



An architect's view of practical plans

GARDENS FOR LIVING. By Helen Lochhead. Greenhouse Publications. 181pp. Illust. \$35.00. Reviewer: HOPE HEWITT.

THE SUB-title of this most practical book is *A Framework for Garden Design*. It is unusual among the stream of attractively illustrated and useful books on gardening in that it concentrates exclusively on one aspect of gardens — their plan — and approaches it from the point of view of an architect. Even more important, a woman architect, because the author thinks of a garden as part of the house, not just an extension for outdoor living, but also as the frame, the approach to the house and the source of pleasing views from the windows for those who look out at them during the day.

The introduction states its purpose firmly. "To generate an understanding of garden design so that people may design their gardens in the way they want them to be." The historical background traces the changing aims in planning a garden from the early days when Australia tried to reproduce a little bit of their home land in a soil and climate which resisted it, then through various fashions to the present one of outdoor living. This centres round the pool and the barbecue, looks for shade in summer and wind-protection in winter, welcomes our move towards more informal but still in its way gracious living, as houses become smaller and help in house and garden becomes more expensive and hard to get.

The main part of the book, illustrated in full-colour photos and clear easy-to-follow line diagrams is a "Framework for Garden Design": the final, shorter section, four gardens, large and small,

formal and "bush" from real life.

The text realises sensibly that many gardeners do not start with bare paddock; they inherit a design and established plants, usually put down, especially in Canberra, in ignorance of how quickly some trees grew and rooted in this climate, or catering for a suburban fashion already dated by the time it was transferred here from conservative suburbs. The author discusses both problems: the basic wants, entrance, garage, compost, incinerator and tool shed, outdoor living area, service areas to be convenient but concealed. She recommends using an established garden or other nearby to learn about the soil, the site and the prevailing winds, to keep if possible healthy established plants, moving them if they have to be moved, but learning from them what sort of plants like the conditions she is having to work with.

Sensible always, Lochhead is aware of the hard work and probable disappointment resulting from trying to grow loved species which simply don't like the place. Hence her enthusiasm for Australian natives. She appreciates the need for privacy, urges greater use of the front garden, especially in small blocks; but is fully alive to the dangers of over-planting rapidly-growing screen plants.

Planning with time is one of her bits of wise advice: give your trees and shrubs space for what they will be; be patient; prune for the future.

The results in all cases are inspiring. In fact this book is the perfect present for anyone moving in to a new Canberra home, whether it is a unit with mini-courtyard, or a wind-swept plot in furthest Isabella Plains. It will give them heart and set them to work.

Growing better fruit trees

GROWING FRUIT IN AUSTRALIA. By Paul Baxter and Glenn Tankard. Nelson. 226pp. \$29.95. Reviewer: SUSAN PARSONS.

FIRST published in 1981, this new edition proves the popularity of fruit growing and the desire to do it better. Each year Australian nurseries sell more than one million fruit trees, mostly to home gardeners and hobby farmers.

Paul Baxter was horticultural adviser to the Victorian Department of Agriculture and has researched management of fruit trees for 30 years. He now runs a small-scale orchard.

Glenn Tankard has written booklets on exotic fruit growing and his experience has seen the expansion of the book's section on tropical fruit. The authors assure readers that even in the smallest garden there is room for a fruit tree. They can be used as a feature tree in pots on a patio. If you plan carefully, a modest strip of land can sustain six fruit trees and, "With proper training, management and some luck these trees will grow sufficient fruit for a large family and their friends, envious neighbours and a flock of birds."

When planting, it is essential to choose fruit trees which suit the region, and tables list climatic data Australia-wide. Soil fertility and its improvement are covered in detail. Grass should be left between rows but under the tree line an organic mulch or herbicide spray is advised to keep the ground weed-free.

Regarding fertilisers, fruit growers

are divided into traditionalists, moderns and fastidists. Readers can analyse their own preferences.

Daily water requirements in Australia depend on weekly evaporation for which the measuring formula is given. Trickle irrigation is explained.

Growing Fruit in Australia is enlivened by a banana-yellow cover. Colour photographs of fruit in the book are mouth-watering but the black-and-white photographs are drab. A year in the life of a fruit tree is comprehensively covered. Tables simplify much of the scientific background of fruit growing, which is called "Pomology". Line drawings bring clarity to the practical side of pruning and propagation.

The latest methods of pest and disease control are included in this updated edition. Table 19 lists fruit trees which generally need few or no sprays.

Each variety in the realm of the fruit kingdom bears a detailed entry so the gardener can proceed with confidence. The chilling requirement means that the most suitable fruits for this climatic zone are apples, pears, cherries, hazelnuts, walnuts, strawberries, brambles and European plums.

From his experience, the senior author suggests you resist this temptation unless you have "a fire in your belly". He believes that to choose fruit varieties renowned for their flavour, and harvest them when fully ripe, is to enjoy one of nature's greatest gifts to man.

Fruit Growing in Australia will enable you to do just that.



End-of-season Asparagus stems tend to lose a little of their succulence so cream of asparagus soup is a good way to use the last of the crop.

Put 0.5kg of asparagus into a pan with a peeled and sliced potato and a coarsely chopped onion. Add salted water to cover and cook until soft.

In a separate pan melt 30g of butter and blend in a tablespoon of flour. Gradually add 3-4 cups of chicken stock, bring to the boil then add the liquid to the drained vegetables. Puree the soup, add two beaten egg yolks mixed with 1/2 cup of thin cream and gently reheat before serving.

Parliament

Treaty with Aborigines essential, Perkins says

The creation of a treaty between the Commonwealth and Aboriginal people, and its inclusion in the Constitution, was essential for the continued existence of the Aboriginal people and their culture, the Secretary of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Charles Perkins, has said.

In his department's annual report, which was tabled in Parliament this week, Mr Perkins said a treaty would be a catalyst in achieving reconciliation between black and white in Australia, "thus bringing us together as a nation".

The department dissociated itself from the plans of some Aboriginal groups to boycott or disrupt the bicentenary.

"Although some Aboriginal leaders have threatened to disrupt the 1988 bicentennial celebrations, many Aboriginal communities throughout Australia are planning to participate in a positive way," it said.

This was evidenced by the several hundred applications from interested Aboriginal groups for assistance for projects under

the \$7.46 million Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program.

On the subject of Aboriginal health, the report points out that analysis of the limited data available confirmed that the health of Aborigines was much worse than that of non-Aboriginal Australians. Some recent reports had shown that there had been improvements in some areas, such as eye diseases, gastro-enteritis, and infant malnutrition and mortality. However, Aboriginal foetal and infant mortality remained about 2½ to three times that of non-Aborigines. Aboriginal life expectancy was still at least 20 years lower than that for other Australians.

The reduced impact of some communicable diseases had been offset by an increased incidence of "lifestyle" diseases, particularly hypertension, coronary heart disease and diabetes mellitus. Alcohol abuse played an important role in these diseases and in the level of accidents and violence among Aborigines.

Moving to the topic of law and justice, the department said the disadvantages faced

by Aborigines before the law were illustrated most starkly in the criminal justice field. Aborigines continued to be more likely to be arrested, convicted and jailed than the Australian population generally. The 1985 prison census conducted by the Australian Institute of Criminology had shown that Aborigines were imprisoned at a rate of 2000 per 100,000 of population, compared with 87 per 100,000 for non-Aborigines. The rate for Aborigines was more than 20 times that of non-Aborigines.

Summing up its overall operations, the department said, "In a difficult and complex working environment, available evidence suggests that the department is undertaking its defined role in an effective and efficient manner."

"There can be no denying, however, that, while there has been progress, the Aboriginal people are Australia's most deprived and underprivileged. This is reflected in a number of social indices."

"The problems faced by Aborigines have been developing since white settlement of this country and will take years to resolve."

Chaney warns of white backlash

A leading Opposition front-bencher has warned of growing white antagonism against Aborigines unless matters affecting Aborigines are handled with more sensitivity during the next 12 months.

The Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Senator Chaney, a former Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, told the Senate yesterday that the Government had falsely raised the hopes of Aborigines with promises it could not keep.

At the same time, it had caused antagonism against Aborigines from the white community, which was unable to accept the Government's promises.

Senator Chaney said there was a "great potential for the exacerbation of the difficulties".

Australia was seeing in its community relations within the next year. Resentment against Aborigines had grown in recent years, with a decline in public support for the advancement of Aborigines.

"The position of Australian Aborigines is going backwards in many areas," Senator Chaney said.

"If we are to avoid continuing to go backwards ... then we must show a far greater degree of sensitivity than this Government has exhibited so far."

"The reality is that the last 10 years is a period during which there have been excessive promises made to Aboriginal people which clearly the present Government once in government felt not able to keep."

"The promises of the Labor

Party in opposition raised Aboriginal expectations and those demands were a part of the process of reducing public support."

The Government would be acting irresponsibly if it did not now make the most careful assessment of what was achievable and acceptable in Aboriginal matters.

"It is very important that that assessment includes what is acceptable to the community generally," he said. "There is absolutely no gain to be made for Aboriginal people in pursuing lines of progress or lines of policy which will increase community ill will. It is fundamentally damaging to the Aboriginal community and to attitudes of the rest of the community to the Aboriginal community."

Senator Chaney was speaking during debate on the Appropriation Bills, which allocate government funds to the various departments.

Senator Chaney also reaffirmed the Opposition's rejection of any sort of treaty with Aborigines, as proposed by the Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, in September.

"This is a very sensitive issue. Public feeling is already very strong on many of these issues," he said.

"We have clearly always in government and opposition said that the idea of a treaty is a very dangerous idea that we will not support because it raises all the spectres about a divided nation."

Senator Chaney was speaking during debate on the Appropriation Bills, which allocate government funds to the various departments.

Claims of aid given to Communists rejected

By KEITH SCOTT

The Government and overseas aid agencies have rejected claims made in an Australian Associated Press report on Tuesday that a number of Australian organisations have provided funds to the Communist Party of the Philippines.

AAP reported "Philippines intelligence sources" as saying that six organisations, including Community Aid Abroad and the Tasmanian Council of Churches, had supplied funds to both the Communist Party and its military wing, the New People's Army.

However, in a press statement yesterday, Community Aid Abroad said the allegation was a "scurrilous attempt" to discredit humanitarian assistance provided by Australia to poor Filipinos.

The national director, Mr David Armstrong, said in the statement that "Community Aid Abroad has never funded and would never fund the Communist Party of the Philippines or the New People's Army, nor has it funded political or military organisations in the Philippines".

Responding to a question in the Senate, the Minister for Transport and

Communications, Senator Evans, representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr Hayden, said there was no evidence to uphold the claims. There had been no request to Australia from the Philippines for assistance to investigate them.

A spokesman for the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau said the bureau had learnt of the allegations through newspaper reports and there was absolutely no truth in them.

He said there had been no investigation into the specific allegations raised because there was an on-going scrutiny by AIDAB of the work of non-government aid agencies. The bureau and agencies had close relations and there were "mechanisms" in place to ensure that money going overseas from Australia reached the right groups.

However, the Opposition called for an inquiry into the claims. Senator Chapman (Lib, SA) said only an inquiry by Australian security organisations could establish beyond doubt whether there was any substance in them. "This must be undertaken urgently to allay the fears of many people in the community who support the organisations named," he said.

More drug testing at AIS

The Australian Institute of Sport would step up drug testing among athletes on scholarships next year, the Minister for Sport, Mr Brown, told Parliament yesterday.

He said the AIS and the Australian Sports Commission condemned athletes using substances listed by the International Olympic Committee to

modify performance.

The use of such substances contravened the rules of sport and in some cases transgressed Australian and international criminal statutes.

"Doping is cheating," Mr Brown said.

'Time no barrier' in prosecution of war criminals

War criminals who committed their crimes 40 years ago should be prosecuted, the "shadow attorney-general", Mr Reith, told Parliament yesterday.

"Time is no barrier in bringing to justice those who have committed serious crimes," he said, reopening debate on the War Crimes Amendment Bill 1987.

Mr Reith said Australia should join countries such as Canada in sending a message that war crimes would never be tolerated and war criminals would find no safe haven.

Bringing criminals to justice was more important than any problems that might arise from use of retrospective legislation.

The Bill will enable the prosecution in Australian courts of Nazi war criminals living in Australia. It will not allow a defence on the grounds of obeying orders but will allow a defence based on the laws of war and international laws concerning crimes against humanity.

The Government established a special unit in February headed by a former member of the National Crime Authority, Mr Ron Greenwood, QC, to investigate suspected migrants.

The Government is believed to have the names of 250 suspected Nazi war criminals — 70 believed to have resulted from Mr Greenwood's investigations, the rest provided by groups such as the Simon Wiesenthal Centre.

Mr Kent (Lab, Vic) named in Parliament yesterday a group of Yugoslavs whom he said were Nazi war criminals living in Australia.

Dr Woods (Lib, NSW) sharply criticised him for doing so, saying he had committed a gross offence against the principles of justice and decency.

Mr Reith said he would move amendments to make it clear that while the passing of time should not prevent prosecutions, they should be made within three years of proclamation of the Act.

The Bill was passed in the House of Representatives.

Senate election in NSW could be declared void, Government confirms

By KEITH SCOTT

The Government confirmed yesterday that the entire Senate election in NSW could be declared void if the High Court upholds a petition challenging the election of the Nuclear Disarmament Party Senator, Robert Wood.

The Minister for Home Affairs, Senator Ray, said in answer to a question in the Senate that in the event of the petition being upheld, the court could either dismiss the complaint, declare Senator Wood ineligible and nominate another candidate to replace him or declare the election "absolutely void".

An unsuccessful candidate in the NSW Senate election, Mrs Eileen Nile, has challenged the election of Senator Wood under section 44 of the Constitution on the grounds that he was allegedly insolvent at the time of the election and had been convicted of two offences, including one of obstructing shipping.

Senator Wood obstructed the passage of a US warship in Sydney Harbour earlier this year when he paddled a canoe in front of it. He also spent one month in jail in 1972 after failing to attend a National Service medical examination. Prior to the election, Senator Wood was unemployed but before that he was a youth worker.

Senator Ray said yesterday that in adjourning the case earlier this month the High Court had made it clear that the case had constitutional implications. It had sought advice from federal and state attorneys-general on the matter before reconvening on December 9. It is understood that the Australian Electoral Commission has provided advice to the Attorney-General, Mr Bowen.



Senator Wood

Senator Ray said that if the election was declared void, NSW senators would probably have to pay back all their salaries and allowances to July 11, the date of the election.

"This matter does raise a serious point, one which may have to be looked at in terms of Senate elections," he said.

"... To have 11 duly-elected senators forfeit their positions through no fault of their own because of a problem with the 12th seems to me incongruous. I am not trying to nobble or in any way influence the court's decision. I just say generally that the disqualification, the expense, of an election and the disruption that would be caused seems to me a rather pointless exercise."

Market crash cuts PS super fund payouts

Commonwealth public servants face lower superannuation payouts because exit rates have been slashed in the wake of last month's share-market crash.

The Minister for Finance, Senator Walsh, told Parliament yesterday that the Commonwealth Superannuation Fund exit rate had been cut from 23 per cent to zero in the September quarter, after it appeared the earnings rate of the fund to the end of October was probably negative.

"The law, I am advised, does not allow a negative notional payment," Senator Walsh told the Senate. "I have made a determination that the exit rate for the September quarter ... will be zero. That should be taken as a formal announcement."

Senator Walsh said a 23 per cent exit rate for the fund was set for the financial year, but quarterly rates were declared based on the apparent earnings to the fund in that quarterly period.

People who retired within that quarter received a pro-rata amount calculated at that rate.

The Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Senator Chaney, had asked

Senator Walsh if exit interest rates being earned by the fund had fallen from 23 per cent in July to zero at the end of November.

He asked also if contributors to the fund who had recently retired but who would not receive any payouts from the fund until after next Monday would receive no interest on their money in the fund since July 1, 1987.

Senator Chaney also asked if it was true that a senior officer of the Commonwealth Superannuation Board submitted his resignation on Tuesday, November 24 but officially retired on Wednesday and would receive the 23 per cent exit rate for this period.

Senator Walsh said he would check the claim and report to Parliament.

"If however it is true ... and I am fairly confident it is true ... if someone did resign on the 24th of November, my expectation is that they would not gain from it because no exit rate had previously been determined for the September quarter or any subsequent period," he said.

Senator Walsh is expected to make a comprehensive announcement on the fund's superannuation payouts today.

Rare-earth health risks

A proposal for a \$7 million rare-earth processing plant in northern NSW posed health and environmental risks because of the radioactive waste it would produce, the Senate was told yesterday.

Senator Wood (Ind, NSW) said there would be a state government inquiry into the proposed plant, at Tuncurry, near Lismore, but residents were calling for a Royal commission.

Rare earth was radioactive processed mineral sands crucial to the weaponry and nuclear industries. The proposal had been put forward

by Deckhand Pty Ltd, which was wholly owned by Queensland mineral processing and exporting company Currumbin Minerals Pty Ltd.

"Deckhand, like so many other commercial interests, is scrambling to gain a slice of the pie in this relatively new industry, without proper regard and respect for the health safeguards, storage, waste-disposal and environmental impacts of its proposal," Senator Wood said. Deckhand would produce and store 865 tonnes of radioactive, toxic waste, yet there was no known method of disposing of it.

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