



A Brief History
of the
Sutherland Group
of the
Australian Plants Society

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January 2001

Haenke, M. (2001) *A Brief History of the Sutherland Group of the Australian Plants Society*
Australian Plants Society - Sutherland Group

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Acknowledgements

The author wishes to thank fellow members, especially Rhonda Daniels and John Aitken, for their support and helpful suggestions, and Douglas Irving for editing and publication of this booklet.

Foreword

It is a matter of regret that, in the year 2000, Sutherland Group possesses neither a documented history nor even records which are in any way complete, covering its thirty-eight year lifespan. The late Dick Dietsch, one of our former stalwart members, actually compiled such a history in 1986, but unfortunately, the only copy of that document has been lost. The archives from the early years, which our Honorary Secretary has in her safekeeping, consist mainly of inward and outward correspondence, dating from February 1963 to March 1976. There are also a few sundry reports, attendance records, pamphlets, questionnaires and newsletters from that period. Fortunately, however, reports of some of the Group's early activities have come to light in early editions of NSW Region's newsletter, *Native Plants for NSW*.

In the absence of more substantial records, and in the hope of at least recording in a concise form what can be gleaned of the Group's early history, I am writing this brief account, and updating it to the present with the help of newsletters and committee minutes from 1977. It is not intended to form a definitive history, but rather a starting point. I would hope that those members with longer associations and better memories than mine may come forward to fill in gaps and, if necessary, correct errors.

Maurice Haenke

1. The Early Years: 1963 - 1977

Introduction -- The Birth of the Society

At the request of Arthur J. Swaby of Surrey Hills, Victoria, an article appeared in the publication *Your Garden* asking all interested in the cultivation of our flora to contact him with the idea of forming a Society to grow native plants. The first meeting was held in Mr Swaby's home on 12 March, 1957. The society was named "Society for Growing Australian Plants" (SGAP), the first President being Ivo Hammett and the first Secretary, A.J. Swaby. The autonomous State Regions, including NSW SGAP, were formed in early 1958. It was not until September 1962 that a resolution was passed that a Federal SGAP be formed with Herb Jones as President and Mrs Ovenstone as Secretary. In 1997 the name of the NSW Society for Growing Australian Plants was changed to Australian Plants Society (APS) to better reflect members' broad range of interests in Australian plants.

Formation of the Sutherland Group

The following amusing account of an abortive attempt to form a local SGAP Group was given by the late Harold Shortman in a letter to Sutherland Group Newsletter in August 1989. (The reference to the forties seems to be an error of memory, as SGAP was not yet in existence. Harold and his wife Edna, of Bundeena, were later to become active members of Sutherland Group until their deaths in the 1990s.)

....the early efforts in the forties to form a Shire branch of SGAP at the Matson brothers' home. You were frowned on if you said anything that was not botanical, and with a straight face, better a studious frown. I left before I was pointed the direction to go. Needless to say, the branch never got off the ground.

Sutherland Group eventually came into being when a meeting of local SGAP members was called at the Engadine home of Mr Bede Keary. As a result, an "Engadine-Heathcote Branch" was formed. Its name was changed in 1968 to "Sutherland Shire Group", and later to "Sutherland Group".

The surviving records indicate that the founders and early members were keen not only to study and grow native plants, but also to care for their local environment, a tradition which has obviously been handed down to the conservation-minded members of our present-day Group.

1963: On page 4 is a copy of our oldest surviving document, which records what appears to be the very first step in the formation of our Group.

The meeting was duly held, and the "minutes" consist of a page torn from a cash book and written on in pencil (see copy on page 5). Twelve people signed their names, the last one being Mr W.M. Payne of Picnic Point, possibly attending on behalf of NSW Region. Bede Keary was elected President, with R. Witchard Vice-President and Kerry Wheeler Secretary-Treasurer. It was decided to publicise the next meeting, on Friday, March 8, in the local press. Mr Metcalfe was to show colour slides of local areas.

Later that year, further meetings in members' homes, walks, and a Christmas barbecue/social were held in the Engadine-Heathcote area. The group was officially known as "Society for Growing Australian Plants, Engadine-Heathcote Branch". It lost no time in lobbying Sutherland Shire Council to develop some land between Bottle Creek and the south side of Willandra Parade, Heathcote as a wildflower reserve, and also to prevent developers from dumping rubbish on the creek bank.

4 Excelsior Avenue,

Castle Hill.

7th February, 1963.

Dear Mr. Keary,

Following is a copy of the letter which has been sent out to members of the S.G.A.P. in your area :

"A group of the S.G.A.P. will be formed at the home of Mr. B. Keary, 50 56 Cooringah Heights Road, Engadine, on Sunday, 24th inst. at 2.p.m. It would be appreciated if you could attend this meeting and bring along any interested friends."

Yours faithfully,


PAX LINDSAY,

Early reference to the formation of the Sutherland Group

1964: At the AGM held in February, Ray Witchard was elected Hon. Secretary, with Bede Keary continuing as President. Saturday afternoon meetings were decided on, with bushwalks and some preliminary clearing of the proposed Bottle Creek Reserve. Members were invited to bring specimens for identification,

exhibition or discussion. There was further correspondence with Council, Forestry Commission, and the trusts of Royal National Park and Heathcote Primitive Area, as it was then known, regarding seed collection and planting of trees on roadsides etc.

Schedule of future meetings: July 18th, Woronora Dam general inspection.. Members meet at Heathcote shops at 1.30 pm and bring some afternoon tea; August 15th: National Park survey of *Boronia ledifolia* at Wattamolla Road. Meeting place, Heathcote shops at 1.30 pm; September 19th: B. Keary, 50-56 Kooriengah Heights Road, Engadine, 1.30 pm; October 17th: K. Metcalfe, 47 Jacana Grove, Heathcote, 1.30 pm. Survey of Spring Flowers in adjacent plateau area of National Park.

Members are invited to bring to all meetings any specimens for identification, exhibition or discussion. (Sec.R. Witchard -520-8282.) (Native Plants for NSW July 1964)

Raymond Whitland	7 Black St	Heathcote NSW
Kerry Wheeler	5 Black St	HEATHCOTE
John Keary	275	Woronora Dam
Ken Metcalfe	47 Jacana Grove	Heathcote
Max Williams	26 Jacana Grove	Heathcote
Off. Luning	67 Telega Ave	Barangah
John Williams	125	Penic Point
John Williams	10	Waterfall
John Keary	50/56	Kooriengah Hts Rd Engadine
W.M. Page	250	Penic Point Rd. Penic Point
Elect Pres B. Keary	--	vice-pres R. Witchard
Sec. Luning	--	K. Wheeler
Next meeting -	at	
Fri March 8 th	-	at B. Keary Residence - 8 pm.
Members		Keary, Williams, Metcalfe.
Publicity - on (left)		to be arranged in Heathcote shops, Sutherland
Topic - see J. Addison		
Mr Metcalfe - to show colour photos of local area		
(include - publicity) - 4 slides		

Minutes of the first Sutherland Group meeting

1965: The Group obtained permission from the Electricity Commission to establish a nursery on land adjacent to its Sydney South Substation at Picnic Point.

One of the Group's members, John Turrell, was employed there as a gardener. Seeds were subsequently obtained from SGAP Seed Bank, and working days held at Picnic Point.

Meetings: January 18th – Mr R. Witchard, 9 Blacket St, Heathcote at 2.00 pm, thence to Primitive Area if agreed. February 15th – Mr B. Keary, 50-56 Kooriengah Heights Rd., Engadine at 2.00 pm – Annual Meeting – Election of Officers. (Hon. Sec.: R. Witchard of above address. (Native Plants for NSW Jan. 1965)

A visit to Stony Range Flora Reserve in September was combined with a meeting at which "Mrs Lynch, Mr & Mrs Duncan and children, Mr Jack Turrell and Mr Bede Keary (President) were present. Each paid 2 shillings [20 cents]. Boronias, Waratahs, Prostantheras, Rock-lilies and many orchids and everlasting flowers were in bloom." Visits were also planned to Waratah Park, Bilpin, and Hallstrom Reserve, Cowan.

1966: There are not many surviving records for this year, but there was at least one working bee at the Picnic Point nursery, and a walk into Heathcote Primitive Area. The yearly subscription appears to have been 10 shillings [\$1].

March 19th – At Sydney South Substation, Henry Lawson Drive, Picnic Point at approximately 2.00 pm. Agenda – talk on nursery procedures, especially applying to Melaleucas. A large number of young plants should be ready for disposal and any member interested in what is available should write to Mr J. Turrell (see last issue Newsletter).

April 16th – At 2.00 pm, R. Duncan's residence, 199 Acacia Rd., Kirrawee.

May 21st – 2.00 pm, walk into Heathcote Primitive Area – access from new subdivision, lower end of Willandra Parade, via Dalley Road, ½ mile from Highway.

A special request has been made by J. Turrell for any information, mundane or unusual, relative to any Melaleuca species, discovered by members in their personal propagation experiments. – R.WITCHARD, Hon. Sec, 9 Blacket St., Heathcote. (Native Plants for NSW March 1966)

1967: At the AGM in February, Roy Duncan was elected President, Bede Keary Vice-President, Mr E. Horner Secretary, and Mrs S. Lynch Minute Secretary. Subsequent meetings were to be held in members' homes, inspecting their gardens or adjacent park lands, and discussing some aspect of a particular plant, with a view to offering advice to new members on growing native plants. Help was given to Kirinari Hostel, Sylvania in establishing native plants in its grounds in October, following its official opening in July.

*Since our Annual General Meeting in February, this Group has had two well-attended meetings. One of them, at Sylvania Heights, was instructive in showing just how hardy are some of our native species. The soil in this particular garden is non-existent apart from that which has been brought in to encourage growth of the plants. One example worth mentioning was the good growth seen in plants of *Gossypium sturtianum* grown from seed bank seed. The second took place at Loftus in a garden on a very steep rocky slope. This garden was originally designed by Mrs B. Maloney.*

*This Group has recently been approached by two bodies offering projects for our development. One was from the Heathcote High School P.& C. Association to plant certain areas of the school grounds with native flora, particularly red *Callistemon*, this being the emblem of the school. The other project was at 'Kirinari', the Aboriginal hostel in Box Rd., Sylvania. This project is in an area very rich in native flora, and we agreed with the organisers of the hostel that to use anything but native plants would be entirely wrong. Since we propose to pursue both projects we expect to be very busy. – E. Horner, (Sec.), 38 Pinnacle Rd., Miranda. (Native Plants for NSW July 1967)*

1968: The only surviving records from this year are two receipts from local press publicity and a letter of thanks from Heathcote High School for work carried out in the school grounds.

1969: By now, planning at State and local government level was under way for the coming Captain Cook Bicentenary in 1970. In conjunction with the Sutherland Nature Conservation Society, an approach was made to reserve land in Bates Drive, Kareela as a flora reserve, and to name it in honour of Sir Joseph Banks or Daniel Solander.

1970: In February, the AGM, held in Bede Keary's home, saw Roy Duncan elected as President and Ken Arnold as Secretary-Treasurer. Plans were discussed for a combined Bicentenary Flower Show at Miranda Fair, and for several advertised night meetings to try and attract more new members.

In July there was a flurry of indignation when it was believed the Shire Council was considering adopting the camellia as its floral emblem. Ken Arnold put forward to Council "our strongest objections to this ludicrous proposal. That a shire whose proud motto is 'Birthplace of a Nation' should consider using anything other than a native flower for its emblem is beyond imagination.... if anything other than a native flower is used as our emblem, the Shire must surely change its motto to 'The Laughing Stock of a Nation'". Such a vigorous attack drew replies from Councillors Gietzelt (President), Skinner and Thorburn, assuring the Group that, although the suggestion had been made, no decision was likely in the near future.

By August the Council had provided fencing and a water supply for the Bates Drive reserve, and planting and path construction were proceeding. West Engadine School was adopted by the Group, and pupils were encouraged to take an interest in the local wildflowers. A slide talk was given to Engadine Garden Club. In the spring there were bush walks, garden inspections and a working bee with Engadine Garden Club at Bates Drive.

1971: On April 27 a Management Committee was formed to “formally assume the responsibility for control, management and development of the Garden” (now the Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve). Its President was Roy Duncan, and Hon. Secretary Alex Martin, with a committee of six members, all members of SGAP and/or Sutherland Nature Conservation Society. By the end of the year, over 1,000 new plants had been added, a circular trail built, the parking area cleared, and over 200 indigenous species listed.

1971 was an important year for our Group, as in May, Jannali Community Hall was first used for monthly meetings. This move was apparently successful in increasing public awareness, and by October, the average attendance had risen to about 25 members and friends. The hall rental was \$3 a month. Subjects for the monthly meetings included Grevilleas, Acacias, Flower Arranging, Local Spring Flowers, Boronias, Waratahs and Christmas Bush. There were well-attended field days to Bates Drive and Jibbon Beach at Bundeena, and participation in a local Girl Guides Conservation Display. The need was expressed for a small, cheap booklet on the more elementary aspects of growing native plants.

1972: At the February AGM, Roy Duncan was re-elected President, Bede Keary and Ken Arnold Vice Presidents, Ken Watson Secretary-Treasurer, Carol Watson Assistant Secretary, and Alex Martin Publicity Officer. From the beginning of the year (there were January meetings in those days), the meeting venue changed to the small hall of Gynea Community Centre. The hall rental remained at \$3 per month.

Subjects for monthly meetings included WA Slides; Cover Plants; Banksias; Ferns; and Pests, Diseases and Pruning. Speakers included prominent names like Joe Mason, Frank Hatfield and Eric Blombery. Field days were held at Burraneer Park, Kentlyn Nursery, Glenbrook, the State Wildflower Show at Gordon, Stony Range and Heathcote, as well as garden inspections and a Christmas picnic at Darkes Forest. The Hon. Secretary’s report for 1972 advised of Roy Duncan’s resignation as President, being replaced by Ken Arnold. Monthly attendances averaged about 30 members, with 40 on the membership roll, following a membership drive, writing to all SGAP members in the Shire. The annual fee was \$1.50.

1973: Unfortunately, our own records are very few for this year. Miss Lorraine McKenzie gave a slide presentation to a family night in January, at which the attendance was about 80. There was a combined meeting with East Hills Group in November. During the year, the membership increased by 17 families.

On August 15th a panel discussion will be held, followed by a 15-minute topic, ‘Callistemons and Calothamnus’ by Dr Philip Moore; and members’ slides will be shown. A visit to Yeramba Reserve at Picnic Point is planned for 18th August, and on August 25th the Group, aided by Joe Mason, will provide a display at the Engadine Garden Club Show. On Saturday, 21st July, Group members visited the gardens of Mr and Mrs Mountford and Mr and Mrs Shortman, both at Bundeena. (Native Plants for NSW Sept. 1973)

'Native Orchids' was the topic discussed by Colin Brandon at the September 14th meeting; his informative talk was well illustrated with many specimens from his extensive collection. On October 13th, Harold Shortman led a joint field excursion (with the St. George Group) to Flat Rock in the Royal National Park. The October 17th meeting was a 'workshop' night; members showed their methods of setting seed, or preparing cuttings and potting on, and much valuable information swapped hands. On November 21st there will be a joint meeting (with the St. George and East Hills Group) (8 pm at the Gynea Community Centre) when Mr D. McGillivray from the Royal Botanic Gardens will talk on 'Joseph Banks in New Holland'. And on November 24th there will be a field trip to Warumbul in the Royal National Park. (Native Plants for NSW Nov. 1973)

On the 20th October the Group (along with the St. George and East Hills Groups) visited Wirrimbirra, returning via Robertson (visiting a rainforest reserve administered by the local school) and the Macquarie Pass. It is clear that these bus outings, provided they have advance publicity, are a good way for Groups to 'get together'. (Native Plants for NSW Jan 1974).

1974: The AGM resulted in some new office-bearers: Peter Locksley was elected President; Bede Keary, Ken Allen and Jim Allen Vice-Presidents; Dr Philip Moore Secretary; Mrs Doreen McCoy Assistant Secretary; Mrs Carol Watson Treasurer; and Max Mountford Publicity Officer. Arthur Cooper was the guest speaker. Another family night was held in January at the Green Point Observatory, and the year's programme included evening meetings devoted to Kangaroo Paws, Displaying Native Flowers (Ray Witchard), Tough Natives for Salt & Wind (Max Mountford), Walks Around the Shire, Trees for Essential Oils, and Stony Range Flora Reserve. Guest speakers included Vincent Serventy, Alec Blombery, Mr A. Cooper and Ron Stevens.

Outings were arranged to Minnamurra Falls, Flat Rock Creek, Lucas Heights, Wise's Track, and to members' gardens. The Group participated in the Engadine Home Gardeners' Flower Show. A break-up barbecue was held at the A.A.E.C. (now ANSTO), Lucas Heights. There appears to have been some fall-off in members' enthusiasm, resulting in a "pep" letter from the Secretary in October. It was decided to form a library. A list of plants collected by Banks and Solander at Botany Bay in 1770 was published.

1975: Mrs Elaine Williamson was elected President, Dr Philip Moore remained Secretary, with Mrs Lillian Wallace as Assistant Secretary. During the year, there were talks on Eucalypts, Ground Covers and Climbers, and Native Garden Layout. Visiting speakers included Alan Fairley, Max Hewitt, Ray Page, Eric Packer and John Rose. Other activities included outings to Joseph Banks Garden, Kurnell and Lucas Heights aboriginal carvings, a display at Miranda Fair, a street stall at Caringbah, and garden inspections.

The venue for meetings was changed to Port Hacking High School, whose Principal made a room available rent free. In return, the Group assisted with the establishment of a native garden. An extensive list of the plants growing in the Menai area was published. The Secretary's annual report decried the apathy of

members for their poor support of the Saturday outings, although attendance at meetings was encouraging.

1976: The AGM in February included a discussion on members' interests, following the issuing of a questionnaire to gauge their preferences for various talk subjects and activities. Favourite topics emerged as: Grevilleas; identification; members' nights with demonstrations, talks and member participation; ferns; birds; slides of flowers; Acacias; orchids and propagation. The new office bearers included Dr Philip Moore President, David Harrison Secretary, and Marie Moore Assistant Secretary/Treasurer. Ron Stevens was made the first honorary member. The Treasurer's report showed assets of \$6 cash, \$201 in the bank, and \$3 in the supper fund. The annual fee rose to \$2. Unfortunately, no records could be found of the year's activities, but the attendance records show an average of about 22 members and friends per meeting.

1977: Unfortunately, even less evidence remains of this year's activities. Dr Philip Moore was re-elected President, David Harrison Secretary, and Gloria McCarthy Treasurer. The average attendance, based on the five months' remaining records, was 23 members.

2. The Later Years: 1978 - 2000

Fortunately, our archives from 1978 onwards are more complete: there are newsletters surviving from April 1978, and minute books of committee meetings from November 1979.

These records of the last 23 years tell of an active and enthusiastic organisation of members, with a wide variety of interests centred around a love of our Australian flora. Despite occasional differences, members have over the years co-operated willingly in the various tasks of running the Group, as well as providing support for the wider work of the Society. We have been fortunate in having among our members people of energy and ability to lead and inspire the membership.

The activities of Sutherland Group are an indication of the wide variety of members' interests, from identification to propagation and growing, to bushwalking, bush regeneration and conservation.

It may be appropriate now to consider various aspects of the Group's ongoing activities, followed by a chronological record of meetings and important events in the life of the Group.

Membership

From a small band of some 23 members in 1977, our numbers grew dramatically to 260 by the end of 1981, reaching a peak of 312 in 1983. Since then the membership, following a State-wide trend, has declined, with some fluctuations, to its present strength of 132 memberships, which still makes it one of the largest groups in NSW.

Meetings

General meetings have been held monthly, with the exception of January and December. In September 1978 the meeting venue was changed to Sutherland Preschool Kindergarten, and in June 1981 to Gymea Community Centre. Since 1979, the Annual General Meetings have been held each November. In addition, committee meetings have been held several times a year to discuss programs of speakers and activities, and to deal with various matters of correspondence and administration of the Group. The monthly general meetings have been generally well attended, the average attendance for 1982 being an all-time high of 160. Supper always provides an opportunity for members to share news and views.

Speakers: Most meetings have featured guest speakers, their topics including propagation, identification and cultivation of native plants, but also ranging over a wide variety of subjects including birds, reptiles, bush regeneration, conservation, bushwalks, national parks and nature photography. Most speakers illustrate their talks with coloured slides. Some of the more well known speakers have included such people as Dr Mary White, Don Burke, Bill Payne, Roger Elliot, Vic Cherikoff and Don Henry.

Members' Plant Table: It has been traditional for members to bring along flowers from their gardens for the Plant Steward to describe them and discuss their cultivation. This is one of the principal ways for members to come to know of the wide variety of species being grown locally, and to learn of their requirements. Cutting material is usually available from the specimens, which members are keen to take home to "try their luck" with different species. September, being a month when most members have flowers to show, has always been a speaker-free "Spring Night", with a wealth of species being shown.

Plant Sales: It is not clear when plant sales were commenced at the monthly meetings, but member Phil Keane, a nurseryman, who since the mid 1980s has been our Plant Steward, has been selling plants to us since that time, and this activity has proved a popular component of our meeting nights.

Cameo Spots: From time to time, members give ten minute "cameo spots", perhaps with holiday slides of wildflowers, or telling of some success in their garden. For some time the cameo spot was in the form of "My Three Favourite Plants".

Library: The Group's library has been popular with members since its inception in 1974. Although records are meagre, the average borrowing rate in 1979 was 20 borrowings a month. New books have been added regularly while those no longer being borrowed are sold to members at bargain prices.

Book Sales: In 1981 a Book Sales Officer was appointed to purchase books on various aspects of Australian plants and sell them to members. For some years this proved very popular and provided extra income for the Group. Records show that in 1982 and 1984, for instance, yearly sales topped \$3000. However, in the late 1980s, perhaps due to the wider availability of such books to the general public, the service was less in demand, leading to a decision in 1994 to discontinue this service.

Plant Raffles: A raffle of potted plants has also been a longstanding tradition on meeting nights, and has been a help in raising funds to cover the hall rental, which, incidentally, has risen from \$3 a month in 1971 to \$40 a month in 1999.

Seed Bank: Another meeting activity since 1978 has been the sale of seeds, mainly donated by members, but also purchased to order. Seed sales were discontinued in recent years due to a decline in demand.

Propagation Aids: Yet another institution at monthly meetings, also begun in 1978, was the sale of propagation aids, such as pots, vermiculite, plant labels and cutting hormones. Again, a decline in demand led to this service being discontinued in 1998.

Newsletters

From a modest "News Sheet" of two typewritten foolscap pages in April 1978, our monthly re-titled "Newsletter" had grown by 1985 to an average of 11 closely-typed foolscap pages, involving a tremendous typing workload each month. It was not uncommon in those days for a guest's talk to be printed almost word for word from tape recordings (which were also available for borrowing from the library), and for extensive plant lists to be included.

Since 1996 the Newsletter has acquired a much more professional appearance, thanks to editors skilled in the use of computers. It is invaluable in notifying members of coming meetings and activities, and in reporting past talks and events. Besides being mailed to Sutherland Group members, the Newsletter is also sent to many other Regional Groups, who reciprocate in like manner, enabling the sharing of much interesting information among the Groups.

Bushwalks

Bushwalks have always been a popular weekend activity since the Group's inception. The proximity of Royal and Heathcote National Parks provides many

handy venues for weekend walks. Other more distant areas have also been visited for day walks, such as Blue Mountains, Illawarra, and parks and reserves to the north of Sydney.

In 1982, the increasing size of weekend walking groups (up to 60 on one occasion) prompted the formation of "midweek rambles" led by Connie McPherson, affording smaller groups the chance to study more closely the flora of an area. Since then, they have become a regular feature of the Group's activities, usually on a monthly basis. Other day outings have included "identification walks" for beginners, and "canoe-ambles" and "li-lo-ambles" on local rivers.

Extended outings involving weekend or longer stays have also been conducted to areas such as Kosciuszko National Park, Mt Kaputar, Bateman's Bay, Dorrigo and the Grampians. Many of these outings have been under canvas, some with an emphasis on families with young children. During visits to Burrendong Arboretum, near Wellington, members have since 1982 often taken part in working bees to assist the wonderful efforts of the Althofer brothers in the development of that reserve.

Garden Visits

Another popular component of our Group's programs has been visits to the gardens of fellow members, of both our own and other Groups. Although early records mention these visits only in 1967, 1970 and 1972, they have been held every year since 1978. Usually three gardens are visited in one afternoon, and in many years two such afternoons have been organised. It is always interesting to see how other members have designed their gardens, overcome site difficulties and been successful in growing some of the more difficult species. Although we may often feel our efforts have been feeble by comparison, the visits are usually a source of inspiration (and of cutting material!), leading to greater efforts in our own gardens.

Flower Shows

Regional Flower Shows: NSW Region of the Society had been presenting wildflower displays from the early 1960s, first in Anthony Hordern's and Farmers' stores, later at Gordon and King's School and Macarthur Girls' High School, Parramatta. When the venue was changed in 1980 to Peakhurst High School, Sutherland Group assumed responsibility for its organisation, and provided major support there for the next three years. In the first year, some 5,000 visitors attended, while in 1982 over 100 members helped to present the exhibition. The next venue, Castle Hill Showgrounds, from 1984 to 1987, was not so convenient for our members, who nevertheless gave good support to the exhibition's organisers.

The 1988 Wildflower Spectacular, as it was now called, at Condell Park Basketball Arena, Bankstown, was ruined by an appropriately spectacular storm,

resulting in a disastrous financial loss. An earlier Bicentennial Banksia Spectacular Exhibition that year was also washed out following the wettest April in 100 years.

It was 1994 before NSW Region again organised another flower show, a “Winter Garden Festival”, at Rouse Hill, which was the venue for the “Native Plant and Garden Spectaculars” for the next two years. Members again gave sterling support, creating and managing displays, supervising parking, and selling potted plants.

“**Spring in the Gardens**” was organised by the Royal Botanic Gardens from 1985 to 1992, and the Society’s displays and plant sales, as part of that exhibition, were again well supported by Sutherland Group. In 1990, NSW Region made \$11,000 profit from the sale of plants, as well as winning \$2,000 prize money for its display.

Sydney Garden Festival has been presented throughout the 1990s at various venues, including Darling Harbour, Homebush Showgrounds and Rosehill Racecourse (in 2000). Group members who were rostered to staff the Society's stand enjoyed the opportunity to meet members of the public and to publicise the Society’s work.

Royal Easter Show: In 2000, Sutherland Group was one of only two APS groups to enter the inaugural Horticultural competition for native plants at the Royal Easter Show. The Group won the prize for best vase of native flowers (\$150 prize) and a number of first and second prizes in other classes for cut flowers and potted plants.

Other Flower Shows and Plant Stalls: Over the years, Sutherland Group has set up many plant stalls at various local sites as a means of raising revenue and promoting awareness of its existence and activities. For instance, in 1981, nearly \$2500 profit resulted from a plant stall in Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve. Some of these stalls have been in conjunction with larger events, such as the Gynea Lily Festival, Cronulla Spring Fair and Menai Envirofest and, in recent years, though further afield, the Grevillea Group’s Autumn Plant Sales at Mt Annan. Many of the plants sold in earlier years were “potted on” from tubes at working bees, and cared for in members’ gardens pending their sale at a later date.

Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve

As noted in “The Early Years”, this reserve was established to commemorate the 1970 Captain Cook Bicentenary, and a management committee was formed the following year to oversee its development and maintenance in conjunction with Sutherland Shire Council. Although initially the committee hoped to do most of the work on a voluntary basis, it became obvious that this was not practicable, and the

Council assumed major responsibility, with the committee being allotted a section to care for. This it has done ably, with the help of monthly working bees of keenly active Sutherland Group members.

In September 1986, the public was invited to two open days, with free guided walks being offered, and plants, books and refreshments sold. A total of \$1,100 was taken over the two days. Next year this activity was held in autumn and spring, and these bi-annual open days have been a regular fixture since then. They have been good publicity for the Group, as well as providing a handy, if variable, source of revenue. In 1987, with the help of a grant from the Commonwealth Bicentennial Authority, an engraving machine and lengths of aluminium strip were purchased, and a start was made on making labels for the many species of plants in the Reserve. The labels were made with volunteer labour and sold to the Council on a continuing basis.

In 1995 the Reserve celebrated its 25th Anniversary and a commemorative plaque with the following inscription was unveiled in the Reserve.

Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve

This plaque to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the
Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve
was officially unveiled by
Councillor Lorraine Rodden, Mayor,
Sutherland Shire Council and
Leonie Hogue, President, Society for Growing
Australian Plants, Sutherland Group.
October 15, 1995

As part of Sutherland Shire's lasting commemorations in 1970 of the 200th Anniversary of Captain Cook's landing in Australia, the Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve at Kareela, was commenced.

Sutherland Shire Council established the reserve as a tribute to Sir Joseph Banks. The reserve was initially developed by a citizens committee including members from the Society for Growing Australian Plants, Sutherland Group. Since 1977, Council staff have maintained the Reserve, with the continuing interest and voluntary efforts of the Society.

The Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve is one of only a few specialized gardens in Sydney devoted entirely to Australian Native Plants.

Inscription on plaque unveiled in the Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Reserve

In 2000, the Management Committee together with Sutherland Group donated four aluminium and timber interpretive plaques incorporating artwork (by the daughter of a member) and text relating to Acacias, Banksias, Ferns and Gardening with Native Plants. The Palm Society produced a fifth sign on Palms. The plaques were unveiled by Councillor Genevieve Rankin at the Autumn Open Day in April, 2000. As more funds become available, it is planned to provide further such signs.

Relations with NSW Region and ASGAP

Although it has always been a requirement that group members are members of the NSW Society, this was not always enforced in the past. Previously there were separate membership fees for the NSW Society and the Groups, with individual Groups setting their own fees. Group membership fees increased from 10 shillings (\$1) in 1966 to \$7.00 in 1995, during which time Regional fees went from 15 shillings (\$1.50) to \$26. In 1996 a “common fee” of \$32 was introduced by NSW Region, with \$7.00 being passed back to local groups. This has since risen in July 2000 to \$38.50 including GST for single membership with \$9 rebate to the member’s group. (It is interesting to note, in passing, that our hall rent also increased from \$3 a month in 1971 to \$40 in 1999).

Our Group’s contribution to NSW Region, though, has been more than a financial one, and over the years a number of Sutherland members have served with distinction on State Council. Peter Olde was State President from 1988 to 1990, as was Jim Boswell from 1994 to 1996. Glen Harvey served as State Secretary from 1981 to 1989, to be succeeded in that position until 1996 by Allan Woollett, who had also been Company Co-ordinator from 1986 to 1988. Other State office bearers were Geoff Broadhead (Editor of *Native Plants for NSW*, 1980-1985), Connie McPherson (Conservation Officer, 1987-1995), and Rhonda Daniels (Conservation Officer, 1997-2000). Peter Olde was made a life member of NSW Region in 1998. The Group elects a delegate to Regional Council each year, in this way maintaining an ear and a voice in its deliberations.

Many members over the years have attended conferences of NSW Region and ASGAP (Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants). It was in 1993, though, that our Group had a major role in ASGAP’s 17th Biennial Seminar, when it was given the responsibility for arranging one day’s activities, centred on “Flora of the Hawkesbury Sandstone”. This involved a lecture, guided walks in Royal National Park, and an informal night with demonstrations and displays. The hard work of many members was rewarded with widespread praise from participants.

Conservation

The Group's interest in and involvement with conservation issues dates back to its earliest days, as already mentioned. Over its 38 years' history this has included a number of facets:

Bush Conservation Group: In 1981 a Conservation Group was formed by the Sutherland Group to raise awareness of local conservation issues and to lobby the relevant authorities where necessary to achieve favourable outcomes. The Group's name was changed to Bush Study Group the following year, and to Bush Conservation Group in 1987.

Over the years many issues have been addressed, often in conjunction with Sutherland Shire Environment Centre. In the 1980s and early 1990s some of the main concerns included the Menai 'megatip', Kurnell industrial development, pampas grass, Towra Point, Jannali Reserve, Helensburgh development and Cronulla Esplanade.

By 1991 it was noted in the Sutherland Group Minutes that the Group's emphasis was shifting from providing plants and books to education and information on the importance of growing natives, and the need to conserve and regenerate bush.

In 1992 a proposal was forwarded to Sutherland Shire Council suggesting that residents' garden waste should be diverted from landfill, composted and resold as garden mulch. Whether or not as a result of our submission, this scheme became a reality a few years later. In more recent years, the Bush Conservation Group has drawn attention to such concerns as a proposed housing development at Waterfall on the fringe of Helensburgh National Park, and another one on unstable land at Gynea Bay. As a result of our submissions to the Land and Environment Court, both of these environmentally threatening proposals were defeated. Other recent issues dealt with by this Group involved ocean sand mining, huts and deer in Royal National Park and a sports complex proposed for Menai on rare and endangered transition forest land.

Financial Support: By means of subscriptions and donations our Group has given generous financial support to conservation bodies such as the Australian Conservation Foundation, Nature Conservation Council of NSW, Total Environment Centre, Sutherland Shire Environment Centre, Gould League, Friends of Port Hacking and Helensburgh District Protection Society, as well as to Burrendong Arboretum, Illawarra Grevillea Park, Como School (to re-establish their garden after the 1994 bushfires) and Peter Olde (for research for his 3 volume Grevillea Book).

Bushcare: There are now 120 Bushcare Groups in the Shire, co-ordinated by Sutherland Shire Council, involved in reclaiming, regenerating and maintaining areas of urban bush. Over 900 volunteers are involved, including many members of Sutherland Group. In addition, members regularly take part in bushcare activities at Kurnell, under the auspices of NPWS rangers.

Other Regeneration Projects: In 1989 a small band of volunteers began landscaping the environs of Como railway station. The following year, a grant of \$1,000 from State Rail enabled the purchase of 250 plants. In spite of considerable vandalism, this beautification work has continued to the present time. In 1991, two working bees were held to landscape an area at Lucas Heights Community School. In 1992 and 1993 working bees took part in stabilising sand dunes at Wanda Beach by planting native species. In the latter year, members of the Fern Group, including several from Sutherland Group, planted ferns in Illawarra Grevillea Park. In 1993, two of our members carried out a survey of native plant species in the Ewey Creek catchment for Sutherland Shire Council. Mention has already been made of the working bees at Burrendong Arboretum.

Publicity

In recent years our Group has endeavoured to publicise its existence and activities in an effort to counter falling membership numbers. Various avenues in use include media releases concerning coming meetings being sent to print media and radio stations, and the use of about 20 posters placed in libraries, nurseries and shop windows. These posters are updated monthly with stickers giving details of speakers and their subjects. Old copies of *Australian Plants* have also been placed in doctors' waiting rooms. Media outlets are also notified of spring and autumn walks in Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve. A Sutherland Group website was set up in 1997.

A further opportunity for publicity arises when the Group is asked to provide speakers to meetings of local garden or service clubs and at the Sydney Garden Festival.

Christmas Functions

It has been the Group's practice for over 20 years to hold a Christmas function of some sort as a finale to our year's activities. For the last 10 years this has taken the form of a barbecue tea at Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve, which provides an opportunity for members to get to know one another better, to reminisce on the year's activities and to make plans for the coming year.

Education

Propagation Workshops: These have been held from time to time, either as part of a monthly meeting or as a special weekend activity. Members with the

necessary expertise demonstrate various propagation techniques, mainly by cuttings or seeds, but sometimes by grafting or layering. The opportunity to take part in such a 'hands on' activity has proved invaluable to newer members, and the workshops have been popular and well-attended.

WEA Courses: In 1989 and 1990 the Group organised speakers for a Workers' Education Association 10 week course entitled "Go Native – Grow Native".

Publications

Several members have co-authored books on native plants.

In 1989 Alan Fairley and Dr Philip Moore published an invaluable book entitled *Native Plants of the Sydney District*. Alan Fairley has also published numerous other books on bushwalking including *The Beaten Track*, *Sydney's Best Bushland Tracks*, and *A Complete Guide to Warrumbungle National Park*.

In 1994 and 1995 Peter Olde, in conjunction with Victorian Neil Marriott, published the definitive 3 volume *Grevillea Book*, following extensive Australia-wide research.

Gwen Harden edited the major work *The Flora of New South Wales*. This work, which is in four volumes, was published between 1994 and 1995.

Another longstanding member, the late Pat Akkersdyk, compiled detailed plant lists covering local areas, which have proved useful to NPWS as well as to members on bushwalks. They have recently been published by our own group in the form of 5 handy booklets, with all species cross-referenced to Robinson's *Field Guide to the Native Plants of Sydney*.

3. Meetings and Highlights: 1978 - 2000

1978

Meetings

February:		AGM
March:	Ron Stevens	Fertilising
April:	Beth Michie	Propagation
May:	Panel	
June:	J. Bungey	Landscaping
July:	Members	

August:	Don McGillivray	Joseph Banks in New Holland
September:		Spring Night and Arrangements
October:	Geoff Butler	Canberra Botanic Gardens
November:		

Highlights (N.B. Highlights for this and succeeding years mostly omit regular activities such as Spring and Autumn Walks, garden visits, Christmas functions etc.)

- Bush Walks to Royal National Park and Heathcote State Park
- Two-day display of potted flowering plants at Miranda Fair
- Sale of potted plants (at \$1.40 each) at Jannali Shopping Centre
- Gymea Lily Festival
- Forty-two members enjoyed a two-day bus trip to Canberra (now National Botanic Gardens)
- Visit to Michies' Kentlyn Nursery

1979

Meetings

February:	John Rose	AGM, WA Trip
March:	Bill Magnusson	Ferns
April:	Bob Crombie	Royal National Park
May:	Members, Dr Philip Moore	Keying
June:	Alan Fairley	Local Natives
July:	Bob Howe	Landscaping (over 80 at meeting!)
August:	J. Waterhouse	Eucalypts
September:	Les Taylor	Prostantheras
October:	Col Brandon	Orchids
November:	Geoff Butler	AGM, Grafting

Highlights

- Trips to Snowy Mountains, Thirlmere Lakes
- Propagation Workshop
- Visit to Sonter's Nursery and Cumberland Forest
- Exhibition and plant stall at Miranda Fair

1980

Meetings

February:	Evelyn Hickey	Bush Regeneration
March:	Members	
April:	Doug Gibson	Birds

May:	Members	
June:	Dr Philip Moore	Pea Flowers
July:	Bruce McKenzie	Landscaping of Botany Bay dunes
August:	Erica Morris	Disaster on the Move
September:	John Clemens	Domestication of Native Plants
October:	Gary Schoer	An Educated Look at the Bush
November:	Roger Good	Fire Management

Highlights

- A potting-on bee
- Two propagation workshops
- A Royal National Park campout
- Field trips to West Head, Barren Grounds and Burrendong
- There was concern over Plant Variety Rights
- The Group bought a slide projector, and appointed three trustees (30.1.80 - for what reason is unclear)

1981

Meetings

February:	Brian Parry	Hawkesbury Sandstone Plants
March:	Peter Olde	Setting up a Native Garden
April:	Dr Albani	Ancient Botany Bay
May:	Members' Night	
June:	Peter Olde	Grevilleas
July:	Don Burke	New natives, cultivars, grafted Grevilleas
August:	Noel Summerell	Bonsai
September:	Max Hewitt	
October:	Arthur Chapman	Endangered Flora
November:	George Martin Adams	Birdscaping

Highlights

- Canoeing on Port Hacking
- Spotlighting in Royal National Park (with National Parks Association)
- Potting-on and propagation workshops
- A bush walk to Palm Jungle
- Field trips to Macquarie Pass, Kandos Weir and Canberra
- Melaleuca seeds issued to members as a propagation and fund-raising project
- After six years, "arrangements are being made to finalise the estate of Lisle Pearse". (See highlights of 1997)

1982

Meetings

February:	Frank Hatfield	Wildflowers in WA
March:	Bill Sullivan	Aborigines
April:	Keith Alcock	Pests and Diseases
May:	Peter Rodgers	Worms
June:	Don Blaxell	Eucalypts
July:	Dr Marilyn Fox	Myall Lakes
August:	Glen Wilson	Landscaping
September:		Spring Night
October:	Bob Crombie	Royal National Park Rainforest
November:	Rodger Elliot	Melaleucas

Highlights

- A field trip and working bee at Burrendong Arboretum
- Two “canoe-amble”, a “bike-amble” and a “li-lo-amble”
- A camp at Kanangra Boyd National Park
- A cruise on Hacking River
- The range of activities is an indication of the size and vitality of Sutherland Group at this time. About now the Group was nearing its peak strength. In September 1983 a membership of 312 was recorded, with 8 to 10 new names being added each month.
- The average monthly attendance, according to the President’s annual report, was about 160!
- Our founding President and Life Member Bede Keary, died on 2 December.

1983

Meetings

February:	Alex Floyd	Rainforests
March:	John Evans	Annuals
April:	Geoff Butler	National Botanic Gardens Rockery
May:	Neil Marriott	Grampians
June:	David Turner	Birds
July:	Phillip Conacher	Soil Conservation
August:	Greg Lamont	Spring Night, Container Plants
September:	Peter Olde	Grevilleas
October:	John Wrigley	Landscaping
November	Merv Hodge	AGM, Queensland Plants

Highlights

- A propagation workshop (over 40 attended)

- Bush walks to Towra Point (45 attended), Royal National Park, and a beginners' walk (80 joining in!)
- Visits to Stony Range and Katandra Bushland Reserve, National Botanic Gardens, Canberra (50 members by coach)
- A camp-out at Greenpatch, Jervis Bay
- A bequest of the late Ron Stevens' books was added to the library

1984

Meetings

February:	Ray Brown	Propagating
March:	Neil Black	Soils and Potting Mixes
April:	Jim Armstrong	Rutaceae
May:	Graeme O'Neil	Proteaceae
June:	Dr Philip Moore	Eucalypts
July:	Graham Quint	Sydney Native Plant Communities
August:		Spring Night and AGM
September:	Harry Recher	Effect of Fire on Heathland
October:	David Turner	The Kimberley
November:	Geoff Holloway	Insect-Plant Relations

Highlights

- Bushwalks (nearly every month, in addition to one or two midweek rambles each month), including a fern walk and a beginners' bushwalk (60 attending)
- An advanced propagation workshop
- A plant labelling day, followed by a plant sale
- A "Kids' camp" at Shoalhaven Heads and a camp-out near Nowra.
- Following the conversion of SGAP to a company, SGAP (NSW) Ltd., an extraordinary meeting and annual general meeting were held in August

1985

Meetings

February:	Joan Webb	Language of leaves
March:	Dr Win Rowan-Jones	Conservation and National Parks
April:	Jim Walsh	History of the Sydney Basin
May:	Les Cady	Australian Orchids
June:	Gwen Harden	Rainforest Plants
July:	Vic Cherikoff	Food Value of Australian Plants
August:	Dr Philip Moore	Pea Family
September:		Spring Night
October:	Angus Stewart	Kangaroo Paws
November:	Graham Quint	AGM and Grasses and Bush Regeneration

Highlights

- A weekend in the Snowy Mountains in the January wildflower season
- A “Kids’ camp” at Bonnie Vale
- A “potting on” day
- A propagation workshop

1986

Meetings

February:	Don Burke	Native Plants in the Landscape
March:	Leon Fuller	Plants of Wollongong-Kiama
April:	Joan Aston	Germination of Seeds
	Tony Henderson	Vegetative Propagation
May:	Neil Marriott	Wildflower Photography
June:	John Rowell	Large Trees in the Garden
July:	Ross Knowles	Conservation in NSW
August:	Judy McMaugh	Garden Pests and Diseases
September:		Spring Night
October:	Alan Fairley	Bushwalking in the Sydney Region
November:	Janice Hughes	AGM, Community Weeds

Highlights

- A working bee at Burrendong Arboretum
- A propagation course, a photographic workshop and an identification walk
- The Group’s healthy financial situation allowed the purchase of a public address system for use at meetings
- It was decided to provide members with name tags. (An earlier system, introduced in 1978, had fallen into disuse)

1987

Meetings

February:	Peter Olde	West Australian Trip
March:	Ian Swords	Council attitude to Urban Bushland
	Bob Paisley	Palms of the World
April:	Brian Walters	Banksias in S.E. Australia
May:	Steve Gallivan	Attracting Birds
June:	Patrick Holland	Habitat Destruction’s Effect on Wildlife
July:	Doug Graddon	Photographing Native Plants
August:	Gwen Harden	Plants of the Warrumbungles
September:		Spring Night

October:	Howard Barker	Environmental Education and Bushland Management
November:	Robert Miller	Mint Bushes

Highlights

- Trip to Warrumbungles
- Survey of members' interests and suggestions for meetings etc.
- Working bee at Burrendong Arboretum
- Identification walk
- Eucalypt walk
- Propagation Day

1988

Meetings

February:	Dennis Margan	Goodeniaceae
March:	Valerie Yeo	Natives in Pots
April:	Margaret Baker & Robin Corringham	Plants of the Blue Mountains
May:	Gwen Harden	Rainforests
June:	Alan Morris	Towra Point Nature Reserve
July:	Peter Cuneo	Mt Annan
August:	Graham Quint	Eucalypts of the Sydney Area
September:		Spring Night
October:	Betty Rymer	Meandering in the West
November:	Marion Blackwell	Local Plants in Landscaping

Highlights

- Three-day trip to Bateman's Bay area and Corn Trail
- Bicentennial Banksia Display at Royal Botanic Gardens and Wildflower Spectacular at Bankstown were both washed out!

1989

Meetings

February:	Bill Payne	Growing Wildflowers
March:	Paul Nixon	Waratahs
April:		Members' Night
May:	Doug Graddon	Terrestrial Orchids of Sutherland Shire
June:	Anthony McLaughlin	Coolangubra and Tantawangalo Forests

July:	Doug Benson	Vegetation of the Sydney Region
August:	George Sloan	Propagation Workshop
September:		Spring Night
October:	Roger Carolin	Gondwanaland Catastrophe
November:	Bob Crombie	Plant Identification

Highlights

- Three day return trip to the Corn Trail
- Cronulla Mall display
- First WEA course – “Go Native, Grow Native”
- Como Station beautification started
- Burrendong Arboretum working bee
- Bernie Clarke received an OAM for services to conservation.

1990

Meetings

February:	Kyrill Taylor	Ferns for Your Garden
March:	Alan Fairley	Native Plants of the Sydney Region
April:	Peter Martyn	Insects
May:	Peter Althofer	West Australian Trip
June:		Film on Banksias
July:	Vic Cherikoff	Edible Bush Plants
August:	Don Adamson	How Our Bush is Changing
September:		Spring Night
October:	Don Henry	Biodiversity
November:		Members' Slides

Highlights

- Easter weekend trip to Bateman's Bay
- Grampians Trip
- Mt Annan visit
- Burrendong Working Bee
- Second WEA course
- Cronulla Spring Fair

1991

Meetings

February:	Cathy Offord	Horticultural Research at Mt Annan
March:	Graham Walters	Birds
April:	Audio-visual	Propagation of Seeds
May:	Neil Marriott	Victoria's Native Gardens

June:	David Jenkinson	Rainforest
July:	Tien McDonald	Bushland Management
August:		
September:		Spring Night and Myrtaceae Video
October:	Warwick Wright	Plant Quarantine
November:	Len Butt	Cycads

Highlights

- Mt Annan Barbecue
- Seed workshop at Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve
- Trips to Blue Mts, Grampians, Newcastle Wetlands, and two to Barren Grounds for a social weekend and working bee.

1992

Meetings

February:	Jim Boswell	WA Conference & Slides
March:	Dr Jocelyn Powell	Epacridaceae
April:		Members' Night
May:	Peter Olde	Grevilleas
June:	Gwen Harden	Mt Kaputar
August:		
September:	Merilyn House	Barren Grounds & Spring Night
October:	Peter Vaughan	Plants for Shady Areas
November:	Byron Hurst	Greening the Shire

Highlights

- Burrendong Arboretum working bee
- Plant Stall for Wattle Day at Kurnell
- Trip to Mt Kaputar
- State Conference at Armidale
- Visit to Wollongong Botanic Gardens and Illawarra Grevillea Park
- Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve featured on the TV show "Burke's Backyard"
- It was agreed to give new members a badge and a plant

1993

Meetings

February:	Darryl Smedley	Native Orchids
March:	Barry Conn	Fragrant Plants
April:		Members' Night
May:	Dr Peter Watt	Christmas Bells
June:	Gordon Brooks	Rutaceae

July:	Alan Leishman	Birds of Mt Annan
August:	Bronwyn Taverne	WIRES
September:	Ken Arnold	Tasmania & Spring Night
October:	Dr Philip Moore	New and Interesting Plants, Sydney District
November:	Joy Everett	Australian Daisies

Highlights

- Opening of Wedding Area at Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve
- Visits to Blue Mts, Katandra Bushland and Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden.
- Aileen Phipps interviewed on Radio 2SSR-FM
- ASGAP Biennial Seminar and Post-Seminar Trip
- Two sand dune plantings at Wanda Beach

1994

Meetings

February:	Gwen Harden	A Flora of NSW
March:	Brian Roach	Successful Plants for Beginners
April:	Dr Roslyn Muston	Fire and the Australian Flora
May:	Craig Thompson	Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
June:	Dr Peter Wilson	Diverse Myrtaceae
July:	Fred Johnston	(Audiovisuals) Banksias & Landscaping
August:	Jim Francis	Birds of Sydney Bushland
September:		Spring Night
October:	Alan Fairley	Discovering Sydney's Urban Bushland
November:	Peter Olde	The Grevillea Book

Highlights

- Outings to Moss Vale (by train) and Currarong (weekend)
- Sutherland Hospital Horticultural Expo
- Cameo spots re-introduced
- 90% of Royal National Park burnt out
- Propagation workshop

1995

Meetings

February:	David Waterhouse	Lorikeets & Their Feeding Habits
March:	Gillean Dunk	All About Ferns
April:	Robin Walton	Doing More for the Environment
May:	Tony Auld	Impact of Fire on Fauna and Flora
June:	Lotte von Richter	Searching for Native Bedding Plants

July:	Ross Hannah	Why I Joined SGAP
August:	Dr Kristine French	Regent Honeyeaters
September:		Spring Night, Cameo Spots
October:	Dr Kevin Mills	Rainforests of the Illawarra District
November:	AA Bulk Company	Native Grasses

Highlights

- Trip to Charlotte Pass
- Silver Jubilee (25 years) of Joseph Banks Reserve
- Inaugural District Group Skills Workshop at Collaroy
- Bus Trip with Menai Group to Wollongong
- Plant Stall at Cronulla Envirofest
- New projector bought for \$367
- Second hand computer and printer bought for \$1200

1996

Meetings

February:	Ray Brown	Botanical History
March:	Ken Griffiths	Reptiles and Frogs
April:	Chris Guthrie	Exotic Natives and Other Weeds (plus problem-solving panel)
May:	Gwen Harden	4WD Trip to Cape York
June:	Gary Leonard	Demystifying the Eucalypts
July:	Mark Aiken	Water Features in the Garden
August:	Barbara & Ron Gornall	Wildflower Tour of WA
September:		Spring Night
October:	Peter Olde	History of Plants
November:		Audio-visual – Propagation & Germination

Highlights

- Weekend Trip to Blue Mts
- Plant stalls at Gymea and Menai Envirofest and a plant display at Westfield Miranda
- Second District Group Skills Workshop
- Open Gardens – Aitken & Wyber gardens participated in the ABC Open Gardens Scheme.
- Meg Boswell founded Hospitality Group
- Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens visited Joseph Banks Reserve
- Publicity increased with posters and media releases

1997

Meetings

February:	Jim Walsh	Tilting at Windmills
March:	Ken Griffiths	Nature Photography
April:		Hands-On Propagation Workshop
May:	Peter Able	Ptilotus
June:	Vic Cherikoff	Bush Foods
July:	Chris Guthrie	Local Plants
August:	Gwen Harden	Identification Workshop
September:		Spring Night
October:	Danie Odinea	Garden Design & Wildlife Habitats
November:	Tony Auld	Plants after the Fire

Highlights

- Trips to Charlotte Pass and Mittagong
- Outings to Blue Mts (with Menai Group) and Mt Annan
- Newcastle Group visited Joseph Banks Reserve
- Group website set up
- Sutherland Group participated in a NSW Region Committee to determine the best use of the Lisle Pearse bequest to the Society of over \$200,000
- Dick Dietsch's bequest of 5 boxes of books and microscope

1998

Meetings

February:	Peter Olde	Designing a Native Garden
March:	Steven Ward	Koalas
April:	Dr Kris French	Flora Biodiversity
May:	Peter Cuneo	Wollemi Pine
June:	Gordon Rowlands	Landscaping with Natives
July:	Dr Mary White	Listen! Our Land is Crying
August:	Margaret Bradhurst	Terrestrial Orchids of Sutherland Shire
September:		Spring Night with Jim Low (balladist)
October:	Peter Stevens	Royal National Park
November:	John Knight	Plants of NSW South Coast

Highlights

- Trips to Dorrigo, Bundanoon and Dunn's Swamp
- Open Gardens: Aitken and Wyber gardens participated in the ABC Open Gardens Scheme

- Peter Olde made Life Member of NSW Region
- Insurance policies reviewed

1999

Meetings

February:	Peter Olde	Growing Grevilleas
March:	Dr Anne Dollin	Native Bees
April:	Allan House	Fungi
May:	Alan Fairley	Walks of the Illawarra
June:	Dr Barbara Briggs	Gondwana Flora
July:		Audio-visual: Fern Propagation
August:	Chris Guthrie	Eucalypts in Sutherland Shire
September:		Spring Night
October:	Peter Hay	Arid Zone Plants
November:	Tony Dowd	Biodiversity

Highlights

- Outings to Mt Tomah and Barren Grounds
- Trips to Charlotte Pass and Bateman's Bay
- Royal Easter Show
- Open Garden –John and Liz Aitken's garden participated in the ABC Open Gardens Scheme
- Sutherland Group Constitution approved by NSW Region
- Pat Akkersdyk's plant lists published in booklet form
- Training instituted for Joseph Banks Reserve walks leaders

2000

Meetings

February:	Dr Philip Moore	New & Uncommon Plants in Sydney District
March:	Dr Kris French	Relationship Between Plants & Animals
April:	Tony Saunders	Birdscaping Gardens/Birds in Backyard Project
May:	Margaret Bradhurst	Photographing Australian Flora
June:	Kate Boyd	Rainforest Plants on Balconies and on the N. Coast
July:	Martyn Robinson	Good and Bad Critters in the Garden
August:	Ross Doig	Propagation of Australian Plants
September:		Spring Night
October:	John Aitken	Garden Landscaping and Design
November:	Jeremy Smith	Flora of Sydney Region and Use as Cut Flowers

Highlights

- A set of four interpretive signs were unveiled at Joseph Banks Reserve
- The Group won several prizes, including best vase of native flowers, at the inaugural horticultural competition for native plants at the Royal Easter Show
- Three members gardens were included in the Australian Open Garden Scheme: the Aitkens', the Wybers', and for the first time Jan Taylor's garden
- Member Connie McPherson received a Mayoral Volunteer Recognition Award from Sutherland Council for her conservation work
- A long-running series of profiles of members as native plant enthusiasts appeared in local newspaper *The Leader* throughout the year.

Appendix -- Office Bearers

YEAR	PRESIDENT	SECRETARY	TREASURER
1963	Bede Keary	Kerry Wheeler	Kerry Wheeler
1964	Bede Keary	Ray Witchard	
1965	Bede Keary		
1966			
1967	Roy Duncan	E. Horner	S. Lynch
1968			
1969			
1970	Roy Duncan	Ken Arnold	Ken Arnold
1971			
1972	Roy Duncan/Ken Arnold	Ken Watson	Ken Watson
1973			
1974	Peter Locksley	Dr Philip Moore	Carol Watson
1975	Elaine Williamson	Dr Philip Moore	
1976	Dr Philip Moore	David Harrison	Marie Moore
1977	Dr Philip Moore	David Harrison	Gloria McCarthy
1978	Peter Olde	Glen Harvey	Connie McPherson
1979	Peter Olde	Glen Harvey	Daphne Hanson
1980	Peter Olde	Glen Harvey	Daphne Hanson
1981	Peter Olde	Glen Harvey	Daphne Hanson
1982	Peter Olde	Glen Harvey	Daphne Hanson
1983	Peter Olde	Glen Harvey	Daphne Hanson
1984	Janice Hughes	Glen Harvey/Leonie Hogue	Ken Barrington
1985	Janice Hughes	Leonie Hogue	Ken Barrington
1986	Ross Hannah	Leonie Hogue	Ken Barrington
1987	Ross Hannah	Meg Boswell	Bill Morrell, Judith Arnold
1988	Jim Boswell	Allan Woollett	Judith Arnold
1989	Jim Boswell	Allan Woollett	Judith Arnold
1990	Jim Boswell	Aileen Phipps	Judith Arnold
1991	Richard Laney	Aileen Phipps	Judith Arnold
1992	Richard Laney	Aileen Phipps	Judith Arnold
1993	Richard Laney	Aileen Phipps	Judith Arnold
1994	Leonie Hogue	Aileen Phipps	Judith Arnold
1995	Leonie Hogue	Aileen Phipps	Simon Bastin, Valerie Yeo
1996	Leonie Hogue	John Aitken	Valerie Yeo
1997	John Aitken	(John Aitken)	Carry Williamson
1998	John Aitken	Doug Irving	Carry Williamson
1999	John Aitken	Doug Irving	Carry Williamson
2000	Rhonda Daniels	Marie Irving	Gwen Smith

