

Hakea fraseri

Australian Plants Society

Armidale & District Group

PO Box 735 ARMIDALE NSW 2350

Volume 25 No 1

April / May 2005

President:

Col Mulquiney – 6772 6012 (H)

Secretary:

Patti Rossi –

Treasurer:

Phillip Rose – 6775 3769 (H)

President's Message

After a very enjoyable and informative outing to Glen Innes where we saw some established native plantings at the National Parks Office, two private gardens each of which contained some interesting natives in full growth and some magnificent native plants growing between the north and south running bitumen strips of the New England Highway, we came back inspired and reassured that natives 'can grow anywhere'. We found it difficult to imagine a more hostile environment than amongst the exhaust fumes of all the highway traffic and in soil that did not seem to be ideal. All plants had been carefully pruned to about a metre or so and some banksias and correas were flowering nicely. We also saw examples of Waratahs growing well, but not yet flowering, in some of the private gardens. An impressive *Grevillea beadleana*, along with a couple of self sown seedlings were found in the other garden. We were indebted to Peter Croft and Jean Moff for their work in organising the outing and to the owners of the private gardens for their generosity in allowing us to visit. Glenda and I were given a large cutting from an elusive pink fuschia (non native) that we have been looking for over the years. It looks as if the small cuttings we took have already started to develop a strong root system. Thanks Jan!

At our recent business meeting we discussed the time-allocation trial that we have been conducting and have revised it somewhat in the light of our recent experiences. We will continue to start the business part of the meeting at 7.30pm and aim to complete this by about 8.15pm at which time we will have our flower discussion session. Those who bring specimens will be asked to comment on one or two of their specimens that they are very proud of with an emphasis on how the plants were grown. We will continue to have questions asked from the floor. We will then have a 'cuppa' and an informal chat. Any guest speaker will start about 8.30pm and should complete the talk about 9.30pm. Of course this modified time-allocation will be on trial and can be modified as the need arises. Comments about meeting procedures are always welcome.

Some members spent last Saturday afternoon moving sawdust and watering at the Arboretum. Some of us (but not all) were surprised to see plants thriving in what looks like tiny holes drilled in concrete rather than soil. It could be that the low survival rates in our own gardens are due to planting in soil that is too 'good'! Maybe water is the key! Whatever the reason, after my recent experiences I'm not going to get too upset if I have to position a new plant in soil that is not 'ideal'.

Happy Autumn gardening!

Col

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS NEWSLETTER ARE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED at ANY TIME

Postal address as above or email – jrnevin@northnet.com.au

GROUP INFORMATION

(group commenced August 1977)

We are a very friendly and helpful group who enjoy monthly meetings, garden visits and field trips to help members to enjoy the search for knowledge about our native flora. Most of all we range from raw beginners to others who have been at the game for many years - all willing to share their knowledge.

General Meetings are held at 7.30pm on the third Tuesday of each month (except December, January, June and July) at The Tree Group Woodland Centre where a display of flowers is presented by members.

Old and new members and visitors are very welcome to these meetings and any outings that we organise.

Committee Meetings are held on the first Monday of the month at 7.30pm – see diary for where - members are welcome to these meetings too.

Annual General Meeting is held in February.

Solstice Function is held in June.

Wattle Day Function is held on a day closest to 1 September.

December Meeting is taken up by an end of year function, usually a BBQ or picnic.

ALL YOU NEED TO JOIN OUR GROUP IS A GREAT LOVE OF OUR NATIVE PLANTS

Cover: Background is adapted from a drawing of Hakea fraseri in Forest Flora, NSW

SUNDAY OUTING on 24 April – Hunting orchids with Peter Metcalfe

Meet at the Visitor's Centre at **8.30am**. Peter will have a small bus for those who do not wish to take their own cars. **Cost is \$10 per head.** Take morning & afternoon teas and lunch and lots to drink. Wear appropriate clothing and footwear.

Armidale Bi-centennial Arboretum Report 2004

A dedicated group of members continued the good work of developing and maintaining the Australian Plants section of the Arboretum from January to December 2004. The two main tasks accomplished during this period were spreading sawdust on three garden beds for weed suppression and moisture retainment and the continuation of plantings.

Thanks to the following for their voluntary work: J & R Boyd, C & G Mulquinney, V Ford, J & B Nevin, S Robertson, P & J Rose and P Urbonas.

DETAILS:

Total man hours spent	– 120.5
Number of working bees	– 8
Number of volunteers	– 11
Planted out	– 108 pots and tubes
Wholesale cost of plants	- \$ 440.00

Work consisted of spreading sawdust, planting out, weeding, spraying, pruning, watering and collecting rubbish.

Special thanks to Phil Brown and Ray Dufty (Armidale/Dumaresq Council) for supplying the sawdust and their co-operation during the year.

Pat Urbonas Arboretum Co-ordinator

Visit To Glen Innes

On Sunday 20 March the Glen Innes members of the Armidale Branch of Australian Plants Society were very pleased to welcome Armidale members to Glen Innes.

The first stop was at the National Parks & Wildlife Office for morning tea, where Peter Croft had on display the herbarium and books of information on all the National Parks in our region.

Firstly we looked at the scrub and trees around the National Parks Office and they were identified chiefly by Patrick Urbonas, helped by Peter. Then the groups moved to the native garden strip on the New England Highway, where forty five different species of plants were identified and labelled, with hopefully, indestructible labels, taking two hours to do so.

We headed up to the Standing Stones for lunch.

Then it was off to Nancy and Peter Fairy's garden, then to Joan Ryan's garden where amongst other plants we saw four different species of very healthy waratahs.

We are most appreciative of the Armidale folk for coming up to Glen and helping us identify our plants.

Jean Mott

CROWEA EXALATA

What a great little plant for our area! Flowering through the heat of summer and into autumn with lovely pink star flowers, it is certainly one of my favourite plants. It can vary from a low growing small shrub to a height of 1m and the form known as 'Southern Stars' has bronze tipped foliage and darker pink flowers. I have seen the taller variety growing and flowering in a patch of hot and dry mallee just out of West Wylong. All forms grow in our climate and soils and make excellent fillers, border or rockery plants in full to part sun.

Pat Urbonas

Committee for 2005/2006

President	Col Mulquiney	Newsletter Printer	
Vice Presidents	P Urbonas & J Nevin	& Collator	John Nevin
Secretary	Patti Rossi	Hospitality	Kath Wray & Julia Rose
Assistant Sec	John Nevin	Supper Coordinator	Ingrid Kalf
Treasurer	Phil Rose	Company Delegate	Unfilled
Membership	Peter Brown	Monthly Plant List	
Publicity	Graeme Fairweather	Collator	Susanne Robertson
Arboretum Coordinator	Pat Urbonas	Occupational Health	
Markets in The Mall Coordinator	P Urbonas	& Safety Officer	Peter Metcalfe
Newsletter Editor	Barbara Nevin	Environmental Officer	
Librarian	Ingrid Kalf		Peter Metcalfe.

Check your label to see if your subs are due. A red dot means that you are overdue and two red dots mean that this is your last newsletter. Please ignore this if you have already paid your subs.

Some Snippets from the Editor

John & I have just returned from near Chicago USA where it was supposed to be Spring but we experienced colder weather than we have here in Armidale (even snow). So henceforth we are not going to whinge (complain perhaps but not whinge) about the cold here. We did see a *Euc. globulus* and *Euc cinerea* and some other ferns in a greenhouse at the University of Illinois but they were very sick looking specimens. (Ah! but we did see some lovely blue poppies from the Himalayan mountains.

At many times during our trip John was hanging off a telephone so when I found this saying in a newspaper, thought I would share it with you – it was on a tea shirt: ‘on hold waiting to talk to a supervisor – the furthest anyone with a problem can hope to get in one lifetime.’

From the magazine – Natural Heritage – ‘Small robins consume four insects a minute for the greater part of one day – a natural insecticide at work’! *A good reason to grow lots of shrubbery in your garden.*

In Coffs Harbour Newsletter – Andrea Baker is closing down her Emerald Heights Native Nursery and will have a sale on Saturday 23 April. Address is 14 Capizzi Drive, Emerald Heights (ph 6656 1456)

The Rose Garden

Phil and Julia Rose have recently developed an interesting garden gazebo.



There is a walking track inside the gazebo and on the south west outer side of the raised garden bed, Phil and Julia have also constructed a ½ m high dry stone wall to act as a heat bank (and shelter for reptiles!).

A selection of plants have been used from WA, Banksias baueri and media, to various Scaevoleas, Goodenias, Correa reflexa forms, lawrenciana rosea and aemula. There are also Eremophila maculata forms, Grev. juniperina Tingha, dimorpha, iaspicula, yellow pea Pultenaea villosa, rose pink Isopogon formosus and pink Crowea exalata. Lambertia formosa, Astartia and Sollya require some protection from or severe frosts so it will be interesting to see how plant in the gazebo perform under these conditions. The tablelands do experience plenty of sunshine, so perhaps the partial shade may not reduce flowering.

The Roses have also constructed other beds and rock walls together with increased plantings. It's wonderful to see one of our members experimenting in this way and this garden is a must see later this year.

Pat Urbonas

Radiating from a 2.5 metre high centre post is 6m X 6m 50% shade cloth. The four corners of the shade cloth are attached to four perimeter posts to form a roof of shade cloth.

Constructed inside, under the shade cloth are raised garden beds made of 50% sand/loam mix and then mulched with 20cm of river sand.

Summer Flowering Plants

Calandrinia balonensis and *Brachycome stuartii* are two beautiful plants that are flowering prolifically in my pots at the moment (end of January).

Last October Brian Carter and I spent four days in Lightning Ridge. Searching for opal is a pretty rough lifestyle but after speaking with locals it obviously gets into the blood and that it is fate that really determines the outcome.

As we drove into the Bluey Motel, I noticed several pots of flowering plants. Apart from some exotics, there was a pot of *Xerochrysum bracteatum* (yellow paper daisy or everlasting daisy) but it was the deep pink/purple flowers of a *Calandrinia* that caught my attention. I had grown *Calandrinia remota* as a pot plant but this plant had much larger flowers and leaves.

The husband of the couple running the Motel worked as an environmental and mines safety inspector and had collected the plant somewhere in his travels. I was invited to take some cuttings and now have a plant rapidly filling a 280mm ceramic pot with open flowers of 5 petals that have beautiful metallic purple petals with yellow centres. The 45mm flowers (a 50c coin is 32mm) are arranged along a stem that is 280mm long and above the thick succulent foliage. These close at night and last for several days.

The plant is growing in Searles Native Plant mix which is topped with river sand to keep it clean. It is given an additional fortnightly feed of Aquasol but I will switch to Seasol in preparation for winter.

There are approximately 20 species of *Calandrinia*, often called Parakeelya, and they occur throughout inland Australia. *Calandrinia balonensis* may be short lived as some species are annuals and it probably is only suitable for pot culture as I don't think it will tolerate our severe frosts.

The plant may become available through Mole Station once its life span and growing conditions are better known or I can be contacted for possible cutting material.

The other lovely plant I have is *Brachycome stuartii*. Sarah Caldwell kindly gave me a tube of this plant late last year which I potted firstly into a 140mm pot and now because of strong growth it has been repotted into a 180mm pot.

Brachycome stuartii is a local plant and this specimen is from the granite country east of Tenterfield. It has dense dark green attractive divided foliage and beautiful 25mm mauve daisy flowers with yellow centres on stems held 130mm above the foliage. There are currently 28 flowers on the plant.

Brachycome stuartii should be frost hardy and makes an ideal pot plant, group planted in a rockery or used as a border plant. It is also growing in Searles mix but needs more frequent watering as indicated by drooping foliage. Sarah will have plants for sale later this year.

Pat Urbonas

On the following page is our financial report compiled by our treasurer Phil Rose and signed by our auditor Peter Brown as a true and correct report of our financial status as at 30 November 2004 and presented at our AGM in February 2005.

Statement of Financial Position As at 30 November 2004

	30 Nov '04	30 Nov '03
ASSETS		
Current/Savings		
ABS Building Society	802.88	957.63
ABS Building society Term Deposit	7048.23	5000.00
New England Credit Union	<u>1737.29</u>	<u>2398.22</u>
Total Current/Savings	<u>9588.40</u>	<u>8355.85</u>
 Total Current Assets	 <u>9588.40</u>	 <u>8355.85</u>
 TOTAL ASSETS	 <u>9588.40</u>	 <u>8355.85</u>
 LIABILITIES	 0.00	 0.00
 NET ASSETS	 <u>9588.40</u>	 <u>8355.85</u>
 EQUITY		
Opening Bal Equity	7287.02	7287.02
Retained Earnings	1068.83	0.00
 Net Income	 <u>1232.55</u>	 <u>1068.83</u>
 TOTAL EQUITY	 <u>9588.40</u>	 <u>8355.85</u>

Income and Expenditure - Twelve months ended 30 November 2004

	Dec '03-Nov '04	Dec '02-Nov '03
Income		
Interest	337.24	193.22
Meeting Supper	88.00	40.00
Plant Sales		
Markets	3451.60	2790.05
Members	876.45	2234.85
Open Garden	3129.00	2958.00
Raffles Arboretum	0.00	457.40
Total Plant Sales	7457.05	8440.30
Raffles	202.70	197.00
Sales Books etc	20.00	70.00
Seed Bank Sales	0.00	27.50
Subscriptions	<u>1656.00</u>	<u>1742.00</u>
Total Income	9760.99	10710.02
Expenses		
Advertising	37.32	6.00
Arboretum	0.00	417.50
Bank Charges	13.75	6.25
Cards	0.00	102.00
Grafting Day	0.00	188.00
Market Expenses	225.00	246.00
Meeting Room	300.00	300.00
Membership Renewal	1239.00	1446.00
Newsletter	87.50	79.65
Open Garden	2357.57	2313.46
Plants, freight	3922.15	2838.90
Postage	232.00	271.00
Printing Stationery	2.15	44.44
Raffle Expenses	10.00	13.90
Speaker Expenses	30.00	324.09
Study Groups	<u>72.00</u>	<u>44.00</u>
Total Expenses	8528.44	9641.19
 Net Income	 1232.55	 1068.83

SUNDAY MARKETS REPORT 2004

Our Sunday Markets began in February and finished in December. In April the Markets fell on Anzac Day and were not held.

We also attended the Walcha markets in November and sold 42 plants to bring total plant sales for the year to 514 pots and 88 tubes.

Highest plant sale month was August with 80 pots and 73 tubes, whilst the lowest was December with 13 plants sold.

In August, we combined Wattle Day with our Market Sunday. The Wattle display was a crowd stopper and should be an annual event. We should also include a pamphlet handout on the history of Wattle Day as there is a lot of general interest as well as some confusion on dates. I've had a preliminary discussion with Maria Hitchcock on the matter of a hand out.

Thanks to the following for their help during the year: J Boyd, G & P Fairweather, M flint, B Flint, K Gow, B & J McCaig, C Mulquiney, J & B Nevin, S Robertson, P Rose, P Rossi and P Urbonas.

In the hand out Pat could some information be included about the hayfever and asthma controversy? Ed

ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS - CRANBOURNE

In early March, whilst in Melbourne, I had the opportunity to visit the Royal Botanic Garden at Cranbourne. The gardens are situated on the eastern shores of Port Phillip Bay, commonly known as the "sand belt" and approx 1 ½ hours from Melbourne.

The Botanic Gardens are located along this sand belt strip and consists of 363 ha of some of Melbourne's best remnant indigenous vegetation. It was established in 1970 to conserve, research and display a diversity of Australian plants and set amongst the local vegetation is to be a 26 ha display garden to showcase this richness and beauty. The first 11 ha will be open to the public late this year and includes a new visitor's centre and café. I've had a peek at this development set amongst rolling sand hills – it looks fantastic!

Two plants that stood out at this time of year in the natural bushland area was *Eucalyptus cephalocarpa*, the Mealy Stringybark and *Banksia marginata*. *E. cephalocarpa* is a small tree with silver aromatic foliage and massed white flowers, whilst *B. marginata*, in better sites, grew to 4m tall, displaying bright yellow flower spikes. The bellbirds were in full cry and one had to be careful to avoid colliding with a Southern Brown bandicoot.

In spring, I imagine the heaths and swamp areas would be spectacular, with flowering epacris, wedding bush, orchids etc then add the display gardens featuring plants from all over Australia and this Botanic Garden would be well worth a visit.

Pat Urbonas

HELP NEEDED

I am a PhD student at the University of Adelaide. I am currently in the early stages of identifying plant species that are able to drill through strong soil layers in vineyards. Also, low moisture requirements and short height (<50cm) would be advantageous. Summer and winter active plants are needed.

Australian natives have the potential to be very useful for soil amelioration in vineyards and I wondered if any of your members would have any suggestions as to possible species. In particular I am interested in *Olearia* and *Atriplex* species with short/prostrate forms. Deep roots are the main criteria here.

Any help, information or possible meetings would be very much appreciated. I am keen for Australian natives to be included in my research.

Daniel Smith, Soil and Land Systems, Prescott 315, The University of Adelaide, South Australia 5005
Ph: 0419817671 (ext 37284) email: daniel.l.smith@adelaide.edu.com

From the Sheathers

Seedlings in the Garden

As our garden developed, *Grevillea* seedlings have appeared in various places. At one time, near our shed, over ten *Grevillea* seedlings appeared in an area of a couple of square metres. Other species have been reluctant to produce seedlings until recently.

In the past 12 months a range of seedlings have germinated in our dense shrubberies. *Bursarias*, *Correas*, *Prostantheras* and *Westringias* have all appeared, sheltered by older shrubs. We have potted on a number of these seedlings and they will be relocated to other parts of the garden.

We remember a garden at Invergowrie where *Crowea* seedlings emerged, near a mature plant, with monotonous regularity.

There is an Armidale garden where the lower branches of a *Grevillea beadleana* shelters a mini-forest of this *Grevillea*'s progeny.

The other day, in Tamworth, we saw a pot of geraniums providing a home for a number of *Eucalyptus citriodora* seedlings. There is a large specimen growing in the street about 30 metres away. Probably the seeds were blown from this tree when they were shed from the gum nuts.

This is a very cheap way to increase your plantings and what a wonderful surprise could await you when they eventually flower. Also a good supply of plants for plant swaps and prizes at meetings Ed

Prostanthera scutellarioides

This Mint Bush is a hardy, small shrub with linear, light green leaves about two centimetres long. The species is unusual because the foliage has virtually no aroma. Masses of purple flowers cover the plant in spring. *Prostanthera scutellarioides* appreciates pruning after flowering and propagates from cuttings.

We have had a long relationship with this mint bush. Our first encounter was when the species was found growing at the Australian Defence Industry site at St Marys, west of Sydney. The mint bush became a resident of our garden when we lived in the Blue Mountains.

When we came to Armidale we heard that *Prostanthera scutellarioides* grew along the Waterfall Way on the margins of wetlands. *Prostanthera scutellarioides* was eventually found growing near a large wetland in Cathedral Rock National Park. This population was identical in appearance to the plants growing at St Marys.

Subsequently we have encountered *Prostanthera scutellarioides* in Gibraltar Range National Park near Mulligan's hut. This population is similar in growth habit to the other populations but the flowers have white patches in the throat.

Prostanthera scutellarioides has proved to be a hardy, long-lived and free-flowering shrub that is drought resistant and frost tolerant.

Callitris oblonga

Callitris oblonga is known as the Pygmy Pine in New South Wales and is a local native. The Pygmy Pine is a large shrub or small tree that may reach a height of five metres. The foliage is light green and the egg-shaped or ovoid capsules are about two centimetres in diameter.

Callitris oblonga is an attractive plant that could be cultivated as a specimen or in an informal hedge. The Pygmy Pine could also be grown as a street tree because it does not grow tall enough to interfere with electricity wires.

Callitris oblonga has a rather fragmented distribution. It occurs in Tasmania where the species is known as the Esk River Cypress. In New South Wales the Pygmy Pine is said to occur in the Southern Highlands. The species certainly occurs in the Northern Tablelands. A population is found on the banks of Sandy Creek, along the Waterfall Way. Further along the Waterfall Way there is a reasonably large population east of the Point Lookout turnoff. In days gone by there were a number of plants growing in a gully beside the road. After road works the population increased considerably due to the ground being disturbed. Now there is a mini-forest of Pygmy Pines growing in this area.

Callitris oblonga is likely to be divided into three sub-species. The species is considered to be rare in New South Wales. Propagate *Callitris oblonga* from seed or purchase tube stock from the Armidale Tree Group.

Warren & Gloria

ARBORETUM REPORT

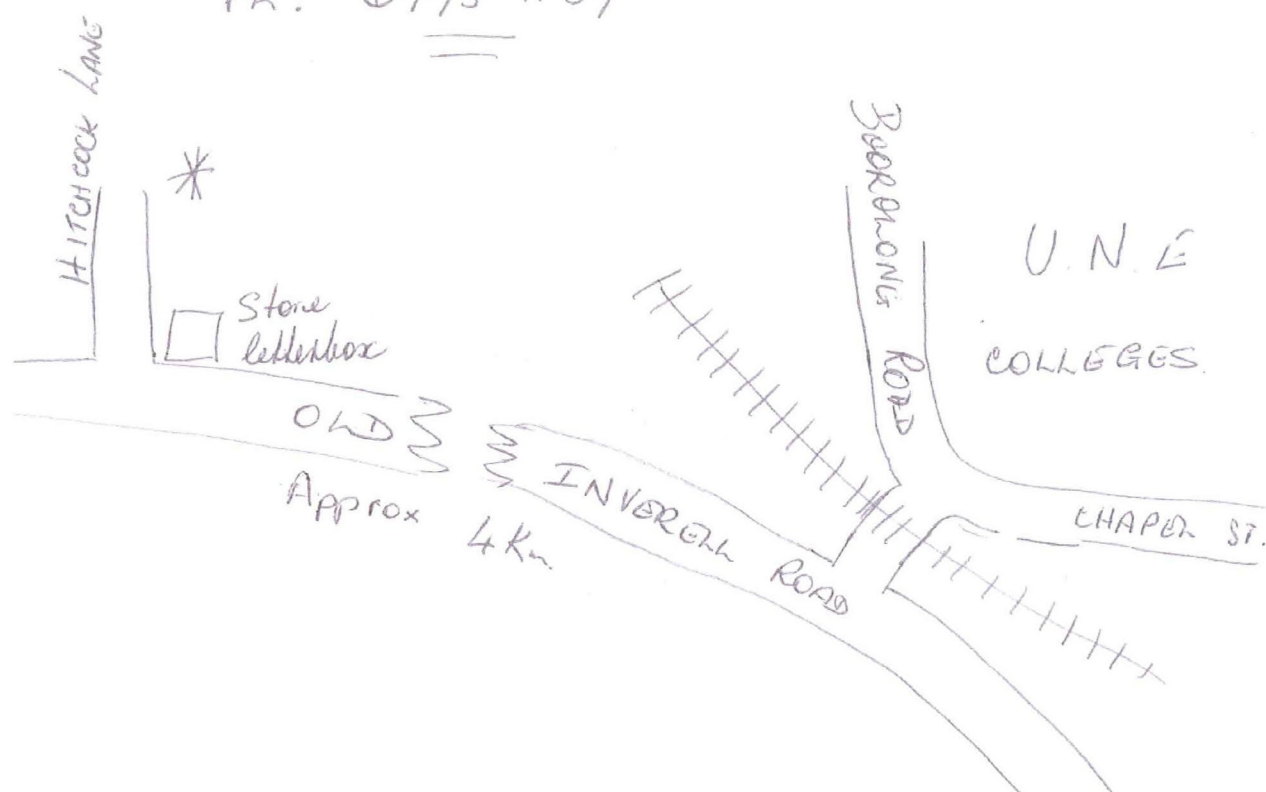
In February members spread sawdust, watered plants, collected rubbish and sprayed weeds whilst in March we planted out 42 pots. The gardens are looking great and we're getting on top of planting and maintenance due to the dedication of members.

Robert Boyd and I watered plants from our March working bee on 16 & 25 March. Whilst we were there it was hard not to notice the numerous swarming wattle birds feeding on the *Banksia integrifolia* and massed flowering *Eucalyptus viminalis*. Any plant flowering at this time of year is a bonus so *Grev. rhyolitica* with large clusters of pendent orange flowers and *Grev. McCutcheonii* with large red spider flowers are worth trying. At the arboretum one of two *Euc. caesia* 'Silver Princess' is in bud and with a bit of luck we may have some flowers in the spring. It will need to survive picking, like our *Prostanthera rotundifolia* did from members of the public!

Thanks to R Boyd, C & G Mulquiney, B Nevin, S Robertson, P & J Rose and P Urbonas.

To MARIA & DON HITCHCOCK

PH: 6775 1139



We are to meet here at 1pm and do not forget something for afternoon tea. Maria said that we will be able to take cuttings so bring the appropriate equipment.

Another idea from American visit.

Do you remember in a couple of newsletters back Col gave the hint that if you have run out of room to plant climbers then plant them in hanging gardens? Further to that theme, while John and I were in Chicago we went to a Flower Show (as you do) and they had another idea that we can adopt. They made structures like pergolas from polypipe and cut troughs into the top. They then proceeded to plant into that. Imagine Phil's construction made out of pipe and then planted out with rambling plants. Your structure would only be limited by your space and imagination.

