

ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS

GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP

NEWSLETTER No. 40

November 2002

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

Dear Members,

This month we're celebrating. Our book 'The Australian Garden: Designing with Australian Plants' is out, with launches in either late September or October in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide. (See p4.) It was great to see a few of you on some of these occasions - unfortunately our members are widely scattered. The SGAP Qld State Conference on the Gold Coast was excellent, with an excursion each day followed by a related talk in the evening. (My resulting 'Conference cold' has not been good.)

A number of GDSG members have written to say they approve of the book and think it is inspiring - no negative comments at all (yet). Together with **Barbara Buchanan, Jo Hambrett** and **Chris Larkin**, I am generally very happy with the final result, though I suppose there are a few changes that each of us would like to make (probably not the same changes). I'll welcome your comments, with any ideas and suggestions you have for the next book!

As usual, spring has been a busy time, in Melbourne, more GDSG members than ever before have had their gardens open in the Open Garden Scheme, with good attendance. This is significant, as I'm sure each Open Garden influences many people. We had about 520 visitors through ours over the weekend (**Trevor & Beryl Blake** had over 600 for their first opening) and we sold about 50 copies of the 'The Australian Garden'. After talking to so many people we were both tired on the Monday, when Don Burke and his team came to see and photograph the garden (and the book). After a fine, sunny weekend for which we were very thankful, on Monday it rained quite steadily - not ideal conditions for an interview in the garden. The segment should be on 'Burke's Backyard' some time soon but I don't yet know when.

NEXT MEETINGS*Please see details of meetings on pages 13-17***MELBOURNE: Sunday November 17 at Charles Hrubos'****NE VIC:** Please phone **Barbara Buchanan****SYDNEY:** Please phone **Jo Hambrett**

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CORRESPONDENCE extracts

"Thank you very much for the latest issue of the Newsletter. I always have a very very long morning tea break the day it arrives! I love the new name for the book¹.

Dead-headed banksias - we've never done it. Our B. intearifolia always has flowers in all stages, especially dead cones; the B. robur hasn't had flowers for awhile and their dead ones are holding well; the B. oblongifolia has yet to flower (4 years old and barely a metre high); the B. 'giant candles' has also yet to flower and has reached the top of the roof. Perhaps now it is in more sun it might show us what it can do. Someone once suggested to me that she always 'dead-headed' her banksias because she didn't like the look of them. I was so horrified by this 'sacrilege' that I've never thought to do the same. I look forward to the discussion.

It's so dry here on the Gold Coast. No rain at all in July. January and February which should have been our best months yielded 21mm and 34mm. Most of our plants are surviving with 10 seconds each from the hose, once a week. I'm assuming that the bigger ones with thick trunks have their roots down to the water table, and hope it hasn't dried up out of their reach. We haven't cut the grass for months. The Viola hederacea which comes up through it in the shady area is still thriving, and we have noticed an indigenous ranunculus poking through also. We'll encourage them both and perhaps cut down on the mowing one day when it rains again." Lynette Reilly, Qld

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Violets and ranunculus sound a nice grass-substitute. Victoria is still in drought conditions too, except for a thin strip along the south coast. I suspect the weather will continue to amaze us. DS

"Re: suggestion from Ruth Crosson re a GDSG badge, what about a sticker for our car back windows which everyone would want, to promote our interest?"

I was really looking forward to our excursion to see Arthur Dench's garden until the ugly spectre of INSURANCE raised its head. Hope the APS can solve this problem in some way or it will make garden inspections a thing of the past.

August 2002 was another great Newsletter full of interesting information. I'm really looking forward to buying my copy of The Book". **Michele Pymble** NSW

I like the idea of a car back window sticker. Again, would members please tell me what they think. DS

"I have started on 'Plants in Pots' project and have planted a Banksia robur and Eucalyptus buraessiana (Faulconbridge Mallee Ash), a Blue Mountains endemic, in large pots and will photograph them and let you know how they go. I have a Huon Pine and a Vireva lochiaie in pots. The pine is about 10 years old and still a Joy and the vireya 4 years old and flowers well." **Deidre Morton** NSW

I'll look forward to hearing how members get on growing small trees in pots. DS

*"Firstly - I really enjoyed seeing your garden again in the Open Garden Scheme. Secondly, loved the book. I went to stay with **Rosemary Manion** last week in Linton and took it down to show her - and she was very impressed. A fabulous addition to great reading on native plants.*

Now for my little native garden in Altona who does a good native plant soil mix? I have already spoken to the local garden supplier in Sunshine and they haven't got anything that I consider suitable. They are thinking about making up a mix for me.

Can you recommend anyone who is making a good mix already? Thanks for any information you can send my way." **Mary Graham** Vic

Does any member have any recommendation? It is a very long time since we needed to worry about this and we have generally avoided introducing soil to our garden. DS

Paula Havelberg Vic is a new member who is a student at Burnley College in Melbourne. She has a special interest in combining indigenous and 'general' Australian plants, and in gardening with natives in small areas, courtyards, etc.

I think these are both very important topics which we could well concentrate on. DS

Letter from Argentina

Etsita Boff-de Schutte

I've been quite busy these last months, but haven't sent any details of my work because, much as I would have liked to, none was really very related with native plants.

In January I did a garden, 2 blocks from the Central Plaza where the Government is (imagine with all our political problems in January, and me MAKING THIS GARDEN 200 m from ALL THAT... un-real).

It is a very small place, 10 m x 3.8 m, rather a fountain with plants in the Lower Floor of an Office Building in complete shade except for the little light that came in from the roof 30 metres above. The Main Hall and offices are the 3 windows that see this area. All is enclosed and not accessible to the 550 people who work here. Just the noise of the water, and the plants in pots and climbing the back wall. The overpowering back wall I dressed with a series of steel cables in a grid that will eventually hold climbers such as *Thumbergia*

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grandiflora, *Macfadanya unguis-cati*, *Tecomaria capensis*, etc. The fountain is quite simple, american-spanish-mexican in its look, with a couple of planters to its sides and a heavy rusted iron spout that leads water down "towards a basin and other 2 smaller falls. The idea was to create a cool, "fresh green window" to look at before going to work in a high-tech-computer-finance office. It was fun; and very different. I usually work in the countryside so dealing with trucks of soil, plants, etc only Saturdays because this is downtown... really downtown, and no services are allowed during office hours. Well, an interesting experience for a country agronomist like me.

During the fall I did a double pond with a fountain. It was made in a place that already has a very nice garden in the northern suburbs of BA. This was a 38m x 40m area that was laundry, dog-kennel, etc. To recycle this we used the paths that were already there, and made these two very formal ponds according to that. I hope this spring it will loosen up a bit as vegetation starts to dress it. As the trees lost its leaves in the fall, reflections were wonderful. Another different job. Had a real good time doing this one. I will send pictures soon; so you know what I'm talking about. But except for the odd native; all quite exotic..

Right now I'm finishing a remodelling of a garden adding a vegetable-garden and several new areas. They wanted a comfortable vegetable garden so I designed this raised bed made with treated ptne, in the shape of a rectangle, defined by 2 "L" of vegetable beds and quite hidden behind what will be a flower border (some natives, but mostly not). These photos are yesterday's and still under construction.

That's all there is to show for this year's work, besides giving classes and some projects that basically due to the complicated political-financial situation are in the freezer for the time being: I consider myself very lucky to have had work; because unemployment had soared to the terrible 30%'s and many of my friends are trying to cope jobless or with very little to do. Some have left for Canada, Europe, etc. because this recession has gone on for 5 years already. I just hope we can start growing soon.

I'm sending you a couple of pictures to show you what I've been describing to some extent. As they develop I hope to be able to show you some more, now that with a digital camera it will be easy to send.

Thank you Diana for all the work and trouble you go to, coordinating the Study Group, letters, meetings, etc, I often wish we were not sooooo far away..

An argentine landscape designer: Clara Bloch is going to Australia for the Congress next week. She hopes to visit some of Paul Thompson's work in Melbourne. I wish I could get into her luggage. Anyway she promised to bring me the papers. I have 94 and 96 ones and are very interesting.

Hope all is well with you; and that you can sometime visit us here

Saludos Elsita

'The Australian Garden: Designing with Australian Plants'.

The book is generally getting a good reception. It is available from APS, at some Open Garden weekends of members, from good book-shops, or directly from the publisher, Blooming Books, email <warwick@bloomings.com.au> phone (03) 9427 1592, fax (03) 9427 9066. I hope you will enjoy it (and consider it when you think about Christmas presents for family and friends).

The RRP is \$55 but check out other prices offered, e.g. at Borders (with had garden) books on 20% discount last month. APS Victoria is selling the book at \$41.25, however I don't know about other States.

Each member of the GDSG is entitled to one copy of the book from me or other members of the committee at cost price (check this with one of us) plus the cost of package and postage (\$10) if necessary. If you can arrange to obtain it directly from **Barbara, Jo, Chris** or myself you might be able to avoid paying package and postage. Further copies from the Study Group are \$45 each plus postage and package (\$10) where applicable. Package and postage is best avoided where possible. For overseas it is \$20 sea mail.

DESIGN

Landscape Conference, Melbourne

It was exciting to have the first launch of our book here at the Landscape Conference. Tim Flannery launched the book with some very enthusiastic and complimentary comments. A number of International speakers were present and some visited our garden before the Conference. I know copies of the book have now gone to U.S.A. (California), Japan and England. I cannot give a full report of this stimulating Conference but here are a few highlights.

Among the speakers were:

Penelope Hill from England was unable to attend because of her pregnancy but her paper was read and her very exciting photographs were shown. Her new book '*Contemporary European Garden Design*' should be well worth looking out for. She identified trends - hard and often synthetic materials; globalization of garden design; use of recycled water; concentration on forms & foliage, not colour. I've noted (but certainly can't remember all the details, the photos came so thick and fast) a spiral fern garden in Germany; the work of Ross Palmer in N.Z.; a vertical grass garden in Zurich; free-standing images from photography and film; and, in Italy, shaped areas of wheat with contrasting trunks grading into farmland. There were many others.

Anne Latreille gave an historical overview of garden designers in Australia, a topic on which she is currently writing a book. Some often overlooked designers include John Stevens (courtyard garden in Canberra) - "bold but restrained use of natural materials and water"; Grace Frazer in Victoria; Kitty Brown in Tasmania, Jocelyn Brown (Tas/NSW). I hope the spelling of these names is correct - I need Anne's book so I can check. A typically nice phrase of Anne's - "the light, economical and playful".

Peter Valder spoke about the gardens and landscapes of China - perceptions of the past and realities of today. It seemed to me some of the fascination of these gardens and landscapes lies in their being almost the exact opposite of those of Australia. Everything is different - the space, the light, the age, the history, the plants - and little to me seems very relevant.

Two Japanese designers presented different aspects of design in Japan.

Norihiro Kanekiyo spoke on planning for today - ecology and participation, the new movement in Japan, it was interesting to see dose parattete with what is happening in these aspects in Australia today. However I thought there was a tendency for the gardens shown to be fussy and rather too symbolic, requiring too much explanation as to their 'meaning'.

Fumiaki Takano I have seen 'rock gardens' before but not on the scale of these Japanese ones, incorporating sizes ranging from gigantic rocks to small pebbles. Beautifully designed and carried out, and extremely formal, but you do wonder about their source of all the rocks. He won the hearts of his audience with 'moving pictures' of children at play in one of the gardens he had created, with flexible plastic structures like huge balloons to climb, slide down, swing from, etc..

Professor Peggy McLaughlin from California USA also spoke about designing gardens for children.

Professor Catherin BMH spoke of four recent "vigorous experiments" in major public gardens in Australia

and what these gardens say about how we see ourselves. The four are the Roma Street Parklands in Brisbane, designed by **Lawrie Smith**; Birrarung Marr (Yarra, Melbourne), designed by **Paul Thompson**; the Garden of Australian Dreams (Museum of Australia, Canberra); and a garden in the University of Tasmania.

A description of the Roma Street Parklands was included in NL 38. Please let us know your impressions of any of the other gardens that you have seen.

Dan Pearson spoke about and showed pictures of Home Farm, a lovely English garden he has helped create and maintain.

Robert Perry from California reported on their situation regarding water conservation, comparable with ours in Australian.

Tim Flannery's subject was sustainability and the Australian mindset. The title of his talk was "our" quote, "If gardens are a window on the mind...." He launched our book straight after giving his presentation.

Other Australian speakers were Michael Cooke, Peter Nixon, Jane Burke, Martin Reeves and Daniel Reeves - a lot of variety and interest.

SGAP Queensland Region Conference at the Gold Coast

Diana Snape Vic

This excellent Queensland Region Conference at the Gold Coast consisted of daytime excursions to a range of areas with different vegetation types, and evening talks covering a variety of topics. Our book was launched there by **Lawrie Smith**, the President of SGAP Old. He was most complimentary and showed great sensitivity to both design and text.

The excursions were all well organized, with their emphasis being of course on indigenous plants. A list of the local plants was provided for every area visited and local experts were there also to help identify rare or unusual species.

The talks began with a fascinating one on the geological basis for the biodiversity of the area. Others were on rare and threatened species; the bushfoods industry; and evolution, ecology and social ecology: exploring human interactions with plants and nature.

Among the gardens visited, I particularly enjoyed seeing Bonni Reichelt's again, especially the wallum garden in one area, which I had seen once before in its very early days. It has now developed into a delightful, low heath garden.

Congratulations to GDSG members **Lynette** and **Peter Reilly** for their splendid organization of this conference.

Fire ecology and biodiversity

DS

An excellent presentation on fire in bushland conservation was given one evening at the Conference, based on a booklet written by Penny Watson and **Cuong Tran**, Project Coordinators for the SEQ Fire and Biodiversity Consortium. This Consortium includes representatives from relevant local authorities throughout SE Qld. They have produced a helpful booklet for bushland conservation and for those with "homes amongst the gum trees", though many such people seem to ignore the need to think about and plan for possible fires.

The following are just a few of the points which were expanded and illustrated in the talk.

There are four principal variable characteristics of bushfires:

- frequency (how often);
- intensity (how hot);
- extent (area covered);
- season (what time of year).

Fires may be planned or unplanned and both of these types of fires may bring benefits or disadvantages to different species of plants and animals. No one sort of fire can suit all. Different vegetation types need different fire frequencies and types. Some are obvious, some more subtle. For example, rainforest vegetation is not fire-adapted and therefore should not be burnt at all. Tall eucalypt forests and grassy woodlands each require specific fire management.

A patch-burning or mosaic approach is generally recommended. Factors to consider include:

- breeding times of birds and animals
- insect dormancy
- the availability of seed.

A quote on the cover of the booklet reads:

"Fire should not be regarded as unnatural or catastrophic, but rather as a recurring event which influences the nature of the Australian landscape and the adaptations of its unique flora and fauna and which therefore offers enormous potential as a land management tool."

GARDENS

Open Garden Scheme gardens 2002/2003 season

Unfortunately the timing of our August NL is always awkward with respect to the OGS Handbook in August.

In **WA**

It was great to see four Australian plant gardens in WA Open Garden Scheme described in the Wildflower Society of WA August Newsletter. All sounded very different and very appealing.

In **SA**

There were also two Australian plant gardens open in SA, described in the August SA Journal. One of these gardens has not been watered for nearly five years.

In Melbourne

Gardens of five Victorian GDSG members involved in the Open Garden Scheme this year were:

September: Chris Larkin; Diana & Brian Snape; Bev Hanson

October: Trevor & Beryl Blake

November: Tony & Joy Roberts

Additional gardens of APS members are:

September: Katandra; Carramar

In Sydney (information forwarded by: **Jeff Howes** NSW)

September: Noel & Rae Rosten; David & Jenny Chandler

March 13, 15 & 16, 2003: Sally & Simon Robinson

In Wauchope, NSW

Annette & John Houseman

I'm sure there would have been other gardens that I have missed. Congratulations to all these members. I know it involves a lot of work. DS

Jacci Campbell's young garden, NE Vic meeting

Barbara Buchanan Vic

After lunch we inspected progress in **Jacci Campbell's** young garden. This included a dry creek bed for the tank overflow which she has been constructing after finding the directions. We had been sitting

looking at the semicircle of rough lawn and the magnificent panorama of the Strathbogies to the south. It was fascinating to find the slope below the lawn planted with thriving low-growing plants, completely unsuspected from the house. Jacci confesses to being a control freak and has been shaping the shrubs into round mounds. There is no doubting the appeal of neatly clipped shrubs and a low westringia hedge outlining a bed is likely to inspire several more if members can find the right situation. However it illustrates one of the big obstacles to using Australian plants formally; there are two clones of the westringia which only became obvious after they had grown together - the differences are slight and only worry the perfectionist. The ground slopes further to the paddock fence, one of the first areas to be planted for wind protection. Here the plants are thriving, including W.A. types I cannot grow. *Regelia velutina* with its distinctive upright growth would be such a useful structural plant if a hardy clone could be found and as for *Eucalyptus diptera* which I last saw as an open forest of upright gleaming copper trunks holding aloft rounded green crowns - well 111 just have to visit Jacci often and drool over it. To the south-west some of the view will have to be sacrificed for wind shelter and the plants grown closer to the house and taller.

The main colour currently comes from the exotics, herbaceous underplanting to roses. I find it interesting that despite no qualms about introducing Australian plants to her exotic garden in Melbourne, Jacci has had inhibitions about mixing them in the same bed here. It can't be entirely due to different needs as the exotics are hardy Mediterranean types chosen for their suitability to the local environment.

Still to come is development of the north entrance area, where shade and privacy from the commercial cattle operation on top of the hill are prime needs. After her recent trip to Europe, Jacci is in straight line phase and this looks like guiding the building a wall, topped by a hedge, with 3 stepped terraces above leading to the drive. To me this formality is appropriate even though some exotics will be used for their deciduous character, as there will be a wonderful opportunity for some blending with natives used formally. We agreed one goes through phases in garden making, craving first after one type of effect then, while that is coming to fruition, becoming entranced by another. Hopefully what emerges is a personal statement of growth and development. I look forward to following the progress of this garden.

Introducing my gardener identity

Glenys Eskdale Vic

I enjoyed reading the two latest issues of the Garden Design Group, which you sent when I joined several months ago. I thought it would be a good idea to introduce myself, so here is my gardener identity.

When I filled out the form to register as a member of the Garden Design Study Group I was dismally unable to enter any qualifications into the boxes provided (*this is true for many/most of us DS*) as I am a very new gardener. The plot I tackle energetically every Saturday is the same one I have had for twenty years, on the side of a hill at the foothills of the Dandenongs. During those years, apart from some attempts to maintain a vegetable garden, my main activities were keeping the grass at bay and cutting back ivy and blackberries. Our garden was established by the previous owners in the fifties. We have tall trees in the front which now obscure our view across to the city, though the eucalypts and tall silky oaks provide much needed shade for the front of the house, which faces west. My current gardening efforts are concentrated in an area of grass and trees at the back, where I work within the confines of the need to terrace everything up the side of the hill.

I became enthusiastic around the time I did some research into garden history as part of the arts degree I have just completed. It was then I realized that gardens were an intricate mix of art and nature. I devoured books on English gardens, fascinated by the ideas of all the icons, like Capability Brown, Gertrude Jekyll, William Robinson and, getting closer to home, Edna Walling of course. I love the typical Dandenongs

gardens, filled with hydrangeas, rhododendrons and camellias, all of which do well in my shady, acidic soil. I have also revived my vegetable garden, and plan a very formal, geometric potager, edged with herbs such as lavender, rosemary and thyme. I have great fun planting seeds with very little idea of what the final flower will be like.

Above this highly cultivated area I imagine an area of bushland. I began by choosing Australian natives for a quick growing screen to separate us from our neighbours' back yards. My main source of inspiration has been from gardening books in the local library, but I am afraid that apart from very practical guides, there was very little inspirational writing on creating Australian gardens. I happened upon the Society for Growing Australian Plants on the internet, and decided to join up to see what it was about. What a surprise to find a large group of extremely dedicated and knowledgeable growers of Australian plants. I had thought myself clever to be able to name plants such as grevillea and westringia as I walked past neighbourhood gardens. Now I was reading articles which seemed almost entirely written in italicized Latin.

However, my newly planted westringias, grevilleas, acacias and croweas are happily flowering, even though I have discovered that some of their companions, which I thought were natives, are not. I enjoy camellias and rhododendrons, but I am now rapidly becoming entranced by the endless variety and intricacy of Australian natives. Since learning about the importance of planting indigenous species I am changing my emphasis to the contents of my local community nursery, which sells plants propagated from local stock.

So what do I have to offer a Garden Design Group? I suppose I will be asking more questions that giving answers. I am really just experimenting with putting plants together in ways that please me, and above all, just learning how to grow things. From a garden philosophy point of view, what is the moral difference between growing Australian natives from other areas, and natives of other countries? (*) There is a strong environmental argument for growing indigenous plants, but apart from that, is it just a matter of preference? My present thinking is that if you want people to grow Australian natives which are not indigenous provided you think that is environmentally permissible then the Australian plants must compete on the same grounds of visual appeal and reliability.

I look forward to further editions of the Garden Design Group Newsletter, and I would like to say that I was impressed and charmed when I visited the beautiful garden of **Chris Larkin** in Lysterfield via the Open Garden Scheme.

I like your comments of gardens as an intricate mix of art and nature. Each of us has our own gardening history, with developing experience and knowledge. (I hope you have won/are winning over the ivy and blackberries.)

(*) *This question is explored by Professor George Seddon in his prologue to the GDSG book.*

I agree that planting indigenous species is very important. My personal view is that growing Australian natives which are not precisely indigenous is different from growing natives of other countries. First, Australian plants closely related to indigenous ones are more likely to be of use to some local wildlife. Secondly, they will also tend to look more 'Australian'. (This depends on their degree of separation of origin.) However I take your point.

Ideally natives of other countries can best be grown in their own countries, both for their own wildlife and to avoid potential environmental risk here. Risk can be subtle and take time to show itself.

What do other members think? Is growing non-indigenous Australian plants any different from growing plants from overseas? DS

New garden project

Martin Rigg Vic

We have a new garden project here in the North East of Victoria, some 16 acres. Our initial boundary plantings are now 2.5 years old and putting out their first significant flowering.

Landscape

Open grass pasture, dams, swamp, some remnant trees, forest along roadside and adjacent, rolling foothill terrain.

Climate

Cool temperature, some heavy frost, 35 inch rainfall, high sunshine levels, and occasional high summer humidity.

Soil

Devonian granite, deeply weathered, gravelly loam, good drainage and moisture retention. Low pH, low nutrition.

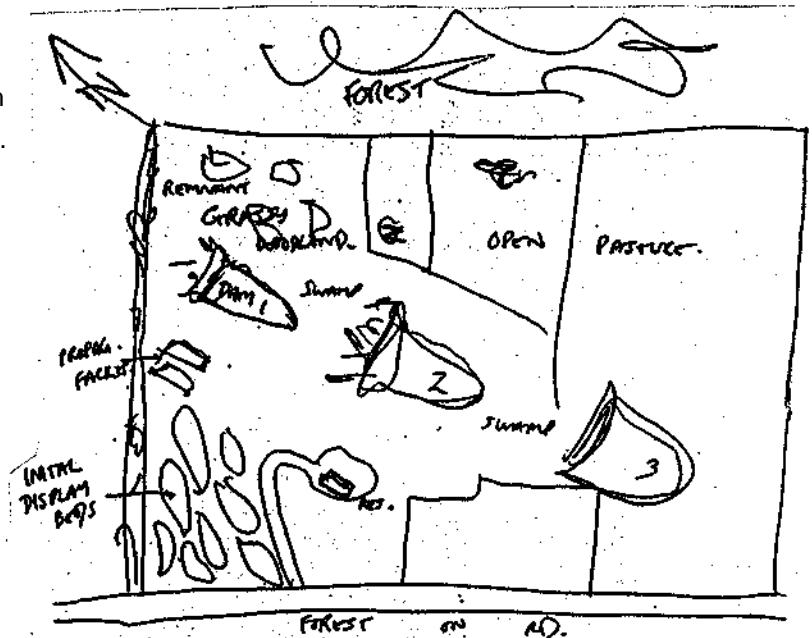
Major building works in progress (slowly), i.e. residence. Have initial display garden, 60 x 40 m. with beds developed by excavation, bob-cat & hand work.

Propagation facility to be erected as soon as plants are required, will expand into many new genera and species. We have joined a few more Study Groups this year: Grevillea, Hakea, Melaleuca, Verticordia and Correa

NE Vic Group has been to project very early, though have created more pathways with bobcat and backhoe, as well as water feature (or beginning of).

Detailed design yet to be worked out. Hope to send project for comment in future.

Please see Martin's sketch on R. We'll look forward to seeing this project progress. DS



BOOKS

One member's review of our book

The Australian Garden: Designing with Australian Plants Annette Houseman NSW-

Member of Garden Design Study Group

RRP: \$55-from all good bookshops - or -

RRP: \$45 (plus postage and packing) - from ASGAP Garden Design Study Group, 3 Bluff Street, East Hawthorn, VIC 3123

The Australian Garden: Designing with Australian Plants" is written by Diana Snape, leader of the Australian Plants Society, Garden Design Study Group, with contributions from four other authors. Diana also provided many of the superb photographs found in this book. She wishes it to be known that the book is not all her own work, that she had help from lots of friends, many of whom belong to the above-mentioned Study Group.

John Landy AC, MBE in the Foreword says "This book covers in a very comprehensive way

Australian plants suitable for growing in gardens and describes how to establish specialised gardens such as grassland, heathland and coastal gardens.

Emphasis is placed on the use of local native species because they are easier to establish and more likely to persist and also because they provide a natural habitat for indigenous birds, mammals and insects. Emphasis is given in the book to 'blending' Australian plants with exotics."

Most chapters are preceded with an apposite quote. One of my favourite quotes is used as introduction to the chapter on 'Natural Gardens'

"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play and pray in, where Nature may heal and cheer and give strength to body and soul alike." - John Muir, *Our Natural Parks* - 1901

Another quote introducing the chapter on 'Ornaments'

"Garden sculpture should mirror its environs. There is nothing wrong with pink flamingoes or plastic gnomes, providing the garden is located in flamingo or gnome country." - Roger B. Swain, *'Christmas Goose'* - Horticulture-1985

The book will appeal to -

- a) The beginner gardener
- b) The experienced gardener
- c) Those who like a good read
- d) Those who like to look at pictures printed on earth coloured, no glare paper
- e) Anyone interested in developing an Australian garden, instead of merely following overseas designs featuring exotic plants.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

Australian Planting Design by **Paul Thompson**, published by Lothian, was also released in October - a good month for we garden designers. So far I have only had time for a quick look but I'm sure it will be a great book as it is based on Paul's many years of experience.

I would very much welcome a member's review of this book. DS

JOURNALS

Australian Horticulture August-September 02

At Western Australia's Garden Week, the intention was to show that gardens can be both attractive and ecologically sound. One exhibit showed W.A. indigenous plants adapted to a classical formal look. Another was described as a drought-tolerant yet colourful tropical garden. (I don't know whether this featured Australian plants - it certainly should have!) The Flora for Fauna campaign was featured in Ecotopia, a large marquee containing dioramas of wetland, dry forest and a salt scald. Stuffed animals added interest, including a stuffed cat with a model frog in its mouth - eye-catching!

Articles about plants included one by **Gwen Elliot** on those colourful red-flowering grevilleas.

Starflowers, Pearlflowers and Gemflowers

Another article described new Geraldton Wax varieties and a chance intergeneric hybrid between *Verticordia plumosa* and *Chamelaucium uncinatum* (Geraldton Wax). Called 'Southern Stars', this is the first in a series called Starflowers. Having a series name makes it easier for importers to keep track of new varieties.

There are now a number of white-flowered interspecific *Chamelaucium* hybrids, called Pearlflowers. The Department of Agriculture is carrying out a controlled crossing program and resulting coloured varieties have been named the Gemflower series.

DESIGN IDEAS

Sense and sensuality**Colleen Keena Qjd**

Colleen subscribes to 'About Gardening' and the information below about a Symposium on 'Sense and Sensuality' comes from their recent Newsletter. Colleen says "I found the concepts very interesting as I started to think about lush, tasty Davidson's Plums (visual/taste), hymenoporum (perfume), the whisper of the wind in casuarinas, and the feel of Hibiscus splendens (furry leaf). Interesting possibilities??"

There are secret pleasures waiting in the garden. It's a symphony of sensory stimulation when you brush past aromatic foliage, stop to caress a leaf or bite into a just-picked tomato. Beneath the everyday sounds of voices and traffic you can detect the sweeter, soothing music of water trickling from a fountain and leaves rustling. When you explore the sense and sensuality of gardens you delve beneath the layers of plants, stone, and water as you discover what stimulates sensory responses and memories. From a practical perspective you'll take away new information on plant selection criteria and design. In developing this symposium we searched out experienced gardeners and designers whose approaches to garden making are linked by a common passion for the sensual pleasure they derive from gardening.

Among the speakers:

Patrick Chassé: *Gardens to Satisfy the Five Senses*

Holly Shimizu: *How Fragrance Can Enhance Your Gardening Experience*

Jack Staub: *Taste the Beauty from a Bountiful Potager*

Patrick Chassé is currently working on a book on moss culture. He combined his study of art, environmental science, and garden history with a long fascination for Asian garden philosophy to develop a contemplative approach to the sensual pleasures of the garden.

When did you last listen to your garden? To the sound of leaves, or water, or gravel? Do you choose plants because of the velvety texture of their foliage, the silken feel of a petal, the irresistibly polished sheen of bark? Or are you inspired by memories of fragrance and flavor? Patrick Chassé goes beyond the expected realm of visual stimulation as he explores a language of gardening where stimulation for all the senses combines in a satisfying whole.

Holly Shimizu, the Executive Director of the US Botanic Garden in Washington, D.C., is enthralled with fragrance. Her studies of herbs and aromatic plants have taken her to countless gardens and she'll share her experience in selecting and growing scented plants. Holly Shimizu is a horticulturist who identifies plants by their fragrance. One of her finest years as a student was spent pruning, weeding, and harvesting in the fragrance garden at Wisley, the garden of the Royal Horticultural Society, in England. She spent eight years as the first curator of the National Herb Garden in Washington, DC where she grew every herb she could gather. Her work with herbs and fragrance continues as part of her life-long passion with plants.

Jack Staub's articles on vegetable gardening and vegetable garden design have helped to popularize the ancient art of kitchen gardening, and to introduce many interesting, new vegetable cultivars to gardeners across America. To secure a place in his gardens, a vegetable has to look as good as it tastes and taste as good as it looks! He celebrates the history, the traditions, and the potential of potagers as he searches out interesting vegetables and devises ways to grow and display them.

In our book 'The Australian Garden', in one chapter called 'The sensuous garden', we begin to explore these aspects. We mention most of those Colleen mentioned and I am sure a whole book about Australian plants could easily be devoted to this topic. DS

PLANTS in DESIGN

The late inclusion of trees in the garden design

Chris Larkin Vic

In the last couple of years I have planted many more eucalypts and allocasuarinas - approximately 40 in all. The garden, now almost structurally complete, was developed in stages over the last 11-12 years with the last major work being completed around 5-6 years ago. Normally selecting and positioning trees would occur when working out what plants are needed in any newly developed section of the garden. A few trees were planted in the first stage of the garden's development; at each subsequent stage of development a few more were added but not nearly as many as I now think are necessary. So why did I delay in planting so many of the key structural elements in the plant design of the garden? I had a number of concerns about possibly blocking a big view, creating too much shade, or even worse still creating too much dry shade. Also I didn't know a lot about eucalypts, their reliability and growth habits. While I was busy learning the names and characteristics of many of my other plants, to some extent I put learning about eucalypts on hold. It was all just too difficult. So caution ruled the day - let's face it if you make a mistake with your choice of tree then it may be a big mistake and a big problem before too long. This delay, however, gave me the chance to become familiar with the trees I have and work out what I want to achieve with trees in the total design. As the garden matures I have been able to see how the inclusion of trees is really necessary to the overall garden design. In time they will bring dimension in areas where it is lacking, welcome shade in other areas and increased privacy. **Most importantly a repetition of eucalypts and allocasuarinas throughout will help to unify the total garden.**

For obvious reasons I had more concerns about planting trees on the view side of the house but as I watched the garden grow on this side I could see how the few trees, now 5 and 7 years old, and mainly planted within 3 meters of the house, break up the view and in doing so make it more interesting. In places eucalypts frame the view, or part of it, from other angles it is possible to see out through foliage or through multiple trunks of an individual tree or a closely planted group of trees. So the exercise on the view side of the house became one of introducing trees into parts of the garden more distant from the house - between the house and the fence-line and along the fence-line. I wanted more shade in these sections of the garden so that I can enjoy walking there even on a warm sunny day. Trees will provide a vertical dimension that is missing nestling the house further into the hillside. With the garden sloping away quite strongly I also hope that trees planted along sections of the fence-line will, in time, direct the eye upwards where at the moment there is nothing to stop a feeling of insecurity as the eye perceives the garden falling away. The fence-line planting should give increased privacy and a feeling of containment - a feeling that is important in making any person walking through the garden, or looking out over it, feel protected and secure. With a few trees and 2-metre high shrubs at the bottom of the garden the distant view will generally be above the plantings. At the same time I am attempting to frame a mid-distance view of the neighbour's dam which has valuable links to my own garden ponds, by allowing one large space in the tree line.

Decisions about where to put the trees were made according to how they will change the view from the house. I used sticks in the ground and checked back at the house to see whether I was sighting them correctly because where a tree appears in the landscape changes with the viewing angle.

On the south side of the house the slope rises up behind the house to the top of a hill. Here my main concern was to plant a scattering of local allocasuarinas, *A. littoralis*, across the top of the block connecting them to older boundary plantings of this same species and a 5-year old forest of *A. torulosa*. Once again my aim is to find unity in consistency.

My treatment of eucalypts in particular has been the same as many other key plants in the design

where I use repetition, overlap when bringing in a new species, and single specimens for occasional contrast and interest. The only difference though is that when I think about placement I try to think of the total garden, not just a bed or a section. From certain vantage points I expect the eye to be able to move through the tree canopy and travel beyond the garden plants into the borrowed landscape to increase the feeling of space in the garden. I have also chosen to intermingle and repeat eucalypts (*leucoxyton*, *pauciflora*, *mannifera*, *scoparia*, *kitsioniana*) that have a similar smooth trunk so that once again the eye will make the connections to produce a feeling of unity. The similar foliage of the allocasaurinas, means that different species can be used throughout the garden and once again I expect the eye will make the connections, the mind will find peace.

Now all I need is patience and good health to see if these newly planted trees create the expected effect when they are fully mature. In the meantime I continue to refine and expand on these ideas of using trees in the overall design and have already decided on 2 more locations where *E. leucoxyton* ssp *megalocarpa* will replace dying shrubs. Please do not think that I am heading towards a heavily treed garden. I have a very large garden, about 1 acre, and most trees are still planted close to the garden's boundaries. In this way I hope to preserve distant and internal views while maximizing the amount of sun and rainfall available to smaller shrubs.

The general or the particular?

Diana Snape Vic

One of the slight disadvantages (outweighed by the advantages!) of having an Australia-wide organization is the difficulty of deciding whether to go for the general or the particular when talking about plants in design. When a situation is described, I may immediately think of a particular plant which is appropriate in my area. However it may not be suitable for many other regions, though a number of plants can accept an amazingly wide spread of conditions.

When you are writing about/your garden or garden design, I think it is always helpful (and interesting) to name particular plants and leave it to the reader to 'translate' those plants as necessary. Your favourite plants may already be someone else's too, even in another area, or they may like to look them up in references and give them a try. Alternatively they can substitute a plant which is similar in its characteristics.

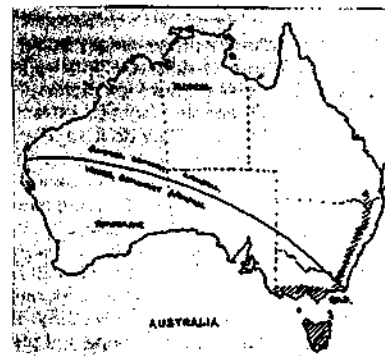
The alternative is to write about plants in design in general terms, e.g. to refer to a small to medium size, single-trunked eucalypt; or a large wattle indigenous to your area; or a prostrate groundcover plant suitable for 'binding' a sloping bank; or reliable small shrubs approximately one metre in diameter; etc.. After such general descriptions, check possibilities in reference books, catalogues or nurseries. I think this is good in design terms but it does seem to lack that love of individual plants so typical of keen gardeners.

SNIPPETS

Drainage and pH John BarrieSA From the APS SA Region Journal August 2002

John describes the advantages of trenching and mounding, especially in heavy alkaline soils. It is important to provide good drainage and select plants' tolerant of the existing soil pH. A pH of 7 is neutral, while a one-digit increase in the pH scale reflects a tenfold increase in alkalinity.

"Be guided by the experiences of other gardeners. We do not live long enough to make all the mistakes ourselves - we must learn from other people. . . . For southern Australia, to avoid excessive watering in summer, do not select plants from areas of summer dominant rainfall (above the diagonal line)." (See R)



A bit of a trim**Bill Eden SA**

I have been growing native plants for at least 20 years without a great deal of method. It is only in the last couple of years that the importance of pruning has become obvious. It's amazing how neat and tidy as well as compact a lot of these plants can be kept with a bit of a trim with the hedge shears.

MEETINGS**Melbourne meetings****DS**

Report of meeting on Sunday August 11 at 1 pm at Chris Owens', then continued at 2pm nearby at Chris Larkin's place.

Chris Owens concentrates on using indigenous plants, including a number of grasses and other groundflora. His garden would not really qualify as a 'tidy' garden, probably an advantage in terms of shelter for wildlife. However in one area at the side of the house there are still plants from elsewhere which Chris is reluctant to remove because of the resultant change in conditions for other plants in that area.

We saw three quite different frog ponds, of various depths and conditions such as drainage. The one at the lowest level holds water longest naturally.

Chris Larkin's garden is looking superb, after all her work in preparation for her Open Garden weekend. There is a moderately steep slope facing north, so it is a sunny block but also subject to wind. Chris has balanced variety of plants with sufficient repetition to prevent it looking like a collector's garden. Her garden is still relatively young and she is looking forward to more trees becoming conspicuous in the landscape and giving it a greater sense of maturity. (See Chris's article page 13.)

In the front (more northern) garden, a pathway zigzags up past two beautiful linked pools, overlooked by two substantial seats.

Close to the house, on its southern side, is a delightful area for sitting. Use is made of the slope with a trickle of water falling into a small pond. Overall, a wonderful garden.

Last meeting for this year:- November 17 at Charles Hrubos' place, please note early start.

We hope to give Charles some ideas for creating (or recreating) his new garden.

If you can, come at **12 noon** and bring a **picnic lunch** for our "Christmas" meeting.

Then we'll start the meeting early at **1 pm**. This is so the many members who belong to Maroondah Group and want to go the end of year barbecue at John Armstrong's place will be able to go.

Charles' directions:

I think that the following directions will be sufficient for people attending the next Design Study Group meeting at my place.

I will leave out some coloured balloons at the entry.

Please Phone **Diana Snape** as soon as possible to indicate whether you can come to the November meeting. I would like to have an idea of the numbers. If we share cars it will make parking easier.

NE Vic Branch

Report of meeting at Jacqui Campbell's on Saturday August 17 **Barbara Buchanan Vic**

From the article 'Dead-heading banksias' in the last NL a discussion developed on the still

experimental nature of much Australian plant gardening. There is very little readily available, detailed, specific information about how to maintain an Australian plant garden, for the general public and the growing band of professional garden maintenance operators. The Encyclopedia is a fantastic source of information but rather expensive for beginners to contemplate and necessarily brief.

For instance with pruning the general advice given is to prune after flowering. Some plants flower almost non-stop, others can be hit by frost if cut in autumn, some must not be cut below green leaves, others can be. When should cuttings be taken, do hormones help, if so, which, and which plants are best regarded as short lived and should be replaced with cuttings regularly? Response to fertilizers is possibly general for a group of plants and optimum planting times depend on climate and other particular conditions. Within our group there are many different situations and solutions, what are the underlying factors?

One member reported trying to use a computer program for ideas on plants to grow in her conditions and coming up with just two plants, both small herby types. We agreed to try and hunt for detailed information for a few plants, note how many books etc. were needed and which type of book was most useful. We are all to give thought to how best to record information so that it is readily accessible.

Record keeping is also needed for our Patio Pot Plant project, which most of us seem to have started. Jacqui keeps a diary but there is a problem with recovering the information. Ideally a computer program diary could enable us to retrieve relevant data, but no one seems to have the computer skills. I propose to buy small exercise books dedicated to the Patio Pot and Pruning topics while I consult the younger generation for computer hints. Give some thought to how best record info as we need a standard format to pool data. Study Groups may have a mine of information relevant to their subjects. Negative results are just as important as positive ones, and background (climate, soil type, etc.) to sort out all the variables. Ultimately, in the far distant future, we may produce our own computer program on plant maintenance for public use.

Glenda Datson has had considerable experience of growing advanced trees for planting out and explained some of the techniques and the reasons behind them. The aim for planting out is to have a pot full of branching but uncurled roots ready to spread into the surrounding soil, and such plants are also healthy pot plants. Many plants however want to send down deep tap roots and when confined in pots these curl round and round the bottom of the pot. When roots have filled the pot and it is time to pot on, the bottom layer of roots, especially if curled, should be sliced off cleanly and cuts also made down the sides of the root ball before transferring to the next size pot. The pot size should only increase gradually as each healthy plant has a balance of beneficial micro-organisms in the root zone and it takes time for these to spread into newly available soil. Special pots are available with small holes in the sides, not just drainage holes at the bottom. When a root hits the side instead of curling it is air pruned and this stimulates branching deeper in the pot - this enables plants to stay longer in each pot size without damage.

Helen and John van Riet then passed around copies of a plan **Jan Hall** devised for their front garden together with a 'before' panorama and some progress shots showing beds being shaped with the addition of soil from their Cheshunt property and logs and rocks for edging. Jacqui produced some directions for making a dry creek bed. Planting will be the next priority and Sandra had worked out a few ideas. Comment was made about some of the beds being narrow but I have since recalled Jan had planned for very small plants, herbs, grasses and daisies for this area.

After lunch we inspected progress in Jacqui's young garden. (See page 7.)

The next meeting was brought forward to **Saturday September 21st**, so this has now passed. The venue changed to **Ross and Elaine Sutherland's** : Ross and Elaine have just moved into a new home and are hoping for ideas on how best to utilise their open space.

Please Phone Barbara Buchanan for information about future meetings.

Sydney branch meetings**Report of last Sydney meeting, planned for Sunday August 25 at Arthur Dench's place**

Concerns with insurance led to a change of venue.

Garden design at Dural

Norm Webb NSW

On a cloudy cool Sunday, 14 enthusiastic Garden Design Study Group members descended on Jo Hambrett's Dural property.

After a warm welcome from Jo, we visited her neighbour's adjoining property of 5 acres, a Bruce McKenzie design, of which one of the main features was a medium sized dam (small lake) with mounded banks, partly bordered by a casuarina forest (*Allocasuarina torulosa*). The deep layer of dropped needles added interest to this area, acting as a perfect mulch. The now unused wooden bridge had originally been part of a circular driveway, a garden of callistemon on the left sheltered a bower bird complete with bower. The weathered timber lean-to structure with healthy shaded fern garden attached to the main (rear) bedroom, for outlook and privacy, was a delight as was the originally planned bird aviary beside the house, now turned shade house complete with fish pond. A question was raised as to the suitability of using *Meiroleuca armillaris* due to its proneness to attacks from insects etc, meaning it was not always shown to good advantage.

This garden was designed with separate sections, not all sighted at once and clearly designed with low maintenance in mind.

Jo Hambrett's garden

The house, at the end of a medium - long curved driveway, was designed to fit in with its surrounds, an unusual and pleasing effect, simple, practical, with long arms from the front building. Designed with only one room width to gain light and visual aspects of the surrounding gardens.

Running parallel to and in the centre of the arms of the house, beautifully made dry stone walls, the blocks cut from stone slabs brought to the site and cut to varying sizes made a different and interesting feature. When the desired effect wasn't achieved, the front of the blocks were ground to take away the look of normal sandstone blocks.

The visual aspect looking to the rear of the block from the house was pleasing. Paddocks in the distance, designed shed, grassed areas, a focus achieved by the simple act of painting timber swing gates red. In the foreground, lavender bordered by fruit trees (guava) especially cut to display bare and beautiful trunks. Although not at its best (wrong season), the herb garden showed its promise of practicality and beauty with an intermingling of Australian plants and herbs. All rain water to the property was used to full advantage, with drains to divert where needed.

Jo has retained (or replanted) a long, large bush area on her property complementing the lines of the house. Mostly natural, with a large variety of trees (turpentine, spotted gums, angophora, etc.) and some evidence of wildlife. This lovely forestbordered with plantings of understory flowering shrubs and made interesting by a meandering rustic path (some parts acquired by Jo, broom-sweeping the forest floor) led to the end of the property where the land rose more steeply to an adjoining property, which now supplied water to Jo's purposely designed rock creek bed, seepage due to a leaking dam. This leak altered soil conditions and Jo has taken advantage of this now more damp area by planting *meiroleuca* species. Some plants have enjoyed the change, some not.

It is hard to overcome our native plant purist attitudes but the exotic plants used around the property were not overwhelming. Banksia roses, not in flower, at the entrance to the house, made promise of colour to come, but the *Banksia serrata* featured each side of the path leading to the house were appreciated and

admired. Jo made use of the wonderful *Lomandra longifolia* to link all the different sections of the property, from the front to the side to the back.

Over lunch, many interesting conversations ensued and brave Jo asked for comments and ideas.

Questions were raised:

- Why were there no rock gardens?
- The suitability of using Norfolk Island Pines.
- How about a plan for a water feature? A design was quickly drawn by some knowledgeable members for Jo's perusal.

This was a good day out; it's always interesting to gain ideas from other gardens. I like Jo's garden and thank her for opening it to us and for her generous and warm hospitality.

Please phone Jo Hambrett _____ for details of future meetings.

MEMBERSHIP

Bryan Loft Vic

New members

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

Dylan Bowker

Dominic Delia Libera

Bill Eden

Glenys Eskdale

Paula Havelberg

Leigh Murray

Lawrie Smith

- Ross & Elaine Sutherland

Judy Whish-Wilson

Further renewals for 2002-2003

(• = renewed for 2 (or more) years)

Ros Andrews, John Armstrong, Shirley Bloomfield, Elsita Boffi-de Schulte, Judy Dykes, Jeanette Devlin, Glenys Eskdale, Wendy & David Evans, Pamela Finger, Ted & Jenny Finnie, Jan Fleming, Gloria Freeman, Peter & Wilma Gamham, Ron Gomall, Mary Graham, Mary Gray, Jo Hambrett, -Judith Hunt, Colleen Keena, Paul & Barbara Kennedy, John & Susan Knight, Nicole Lenffer, WJn Main, Helen Morrow, Leeanne Neil, Shirley Pipitone, Martin Rigg, Karen & Geoff Russell, Kris Schaffer, Barbara Setchell, Ross Smyth-Kirk, Margaret Stanton, Ross & Elaine Sutherland, Gloria Thomlinson, Lesley Waite, Jim & Pat Watson, Maureen Webb, Robert Willson.

ASGAP, SGAP Qld, Wildflower Society for W.A., APS Armidale & District.

Please let Bryan or Diana know if your subscription has been sent in but not acknowledged, either in this NL or the last. This is the second NL for the 2002/2003 financial year.

There is no change in the subscription: \$10 for one or two members at the same address; \$5 for full-time students or pensioners; \$20 for overseas members. Please send your cheque, made out to the Garden

Design Study Group, to Bryan Loft (address on page 1).

You should expect to receive four NL each year - in **February, May, August** and **November**, or in the last week of the preceding month. **If you do not**, please contact me in case it has gone astray. DS

TREASURER'S REPORT

Bryan Loft Vic

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 1 July 2002 - 31 October 2002

BOOK Account

Sales		\$7624.89
Less Book purchases	\$6,261.75	
Selling costs	\$ 182.80	<u>\$6444.55</u>
Surplus		<u>\$1180.34</u>

BANK ACCOUNT

Bank Balance 1 July 2002		<u>\$ 2519.69</u>
Plus INCOME		
Book surplus	\$ 1180.34	
Donations	\$ 50.00	
2002/2003 Subscriptions received	\$ 504.00	
2003/04 Subscriptions received	\$ 107.64	
		<u>\$ 1841.08</u>
Less EXPENDITURE		
Newsletter Expenses:		
Printing	\$ 237.05	
Postage	\$ 105.50	
	\$ 342.55	
Sub to Friends of RBG Cranbourne	\$ 25.00	
Sub to Friends of Karwarra Gardens	\$ 20.00	
Sub to Eurobodalla Botanic Gardens	\$ 20.00	
State tax on Withdrawals	<u>\$ 2.30</u>	
		<u>\$ 409.85</u>
Balance 31 October 2002		<u>\$ 3,951.82</u>

// you want to, remember for your convenience you can pay a subscription for 2 years (i.e. \$20 for the normal subs, \$10 for concession). This will reduce cheque/bank fees associated with subscription payment by cheque. I can keep track of this on the database. Bryan Loft

Sad news

I am very distressed to report the deaths of two long-time members of the Garden Design Study Group.

Pam King from Victoria, the younger sister of fellow member **Betty Denton**, lost her life recently in a tragic accident. Both Pam and Betty have been consistent, strong supporters of the work of the Group since its early days. Our deepest sympathy goes to Betty.

Geoff Simmons, from Queensland, was one of our most original thinkers who contributed many thoughtful articles to the Newsletters over the years. His ideas live on in the book but sadly he died during the week before the book was launched near to where he lived in Queensland, so he did not see it.

Next year we will celebrate the first ten years of the Garden Design Study Group.

Our first Newsletter was sent out in May 1993. For your interest, in the next NL, I'll reproduce the list of members shown in the very first edition - approximately half of these still belong to the GDSG.

A new leader needed in March 2003

I think ten years is long enough for one person to take the responsibility (and have the fun) of leading a Study Group such as ours, with the dual role of Newsletter editor. The book has been a major effort for me too and I think it would be good for a new leader to take over in March next year, with fresh ideas and new enthusiasm. Ideally it would be someone who has belonged to the Study Group and shown a history of interest in it, though this is not essential. It could well be someone from another State. I'll still be a member, of course, and contribute ideas and do all I can to help, but I won't be looking over the new leader's shoulder.


So if you have a keen interest in the aims and activities of the Study Group, do consider offering to become the new leader. It isn't necessary to have any particular expertise - it's the enthusiasm and energy that's important. You learn on the job. Details of how to offer to lead the Group will be in the various State newsletters early next year and in the February NL.

There are so many things we haven't (yet) achieved but I do think we have succeeded in raising the awareness of garden design and its importance, to encourage the inclusion of Australian plants in gardens generally. This can result in both making APS gardens more beautiful and in converting exotic gardens to blended ones. Showcasing Australian plants in more gardens in the Open Garden Scheme continues to be a worthwhile goal.

My decision means the next Newsletter, for February 2003, will be my last as editor. Please make it a good one by sending in your (yes **YOUR**) ideas, thoughts, reports, comments and questions. If you've always had good intentions but haven't actually done it yet (and even if you already have) please do it **NOW** - just one contribution will do. For my time as editor, it's your last chance! Or you might offer to help the new editor in a specific way. For example, members have said we need more diagrams/plans/pictures in the NL (I agree). But some-one has to find or produce those interesting and relevant diagrams/plans/pictures.

I know it's a sign of old age when time flashes by but the ten years have gone very quickly for me - and I still can't really believe Christmas is coming next month.

Best wishes to all members for a safe, peaceful and happy holiday time.



Diana