

GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP

Newsletter No. 54

May 2006

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ABN 82 428 110 028

Dear Members,

It is a strange but pleasant feeling to be back writing to you again. 'Old' members from more than three years ago will remember me (isn't remember an odd word?) and I look forward to getting to know more recent ones. First of all, I know you will all join me in thanking Jo for her inspiring leadership (and all her work) over the past three years. We are fortunate that Jo will still be leading the group in Sydney, as Chris Larkin does in Melbourne and Barbara Buchanan in north-east Victoria. Laurie Smith hopes to get a branch going in Brisbane as soon as his overseas commitments allow. And now we have Shirley Pipitone as the first leader of an ACT branch - an exciting new venture. Local meetings are stimulating for those able to attend, and this can include visitors from other areas. I hope some members from country Victoria and other States will be able to join us for the official Opening of the new Australian Garden at the Botanic Garden in Cranbourne (see page 20). It will be a very special occasion and I am sure the Australian Garden will begin to inspire wider public interest in Australian plants and their use in garden design.

Shane Doherty suggested in the Feb NL, and Gordon Rowland in this one, we should list our professional members in garden/landscape design and horticulture. It was something we tried to do early on - before emails and the GDSG Website. I think it would be more successful now, though keeping directories up-to-date is still a challenge. It is a good idea, well worth investigating.

Two main themes emerge in this NL - 'what is a garden?' and 'inside looking out', and another is suggested - seasonal change in gardens of Australian plants. I look forward to hearing your comments, ideas, findings, problems and questions - these are the life-blood of the Study Group!

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NEXT MEETINGS

Please see details of meetings and contacts on pages 19-23

NE VIC: Saturday May 6 at Paul and Kerri Davenport's

CANBERRA: Sunday May 21 at Barbara Daly's

MELBOURNE: Sunday May 28 at Cranbourne RBG - **a special event**

Sunday June 11 at Cheryl Southall's

SYDNEY: Sunday May 28 at Ros Andrew's and Betty Maloney's

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Jo,

I do enjoy the newsletter and hope to be at the next outing. I've got myself into this dilemma of helping a dementia group (I may be there myself one day and won't know I did anything) plant out a garden - two in fact - both rectangular - one with a raised bed done with hardwood sleepers and the other at the back of the backyard just with sleepers placed on the ground. Both beds are clay - the stuff they make pottery and dams out of. The first raised garden, against the wall of an adjoining building, is coming along well. I've had to add manure, hay/straw, calcium to break up the clay. It's 1.0m long and around 2.2m wide and very hot. The other bed is about the same width by about 15m long and has three gummies (2 taller variety and one a mallee not in very good condition. It may find itself removed.) These beds will be staying as is, but the bigger bed will have imported soil and mulch added next week and calcium as well.

The 'house' has a concrete area at the back facing west. It's supposed to have an awning but this won't be coming for another couple of years. From this concreted area there is a small path in the middle leading to a lovely little water feature (that spills water everywhere). I can fix this. The rest of the yard is scattered grass and pure clay. When it rains like it did last week, it's nothing but mud. The supervisor has been told to paint the concrete because of the glare but has not been told what colour. Too light a colour and you may as well not paint it at all, too dark and it's going to be hot.

The problems: Do you know of anyone that has been involved in this type of landscaping before or is there a website that you know that deals with this type of landscaping? I've been looking at websites today but nothing jumps out. It's mainly US landscaping and nothing with Aussie plants or mixed plantings. While there will be a lot of smaller natives I feel that a smell, feel, touch approach is also needed. I have suggested that the area around the fountain have small plants but the supervisor said no. There will be a small area for herbs but I feel this could be incorporated into the native plantings. I also feel that grass can be done away with, with a full on planting of perennials and a path that goes around the gardens and water feature.

I feel that there is also a need for deciduous trees (2) to take the place of shade until an awning is forthcoming. I was looking at *Gleditsia* 'Ruby Lace'. These would have to be raised above the clay and could be incorporated into the garden (where the grass is at present). I feel that if I can come up with a design that is fairly easy maintenance, has access for wheelchairs, shady, they can eliminate the awning and the mowing. I can't understand that the Dept of Age Care, whose buildings these belong to, has let them be built with no thought of outside entertaining, ie landscaping and shade. Can you help me?... please **Suellen Harris** NSW

And some time later (following a suggestion by Jo):-

I have emailed **Shane Doherty** and we have been communicating. This has been a big job for a small handful of people. I supplied most of the plants and some of the grevilleas were bought (should have put the hard word on Peter Olde for a few).

I don't think I need that request in the newsletter though I suppose it may generate a bit of feedback. Either way, Shane has come to the rescue and the Dept of Aged Care knows that there is a professional person taking a look at it. **Suellen**

Your soil treatment sounds ideal. For the colour of the concrete you could try a pale terracotta or peach colour, or for a cool look rather than warm, a pale lilac-grey. You could also use this for paths for wheelchairs. Instead of mown grass, you could consider using groundcover plants and Australian grasses or other tufted and strap-leaved plants - many of these are both beautiful and low maintenance.

I don't know any helpful websites - do other members? DS

Hello Jo

Sounds as though a good time was had by all at the Cootamundra weekend. We were sorry not to be able to come to that but it was very worthwhile staying home to attend the Bushcare Awards Night where Norm gave a presentation about the work he does in the St Georges Basin area. He also received a most prestigious award for his work. He was absolutely stunned and thrilled and was quite a celebrity in this area for a few months, his photo seemed to be everywhere. He now shuns all cameras.

Also thank you for an interesting and varied newsletter. Norm and I didn't submit anything much during your time as editor, but we enjoyed very much reading it. Thank you again. Regards,
Maureen and Norm Webb NSW

Very warm congratulations to Norm on his Bushcare award. All our work on garden design would count for little if our natural environment disintegrated around us. DS

HiJo

Thank you for your professionalism and enthusiasm as Garden Design Study Group newsletter editor over the last three years. You did a great job, and it's a comfort to know that you're saying au revoir and not good-bye. With the return of Diana, it's also a comfort that you have a more-than-capable editor to fill your shoes.

Marie and I are delighted by your proposal for the Garden Design Study Group to hold a garden design conference or workshop at our place. Maybe a guided tour around our 10 hectares plus the adjacent Wallingat National Park or local lakes could be included. I look forward to discussing the details with you, and shall contact you within the next few weeks; or feel free to contact Marie or myself whenever it suits you. Regards, **Gordon Rowland** NSW

Diana

Welcome back as leader!

Canberra gardens are looking the better for all the rain we've had, but unfortunately our watering restrictions have been reduced so there is little continuing incentive for people, including our local government, to limit the size of their lawns, or their other unsustainable

practices. Petunias and begonias in the roundabouts are really ridiculous!

Luis Barragan said "that, in light of the environmental, social, psychological, and political chaos that is the twentieth century, it is the duty of every garden to offer a place of serenity". Interestingly, although I lavished neglect on my garden, I could still feel serene about it. I am now clearing my garden of weeds and it is such a pleasure. It's not yet quite respectable enough for the Canberra Chapter of the Study Group to meet here, but given another few months it will be.

Has anyone ever done an index to the GDSG newsletters? It would be quite a chore but it would make them an invaluable resource. Has anything like that been attempted? If not, I might try and get together some members to take it on - sharing it around would reduce the burden. You know what they say - if you want something done, ask a busy person!

Regards, **Shirley Pipitone** ACT

I was delighted to hear you are starting a Chapter (or Branch - more organic) of the GDSG in Canberra. I agree about gardens being places of serenity, even when they fall short of perfection! When the world and politics get too much for me, I always feel I can retreat into our garden for a little peace and contentment.

Regarding an index, in 1996 Maxine Armitage from NSW produced one for GDSG newsletters from 1993 to 1995 (nos. 1 - 11). I noted in a NL that it was 16 pages in length! (Now I just have to find my copy of it!) I think it is an excellent idea Shirley, especially if a few people can help, making it less of a chore. DS

For anyone who may be interested -

Jim Barrow of the Wildflower Society of WA says that this year they are rerunning the Eastern Tour that was run before and after the Perth ASGAP conference in 2005. They are seeking bookings from anyone, even non-members.

We went on this tour last year and can recommend it. You must make arrangements with the Wildflower Society direct. It is possible, but unlikely, that participants from interstate will be required to join the Wildflower Society. **Ian and Tamara Cox** NSW

Dear Diana

Welcome back as newsletter editor, and may I take this opportunity to express my appreciation for Jo's editorial enthusiasm and professionalism over the last three years.

In support of Shane Doherty's proposal [Newsletter, February 2006], members of the Garden Design Study Group should be particularly well placed to gather information on SGAP (APS) members working in horticulture, garden/landscape design and the native nursery industry.

Such information, attractively presented and made available (for sale?) to members of the public - on the internet and/or hard copy - would fill a gap in readily available information, and could - should - become THE recognised resource for an increasingly (as I like to think) eco-

aware population. A great way to advertise the APS and the professional skills and/or products of eco-aware designers, gardeners, horticulturists and suppliers. A great way too, to help counter the creeping loss of regional identity and increasing dogsbreakfastisation of the 'designed' landscape.

It should be fairly straightforward to assemble such a database, to which may be added the database of native nurseries in New South Wales, published on Indigenous Landscape Design Australia's web site: www.ilda.com.au.

The question is whether to produce a single publication for national distribution or separate publications for each State/Territory.

On a separate issue, may I congratulate Shirley Pipitone on her Master of Landscape Architecture degree. [Newsletter, November 2005] Like Shirley, "I am not very optimistic about a citizen-led environment revolution" (nor about the honesty and integrity of our politicians); and I totally support her call for "leadership in environmentally responsible practices, rather than merely following the wishes of clients"

I am reminded of the words of Michael Hough, Professor of Landscape Architecture, York University, Canada. In his 1994 paper 'Cities, Towns and Natural Processes', he states:

"The exotic vegetation that replaces indigenous plant communities in urbanising regions, disassociates us from the rhythms and diversity of the native landscape and a sense of the place, and we are the poorer because of it."

Shirley's mention of George Seddon (Emeritus Professor of Environmental Science at the University of Melbourne), reminds me of his recently published *'The Old Country: Australian Landscapes, Plants and People'* (Cambridge University Press, \$49.95, Hardcover), (see review pi 7), in which he states:

"For thirty years or more, I have been urging people to grow plants in their gardens that come from comparable soils and climates. For thirty years or more, I have been wrong, for these are the plants that are most likely to leap the garden wall."

I must learn to restrain myself when discussing this sort of information with prospective clients.

Finally, in response to Caroline Gunter who "read with alarm some of Gordon Rowland's selected *Corymbia* and *Eucalyptus* species." They were selected by the researchers, not by me. In my opinion though, they are all attractive, useful trees, for selected situations. Caroline's preference for the *Corymbia* 'Summer' series, also deserves comment: *C.* 'Summer Beauty' and *C.* 'Summer Red' are artificial hybrids between *C. ficifolia*, endemic to a small area on the south coast of Western Australia, and *C. ptychocarpa*, endemic to scattered locations across the top end of the Northern Territory. To promote visual unity and ecological integrity, and deter inter-breeding with local *Corymbia* species, I recommend against them.

Regards **Gordon Rowland** Indigenous Landscape Design Australia, Pacific Palms, NSW

I think the horticultural use of beautiful forms or hybrids of Australian plants in gardens is both inevitable and reasonable but should always be balanced against environmental factors such as ecological integrity. Sadly there is little of this in many urban and suburban areas. DS

Dear Diana,

Congratulations for once again taking on leadership of the Study Group; from past experience we know we are in good hands. I hope you enjoy the period you give to this big task and I'll try to be of as much help to you as I can.

Also I'd like to thank Jo for the job she has done as leader over the last few years - a difficult task to balance with a demanding home life and developers knocking at the door. The articles in the newsletter were frequently stimulating and the website is a real achievement and something I think we may even be able to build upon. Jo, I know you will continue to be involved in the group so we'll continue to hear from you - on other matters such as your publication - good luck. **Chris Larkin Vic**

Deadline for NLs

NLs are usually sent out at the beginning of the month (Feb, May, August, Nov). To be sure of being in time, please send your contributions by the end of June for the August NL, end of Sept for the Nov NL, etc. It gives you two months and me one, and helps keep the editor sane. Thank you! Ed

AIMS OF THE GDSDG

Diana Snape Vic

Those of you who joined in the early days of the Study Group will remember our first attempts to identify our aims. We reviewed them once without major changes. Recently in Melbourne we again considered this question. It now seems to me we could summarise these in just two general aims:

- 1 To learn about garden design with Australian plants.
- 2 To encourage and help others to learn about garden design with Australian plants.

There are two parts: as well as learning about garden design and general design principles, we need to know as much as we can about Australian plants and their cultivation. (Plants indigenous to our own area are of special importance - we can't know *all* Australian plants!)

Then there is the marriage of these two - to use the special qualities of this country's indigenous plants in design (and also meet the challenges of using them). This is the whole new world we have barely started exploring. Our knowledge needs to be practical as well as theoretical and we must try to apply it where we can.

The methods by which we achieve our aims (included in those original aims) can be many and varied. The newsletter and our meetings (in population centres - ie, populations of GDSDG members) are vital but these both depend on the efforts of individual members to learn and contribute as they are able. For the first aim we could sum up various methods as looking, visiting, experimenting, reading, listening, thinking. For the second we could add talking, writing, showing.

Please let me know your thoughts - what should our aims be?

(If you are interested. I could reDroduce our oriainal aims in the next NL.)

Use of royalty money

We much prefer the establishment of a book publishing fund. It could be used to support photographic studies of whole or parts of gardens or themes in gardens, etc., as well as more classical garden books.

Supporting an individual garden would require much greater management on a long continuing basis and would be of very local availability. Similarly a design prize would be localised. Further publications would be dispersed throughout the nation and influence a larger number of people. **Ann & Geoffrey Long NSW**

Doug McIver Vic has suggested that we could produce each year a booklet of pictures (with text) of a small selection of well designed Australian plant gardens. These could for example be ones in the Open Garden Scheme. With digital cameras now widely available and popular, more people are taking quality photos which are easily stored on disc. Professional photographers could also be used, expensive but very worthwhile. This way we would gradually build up our records.

This has been done in the 'Our Garden' series in '*Australian Plants*', with the emphasis there on plants rather than garden design.

As Chris Larkin commented in the last newsletter, one possible focus for our next major writing project could be designing for small spaces ("the gardens of the new millennium"). These could be small suburban gardens, courtyard or apartment gardens, or areas close to the house in much larger gardens. This also links to the topic Chris raises below of garden views from inside the house. Current concerns like low water use would need to be incorporated and, after the recent terrible fires in Victoria, the special case of gardens near the house in fire-prone areas could be considered too. DS

A publishing fund for books or booklets and photographs seems to be coming to the fore. Have you any thoughts about this question?

Index to newsletters

Shirley Pipitone ACT

Members were enthusiastic about my idea of creating an index to the newsletters and I think I can probably even get some volunteers to help. One person suggested putting all the newsletters on a CD, edited to remove housekeeping and non-design stuff. If we were to do that, I suspect the task would grow because straight text on a CD can be tedious in PDF form. It would be readily searchable but I think it would need illustrations. Then of course, if we were to do all that work, the obvious next step would be to sell the CD commercially.

This is letting my imagination run away with me. What we have are several options:

- a hardcopy index for study group members - not very useful for new members unless someone is prepared to search for and copy articles for them
- all newsletters on CD in sequence, searchable but no illustrations - does someone have all newsletters on disk? (*Between us, Jo and I have (almost) all NLs on computer. DS*)
- all newsletters on CD in sequence, searchable with illustrations would have limited

commercial potential because of lack of structure

- newsletters edited into topics - this would give it chapters and we could then produce either an e-book or a CD.

Diana, you and the other authors may have gone through this thinking process in developing ideas for your wonderful book but I thought I would open up debate anyway, starting with the index idea.

It is a very good idea to collect all the newsletters on a disc and also to do something to make earlier NLs accessible. We certainly went through all of them in preparation for writing the book. I'm glad you are opening up the debate and we'll see what the feedback is from this NL about your suggestions. Indexing is a big task but it would be great to have one available. DS

Would you like to have an index? Which of Shirley's options?

DESIGN

Inside looking out

Chris Larkin Vic

It is certainly possible to design a garden that gives great joy when observed from inside a building but I wonder how often we design from this angle - or for views from these many and varied vantage points. Here is another aspect of design to be considered when planning and, most particularly, when choosing and placing plants in a garden. The psychological benefits of being able to look out at a garden with birds and the effects of changing weather and light and seasonal colour probably can't be over-estimated. Just this morning I was speaking to an environmental officer employed by the local council and she was saying that she was having great difficulty getting developers of aged care units and facilities to see the point of planting more naturalistic gardens and using plants such as banksias that would be bird-attracting. She has a theory that elderly and infirm people want to see nature - birds, and the differing moods of wind and light on the leaves of a tree. **Bev Fox** said something similar at our last meeting when she spoke about how important it was at the time for her very ill mother to be able to look up into the canopy of a tree while lying inside - this simple act did in some very real way make a difficult life due to illness worth living.

The following are some things to consider in relation to views from windows. I have drawn heavily on a list supplied by **Pam Yarra** when making these points.

- Position of window is important for what it is possible to see. Clerestory windows and clear skylights enable views of sky and canopy. Mirrors can provide a reflected view that is intriguing.
- Given the position of the window and your likely position in the room e.g. sitting at a desk, lying in bed or standing at a kitchen bench, what do you want to see? Do you want to look out over plants to see further into the garden, have a close-up view of a particular plant like a banksia that might be bird-attracting, look at or through the trunks of trees or taller shrubs or view a pond. The list is endless.
- Nowadays we are just as likely to be looking from some windows at a deck, patio,

courtyard, terrace, (with or without pergola), as we extend the inside outdoors. We can look at ways of decorating this extension of the built environment of the house, softening it with climbers, hanging baskets, large and small pots, which will integrate it into the garden, if there is one. In many cases there may be nothing more than the outdoor living area so it may be even more critical to find ways to turn this otherwise sterile environment into something more gardenlike.

» Screening is usually important for reasons of privacy but sometimes some people may not want to be completely screened from the activity and the comings and going of the front street.

• Plant selection for height and seasonal interest is critical. Placement of plants is equally critical. As a general rule I would say that it is better to look at a garden view than have this view blocked by a single shrub.

There is certainly a greater element of surprise in entering a room, particularly if it is for the first time, to see what the view outside holds as it cannot really be anticipated. Looking out from a window, a garden, or part of a garden such as a tree canopy through a clerestory window, is held suspended but never static as a framed picture. Views, like that of the Snapes' fernery, may be foreshortened and intimate, almost introspective; long and distant views, or over-views, like most views from windows at the rear of their house connect you to the garden bringing the outside closer. The views from Brian and Diana's windows are extremely good and it is impossible to believe that any less attention has been given to constructing these more private views than those you experience as you walk or sit in the garden itself.

I hope this is the start of a discussion in the newsletter on this topic which I'm sure many of you will have some opinion about.

Designing a garden for views from inside the house

Margaret James Vic

The first question that springs to mind here is: What is a view? For a suburban house, views may include not just the garden, but fences, houses, street, cars, passersby, trees in the neighbours' gardens, TV aerials, power poles, telephone wires, sky. Much of this is neither wonderful nor exciting.

Looking around at the views from inside my own house, I realise that I've found the creation of pleasing views from the front rooms of my suburban house much more challenging than from the back. This may be because I am caught between two conflicting aims, to screen my activities from the street at the same time as maintaining my own outlook. From my study in the front of the house I can see quite a lot beyond my own front garden - neighbouring houses and tall eucalypts which take the light beautifully on sunny afternoons. I am lucky enough to live in a quiet court, where the wires are all underground and there are no footpaths. I enjoy seeing some movement in the street - children on bikes, people taking their dogs to the park.

But a short walk round the neighbourhood convinced me that most people do not share this

preference. Most windows in the front of houses are screened by curtains or blinds, fences or dense vegetation. The gardens are not designed for the occupants to look at, but for the neighbours and the passersby. I wondered what the landscape designers had to say on the subject of views and front gardens and looked up Edna Walling and Ellis Stones.

In *The Vision of Edna Walling*, I found that 'creating views from inside looking out, not just within the garden itself, was of enormous importance to Walling'. Her publications contain many expressive, softly lit black-and-white photographs taken through doorways and windows and there are frequent references to the subject in her writings. For example 'To look through doorways and windows on to fresh green foliage in shady courtyards is to live comfortably and gently in summer¹.

Unless a garden was able to 'borrow rural landscape¹, Walling always planted garden boundaries thickly to form a natural screen. In small gardens, she used trees on the boundaries to create a sense of distance. She wrote that 'I think it is always desirable that a garden should be made livable by screening it from the public gaze, rather than to make it a means of flaunting one's horticultural abilities.¹ 'I do feel that the more brilliant garden displays should, wherever possible be kept for the rear of the house. There are, of course, those who prefer to display their horticultural powers and wares for all who pass to see, and there are those who have not thought that there are better and more interesting ways of dealing with the area between the street and the house than with standard roses and annuals; and to the latter may I suggest lots and lots of trees and lawn and evergreen shrubs to conceal the boundaries'.

Walling often designed front gardens to be unrestrained and relaxed, back gardens to be carefully designed and structured. Perhaps the other way round might be more common today?

Ellis Stones seems to have had some different ideas from his mentor, making a plea that 'in designing your garden you give some thought to the view along the street.¹ He recognises that this is difficult, given the 'most unhappy muddle¹ that is characteristic of suburbia: 'a street filled with totally different-looking houses, hidden behind an array of fences and walls of various heights and in contrasting materials, each having not the slightest relationship with any other...¹

As he pointed out, in trying to establish our own individuality we have built thousands of different styles of house in a multiplicity of materials... and we have made the unfortunate mistake of dividing all of these with ugly paling fences. It has all been unwitting, but the effect has been inevitable - we have destroyed the landscape, that most valuable of assets.

But there are other possibilities. For example, Frank Lloyd Wright developed ideas of blending building and artificial landscapes to achieve a harmonious communal environment. He believed front gardens should appear as a flowing sequence, creating a park-like effect along the street. Wright favoured the elimination of footpaths and the extension of united front gardens to the kerb. One implication is that part of one's civic responsibility is to join with the neighbours to create and maintain the parklike feeling. Easy to say, but difficult to achieve, even in areas like mine where the original subdivision was influenced by these ideals, more than thirty years ago.

References (please see next page):

Trisha Dixon and Jennie Churchill, *The Vision of Edna Walling*, Bloomings Books 1988

Ellis Stones, *The Ellis Stones Garden Book*, Nelson, 1976

Simon Plant, 'Golf Links innovation', *The Heidelberger*, 22 February 1984 (remarks on Frank Lloyd Wright)

My Special View

Joan Barrett Vic

My 'Special View from House to Garden' encompasses most of what I refer to as the back yard. It is where I first planted Australian plants and discovered I was passionate about them. I am looking northward with a sunken area on my left which is partially screened by a raised mound, a prime spot for displaying those 'little treasures' such as *Epacris* 'Pink Crystals', which hasn't grown a lot but which hasn't stopped flowering since Mothers Day 2005. There's also a mauve *Thryptomene saxicola* which I'd like to remove but tell myself to be more sensible at my time of life and forget that I could fill its space with lots of exciting and colourful beauties. After all it does flower for months and those far-spreading branches are attractive in an antique silver sort of way.

Further out, in the area that remained for a long time covered with what I dubiously called lawn and then converted to 'space' are low growers like wahlenbergia, bracteanthas, *Pelargonium rodneyanum*, Common Dampiera (*D. linearis*), Morning Iris (*Orthrosanthus laxus*), *Conostylis candicans* (which never flowers) and chorizemas. Then almost central there's a big *Eucalyptus macrandra* (Long-flowered Marlock) which flowers in summer and its lime green blossoms attract masses of parrots. Beyond this comes a clump of callistemons - my first ever a red *C. linearis* from NSW - but have since added 'Reeves Pink' and 'Mauve Mist' which bring me joy, though brief, when flowering; at other times I appreciate their mature trunks. Through these I can see to the back fence which is almost entirely (I'm still trying) obscured by further plantings and a mound of imported earth awaiting the autumn rains.

The eastern fence used to be mainly cyclone wire but is now high and wooden as imposed by new people next door. So this has necessitated new plantings and lattices to encourage hardenbergas, etc. An *Acacia vestita* (Hairy Wattle) helps me with screening here too.

'Inside looking out' is an important topic for owners of both small and large gardens. We'll look forward to hearing your ideas and suggestions. DS

PLANTS

The wealth of articles for this NL has meant that two long articles on plants have been held over.

From **Australian Horticulture** Feb 2006

Native succulents

Gwen Elliot Vic writes of the showy Australian succulents which should not be overlooked by gardeners who are turning to drought-tolerant plants to reduce their garden's need for water.

Disphyma crassifolium subspecies *clavellatum* (Rounded Noon-flower) and *Carpobrotus glaucescens* (Coastal Noon-flower) are two well known ones with vividly coloured daisy-like flowers. *Calandrinia* species, with smaller but just as colourful flowers, are found in the more arid areas of Australia. If you're thinking big, both the Boab (*Adansonia gregorii*) and the Australian Bottle Tree (*Brachychiton rupestris*) are succulents which store water in their trunks rather than in swollen stems and leaves.

Orchids and mycorrhizal fungi

Research in Melbourne has established the vital role mycorrhizal fungi play in the propagation of the terrestrial orchids which make up 80% of the 1200 or so orchid species in Australia. Using this information, scientists are propagating a number of *Caladenia* and *Diuris* species, including endangered ones, for successful reintroduction to the wild. Mycorrhizal fungal filaments extend plants' root systems, improving nutrient and water take-up, root and plant growth, and general plant health. It is estimated 95% of the world's land plants may form mycorrhizal relationships in their native habitats and such links are being found for more and more Australian plants.

No wonder we can have trouble re-introducing indigenous plants to soils which have been greatly modified. DS

GARDENS

What is a garden?

Answers to this question were given by members of NE Vic Branch at their last meeting.

From **Barbara Buchanan's** report:

It seems everyone had given it thought which delighted me. Some of us opted to try and express it in one or two sentences, others had a list of points which sometimes extended into what is a good garden, or our other query, what do we mean by design? While there was as expected a lot of similarity, there were varied ways of expressing the basics. Two very interesting contributions - "a piece of ground manipulated by man to please touch, taste, smell and vision" (**Mary Ward**) - and anticipation, the thrill that comes with almost every garden activity, the picture in the mind's eye of the future beauty. I read a quote describing a garden, as opposed to a productive plot, as a luxury. There may have been an initial agreement and then a howl of protest. For us, at least, a garden is an essential part of life.

Thea McCarthy

A garden can be an extension of the home and provide the privacy of outdoor living areas - a shady courtyard in the summer and a sunny courtyard in the winter:

- use of deciduous vines to provide summer shade
- focus can be on hard landscaping with paving, rocks and pebbles and perhaps a small pool with a few plants.

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- can be more tropical with rainforest plants and vines

A garden can be in harmony with nature, a retreat and source of peace:

- retreats can include seating in open sunny areas and shady areas with summer trees
- screening plants may be used to hide unwanted views, or a borrowed view may be more pleasing
- focal points such as a moss covered rock or a plant in a pot in a small garden or a feature tree in a larger one
- appropriate balance between open space and garden beds is visually restful
- some repetition can be restful to the eye and provide unity in the garden

A garden can be formal or informal:

- formal gardens have symmetry and informal gardens tend to be asymmetrical.
- both styles require elements to be in balanced proportion - balance is visually pleasing when the effect is harmonious.

A garden is a refuge for birds and other small wildlife - they can become links in the chain of wildlife corridors:

- access to water ponds and birdbaths will encourage birds and wildlife
- diverse habitat selection for birds, such as tall trees with dense understorey including shelter, insect-pollinated, nectar, seed and fruit plants
- access to ponds, logs, rocks and leaf litter for lizards and frogs

A garden can reflect the character of the locality:

- indigenous gardens can evoke the feeling of being in the bush where plants can be chosen for their ability to survive the local environment, their form, texture, colour, smell of their leaves and scent of their flowers.
- can be planned with soft, indistinct boundaries with subtle pathways which lead to a seating area in a quiet garden corner

A garden can require minimal maintenance with good planning:

- maintenance, such as weeding, mulching, raking gravel paths, sweeping hard surfaces and controlling pests, needs to be carried out fairly regularly in order to enjoy the garden
- ongoing maintenance, such as pruning, removing old plants and planting new ones, for garden renewal
- plants with similar watering requirements to be planted together
- emphasis on waterwise principles

Jan Hall

Whether people realize it or not, we all need some contact with the natural world - even if it is secondhand and "someone else will see to that" - maybe it's the husband or wife as the case may be. Just reflect on those who are sick, disturbed or displaced, and miserable populations in this world. I am sure they would all benefit greatly if given the opportunity to live with a garden, no matter how small.

Hope for future results or the anticipation of watching things grow to see what will happen and the joy when our hopes for that process become a reality are all part of what a garden is about.

The static or minimalist garden can be appropriate in commercial districts. At least, it is something living and green to which people can unconsciously relate. I have to also acknowledge that it may be the only type of garden that many busy people, with other priorities, are ever likely to create.

So, it's up to the landscapers and gardeners of this world who can see the wider value to spread the message by creating our gardens and thus helping to make our surroundings healthier and happier places.

Paul Kennedy

"A garden is an arrangement of plants that depicts the aspirations of the creator."

He added further aspects in point form:

space, vistas;	eye-catching, delightful;	creativity - ponds, ornaments, rocks;
tranquility;	water conservation;	habitat for nature, birds, lizards, etc;
arrangement of plants for texture, colour, flower;		able to be maintained.

Canberra Branch first garden visit

Shirley Pipitone ACT

The Russell garden

The house is located towards the top of quite a steep block with a very wide curved frontage. A good framework of mature eucalypts has been retained but the garden is otherwise only about three years old. Planting is entirely native, a mix of indigenous and non-indigenous, except for herbs and one shrub. The suburb of Aranda has always had a strong "bush" character, reflecting its location adjacent to Black Mountain Reserve. Street trees and trees in gardens surrounding the Russell garden are also predominantly eucalypts, creating a lovely backdrop for a "new" Australian plant garden. The garden suits the style of the house.

The structure of the garden was essentially in place when the Russells purchased the place. A timber fence in line with the house divides the garden into "the inside" and "the outside". Outside is a broad sweep of dry garden and it is difficult to see what the final character of this area will be because the shrubs are small. Generally the garden shows good balance between eucalypts, shrubs and ground covers but the outside garden seems to contain a lot of medium to large shrubs. Greater use of grasses and groundcovers to leave lines of sight between the larger plants would create a more interesting effect. Drip irrigation has been installed throughout the garden and is evidently used judiciously. Some use of low swales in the outside garden probably help minimise runoff.

On one side of the outside garden, informal terracing with local rocks leads to the driveway and entrance to the house. A rock retaining wall up to about a metre high along one side of the path to the house emphasises the steepness of the block and creates interest by bringing plants closer to eye level.

The inside garden comprises a NW facing courtyard off the back veranda, a triangular area between the house and neighbours' fences, and a narrow utility area. The courtyard is the focus of attention. At roughly the same level as the house, the courtyard creates a seamless transition between indoors and outdoors. A small bed at the edge of the veranda and pot plants in the courtyard help to link house and garden. The paved surface of the courtyard links to paths meandering around the garden, which blend well even though they are not all of the same material. Weathered outdoor furniture, a large squarish pergola and dappled shade invite the visitor to relax and enjoy the sound of trickling water from an attractive column and ball fountain. Crimson rosellas have learned how to stop the ball from rotating to make it easier for them to drink from the fountain!

Eucalypts in the courtyard screen the summer sun but new tree plantings will increase the shade in this area. New allocasuarinas in the utility area may grow too large, depending on the species. Climbers may have been more appropriate in this narrow area. Shrubs will screen the fences and the bare wall at the front of house when they are fully grown.

Windows in the house give beautiful views of the courtyard and striking white tree trunks. Windows at the back of the house, where the ground cut is deepest, face an informal retaining wall/bank with shrubs about a metre higher beyond the path. This will create a green curtain when plants are fully grown. However, lower shrubs in the front would give an impression of greater distance to the view, and a seat in the corner would be enticing.

Distant views from the courtyard are stunning but are lost when you sit down. Members suggested lowering the fence towards the west by up to 30cm or replacing the fence with see-through metal mesh fencing. The courtyard is far enough from the street that these measures should not compromise privacy. As one member put it, the slope of the block "creates ups and downs and curves" which need hard landscape materials to retain soil at path edges and ground cuts. Local rock, much from on site, is used very effectively throughout the garden. In some places rock is a feature, in other places it is used with subtlety.

The use of rock and repetition of tall pot shapes and dianellas in and out of pots help unify the garden and give a peaceful feeling. Most shrubs in the courtyard planting have small foliage so they are not competing for attention. Instead they allow tufty plants to stand out and they direct attention to the broader foliage of *Grevillea* 'Deua Flame' with its flowers catching the full sun. Amongst the small foliated shrubs, one with small shiny leaves truly sparkled (*Leionema elatius x lamprophyllum*), showing the power of texture. A large dead tree trunk with *Poa* and *Lomandra* sp. around also provided good texture and contrast with the smooth olive trunks. The garden made a number of subtle appeals to the senses: mint fragrance from a prostanthera wafted down to the courtyard, the sound of trickling water, the touch of shrubs as you brush past, the noticeable contrast of sun and shade in the courtyard compared with the quiet shade of the back corner.

Overall the Russell garden was a delight to visit.

"Gardening is not a rational act."

Margaret Atwood

Gardening is "a joy that never fails."

Viscountess Wolsetey

Slow gardening

Chris Larkin Vic

Have you heard of the Slow Food movement? - a return to appreciating local produce and taking care with cooking and enjoying food as opposed to pre-packaged and fast food. Well we spent time in the meeting talking about the notion of 'Slow Gardening' as opposed to the instant backyard blitz variety. Nice concept isn't it? There really aren't any good quick fixes for gardens - patience and knowledge are essential - and we mustn't shy away from saying so. While encouraging people to have a go at gardening with Australian plants, it can be said that being able to do so with any great degree of success is arguably more difficult than working with tried and true exotics. Perhaps members might have something more to say about this idea.

Slow gardens

In 'Gardening Australia', October 2005, Michael McCoy took the contrast between 'fast food' and the response of the 'Slow Food' movement and applied it to gardens. He describes "virtually instant gardens, which not only look almost complete and fully grown upon installation, but also change as little as possible from then on." With 'slow gardens' he says "We are nurtured as we nurture.... The slow and sometimes time-consuming processes of gardening - the weeding, the pruning, the deadheading, the mulching - are not just beneficial, they're hugely enjoyable. ... We should enjoy the peaks and troughs that indicate the seasonal rhythms rather than deny them... low maintenance simply means low reward." DS

The garden of Ian and Tamara Cox NSW

I hope many members have seen the current issue of 'Your Garden' (Autumn 2006) containing an excellent article on this garden. It includes helpful advice on gardening and designing with Australian plants, based on years of experience. Ian and Tamara say they were pleased both APS and the GDSG got such good publicity but "We were a little disappointed that the photos didn't show any garden design plantings." The photos are beautiful but tend to concentrate on close-ups of individual flowers and colourful scenes of the natural bush area of the garden. It still should inspire many gardeners to consider using Australian plants. Congratulations to Ian and Tamara. I hope they have been able to obtain copies of the garden photos taken.

BOOKS***The Old Country: Australian Landscapes, Plants and People* by George Seddon**

(Cambridge University Press 2005)

Diana Snape Vic

(Vic members may have read much of this review but there are some extra comments.)

The title of this book refers to the actual age of this continent in geological terms and also to a phrase many Australians once used for England. Thus it links our natural environment and the cultural history of most of us in earlier years. Both of these influence how we live today and more specifically how we garden. Resolution of this dichotomy is a principal theme of the book. The aeoloav of Australia, its ancient rocks and lack of recent alaciation or sianificant volcanic activity.

has led to the dearth of topsoil which baffled our ancestors and which we are still coming to terms with today. In this and many other ways George Seddon says "We have been slow learners".

The book has wide scope, skilfully weaving together history, botany, language, culture, environmental science and garden design. The author could well be called a Renaissance man, wearing his scholarship lightly and showing wisdom, clarity and humour in his writing. (I liked his quote from Oscar Wilde that England was "too green and badly lit".) Among the sections based on groups of plants is Seddon's list of four main constraints and responsibilities for gardeners, which I would support, plus mention of other more subtle ones. Another section discusses the families of conifers present in Australia, their Gondwanan links and special roles in gardens. In the Proteaceae family, he concentrates on the iconic banksias, particularly their taxonomists and their artists from Ferdinand Bauer to Celia Rosser.

"On being deciduous" looks at the different nature of this process in Australia. Here we can appreciate the wonderful variety of types of deciduous bark of eucalypts. (The beautiful photos in *'Australian Plants'* June 2005 show bark variety in rainforest species of SE Qld.) There are a number of deciduous and semi-deciduous trees and shrubs in northern Queensland, the Northern Territory and the Kimberley. In other parts of Australia, patterns of seasonal change are more subtle. Reflecting one of his professorial roles, Seddon shows a preoccupation with names and language - what is "Australian", a "weed", a "garden"? - challenging our own choice of words.

One section that most interested me was titled "Mediterraneity". In this, Seddon does what few authors are brave enough to do in writing and admits he has been wrong. (See Gordon Rowland's letter page 6.) This is in regard to his advocating the use in gardens of plants from comparable soils and climate, those he now says are "most likely to leap the garden wall". (His statistics for the spread of weeds in Australia are devastating.) He says two aspects of a "Mediterranean garden", plant selection and style, should be separated. The image of such a garden in Australia, based on climate and latitude, is suspect (backed by tables of comparative measurements). He now recommends we forget the term and use indigenous plant material but with awareness of Mediterranean style.

The section most relevant to GDSG members is probably "By design". Seddon says "Design ... is an inescapably hybrid craft, with a practical base and 'pure' design overlays." Garden design in Australia from the early days of settlement has been linked to the availability of water, one of the practical constraints. He thinks, over time, artists have responded with greater sensitivity to the Australian landscape than have landscape architects. Visual qualities of plants relate to the environment that has nurtured them, so local plants are often most satisfying in design terms. "The Return of the Native", his initial working title, could thus be based on both horticultural and design grounds. He gives several reasons why a garden designer might still want to use suitable, non-local plants. The concept of what we call a 'natural garden' is mentioned. He points out the

need for an appropriate vocabulary to describe Australian gardens and plants (something GDSG members have said in the past). He discusses "edge phenomena" - those naturally rich environments of verge plants along the roadside, the perennial border in a garden, or a clearing in the forest. Seddon also describes and comments on the work of three pioneer designers, Edna Walling and Ellis Stones in Victoria and Oliver Dowell in Western Australia. I think there is much to be gained from reading and considering this section.

George Seddon has written other memorable books, from his early "Sense of Place" to the recent "Landprints: Reflections on Place and Landscape", but for me this challenging book speaks most clearly, eloquently and persuasively. Highly recommended.

SNIPPET

A note in the Editorial of *Australian Horticulture* Feb 2006 should comfort us gardeners (including **Suellen**). It quotes the results of a study of 2805 elderly men and women by medical researchers at Dubbo in NSW. The study found that gardening daily reduced the risk of developing dementia by 36%. Of much less significance to us was the fact that drinking in moderation produced a 34% lowering of the dementia risk. However a combination of the two might be worth considering! Unfortunately there was no comment about garden designers.

MEETINGS

Canberra Branch meetings

Shirley Pipitone ACT

Next meeting: Sunday May 21 at Barbara Daly's garden in Cook

The first meeting of the Canberra Branch of the ASGAP Garden Design Study Group was held on Wednesday March 1 at Hilary Merritt's place in Lyneham. It was held in the evening to maximise the number of people who could come.

Our planning meeting went well. We decided to meet monthly with the general formula being the third Thursday morning of the month alternating with the third Sunday morning. The general formula will be flexibly applied. Thursday meetings will start at 9.30am and Sundays at 10am, winding up at 12noon or 12.30pm respectively. On Sundays we could travel a little further afield but we decided to limit ourselves initially to the Southern Tablelands region to keep our focus on reasonably local plants and conditions. We may meet occasionally on a Saturday if it suits the garden owner better.

We brainstormed a lot of ideas for gardens to visit and a few members are following up their suggestions. Meanwhile I am following up the rest and I will draw up a schedule of meetings. I would like to have the meetings planned at least six months in advance so we can put the schedule on the ANPS Canberra website. Tentative dates for meetings are: Thursday April 20, Sunday May 21, Thursday June 15, Sunday July 16, Thursday August 17, Sunday Sept 17, Thursday October 19 and Sunday November 19.

For discussion of index to newsletters please see page 8.

Report of meeting on March 14

For our first real meeting we decided to join the ANPS Canberra Daytime Group on March 14 at Andy and Janet Russell's garden in Aranda. (Garden visit report page 15)

I handed out forms which I drew up based on the garden design criteria set out in NL29. The ANPS Daytime Group meetings are shorter than our meetings will normally be, so there was no time to brief members on the form apart from reminding them to please be constructive in their comments. So members were thrown in the deep end! But we did have a lot of conversations with each other as we wandered around the garden.

I am planning to focus on some of the design criteria in future meetings, depending on the strengths of the garden we visit. That means I'll have to be organised and look at the gardens myself beforehand.

For queries or information please ring **Shirley Pipitone**

Melbourne Branch meetings

Next meeting: Sunday May 28 at Cranbourne RBG for the Opening of the Australian Garden! The official Opening time is 11 am. We will meet at 12.30pm at the bottom of the steps going down from the visitors' centre. It might be a good idea to bring your own lunch - there will be food available but there could be quite a crowd. To let us know you are coming, please phone **Chris Larkin** or **Diana Snape** I'm sure we'll have plenty to talk about after we've seen the new garden.

All members of the GDSG are most welcome at this special meeting!

Following meeting: Sunday June 11 at Cheryl Southall's, 2pm,

Report of meeting on Sunday March 12

Chris Larkin

As scheduled, the small group that gathered at Brian and Diana Snape's home on a very hot Sunday afternoon discussed future directions for the group - both national and local - and considerations for garden design when looking out through the windows of a building (see page 9).

Directions for the Study Group - national and local

For a while now some of us have thought it would be a good idea to look again at the aims of the group as one way of bringing focus to our activities. I believe the initial aims were revised around 8-10 years ago. After our Sunday meeting the national group may want to adopt two quite simple aims that were proposed by Diana (see page 7). A lot of ideas were tossed around about what sorts of things might be possible or desirable for the study group to do or work towards achieving:

The website

The website was seen as being a most valuable resource to inform website visitors and hopefully it will attract new members. A suggestion was made to include one worthwhile article from each newsletter as a relatively simple way to regularly change the content on the site. (We also

wondered if it is possible to easily tell how many 'hits' the site had over a specified period as an indication of interest.)- The suggestion put forward by Shane Doherty to use the site to publicise the professional qualifications of members is another way to make websites informative. I expect that we will hear more about this idea in the future.

Pictures and prose

We talked about what kind of information the group could eventually produce to encourage and support gardeners, ourselves and the broader public, in our efforts to design Australian plant gardens. There was general agreement that any hard copy material - book, magazine or series of fact sheets - will need to have excellent pictures that relate closely to any accompanying text. The text may talk about design elements exemplified in the picture! That would make a nice change.

This means we really do need good pictures of beautiful gardens. Many members may now be using a digital camera which makes taking good pictures easier. On the other hand the group has the money available to pay for the services of a professional photographer. The greater problem is finding enough good gardens for photographic purposes as it is sometimes quite difficult, or impossible, to take good, interesting photographs in many otherwise quite lovely gardens. Perhaps we should organise for some of the gardens in the Australian Open Garden Scheme to be photographed - a suggestion already put forward by Diana in the last newsletter. Members too can play a part by developing at least one section of their garden to a point of photographic perfection.

The newsletter

We also thought it would be a good idea to try to devote a section of each newsletter to a focused discussion of some aspect of design. For instance, later in the meeting, we talked about designing gardens for enjoyment from inside the house looking out. We thought this might be a good topic to stimulate thinking and get feedback from members in the next newsletter. If we have enough interest and discussion on a range of subjects (most likely pertinent to small gardens) then maybe, just maybe, we are on the way to producing a booklet or magazine of some value.

A garden walk

Part way through the meeting we took a walk outside to look at all the changes that Brian and Diana have made to the garden. On a little over 1/4acre, or 1200m², the garden always feels much larger than it is despite containing outbuildings - a studio and garden shed - a small propagating area and quite large vegetable garden. It is a wonderful garden to walk around as it has many different areas of interest. The 'new' large (vergola) roofed deck that connects to the house at house level is settling nicely into the garden. A gently sloping timber walkway takes you from this deck down into the garden and at one point acts as a bridge spanning between two ponds. This timber walkway now meets with a brick path which is an extension to an existing brick path leading back to the house via a small paved courtyard. I always find the balance of open and closed space remarkable and one of the garden's strongest features but then the vistas that have been created in such a relatively small area are also lovely.

NE Vic Branch meetings

Barbara Buchanan

I was going through my pile of N.E. Branch papers and found the notice of our first meeting in April 1996. So we are now 10 years old, I'll have to bake another cake to celebrate.

Next meeting: Sat May 6 10.30 at Paul and Kerri Davenport's new block,

Following meetings: **Sat June 17** 10.30am for 11. Normal meeting.

Sat August 5 Kennedys', especially in relation to small trees for house and street.

For information ring **Barbara Buchanan**

Report of meeting on Saturday March 25

We had a reasonable turnout considering the changed date; perhaps a few forgot. People were very kind about the garden, and the Firewheel Tree (*Stenocarpus sinuatus*) was magnificent, but I am all too aware of empty spaces and hangdog appearances. Discussion began with the general trend of the group; it seems we are doing more or less what members are looking for and no great changes are necessary. What I think of as our 'publishing effort'¹ will be combined with Wang Group's small tree project undertaken by **Jan Hall**. The aim is to have information ready for councils or private gardeners on request, not have to go away and think about it. Small trees that are reliable and predictable in performance and readily available are in limited supply and there are many extra constraints on finding suitable street trees. Jan hopes to offer some different choices suitable for our area. The later thought I have had is maybe what seems boring and familiar to us is perhaps not common elsewhere and could be signature plants to establish an identity for the region. Meanwhile everyone can help by observing street and other trees and taking photographs. The first meeting of the subcommittee will be held on April 8th.

There was some discussion on suitable ways to use profits from the book to further Study Group aims. Diana is always open to ideas.

Try it out with suggestions and/or snippets for the next NL. She would like to see a large attendance of study groupers at the opening of the Cranbourne garden on May 28th - there will be a short meeting of the group afterwards. With regard to the money, we were generally in favour of further publications and preparation of a slide show/powerpoint presentation which could be lent to groups or interested members.

Somehow seasonal change came into the conversation and I made it the topic for your thoughts for the June meeting. Scribble down a few ideas, don't try to cover the whole range of possibilities. I guess what we really want to develop is ways to keep the garden full of interest at all seasons, which may mean diluting the spring flush. You may also have strong thoughts on the differences between native and exotic seasonal changes. Maybe some form of hard landscaping helps the trying times. I know my garden would look a lot better right now if I were able to water it thoroughly-but how far should I go (if I could)? Chew it over and bring along what seems to you to be the important ideas.

Discussion on 'What is a garden?' (see page 13). We discussed an ABC Gardening Australia series on "The best of Australian Garden Design" with which we were not impressed. Jan is quoted

as refusing the name 'garden' to those creations which show no seasonal change and where everything is kept clipped and manicured to preset standards. This may be acceptable around public buildings but is regrettable in parks and deplorable in private gardens.

Sydney Branch meetings

Next meeting: Sunday May 28 at Ros Andrew's and Betty Maloney's

We will meet at Betty Maloney's house at 11 am. Jo will give you the address when you RSVP. We will then go on to Ros Andrews' where we will lunch on the lawn [BYO everything] and see the progress her garden has made in the 4 years since we visited it.

Both these gardens are of course sub tropical and coastal - especially Ros's, although well protected. It will be a most interesting day to chart the progress of an old garden where the native plant garden movement in Sydney began and now under new ownership and a wonderful newish garden flourishing under the [typical] expert attention and boundless enthusiasm of a GDSD member!

Please RSVP ASAP. I know some members are making the trip from the country to see these gardens; it will be as always a terrific day out.

My thanks to member **Pam Renouf** for organising it.

The following Sydney meeting will be on **Sunday Oct 8** at Mai and Jenny Johnson's newly opened Australian plant garden and rainforest walk at Kenthurst in the Hills District. Mai and Jenny ran the Annangrove Grevillea Nursery for years and have semi-retired to create this wonderful garden full of dry sclerophyll and rainforest species. To see these plants - mostly Sydney sandstone indigenous, except of course the rainforest! - bursting at the seams with health and vigour, planted in great swathes in a garden setting is a sheer delight. There may be some plants for sale as well. We can picnic in the garden - a gold coin donation for the local Rotary.

Please contact **Jo Hambrett**

for further details; by the end of September for the October meeting.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Bryan Loft Vic

New members

A warm welcome to the following new members of the Study Group. (Canberra is conspicuous in the list!) We hope you enjoy your membership and look forward to sharing ideas with you.

Ian Anderson Hughes, **ACT** Ian is interested in use of native grasses and associated herbs, and designs which attract birds. He has an agricultural science background but no special expertise — yet.

Sue Booker Mt Rumney, **Tas** Sue is interested in formal design using native/indigenous plants. Sue has a Diploma of Horticulture (Landscape) and a Certificate of Landscape Design and operates her own landscape design business.

Shane Doherty Petersham, **NSW** Shane operates her own business A D Garden Planning.

Linda Johnston Gordon, ACT Linda is interested in local native plants and bringing the local bush into the garden by incorporating the owners' various needs into the overall design, so they blend well together without looking contrived. She has contact with a lot of people who have just average gardens, mostly or totally exotic, but want to try something more interesting. Being able through GDSG to show them examples of native gardens and having lots of suitable plants would be very helpful.

Maureen Mallard Gowrie, ACT Maureen has a Certificate in Horticulture and is particularly interested in integrating native and non-native plants, also water-wise plants.

Leslie & Neville Page Wamboin, ACT Lesley and Neville have a rural garden and are interested in blending the home garden with the surrounds. Lesley has a Diploma of visual art.

Els Wynen Flynn, ACT Els is also a member of the Friends of the Australian Botanic Gardens.

All the interests mentioned above are important topics for study by the Group. Members are invited to offer comments and advice, to contribute to ongoing discussion in the NL.

I noticed in the ANPS Canberra Region December 2005 Journal that Ian Anderson has been awarded a Life Membership - congratulations, Ian. Also the editor and producer of that Journal happen to be Leslie and Neville Page. DS

Renewals: Neil & Wendy Marriott (2 years), Georgina & Jonathan Perse and Warnambool APS.

Membership renewal time

There will be no change in the subscription for 2006 to 2007 but there will be an additional category - **members who receive newsletters by email**, at a reduced subscription:

\$10 for one or two members at the same address;

\$6 for email-subscription members;

\$5 for full-time students or pensioners;

\$20 for overseas members.

Please send your membership form and cheque, made out to the Garden Design Study Group, to Bryan Loft before July 31. Remember you can pay a subscription for two years (\$20 normal subs, \$12 email, \$10 concession) to reduce cheque/bank fees (the years go by so quickly too).

Happy anniversary to NE Vic Branch! And congratulations to Barbara on her ten years of leadership - she and her members have achieved such a lot. The excellent booklet they have recently produced in conjunction with APS Wangaratta is just one example.

I'm sorry there are no pictures or plans in this NL - how about it, photographers and plan-drawers? We know how many words a good picture is worth and I think the same goes for garden plans. Currently the printed NL is restricted to black and white but email-subscription members will be able to see any coloured photos in their full glory. (Now that we are on broadband, we enjoy them too.) Please don't hesitate to send in any small 'snippets', to add interest and variety to the NL. Enjoy the rest of autumn and the start of winter.

Best wishes

o/ - ,.
 > ~ ~ * ~

Diana Snape