

ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS

**GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP**

NEWSLETTER No. 5

May 1994

Study Group leader: Diana Snape

Dear Members,

Do not worry, the logo above is not the final choice for ever and ever - I just wanted to start using a logo on the newsletter. You can still send ideas in and as soon as an irresistible one arrives we'll use it. Ideally it will somehow symbolize garden design with Australian plants but it can't be too complicated because often quite small reproductions are needed. Alternatively we could consider having different logos (or designs) for different purposes; perhaps a larger, more complex design for posters or displays.

The 'Gardens for Tomorrow' Conference in Melbourne in March was very stimulating for those able to attend. Reports in this newsletter from members give a glimpse of the wide range of interesting talks we heard. It was encouraging that the overall emphasis was on low water use in gardens and the use of Australian plants, though many other themes also emerged.

Plans are preceding for our GDSG weekend at 15 Mile Creek Camp in Victoria, in the first weekend in September. Details are given straight after the index. Please come if you can.

As we enter our second year of existence, I hope we all retain and build on our initial enthusiasm and energy for the aims of the GDSG. After a good start we must continue to expand our horizons.

MEMBERSHIP is now 155:- 79 individual members in Victoria, 30 in NSW, 17 in Queensland, 6 in Tasmania, 6 in the ACT, 2 in S.A. and 2 in W.A.; there are currently 13 group memberships.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Due to increase in the cost of copying newsletters (and this one being an 'extra' above our 'usual' 4 a year) it has been decided to put the cost of membership up to \$10 for the financial year 1994 -1995. (It remains \$5 for students, pensioners and unemployed people. If the increase is of real concern to you please let me know.) Do not worry if you have already renewed at \$5 - a reward for 'early birds'. With this newsletter all members have now received five, so what month you actually joined doesn't really matter. This newsletter will be the last you will receive if your subscription for renewal has not been received by 1 st July, so (if your memory is anything like mine) please don't delay, send it now! (No further warnings.)

FINANCES \$784.22 in the bank on 30/4/94. (Payments to be made soon for this newsletter, the Camp and establishment of the GDSG Slide Library.)

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GDSG weekend at 15 Mile Creek Camp in Victoria, in the first weekend in September.

The weekend extends from the evening of Fri. 2nd (any time after 4 p.m.) to the morning of Mon. 5th. The cost per person (including catered sandwich lunches and evening meals on Sat. & Sun.) will be \$40 - \$50 depending on numbers (BYO breakfast). Sleeping is dormitory style or in bunk rooms, or in a van or caravan if you have one; some billets will be available. For alternative accommodation, the nearest motels are at Benalla and Wangaratta, 35-40 km away, and there is also a hotel at Whitfield about 15 km away.

Our 'guest' speakers on Saturday night are two of our own members. Rodger Elliot's expertise is recognised internationally; co-author of the *Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants*, he is a widely published writer and photographer and in great demand as a speaker. Paul Thompson is one of the most experienced landscape and garden designers with Australian plants in Victoria; he has won a number of awards for his work and is an enthusiastic and challenging speaker. In the daytime we plan to visit a number of gardens, both private and public, have workshops on garden design and informal exchange of ideas. There will also be gardens to see (if you are able) on Friday afternoon & Monday morning. Bring your slides along for a members' garden design slide night on Friday &/or Sunday. If you have any other suggestions for this weekend, Barbara Buchanan (Ph. (057) 29 7536) and I would like to hear them.

A number of members have expressed interest in the weekend, but now please let Barbara or me know if you are coming and what sort of accommodation you prefer, and send a deposit of \$20 to me. We hope members from NSW (& more distant states) may be able to attend and meet with Victorian members. It should be possible to come for just part of the weekend; again please let me know your detailed requirements. It should be very stimulating - do come if you possibly can. (Husbands & wives are welcome, as we don't expect to have to limit numbers unless we are inundated with a flood of applicants! Gentle bushwalks and birdwatching are possible alternative activities for non-members.) We'll send more details to those who are coming, closer to the date.

Notes from the first meetings of the Sydney group

Gordon Rowland NSW

In considering the objectives of the GDSG (nl 4, p 4) we decided that "to initiate a number of garden design projects in which GDSG members collaborate with other gardeners" should be considered over a 5 to 10 year period (rather than 1 to 2 years). We would also encourage members to provide mutual help in the design of their own gardens.

We intend to prepare a display at the SGAP Australian Winter Garden Festival, to be held on 23 and 24 July from 10 am to 4 pm at the Nursery Industry Association grounds, Annangrove Road, Rouse Hill (Admission \$3). Betty Rymer is the organiser of the festival and Carol Bentley hopes to organise the display.

We thought it advisable for each state to have its own slide collection and to exchange copies with Victoria (and other states) as appropriate. Dennis Marsden agreed to be responsible for storing and cataloging slides.

We will produce a leaflet publicising our group, containing a list of recommended books (including a brief description of each), recommended nurseries and a list of well-designed Australian native gardens open to the public or to SGAP members. If a suitable logo is not forthcoming we thought it might be worthwhile to have one professionally designed. A well-designed logo will provide a good initial impression of the GDSG and enhance our prestige.

Details of further meetings & activities are given at the end of this newsletter.

Suggestions for additional 5 to 10 year objectives

Ian Percy NSW

"Australian garden designs and plant descriptions to be available on CD ROM (as is "A Field Guide to Australian Birds" with illustrations and bird song)

*promotion of Australian plants for the Olympic games in Sydney 2000

(I think the latter should be an objective for SGAP, particularly SGAP NSW; all study groups could help. DS)

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Extracts from members' letters

"I have enclosed a copy of the last Dryandra Study Group Newsletter - Margaret Pieroni has written a fairly extensive article on dryandras for landscaping. . . . It is probably too long in its present form but let me know if you can use it or part of it. . . . Here is the next instalment of Views of the Australian Landscape. I hope members find them interesting. I think I can find enough material for two or three more instalments which will probably deal more with gardens and gardening than landscaping." Tony Cavanagh Vic (We'll look forward to an article on Dryandras soon. DS)

"You must be very pleased with the response to the GDSG. It's obvious that so many Australian plant enthusiasts felt the need for such a group. Note that I said 'Australian' instead of 'native'. I have been consciously trying to call them Australian plants for some time now, partly because 'natives' still have a bad name with some people and partly because I feel we should be encouraging a feeling of national pride in our own flora and fauna. . . ."

I was very interested in the comments from Grahame Durbridge re creating three different pictures using the same plants. That would be interesting to try. (Oh for several acres!) Bev Courtney Vic

"I do hope we can promote the GDSG at the Rouse Hill Wildflower Show on July 23/24. Danie had some good ideas for this. I would like to see a native garden design at the "Spring in the Gardens" at the (Sydney) Royal Botanic Gardens in September. Last year I worked for the "Friends" during this time - they are quite keen for any sort of input. Mt Annan Botanic garden had a good display of Australian plants which created a lot of interest, although they mainly used Western Australian plants. . . ."

For me, the GDSG newsletter is the best gardening magazine available at the moment, full of concise interesting information and great debate. However, can we please hand over the design of our logo to a professional graphic designer. Surely a member will have a contact in this industry." Ian Percy NSW

"Last week my husband and I went on a walk with the "Mid-weekers" group of the Newcastle branch of ASGAP. Once a month there is a non-strenuous walk to some interesting area and for February it was the Oyster Cove & Tanilba Bay area. . . . After we had lunch I passed around the four newsletters of the GDSG and told them a bit about it. There were 21 present and all seemed interested, so the word is gently spreading around here. Would it be a good idea to have your address (or an address for correspondence) on each newsletter?" Wendy Evans NSW (Yes it would! Danie Olbrich & Ian Bond suggested this too - note the new header on page 1. DS)

"I am a qualified horticulturist and obtained my Diploma in Horticulture from Lincoln College (now University), New Zealand. Currently I am employed by the Albury City Council as the Curator of the Albury Botanic Gardens.

My experience in landscaping with Australian native plants is limited, however I have a great love of natural Australian landscapes and the vast variety of Australian plants. My reasons for joining this group are to learn, experiment, impart knowledge gained and promote the use of Australian plants in landscape design in urban areas.

I have spoken to Glenda Datson at length concerning an area in the Albury Botanic Gardens that we would like to develop into a native garden and she indicated that the GDSG would be interested in assisting. A formal letter is being drafted which should be in your hands shortly." Patrea Cook Vic

"Please find enclosed plans of Albury Botanic Gardens. The high-lighted strip is the area to be planted. Most, if not all, existing shrubs are to be removed. The canal floods above the top of the wall at times so anything on this lower level needs to be tolerant. (Water drops away rapidly, generally 1 - 2 days.) There is extensive existing kikuyu grass. Not sure whether to remove this completely (may be difficult to eradicate) or to leave as a grassed park. They would prefer gravel." Glenda Datson NSW

"Re Jeff Howes' comment on common names for plants. When I started out I was very unfamiliar with botanical names & found articles which included common names let me read the article with some understanding before I started to look up all the botanical names. So, in order to include as many people as possible, I would like to see common names included. Also when I am talking to kids & non-plant people it is very useful to be familiar with common names (kids love to plant Pigface just because of its name, I find) and as I get more deeply into plants & using botanical names, I forget the common ones & immediately there is a gap between me & the people I am trying to inform. So constantly being reminded actually helps me in those situations. Also, the botanical name of a totally unfamiliar plant from another state is quite bewildering & may not be in any of your home reference books, so a common name gives you an idea of what the person is using & writing about." Danie Olbrich NSW

"Given a certain area to plant out, it is a bit daunting to think of all the possibilities and my biggest problem is being uncertain about which way to go and not doing anything in the finish! Therefore I like to look at lots of options & ideas and hopefully there will be some good ideas coming from this group!" Trudy Grace Tas

"It was great receiving the latest newsletter. I enjoy reading them immensely. It might be too late but I have enclosed a drawing (for a logo) that I did. My husband says it is too complicated and my mother tells me to send it anyway, so see what you think. I can't wait for the next newsletter." Jeanette Heinemann Qld

"I thought a logo could try to reflect the essential elements and ingredients that we would consider in garden design, namely the plants in their varying forms and qualities, the contours of the land, the gullies, waterways, hills, etc.!" Grant Molyneux Vic (Jeanette's and Grant's suggestions are included on page 19. DS)

"The first meeting of the Sydney chapter offered lots of scope for promoting the group. . . . It was an enjoyable meeting and we all appreciated Gordon Rowland's garden and his generosity in holding the meeting in his home.

With more temperate weather my garden is romping away and after the fires so is the bushland. As a bush regenerator I am delighted to see the rapid regrowth. A group of us will be working in one of the affected areas as the weeds are regrowing just as rapidly." Carol Bentley NSW

"Have been haunting Stage 2 of the Mt. Coot-tha Botanic gardens here, which is all-Australian - lake, palms, ferns, rainforest and wet and dry habitat plants. Most of them very small, but it will be a joy to watch them grow. Noticed the Alphitonias (petriei and excelsa) leaves were both chewed by pests and Pullea stutzeri (of delightfully ornamental leaf

- and available at Fairhill Nursery..) was affected by sooty mould.

Saw the Nosworthy garden In the Open Garden Scheme. As you state in your article, there is a crying need for Australian gardens where the public (& SGAP members) can see what our plants look like.... It seems the Brisbane Society needs to develop a similar system of garden visits (to Victoria), for members & perhaps their friends (a way of recruiting members). R.K.Willson Qld (Common names of the three trees mentioned: *Alphitonia petriei* White or Pink Ash; *A. excelsa* Red Ash; *Pullea stutzeri* Hard Alder)

**** Some extracts from more recent letters are being saved for the next newsletter. DS ****

Australian Plants - Australian Gardens "Pushing onwards, pushing upwards"

"It is now O.K. to talk about an 'Australian plant'.... but where do these Australian plants grow? Well, to me the only place they can grow is in an Australian garden. One flows naturally from the other. Nothing else is logical. It's only the limitation in our thinking that holds us back. I am undoubtedly a novice gardener but I am certainly aware of the importance of language and the necessity of naming in the process of change. If one does not take the high ground oneself, another will. Australian plants have to grow in Australian gardens. Exotic plants, or plants originating in other countries, can therefore grow in Australian and exotic plant gardens. Sounds good - feels good, and not only that, will bring us out of the plant wilderness." Janet Woodroffe Vic (Ed's comment: I like Janet's commitment to the use of 'Australian garden' to 'bring us out of the plant wilderness' - go for it! However I think 'all-Australian garden' and 'Australian plant garden' are reasonable, unambiguous alternatives or 'backups' at this stage. I do strongly recommend we use 'Australian' plant instead of 'native' plant and this is now editorial policy. DS)

Extracts from friends' letters

"I have asked David Abbott, who is currently preparing a Masterplan for Cranbourne Botanic Garden, to contact you to discuss some of the ideas we have for developing native gardens there. In particular, we are considering developing an Australian Display Garden which would provide a sample of (mainly) sand-country flora near the proposed Visitor Centre at CBG. This would provide an opportunity for innovative landscaping and garden design to give visitors a concentrated "experience" of the flora....."

We will soon be interviewing applicants for the Landscape Planner's position at the RBG. Once we have made an appointment and the person has started to draw together information for the RBG Masterplan, I shall ask him/her to discuss with you your ideas for possible native gardens at South Yarra." Dr Philip Moors (Director, Royal Botanic Gardens), in response to a letter of mine.

"It has come to Council's attention that the Garden Design Study Group of the Society for Growing Australian Plants is seeking native garden design projects. The Albury Botanic Gardens is a late Victorian garden with mainly exotic plantings. A narrow strip of land approximately 2000 square metres on the western side of the gardens.... has been designated for a native garden. Council is seeking your assistance in the design of the garden.... This project will promote native garden design, raise the profile of native plants and involve special interest groups and the community." B J McLennan (Director of Engineering Services, Albury City). (This project is now underway. DS)

"My final project ...at RMIT used indigenous plant material within a contemporary design aesthetic. This design was not so concerned with scientific and ecological criteria but more with the relationships of modern culture and indigenous plants. I have enclosed a brief synopsis of the project." Paul Merton (Landscape Architect, Vic)

GDSG Slide Library: we're ready to start!

Doug McIver is our slide librarian for members from Victoria and all states other than NSW.

Dennis Marsden is our slide librarian for NSW members.

Thank you to both Doug and Dennis for

undertaking this responsibility. Our aim is to develop an extensive slide library showing all aspects of garden design using Australian plants. The slides will be stored in archival quality containers and their details entered on a data base. They can be used to illustrate talks or articles and to prepare audiovisual displays for SGAP (and other) groups. This is vitally important for spreading knowledge, understanding and enthusiasm. This year's beauty in a garden is transient but it lives on in photographs for others to share.

We hope that all GDSG members who are photographers (but not on a professional basis) will contribute slides to be used with appropriate acknowledgment. We'd appreciate donations of your spares or copies - if an example of garden design appeals to you, take two photos! Alternatively slides can be sent to the slide librarian & we'll copy selected ones. Slides shouldn't be under copyright or have technical faults. Most should show good design rather than bad, though contrasting 'before' & 'after' and 'good' & 'bad' photos are welcome.

We'll need certain information about each slide and a form is included with this newsletter for you to photocopy. Each slide requires a form. The information in the top section of the form is essential, including the signature of the photographer. "Climate" need not be detailed. Under "photograph depicts" only information which is relevant is required (the thesaurus on the back expands on some of the headings).

Please, if you can, help us achieve one of our important aims.

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Bush Garden Handbook by A.G.W.Simpson (Rigby, Adelaide) 1982 208p index, bibliography
reviewed by **Dorothy Parris Vic**

This out-of-print book is intended for the lay person wishing to plan an Australian plant garden. It is very readable, chatty and non-technical in style. A.G.W. (Bill) Simpson, at the time of publishing, was a superintendent of parks and gardens in Adelaide. As an inexperienced person, new to growing Australian plants and garden design, I find Simpson's book invaluable as a basic guide to the subject.

Practical considerations are presented in clear point form. Explanations are concise and flow on logically. Subjects covered include how to draw up a garden plan and what practicalities to consider. Here an interesting section concisely discusses the functions of trees, shrubs and groundcovers in landscaping. Simpson even defines what trees, shrubs, herbaceous and bulb plants are, giving the lay person a good background to the available plant material. There are chapters on building various garden constructions such as paths, walls and steps, the implications of colour, how to combine colours, and propagation methods. There are several chapters with plant lists for various needs, similar to though not as comprehensive as "*Grow What Where*", which was first published in 1980.

The most useful chapters from my point of view are firstly the landscaping and planning ones. The "how to" steps of drawing up a plan are much more comprehensive and "hands on" than in "*Native Gardens: how to create an Australian landscape*" (Molyneux and Macdonald). Secondly, a chapter which is a "beauty" lists the meanings of 600 botanical names. I use this section as a reference tool at nurseries, etc.

In my limited experience, I suspect the sections on propagating and fertilizing are probably a little out-dated. I do know that his suggestion that black plastic can be considered as a mulch (if used carefully) will cause some cringing in our enlightened times.

I would be thrilled if this book was revised and republished, as it has so many useful sections in it and the author has given his intended audience just what they want - the encouragement to "have a go"!

More books and articles

Ian Percy NSW

I love the book section of the newsletter. Last year my most challenging reading came from:-
Denatured Visions - Landscape and Culture in the 20th Century published by The Museum of Modern Art, New York
Studies in Landscape Design by Geoffrey Jellicoe Volumes II & III (O.U.P.)
Second Nature by Michael Pollan (Batam U.S.)

I am currently doing some research for a book publishing company. One of the books they lent me to have a look at, ***The Gardener's Guide to South African Plants*** by Pitta Joffe, published last year, contained some interesting ideas. The following extract is from the foreword by B.J. Huntly of the National Botanical Institute, Cape Town.

"While we have neglected the financial potential of our indigenous plants, so too have we, as a nation of home-proud gardeners, failed to fully develop the use of our native plants. Our strong Eurocentric gardening traditions and the availability of a multitude of proven cultivars of exotic species have resulted in a reluctance to test our gardening skills with native species. The situation is rapidly changing, however, as the experience and expertise developed over the past 80 years in our National Botanic gardens have become more accessible. More and more commercial nurserymen are producing wide ranges of native plants and 'growing indigenous' is becoming a popular and rewarding theme. The advantages of using indigenous species in South African gardens are numerous. Not only does one have an enormous diversity of species from which to choose, but they are genetically and physiologically more tolerant of our often harsh climate, resistant pests and disease and better adapted to our varied soil conditions."
Some 'food for thought'.

(It's fascinating to compare the similarities to, and differences from, the situation here in Australia. DS)

Some early SGAP articles of interest from *Australian Plants*

* A Garden near the Sea by H. Bell Volume 3 June 1965

Queenscliff Victoria Sept 1963 Good selection of plants, no mention of design.

The retention of Indigenous Flora in developing suburban areas by D.D. Morris Warners Bay NSW

Volume 3 pp 359 Sept 1966

* My native garden by C.F. Davies p162 Vol 4 Sept 1967 A plantsman garden south of Perth, no mention of design.

'Healthy, Wealthy and Wise' (Channel 10)

I appeared in a brief segment on this program on 7th March, talking about Australian plants and their use in gardens, including my own (not much about design though). I learnt there were 1000 enquiries for the fact sheet on this segment (which included details of my book and the contact number for SGAP in each state). I think this shows there are a lot of people out there who are interested. It would be salutary to look at the amount of space which Australian plants/gardens - let alone design with Australian plants - get in the media: in garden programs on TV and radio, gardening magazines, newspapers. If you have any comments/observations on this topic please send them in. Diana Snape

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HAKEAS SUGGESTED FOR LANDSCAPE or GARDEN DESIGN

Hazel Blackney (Leader of the Hakea Study Group)

All these hakeas are recommended and regarded as hardy and reliable.

| | | |
|---------------------|--|---|
| <u>Ground cover</u> | MYRTOIDES | Low, sprawling plant, purplish pink flowers May to August. Can suffer dieback of leaves; prune. |
| <u>Banking</u> | CRASSINERVIA (a form of PETIOLARIS?) | Vigorous, sprawling shrub usually about 1.5 m by 3 m wide. Pink flowers, sometimes twice each season. |
| | LISSOCARPHA (Honeybush) | Divided foliage, pink flowered form preferred, white flowers tend to go brown and look untidy. |
| | PROSTRATA | Low form. Stem-clasping foliage, grey-green, prickly. Flowers can be yellowish, dull red, sweet scent. |
| <u>Small</u> | CONCHIFOLIA | Shell-like leaves, heavily veined. New growth is bronze and very velvety. Flowers creamy. |
| | FLABELLIFOLIA | Foliage is fan-shaped, plant usually under 1m. |
| <u>Medium</u> | CINEREA (Ashy H.) | Grey-green foliage, yellow flowers. |
| | CRISTATA | Flat holly leaves, edged yellow, large clusters of cream flowers. |
| | DACTYLOIDES (Finger H.) | Elliptical leaves, flowers profuse, white or pink. |
| | NITIDA (Shiny H.) | Obovate-oblong toothed foliage, spreading fruit very attractive with spots (also called Frog Hakea) |
| | PURPUREA | Red or cerise flowers in leaf axils, terete divided foliage. |
| | SERICEA (Silky H. or Bushy Needlewood) | Very hardy, terete foliage, great for bird nests, pink flowered form very showy. |
| | UNDULATA | Heavily veined roundish foliage, margins wavy with irregular teeth, scented flowers creamy-white. |
| | VERRUCOSA | Can be a very dense shrub beloved by birds for nesting. Flowers cream becoming reddish, occurring April to September. |
| <u>Tall</u> | CUCULLATA (Hood-leaved H.) | Profuse pink, rarely white flowers in cupped, orbicular or reniform foliage. Hardy, usually quick growing, an attractive screening shrub. |
| | BAXTERI | Good foliage plant with fan-shaped leaves, upper margin wavy and prickly toothed. |
| | NITIDA | Upright form has attractive red stems, leaves irregularly toothed becoming lanceolate as it matures. Cream flowers. |
| | SCOPARIA | Small, medium and tall forms. Sulcate leaves to 23 cm (terete, deeply grooved). Flowers cream to pink or purplish, some begin deep pink aging to rusty brown. |
| | PETIOLARIS (Sea Urchin H.) | Foliage grey-green to glaucous, prominent reticulate venation, ovate to orbicular with flowers pink or cream aging to cream or purplish. Excellent in narrow areas between buildings or where a tall skinny tree is useful. |
| <u>Very tall</u> | CORIACEA, FRANCISIANA (grafted) | are part of the MULTILINEATA group which have spike-like racemes of flowers in pinks and reds. Leaves are long and strap-like with longitudinal veins. These species are particularly attractive. |
| <u>Notes</u> | | Most hakeas produce bronze new foliage. ELLIPTICA often produces new foliage all over the large shrub giving it a variegated effect. |

Ferndale : Barry White's garden in West Essendon

Joan Barrett Vic

Ferndale was developed in 1967 by the current owner and his wife as an exotic garden on a standard suburban block - weedy grassland - surrounding their new home. Aspect is S - N with a slight slope to the east. In 1983 Barry re-developed it as an Australian native garden with an emphasis on fragrance, foliage and, of course, ferns.

The garden contains many colourful, well grown plants from local sources (*Calotis scapigera* used as ground cover in the service area) and distant sources: planting commences on the nature strip and continues to the rear fence. Despite this abundance however the most striking feature to this first time visitor was the "built environment". Barry's ingenuity is demonstrated in the pools in both front and rear gardens and in the many "secret" seating areas which invite the visitor - or the gardener! - to stay a while and enjoy the scented plants.

The rear garden has many such resting places, being divided into spaces - one hesitates to use "rooms" - featuring raised ponds, statuary and fountains. The massed plantings of ferns are sheltered by mature eucalypts, hymenopterums and vine-covered pergolas. A further 'surprise' is a raised area for outdoor meals which doubles as a viewing platform and fits in unobtrusively because of the surrounding planting. This is a conversion of the decking which surrounded an above ground swimming pool when the five sons of the family were young!

At the time of my visit Barry was the President of the Fern Society and of the Keilor Plains Group of SGAP. He welcomes visitors and has opened Ferndale on two occasions for the Open Garden Scheme.

An experiment in formal native garden design was commenced in Sydney in July 1992.

Aspect: The garden site was south-facing with full sun in summer and minimal in winter.

Soil: poor sand with asphalt rubble.

Existing trees: *Citharexylum quadrangulare* (Jamaica Fiddlewood) and bamboo hedge on adjoining property

Fertilizer used: low phosphorus Osmocote

Mulch: A mulch of decomposed granite was used over the entire site, compacted with a "wacker". This mulch was used as an experiment in xeriscaping after consultation with a friend from Colorado, USA.

Watering: Apart from initial watering (one to two weeks) no watering was given to plants (to simulate a xeric environment).

The following plants were grown as part of this experiment. (Numbers in brackets still surviving after Jan 1994, the driest summer on record.) The garden was planted in rental property. In April 1993 new tenants moved in and no maintenance is now given to the garden. The design would be better suited to a larger garden with space for garden room or theatre.

Decomposed granite is rough on the feet and glarey in summer but a delightful colour. A lawn placed directly on decomposed granite is successful.

| <u>Quantity</u> | <u>Plant</u> | <u>Pot size</u> | <u>Origin</u> |
|-----------------|---|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| 120 (10) | <i>Baeckea imbricata</i> | tube | Randwick Council Nursery, Sydney |
| 24 (0) | <i>Melaleuca diosmifolia</i> | 8" | Victoria |
| 24(12) | <i>Acmena smithii</i> (Lilly Pilly) | 8" | Victoria |
| 2 (2) | Standard Lilly Pilly (transplanted) | 24" | Victoria |
| 12(0) | <i>Acacia howittii</i> (Sticky Wattle) | 6" | Victoria |
| 10(8) | <i>Callitris rhomboidea</i> (Port Jackson Pine) | 6" | Victoria |
| 15(0) | <i>Metrosiderous queenslandica</i> (Pink Myrtle) | 8" | Northern NSW |
| 6 (1) | <i>Banksia serrata</i> (Saw B. or Old Man B.) | 10" | NSW |
| 4 (3) | <i>Melaleuca leucadendra</i> (gold leaf form) (Weeping Paperbark) | 10" | Old |
| 4 (3) | <i>Banksia spinulosa</i> Green Cape Dwarf (Hairpin B.) | 8" | Southern NSW |

The following results were achieved.

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <u>Baeckea imbricata:</u> | excellent mini-hedge | similar leaves to herb Thyme | prune with scissors |
| | requires large amount of water (naturally occurring on different face with constant water) | | |
| <u>Melaleuca diosmifolia:</u> | instant hedge from 8" stock | | rapid growth initially |
| | unable to cope with Sydney humidity in February | | |
| | devastated by web-spinning insect attack | | removed March 1993 |
| <u>Acmena smithii (Lilly Pilly):</u> | steady growth | constantly tip pruned | growth OK in competition with Fiddlewood |
| | mite attack Dec 94 | unable to cope with lack of water | |
| <u>Lilly Pilly standards:</u> | excellent growth | kept good form | masses of purple fruit in April/May 1993 |
| | successfully transplanted to new site in May 1993 | | |
| <u>Acacia howitti:</u> | poor growth | these were not mulched as they were planted to form a background to a pond (between the pond, and a fence and a wall at right angles to each other) | |
| | may have reacted to lime washed wall and cement from pond | | |
| <u>Callitris rhomboidea:</u> | slow growth | responded well to hedge shear trimming but.... | |
| | a bit top heavy as a result liable to collapse | | |
| <u>Metrosiderous queenslandica:</u> | unable to cope with competition from bamboo hedge | | |
| | 3 survived for a while in space where no bamboo exists | | |
| <u>Banksia serrata:</u> | slow growth | specimens too large but responded well to severe cut back | |
| | site not sunny enough | | |
| <u>Melaleuca leucadendron (gold leaf form):</u> | one loss | responded well to severe cut back | |
| | colours well in cooler months to lime green / gold - excellent colour | | |
| <u>Banksia spinulosa Green Cape Dwarf:</u> | one loss | good compact form | |
| | slow growth requiring no pruning | | |

A Display Area for Frankston's Indigenous Plants

Bev Courtney Vic

Casuarina reserve is a 2Ha patch of very disturbed remnant vegetation in Casuarina Drive, South Frankston, just around the corner from my home. Two years ago I obtained Council permission to commence a regeneration project. There were 75 local species still struggling to exist, some with only one plant of a species occurring. The major woody weeds are Coastal Tea-tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum*), Sallow Wattle (*Acacia longifolia*) and Spanish Heath and it is amazing what comes up when these are removed allowing extra light and moisture to penetrate.

There are many natural reserves in Frankston, mostly weed-infested, but a few with regional significance so I felt that just another bushland reserve would not rate too highly maintenance-wise with an already undermanned and over-stressed Parks and Gardens department. I decided, with Council approval, to plan something different and revegetate with a view to creating a display area for Frankston's indigenous plants. The idea was to include as many as possible of our local

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species typical of heathland/ heathy woodland/ grassy low open forest plant communities. Replanting in the reserve will therefore be designed to show off the plants to their best advantage, something which Mother Nature doesn't always do. We will be doing a lot of group planting e.g. we have 80 irises (*Patersonia occidentalis*) ready to plant in one spot this year and I can see them in my mind's eye (like Wordsworth's daffodils), interplanted with orange Grey Parrot-peas (*Dillwynia cinerascens*) and yellow (with silver foliage) Clustered Everlasting (*Chrysocephalum semipapposunfj*). There are already some nice patches of Spear Grass and a large area of Kangaroo Grass. Clumps of pink and white Common Heath (*Epacris impressa*) are planned, along with groups of many other species. The reserve will still be essentially natural in character, so the idea will be to show how local plants can be used to create a natural look.

One third of the reserve has mown grass and play equipment and will remain so for the present. There are several large *Pinus radiata* which will have to come out of this section, but a long-term plan is to create more formal garden beds, again with local plants prominent. We have put walking tracks through the bushland section and a self-guiding nature walk is being planned. We have a small Friends group of local residents and we are able to use Council's nursery facilities to grow all the plants we need. So far 30 species new to the reserve have been added. Seeds and cutting material have been collected from nearby when possible and from other parts of Frankston when not.

Solutions to problems

Nicole Lenffer Vic

Planting under established eucalypts (in Melbourne)

"Most thomasia species do well in dry conditions beneath mature trees.

'*Crowea* 'Poorinda Ecstasy'

'lower growing forms of *Baeckea virgata*

"*Acacia pravissima* 'Golden Carpet' - the prostrate form of the Oven's Wattle - said to grow under trees

* *Leptospermum flavescens* 'Cardwell'

Remember to mulch around the tree and the small plants. This will give the smaller plants a better chance to establish. (I don't know about the availability of these plants or their success in garden situations in the Sydney area.)

A hot clay bank(Queanbeyan)

•Take a look at the Canberra Botanical Gardens for examples of plants growing in that environment.

"Use tube stock and mulch heavily. Keep watering until the hot weather is over and the plants will have some chance of establishing themselves.

'Grow some quick-growing plants to provide shade and protection for smaller plants.

'Try *Acacia* and *Callistemon* species that are indigenous in the area.

Pruning in the Australian Garden

Geoff Simmons Qld

Pruning is used for many purposes to create a garden and there is no lack of books and articles describing how it should be done. Mostly the recommendations are for exotic plants. What can be said about pruning practices in gardens based on an Australian philosophy? There are no reasons to suggest that native plants should not be treated in the same way as exotics. Maybe there are Australian plants that require special treatment. If so the GDSG could be a forum for these requirements.

Reasons for pruning

1. Neatness - a straggly bush such as a grevillea does little to enhance the appearance of a garden. Judicious tip pruning from the beginning can produce more flowers or bushiness. Untidy plants may blend into the landscape of wild areas but rarely look appropriate in the artificial situation of a garden.

2. Hedges and Topiary - of necessity these represent the cases where pruning is essential and on-going.

Success in this area depends basically on choosing the right plant. The group could compile a list of plants that have been used for this purpose.

3. Safety and Enhancement of Ambience - lopping to prevent branches falling and being a cause of hazardous situations is a desirable practice. Less obvious is the need to cut back foliage that overhangs paths or otherwise spoils the enjoyment of walking in a garden. Prickly or even soft foliage brushing parts of the body, particularly the face, are often the cause of irritation. In the hot times of the year, foliage to above head height can be removed to produce a shade tunnel. The best time to judge the inside height of the tunnel is when rain water is weighing down the branches.

4. Bush or Tree - it is surprising how often an Australian plant is described as a large bush or small tree. This begs the reader to make a decision - bush or tree. If the latter, pruning is very important to determine whether to prune to one or several trunks.

5. Vistas - vertical views have a place in the garden scene and can be improved by pruning. The design may require a clear view over a tree requiring top lopping or under a tree requiring low branches to be pruned. Also a seat may be located in such a position that a nearby tree needs trimming to take advantage of the shade of the tree. Another type of view can be created by planting two rows of bushes and then keeping them cut back so that there is an uninterrupted view to the end where a particularly choice specimen plant is located.

When to prune

There are two time factors to consider - at what stage of growth and in what season. Just as grape vines are pruned to produce the best crop for the variety so Australian plants should be pruned to fit their purpose in the garden design. The general advice for exotics is to prune in winter months. However this may not be appropriate for the mainly

non-deciduous plants of the Australian flora and certainly in the hot wet climate greater activity is required.

When to start pruning is another question. I believe that big shrubs and trees should be shaped when young. On the other hand experience has taught me that early pruning slows growth and it is desirable to leave the plant unchecked for two or more years until good root formation has occurred. Books on the care of trees often point out that removal of leading top growth will lead to other branches taking over the role of leader. This does not negate the practice but does mean that a continual watch is necessary to produce the desired shape and height.

My view is that all trees should be considered for shaping although on many occasions they will be left to become their own shape. A mis-shaped gum tree of stunted growth and buffeted by the elements in an otherwise neat garden is no advertisement for the beauty of eucalypts whether in nature or art. I prefer to take a positive approach and use the art of pruning to enhance the beauty of a garden. Sawing, cutting and snipping is an integral part of gardening.

(Rodger Elliot's "Pruning" gives some information about pruning Australian plants, as does the *Encyclopaedia. DS*)

A 'whispering grove' of *Casuarina cunninghamiana*

Janet Woodroffe Vic

I certainly concur with the idea of a 'whispering grove' of *Casuarina cunninghamiana*, having one myself. The sound on a windy or rain-lashed night is something to be remembered. I've never heard anything like it before. Loud - certainly, penetrating - yes, but strangely comforting. The four female trees are covered in nuts and the three male trees are about to load their branchlets with pollen, which will cascade to the ground in golden flurries over the next few weeks.

These trees also bring a different range of birds from those that use eucalypts and grass lands. They have brought an element of surprise into my garden. I just looked out the window and spotted an Australian goshawk - a first for my garden. Dipping into my bird book, I see this group of seven trees have also been visited by magpies, magpie larks, currawongs, choughs, sulphur-crested cockatoos, yellow tailed black-cockatoos, red & little wattlebirds, brown treecreeper, king parrot, eastern & yellow rosellas, crested & bronze-wing pigeons, silver-eyes and thornbills. They just come, rest for a while and pass on. The noisy friar birds command the callistemons; the spinebills, rufous whistlers, robins, fantails, honeyeaters and wrens seek out the grevilleas, acacias and eucalypts; the red-browed firetails graze the grasses. (Blackbirds supervise the mulch.) All this has happened in such a short time on a suburban block in a town areawhy would anyone plant exotics?

Yes, the grove of 'whispering' *Casuarina cunninghamiana* has certainly paid off and I recommend them to anyone with a bit of space.

'Gardens for Tomorrow' Overview

The Landscape Australia

Garden Design Conference

Gordon Rowland NSW

Deciphering my notes, scribbled in semi-darkness during the presentations, the first is a quote from Professor David Yencken: "Green is the colour of gardens" - (and yet the colour we value the least?). During Dr Peter Valder's entertaining talk I noted his telling comment that possession of a rarity - meaning a novel exotic plant - was formerly an indication of one's position in society. (I'm not sure though what it indicates today.) I liked Professor Marc Treib's definition of a garden as a "zone of modified ecology".

John Brookes showed a remarkable sympathy for our Australian flora. In referring to the "sense of place" he asked "Whose place?", and characterised the tendency to look for inspiration from English and European gardens as "a cul-de-sac we call nostalgia". He reminded us that the cottage garden originated among those who lived in tied cottages and worked on landowners' estates. It was a *functional garden*, mostly of herbs, which happened to flower at certain times of the year. It was later romanticised and eventually found its way to Australia.

After morning tea on the second day, Rodger Elliot began by announcing that he would not have time to speak about all twenty-five thousand Australian plant species. (I took this as a mild rebuke to those who would fill their plots with plants from almost anywhere *except* Australia.) He suggested that, in determining "What is a garden?", we might recognise ecology (the balanced interrelationship between organisms in their environment) as the cornerstone.

I liked John Patrick's suggestion that we might use plants to convey a particular *mood*, and was delighted that he has become more appreciative of our unique Australian flora. Professor Robert Perry suggested ways of reducing the use of water, fuel and fertiliser in the designed landscape, illustrating his talk with slides of designs using drought resistant plants from the Mediterranean and his native California.

Judith Rawling alerted us to our responsibility for the problems caused by environmental weeds, a third of which consist of exotic ornamentals. The annual cost to agriculture and waterways, in control and in lost production, is a staggering \$3 billion! Weeds are often winter flowering/berrying (thus helping to sustain less desirable birds such as Indian mynahs and currawongs, to the detriment of smaller native birds). In the circumstances I was surprised to hear Judith declare her own garden to be largely exotic.

Graham Pizzey referred to the widespread use of exotic plants in British gardens, a practice understandably adopted by early settlers, unfamiliar as they were with a flora which had evolved in isolation over a period of 50 million years. He also drew attention to the mutually beneficial partnership between indigenous flora and fauna, with particular reference to plants and birds.

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Simon Klose suggested that sculpture and garden be mutually supportive, that we think of trees as walls, the sky as ceiling and the lawn (or other groundcover?) as carpet. He reminded us that sculpture - even bronze sculpture - requires regular maintenance.

Dirk Slotboom spoke of water features, and the contrast between static and dynamic designs. In naturalistic streams he suggested the careful placement of stones to control water flow, and he went on to deal with the creation of mist as a design feature, the problem of rubbish getting into the display, pool depth, primary filter screens, overflows, drainage, evaporation and topping up, electrical cables, size of pump, maintenance, keeping water clean, pipe materials, corrosion and the installation of mobile plant (equipment) rooms. (I think I'll leave the design of my next water feature to Dirk.) Professor Giovanni Abrami from Italy spoke on paving in design, defining this as a meeting point of knowledge (science) and creativity (art).

Topher Delaney illustrated her talk with slides of her Californian garden designs, in which hard surfaces (often coloured, patterned or textured) generally appear to be the predominant features and plant material subordinate or incidental. Despite having lost her home in the Californian bushfires, Pamela Burton made it to the conference. (I immediately warmed to her, for her candour in describing herself as "indecisive".) She gave a fine talk about her work, emphasizing her concern with the integration of private and public open spaces.

(I chose to include the full text of Rodger Elliot's talk, despite his suggestion that I abbreviate it, because I think it gives an excellent glimpse into the enormous range of Australian plants from which we can select for garden design. DS)

Australian Garden Plants

Rodger Elliot Vic

After all, what is a garden? I have selected a broad definition: 'A garden is a piece of land given over to the cultivation of ornamental or useful plants to provide a place of sensual indulgence.' In the foreword to *'The Gardens of Roberto Burle Marx'* the great man himself has written: "We need to understand that we live in a world where plants exist not only for material reasons but also because they depict BIRTH, GROWTH and DEATH, emphasising the instability of nature. We should always try to understand the mutations and variations in nature and the LIGHT, SOUNDS and PERFUMES that stir our emotions.' I would like to be so bold as to add to the master's thoughts that TOUCH and TASTE are also important and should never be disregarded in order to provide stimulation for all of our intrinsic senses.

Two views:- 1841 Rev. Wollaston, recent immigrant: 'Trees although evergreen, want freshness, their foliage is of the most sombre uniform hue imaginable.' 1987 Amy Crocker, born Albany, 1902: 'Eucalypts have the loveliest, softest, warmest greens in the world.' Like the early explorers, our first impressions are often based on conditioning. Take time to experience the environment. Look at the intricate patterns of rocks and flowers, leaves and sky; close your eyes, take a few deep breaths and listen to the sound of the wind and birds, smell the scent and the soil. TAKE TIME TO DISCOVER, TO APPRECIATE, TO UNDERSTAND.

Australian plants are often regarded by many people as unique. This is an over simplification, as even though about 75% of Australian plants occur naturally only on this vast and varied continent, there are strong Gondwanan relationships. Plants from tropical Australia are often also found in New Guinea and Asia, or are members of genera or families which also occur in these regions. Many south-eastern Australian plants show relationships with plants from South Africa, western South America, New Caledonia and New Zealand.

A large number of Australian plants have evolved in isolation and barriers such as the central Australian deserts have been an influencing factor in the development of many species with outstanding ornamental characteristics, and it is from this group that there is high endemism. The major expression of uniqueness by Australian plants is that so many have small, narrow stiff leaves which is aptly described by the term scleromorphy. This characteristic is very evident in the families Epacridaceae, Fabaceae, Mimosaceae, Myrtaceae, Protaceae and Rutaceae. Recent thought is that this adaptive feature is due to low nutrient value of many of our soils (an important factor for cultivation), and not a response to aridity which was generally accepted by earlier botanists.

Within Australia there are over 25,000 flowering plants, which is an extremely rich representation for such an arid continent. There is a remarkable diversity of species and growth habits on which designers and gardeners can draw for cultivation. We need to come to a better understanding of our wonderful flora and its ecology in order to utilise it to its full potential. We have the tallest flowering plant in the world, in *Eucalyptus regnans*, Mountain Ash, any number of minute ephemerals, as well as a mindboggling range of herbs, subshrubs, shrubs and trees in between.

Trees dominate on the eastern seaboard and to some distance inland, with other populations in northern and south-western regions. They are also scattered throughout other areas, with the exception of the driest of our inland regions. Eucalypts are common and their variation of trunk form and adornment is legion. The other dominant genus is *Acacia* and everyone knows them because "we have one - the Cootamundra" and so often the other 749 or so species are treated with disdain. There is a small range of conifers, some of which have only one species per genus.

It is shrubs which provide the greatest cover throughout Australia, with a tantalising range of forms and dimensions. Botanists and horticulturists from overseas often describe Australia as the "Great Shrubland of the South". There are

climbers of varying degrees of merit, with the greatest diversity in the tropical rainforests of north-eastern Queensland, but they are found in all areas, including some of our arid regions. We have a small range of woody monocotyledons which are well represented by the *Cordyline* genus. Within Australia, palms are extremely uncommon in extensive stands, but we have a number of endemic genera which engender superlatives from overseas growers. The greatest diversity is in tropical regions. Bangalow Palm *Archontophoenix cunninghamii* and Lord Howe Island's Kentia Palm, *Howeia forsteriana* are extremely popular as outdoor and indoor palms respectively.

Australia's herbaceous perennials are limited in number but are becoming increasingly popular for cultivation. Some of the dwarf daisies which are suffering the displeasure of name changes still delight in being treated as herbaceous perennials. Other genera with suitable species include Kangaroo Paws (*Anigozanthos*), *Craspedia*, *Dampiera*, *Goodenia* and *Scaevola*. Annuals and ephemerals are usually more prolific in the semi-arid and arid regions, where they put on their irregular display of pomposity after soaking rains. Here the daisy family Asteraceae is prominent. Annual species of *Rhodanthe* (syn. *Helipterum*) and *Schoenia* are utilised to a limited degree in gardens, but they deserve greater recognition.

Bulbs and relatives such as in the families of Amaryllidaceae, Liliaceae and Iridaceae are poorly represented when compared with many other areas such as Asia and western America, but there are some handsome examples within the genera of *Calostemma*, *Crinum*, *Orthrosanthos*, *Patersonia* and *Thysanotus*. Orchids are well represented, by both terrestrial and epiphytic species, some of which are minute and intriguing such as *Acianthus caudatus*, while others such as *Dendrobium speciosum* are majestic and stunning when in full fragrant bloom.

Grasses, rushes and sedges are now regarded more highly as ornamental plants and are therefore gaining popularity for cultivation. There are plenty of Australians from which to choose, e.g. *Themeda triandra* (Kangaroo Grass), *Danthonia* species (Wallaby Grasses), *Stipa* species (Spear Grasses), *Restio tetraphyllus* (Tassell Cord-rush) and *Mesomolaena tetragona* (Semaphore Sedge). Cycads have a worldwide total of about 185 species and we are fortunate to have about 50, with northern Australia being home to most species. *Bowenia*, *Lepidozamia* and *Macrozamia* are endemic. Some like *Lepidozamia peroffskyana* and *Macrozamia communis* adapt well to cooler climes.

Habitats from rainforest to desert inclusive are the realm of many ferns, from cool wet fern gullies with the often majestic tree-ferns to the harshness of arid rock outcrops where resurrection ferns such as *Cheilanthes lasiophylla* survive against all odds. Ferns are not always only green, and this is displayed by the brilliant reddish new growth of *Doodia caudata* and other species.

There is an immense variety in the Australian plants suitable for and indeed very desirable for cultivation, but sometimes troubles may be encountered in cultivating them. First and foremost we need to have more than just an inkling of the natural habitat of plants we aim to cultivate. Australia is not just an extended area of desert where all plants are drought tolerant. Many plants have specific requirements, especially in regard to their tolerance of fertilisers and response to watering. Pruning is often a neglected aspect of gardening with Australian plants and many respond very well to judicious pruning thus leading to extended longevity. (Further examples of Australian plants, their appropriate use and cultural aspects were discussed during the presentation of slides.)

'Garden Design for the 21st Century' by Dr James Hitchmough

reported by **Catherine Drew Vic**

Dr James Hitchmough continued the theme which emerged at the Conference for an ecological approach to garden design. He was born and educated in England. He lectured at VCAH Burnley for a number of years before returning early last year to the UK, where he works in Scotland. One of his research projects here was the establishment and management of native grasslands. In his talk he suggested that greater use could be made of Australian grasses in relation to the built landscape such as paving. He showed slides of the universally admired Sculpture Garden at the Australian National Gallery in Canberra. Here the landscape treatment used grasses in spaces between wide areas of paving and as ground cover beneath the clean trunks of stands of *Eucalyptus* species. He pointed out that Kangaroo Grass cannot cope with the competition of the stronger introduced grasses.

He stated that the gardens of the future will need to be thoughtfully designed because of scarce resources such as water. One direction could be the more 'ecologically' managed garden where the plants are selected for the site. This would be a more sustainable garden where plants would have similar growth requirements. This naturalistic garden could include Australian plants as well as other introduced species which would fit these requirements. On sites where the soil is dry and poor, rather than use resources to change these conditions, capitalize on the lack of competition and develop a more xeric garden. This involves using very low water requiring species from both Australian and introduced genera. (Professor Bob Perry from California and Andrew Straker of Melbourne spoke later at the Conference about design and species for water conservation.) Hitchmough pointed out that there will always be a place for heritage gardens and the cultural gardens of the future such as arts gardens. He believes the garden designer and home gardener of the future will be forced to take a more responsible approach to their planting schemes and in the process to use more Australian plants.

'The Additional Dimension - Wildlife in the Garden' by Graham Pizzey
 reported by **Danie Olbrich NSW**

One of the great pleasures of the recent Garden Design Conference in Melbourne was being lead, by the wonderful Graham Pizzey, through the world he inhabits as a naturalist, photographer and gardener. The incredibly beautiful images washed over me, as did the passion this quiet man has for the natural world. It was a perfect way to end the second day.

Before the Conference I had only experienced Graham through his books. A battered copy of *Field Guide to the Birds of Australia* is a constant companion in my car. The great joy of this book is that you can rely on a description of some behaviour or favoured hangout which instantly identifies a bird which seconds ago was impossible to know for sure. I can only imagine the hours of careful observation and dedicated thought it must have taken to become so familiar with all our birds and to know how best to pass that on.

Graham's *A Garden of Birds* also has a special place in my heart. Not only does it have the most wonderful photographs (some of which we saw at the Conference) but it is full of exciting, detailed information about the dynamic relationship between Australian birds and plants. His anecdotes about research findings and bird gardens he has visited (and particularly his own garden) make the book all the more memorable. One favourite is his description of turning a moist hollow at the rear of his garden into a large pond and the dramatic arrival of frogs, insects, birds and plants after the first big rains.

Writing this, I am sitting on the verandah of my little house on the coast, south of Sydney. Nearby is an Eastern Whipbird working his way through the undergrowth and lovely soggy leaf litter, chuckling gently. A Lewin Honeyeater is furtively picking at a pear core I put out for her and a stunning King-parrot above me is crunching into the fruit of a large *Glochidion ferdinandi* (Cheesetree). Much as I love the plants around me with their interesting life cycles and textures and colours, it is this use of them by birds and lizards and caterpillars which is really important. The lives of our plants and animals are so intertwined, so mutually dependent, that it is only with a garden full of munching and pecking and leaf-flicking and song that I know I am getting it right. I believe there are no truly beautiful gardens without wildlife.

So, in the end, Graham Pizzey's wonderful talk does need one alteration - the title should have been The Essential Dimension!

'Creative Approaches to Garden Design' by Topher Delaney reported by **Paul Thompson Vic**

Topher Delaney, artist, landscape architect, contractor and most adventurous, exciting person, whilst speaking at the Garden Design Conference, showed participants that the opportunities in the landscape were restricted only by the limit of imagination. Historic principles of design, whilst fine as background information, are not allowed to restrain her work. Soundly schooled in technology, she showed how, with fine craft and careful detailing, materials such as recycled plastic and the utilitarian concrete may be used to produce stimulating spaces.

Topher was raised in a household in New York where her mother kept an artist's salon, regularly entertaining the likes of Jackson Pollock and Andy Warhol. Walls of their house were adorned by the spontaneous sketching of the *avant garde*. Now a mature artist in full flight, one could not expect anything more but ideas at the edge. Landscapes of comforting spaces of human scale and revelance showed us that we may continue to reassess the garden to reflect today's culture and not just reinterpret age old principles.

Some more reports on the Garden Design Conference are still to come in and will be included in the next newsletter. DS

My garden design interests have been in: **Ian Percy NSW**

1. Formal gardens based on the French movement or modernist approach of the 1920 and 1930s. Gardens influenced by cubist paintings of Picasso and Braque with a disregard for classical symmetry and organizational rules.
2. Pure abstract painting and sculpture and its influence on the gardens of Russell Page and Burle Marx.
3. The use of Australian conifers in gardens for formal design or as specimen trees. (A current favourite is *Prumnopitys ladei*- Mount Spurgeon Black Pine.)
4. Rainforest trees which are pyramid shaped or grow with layered branches for use as a third dimensional formal space in gardens or as contrast to informal plantings.
5. Australian trees and shrubs which form curved or sinuous trunks and their use as a biokinetic element in formal gardens.
6. Sydney coastal headland "gardens" where shrubs are salt wind pruned to clumps and thickets of flowing shapes as in Japanese cloud pruning techniques.
7. Colour change with seasons of Australian grasses.
8. Small contained meadow gardens with grasses, *Wahlenbergia*, *Stylidium*, *Blandfordia*, *Dianella* and Garland Lilies with *Crinum* as accent plants. Dwarf *Banksia* or *Bottlebrush* as hedge surrounds.

Ecology, ecosystem, permaculture, sustainable development - these are some of the buzz words now in vogue, but I would question the extent of their relevance to this group of SGAP. The aim of the group should be to express and improve the design of gardens with special emphasis on the Australian ethos. Because of their background of intelligent interest in Australian plants and widespread awareness of environmental factors, members will consciously or subconsciously incorporate ecological aspects when designing gardens. The task is to build on this knowledge rather than take the view that members should be explained the basics of good environmental practices. GDSG should avoid diverting energy to these aspects and concentrate on the task of advancing the art of creating new and better Australian (native) garden design philosophy. The influence of GDSG will be diminished if it indulges in multifaceted activities.

Examination of what is required to produce better design is crucial. There are many questions to be asked and debated - for example is there any common design thread in tropical, subtropical, temperate and desert garden design? If not, what should be the Australian characteristics for each area? For instance can we say that desert gardens involve greater spacing between plants or are there desert plants that co-exist when close planted?

Consideration of such questions may give inspiration to a member to review his or her plans, resulting in the production of something that is unique and can be classed as a plus for Australian design. The main difficulty is to determine the questions to be asked. Often the answers are simple and become evident when members communicate within the group. Maybe the first task is to list points that define an Australian (native) garden and then points that may define good design. In the first list e.g. the garden should:

- contain at least 75% Australian plants;
- contain at least 10% of plant species native to within 50 km radius of the garden;
- contain plants that provide food and shelter to native animals, birds and invertebrates;
- not contain plants harmful to native life forms.

The use of percentages encourages people to think about their gardens. General terms usually have no force, so I think that some classification of gardens could be discussed. There are other ways to tag the level of the Australian component in a garden. "A" stands for top grade in financial jargon but it also stands for Australia, hence we could use it in the following manner:

| | | |
|----------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| AAA (triple A) | 90-100% use of Australian plants | (AAA+ 100% Australian plants) |
| AA | 75-90% | A+ 50-75% A- less than 50% |

The gardener who had a triple A rating would have reached a high degree of involvement in Australian plants and therefore be justly proud. My garden would rate AA. The definition of each category could also include design and other criteria. The aesthetic factors such as colour harmony, foliage types and topography etc come into the good design list, so between the two lists there is much scope for both imaginative and lateral thinking.

Trees in Streets and Gardens

Street Trees

Janet Woodroffe Vic

Our recent experiences with replanting street trees in Corowa, NSW, leads one to believe that this is an issue people are vitally interested in. But when the crunch comes, i.e. of choosing the trees, all parties suffer from the same lack of knowledge in answering the question what really is a good tree to plant in the street. Corowa ended up with English oaks (and are already in trouble with half of them dead). The reason for planting oaks was that people concerned honestly wanted to grace their street with the best trees possible. They consider - rightly - that their street is a worthy place and they wanted to enhance it, to make it regal, majestic, a right royal place to be in. . . . I'm sure you can see the linguistic connection in the thinking that produced the present outcome.

We now, sometimes, have more input into bureaucratic decision-making. . . . Public servants, elected representatives and Council employees can find themselves in a situation where they do not have sufficient knowledge or expertise. They (and the ratepayers) often pay high prices for professional advice which can also be ill-informed. Surely it would help our cause if we could compose a list of suitable Australian street trees, laminate it, put a hook on it and send it to every municipal environment office . . . so that they can hang it on the wall and refer to it - not just stash it away in a file somewhere!

(It's a shame there is not a "Grow What Where" list for street trees, but to make it really easy for Councils (etc) there would need to be different lists for different areas. This is a challenge for SGAP - local groups of SGAP, not just GDSG members, though knowledge about suitable street trees is helpful in designing gardens too. DS)

Roots of trees in suburban gardens

R. K. Willson Qld

This question is worthy of a detailed article in our newsletter. As Glen Wilson says in his book, you can plant large trees near houses on stumps, but not on slabs. In my Melbourne notes I have a file on this problem (of roots near houses - near drains is a different problem). However, most articles are inadequate. We need to know which trees have surface roots & whether wide ranging or compact, etc. Finally, regarding the commonly heard statement about planting a 20 m tree in your backyard - that 'it won't be so big' - some trees slowly keep growing. For example *Lophostemon confertus* (Brush Box, formerly *Tristania conferta*). I have seen roots of this exposed by erosion & they are huge! Jan Sked wisely does not recommend this tree for suburban gardens in her book *Planting an Australian Garden*. . . . I do not believe in bequeathing

problems to future owners of the property, even 20 - 40 years down the track. If a new house is being built (on a slab), perhaps specially strong edge beams can be used, as well as barriers to the roots. I notice with dismay the new blocks of houses going up without any provision at all for trees.

Shapes, Profiles and Shade

Geoff Simmons Qld

In recent years there has been an upsurge in interest in Australian trees, especially rainforest species. The temptation to plant these is laudable but as many are virtually unknown in cultivation the eventual shape may come as a surprise. The descriptions that I read of *Lomatia fraxinifolia* did not suggest how pencil-shaped they were, so they were not really suitable for the position they occupied. Some gardeners prefer a tree to express its natural shape. This is a feature that is difficult to assess when the species is removed from its natural habitat. Displacement into the artificial situation of a garden with different watering, soil and companions may influence the growth.

A manual containing illustrations of the potential shapes of Australian trees would be a desirable publication. This is a daunting task as viewing them in nature is only part of the work. Many of the newer species now obtainable take decades to reach a degree of maturity when their shape and other feature, such as type of shade produced, can be assessed. A *Field Guide to Australian Trees* by Holliday and Hill does a good job using photographs. This is an expensive method. Possibly a more stylised depiction of tree forms such as in *Ornamental Trees* by Maino and Howard could be used to produce a cheaper manual.

'Soft' and 'Hard' Garden Design

Diana Snape Vic

I have recently recognized one of the problems some people (not us of course) have with what appears to them the lack of design in many Australian plant gardens. It is because the design is 'soft' and subtle, not 'hard' and obvious. It is easy to see the intention and achievement of a formal (or formalistic) layout. Use of paving, paths, walls, steps, fountains, statues, arches and other built structures suggests mastery over nature, as do closely clipped lawns and hedges and an imposed symmetry and order. The greater the departure or difference from the autonomous look of nature, the greater the consciousness of 'design'. Such obvious designs can be very pleasing and satisfying, whether using Australian and/or exotic plants, but they are certainly not the only acceptable or justifiable type of design.

In naturalistic gardens also we need some of these structures but often decrease their importance by making them inconspicuous rather than featuring them. Open areas may not have paving or lawns and paths may be just trodden mulch. Many Australian plants are pruned but this is often not obvious. Owners of a 'bush' garden may be happy if it looks so natural that it appears to have just happened without design, though much 'soft' design was necessary to achieve this effect. A small section of 'the bush' is not always beautiful in itself and I do not suggest that all 'soft' designs are good any more than all 'hard' designs are. We can still consider many relevant criteria to assess a 'soft' design - subjective ones, involving peoples' personal responses to the garden, as well as rather more objective ones such as the spacing, balance and display of plants, the use of foliage and colour, creation of vistas and special places in the garden, and many others. In most homes with a naturalistic garden a transition area between the formality of a house and the less formal garden presents an additional challenge in terms of design. We may personally prefer 'soft' or 'hard' gardens but I think any style of garden we chose is valid and will benefit from the best design skills we can use in its creation.

On lawns, colour and soft landscaping

Barbara Buchanan Vic

More on the topic of lawns - which we proposed to try to eliminate when we first moved up. With all due respect to the Chinese gentleman quoted in the last nl, it is all a matter of cultural background. Without this, westerners can only view Chinese & Japanese gardens for their visual impact; the elaborate meanings of various components are unknown to us and leave our intellects unstimulated. The lawn by itself is no more than, say, a football field, but in a garden it is part of the three dimensional ordering of space, enabling individual forms to be highlighted and other forms & shapes created, while linking all the areas with its binding greenness. This is particularly true in large gardens.

The bushfires of last summer have made me more convinced of the value of open areas around the house, and this is most easily achieved with a lawn. There has to be a compromise between the need for shade every summer and the fire hazard that trees represent. Trees close to the house also cause blocked gutters and downpipes which can affect the quality of the tank water used for drinking.

The early landscape designers in Britain did not rely on flower colour for their effects - close around the house there may have been coloured beds but these were largely swept away for the broader scale landscaping. To the purists Stourhead has been spoilt by the introduction of rhododendrons, even on a small scale. The discovery and collecting of exotic flowers all round the world led to the present riot of colour in English style gardens. I think one of the reasons Australian plants have difficulty in being generally accepted is their finer flower form giving a lesser colour impact unless seen close up. True my *Stenocarpus sinuatus* (Fire-wheel Tree) is ablaze at the moment and there are many other exceptions. I can remember a valley of hovea and acacia - purple and gold patchwork - in what is now a Perth suburb; hillsides of pinky purple in the Fitzgerald and of course fle sheets of daisies in the mallee & the alps - but we don't as far as I know reproduce these in our gardens. Our natural bush gardens are (in my mind) quieter.

To return to the theme: the first of the landscape gardens were exercises in the use of space, foliage, water and built objects. Colour played very little part, partly because there were fewer flowers available. Is it fanciful to imagine that in our

bush gardens we are returning to a similar approach, interpreted in our own way, generally on a smaller scale and with more limited resources - certainly no ruined Greek temples - but a magnificent palette of foliage forms. I wonder how such gardens are going to survive their makers. The historic English gardens have survived because of their hard landscaping - walls, pergolas, temples, paths, bridges and not the plants. They also need to have avoided active gardening owners who inevitably must remove some of the old to make their own statement. If our bush gardens have no hard landscaping to speak of what have they got which will survive?

Classify and/or describe?

Geoff Simmons Qld

Much thought has been put into the classification scheme described in a previous newsletter. Recently I commented on the inadequacy of words such as cottage, woodland and rainforest to describe gardens (Australian Garden Journal Vol.II, page 121, 1992). I would like to see some attempt to create an Australian way to describe gardens beside the usual bush, meadow type of terminology. My garden is surrounded by bush but I would be disappointed if a visitor described my garden as bush. One of my dictionaries defines woodland as land covered with trees. This could cover both natural and artificial i.e. garden areas. I think that it is desirable to distinguish between the two, so a 'tree garden' seems to me to be more appropriate as it denotes and expresses a person's creativity. This distinction becomes even more desirable if the trees are of one genus e.g. eucalyptus in a created group of trees.

To simplify discussion, I would like to define a garden as a delineated area in which people combine living and inanimate objects to produce a desired effect. This dispenses with natural areas for which words such as rainforest and bush should be reserved - human involvement is minimal or lacking in such areas. A garden can be considered as a mosaic. Difficulties arise in describing this mosaic. Most descriptions especially those with long lists of plants don't seem to have any structure. These difficulties can be resolved to some extent by the introduction of words such as section and subgarden. Sections would detail the different beds/ areas and note any special features e.g. ponds. For instance I can say that my garden consists of the following sections - tree section, bulb section, sloping section and southern cross section.

Subgardens would describe notable plantings and refer to their locations in the sections. This term distinguishes these areas from their contents, hence I have a cassia (now senna) subgarden that includes 13 *C. marksiana* in the southern cross section, *C. tomentella* and *C. brewsteri* in the tree section and *C. queenslandica* and *C.sp* Paluma Creek in the sloping section. This illustrates one feature of Australian native gardens, viz. the planting of five types of cassias not usually met with in other countries. However the mere use of Australian plants is not the major point, it is how they are used in design that will produce a distinctive Australian flavour.

(I enjoyed seeing photographs of Geoff's most interesting garden during his visit to Melbourne earlier this year. DS)

VIEWS OF THE AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE - 2

Tony Cavanagh Vic

The English explorers

The first English presence on the coast fared no better than the Dutch in that he saw possibly some of the most desolate country imaginable - the north west coast of Western Australia. In 1688, William Dampier landed at present-day Cygnet Bay and unenthusiastically reported that the land consisted of dry, sandy soil; no surface water; some thin grass and stunted trees; little animal or bird life. His description of the inhabitants - "the miserablest People in the World" - was to live long in European memory. Yet Dampier was to return in August 1699, first of all to Shark Bay (already visited twice before by the Dutch) and then along the western and north-western coasts past North West Cape, the archipelago which bears his name and finally leaving Australia at Roebuck bay. Unflattering though his descriptions might have been, Dampier was to make money out of his published accounts of these voyages. He also made collections of plants and animals and indeed some 40 of his botanical specimens can still be seen in the Sherardian Herbarium at Oxford University.

Between the Dutch and Dampier's descriptions there was little attraction in New Holland as it was by then known. Even Cook's discovery of the east coast some 70 years after Dampier was more or less accidental. Cook in his instructions was requested to search for the (mythical) southern continent or, failing to find that, to explore New Zealand and then return home by either Cape Horn or the Cape of Good Hope. New Holland was not mentioned. It was Cook himself who, in deciding to return via the East Indies, sailed westward from New Zealand and fell in with the Australian mainland near present-day Cape Everard. Here was a coastline vastly different from the west coast. In Cook's words - "the face of the country green and woody"; Joseph Banks noted "gentle sloping hills which had the appearance of the highest fertility". A few days later, Banks had second thoughts - "The country tho in general well enough clothed appeared in some places bare; it resembled in my imagination the back of a lean cow, covered in general with long hair but nevertheless where her scraggy hip bones have stuck further out than they might, accidental rubs and knocks have entirely bared them of their share of covering".

It was only when they landed at Botany Bay in late April that they had the opportunity to see the land at close quarters. The descriptions given by Cook and Banks differ in some quite important details. Whereas Cook wrote "The country (inland from the coast) was diversified with woods, Lawns and marshes; the woods are free from underwood of every kind and the trees are at such a distance from one another that the whole Country, or at least a great part of it, might be cultivated without being obliged to cut down a single tree; we found the soil every where except on the Marshes to be a

light white sand and produceth a quant(it)y of good grass", Banks was less optimistic - "The soil wherever we saw it consisted of either swamps or light sandy soil on which grew very few species of trees - but every place was covered with vast quantities of grass".

Cook's view, embellished by his editor, was the one which prevailed in the published accounts of Cook's voyage. A few days later, after a trip to the head of the bay, Cook wrote again - "We found the face of the Country much the same as I have before described but the land much richer for instead of sand, I found in many places a deep black Soil which we thought capable of producing any kind of grain; at present it produces besides timber as fine meadows as ever were seen". Banks in contrast, after visiting the north-west side, was much more pessimistic - "We went a good way into the country which in this place is very sandy and resembles something our Moors in England, as no trees grow upon but everything is covered with a thin brush of plants about as high as the knees", - a reasonably accurate description of the Sydney heathlands.

Once again, it was Cook's version which was published and this was to cause much heartburn and dissatisfaction when the First Fleet arrived some 18 years later (especially the reference to "meadows"). From the ship, as the *Endeavour* sailed north, the land looked good in contrast with the barrenness of the west coast. "It is diversified with an agreeable variety of hills ridges Vallies and large planes all clothed with wood" wrote Cook. Even Banks enthused "well wooded and looked beautiful as well as fertile". True, the country in Queensland around Bustard Head and Thirsty Bay was dry and sandy with no water but the east coast, in contrast with the west coast, offered at least the possibility of settlement. Acknowledgement *Terra Australis to Australia* ed. Glyndwr Williams & Alan Frost, Melb., Oxford Uni. Press 1988

DESIGNING A LARGE GARDEN

Even more than when designing a small garden, designing a large garden must involve a number of stages. Site analysis and identification of requirements probably overlap with obvious necessities such as planting of windbreaks, shelter belts and screens. Earthworks must happen in the early stages too; other early plantings - avenues of trees along a drive and beds close to the house - are likely. Pure design is constrained by all the practical considerations - limited availability of plants and even more limited time, then changing conditions as initial plantings grow to maturity. The garden and its design evolve together. Here we look at two stages in the development of large gardens belonging to our members.

GARDEN DESIGN PROJECT

The initial stages - analysis of the site, identification of requirements

Location: 36 acres at Strathmerton, Victoria

Aim: To develop a garden to show people what can be grown in this area - it will approach the size of a small arboretum.

Climate: Cool winter months with long hot dry summer period lasting up to 4 months. Rainfall (average) 450 mm which occurs mainly in spring. Frosts with temperatures as low as -2°C .

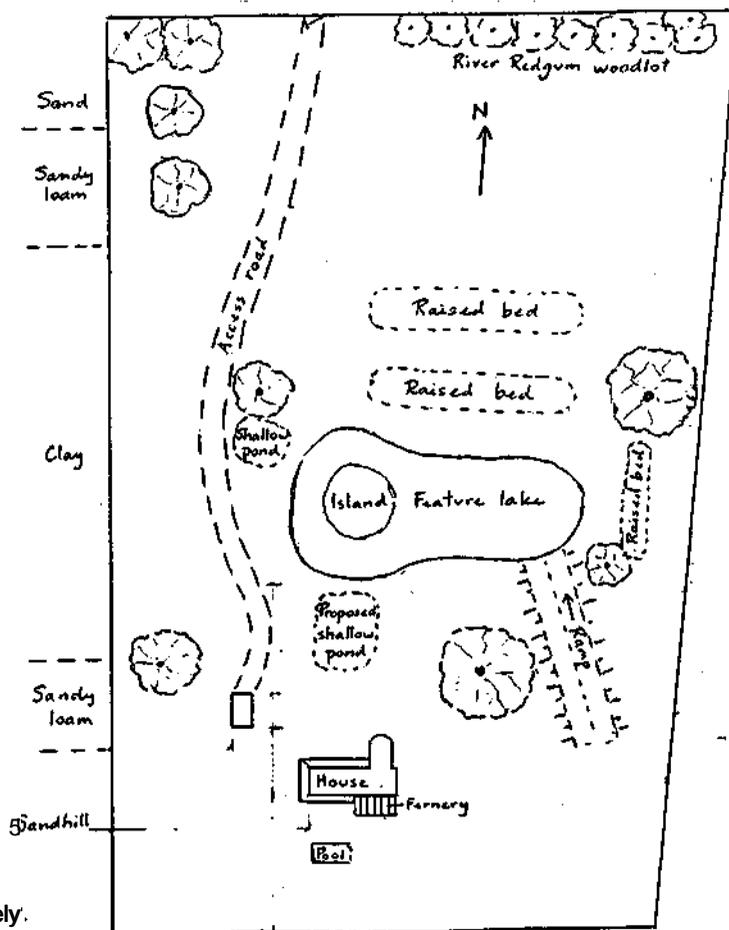
Topography: Land is divided into 2 blocks of approx. 18 acres each. The rear block is to be developed first & should be considered in detail. The front block should be considered in broad outline only.

The **front block** has a natural depression running across it & after heavy rains water runs there. A dam has been dug on the western side for watering of stock. Sand beds under 200 mm of clay exist to the south of the depression and soak up water when stream flows occur. The remainder of the area is clay soil consisting of 450 mm depth of brown clay (pH 5 to 6) with a darker brown clay layer underneath which is less prone to drying out. An access road has been formed with a slight curved effect across the land to the rear block.

The **rear block** has a sandhill at either end with a clay depression in the middle. River Red Gums (young to old) already exist & will be retained. A woodlot of River Red Gums also occurs on the northern boundary where sand merges into clay. The sandhills rise to 4.0 m above the claypan. The sand is at least 6.0 m deep and its pH is 5.0. Yellow weed, which has a deep taproot, grows profusely in summer on the sandhill. *Banksia* and *hakea* species have been tried on the sandhill with no indications of nutrient deficiencies. A 10 to 20 m band of sandy loam abuts the sandhill of yellow brown fine sand which drains freely.

Barbara and Paul Kennedy Vic

PLAN



A large dam has been dug in the claypan to form a feature lake and island. Two further shallow dams are proposed for wading birds. Excavated spoil from the dam was used to form roadway and raised beds across flats. A ramp was formed back onto the sandhill on the eastern side to enable us to create a 'creek' with small ponds at a later date. Shrubs which like extra water are intended for this area. A grid watering system using pure bore water will be provided to establish plants. The top layer of clay soil 450 mm deep is very workable when moist but rock hard when dried out. It does not crack due to the large proportion of very fine sand particles. *Do we need to rip it before planting?*

Basic requirements: The house plan shows the relationship to the large dam and the need to have low shrubs in this area to give views across the water area. Apart from the shelter belt protection on the east, south and west sides, we are seeking to create a parkland effect, with water areas for birds and to give a cool appearance.

Plant types: all varieties of banksia, hakea, melaleuca, dryandra and calothamnus, with many other genera to give balance; as many varieties of eucalyptus as climate will permit. A fernery will be created on the south east side of the house. We would also like to grow some rainforest plants. *Is it feasible and where?*

A few more questions to consider in the early (or later) stages of planning.

Diana Snape

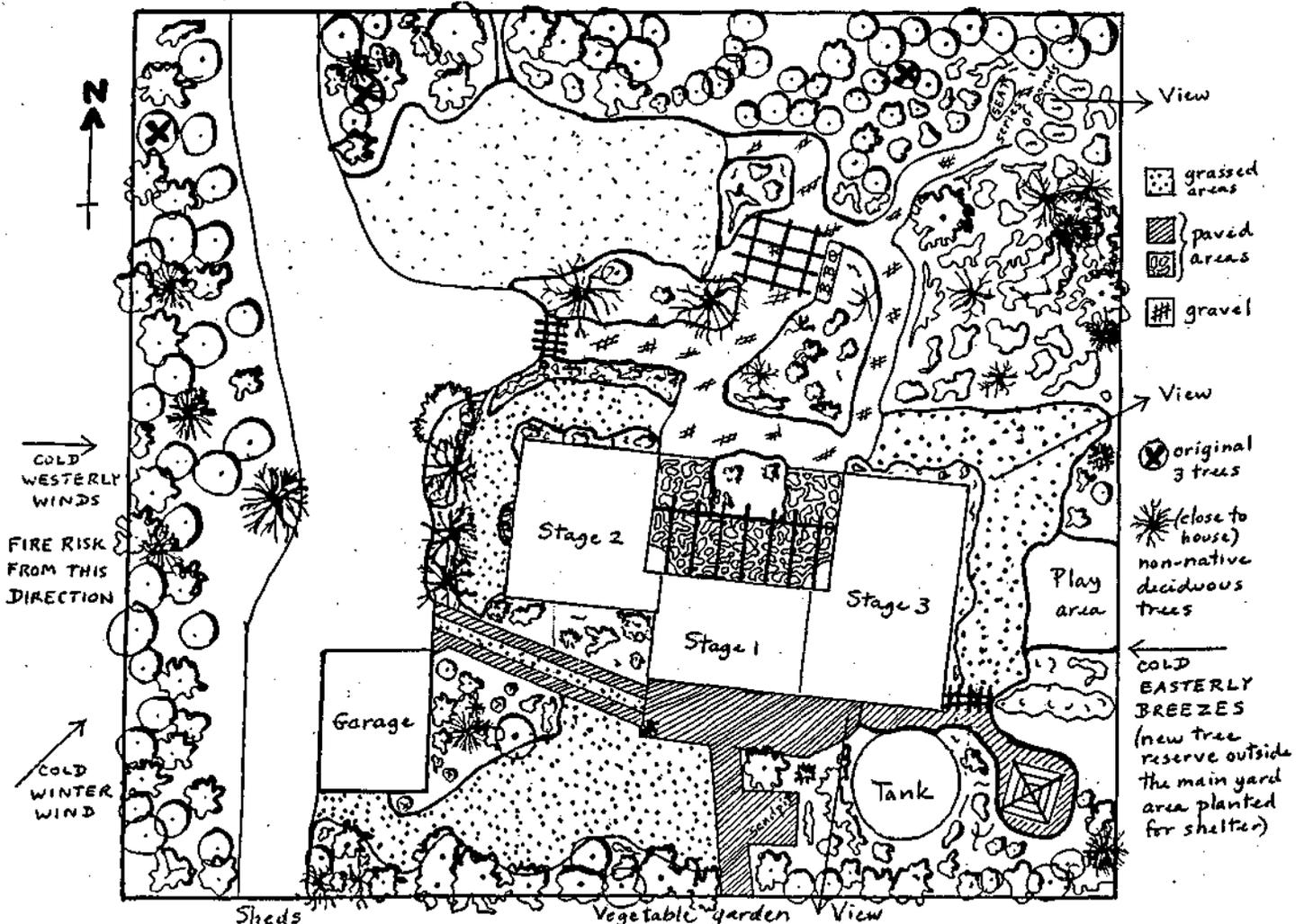
1. How will space be allocated to open areas and sections with plants ?
2. Will open areas, water areas and the general style of the garden be naturalistic or formalistic ?
3. On what basis will plants be grouped into sections ? For example:
 - a) species which like the same conditions planted together (a sensible start, particularly for fussy plants)
 - b) species of the same genus together (arboretum-like but not always attractive)
 - c) species which occur naturally in the same area (combinations which usually look appropriate and attractive)
 - d) combinations of species which look good together
4. Will many local/indigenous plants be grown (for ecological as well as practical value) ?

Seven Years On

Gillian McDonald NSW

My approach to this garden (which is near Orange in NSW) has probably been a little different from the 'ideal'. We have built the house in three stages, so the garden had to work around that. We also had just three trees to start with - the tallest of them 60 cm high! So shelter was a priority with our first plantings. Because of this, we planted a number of trees along the south, west and northern boundaries and planted quite densely. The idea was to get quick shelter and shade, and eventually a supply of firewood from the 'thinnings'. Seven years down the track, we will probably commence thinning and coppicing this year, as I do not want the trees to get too tall (fire hazard avoidance).

PLAN



Having finally achieved a bit of shelter, we are now able to grow some 'fussier' genera and species. My garden does not have a lot of variety in it, due to the fact that our local nurseries stock deplorably few Australian plants. So we are dependent on the genera easy to propagate from seed. I have been able to get hold of a number of grevilleas, however, and I am now chasing plants such as prostantheras, which are a little touchy due to our generally bad drainage.

Species along the southern boundary are dominated by *Eucalyptus cinerea* with shrubs such as callistemons (C. 'Captain Cook', C. 'Anzac' and C. 'Western Red'), *Leptospermum flavescens* (*polygalifolium*) and L. 'Copper Sheen' as an understorey. Grevilleas that I have scattered through the garden are the following: *arenaria*, 'Austraflora Canterbury Gold' (loves our conditions), *bitemata*, 'John Evans', *juniperina* (yellow prostrate), *juniperina* 'Molongolo', *juniperina* var. *trinervis*, *ianigera* 'Mt Tamboritha', *lavandulacea* 'Penola' (also loves our clay - my favourite grevillea), *lavandulacea* 'Victor Harbour', Poorinda Queen, Poorinda Rondeau, Poorinda Royal Mantle, *victoriae* var. *trinuinervis*? (this is planted in a cold, shaded corner on the south side of the house (well drained spot) and just thrives!)

We also have a variety of *Acacia* species - *boormanii*, *baileyana*, *dealbata* (very fast growing), *howittii*, *iteaphyllia*, *melanoxydon*, *rubida*, *spectabilis*, *verniciiflua*. I wish to attempt to get at least one acacia species flowering all year round - quite a task when our winters are so cold! There are multiple plantings of each species. Other trees that do well here are *Casuarina cunninghammii* and a variety of eucalyptus species. Deciduous trees ... scattered to the north and west of the house are planted to give winter sunshine to the house and shade in summer. The balance of the plantings are understorey species, eg banksias, prostantheras (along eastern wall of the house), brachyscomes, callistemons & melaleucas, correas, hakeas, kunzeas, westringias.

I have found it useful (for reference) to keep a note of all specimens I have planted, where, when & whether they were successful or not. Most of the garden beds are raised and filled with local topsoil, except for one which has Forbes river sand, and in it are anigozanthos species and other more touchy WA plants that I have been able to get hold of.

When starting a new section (non raised) we put paper and cardboard out onto an area (preferably already sprayed to control any grass and weeds) and cover it with rough cut hay or straw. This does not equate aesthetically with wood chips or scoria, but is a lot cheaper and gets the pioneer species established just as well. Once the shrubs are mature, I intend to fill the gaps with woodchip, as I have done in the 'finished' areas. All the gardens are surrounded with bushrock, taken from our own paddocks to facilitate machinery operation on the farm side of things. I would imagine that such a use of rocks would be prohibitively expensive and environmentally horrifying otherwise. I love the 'recipe for rocks' and intend one day to make some huge rock feature using this idea.

Grassed areas are the only areas that are watered. A lot of folk object to grass in a 'native' garden, however we have it as a place for children to play; to reduce fire risk around the house; as a 'cool' zone near the house in summer. Sometimes I am tempted to believe that the garden looks better on the plan than it does in reality! This is mainly due to time constraints as I am not able to spend as much time in the garden as I would like to. But I also believe that it takes a lifetime to create the 'absolute' garden one requires (particularly when it is as large as ours).

An Indigenous Garden of Modern Industria designed by **Paul Mewton** reported by Diana Snape

In response to my request in 'Landscape Australia' for information on good garden design using Australian plants, I received details from Paul Mewton of his fascinating Final Project in Landscape Architecture at RMIT. The site for this project is one of the open spaces along the Upfield Railway Line in Brunswick. Paul categorises existing indigenous gardens as the following types:

- a) the revegetation project (mostly excluding European cultural influences)
- b) the indigenous picturesque (a cultural interpretation conforming to European ideas)
- c) the bush garden (replicating the bush walk aesthetic)
- d) the recreation or barbeque landscape (functionalist - providing shade, shelter or screening; low maintenance)

Paul Mewton wants to challenge these existing forms of indigenous gardens. His design aims to link an indigenous grassland landscape using plants of the basalt plains (not just those from the vicinity of the site) with the modern industrial culture of the Western/Northern suburbs of Melbourne. Initially linear patterns from collages of the railway and industrial landscape were introduced to the site plan, then further industrial forms and Mediterranean checkerboard as modernist decoration. Constructed industrial forms may be functional (for seating, lighting, drainage, play, etc) or just decorative. Paul says 'The indigenous plants are also treated as both modernist decoration and function. *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* and *Juncus flavidus* become part of a drainage unit that is both decorative and functional.'

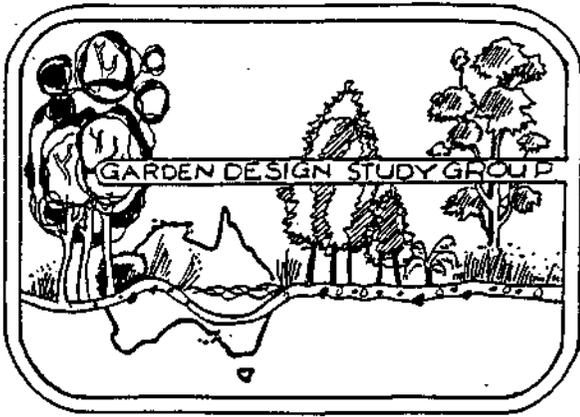
I was unable to reproduce Paul's very detailed plan successfully on a smaller scale for this newsletter, but it is available for interested members to see. I hope Brunswick Council decides to go ahead with this innovative project.

Logos

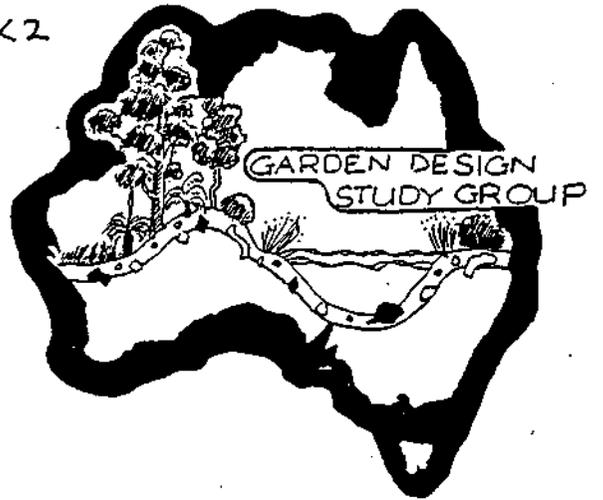
On the next page there are more suggestions to consider - thank you to their imaginative creators. I think some of this group would make excellent designs for posters or displays. Let us know if you have any favourites.

19 LOGOS

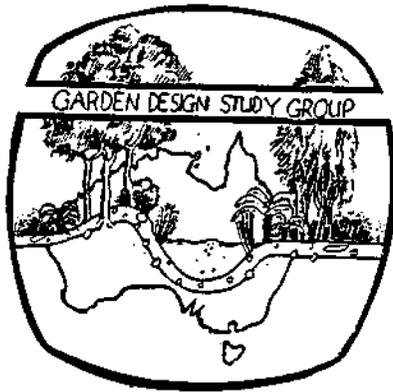
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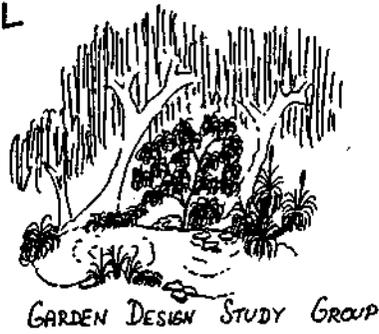
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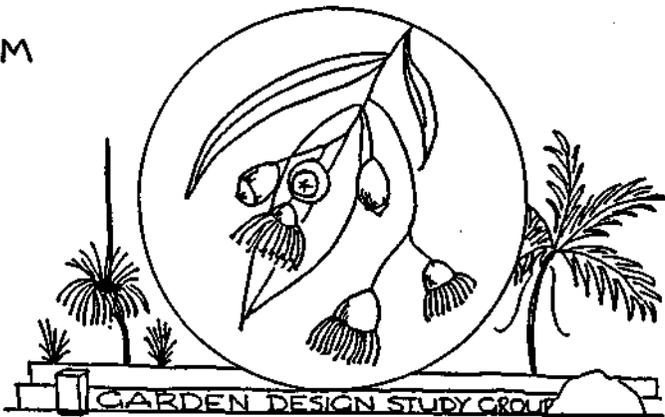
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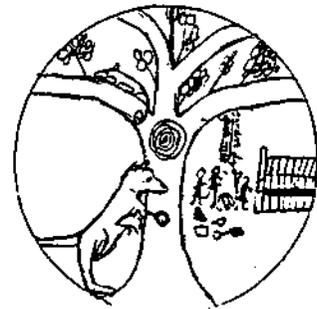
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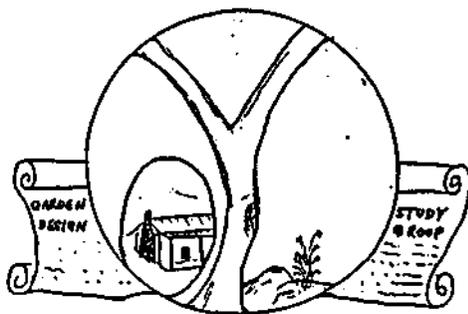
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Reminders to members

- " 94-95 subscription (\$10) due by the end of June
- ' send your deposit (\$20 per person) for the GDSG weekend in September
- * check out your slide collection for the Slide Library
- * contribute to the newsletter so we can share ideas and inspirations, for example:-
 - combinations of a small number of plants which appeal to you, for the next nl
 - we don't all agree about everything; let us know your thoughts

Sydney meetings

Sydney leader:

Next meeting: Tuesday 26 July 7:45 pm for 8:0 pm at Geoffrey & Ann Long's Place.
Subsequent meetings on the fourth Tuesday of alternate months: Tues. 27 September and 22 November.

A further excursion is proposed for Sunday 21 August to Betty Rymer's garden, possibly to a rainforest garden planted by Michael Bates. Further details in due course.
(A reminder about the Greater Garden School at Rozelle - for enquiries about 2nd term program Ph.(02) 891 1321)

Melbourne meetings

Next meeting: Sunday 5th June, 2 pm at Diana Snape's place
Sunday 3rd July, 2 pm at Joan Barrett's place, - garden design project session
Sunday 7th August, 2 pm at Diana Snape's
3,4 September, GDSG weekend
Sunday 2nd October, 1 pm picnic lunch at Beckett Park, Parring Rd Balwyn; 2 pm visit to the adjacent Maranoa Gardens. (Vic. members are preparing a display for the Melb. Wildflower Show at the Ringwood Convention Centre, 13-14th August.)

New Members of GDSG (*professional qualifications &/or practice)

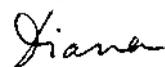
- Timothy Bungey
- Patrea Cook*
- Helen De Faye*
- Mark Fountain*
- Phil Gall*
- Wilma & Peter Garnham
- Trudy Grace
- Nadia Lalak*
- Ronald Munro
- Karen Olsen*
- Pamela Polglase*
- Betty Rymer
- Jan Schapper*
- Mardi Simons*
- Rosalind Smallwood
- Ken Thompson
- Don & Jean Weybury

Geoff Simmons
Margarete Lee

Carol Bentley
Bemadette Flynn
Nick Hockey
Gillian McDonald

Members who have currently renewed for 94-95 Joan Barrett, Carol Bentley, Beryl Blake, Shirley Bloomfield, Ian Bond, Timothy Bungey, Simone Chappie, Patrea Cook, Bev Courtney, Glenda Datson, Helen De Faye, Catherine Drew, Rodger & Gwen Elliot, Linda Floyd, Mark Fountain, Phil Gall, Wilma & Peter Garnham, Trudy Grace, Lindy Harris & Grant Molyneux, Phyllis Hawkey, Jeanette Heinemann, Nick Hockey, Margarete Lee, Neil & Jane Marriott, Gillian McDonald, Craig McLennan, Ron Munro, Danie Olbrich, Karen Olsen, Ian Percy, Pamela Polglase, Tony & Joy Roberts, Gordon Rowland, Jan Schapper, Mardi Simons, Rosalind Smallwood, Diana Snape, Don & Jean. Weybury, R K Willson, Spencer Wilson, Janet Woodroffe
***Please let me know of any errors or omissions. DS

Thank you to all members who have contributed to this newsletter - I've found it a great pleasure to compile.
I look forward to hearing from you, whether it's 3 lines or 3 pages.
Happy gardening and good designing!

 Diana Snape