

ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS

GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP

NEWSLETTER No. 27

November 1999

Study Group Leader/Editor: Diana SnapeTreasurer/Membership: Peter Garnham

Dear Members,

Thank you for your prompt renewals - it makes life easier for Peter Garnham, myself and the team who post the Newsletters. I hope you have enjoyed an exciting and extended spring, as we have here in Melbourne. We've had good rain recently to revive the garden but (of course) would still like some more. Whether the garden really needs it is another question. I'll leave a few more comments until the end of this Newsletter.

NEXT MEETINGS *Please see details of these meetings in text (page 20)*

SYDNEY: Sunday November 7 - contact Jo Hambrett

NE VIC: Sunday November 21 at Barbara Buchanan's

MELBOURNE: Sunday December 5 at John Armstrong's

INDEX

- 2 CORRESPONDENCE extracts
- 4 A GDSG book - Barbara Buchanan, Pat Webb, Danie Ondinea, NE Vic Branch
- 5 DESIGN
- 5 The Sydney garden: where is it headed?-Gordon Rowland
- 6 Garden design for a village in a desert area - Lynne Boladeras
- 7 & 8 Plans of Lynne's garden design
- 9 Landscaping around the house on Mt Clay - Cherree Densley
- 11 Plan of Cherree's landscaping at Mt Clay
- 12 GARDENS
- 12 Local native habitat gardens- Stefanie Rennick
- 13 Ten years on - John Hulme
- 13 Open Gardens - Joan Barrett, Jan Hall
- 14 Naturalistic gardens -LynReilly; Pat Webb
- 15 BOOKS, MAGAZINES & the INTERNET
- 15 Design issues from the Internet - Colleen Keena
- 16 DESIGN IDEAS
- 16 Winter colour-Chris Larkin
- 17 A 'humanised translation of the landscape' - Dr David Jones, Sylvia Crowe
- 18 Serendipity in garden design - Diana Snape
- 19 PLANTS in DESIGN
- 19 Eremophilas in the desert - Jan Hall
- 19 SNIPPETS
- 19 A Churchill Fellowship

19	Lichens - Geoff Simmons
20	Mosses (and lichens & fungi)
20	MEETINGS
21	TREASURER'S REPORT
21	MEMBERSHIP

CORRESPONDENCE extracts

"My garden has grown so well in the month I was away in Queensland for the Conference and Pre- and Post- Conference tours, with lots of plants bursting into bloom not to mention, of course, the weeding that needs to be done. However it is not so bad this time because of the amount of mulch I have used. Especially beautiful is the prostrate white thryptomene which is proving to be a very good garden plant, covering quite large areas and with lots of bloom.

Just before I got away, I cut out and pruned back most of the large garden area just inside the front gate (filled the tray of the truck twice). The garden here is now 15 years old and plants had become top heavy with lots of dead, sticky old growth underneath. I redug, contoured, added almost a truckload of old cow manure and soil, and mass planted with 30 Anigozanthos manglesii hybrid form, which are in full bloom at present, plus 20 Anigozanthos "Big Red" which will follow by flowering later, and also planted 12 little Xanthorrhoea australis that I grew from seed, and then mulched the lot. I think this newly remodelled garden now makes a statement about the rest of the garden, as soon as one gets in the front gate. I shall systematically do the same with the older parts of the garden over the next few months, as energy permits - or more specifically, as time permits.

*I am planting a mini rainforest too in a part of Mt Clay near where the windrow was burnt and where the land slopes away. I am getting plants from Yaruga Nursery, Walkermine. It will be a real experiment and I am mindful that none of them should become invasive. I will have to be ever vigilant as many of the rainforest trees have berries which are just so attractive to birds and thus will be carried around. I need to have a talk to Neil Marriott who has planted hundreds of rainforest trees on his block at Black Range, and see if he thinks that there will be any future problems with seed dispersal." **Cherree Densley** Vic*

As always I am deeply impressed by Cherree's energy and enthusiasm as she applies her design skills in her ever-expanding gardens. DS

*"Our garden is going to be featured in the October issue of 'The Garden' - the RHS magazine in England. Unfortunately the photos are a few years old (older than the photos taken for the 'Australian Gardener') and the garden has developed since then but it does show the interest there is in Tasmanian and Australian plants in general around the world." **Lindsay Campbell** Tas*

Congratulations, Lindsay, that's good news. I think it's difficult to keep up-to-date with photos of a garden as it develops and changes from season to season. DS

"Pen to paper for comments on NL25:- p3 "unique aspects for Australian garden design" - as you said, a challenging approach. However '1'open spaces - planting close was essential when we moved into this very windy site. I would do it again too, even though one may need to thin out at a later date.

p9 "Ideas for garden design - Sydney Wildflower Nursery, Marsden Park" - some very useful and practical tips for us all. Regarding Melaleuca fulgens - I have grown it in three positions in the garden, and the one where I have a full background is the best. This plant I have tip pruned monthly or bi-monthly since it went in 3 years ago. It has flowered sporadically all year; of course the main flush is in Spring. This made me think of all the melaleucas we have or have had, and I feel that they are such useful shrubs/trees in a garden; but the ones that have been really successful need tip pruning regularly. I wish I had made more of a feature

3

of the papery bark on some species, to show it off. I particularly like the greyish foliage of *Melaleuca incana* and the pendulous growth habit. I have one that has become very leggy - it definitely missed out on the tip pruning. But it hides the neighbour's garage, so what's a poor girl to do?!" **Pat Webb** Vic

We have the salmon and purple forms of *Melaleuca fulgens* in flower now in different parts of the garden - both beautiful colours - and I agree about the need for pruning. DS

"I have a special interest in identifying the critical elements of Australian naturalistic garden style (i.e. if I moved overseas and couldn't get any Australian plants, how would I make an Australian bush-style garden?) - the lines, shapes, masses, form and colour of plants, surface treatments, etc. Are there common features across the nation, eg tropical compared with dry sclerophyll? How can we use this information to promote garden design using Australian plants, including in public and city areas?" **Shirley Pipitone** ACT

My initial reaction was that one just couldn't make an Australian bush-style garden without Australian plants but then Shirley's questions started me thinking. If we could identify the characteristic features of such a garden and choose plants from elsewhere which fit in with this concept, then why not? Obviously using Australian plants makes it a lot easier! What do you think? DS

"We are water-logged. We had 109 mm in May, 71 mm in June, 65 mm in July, 130 mm in August and already 40 mm for September. Our property has never been this wet since we have lived here.

I keep revising my list of plants to grow in bad drainage areas. These areas drain in the summer and can be quite dry by February. The temperatures have been mild generally but we still have managed a couple of ripper frosts. One morning every pot in the nursery was frozen solid. We have put some new drains in and I am waiting to see if they have made any difference. I am doing lots of reading on what will grow in wet areas and hoping to be able to plant out in the spring." **Rosemary Verbeeten** Tas

The contrast between Rosemary's situation and the long drought in most parts of Victoria is amazing. The difference in rainfall is one significant factor in trying to answer Shirley's question about 'common features across the nation'. DS

"I like to introduce a natural effect into gardens and create bush gardens (a "walking in amongst" effect). I also like to use the rarely grown species, and effective combinations of flowering plants to produce bright spots of interest. Gardens should be satisfying living areas." **Merele Webb** Vic •

I like the ideas of a "walking in amongst" effect and "bright spots of interest" in a garden. DS

"The results of the flora survey at Mt Clay were good -167 species (I've added another 35 to that!). The first waxlip orchid was flowering, plus another plant for my block - a small clump of flowering *Stackhousia viminea*. It is thick along the road just below here, but this has come up since the bulldozer cleared for the house. Another road was ablaze with boronia, tetraheca, white epacris, hibbertia, pultenaea and euphrasia, particularly where the sides of the road were graded about 18 months ago.

Our APS Warrnambool flower show was very successful. We had a special display of 'environmental weeds which have escaped from gardens' - ivy, coprosma, polygala, gazania, freesias, etc - which caused a lot of interest." **Cherree Dertsley** Vic

"We have been on holiday along the Anne Beadell Highway - some amazing images out there in the desert! - Grand 'Marble Gums' and *Triodia* sp on the red sand dunes highlighted by the back lighting of the setting sun, and so many silver-foliaged trees and shrubs. Then the contrast of a ridge covered with *Callitris*

verrucosa or *casuarinas*. with the colour of various *sennas*, wattles and amazing deep red and bronze of *Dodonaea* sp and *Maireana* sp. We were actually collecting *eremophilas*, *eucalypts* and *daisies* and none of it was spoiled by human interference, grazing or litter. It is a privilege to experience these unspoilt remote areas and inspiration for designers of plantings in arid areas - this one with plenty of *eucalypts* and other trees and therefore wildlife, even without fresh water." **Jan Hall** Vic

A GDSG BOOK

"One of our younger members who has just finished building a mud-brick house and is starting on the garden lent me a book on garden design, 'The Garden Planner' by Robin Williams (Frances Lincoln, 1990). I was flipping through it - the early chapters quite good, basic stuff, just right for beginners I felt, but of course when it gets to plants at the end they are all exotic for the English garden. I believe it is time to think about the book the GDSG is going to produce. I had always been intimidated by not knowing where to begin, what level to pitch it at, and it suddenly came to me that beginners could benefit very much. The potential market may not be huge at any one point in time but there will always be young people needing help in getting started and the trick will be to keep away from commercial publishers who will want to remainder after a year or two and keep it constantly available through ASP/SGAP. Perhaps we are ready to start planning what should go in and what should be left out - perhaps get an editorial committee together, agree on the target buyers, and maybe farm out chapters." **Barbara Buchanan** Vic

"Comments on the possibility of GDSG producing a book - I am sure you must have a great amount of valuable material over the years in past Newsletters, and from your many visits to Australian plant gardens. An enormous task, but one which should be possible with such a vibrant Study Group.

I have to say that there must be a section on Pruning and General Maintenance and Refurbishment of the garden. One of the saddest things in visiting a public garden is the evidence of a lack of ongoing maintenance, and certainly an Australian garden needs plenty.

I feel it would be good to have a book that is easily understood by beginners and within a price range that most people could afford. John would be happy to share the proof-reading." **Pat Webb** Vic

I think a book would be a wonderful idea and my suggestion for a chapter heading is (no prizes for guessing): Wildlife and the well designed Australian garden (or something along those lines). I'd love to be involved in the writing of it or help in some way. Just finishing off our book on the bush plants of the Cooks River - so much fiddle at the end to get it right!" **Danie Ondinea** NSW

Report from the last NE Vic Branch meeting

Barbara Buchanan Vic

The discussion centred on the idea of the book. Points made are listed:

- 1 A search of the NL should provide a useful starting point both in readymade articles and as an indication of matters of general concern.
- 2 We need a pool of photos of established gardens.
- 3 Video - should we make?
- 4 Suburban v. rural gardens or small v. large
- 5 Regional differences
- 6 Mistakes - we have all made them, it could help others to know what to avoid.
- 7 Special plants such as architectural plants

8 *Caring for your plant once in the ground*

9 *Real information needed on pruning as part of ongoing maintenance and design; coppicing, bonsai.*

10 *Transplanting - when it can be successful*

On reflection I wonder if we can do much better than the Encyclopedia and if we have the depth of personal experience. I am inclined to return to my original idea of offering basic principles of design with examples from Australian flora and situations. I would not give much space to where to put the clothes line and sandpit for children although such things must always be considered, because I feel there are plenty of books that deal with such practical aspects of design. I think there is a need for a book to guide people faced with an empty space - where to begin - and to help them firm up in their minds what their aim is and then how to achieve it. These are just a few personal thoughts.

Would any member interested in being actively involved in any way in the production of a book please let me know as soon as possible. This could involve: being on the editorial committee (this will have to be a very committed group of members), or researching, making suggestions, writing a chapter, proof-reading, taking photographs, doing illustrations or plans, etc. With members so widespread, having a fax or email would help make consultation speedier. DS

DESIGN

The Sydney garden: where is it headed?

Gordon Rowland NSW

The following is reprinted from 'Landscape Outlook' September 1999, and is a talk under this title that Gordon presented to the Horticultural Media Association, at the RBG in Sydney in July.

The future I envisage involves returning to our roots, and to what the American eco-theologian Fr Thomas Berry refers as "fostering the spontaneities of nature". For us Sydneysiders this means reintegrating our gardens - as far as that is possible - with the original landscape. How likely is this to occur and what benefits will it bring? To answer the first question first, I think it's more than likely for several reasons.

The first is this: Last year a coalition of 40 out of Sydney's 42 municipal councils initiated a project - Green Web Sydney - to create green corridors between patches of isolated bushland and to restore, as far as possible, Sydney's fragmented web of indigenous vegetation. Green Web Sydney also encourages owners and designers of private gardens to participate in restoring the web by planting local indigenous species, trees in particular.

And here's reason number two: I was speaking recently with Anita Boucher, the editor of *Australian Horticulture* who has heard from a variety of sources anecdotal evidence suggesting a swing back towards Australian plants, not only in Sydney but throughout Australia.

Reason number three is this: In developed countries such as Britain and the USA, and here in Australia, and even on the island of Bali, people are beginning to appreciate their besieged natural heritage. Indigenous plants are making a comeback in private gardens and public places, and the restoration of indigenous landscapes - where they are not still being destroyed - is steadily gathering pace.

And finally, reason number four: At last year's Olympic Coordination Authority workshops on plant selection for the so-called 'Look of the Games', I received - to my surprise and delight - unanimous industry support for my proposal for a truly Australian look, show-casing to our fellow Australians and the rest of the world, the best and most beautiful Australian plants. After the Games are over this will inevitably have a flow-on effect, leading to increased demand for Australian plants as we enter the third millennium.

6

There are four interrelated benefits of the indigenous garden.

The first is **aesthetic**. Now this is a very subjective area and, as everyone knows, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Some of you will prefer the traditional exotic garden with its brightly coloured flower beds, whatever I may say. But listen if you will to these words of wisdom of the late, great English landscape architect Sylvia Crowe:

"Perhaps the greatest principle (of design) and the one most lacking in the average garden today, is a sense of unity. It is a quality found in all great landscapes, based on . . . the domination of one type of vegetation and (where) human use and buildings have kept in sympathy with their surroundings. When we say that a landscape has been spoilt we mean that it has lost this unity."

If you made an informed selection of indigenous plants, and if you take care where you place them, you're almost certain to achieve that elusive sense of unity described by Sylvia Crowe and your garden will soon become - if it is not so already - a relaxing retreat with a timeless aesthetic appeal. You will also be helping revive a *sense of place* and the unity of the wider landscape.

And if you're still worried about colour, this is what John Brookes advised me back in England about twenty years ago: *"Take care of form and let colour take care of itself"*, meaning of course: *"Get your priorities right"*, because colour is fleeting while form, or the lack of it, endures.

The second benefit of the indigenous garden is to the **environment**. Designing in harmony with nature using indigenous plants, provides the best source of food and shelter for our embattled native wildlife and the best protection against further degradation of the land by exotic weed invasion. More native birds in your garden might also be considered an aesthetic benefit, because they stimulate your senses with splashes of extra colour, and sound and movement too.

The third benefit is **economic**. Indigenous plants need less water and less fertiliser, while increasing number of birds which feed on insects means less expenditure on toxic pesticides, increased safety and health benefits and more time to enjoy your garden. Of course these would be environmental benefits too.

The fourth, and some might say the most significant, benefit is **symbolic** because the indigenous garden symbolises both humankind's reconciliation with nature, and the reconciliation of Aboriginal and 'European' Australians.

Garden design for a village in a desert area

Lynne Boladeras WA

Enclosing a couple of examples of the work I do at the village that accommodates 250 - 300 people who work at a Gold Mine. Illustration (11) shows the garden design between two blocks of buildings, one person per ensuite room - total of 16 people. So we have a lot of garden to cover the whole village, as well as Administration buildings, etc.!

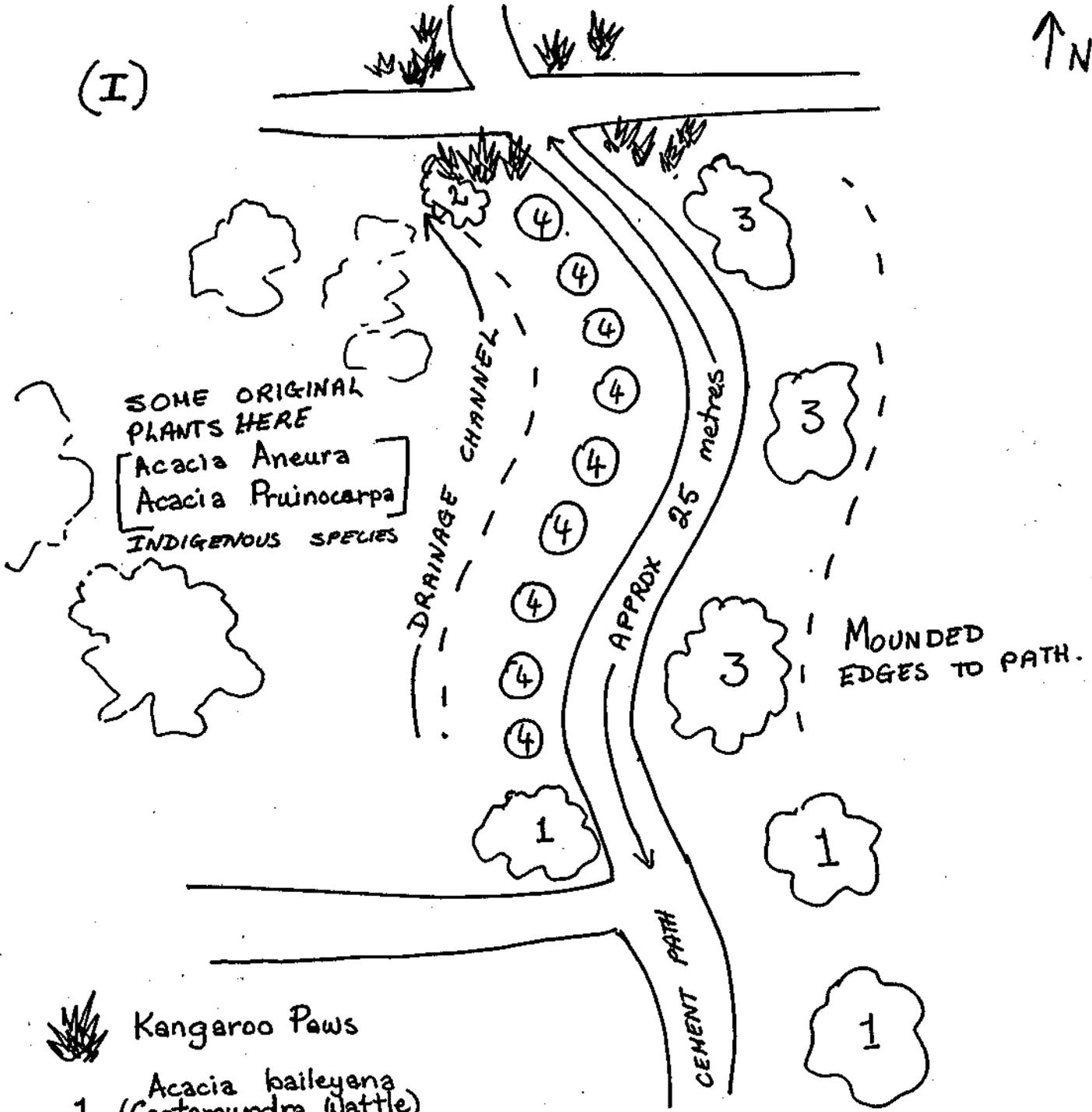
Availability of suitable plants for the climate has been difficult. We have had a propagating shed for 18 months so I can now grow a lot myself, which is very rewarding.

Re illustration (1). The original landscapers had the mound to the left of the path covered in arctotis daisies. While they looked OK for a couple of years, they became woody and one hot summer (temperatures over 45 degrees C every day for weeks) they nearly all died. I replaced them with *Melaleuca* 'Green Globe' (a dwarf form of *M. armillaris*). These have a lovely rounded form, are extremely hardy and stay bright green all year. The *Myoporum parvifolium* groundcover turns purplish in winter and looks very effective.

Area 11 (one of my first designs) was first planted in Sept. 95 - mostly closest to buildings. The central area was seeded with *Atriplex* spp. and *Maireana* spp. at that time. This reduced dust problems and was cost effective, while we were establishing large areas. By this year, trees such as the wattles made a



(I)



Kangaroo Paws

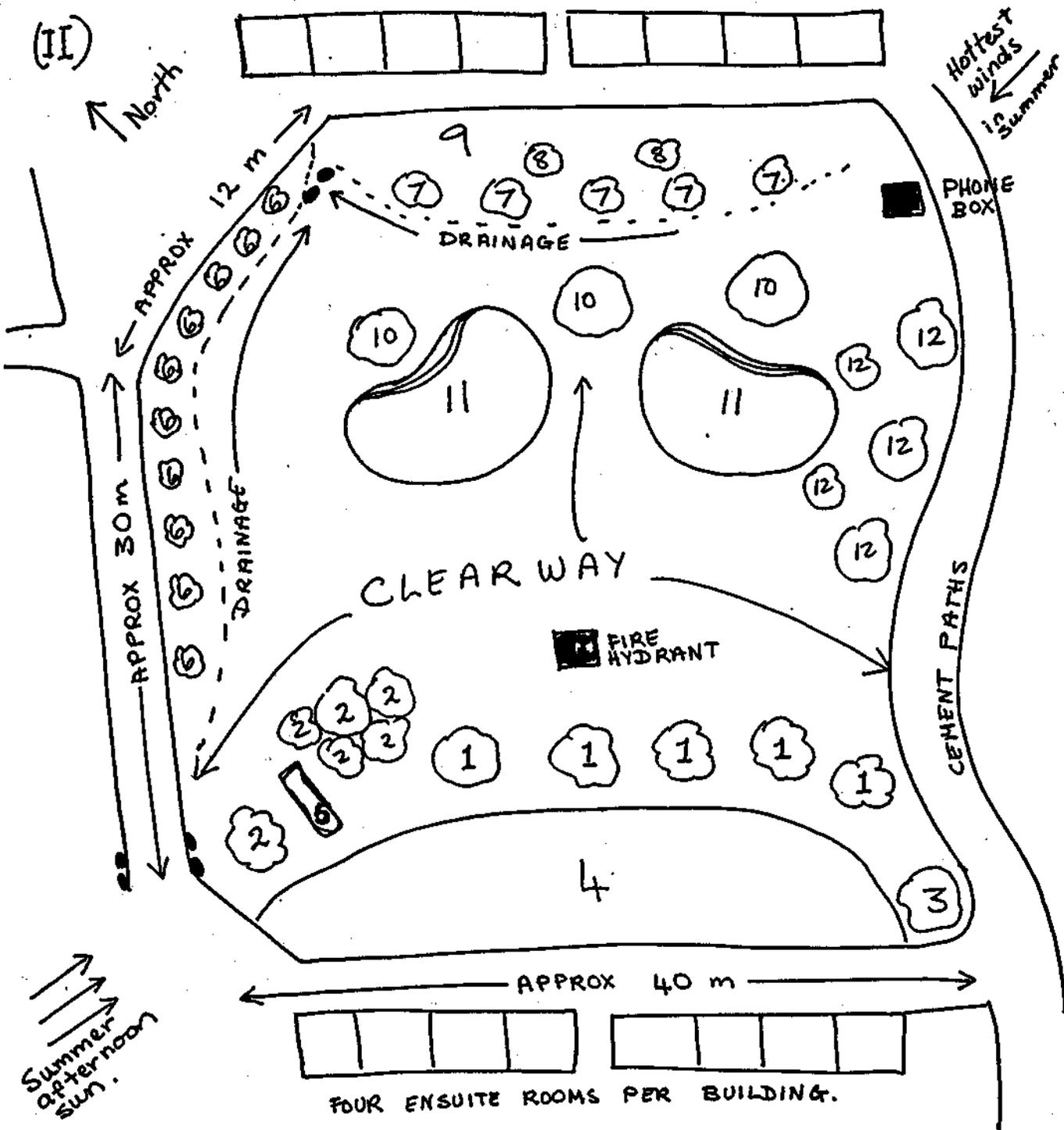
1. *Acacia baileyana*
(Cootamundra Wattle)

2. *Callistemon*

3. Eucalypts

4. *Melaleuca* "Green Globes"

with
Myoporum Parvifolium Purpurea (ground cover)
planted between.



MUST HAVE CLEARWAY ACCESS TO FIRE HYDRANT.

PLANTS CLOSEST TO BUILDINGS MUST BE 1m or less (to save constant pruning)

Site is on a hill so DRAINAGE IS IMPORTANT as most rain is from thunderstorms or cyclones.

● CULVERTS

Natural soil is very rocky. (hence the olive trees)

LYNNE BOLDFEARS 20-3-97.

decent framework and provided some shade. However there were drainage problems and more shade was needed in summer.

The atriplex etc. in the central area were only about 1 m (natural height limit) and also a bad snake haven, having grown very densely. The centre was cleared and soil brought in to fix drainage problems (eg mound on left of plan next to path) and to make "kidney" shapes. We planted three robinias, even though they are not natives, as we needed large spreading deciduous trees.

There are a few indigenous *Acacia pruinocarpa* growing near the *A. baileyana*. One *Ptilotus obovatus* has also grown and fits in well with the *Melaleuca incana* 'nana's. Hopefully more will germinate. (*Ptilotus obovatus* is the local "cotton bush" - mauve flowers with silver-grey foliage. It would make an excellent garden plant.)

Plant list for Illustration 11

1. *Acacia baileyana*] fast growing
2. *Acacia saligna* & *A. burkittii*]
3. *Melaleuca armiliaris*
4. *Melaleuca nesophila* + *Callitris preissii* (slow growing) - shade trees
 - + *Melaleuca* 'Green Globe']
 - + *Melaleuca incana* 'Nana'] all less than 1 metre, nearest buildings
 - + *Grevillea thelemanniana* 'Gilt Dragon']
 - + *Agonis flexuosa* 'Nana']
 - + *Lavender canariensis*]
5. Wonga Wonga creeper (*Pandorea pandorana*) growing over old log
6. *Callistemon* 'Captain Cook' with *Eremophila glabra* (silver-grey leaves) groundcover between callistemons
7. *Melaleuca lanceolata*
8. *Hakea francissiana* (grown from local seed)
9. *Grevillea obtusifolia* groundcover ('Gin Gin Gem')
 - + *Thryptomene saxicola*
 - + *Callistemon* 'Captain Cook'
10. Robinia (shade in summer / light in winter)
11. Mounded areas with
 - Ricinocarpus tuberculatus*
 - + *Eremophila brevifolia*
 - + *Melaleuca* 'Revolution Gold' to contrast
 - + *Myoporum parvifolium* 'Purpurea' groundcover
12. *Olea europa*

Landscaping around the house on Mt Clay

Cherree Densley Vic

Late last year I had the opportunity to purchase a relocatable three bedroom weatherboard house and had it transported and positioned on Mt Clay, the 187 acre block of sclerophyll forest which has a conservation covenant placed on it, with the encouragement and help of Trust for Nature. I have written about my block before. However, now that the house is positioned, painted and furnished it is time to turn my attentions to the landscaping. The following priorities have evolved:

10

I don't want to lose the wonderful views across the Fitzroy River Valley and to the Grampians beyond.

I must take care that I don't create a fire hazard.

I must avoid planting anything which may become an environmental weed as the natural bush is very close and my block is adjacent to the Mt Clay State Forest on two sides.

Because the soil and environment is so different to our home and garden in Killarney I want to try to grow things which have proved difficult there. (The Mt Clay block has soil that is deep red clay loam, is at a higher elevation, is more sheltered and warmer, and being sloping, the drainage is better, plus it has never been grazed or farmed, so weed species should be at a minimum).

After a fair amount of observation, I need to take into account the wildlife - I want to watch the birds at the dam, so don't want to obstruct my views down to the west. The other major consideration is the grey kangaroos and red necked wallabies which seem to have made specific tracks across the house block, and they, I'm sure will flatten - or chew off - any plants which are in their pathways.

So the plan on page 11 shows what I have decided on so far. John Armstrong and Lola and Charles Mensch from APS Maroondah visited recently and I welcomed their help and advice. I welcome advice from other members.

M This is natural bushland - messmate, swamp gums, shining peppermints, blackwoods, black wattles, prickly moses, sweet bursaria, coastal beardheath, gahnia, native grasses, glycines, clematis, tea-tree, greenhoods, maidenhair fern, chocolate lilies, cassinia, coprosma, bracken.

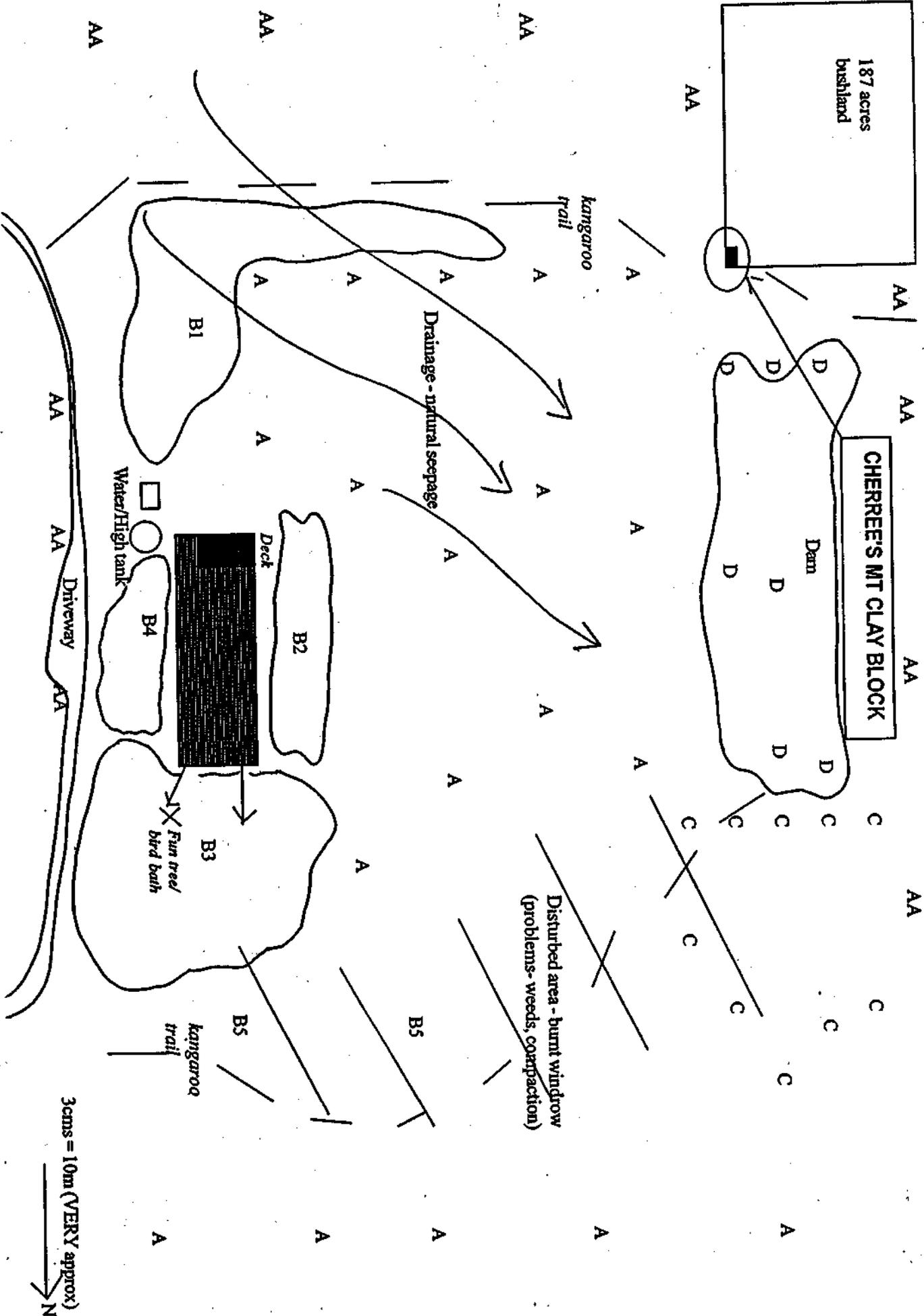
A This half hectare was scalped by a bulldozer about 2.5 years ago and will be left to regenerate naturally. There is a lot of growth already of the plants from AA plus an abundance of little things like different grasses, violets, senecios, lomandras, hypoxis, *Indigofera australis* and wahlenbergias. I'll be keeping a watch on any weeds such as fog grass, sweet vernal grass and cape weed and removing them. I shall also remove any eucalypts or wattles which come up too close to the house - perhaps transplanting them back into the bush if possible.

B1, B2 These two areas bordered by logs will have mixed plantings of Australian natives from groundcovers to medium shrubs, mostly plants which appeal chosen for colour, foliage, form and some which won't grow successfully in Killarney (dryandras, grevilleas, isopogons, banksias) There are, so far, about 200 in B1 and 150 in B2.

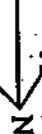
B3 This area is mostly low and indigenous plants grown from seeds and cuttings collected locally. *Xanthorrhoea minor* (about 30 planted), *Indigophera australis*, *Viminaria juncea*, glycines, tethrathecas, correas, *Hakea rostrata*, patersonias, *Kennedia prostrata*, local grasses. I'll continue to propagate local plants (from a permit) and revegetate this area. There is a local *Grevillea parviflora* from about half a km away and *G. aquifolium* from near Portland which I would like to grow. I have also collected and sown lots of seed of a low form of *Banksia marginata* from my block which should look great. A challenge to get going will be *Epacris impressa*. There are wonderful colour forms on my block but the number of plants is not high, and I haven't noticed any regenerating. *Hibbertia riparia* should regenerate as it is a common understorey on the block.

B4 This is a rockery which is not planted yet as it is still waiting for the soil to settle. As it is on the east of the house, I think that ferns will do well along the edge nearest the house and I might try a few 'glam' grafted grevilleas. I don't need to attract the birds however, as just a quick look out the windows to the east reveals lots of visitors here - yellow robins, golden whistlers, grey thrush, superb blue wrens, red-browed finches, scrub wrens, crimson rosellas, eastern spinebills and other honeyeaters are common. (And at night, I can just swing the spotlight around from the deck towards these trees to see ring-tail possums, gliders and the odd koala or two). I am mindful that too many large flowered grevilleas might upset the ratio of birds and result in lots of bigger wattlebirds chasing out the smaller birds, but it might not happen here so close to the bush. What do others think?

B5 This is the most difficult area as it is where the windrow of cleared bush was stacked by



3cms = 10m (VERY approx)



the bulldozer and subsequently burnt when it dried out and the weeds are threatening to beat me here. Initially, hundreds of very fast growing Large Kangaroo Apples seemed to appear from nowhere - I had not previously recorded them on the block. These are providing shelter for other plantings and are making great mulch as I pull them out. At the moment, I have planted lots of callistemons, melaleucas, banksias, smaller acacias and lots of hardy things - heavily guarded against the wallabies and kangaroos and hopefully fast growing. I have to be careful that these plants don't get too tall here in this area.

C Now this is controversial. But I have decided to plant this out with about 200-300 rainforest plants for a timber trial. I shall need to keep a really close watch over these. They should grow well here in the well-drained, rich soil and not block my views.

D Hundreds of small clumps and tufts of local reeds, rushes, sedges and other water plants have been propagated and transplanted around the perimeter of the clay dam to help stabilise the banks and edges. I have also planted a box of local tea-trees there. There seem to be lots of various small plants growing back in the clay, and hopefully the larger animals will allow them to make some sort of decent growth. However, the sedges and reeds are doing very well and as the water level has risen, the stems have made great shelter for the many little transparent bags of frog spawn on them. The trees and thick bush just at the back of the dam proved to be great habitat for other things too as trappings over Easter revealed lots of bush rats, swamp rats and agile antechinus in this area. Some of the closest trees also have great hollows and I'm sure are full of possums and parrots.

Just for a bit of fun, we 'planted' several dead limbs, arranged artistically, collected from up the road into the one hole just outside the lounge window to resemble a dead tree. Hopefully, birds such as owls will use this as a perch. John Armstrong suggested I make a large free-form bird bath at the base of the 'tree', and I have purchased the mix for this already. I have also propagated about another 30 small grass-trees to plant in this area.

GARDENS

Local native habitat gardens

Stefanie Rennick Vic

I'm writing to let you know some of the outcomes of the Ormond East Primary School local native (indigenous) plants garden which you and the Garden Design Study Group helped get going. You will recall that the basis of the garden was the use of plants propagated from remnant indigenous and threatened habitats in nearby railway reserves, under demolished East Bentleigh Primary School, the Caulfield Race Course, etc.

Because so many children wanted to belong to the Garden Group, I was asked to extend the propagating, design and planting to every class in the school, the teachers looking after the clear plastic covered seeds or cuttings in the class room. We finished up with a large number of plants which the children and their teachers then planted either at the school or in the beds prepared by the Council garden staff in the nearby Joyce Park. Design was discussed with the garden staff. The plants have grown remarkably well. The garden staff, landscape students and the Council's Open Space Strategy suggested interpretive signage which was designed, and then funded by the Australian Plants Society. I am hoping some will be ready to erect in the Park as our contribution to National Biodiversity Month (September).

Are many APS groups participating in this important concept? I believe the children are developing a live and beautiful local native habitat garden providing a direct link with the heritage and life of our Aboriginal peoples, growing homes for our threatened fauna, ensuring the survival of Australia's most valuable assets, and a practical way to demonstrate reconciliation. This year Grades 5 and 6 are doing part of their Aboriginal Studies through "growing and knowing" at least 5 of their own local native garden plants. They are each producing a booklet from which we hope to use ideas or pages to design a professionally produced book to assist future teachers and children.

What can the GDSG do to promote local habitat garden designs for every region? We need to encourage schools to learn and landscape with ten local native plants. If any GDSG member lives near Ormond, Joyce Park and the Elster Creek Trail, I would be delighted to have them join me in

this very interesting local native garden project.

I think for a start we need a large number of Stefanie Rennicks

Ten years on

John Hulme NSW

We've been in this house in Forster NSW for nearly 10 years. I'm happy with the forethought that I put into planting our garden. The bird attraction has worked well with the honeyeaters enticed by the long flowering grevilleas: *G. 'WinparaGem'*, *G.arenaria*, one of the *G. 'Poorinda'* series, *G. longifolia*, *G. 'Honey Gem'* and *Hakeasericea* (pink). They have survived where a lot of others haven't. They're all about 2-3 metres high and have formed a nice thicket to look down upon from the upper floor of the house, especially now they're all in flower. Homogeneous in small foliage and flower for the small 5m by 6m garden on a slight rise up from the house. A *Banksia integrifolia* sticks up for interest. A minor regret is that the Wattlebird is over territorial. The thicket was supposed to shelter smaller honeyeaters - there were a couple, but not lately. The Scaiy and Rainbow Lorikeets are a plus.

In front of the downstairs picture window is, now leggy, a V-shaped *Banksia* roour.occasionally pruned (used for dark green dried flowers) with an *Albizziajulibrissin* (exotic deciduous), also V-shaped.just behind and above it. It's also pretty from upstairs windows which look down on it. The northern winter sun is lovely over the grevilleas and through the albizzia. Some orchids are nestled in a rockery under the banksia (and violets).

The sun also shines through a deciduous *Melia azedarach* which is in front of the grevilleas. Most grubs are caught in cloth or toilet paper wrapped around the trunk at the right time. The household surface spray works well through the toilet paper. I don't think any birds or anything like the grubs. The *Eucalyptus caesia* up front died after about 6 years.

This might all sound a bit raggedy or common to some, but these have survived well with negligible care. It's interesting looking at old planting plans to see what has or has not survived. I think it's worthwhile drawing up a plan of the existing plantings every so often, or taking photos. Anyway I'm happy that my elementary attempts at design have basically worked for me. I now need to try some undershrubs.

I think 'common' plants can make a valuable contribution to garden design. Whether a plant is rare or common does not really matter in garden design, though it is nice to have reliable plants.

We had similar trouble to John's with Wattlebirds (Brush or Little) being aggressive and dominating the garden. We decided to remove two floriferous hybrid grevilleas which they particularly favoured and immediately the Brush Wattlebirds seemed to vanish. The catch was that they were replaced by the larger Red Wattlebirds, which were rarer before. We're waiting to see what happens next. DS

Open Gardens

The Ebringer garden in Ivanhoe

Joan Barrett Vic

Despite suffering pain of unknown origin in one of my feet, I could not ignore an Open Garden just across the river from my home, with Paul Thompson (a professional member of GDSG) the designer! The Ebringer house rises steeply uphill from the Yarra grasslands. I limped up the drive beside a high retaining wall, softened with creeping plants, and proceeded, with what dignity I could muster, around the corner of the house to the somewhat precipitous northern sideway.

Here the eyes immediately alight on two towering *Eucalyptus (Corymbosa) citriodora*. These trees, now in excellent proportion to the height of the house, had been planted by the original owner, the handout reads "against all advice". Viewed from the present, the word 'inspirational' springs to mind. At their base the colours in their trunks were echoed by the pebbles used in swirling patterns to create a 'dry creek bed'

tumbling down the hillside, with water in the lowest pool. The impact of this scene will be long remembered.

The pathway beside the 'creek' proceeded, fortunately for me via a couple of landing stages, to the back garden which ties beautifully with the pergola-covered slate veranda running the length of the house. In this area well kept lawns, ponds and an in-ground pool took up most of the fairly narrow space between the veranda and the boundary fence. Nonetheless, many well kept shrubs and small trees were in evidence either as fence-screens or accents among the pools. One of these was a *Melaleuca nodosa* having several papery trunks and covered in masses of lime-green buds.

It was now becoming painfully evident that I must turn back though I could see, in the further reaches of the garden, rainforest trees and tumbles of large rocks from among which a creek was flowing. This appeared as a natural bushland gully, rather than owing anything to a human hand, even Paul's. I was now headed for home, though not without tackling the steps up to the front garden, a small terrace which the handout describes as an 'oriental zen type garden', newly planted with native grasses, dianella, *Lomandra confertifolia* and *L. nana*, and low-growing baeckea, scaevola and correas.

I can truthfully say I loved this garden!

Comments on the **Open Gardens** it was my great pleasure to visit.

Jan Hall Vic

John Armstrong's garden is well known but the immediate effect is of a pleasing, relaxing place to be. It is a tribute to good planning and initial landscaping skill. A family garden which has stood the test of time and much use, it contains some interesting plant surprises and lovely colour combinations.

Peg McAllister's - a 'happy, smiling wildflower garden'. Everyone was smiling! The young man on the gate said it was like that the whole two days. What a delight! Also a tribute to sound knowledge of plants and flower timing plus the unity achieved with the right colour combinations and repetition. Self seeded stylidiums, daisies and *Actinotus helianthi* provided the naturalistic element, along with some dappled shade and background from 'borrowed' trees next door.

Naturalistic gardens

Lyn Reilly Qld

While I haven't digested the two Newsletters fully, I am intrigued by the item 'Naturalistic gardens' in the August edition. It was the statement by the NE Vic branch that "We would expect all our gardens to be naturalistic" that got me thinking. I agree, if they meant "to use natural (Australian) plants". But if they also mean "to look natural" I feel that excludes formal gardens as well as traditional gardens with lawn areas. I think this would be a shame, and a narrow view of designing gardens with Australian plants.

Two examples come to mind:

(1) Last year the SGAP display at the Brisbane Exhibition featured a formal Tuscan garden using only Australian plants. Since "Tuscan" seems to be the main theme local builders know, many people were interested, intrigued and attracted. (I'm certainly not saying I like Tuscan, but it is a fact of life up here.)

(2) I've done a bit of research recently into designing gardens to encourage birds. We've decided this is a priority for our garden. While it is small, we have noted over forty different bird visitors since we've been here. Birds like a fair bit of open space (actually they like the edges between open space and shrubs). Until I discover a ground cover as hardy and versatile as lawn - able to withstand being driven on by cars and camping trailers, having salt from dinghies washed off onto it, etc. - then grass it is. The birds love it, both for grub-eating and seed-eating, as well as for courtship and aggression displays - and for those reasons we wouldn't change it to paving.

Also, one of the gardens we visited during the ASGAP conference, was a perfect picture of an

Australian garden - winding paths past lots of flowering plants and ponds. However when I asked them about birds, they had only one or two. I think there are probably as many reasons for designing gardens as there are people doing it. I guess I'm saying "Don't exclude those which only have a 'bit of nature'".

Naturalistic and other gardens

Pat Webb Vic

I think your comment in "Naturalistic gardens" NL26p13 "Many (most) of our gardens are naturalistic in that they contain only Australian plants, but these may come from very different areas and have no regional/ecological influence or look" is very valid. When planning in my mind's eye, a small garden for a unit and to have only five or six species - it would be so hard to contain myself. Perhaps that is when I can have more variety in a few pots! Looking out of the window at the garden now, I hope it will be a long time before we need to move on. The *Hakea sericea* (pink form) is certainly 'plant of the month'¹ at the moment and standing up well to a horrible blustery north-westerly.

This issue highlights how gardens are so different, along with the people who plant and care for them, as well as the climate and area in which they are started. They will always be so and, of course, that is part of the charm. Whilst now I really enjoy our mainly Australian native garden, for many years our gardens were a mix from all over; and these gardens we enjoyed too.

One factor we all need to consider, certainly here in many parts of Victoria, is our water consumption. It is another dry winter on the Mornington Peninsula and, I gather, in many other places. Driving recently between Geelong and Ballarat we heard that they have had water restrictions for over a year. This July we had only 37mm rain - our average over the past eight years has been 90mm. We hope for a wet Spring.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES and the INTERNET

INTERNET

From the Internet, Colleen Keena Qld recommends the following:

<http://www.gardenvisit.com>

<http://www.omen.net.au/~wnatives/design.htm>

<http://www.global-garden.com.au./burnley/sept99dte.htm> (see next February's Newsletter)

<http://www.horticulture.demon.co.uk>

Colleen copied this snippet from the last one. It has several interesting points from the UK: preparation of site and use of smaller plants; indigenous planting; variation in nursery stock and selection of superior forms.

Conference report:

'Planting 21st Century Landscapes' - Design issues

Ian White (Ian White Associates) gave a blueprint for successful landscaping in the next century. Key factors, he said, were time spent preparing the ground and the use of smaller plants. The avoidance of the use of large plants at planting resulted in well established robust planting which inevitably contributed to the quality of the landscape.

The most controversial presentation was, perhaps, that prepared by Tony Kendiel. He took the native plant issue by the horns and asked whether it was really of any relevance. A prime example given by Tony described how a species 'naturally' traversing through western Europe over the centuries and ultimately as plant or seed, inadvertently hitching a lift across the Channel on a seagull/pigeon, would be considered a native. Yet, another species which made it all the way to Calais, but has so far missed any flight,

can be ferried across, daubed to your car mudguard and establish on this island, but could not possibly be considered native as it had 'human intervention'.

Sue Everett managed to refocus attention to the importance of conservation of native species and highlighted the need to always have an awareness of the inclusion and needs of native planting. As concluding speaker, the Institute was fortunate to have Dr Rune Bengtsson. His research into the performance of landscape plants provided some useful pointers for this country's landscape profession. The variation in nursery stock is Rune's favourite pastime. He believes keen observation of different forms within the same species can take selection forward. I wonder how many street trees in Britain are actually 'fit for purpose'¹ and where in the UK there may be exactly the tree with the genetic make up that could do the job. Keep your eyes open, is the tip.

DESIGN IDEAS

Winter colour

Chris Larkin Vic

Any time between April and November is good in the garden, but if I had to pick a favourite season it would definitely be winter. I like the softer light of winter, not the grey days which can come at any time of the year but the more watery winter sun as it lights up the different foliage and flowers.

A great number of plants are in flower here in winter - hakeas, correas, thryptomenes, grevilleas, brachysemas, hibbertias, wattles, banksias, brachyscomes, adenanthos, eriostemons - just to give you an idea. Some of the plants that are in flower are quite surprising. Despite the Encyclopaedia stating that *Chamelaucium ciliatum* flowers Sept - Nov, it has always flowered at this time of year and for several months. It is a particularly beautiful stiff blue-grey foliaged plant with masses of small white flowers. At a glance it doesn't look at all like the more commonly grown *Chamelaucium uncinatum* (Geraldton Wax) and I've often thought it would look quite fine in an exotic garden. Another plant that is meant to flower later in the year is *Casuarina nana*. I have a female plant with a particularly fine structure that is always massed with flowers along its branches in winter. One of my real delights is to see the blood red flowers glow with the sun behind the tree.

Winter is the time of year when my favourite dwarf banksia - Golden Candies - puts on its wonderful display. It is a very small shrub (mine would not even be 0.5m) but it has a lovely growth habit and it displays its flowers extremely well as they basically sit above the foliage. The original plant has been such a good performer that I've planted three more of them in the newer section of the garden. This is a little massed planting so it may be quite a feature. Although I am not lucky with a wide variety of eremophilas, I do have a few and they are at their best in late autumn through winter. Several of them are forms of *E. glabra* - from prostrate to bushy - with red, yellow and orange flowers. Another one is (if I had to guess) a form of *E. maculata*. It has been a real pleasure to see the colour combination of the red flowering *Correa 'Mannii'* coming up through, and mixing with, the yellow flowering *E. glabra*. If I can succeed in getting an orange flowering *E. glabra* to thrive in the same vicinity then the picture may become more interesting still. *Adenanthos obovatus* is definitely a plant that people should consider for winter colour. There is no doubt that at this time of year it is at its best with lots of scarlet tubular flowers along stems which radiate out and up from the plant's base. This whole plant is very neat with attractive light green foliage and, to be honest, my plant never seems to be without a flower. I have several dwarf anigozanthos (Kangaroo Paws) in a group and they are flowering - so much so that I picked a bunch to put inside just the other day.

There are lots of grevilleas out at this time of year - and this seems to be a particularly good year for grevilleas. In my garden they have been coming out gradually over the season so there is always something new to excite the senses. Much to several peoples' amazement I am successfully growing *G. tenuiloba* ungrafted. It has been planted on an embankment so that it cascades down and over a very large rock right beside a pathway - a perfect setting to display the wonderful and profuse orange toothbrush flowers. Not far from this plant is a group of three *G. banksib.* In the last week the two older larger plants have started to flower for the first time. The contrast of the large, deep red velvety flowers with the blue foliage of the plant is truly stunning.

There is no doubt that there is a lot of excitement in gardening, especially with Australian plants. A range of Australian plants are still not commonly grown, so there is the excitement of seeing plants grow to maturity and seeing them flower. There is also the excitement of seeing how plants combine in the garden to produce what you hope will be a pleasing effect. It is good that many plants flower twice a year because of the sense of anticipation and delight at seeing those flowers yet again. I do, however, grow several plants that flower all year round and they have an important role in providing constant colour and floral interest while the plants around them are coming in and then going out of season.

A 'humanised translation of the landscape'

Dr David Jones, Sylvia Crowe

Extracts from an article 'Sylvia Crowe in Adelaide' by Dr David Jones, printed in the gazette of the Friends of the Adelaide Botanic Gardens, April - May 1999, sent to me by Geoff Simmons Qld

Sylvia Crowe (1901 -1997) was a noted landscape designer and author from the UK who visited Adelaide in 1964. Her illustrated talk at the Adelaide Town Hall drew together some 250 people. The following is part of her lecture which contains many messages pertinent today.

"I believe the whole of Australia has reached a crisis in the development of Landscape Architecture as a profession and in the practice which that profession represents. In some ways you are extremely fortunate because you have got space.... I think Australia has the wonderful opportunity of producing an environment for living directly from virgin landscape, and there are not too many places left in the world where that can be done. ... I do not think that you have yet found how to translate the spirit of the Australian landscape to a humanised landscape...."

I think everybody needs two things from their landscape. You need a wild landscape ... but also one needs the smaller, more intimate environment in which one lives one's daily life. Going about the country I have seen delightful examples of this. Yesterday, for instance, I noticed the little churches, each one set around with a double row of eucalyptus. Somebody had taken care of that small part of the landscape and made of it the right environment for a church and at the same time kept it as part of the landscape. ... Here with aridity and often thin soil you have the ever present risk of erosion. Now that means that you should make no incursions into your balanced wild landscape - no change of land use, without considering how the ecology of the landscape should be adjusted to your change - how you are going to mend the hole that you make in the covering of the earth. You are faced with an enormous task for ecologists who understand the growing, complex, surface of the earth and for landscape architects who see the patterns of the landscape as a whole and, in particular, should be able to help you to find the humanised translation of your landscape."

A special request made by Crowe was to take a short journey around the lower Flinders Ranges to see and feel the colours and expansiveness of Australian landscape. During her time in Canberra and Sydney, Crowe was being exposed to semi-British and North American landscapes and gardens and not what she perceived as the arid or semi-arid qualities present in the Australian landscapes. This theme is echoed in her Adelaide lecture where she criticised the lack of an Australian landscape design ethos, and ease with which European and North American styles and -models were being imposed upon the Australian landscape.

How much progress has been made in 35 years? If we consider 'gardens' as well as 'landscape', it is sad how widely this still applies. DS

Serendipity in Australian garden design

Diana SnapeVic

Garden design is a complicated business! It's difficult enough deciding where to place plants at any given time, but trying to foresee their future growth and configuration and the resulting evolution of the garden is amazingly challenging. There is no way we can plan with absolute certainty. A grevillea species may be listed as growing between one and two metres, with similar spread. That sounds helpful and encouraging but it's still quite a size range and the results can be very different. Significant factors include the general health of the plant and its root system, its provenance, the soil type, moisture content, amount of fertiliser provided, climate or microclimate, actual situation of the plant in the garden, and possibly its neighbours. The rate of growth as well as the final size will depend on a number of agents over some of which we have very little control. Serendipity plays its part.

We do have control over some important things, for example how much we prune. For many species some pruning is essential, or at least beneficial. Each time we prune we are making design decisions - we can be gentle or savage, prune to accentuate the natural shape or to change it considerably, to keep a plant compact or deliberately make it sparse. We can convert a large shrub such as an acacia, a banksia or a callistemon into an attractive small tree. Some plants respond well to formal shaping, even topiary - for example, a number of westringias, *Darwinia citriodora*, dwarf forms of *Baeckea virgata*.

In general we continually respond to the garden picture the plants present to us. Occasionally plants do die, a negative result which still presents a positive opportunity to change the 'feel' or emphasis of an area, maybe to introduce a new plant unavailable when the garden was first designed. One disappointing result may be a decision that a plant no longer looks attractive or 'belongs' where it is - we can try moving it to a different situation, or be brave-hearted and take it out altogether.

Most outcomes are happier than this and often involve serendipity. A plant may grow perfectly just as we envisaged it. A number of species are likely to self seed, so we may have seedlings which we can leave where they appear, transplant to a chosen spot, or remove. Sometimes such seedlings may almost remind us of weeds - *Hibiscus geranioides* is one example of a prolific seeder. Others such as *Crowea exalata*, Flannel Flowers (*Actinotus helianthi*) or some correas and grevilleas are likely to be welcome. There's something very appealing about discovering little seedlings which have decided they like your garden.

Success with a batch of cuttings can give us a large number of plants to use for repetition in a certain area or throughout the garden. If a particular combination of plants really appeals to us, we might take advantage of its unexpected success and repeat it either nearby or at a distance. A plant may grow in an unusual way - tail,

lean and upright, or leaning at an angle, or else low and spreading close to the ground. In each case we have a choice of doing nothing and letting the plant do its own thing, or trying to persuade the plant to fit in with our initial picture, possibly by severe pruning. Out of two plants growing side by side, one may be rather small and weak while its neighbour flourishes. Should we do something about that?

All such choices are part of garden design. It is ongoing, never finished. A section of the garden may be looking beautiful, but we still might decide to add another small plant which just sets it off. I think many of us tend to start off concentrating on larger plants - trees and shrubs - and gradually introduce smaller plants, such as groundcovers, herbs and 'tufties', to complete the picture. Studying garden design helps equip us to enjoy serendipity, to make better choices and create gardens which give great pleasure.

PLANTS in DESIGN

Eremophilas from the desert

Jan Hall Vic

We revisited the Arid Lands Botanic Garden at Port Augusta where the use of *Eremophila* spp combined with the silver foliage of *Maireana sedifolia* (Pearl Bluebush) is developing nicely but with some changes necessary as they observe rates of growth and effects of the watering regime. This collection of arid country plants, combined with their use in large scale landscaping design, will certainly become a valuable reference in future. The use of eremophilas is only just beginning due to the need to learn how to grow them first. Already they can solve a lot of problems in inland gardens.

We saw so many wonderful shapes and sizes, leaf variations, flower colours and forms in our travels. I can envisage potential for using the silver-grey trees and bright greens for contrast and maybe some can be clipped into hedges and topiary. Some are flat-topped - possible bonsai or Japanese garden use. *Eremophila gilesii* (Desert Fuchsia) was frequently massed as a groundcover under the Mulga or eucalypts and that comes into the 'dry shade' category. Mass planting comes with familiarity - I must do more. Flower colour varies but a lot of deep purple and pink could be a feature. Then the amazing calyx changes of showy species eg *Eremophila platycalyx* and *E. mirabilis* can make stunning pot and tub plants. I realize there are a range (limited) of grafted species already available and a few more cutting grown in Victoria plus heaps more in S.A., but the cultivation and selection still has a long way to go.

SNIPPETS

Congratulations to GDSG member **Catherine Drew** Vic who was recently awarded a Churchill Fellowship to study landscape design in relation to horticultural therapy in the USA and UK, for seven weeks in May and June 2000.

Catherine writes "In relation to Newsletter 26 Geoff Simmons' article on p 13 'Design for perfumed gardens?' I wrote a booklet 'Sensory Gardens for Horticultural Therapy Programs' for the Horticultural Therapy Association of Victoria. It is available from the HTA V39 Wetherby Street, Doncaster. (The office is only manned part time. Phone /Fax no. is (03) 9848 9710.) We included many Australian plants. I found lists from Kuranga very useful. In their newsletters they covered the sensory elements in gardens over several editions."

Lichens

Geoff Simmons Qld

One of the interesting items raised in NL 26 p16 was about lichens. It seems that 6 volumes about lichens are proposed for the Flora of Australia, and to date Volume 54 includes an introduction to these plants. There is no doubt the occurrence of lichens adds another dimension to garden design but the problem is

20

how to enhance their presence and use them in design. Although I have bougainvilleas in pots - over 20 years of age - with good examples of lichens, I have yet to see any on trees or shrubs in my garden. Why this is so is the question. Perhaps it may be worthwhile for members to supply names of Australian plants on which they have seen lichens - both non-garden and garden grown. Another factor that could be linked with several other items in the Newsletter is the age of plants - for growth to become apparent years may be required. In my case the 1994 bushfire destroyed many trees and lichens if present. In the Newsletter we read about replacing plants but does this mean that lichens will never be seen? Perhaps if we knew which species will host lichens, older plants could be trimmed rather than replaced. Although a relatively minor part of landscaping, I hope somebody with personal experience of these plants will give details of their observations.

We'd welcome your comments on lichens and their occurrence. A lichen is not a single organism but a combination of an alga and a fungus living in a symbiotic relationship. I have heard that lichens are sensitive to air pollution, so those of us who live in cities may be at a disadvantage in this respect compared to members who enjoy clean country air. (I think many plants show a marked preference for the clean country air and sunlight unfiltered by city smog.) DS

Mosses (and lichens & fungi)

Paul Thompson Vic spoke at the August meeting of Maroondah Group APS on the 'Gallery of Life' at the Museum of Melbourne, his latest major landscaping work which represents the rainforest of Victoria. One small but significant component of the forest includes mosses such as *Dawsonia superba*. The late Dr George Scott was the consultant on mosses (the 'absolute boffin'). The experts freely admitted when they didn't know what would happen and much of what is being tried in the Gallery is new. Paul says that this is the leading edge of broad cultivation of many of these types of mosses, lichens and fungi. They play an important part in the Gallery due to their role in the growth and decay of the forest. Much of the success may be by serendipity rather than good management!

In *'The Victorian Naturalist'* August 1999, a contributor Cecily Falkingham reported finding twenty-one species of fungi in her average quarter acre block in suburban Melbourne.

Jeff Howes reports another garden in this year's Open Garden Scheme, that of the President of the APS Sutherland Group, John Aitken. His native garden was open on 25-26 September.

MEETINGS

Sydney Branch

Next meeting Sunday November 7

Please phone Jo Hambrett

for details and to indicate whether you can come.

NE Vic Branch

Report of meeting on Sunday August 22 at Jacci and Robert Campbells' Caniambo.

Barbara Buchanan Vic

We began with a tour of the garden at the present house. This is a very pleasant oasis, still showing some of its exotic origins but nevertheless Australian in character. As Robert pointed out we were seeing the countryside at its absolute best and it was hard to fully realize the problems of the site as indicated by the restricted size of *Eucalyptus scoparia*.

The soil is different again from any other garden we have visited, full of small rocks and stones,

minerally deficient, lacking humus (except where applied), subject to tunnel erosion. At the time of our visit the ground was soggy underfoot due to seepage yet the drainage is free so that a selection of maliees have provided a good framework. Thereafter Jacci said it is almost a matter of what can be induced to grow.

Discussion of the idea of the book - please see page 4.

Next meeting Sunday November 21.10.30am at **Barbara Buchanan's**,

The agenda will include ideas for the Campbells' new garden, a quick look at developments here and a visit to Paul and Fiona McCalium's emerging new garden at Greta West.

Please phone Barbara _____ to indicate whether you can come.

Melbourne meetings

There will be a report of the last meeting on Sunday October 17 in the next Newsletter.

Next Melbourne meeting Sunday December 5 1.45 for 2 pm at **John Armstrong's**.

John's garden was in Australia's Open Garden Scheme this year and attracted a strong attendance. Our last meeting at John's place was held in the evening, looking at lighting in the garden, so this time we'll be able to enjoy seeing the garden in daylight. We'll also talk a little about the concept of the GDSG book. It will of course be our last meeting for the year so, although December is a busy time, I hope you'll be able to come. If you can please 'bring a plate' for afternoon tea.

Please phone Diana Snape _____ to indicate whether you can come.

First meeting for 2000 on Sunday February 6 1.45 for 2 pm at **Tony & Joy Roberts'**place,

TREASURER'S REPORT

Peter Garnham Vic

FINANCIAL STATEMENT - Quarter ending 30/9/99

<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Expenses</u>	
Subscriptions	1155.00	Postage	125.93
Donations	5.00	Photocopying	384.50
Past Newsletters	10.00	Duty (FID)	<u>0.01</u>
Bank interest	<u>1.03</u>		<u>\$510.44</u>
	<u>\$1171.03</u>		

Balance in bank \$3061.71

MEMBERSHIP (1999/2000)

146 membership subscriptions paid (to 20/10/99) - approx. 180 members

New member

A warm welcome to the following new member of the Study Group. We hope you enjoy your membership.
Yvonne Coventry

Membership renewals

Ian Abbottsmith, Ingrid Adler, Joan Barrett, Ted Belcher, Carol Bentley, Beryl & Trevor Blake, Shirley Bloomfield, Ian Bond, Elizabeth Brett, Dave Bright, Leanne Brockway, Barbara Buchanan, Maree Burgoyne, Mark Burns, Lindsay Campbell, Shirley Cam, Dianne Clark, Matthew Collins, Ian & Tamara Cox, Peter Cuneo, Brian & Mary Dacy, Glenda & Bernie Datson, Sandra & Kim Davey, Jennifer Davidson, Gillian Davies, Kay Dempsey, Arthur Dench, Cherree Densiey, Betty Denton, Jeanette Devlin, Catherine & Jeremy Drew, Judith Dykes, Joyce & Tom Edgerton, Rodger & Gwen Elliot, Wendy & David Evans, Peter Feige, Theresa & Len Feile, Steve Fielke, Shirley & Graham Fisher, Linda Floyd, Gloria Freeman, Christine & Angelo Gaiardo, Barrie Gallacher, Peter & Wilma Garnham, Margaret Garrett, Neil Goldsborough, Ron Gornall, Mary Graham,

Marilyn Gray, Caroline Gunter, Jan Hall, Jo Hambrett, Bev Hanson, Robyn Hartley, John Hoile, John & Annette Houseman, John Hulme, Judith Hunt, Margaret Ingall, Greg Ingerson, Mark James, Elaine & Ron Jell, Lyn Johnson, Julie Jones, Allan & Helen Joyce, Bev Kapernick, Morton & Judith Kaveney, Colleen & Geoff Keena, Catherine King, John Knight, Faleiry Koczkar, Nadia Lalak, Chris Larkin, Mollie Lau, Jennie Lawrence, Margaret Lee, Margarete Lee, James Lenard, Nicole Lenffer, Bryan Loft, Alex Mackenzie, Kate Malfroy, Rosemary Manion, Neil & Jane Marriott, Doug & Margaret McIver, Gillian Morris & Geof Hawke, Helen Morrow, Deidre Morton, Penny Munro, Anne Neild, David Oakley, Danie Ondinea, Linda Parlane, Dorothy Parris, Georgina & Jon Persse, Thelma & Don Peterson, Shirley Pipitone, Christine Proud, Michele Pymble, Lynette & Peter Reilly, Stefanie Rennick, Pam Renouf, Tony & Joy Roberts, Nicky Rose, Gordon Rowland, Karen & Geoff Russell, Gwen Sanders, Kris Schaffer, Jan Schapper, Peter Shannon, Maureen & Geoff Short, Geoff Simmons, Julie Slifirski, Ross Smyth-Kirk, Diana Snape, Margaret Stanton, Peter Swain, Elspeth Swan, Stephen Thomas, Gloria Thomlinson, Paul Thompson, Melva Truchanas, Rosemary Verbeeten, Annette Warner, Jim & Pat Watson, Maureen & Norman Webb, Merele Webb, Pat Webb, Jane Weyand, Robert Willson, Tim Wilson, Debbie & Rudi Youssef, Alik Zouliou.

APS Blue Mountains Group, APS Keilor Plains Group, APS Foothills Group, APS Geelong Group, APS Maroondah Group, SGAP Canberra Region, APS NSW, SGAP Queensland, APS Tasmania Inc, APS Victoria, Wildflower Society of WA, Aus. National Botanic Gardens.

Thanks to all these members for their prompt renewals.

Reminder: *Please always let us know of any changes to your address or phone number, or email.*

I thought our garden was especially beautiful this spring, even though it was sadly neglected during autumn and winter this year. Many shrubs seem to have reached maturity and they responded to the rather warm weather by flowering well. We had normal rainfall in August but only half the average in September so the ground still needs more water, though it has not dried out completely. One big old eucalypt in the front garden has been looking unhappy for some time now. It was bought many years ago as *E scoparia*, but we suspect it was a natural hybrid rather than the true species. Probably because of the recent dry years half of the tree had died, so we hardened our hearts and had it cut down. We've replaced it with another *E. leucoxyton*, to link with several already established in the front garden. The removal of the large tree reveals blank sky, but a number of medium shrubs and smaller plants already in the area stop it from looking bare. These should enjoy the extra sunlight.

We have recently done a lot of planting and almost cleared the nursery, which was getting very crowded. Where we removed two hybrid grevilleas, we put in a selection of plants including a *Stypantra glauca* and a *Dodonaea microzyga* to repeat plants already growing nearby. We have re-designed another small area of the garden, removing its groundcover of *Viola hederaceae* (an ongoing task for a while) which will eventually be replaced by a few low groundcovers and also mulch when the last of the violets have departed. This garden was sloping so we created a distinct change in level with a mini wall of bluestones to add interest. We used mainly correas (*C. reflexa* forms & *C. pulchella*), prostrate grevilleas (*G. lanigera* & *G. aquifolium*) and dwarf banksias (*G. spinulosa* 'Schnapper Point'). Most of our additions to the garden in general were small plants, usually with repetition, filling in gaps and corners or adding accents.

The next Newsletter will include articles on 'tropicalissimo' gardens and the implications for garden design of higher density inner-suburban living. Cherree Densley will let us into a secret - her secret garden - while Gordon Rowland tells us how easy it is to degrade the landscape.

Best wishes for summer, a peaceful and happy Christmas, and no Y2K bugs.

Diana

Diana Snape