

## ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS

## GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP

NEWSLETTER No. 37

February 2002

Study Group Leader/Ecotor: Diana SnapeTreasurer/Membership: Bryan Loft

Dear Members,

I hope that no NSW members were too closely affected by the terrible bushfires that raged during this summer. They certainly wrought devastation on many areas of the State and anyone living near bushland cannot avoid being aware of this potential hazard. People can take sensible precautions but, under the extreme conditions experienced this summer, much luck is needed too. Fire can be so terribly unpredictable. It seems strange that during this time most of Victoria was unusually cool. If you have any experiences related to the bush fires and gardens, as Geoff Simmons in Queensland did a few years ago, please tell us about them. There is still a lot for us to learn. I remember Barbara Buchanan saying that she knew of an occasion when a row of acacias shielded a weatherboard house from a fire and actually saved it, while a brick one next door was destroyed. I think there's no doubt that eucalypts, with their oil-rich leaves and heavy leaf and twig drop, are a recipe for disaster if growing too close to a house.

It is a small Newsletter this quarter. I think members have been either too relaxed or too preoccupied over the summer holidays to send in articles or ideas. I hope you'll get to work now and write those letters you've always been meaning to write but haven't yet managed to! In the early years of the Study Group, I think there was more general participation by members, more comments, letters or short articles, while recently a relatively much smaller number have contributed. We all lose out when ideas come from so few. Many of you must be far too busy - or else maybe a tiny bit lazy??

I can't talk! I know I've been preoccupied, as the book has been keeping me very busy for the last few months. The text has now been thoroughly edited and is with the publisher. The photographs have been assigned to chapters and the designer has started working on the initial layouts for several of these.

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### **NEXT MEETINGS**

*Please see details of these meetings on pages 12 to 15*

**MELBOURNE: Sunday February 10 - at Helen & Tim Morrow's**

**NE VIC: Saturday February 16 - at Barbara Buchanan's**

**SYDNEY: Sunday March 3 - at Geoffrey & Ann Long's**

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**CORRESPONDENCE extracts**

Last year, **Fran Bright** won first prize for the State of Queensland in the GDSG photo competition. For this she will receive a copy of the book as soon as it comes out. She has recently shifted from Queensland to East Gippsland, Victoria. Fran writes:

*"Believe me the book will be of great assistance for design ideas for our new native plant garden! The current garden is rather manicured and lacks Australian character. Although I am especially interested in the native plants found in the bush, I am not a very good gardener. There is plenty to intrigue me down here - Cape Conran Coastal park is near Mario. The forests near Orbost contain a wide variety of beautiful ferns and other plants too. I know that I will enjoy exploring the district with my camera.*

*I would be grateful to receive some information from you about the Garden Design Study Group. I still am a member of SGAP Qld Region and will shortly join the Victorian Region. I already miss my activities and friends in Queensland! However, for me moving south was coming home, as I was born and educated in Melbourne,"*

We welcome Fran to Victoria and wish her good luck with her new garden. We'll look forward to her possibly joining the Study Group. DS

**DESIGN****The Persistence of Gardening in the Inner City****Annie Treasure** Vic

*Melbourne Conversations is a series of regular free discussions exploring topics that make Melbourne (and Melburnians) tick. The conversations are held at the Melbourne Town Hall Supper Room. The inaugural discussion on 28 November 2001 was chaired by ABC presenter Tonya Roberts.*

## The Persistence of Gardening in the Inner City

**Richard Heathcote** (garden historian)

Hugh Mackay's research reveals that people in Australia spend more money on gardening than gambling. An important dimension of gardening is the psychic/spiritual qualities brought to life by this activity. Landscapes are like palimpsests by which we recreate, refresh and reintroduce nature to our lives. In the 1930s the 'Garden city' movement was strong in Melbourne, this idea being from the late 19th century.

**Perri Cutten** (fashion designer),

Living in the Dandenongs as a child, where her father founded the Olinda rhododendron garden, she was influenced to create her own garden in that area. Now living at Mornington she will use more Australian native plants.

At her Richmond workplace she has transformed an unused outdoor area into an 'Oasis' garden, its outdoor seating and BBQ providing a relaxed meeting place among potted plants, fountain and vegetables.

**Sean Godsell** (architect): **Arcadia and the CBD**

Sean can design a building only in the context of its landscape. He uses the principles of landscaping's 'Picturesque' style in his architecture and garden designs, treating indoor and outdoor space as a continuum. He mentioned the work of Gordon Ford, with whom he worked to design the garden of his house in Kew.

Sean proposed creating communal garden areas, by sharing existing rear lanes and adding some area from property holders' existing back yards. He examined a typical high rise building, and commented on the greed that adversely affects quality of life and the provision of outdoor space. Sean proposed that every remaining space in the CBD be captured to create small gardens.

**Carolyn Blackman** (landscape designer).

Carolyn compared the maximum temperature of 77 degrees Fahrenheit reached by sod/turf with the 140 degrees Fahrenheit of bitumen, and suggested we insulate the tops of buildings with gardens. In some USA cities high-rise developers are required to plan for these green rooftops. She showed slides comparing the formal, sterile and unpopulated roof garden of Crown Casino with the chaotic and productive St. Kilda community garden, which provides a central point for neighbours to meet, exchange information, or sit to read a book. A child's train set wound amongst vegetable plants.

She designed a formal 17th century garden for a city apartment, to extend the theme of the adjacent living room. High-rise garden design must take account of temperatures and wind velocities not experienced at ground level. We are not generally aware of the huge potential for fruit and vegetable production from inner city gardens. Gardens improve air quality and reduce temperatures, get people talking to each other, and allow children to learn where things come from.

*Thank you, Annie, for a fascinating report. DS*

### Design of Woden Senior Citizens' Centre A.C.T.

**Shirley Pipitone** A.C.T.

SGAP Canberra Region (now Australian Native Plants Society) was asked by the Woden Senior Citizens' Club to advise on replacing exotic plants in existing beds with Australian native plants. I volunteered and when I visited the site, I could see the potential for the whole site to be redesigned, including the carpark area (next next page). The Club agreed to 'let me loose' on the whole site, subject to budget and Committee approval of course, with a major aim being to create a showcase garden for SGAP (ANPS).

The project has not progressed much beyond the Masterplan (see p5) because of delays mostly on the Club's part. I have been working with an engineer on the carpark which should get underway soon, followed by construction of the garden areas. Meanwhile I will be finalising detailed planting plans so that

planting can occur in spring.

**Description of site:** 3000 m<sup>2</sup> corner block on a secondary but significant entrance to Woden Town Centre. Unattractive building, Grounds currently used only as carpark, which has major drainage problems. Many eucalypts on perimeter, mostly in good condition.

**Brief: To design club grounds for senior citizens including people with a disability.**

*A table followed listing Clients' needs and Design features. I'll list those which I think are most relevant to us.*

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### Clients' needs

Use by clients

### Design features

#### Encourage pride in club:

- Attractive street entrance
- Views from inside building, from exits and within garden
- Distinct character for each area of garden
- Views to and from carpark

#### Encourage enjoyment of garden:

- Year-round horticultural interest
- Sunny outdoor area for midday in winter
- Cool outdoor area for summer morning

Vegetation

#### Use hardy, mainly indigenous Australian native plants

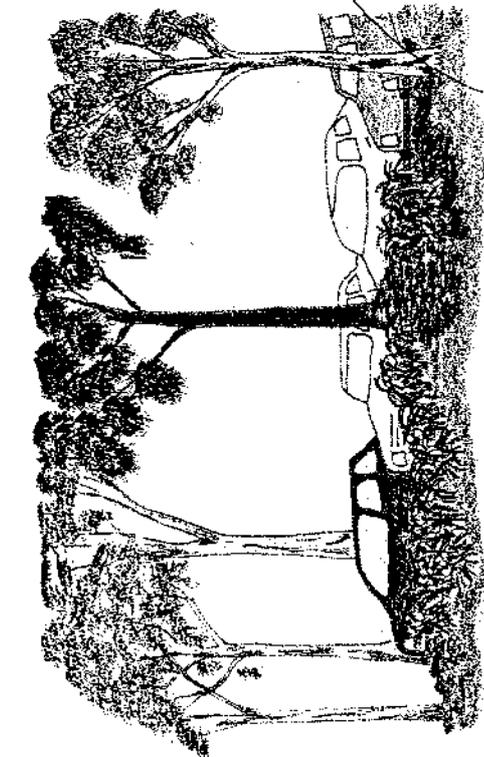
- Fast growing to desired height
- Tidy habit, little need for pruning, watering
- Low allergy, non-toxic, not prickly
- Provide wildlife habitat and food

Maintenance and the environment

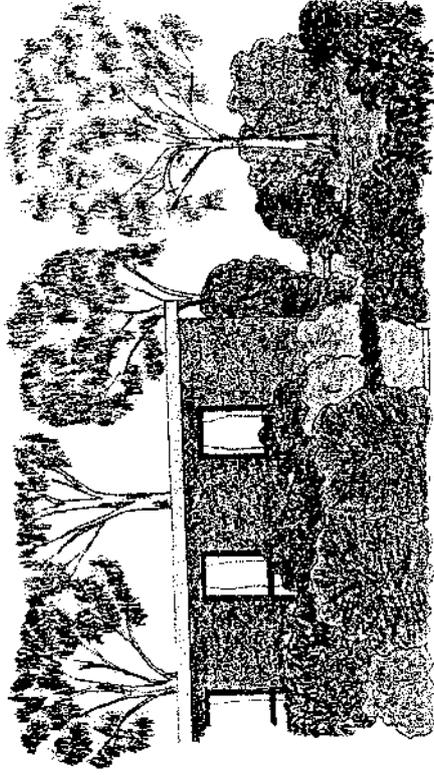
- Easy-care surfaces
- Maximise mulched areas to minimise water use
- No lawn
- Provide maintenance schedule

Site



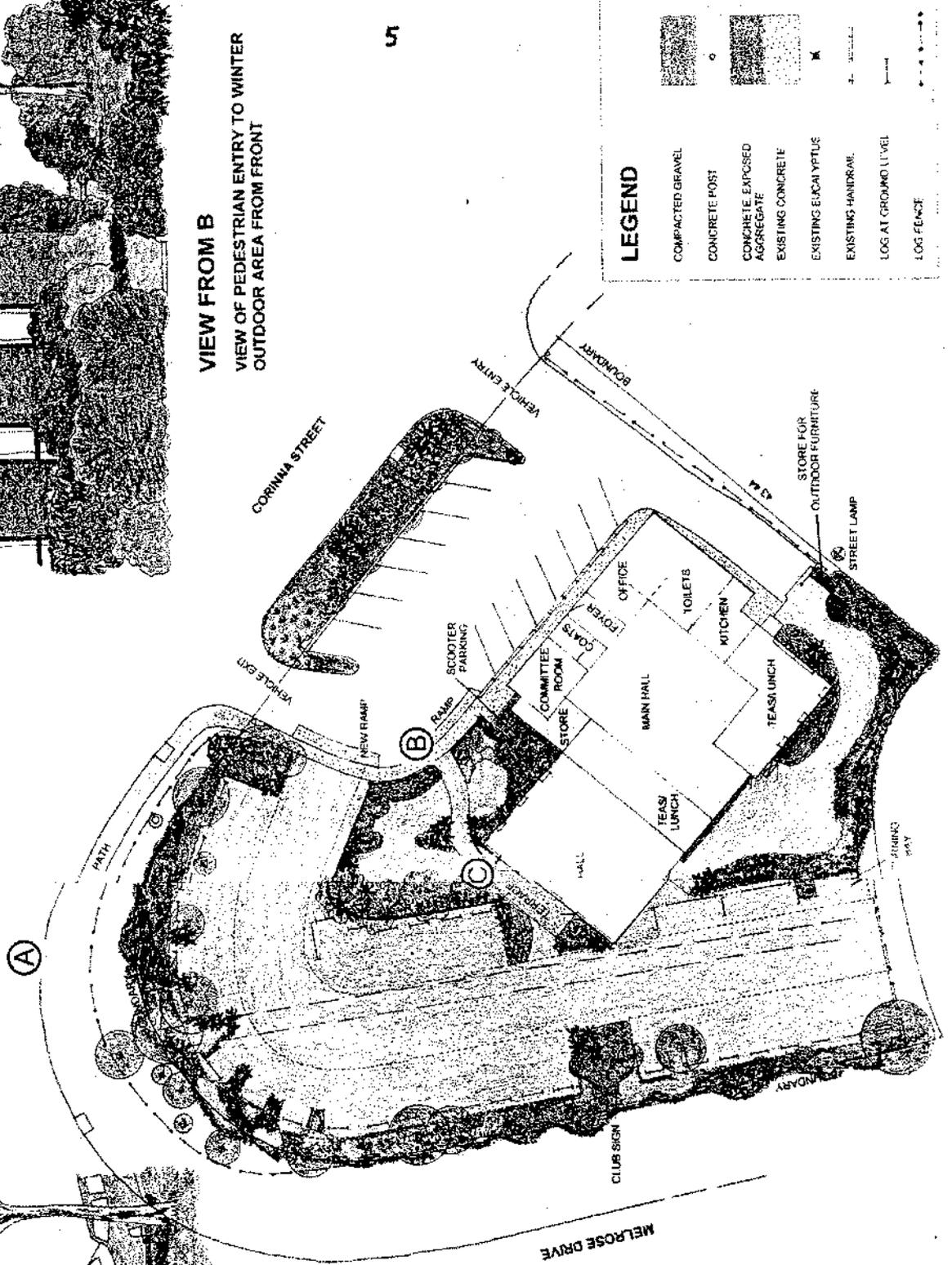


**VIEW FROM A**  
VIEW OF GARDEN NEAR DRIVE EXIT FROM  
OTHER SIDE OF CORINNA STREET



**VIEW FROM B**  
VIEW OF PEDESTRIAN ENTRY TO WINTER  
OUTDOOR AREA FROM FRONT

**FINAL LANDSCAPE PLAN**



**LEGEND**

[Symbol]	COMPACTED GRAVEL
[Symbol]	CONCRETE POST
[Symbol]	CONCRETE EXPOSED AGGREGATE
[Symbol]	EXISTING CONCRETE
[Symbol]	EXISTING EUCALYPTUS
[Symbol]	EXISTING HANDRAIL
[Symbol]	LOG AT GROUND LEVEL
[Symbol]	LOG FENCE



**VIEW FROM C**  
VIEW OF WINTER OUTDOOR AREA FROM NEW  
TERRACE

## GARDENS

## A small unit garden

Pat &amp; John Webb Vic

Some of you may recall John's article in NL 35 (August 2001), about our small unit garden in Berwick. Here's an update, overview and evaluation.

It is now nearly nine months since we moved into our new home; some warmer weather and some spring rain (not enough really), and the garden is developing, albeit too slowly for me!

The front of the unit which faces west is now quite colourful, with not much bare ground left. The *Chrysocephalum semipapposum* and two other varieties of chrysocephalum are in full flower, interspersed with *Brachyscome multifida*, light and dark forms, *Brachyscome segmentosa*, *Scaevola* 'Mauve Clusters' and *Goodenia ovata*, to make a cheery welcome. At the moment, the plant which is really doing well, an attractive shrub outside our lounge area, is *Grevillea aquifolium* (holly-leaved). I note in Elliot & Jones that it is a very variable plant - I think ours is either the 'Lake Wartook' or 'Serra Road' variety; a fairly vigorous prostrate plant with soft pink new foliage and bright red flowers. It has flowered continuously since being planted in late April, giving me a regular supply of attractive foliage for a small vase whenever I prune it (frequently!). (I may try some cuttings soon.) I am hoping the *Grevillea* 'Moonlight' will improve now that the warmer days are here; it has been slow so far.

We have been quite amazed at the winds we get in the village. Opinions seem to differ as to whether Berwick is normally like this. There is no need now for any container plants in the west-facing bed. The containers with *Rhodanthe manglesii* and *Lechenaultia biloba* did not do well - not enough sun in the winter, and too much wind. My container plant collection has changed enormously because of the very different microclimate here - quite another story.

In the south-facing bed outside the dining area and bedroom, things are going well. The large (two metre) exotic conifer went in early spring, replaced by a *Correa bauerlenii* (Chef's Cap Correa) and a second *Epacris longiflora*, several ferns - *Blechnum nudum*, *Pellaea falcata*, *Asplenium bulbiferum* and *Doodia aspera*. To give some cohesion, I have planted several *Brachyscome multifida*, *B. segmentosa* and several plants of *Viola hederacea*, hoping that by this time next year they will be a nuisance! In a 30 x 30cm pipe is an unidentified (as yet) fern with a much-used bird bath nearby, and a hollow log with a *Dendrobium* sp. (which has to be moved into the patio for sun in the winter months). The camellia remains outside our bedroom window for the present. It has been pruned and has lots of new growth, profuse pink flowers in July/August - it is great protection for my *Lagarostrobus franklinii* (Huon Pine) through the summer and hides my small stockpile of mulch!

Around the edge of the small patio, *Brachyscome multifida*, *B. segmentosa*, *B. attenuifolia*, *Hibbertia dentata* and pratia are growing happily, and my much-reduced family of container plants give structure and shape. We look forward to much more growth over the next few months.

Many Victorian members will know Peg and Glyn Sago who are moving into the village quite soon. I know that the geraniums and roses around their unit will disappear quickly for Glyn has lots of lovely grevilleas in containers he will be bringing. We shall watch with great interest - their's will be the third native garden here - although, to be fair, there are quite a number of Australian plants in the common garden areas - it is always good to find them.

Our greetings to members for "good growing and planning" in 2002.

*I am sure Pat and John are managing well their change from a large to a small garden, and enjoying the new and different challenges. DS*

Our first planting of our 'courtyard' (or passageway) garden was finished in time for our Open Garden weekend - just. (Please see plan on the next page.) The large centrally placed 'sculpture' is a vertical bed base close to the wall with a simple, abstract design, outlined in wire coated with black plastic and fastened to the wire frame. The design is meant to suggest silhouettes of plants such as Tree-ferns (or palms), ferns and rushes.

We decided against using any shrubs taller than *Correa baeuelenii* (Chefs Cap Correa), in order to keep the area as open as possible at eye level. One member suggested including *Grevillea longifolia* - a very beautiful plant - but from our previous experience this would grow too big for our confined space. A lot of pruning would be required. We know the same will be true for our pandorea, which was already established and which we (Brian) will keep trimmed close to the back wall. We are not sure which one (or even two) it is but it's very vigorous. He is pruning it up each side and across the top to keep it to a rectangular shape. We are trying *Aphanopetalum resinsum* (Gum Vine) on the other side of the 'bed' as an alternative. If it is successful, we will later on replace the pandorea(s) by another aphanopetalum.

Our section of *Mazus pumilio* in the centre under the 'bed' is flourishing and looks lovely - just the foliage alone, but especially in flower. On either side of the mazus, separated by four rows of bricks laid flat and matching the wall, is the smaller leaved groundcover plant *Australina pusilla* (Shade Nettle), given to me by **Barbara Setchell**. It has finer texture and is doing well. (It is a nice Australian nettle, not a nasty one!) Dividing the garden bed into the three distinct sections has reduced its apparent length.

I am still considering **Caroline Gunter's** suggestions of using *Crinum pedunculatum* (Swamp Lily) and *Cordyline stricta* (Narrow leaf Palm Lily) too. I think they could fit in well. We'll see how the other plants grow.

## THE INTERNET

**Colleen Keena Qld** sends this suggestion from "a very hot and humid south-east Qld"

<http://www.alobal-aarden.com.au/bjlrnlev/downtoearthaarden.htm#Desian>

## DESIGN IDEAS

### Gnomes

**Nicky Rose & Diana Snape Vic**

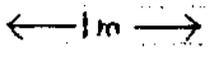
*Nicky Rose brought back from her travels an article from the U.K. Daily Mail about gnomes, which I thought was just right for a summer holiday NL (We haven't had an article on gnomes before!) The heading says:*

*"It was once Britain's favourite garden ornament but now sales have hit an all-time low. Here an aficionado pays tribute to the king of kitsch."*

I'll include just a few sections from the quite long article.

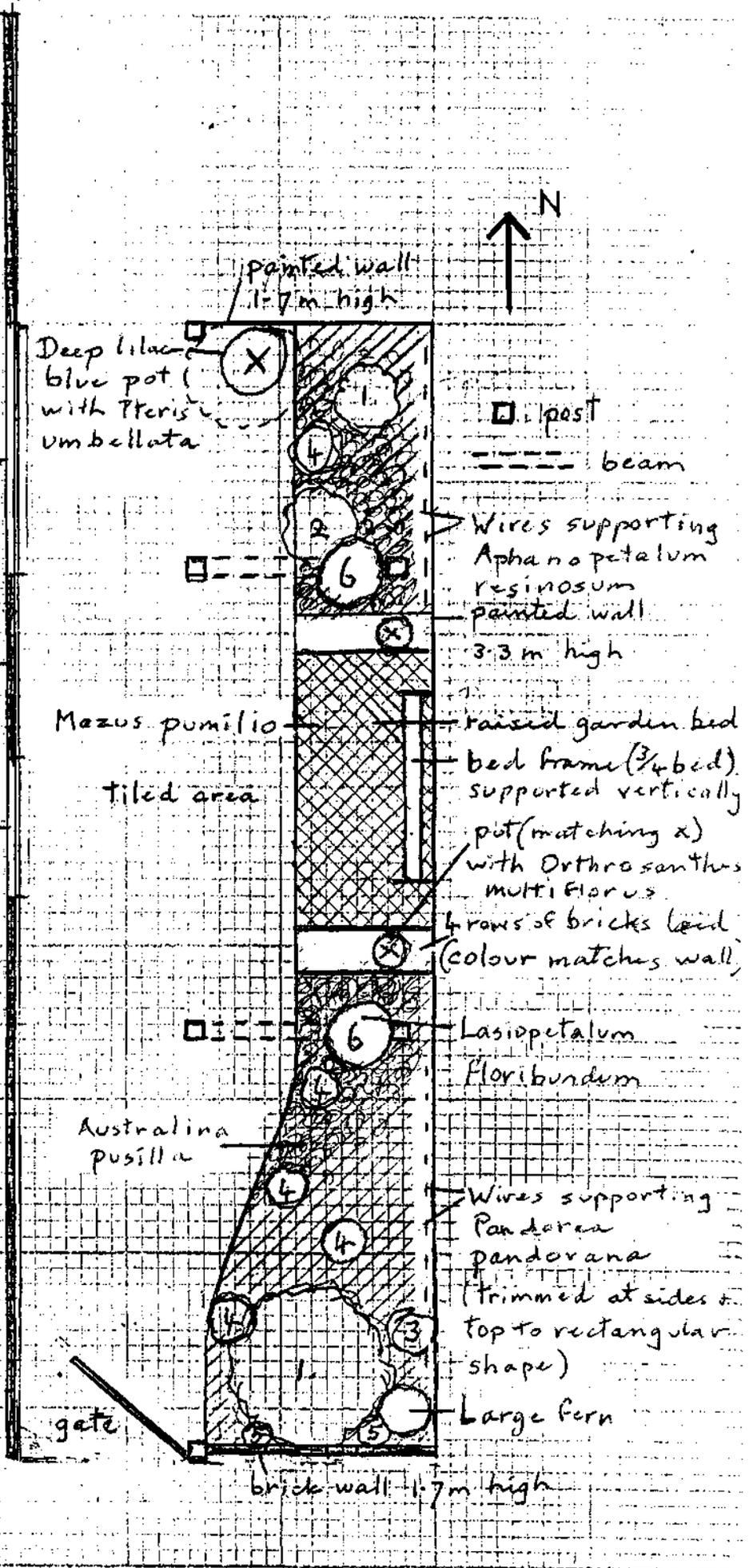
"The Royal Horticultural Society, faithful upholder of all that is most elitist about British gardening, has waged a long war against the gnome that will no doubt be renewed at next month's Chelsea Flower Show. . . . Gnomes inhabit the kind of cheerful plots that the great majority of people create around their houses, contentedly smoking their pipes or dangling their fishing rods among borders awash with bright roses, dahlias, begonias and busy lizzies. They have no place in the designer gardens that are built  
(Continued on page 9.)

Scale



Plants in the garden now:

1. *Correa bauerleniji*  
(Chef's Cup Correa)
2. *Austrorhynchus delais*  
(Midgen Berry)
3. *Pandorea pandorana*  
(Wonga Vine)
4. Ferns: (*Doodia* sp.)
5. *Jasminum suavissimum*  
(Sweet Jasmine)  
(also suckering through bed)



(Continued from page 7.)

specifically for RHS shows but seldom occur in real life. . . . Dotted as they are with modern sculptures and elaborate water features, these unreal fantasies will ever remain gnome-free zones. In other words, it is a question of snobbery. . . .

Gnomes have always had spiritual associations. Martin Cornwall sees them as 'a legacy of the ancient human need to populate the world with spirits, their presence sensed in trees and boulders, caves and streams.' The idea probably originated in legends about kingdoms in the centre of the Earth, peopled by dwarves and elves, that became current in northern Europe in the Middle Ages. Interest was revived when the brothers Grimm wrote their fairy tales in the early 19th century, to be followed by Wagner's Ring Cycle with its elfish themes. (~~And now we have the hobbits.~~ DS)

.....TV makeover programs, with their matey approach and their emphasis on acres of decking and hard features, are themselves regarded as infra dig by the green-fingered elite. They much prefer the traditional programs, in which ladies with cut-glass accents, in twinsets and green wellies, guide viewers around their impossibly perfect plots. Real gardeners are a hardy, stubborn breed, not easily led. Those who want gnomes and bright flowers will have them, whatever the horticultural style gurus tell them they should like."

And I haven't even talked about the Garden Gnome Liberation Front - a group of young French activists in 1997. And the travelling gnome in the recent film 'Amelie'!

*I have never before thought there might be some connection between the 'spirit of place' and some peoples' love of gnomes. One is so 'politically correct' and the other so 'politically incorrect.'*

*I like the quote from Roger. B. Swain, "Christmas Goose", Horticulture, December 1985. "Garden sculpture should mirror its environs. There is nothing wrong with pink flamingos or plaster gnomes, providing the garden is located in flamingo or gnome country." DS*

## PLANTS in DESIGN

### The use of correas in garden design

**Maria Hitchcock NSW**

*Maria is the Leader of the Correa Study Group and I recently asked her if she could provide us with a list of the 'best' correas (an impossible task, I know!). She kindly attempted it and the following is her response. DS*

Since garden design is a very personal thing, it is hard to generalise. I suppose the best way to start would be to look at the most common garden types and then fit into them a range of hardy and reliable correas which would be suitable. I shall start with the tallest ones and gradually work my way down to groundcovers.

### The bush garden

The upper storey of this garden is dominated by a range of eucalypts and tall acacias, casuarinas, banksias and any other small trees. The middle storey contains a variety of plants which grow up to 3m, such as callistemons, melaleucas, leptospermums, kunzeas, banksias, etc., and outside edges are bordered with a range of larger shrubs. The beauty of this type of garden is that you can walk through it - like having your own private bushland.

*Correa lawrencianavser. rosea* would fit well into a bush garden. It is both frost and drought hardy and needs very little maintenance. Plants grow up to 3m in height and are very dense with large leaves that give a rainforest look to the garden. I plant them in a clump towards the edge of a bush garden where they provide a dark contrast to other shrubs nearby. They tolerate being planted close to eucalypts and I underplant them

with some *Correa reflexa* var. *nummulariifolia* plants which peek out from the base and provide a dense groundcover. My plants are watered with drippers.

The Tasmanian form of *Correa lawrendana* var. *lawrenciana* can be trained into a small decorative tree shape and looks spectacular in flower when planted as a specimen and carefully tended. It should be planted so as to allow the afternoon sun to backlight the flowers.

### The shrub border

This type of garden is characterised by large shrubs at the back, medium shrubs in the centre and small shrubs at the front. The trick with growing an attractive shrub border is to plant fairly closely so that shrubs grow into one another. This will shade the ground and prevent the germination of weeds. I like to mulch these gardens very heavily at first until the plants cover every bit of ground. After that they need regular watering during dry periods and the application of an organic fertiliser twice a year. I find that mixing *correas* and *prostantheras* gives an interesting and attractive look.

*Correa backhouseana* var. *backhouseana* is a very vigorous and hardy large shrub which would suit the background. It has cream-coloured flowers and rounded shiny dark leaves. Another excellent background shrub is *Correa* 'Marian's Marvel'. This old hardy cultivar is still a favourite and is grown widely across the country. It has pale pink and green flowers for most of the year.

The middle row is for shrubs which grow to about 1.5m in height. The various forms of *Correa glabra* fit in well. All are very drought and frost hardy, have dense foliage and require practically no maintenance. *Correa glabra* var. *glabra* has pale green flowers and shiny mid-green leaves. *Correa glabra* var. *leucoclada* has yellowish flowers and apple-green leaves, *Correa glabra* var. *turnbullii* has dark shiny foliage and red and green flowers. One of the best forms grows on Mt. Barker in South Australia.

*Correa alba* var. *alba* tends to sprawl a bit so needs to be grown in between other shrubs. It is usually very hardy and reliable in cultivation and the white star-shaped flowers are attractive. There are pink flowered forms available but not all are reliable in cultivation. The form from Swansea in Tasmania would be the best.

Most of the colourful *correas* are best suited to the front row of the shrub border.

*Correa reflexa* has many forms but not all are reliable in cultivation. The best forms of *Correa reflexa* var. *reflexa* come from coastal areas in South-eastern South Australia, western Victoria and south-east NSW. They are generally low-growing plants which require regular tip-pruning in the early stages to make them bush up. All have bright red flowers.

*Correa reflexa* var. *reflexa* is very popular as a groundcover. It is very dense and has grey-green foliage and cream flowers with tan tips. I have seen a very small-leaved form which is highly attractive. It was planted en masse under a small grove of Silver Birch trees and looked spectacular.

*Correa reflexa* var. *speciosa* is the brightest of all the *C reflexa* flowers. Plants have large, bulbous carmine flowers but the plants themselves can be fairly touchy. I like the 'Point Hicks' and 'Mario' forms very attractive but young plants need regular tip-pruning to make them bush up. I think you could plant five or six together closely to give a spectacular display. They need regular watering and feeding.

*Correa pulchella* is also a very variable species and has contributed to a large number of cultivars. *Correa* 'Dusky Bells' is a hardy favourite. It spreads over a large area and has attractive pink bells which are half-hidden in the foliage. *Correa* 'Pink Mist' is another favourite. The salmon-pink bells are more obvious and the plant tends to be more upright. It would also make an excellent small hedge plant. *Correa* 'Mannii' tends to sprawl a bit but the flowers are worth it. It needs regular pruning for shape and is best grown in between other shrubs. *Correa* 'Ivory Bells' has a neat habit and attractive cream-coloured flowers.

*Correa decumbens* has several hybrid forms which are vigorous and reliable in cultivation. They are bushier and are more upright than the parent plant and flowers tend to hang down rather than poke up.

Some are taller and better suited to the middle row of shrubs. Many are unnamed but one fantastic form I have growing originated as a seedling in Royce Raleigh's garden.

### **Rockeries and embankments**

The plants listed for the front row of the shrub border would also suit rockeries and embankment plantings, as well as tub planting and pond surrounds.

While there are many promising cultivars on the market, it is impossible to list them all. Often it is a matter of trial and error to find the right plant for that location. However, this article may help in organising your correa garden. The nice thing about correas is that you can plant a large number of them fairly closely together and they lend themselves to filling odd pockets in the garden. They also propagate very easily from cuttings so you can assemble a good collection at very low cost. The best thing, however, is that they will provide winter nectar for small birds and, if you plant a variety of correas to flower at different times through the year, the birds will stay all year and nest in your garden as well. Race a birdbath in your correa garden and enjoy the antics of our feathered friends as they splash in the water.

*Maria didn't mention one of my favourites, Correa baeuerlenii (Chef's Cap Correa), from the South Coast of NSW. She said it doesn't grow well for her. DS*

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**Margaret McIver** Vic has given me an article by **Jill Hamilton** (or Jill, Duchess of Hamilton) entitled **"Hybrid superpowers make slim pickings for wildlife"**. This article outlines the problems for indigenous wildlife arising from the development of modern cultivars with enlarged or double flowers. These often do not provide nectar, or else hinder access to it. "That they cannot be pollinated is the key to their long blooming period," but this can be disastrous for wildlife:

Jill Hamilton was involved in setting up the Flora-for-Fauna program in Britain in 1995. She says this program has "encouraged gardeners to grow plants that are local and native, as well as the new flowers that provide pleasure for people. ... There is room for both." The following information shows that at last these concerns, which we share, are receiving government and media support.

### **From 'Gumnuts'**

#### **Flora for Fauna Project**

The following is a media release from Senator the Hon Robert Hill, Leader of the Government in the Senate, Minister for the Environment and Heritage

#### **FEDERAL FUNDS TO BOOST URBAN FLORA AND FAUNA**

Environment Minister Robert Hill today announced half a million dollars in Federal Government funding for an innovative national program to encourage native flora and fauna in Australia's urban gardens. Senator Hill said the new Flora for Fauna project-devised by Australia's Nursery and Garden Industry-has won support through the Federal Government's \$2.5 billion Natural Heritage Trust.

"Most of Australia's almost one million homes have a backyard and this national project will encourage all Australians to use these areas to create their own Flora for Fauna gardens," Senator Hill said. "We want to encourage and show people and communities throughout Australia how they can create truly 'living gardens' - gardens that naturally attract, nourish and provide a safe haven for our unique birds, butterflies, frogs and lizards. "Australians want to play a part in protecting our local wildlife and this new national project gives them a practical way to contribute. These gardens will provide the vital native plants our local creatures need to survive and they give every household a way to enhance and protect Australia's unique biodiversity."

A key focus of the new project will be dedicated Flora for Fauna displays in participating garden centres throughout Australia. Plants most suited to an area will be clearly identified in garden centres with

their own label showing the Flora for Fauna name and symbol-and they will be accompanied by planting and other information.

"People can do as much or as little as they like," Senator Hill said. "They might plant some banksias opposite the rose bushes to attract honey-eaters or they may choose to completely overhaul their garden with a completely new native design."

The Flora for Fauna program will encourage increased plantings by local councils, property developers, schools and other community groups while discouraging the domestic planting of environmental weeds. 'How to' information will be distributed through local councils, zoos, botanic gardens, garden centres, schools and a web site will be running later this year. The Flora for Fauna project is to be promoted through the media and a web site featuring an extensive database of flora, fauna and their locations.

Industry will also contribute funding for Flora for Fauna and it will involve partnerships with botanic gardens and zoos, councils, environment groups and plant societies, research and tertiary institutions and Environment Australia to achieve its goals.

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## **SNIPPETS**

### **For lovers of the Australian landscape APS S.A. Region Journal November 2001**

by **Ivan Holliday** S.A. (in response to a Welsh colleague critical of Australia's landscapes)

"One disappointing aspect I found in Britain was the simple and generally uninteresting wild flora compared with the great diversity of their Australian counterparts. Britain's wildflowers are mainly weeds. Or imports. (Perhaps this is another legacy of hundreds of years of sheep.)"

He also quotes Lady Eve Balfour, talking about eucalypts:

"I had seen several species (of eucalypts) before going to Australia, both in California and in Kenya, and had admired them; but their psychological effect there is quite different. I can only describe it by saying that when they are in exile (even though they colonise and 'settle' so outstandingly well) they are silent, but at home they speak. This may sound fanciful, but Australians will understand what I mean."

*The number of indigenous plants in England is reported to be, 982 compared with Australia's 25,000!! DS*

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## **MEETINGS**

### **Melbourne meetings**

#### **Report of meeting on Saturday December 1 at Diana Snape's,**

Unfortunately quite a few members were unable to come to this meeting because of competing attractions/commitments. However it was great that a similar number *could* come. The weather was kind and we were able to enjoy a picnic lunch in the garden. Then we spent time looking around the garden, particularly areas that have been changed since the last GDSG meeting here, including the narrow 'courtyard' garden (see plan on the next page). Since our Open Garden Scheme weekend in October we have started pruning (some heavy), to be ready in case our garden is in the Scheme again next year.

It was a relaxed meeting, with a substantial amount of time spent on afternoon tea! Because of some difficulties this year establishing dates for meetings, we decided it was a good idea to establish early four dates for meetings in 2002, so members could put them in their diaries at the start of the year. Most are the second Sunday of the month, which suited more people than the first Sunday. ***Please put these dates***

***in your diary now. They are all Sundays.***

The selected dates are: **February 10;** **May 5;** **August 11;** **November 10**  
 Additional meetings could be scheduled during the year, for example **April 14** is another possible date.  
 Please let me know if there are any major events in conflict with any of these dates.

**Next meeting: Sunday February 10 at 2 pm at Helen & Tim Morrow's,**

Helen and Tim both lead busy lives with many commitments. Helen says that they would like to be able to spend more time in their garden and has invited us to come up with some inspiring design ideas for them. We haven't had a chance for a while now to give one of our members an incentive to try something really new in their garden, so come along with your brain (and imagination) geared for action.

Please Phone \_\_\_\_\_ or Diana Snape \_\_\_\_\_ to indicate whether you can come to the February meeting. I hope you'll be able to be there. ***Please note that it's the second Sunday of the month.***

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### **NE Vic Branch**

#### **Report of NE Vic meeting on Saturday November 10 at Mary Ward's**

**Barbara Buchanan Vic**

With almost all members able to come, discussion was brisk and animated. Even over coffee it had begun with Jacci Campbell's belt/frame/hedge for her front garden. This has to be right from the first, experimentation is not appropriate in something so fundamental to the whole garden. The desired height is two metres, water and frosts are not problems, the site is sloping with good drainage, the soil will probably be built up and there will be a bw stone wall behind. As some 150 plants will be needed, Jacci would like something she can propagate herself - this should also help give uniformity. Elsewhere there is a callistemon hedge already started around the vegie patch and a westringia one around the herbs. Jacci has tended a *Leptospermum petersonii* (Lemon-scented Tea-tree) hedge and found it a most delightful chore to clip it, so this could well be her final choice but she wants to explore all options. The rich green of the new Lilly Pilly cultivars is also tempting, and *Leptospermums* 'Copper Glow' or 'Rudolph', long-leaved Eriostemon myoporoides (Long-leaf Wax-flower), melaleucas including *M. blaeriifolia*, *M. diosmifolia* (Green Honey-myrtle) and *M. bracteata* forms were some of the suggestions. Grevilleas were discounted because of the possibility of gaps occurring.

Amid the discussion about the value of hedges as part of design, the difficulty of getting photographs which do justice to Australian plant gardens was raised; probably a good clipped hedge would set off our plants well. This led to the further idea that the lines formed by hard landscaping, paths, walls, hedges, etc., i.e. the bones of a garden's structure, are positive aids in garden photography. Of these we generally only have the paths and these are often poorly defined. When I think of recent photos of my garden I can find confirmation of this; where there is a path the photo is generally more interesting. Any larger patterns of form are generally too big to be captured, while the softer differences in foliage that are so obvious in the 'flesh' seem to almost disappear. Not that we make our garden for photos. *(However a photo just records what we see in a garden - and we do want what we see to look good. DS)*

Another interesting thought tossed into the pool - what is the line between a weed and an interesting volunteer? Jan Hall uses the latter extensively to fill gaps and add variety. The rabbits munch most of mine. Also floated was the proposition that Australian plants probably won't ever make formal

gardens as traditionally conceived, but we did not get as far as what the new formality might be like.

Although none of us had come up with lists for Elizabeth Brett's shelter belt (see plan on the next page), plenty of names were bandied about until Gloria Thomlinson suggested that the indigenous planting which Landcare are going to put in along the creek separating Elizabeth from her daughter be extended in the road screening. There is an acre or two of land potentially available but at their stage in life the Bretts cannot undertake extensive maintenance; this will largely be achieved by slashing with a tractor. This means wide distances between plants. Gloria's brainwave is to plant in large blocks of individual species which will form large patterns - completely appropriate for plantings which will largely be seen from passing cars. In the strip along the drive and by the gate there is scope for exotic natives for extra colour. The land is flat, a rich-looking loam with gravel at depth and, although there is plenty of water in the river, this area will not be watered.

We are all excited by the ideas Mary Ward is trying in her garden, going around muttering to each other "Why didn't I think of doing that?". Many of the exotic plants are being moved to areas close to the house or removed altogether, although this will always be a mixed garden. Spoil from one of the dams is mounded in tiers to be faced in stone and planted in grasses; already it gives a bird's eye view of the garden and especially a formal courtyard with a small rectangular pool in the making, as well as Mt. Buffalo in the other direction. There are seats and 'found' objects in abundance, a young callistemon hedge but alas the westringia hedge collapsed. Watch this space!

The exercise for the next meeting has evolved to be a theoretical one. Produce a planting pattern for the plan indicating only the form and size of the plants in each block - forget about naming the species. The easiest way to do this could be with a sketch and try to show the view from the house as well as the ground plan. Help! I doubt my ability but I'll have a go. Suggestions for special plants long the drive can be named.

**Next NE Vic meeting: Saturday February 16 -10.30 a.m. at Barbara Buchanan's**

Please Phone Barbara Buchanan

to indicate whether you can come.

### Sydney branch

#### **Report of meeting on Sunday November 18**

**Jo Hambrett NSW**

No meeting was held because of lack of support. It seems that Christmas activities start earlier each year. December used to be the busy month but now November seems to have joined ranks.

#### **Next Sydney meeting: Sunday March 3 at Geoffrey & Ann Long's place**

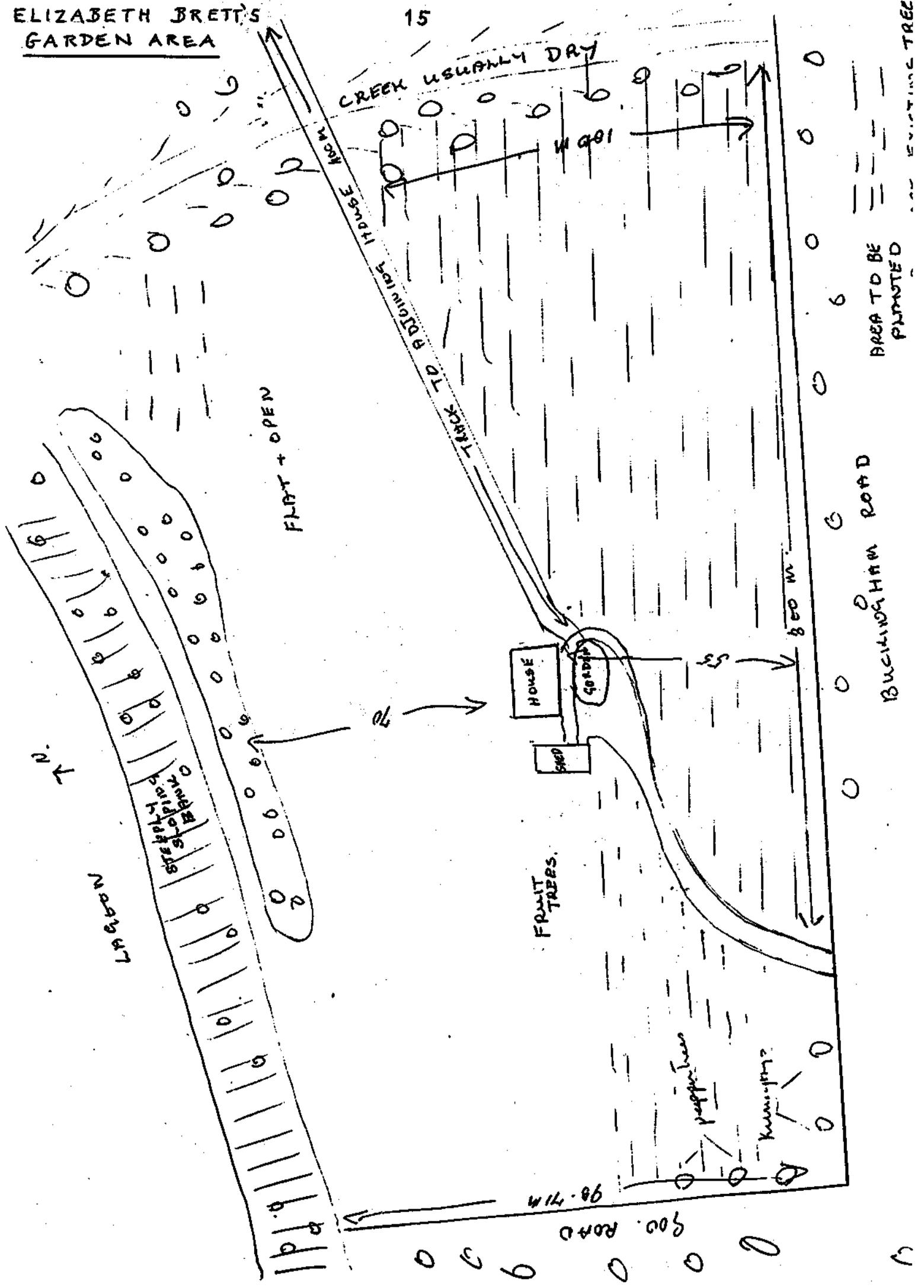
The Longs moved from their 4 ha (1 acre) rainforest weekender (previous visit 1997) to their new house on 20.5 ha (50 acres) one kilometre further up the escarpment in April 1999. There was some open land (approx. 6 ha) previously used for cattle grazing and some areas badly overgrown with *Lantana camara* (approx. 6 ha). The result is healthy and reasonably healthy natural subtropical and warm temperate Illawarra Rainforest.

The land is being managed

1. to maintain the natural forest and to provide access over the steep slopes
2. to establish woodlots aimed at long term production of fine cabinet timbers (*Toona australis*, *Podocarpus elatus*, etc.)
3. revegetation of the areas which aren't suitable for Farm Forestry by removal of the lantana and seeding with indigenous species.

ELIZABETH BRETT'S GARDEN AREA

15



AREA TO BE PLANTED

BUCKINGHAM ROAD

500. ROAD

98.714

pepper trees

knives?

FRUIT TREES.

HOUSE

SHED

FLAT + OPEN

CREEK USUALLY DRY

TRACK TO BOLLING HOUSE

LABOR

STREPTOCOCCUS

STREPTOCOCCUS

N.

EXISTING TREES

Overall, Nature/God is the gardener but we're lending a hand by encouraging/discouraging certain species. The design concept is to make the land/park/garden as natural-looking as possible except for the man-made components of house, road and stone walls (dry stone walls are important historically in the Kiama area).

The day will consist of walks to view the flora. There are alternate easy and harder walks. We will also go to an area of cool temperate rainforest dominated by *Eucryphia moorei* (Plumwood). We'll start early and get people away in time to get home at a reasonable hour.

~~Please phone Jo Hambrett~~ to say whether you'll be able to come to this meeting, and to obtain details. This is a great opportunity for South Coast members in particular to get together, but also for those from Sydney and elsewhere. It is generous of members to offer to host meetings and it should be a most enjoyable occasion.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Bryan Loft Vic Treasurer

### Financial Statement 1 July -30 December 2001

BALANCE 30 June 2001 \$4121.06

#### Plus INCOME

Advance royalty on book \$1,000.00

Loan from APS(Vc) \$ 8,500.00

Bank Interest \$ 0.67

2001/02 Subscriptions received \$ 948.60

\$10,449.27

#### Less EXPENDITURE:

Newsletter expenses \$ 707.94

Sub to Friends of RBG Cranbourne \$ 25.00

Sub to Friends of Kawarra Gardens \$ 20.00

Sub to Illawarra Grevillea Park Soc \$ 25.00

Sub to Eurobodalla Bot Gardens \$ 20.00

Bloomings Books \$10,000.00

BADTax \$ 2.20

Bank fee for returned cheque \$ 9.50

Secretarial Expenses \$ 24.20

\$10,813.84

BALANCE 30 Dec 2001 \$ 3,746.49

In explanation of this financial statement, APS Victoria is making a substantial loan to the GDSG to go towards the publication of our book. The publisher's aim is to produce a very high quality book but to keep the price reasonable - as low as possible. The loan is to be given in two parts, the first of which we received and gave to the publisher late last year. The second part of the loan will be given to the publisher when it is received some time in the next month. The loan will be repaid to APS Victoria from royalties received for the book.

However we would still like to receive a grant so we could repay at least some of the loan sooner, before royalties start to come in, and not have the weight of this debt on our shoulders. We'll apply again to APS Victoria, in effect to make some of the loan into a grant. We have also applied to APS NSW. Do any members have suggestions of other possible sources of funds for our project? Please let me know of any ideas you might have. Diana

## **MEMBERSHIP**

### **New members**

*A warm welcome to the following new member of the Study Group. We hope you enjoy your membership and look forward to sharing ideas with you.*

Michelle Nunn

### **New addresses**

Dave Bright

Shirley & Graham Fisher

Nicky Rose

### **Renewals for 2000-2001**

*Please let us know if your subscription has been sent in but not acknowledged in the NL. My apologies to members to whom this has happened.*

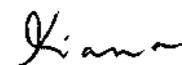
Trevor & Beryl Blake, Elizabeth Brett, Shirley Cam, Dave Bright, Judith Dykes, Gloria Freeman, Ronald Gornall, Mary Gray, Ken Milburn, Michelle Nunn, Nicky Rose, Therese Scales, Peter Swain, Maureen & Norman Webb; SGAP Blue Mountains Group.

I hope members enjoyed a peaceful and contented Christmas. Here, we are having some warm weather at last and I'm starting to look forward to the thought of autumn planting. There's some designing to be done first. Having the garden open to the public on a specific weekend encourages planning to be a little more careful than usual, as we want the garden to be at its 'best' for that weekend. (I agree, there's really no such thing as its 'best' !) The aim just emphasizes the importance of (permanent) form and foliage, rather than (less reliable) flowers.

Recently **Cherree Densley** Vic raised the topic of borders for paths and this resulted in a lot of discussion, with many members contributing their thoughts. So I'm sure you have ideas about a number of different aspects of garden design. Perhaps we could revisit some of the topics that aroused interest in the early years of the Study Group, but have been forgotten about more recently. These include topics listed in the GDSG information sheet (do you still have yours?). Any conclusions we came to in past years were certainly not written in stone.

I have come increasingly to realize the importance of growing (among our Australian plants) as many indigenous plants as possible, wherever they are available and fit into the design concept (and will cooperate and grow). As more people do this, it will help begin to restore shattered ecosystems. This idea corresponds to the Flora for Fauna program (see page 11), and it is exciting to see this program being recognized and publicized. Please write about this, or any other topic we have touched on over the years - or, of course, any brand new ones related to garden design.

Best wishes for a happy 2002, and good designing,



Diana