons, 3 *Eucalyptus dunnii*, 2 *E. camaldulensis*, a considerable amount of polythene piping and many contour marking pegs and labels.

Despite all this and despite the drought – under 9" of rain for the year at the time of writing and less than 4" in the last 6 months, many acacias were in magnificent bloom. The amazing thing to me was that so many from such diverse habitats were so extremely well established and flowering better than they normally do in their native habitats. The soil is clay based loam; average annual rainfall 24".

Some of the outstanding Acacias were *A. duriuscula*, one of the prostrates mentioned in N/L No. 10; *A. lasiocalyx*, a small tree with graceful semi-weeping habits, smooth bluey-white trunk and large dense flower spikes of deep gold. Another outstanding species was *A. prominens*, so completely covered in blossoms that no green was visible through the gold. *A. rigens* looked magnificent, as did *A. fimbriata*. Another outstanding species was *A. pycnantha* with distinctly weeping habit. It reminded me very much of the willow trees on the old Chinese willow pattern china.

Latest information from the Arboretum estimates that approximately 29,000 plants comprising 1055 species are well on their way to maturity. Another 8000 plants are in the nursery, mostly raised by Mr and Mrs Peter Althofer. The drought has held up planting of them. The ultimate aim is to have as many species as possible of the total Australian flora.

In the face of such work and devotion I hope you will feel as I do, that we should do what we can to help this magnificent project by joining the Burrendong Arboretum Association. It costs only \$2.50 per annum and entitles you to receive a very interesting quarterly bulletin. The Treasurer is Mr J Fraser, "Mehruda", Baker's Swamp, NSW 2742.

Burrendong Dam as seen from the focal point, a hill on which the Ranger's cottage stands is so peaceful, and so much a part of its surroundings that it is hard to believe it has not always been there. For once there is no visible sign that man has tampered with nature. The huge concrete walls and great jets of water gushing endlessly from the hideous man made spillway are mercifully hidden from sight and in fact are several miles distant. Together the Dam and the Arboretum combine to form one of the best Reserves I have seen, magnificently sited, planned and planted. There is an immaculate caravan park and the Ranger told me the fishing is excellent. If you're traveling inland through NSW, this is well worth a visit. The nearest town is Wellington. The turn-off to the Park is 3 miles south of Wellington coming from Orange on the main road.

AND THAT'S ALL FOR NOW/