

**S.G.A.P. ACACIA STUDY GROUP**  
**NEWSLETTER NO. 2**  
**JUNE 1968**

**Robert Coveny**  
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**Concord, NSW 2137**

Welcome to four newcomers to the Group.

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| 1. Mr Harry K Kerchian<br>287 Franklin St<br>Heading 01867<br>Massachusetts, USA | 3. Mrs M J Monfries<br>5 Blacks Rd<br>West Pennant Hills<br>NSW 2120 |
| 2. Mrs L Murphy<br>2 Kemsley Court<br>Hawthorn<br>Victoria 3123                  | 4. Mrs J Hardy<br>132 Gloucester Rd<br>Hurstville<br>NSW 2220        |

My apologies to Mrs E Durbridge for the misspelling of her name in the last issue.

Report on the Allen Keane dedication at Bargo, on April 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **THE DR ALLAN KEANE MEMORIAL DEDICATION**

It has been said that the late Dr Keane had made an important part of his life's work the study & cultivation of the genus Acacia, because of his love for yellow flowers.

At the Wirrimbirra Reserve, Bargo, on the glorious afternoon of Saturday April the 27<sup>th</sup>, the dedication of the late Dr Keane's Memorial took place.

70 members and friends of the David G Stead Foundation were present, at 3.40pm, when Mr Geo. Althofer said a few words on behalf of the Acacia Study Group.

Mr Althofer said that Dr Keane and himself had been drawn close together through their correspondence, for some 25 years, even though they had never managed to meet. They had one thing in common, their love for, and cultivation of Australian plants.

When Mr Althofer had finished his brief speech, Mrs Keane responded on behalf of her late husband. She told how, at the time of his death, he had 144 species of Acacia growing on their 7 acre property at Montrose, in 1966. This was a remarkable achievement in itself, because 4 years earlier, when there were 140 species growing, a fire had swept through the Dandenongs destroying all before it. Only a very small number of plants survived. Thus we may see this man's dedication for the growing of Acacias.

The memorial is a natural sandstone block, with a metal plaque affixed to the centre, sited beneath tall gum trees, with young Acacias growing nearby. The following words are etched into the plaque of the Memorial –

“In memory of Dr Allan C Keane  
1900-1966  
Foundation Leader of the Acacia Study Group, S.G.A.P.  
From the members, 1966.”

The Acacia Group was represented by Mrs Chandler, Miss M Pearce, Mrs L Murphy (a new member from Victoria) & myself.

The following Acacias were seen growing at the Bargo Reserve, many introduced, some indigenous, to that area.

<i>A. adunca</i>	<i>A. drummondii</i>	<i>A. myrtifolia</i>
<i>A. alata</i>	<i>A. falcata</i>	<i>A. parramattensis</i>
<i>A. amblygona</i>	<i>A. falciformis</i>	<i>A. pentadenia</i>
<i>A. binervata</i>	<i>A. fimbriata</i>	<i>A. pubescens</i>
<i>A. botrycephala</i>	<i>A. gilbertii</i>	<i>A. pulchella</i>
<i>A. brownii</i>	<i>A. howittii</i>	<i>A. pycnantha</i>
<i>A. calamifolia</i>	<i>A. iteaphylla</i>	<i>A. rotundifolia</i>
<i>A. cardiophylla</i>	<i>A. jonesii</i>	<i>A. saligna</i>
<i>A. conferta</i>	<i>A. linifolia</i>	<i>A. spectabilis</i>
<i>A. continua</i>	<i>A. longifolia</i>	<i>A. ulicifolia</i>
<i>A. cyanophylla</i>	<i>A. melanoxydon</i>	<i>A. verticillata</i>
<i>A. decurrens</i>	<i>A. muellerana</i>	

I feel that Dr Keane must have indeed been a remarkable man, for his many scattered Study Group members to have united in effort to have a Memorial dedicated to his name, so that he would be long remembered for his work with Australian plants, especially Acacias.

Below is reproduced a letter from Mrs Ann Hardy, an ordinary SGAP member, who was present at Wirrimbirra for the Keane Memorial ceremony. Mrs Hardy has since joined our Group.

“On Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> of April, I was amongst the privileged throng who arrived at Wirrimbirra, Bargo, to witness the dedication of the Memorial of the late Dr Allan Keane, by Mr Geo. Althofer.

With Mrs Keane and Mr Althofer either side of the simple sandstone Memorial, which is surrounded by tall Gums and young Acacias, Mr Althofer in a gentle sincere voice, told of his friendship over 25 years with Dr Keane, and of this man’s great work.

I felt at that moment regret that I had not known him, and that all our Group members could not be there to share this poignant moment with me.”

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Further information has been received from Mr Des Nelson of Alice Springs:

“Some of our Acacias are very erratic in their flowering – I have some *A. estrophiolata* “Ironwood”, flowering well on the 9<sup>th</sup> of April, at the start of the cool weather.

I might mention that the most serious poisoning problem in the Centre is caused by an Acacia. It is *A. georginae* “Gidyca”, which occurs abundantly to the N.E. of Alice Springs, in alkaline soils. It is poisonous only over towards the Qld border, where certain trees will produce a poison similar to 1080 (sodium fluoroacetate) for which there is no known antidote. In regions close to Alice Springs the tree is harmless and a useful stock feed. To date research has failed to provide an answer as to why the tree is safe in one area, and sporadically poisonous in another.

*A. murrayana* “Colony Wattle”, one of our most spectacular wattles, is also interesting in that it propagates largely from suckers and the sucker growth, initially, has pinnate true leaves, before the normal phyllodes develop.

*A. peuce* is another interesting species. A rare tree, it grows in two places only – on Anando Station in the Northern Territory, and at Birdsville in Qld. In between 300 miles of Simpson Desert. This would seem to indicate that this tree may have been more common before this desert developed.”

In the next Newsletter, a list of pamphlets received from Alice Springs, dealing with Acacia species, will be published. At the end of this Newsletter will be found a Seed List supplied by Mr Nelson for the benefit of members. All seed packets are available at 50 cents each.

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#### **A note on a swamp loving species.**

*A. ptychoclada* Maiden et Blakely. A shrub 6ft high, with narrow phyllodes, occurring on swamp margins and along creeks. Fairly common on damper parts of the Blue Mountains. It has been seen growing at Wentworth Falls, Lawson and Blackheath.

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*A. conferta* A. Cunn. ex Benth. is recommended to members to propagate from seed, when available. A most delightful shrub, 3ft with deep yellow balls at the ends of the branches, among the short crowded phyllodes. A plant of this species was seen at Wirrimbirra, Bargo, coming into blossom. A native of NSW.

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Confirmation has been received that *A. graniticola* and *A. bynoeana* var. *latifolia* are invalid because descriptions were not published in Latin as required in scientific circles. These names should not be used until they have been published correctly.

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A request has been received from Dr Biccard Jepps of the 'Tree Society of South Africa', for a member, or members of the Acacia Study Group, to produce an article with photographs dealing with Acacias, to appear in their Journal.

This would be a marvelous opportunity to give some publicity to our Group. If anyone can help them with their request, please do so with my blessing.

The following information is taken from the replies received from members, concerning the questionnaire sent to them by the Leader.

## 1. Treatment of Seed Before Planting

Rupture seed coat by filing or holding against a grinding wheel. A nick is made in the seed coat with a needle, unless seed is hard, when a sharp instrument is used to cut off end of seed.

When old seed is used, a small cut (notch) is made in the seed coat, and then dipped in sulphuric acid for 2 hours. Soaking in boiling water.

The following article is reproduced from Mrs Chandler's letter for the benefit of members.

"I place the seed in a breakfast cup, pour boiling water over, and wait until seed swells visibly, sometimes this is evident within 24 hours, and often 48 hours – up to 16 or 17 days – is necessary with very hard coated seeds, such as the species:- *A. drummondii* and varieties, *A. pentadenia*, *A. rotundifolia* etc. You may have to plant one at a time as there may be great variation in the penetration of moisture.

In cases where lengthy soaking is necessary, drain water off each day and add more hot water. Any seeds that float to the top are discarded, as they contain no embryo.

As weather and seasonable conditions have a great influence on germination, where supply of seed is small it is unwise to risk all seed at once. I generally plant 4 or 5 seeds in a square 4 inch pot, they are then easy to transplant with minimum root disturbance.

Small Acacia seedlings form quite large root systems and are resentful of root disturbance. It is a good idea to stand pots containing small seedlings in about 2 inches of damp wood shavings, vermiculite or similar medium. This encourages downward growth of roots, which will wander through the holes in the pots, but come to no harm."

## 2. Soil Mixture Used For Germination of Seed

The variability in soil mixtures used may account for the germination results obtained. Each member's mixture is reproduced from their letters.

"sandy loam topped up with a handful of peat moss." Mr O'Donnell.

"Sharp sand plus a little leaf-mould." Brigadier Offier.

"A mixture with leaf-mould, heath-mould and earth, not calcareous, (mica schist earth). For small species, perlite is added to lighten the soil." Mons. Marnier-Lapostelle.

"Coarse sand as a medium, but find that growth is slow after germination – now adding about 1/3 part of light bush soil." Mrs Cumpston.

"50/50 mixture of white quartz/or brown river gravel, and loamy bush soil." Mrs Simmons.

"grey bush sand mixed with friable loam and some well broken down organic matter. The mixture should be springy when pressed and water should pass straight through it. Drainage must be perfect." Mrs Chandler.

### 3. Germination of Seed

From the results received, some members have achieved 100% germination, while others have little success. The soil germination would be affected by a number of factors eg soil mixture, time of planting, altitude etc. The following is reproduced from Mrs Chandler's letter:-

"May commence in rare cases at 8 days, but is generally from 10 days onwards. Some species germinate best in Spring, but some WA species for instance, germinate best in Autumn, it is difficult to be precise, but I have experience with *A. aculeatissima*. I was given about 50 seeds and asked to attempt to grow it for establishment at Wirrimbirra.

Over about 8 months successive plantings only ended in failure, at last after 16 days soaking and repeated boiling water treatments, a planting yielded some success. 1/4 in two pots and 2/4 in two pots, with germination time ranging from 3 to 4 months. Imagine my surprise on deciding to pot on the one specimen I had kept for myself, to find another had germinated about 2 days ago, planted on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1967, germinated January 19<sup>th</sup>, 1968.

Notes on *A. continua* – 4 seeds planted, 100% germination – 1 in 6 days, 1 in 25 days, 1 in 81 days and 1 in 101 days.

*A. pulchella* – May germinate quickly, or take 6 months."

An article received from Mrs V McHaffie, dealing with her Acacia germinations will be dealt with in the next issue.

### 4. Acacia Species as Pot Plants

From reports received, little work has been done to grow Acacias by this method. I recommend that only dwarf varieties should be tried eg prostrate shrubs, or up to 6ft. It would be mainly used by people with limited space in which to grow plants.

Mrs Chandler recommends the following species from WA to be grown as pot plants – *A. pulchella*, *A. gilbertii*, *A. drummondii*.

### 5. Acacias From Cuttings

Very few members have tried this method of propagation. Some success has been achieved, and with further experimentation, this may be found to be a more reliable method of propagating Acacias than by seed.

Mrs Chandler reports that *A. falcata* and *A. parramattensis* have been tried by this method.

*A. pravissima* will readily strike from soft-wood tip cuttings, but less success with *A. adunca* (*A. accola*), reports Mr O'Donnell.

No success with *A. drummondii* or *A. tayloriana*, but they have struck one like *A. suaveolens* from WA, reports Mrs Simmons.

I suggest that all members make an endeavour to propagate 6-12 wattles growing in their area, and report their success by this method. Report whether cuttings are soft-wood, hard-wood, or semi-hard wood, time of planting, soil/soils used and whether hormone powders or other rooting aids were used.

### 6. The Watering of Acacia Seedlings

It has been suggested to me that germinating Acacia seeds or very young plants, are inclined to damp off if the foliage is wetted by overhead watering. Even adult foliage on small plants may be susceptible in times of high humidity. "Damp off" is a fungus disease, favouring damp humid conditions.

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Would members, especially those residing in Victoria, report the effect the prolonged drought has had on their Acacia plants.

Mrs McHaffie has already sent a report dealing with this matter, which will be dealt with in a coming Newsletter.

Would any member who has used a spray, or sprays, report the effect it has had on the plant, also what spray was used, and for what insect attack or disease?

## Newsletter Subscriptions

Would all members who desire to receive the quarterly Newsletter please forward 50 cents to cover the cost of stationery and postage, to:- Mrs M Chandler, 20 Honiton Ave, Carlingford, NSW 2118.

In future the Newsletter will only be sent to those members who have forwarded their subscription for same. This notice applies only to the Newsletter.

## Seed bank

A list of seed available from the Seed Bank has been supplied for the benefit of members, and this is enclosed at the end of the Newsletter.

Mr Nelson's Seed List. The variety of seed now available from dwarf shrubs up to very tall trees, should satisfy the needs of every member.

Requests for seed from the Seed Bank should be sent to Miss M Pearce, "Dunolly", Warne St, Katoomba NSW 2780 with a stamped addressed envelope enclosed for receipt of same.

## References to New Combinations and Species in Acacia Named After 1960

### *Acacia pruinoscarpa* Tindale

Notes on Australian Taxa of Acacia No. 1, by Mary Tindale,  
pp73-74, Vol 4, No. 2 (1968), WA, NT  
Contributions from The NSW National Herbarium

### *Acacia brunioides* A. Cunn. ex G. Don, ssp *gordonii* Tindale

Notes on Australian Taxa of Acacia No. 1, by Mary Tindale,  
pp74-75, Vol 4, No. 2 (1968) NSW  
Contributions from The NSW National Herbarium

### *Acacia obliquinervia* Tindale

Notes on Australian Taxa of Acacia No. 1, by Mary Tindale,  
pp76-78, Vol 4, No. 2 (1968) NSW, Victoria  
Contributions from The NSW National Herbarium

### *Acacia phasmoides* Willis

Systematic Notes on Indigenous Australian Flora, by J H Willis  
pp121-123 Vol 1, No. 3 (July 1967), Victoria  
Muelleria

### *Acacia storyi* Tindale

New Taxa of Acacia from Eastern Australia No 2, by Mary Tindale,  
p77, Vol 91, Part. 2 (Dec 1966) Qld  
Proceedings of the Linnean Society of NSW

### *Acacia irrorata* Sieb. Ex Spreng. ssp *velutinella* Tindale

New Taxa of Acacia from Eastern Australia No 2, by Mary Tindale,  
pp147-149, Vol 91, Part. 2 (Dec 1966) NSW  
Proceedings of the Linnean Society of NSW

### *Acacia leucoclada* Tindale, ssp *argentifolia* Tindale

New Taxa of Acacia from Eastern Australia No 2, by Mary Tindale,  
p151, Vol 91, Part. 2 (Dec 1966) Qld, NSW  
Proceedings of the Linnean Society of NSW

*Acacia leucoxyla* Tindale, ssp *leucoxyla*  
New Taxa of Acacia from Eastern Australia No 2, by Mary Tindale,  
pp149-151, Vol 91, Part. 2 (Dec 1966) NSW  
Proceedings of the Linnean Society of NSW

*Acacia fulva* Tindale  
New Taxa of Acacia from Eastern Australia No 1, by Mary Tindale,  
pp19-20, Vol 4, No 1 (1966) NSW  
Contributions from The NSW National Herbarium

*Acacia chrysotricha* Tindale  
New Taxa of Acacia from Eastern Australia No 1, by Mary Tindale,  
pp20-22, Vol 4, No 1 (1966) NSW  
Contributions from The NSW National Herbarium

*Acacia saliciformis* Tindale  
New Taxa of Acacia from Eastern Australia No 1, by Mary Tindale,  
pp22-23 Vol 4, No 1 (1966) NSW  
Contributions from The NSW National Herbarium

*Acacia deanei* (Baker) Welch, Coombe et McGlynn, ssp *paucijuga*  
(Muell. Ex N. Wakef.) Tindale  
Notes on *Acacia deanei*, by Mary Tindale,  
p56, Vol 4, No 1 (1966), NSW, Victoria  
Contributions from The NSW National Herbarium

*Acacia beckleri* Tindale, by Mary Tindale  
pp 173-174 (June 1965) SA, NSW in  
Supplement to J M Black's Flora of South Australia, Hansjoerg Eichler

*Acacia capillosa* Pedley  
Notes on Acacia, chiefly from Queensland, 11, by Mr L Pedley  
p29, Vol 75 No 4 (Oct 1964) Qld  
Proceedings of the Royal Society of Queensland.

*Acacia gittinsii* Pedley  
Notes on Acacia, chiefly from Queensland, 11, by Mr L Pedley  
pp 30-31, Vol 75 No 4 (Oct 1964) Qld  
Proceedings of the Royal Society of Queensland.

*Acacia laccata* Pedley  
Notes on Acacia, chiefly from Queensland, 11, by Mr L Pedley  
p31, Vol 75 No 4 (Oct 1964) Qld  
Proceedings of the Royal Society of Queensland.

*Acacia latisepala* Pedley  
Notes on Acacia, chiefly from Queensland, 11, by Mr L Pedley  
pp 31-32, Vol 75 No 4 (Oct 1964) Qld  
Proceedings of the Royal Society of Queensland.

*Acacia orites* Pedley  
Notes on Acacia, chiefly from Queensland, 4, by Mr L Pedley  
pp 32-33, Vol 75 No 4 (Oct 1964) Qld  
Proceedings of the Royal Society of Queensland.

*Acacia pubifolia* Pedley  
Notes on Acacia, chiefly from Queensland, 1, by Mr L Pedley  
p59, Vol 74 No 6 (April 1964) Qld  
Proceedings of the Royal Society of Queensland.

*Acacia parramattensis* Tindale, by Mary Tindale (1962) NSW in  
Vascular Plants of the Sydney District and Blue Mountains, Beadle, Evans & Carolin

*Acacia trachyphloia* Tindale  
Contributions to the Flora of NSW, New Species and Combinations Acacia & Blechnum, by Mary Tindale  
pp248-249, Vol 85, Part 11 (Aug 1960) NSW  
Proceedings of the Linnean Society of NSW

*Acacia parvipinnula* Tindale  
Contributions to the Flora of NSW, New Species and Combinations Acacia & Blechnum, by Mary Tindale  
pp249-251, Vol 85, Part 11 (Aug 1960) NSW  
Proceedings of the Linnean Society of NSW

Other references will be dealt with in future issues.

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Members are requested not to reproduce any information from this newsletter without the Leader's permission. It has involved many hours work to produce the Journal for the benefit of interested members.

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The size of the Newsletter will always depend on the amount of material present at the time of preparation.

It is intended to provide a section dealing with Acacia descriptions in each issue, so I would be grateful if any member could take part in providing notes for this part of the Newsletter.

**Robert Coveny**

The following seeds are available from Mr Des Nelson, at 50 cents per packet:

*Acacia aneura* "Mulga", 20ft high, golden spike blooms. Grows in a variety of soils, probably best in clay loams.

*Acacia estrophiolata* "Ironwood" (limited supply). 50ft high, pendulous foliage, pale cream globular blooms. Best in sandy loam.

*Acacia cowleana* Usually a shrub about 8ft high, with large curved flat phyllodes, and bright yellow flowers.

*Acacia georginae* "Gidgee". Very drought resistant small tree, with large flat thin covered seeds. Very easily germinated.

*Acacia victoriae* "Acacia Bush". Bushy large shrub, can be trimmed to tree shape. 20ft high, bears a profusion of light yellow golden blooms. Best in good loamy soil.

*Eucalyptus gamophylla* "Blue Mallee". Many stemmed, 10-12 ft high, notable for attractive grey-blue foliage. Sandy soil.

*Eucalyptus pachyphylla*. "Red-Bud Mallee". Many stemmed, 10-12 ft high notable for large red buds and fruits. Sandy soil.

*Casuarina decaisneana* "Desert Oak". Erect shady tree, reaching 60ft. Pendulous foliage, strong thick black-barked trunk. Sandy soil.

*Livistona mariae* "Palm Valley Palm". Attains a height of 100ft. A rare and attractive palm. A fairly rich soil is best.

*Erythrina vespertilis* "Bean Tree or Bat's Wing Coral tree". A deciduous native, reaching 40ft with thick trunk, good shady canopy and bearing scarlet flowers. Any soil.

*Hakea divaricata* (syn. *H. intermedia*) "Corkwood". Reaches 20ft, bears yellow to orange bottlebrush like flowers. Bark deeply fissured and corky. Wide range of soils. (limited supply).

*Ficus platypoda* "Native Fig". A large spreading shrub, reaching 15ft high and 30ft wide. Rocky locations.

*Stylobasium spathulatum*. Very hardy shrub to 6ft. Sandy soil.

*Gossypium bickii*. Low spreading shrub 18inches high and 3ft wide, with dark-centred mauve-pink Hibiscus like flowers. Good loamy soil is best.

*Gossypium australe*. Flowers similar to above, but shrub of erect habit to 6ft high. Loamy soil in exposed positions.

*Gossypium sturtianum*. "Desert Rose". Floral emblem of NT. Flowers similar to preceding two. This species is a bushy, well shaped shrub, 6ft high. Most soils.

*Psoralea patens* "Perennial Verbena". Legume to 6ft or more, with spikes of small pink flowers. Loamy soils.

*Solanum sturtianum*. Erect perennial to 4ft, with delicate pink flowers. Loamy soils.

*Trichodesma zeylanicum* "Cattlebush". Perennial to 2ft, with sky-blue to white flowers. Loamy soils. (limited supply).

*Neptunia dimorphantha* "Sensitive Plant". Prostrate, perennial-rooted, acacia-like flowers. Pinnate leaves which close rapidly on being touched. Rich loamy soils.

*Sesbania benthamiana* "Top End Peabush". Rapid annual, has reached 14ft high in 8 months. Yellow pea-type flowers. Loamy soil. Native to the tropical north of the Northern Territory, but will grow anywhere.

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