
Bowral Garden Club Inc

NEWSLETTER March 2011



'Friendship through Gardening'
Affiliated with the Garden Clubs of Australia Inc.



'Australia Felix', the Alister Clark rose, which has been rediscovered in Muriel Stuart's garden (photo 2005 © Jocelen Janon www.rosrosam.com)

Heritage Rose

One afternoon, just after my granddaughter's wedding and garden party, when all my roses were at their blooming best, Sue Kingsford from 'Roses and Friends', Fitzroy Falls (who spoke at the Club meeting on 1 November) came to visit. We walked around and she photographed them all. We came to my 'intensive care' bush with its three lovely blooms (a silvery pink, something like Daphne). When I told her it was an Alister Clark 'Australia Felix', she said, "It can't be; that's been lost for many years". But a few days later, Sue arrived with a wide smile, a plastic bag, a pair of secateurs and a request: "Please, please could I have a cutting?" She had sent the photo of the rose down to John Nieuwesteeg, one of the chief authorities on Alister Clark's roses and himself a rose nursery grower at Coldstream in Victoria. He identified it and couldn't believe that the rose wasn't lost after all. Sue was able to take three cuttings (Mendel's theory - 1 in 3, no doubt) and they hope to be able to grow on the cuttings to save 'Australia Felix' from extinction. It will probably take four years as if the cuttings take they will be grafted onto rootstock. There must have been a caring fate that prevented me from attending the meeting the day Sue was the guest speaker, and someone must have mentioned my name to her.

Muriel (the keeper of the memories and the guardian of THAT ROSE.)

See page 5 for a postscript to this story.

What's on This Month

7 March (Monday): 1.30 pm: Club meeting at the Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley St, Bowral. Speaker: Dr Peter Donaldson on the work of the great botanist, Dr Joseph Hooker, friend of Charles Darwin.

14 March (Monday): 10.30 am Coffee morning at Braemar Garden Centre "Blue Rose Café", Lot 27, Old Hume Highway, Braemar.

21 March (Monday): 10.30 am Club Outing to Glenmore House and Garden, Argyle St, Camden Valley Way, Camden. Car-pooling. Cost \$7.50.

28 March (Monday): 10.30 am second Potting morning in Marilyn Gleeson's shed. 6607 Illawarra Highway - entry via 'Mist Hill' entrance on Fitzroy Road. Bring your secateurs, gloves and any rooting powder or gel (or honey).



Japanese maple (Acer palmatum) in its autumn colour

What's on in April

4 April (Monday): 1.30 pm: Club meeting at the Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley St, Bowral. Members Forum.

6 April (Wednesday): 10.30 am: Committee meeting at Kay Fintan's home. 2 Sir Donald Bradman Drive, Bowral.

11 April (Monday): 10.30 am Coffee morning and visit to Noelene and Bob Bailey's home and garden. 16 Harley Street, Bowral. Duck pool likely so wear suitable foot wear.

18 April (Monday): 10.30 am Club Outing to Winter Hill Tree Farm, Canyonleigh Road, Canyonleigh.

Coffee morning at the Paananens



Members of the Garden Club admiring the front garden



The Smoke Bush (Cotinus coggygria) pruned into shape.

About thirty members on Monday 14 February attended the coffee morning, enjoying the stroll round Phyllis and Eric's garden in East Bowral. Phyllis and Eric made endless cups of coffee and tea and Eric patiently answered a plethora of questions on every conceivable gardening topic. The garden is a tribute to the Paananens' horticultural skills, with lovely ornamental trees, borders of roses and skillfully pruned hedges. But the special feature of the garden is the effect of so many beautiful maple trees with their beautiful leaves and shapes.

Garden Tips

Bulbs: Buy the best quality of bulbs you can afford and you will be rewarded by plentiful flowers. Reject any that are soft or withered or that have started to grow. The bulbs should be firm and fleshy when you touch them. The greater the circumference of the bulb, the more nourishment it will contain for the bud inside. There's always an exception to the rule and if your hyacinth bulbs are too large they need to be kept for indoors as they produce heavy flowers that will probably not cope with the environment outdoors. Plant a succession of bulbs from now until early summer. For a natural effect, plant in drifts, letting the bulbs wander between perennials and shrubs. Leave a space of two or three times the width of the bulb between each one. Begin to feed your bulbs with a complete fertilizer when they start to grow.

Snails and Slugs and other pests: Continue watching out for the snails and slugs, which seem to have been particularly prolific this summer. Or is it just that we haven't used bait because of our dog-sitting responsibilities? Using your left-over coffee from your pot as a spray on or around the plants should deter the snails and slugs in a nice environmentally friendly way. How beautiful the white butterflies have been this summer, fluttering all over the garden in gay abandon. It's a small price to pay for all the damage to the nasturtiums caused by the caterpillars. Although the white cedar moth hasn't discovered our trees yet, we must remember to spray with a registered insecticide. Check plants for scale and spray with white oil.

Prune and take cuttings of fuchsia, geranium and pelargonium. Cut to just below a joint, remove the leaves except for the top two or three and plant in a small container in a mixture of sharp sand and compost or a good potting mix. Use a rooting powder or some honey to assist the root development. Deadhead your roses regularly. Give your hedges a last prune now and use cuttings from hedging plants, such as box, murraya, gardenia, grevillea, photinia and plumbago, to strike new plants.

Mulch: If you have not already done so, spread all the old compost and rotted manure on your garden beds before the new planting. Collect all the fallen leaves for your new compost heap.

Mildew: Don't put any plants suffering from any fungus or virus disease in your compost. Put them in a polythene bag and tie up firmly and place in your bin.

Autumn Berries: Ensure that any berries from plants classified as environmental weeds are removed so that birds can't spread them into native woodlands: hawthorn, pyracantha and cotoneaster.

The First Potting Morning for 2011



Eric cleaning the pots on 21 February



The merry band checking over the cuttings outside Marilyn's shed



Eric and Lindsey examine the potting mix

Don't forget the next potting morning is soon — on 28 March!

Muriel's Musings

I was "confined to barracks" with a pesky dose of the shingles from New Years Day to the beginning of February. Thank God for my fine cotton diaphanous shortie nighties —NB NOT a fashion statement at my age (!!) but cool and comfortable and better than nothing. I'm aching to be able to get back out to do some gardening.

I have had a drama or two on the home front—after the flood swooshed through my garden and turned the lower lawn into a water meadow, it triggered a ground flea outbreak and predictably they hopped onto my two cats and caused a carpet plague throughout the home. I fixed the cats with some squirtie stuff on the back of their necks and to be sure I double-bombed all the rooms—so I now have cats and carpets free of fleas.

But now the cats, Shah of Purrrrsia, and the long-haired, black, voluptuous one Sheba, refuse to walk on the carpets but happily sit among the Wedgwood on the side table, or on the back of the sofa grooming themselves and meowing mournfully when they want to go out or come back in.

I regard carrying them in and out umpteen times a day as my alternative to going to the gym and doing weights. Non-cat lovers would think me a silly old fool—but I know Robyn and Ulishka will be smiling knowingly. Signing off for now—it's five minutes to Sherry—my favourite time of day.

A small glass of wine every day really does help the system. So our Grandmother's Elderberry Wine taken to 'Cheer up the blood' was a medical fact not a medical myth!

As my Dar used to say, 'When it's dark enough you can see the stars.'

Muriel

A War time Cake from Muriel's Mother

2 tblsp (1 tablespoon = 1 ounce) butter

1½ cups SR Flour and a pinch of salt

1 cup castor sugar

1 large egg beaten with some flavouring essence

½ cup milk

½ teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda

¼ cup boiling water

Cream butter and sugar. Add beaten egg. Then add milk in which the bicarbonate of soda has been dissolved alternately with the sifted flour. Finally stir in the boiling water. Pour the mixture into a greased sandwich tin and cook in a moderate oven for 15 to 20 minutes. Cover with icing of your choice.

Joost and His Touring Greenhouse Restaurant at Circular Quay

On a recent visit to Sydney we came across the Greenhouse restaurant lodged between the Harbour Bridge and the cruise ship dock at West Circular Quay. You may have heard the interview on Radio National (26th February) with Joost Bakker ('By Design' presented by Alan Saunders). We had no idea about its history but marvelled at the simply constructed building covered in strawberry plants! The electricity comes from a generator, which is run on used cooking oil. The building will there until the end of April.



The plants on the sheltered side seem to be thriving . . .



. . . but some of those on the sun exposed side had died.



The squat green building made of steel and straw bales seats 120 people and is dwarfed by the cruise ship at the dock

Bats in the Botanic Gardens

Most flying-foxes at the Royal Botanic Gardens are Grey-headed Flying-foxes (*Pteropus poliocephalus*), or fruit bats, the largest bat in Australia, listed as vulnerable under both NSW and Commonwealth legislation. When you see the damage caused by them it's not surprising that many people feel that they should be moved away. But these animals are very important pollinators of the eucalypt forests and woodlands of eastern and northern Australia.

The protein-rich pollen produced by *Eucalyptus* flowers is their main food source and *Eucalyptus* trees need pollen from other trees of their species to produce fertile seed. Flying-foxes disperse seeds and carry pollen on their fur for very long distances (up to 100 km in one night) and provide an essential genetic link between fragmented patches of native vegetation.

There are currently estimated to be fewer than 450,000 Grey-headed Flying-foxes in Australia as the species suffered a population decline of around 30 per cent over the 10 years between 1989 and 1999. This dramatic loss contributed to its listing as a threatened species. To be effective in their role as pollinators, flying-foxes need to be in large numbers. So we have to be prepared for some loss of trees and vegetation in certain areas in order to protect the forests. The experts managed to move the colony in Melbourne from the Botanic Gardens to a site along the River Yarra without harm to the animals, but where can the authorities move the bats in Sydney?



Grey-headed Flying-foxes hanging in the tree, which has been terminally damaged (23 February 2011).

Minutes of General Meeting – 7th February 2011, Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley St. Bowral

Present: 34 **Visitors:** 5

Apologies: Margaret Buckland, Sandra Everett, Robyn McDonald, Cheryle Moore, Maureen Moran, Elizabeth Nicol, Joy Schou, Barbara Wilson

President Margaret Woodcock began the meeting at 1.30 by welcoming back members, visitors and prospective new members. She hoped that all would enjoy the afternoon and feel that membership was a worthwhile experience. She then introduced Bruce Rosenberg, the visiting speaker.

Bruce began his talk by declaring himself as not a botanist or horticulturist, just a gardener. Bruce began visiting the area in 1979, establishing a 'bolt hole' in Burrawang. Here his gardening experience began to develop, with memories of his mother's garden, into a riot of colour with flower displays. On reading a book, *The Small Shrub Garden*, his ideas changed into a love of the more natural environment with trees and seats for resting and enjoying. From the first cottage a move was made in 1993 to a bare hectare section of an old dairy farm with the idea of recreating the rain forest environment that had been cleared for the farm. With outside professional help, that was not always successful, and the use of a ride-on mower to follow the natural contour of the land, the present form has grown and developed. The area is now self-mulching with the emphasis on shapes and textures with large garden beds incorporating trees at the edges.

Bruce provided many hints on creating and caring for gardens as well as answering many questions. Jennifer Braithwaite thanked Bruce for his talk and presented him with a small gift.

Minutes of the November 1st meeting were taken as read and accepted. **Moved:** Meg Probyn **Seconded:** Clive Probyn

Correspondence in:

Flyers and newsletters: Tasmanian Tourism, Plant Collectors Fair, Pineleigh Plants, Goulburn Rose Festival, Highlands Garden Newsletter and SHBG Newsletter, G.C.A. Magazine and Friendship Day Information, Friends of Botanic Gardens Magazine.

Thank you: Bowral Child and Family Health and Maureen Moran.

Information: Presbyterian Church, Challenge Southern Highlands and Bowral Hospital Auxiliary.

Correspondence out: Sue Kingsford, GCA Membership Information Form.

Treasurers Report:

Pam Bailey reported income for Nov/Dec as \$3,865.85.00 and expenditure at \$2,506.90, leaving

a Balance with accumulated funds of \$3 769.44. **Seconded:** Audrey Hawker

General Business:

- ❖ Program alteration with 21st Feb. becoming the Potting Morning and 28th February being a Committee Meeting. Margaret reminded members to check their Newsletter to confirm all dates.
- ❖ As noted on the Program some variation to the coffee mornings will be occurring. The first garden visit /coffee combination will be at the home of Eric and Phyllis Pannanen.
- ❖ Margaret thanked those members who had nominated their garden for a visit and explained that a list would be kept at the sign-on table for anyone wishing to add their garden to the list.
- ❖ Ulishka reported that the **trading table** had fresh eggs, marrow, cacti and 'Fairy's Fishing Rod' bulbs.
- ❖ **Show & Tell:** Margaret had evidence of Christmas Bush that appears to be thriving in the Highlands. Muriel had a picture of her "Australia Felix" rose that Sue Kingsford was delighted to find in Muriel's garden.
- ❖ Shonagh reported that Hazel Kite, though very frail, still very much enjoys reading the newsletter. Shonagh also expressed a welcome to any singers in the club who would like to join the Southern Belles Choir.

Lucky Door Prize: Drawn by Muriel Stewart and won by Ann McColl

The meeting closed at 2.45 pm. The next Meeting will be at the Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley Street on Monday 7th March commencing at 1.30pm.

A postscript to 'Australia Felix' bred by Alister Clark (1864-1949) in 1919

The rose bush in Muriel's garden came from Miss Nellie Brennan's garden at 'Arrankamp', a rather superior guesthouse on Centennial Road. When Miss Brennan died in 1945 some of her garden was bulldozed to make way for a car park for the new country club. Her garden had been filled with roses and beautiful flowers, which her sister sold at her florist shop in Sydney. Members of the country club were invited to take any plants they wanted and Muriel's father dug up a couple, including the 'Australia Felix', to plant in his garden. They never knew the name of the rose but simply called it 'the Arrankamp rose'. It wasn't until a few years ago when Muriel started to investigate her roses that, with the help of some specialist reference books, she identified it as Alister Clark's 'Australia Felix'.

Editor

Tulip Time

The Tulip Time Council committee has announced that the colour for 2011 will be purple and the proceeds from the week will be given to Parkinson's Disease research.

We are already thinking about plans for a float and will keep you posted, but remember the colour purple and if you see any suitable flowers let us know.

Management Committee

President:	Margaret Woodcock	4861 1647
Vice President:	Jennifer Braithwaite	4869 1389
Secretary:	Kay Fintan	4861 2594
Treasurer:	Pam Bailey	4869 5117
Meet & Greet:	Sandria Westwood	4861 5695
Membership:	Marilyn Gleeson	4869 3881
Newsletter Ed:	Meg Probyn	4871 3134

General Committee Members

Publicity:	Lorraine Stott	4869 4797
Social Secretary:	Catherine Mah	4861 7268
Seed Bank:	Barbara Wilson	4869 3925
Trading Table:	Ulishka Virag	4872 2243
Public Officer:	Eric Paananen	4862 1570
Afternoon Tea		
Hosts:	Margaret Buckland	4862 5963
	Wendy Gamble	4862 2766
	Glenys Lilliendal	4861 2849
	Doreen Plumridge	4868 3517

Address: PO Box 910, Bowral, NSW 2576

SUNFLOWERS

How are your sunflowers growing??
Don't forget to bring the flowers to the
Club Meeting.

Advance notice:

Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens: Town and Country Weekend 16-17 April

Four Town and four Country Gardens, some not usually open to the public, with a plant stall and displays or entertainment at gardens. More information will be available in next month's newsletter.