

Bowral Garden Club

INC (established in 1963)

Address: PO Box 910, Bowral, NSW 2576

NEWSLETTER November 2011



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

Plant Stall 2011

We heaved a sigh of relief when Saturday 15 October dawned misty but warm. Last year the Club members nearly froze in the cold snowy conditions. This year the sun even came out and by mid-morning we were shedding coats and sweaters. Eric and Ulishka were the early birds on duty at Corbett Plaza setting up the area and as more members drifted in we had a full complement of stallholders by 8am and more plants to sell than we have ever had before.



A huge 'thank you' to all of you who brought plants and marmalades to sell and to those of you who bought the goodies – we couldn't have raised so much money without you. Our Treasurer, Pam Bailey, was looking happier by the hour as she collected the money.

A 'thank you' also to Lindsey Arrol who organized the raffle prize of a truck-full of mushroom compost (and thanks to her brother-in-law, Noel, who will provide the load to the winner). As we go to press we don't know the name of the lucky person; the draw will be made at the meeting on 7 November. A huge team effort and an enjoyable morning helping the club to raise funds.

Christmas Lunch Payment

Those of you intending to attend the Christmas lunch on Monday 5 December at Fitzroy Inn, please remember to pay at the November meeting (Monday 7 November). The cost is \$40, which includes wine/beer. It was agreed at the last General Meeting that we should discontinue the Kris Kringle tradition as it is so difficult to find inexpensive presents and instead it was agreed to put the \$5 towards the cost of the meal and wine/beer.

What's on in November

7 November (Monday): 1.30pm: Club meeting at the Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley St, Bowral. The Guest Speaker is Paul Kirkpatrick on 'Norfolk's Bounty: the natural and man-made beauty of Norfolk Island.'

14 November (Monday): 10.30am: Garden visit to Keith and Pam Bailey's garden, 39 Villiers Road, Moss Vale.

21 November (Monday): 10.30am: Visit to the historic gardens at Camden Park. See the map of directions attached to the newsletter.

What's on in December

5 December (Monday): 12 noon: Christmas lunch at the Fitzroy Inn, 1 Ferguson Crescent, Mittagong.

12 December (Monday): 10.30am: Coffee at The Courtyard Cafe, Old Hume Highway, Berrima.

President Resigned

At the Management Committee meeting following the General meeting on Monday 10 October, Rosemary Simmons resigned as President. She will remain a member of the Club. Jennifer Braithwaite, Vice-President, will take the chair for the next meeting and the Committee is currently considering the constitutional implications and the timing of the election of a new President.

Norm Lilliendal

The death of Norm Lilliendal on Sunday 23 October came as a great shock to us all and our thoughts are with Glenys and her family at this time.

Lots of Pots for the November Meeting

Marilyn Gleeson sent an email to remind us all to start thinking ahead to the next plant stall. Please start by bringing to the November meeting any pots that you have. If you can begin to pot plants now, we would have some mature plants for next year. She has offered to help any members if they don't want to do the potting themselves. If you are dividing or digging up plants, you can deliver them to her property in Moss Vale. Please call her first.

There are only the November and February meetings before the first potting day of 2012 and we need lots of pots early to avoid a rush at the last minute.

Please don't forget to bring clean pots to the meeting.

Moss Vale Nursery

Jennifer Braithwaite reminded us about a small plant nursery at 129 Lackey Road, just past Harvey Norman. **Jenny's Nursery Plants** stocks almost everything one needs for the garden and since Bunnings' garden centre moved to Mittagong and Mt. Murray closed down, Moss Vale gardeners have had to travel to Bowral for their supplies. They are closed on Mondays.

Bon Voyage to Sandy Westwood



Sandy at Milton Park

We will all miss Sandy! She has been such an asset to the club since 2005 with her friendly smile at the door – meeting and greeting old and new members and visitors. Although softly spoken with her lilting Somerset accent (with a bit of Wiltshire thrown in), she has been a strong advocate of ideas and the chief instigator of the Club's activity in the Tulip Time parade over the last two years.

It's not that she wants to leave Bowral, but family circumstances require her presence back in England. She has a return ticket for 2012 for a visit in April and we are all hoping that matters will be happily resolved so she can once again return to live here permanently.

She and Steve came to live in Australia six years ago and intended to stay here forever. First stop was Brisbane, where they had visited many times while their son, Tim, studied Veterinary Science. They discovered the Southern Highlands because their daughter Ruth, who studied at the University of Sydney, chose this area as the venue for her wedding. (Sandy had made Ruth's wedding cake in England and brought it over as hand luggage and that was a story and a half!)

They bought a house in Bowral, spent eighteen months renovating it into a lovely home and while the builders were doing the inside, Sandy was developing the outside. This was the second garden that she had created. Her first in England was beautiful and those of us who have seen her Bowral garden and photos of her Wiltshire village garden realise what a talented horticulturist she is.

It was Sandy who persuaded us to enter a float in the Tulip Time Parade and who persuaded Clive and Steve to join in the hard work of producing all the wooden and painted components. She scoured the shops in the area finding 'bits and pieces' and chivvying us all along.

We wish her and her family every happiness in the future and are keeping our fingers crossed for her return.

The Editor



A Garden Ramble with Keith Bailey

Why does gardening (and other interests) often remind me of the phrase attributed to John Masfield, 'The long despair of doing nothing well'. The appropriate definition of *well* is of course important in an age where so often 'near enough' is considered 'good enough'.

It was the chestnut tree *castanea sativa* that did it. Planted on the hillside five years ago in the dry period I thought it would pull in some moisture, which would drain down the hillside, although I struggled to provide extra support in the ensuing summers.

More recently as the conventional wisdom of global warming took hold and as the rains came, an underground watercourse seemed to develop. A wide strip on the sloping hillside held the water and when walked upon squelched like the Somme—I should be banned from using that term however, having just read William Philpott's *Bloody Victory – the sacrifice on the Somme*, Abacus 2010).

Last year I dug trenches around the chestnut tree which had yet to fruit although it was flowering, and around the walnut, apple and apricot trees. The only one seeming to enjoy wet feet was the swamp cypress *taxodium disticum*, a species specially adapted to be able to breathe when its roots are under water. In autumn the fluffy leaves turn to a rusty metal appearance. Found in the Everglades of the USA, specimens can reach almost 40m in height. The chestnut tree finally succumbed to the abusive elements this spring however, and I took it out. I re-dug the trench around the walnut tree.

It's like life I expect. How do you manage to adjust to what our capricious weather patterns throw at us? Some hillside trees damaged by prevailing winds have learned to lean and go with the flow. Roots are less adaptable. Unlike my assistant gardener I am perhaps more root than branch. I have failed to follow my Derbyshire farmer grandfather's advice: 'Remember thou'll al'us get more wi' lickin than wi' bitin'. It is a pity that the wallaby, who regularly visits the garden, does not appreciate this, instead of showing strong disapproval of my planting along the hillside paths by ruthlessly pruning the shrubs.

So should I try again with a new chestnut tree in a different spot? It is a question of life expectancy—that of the tree versus my own which probably makes it a one-way call. That's the trouble with old age — it catches you at an awkward time. Sitting in the audience, enthralled, at the recent finals of the Southern Highlands International Piano Competition, I was mesmerised by the mastery of the keyboard of the finalists – and at only 18 or 19 years. It took me days to return to my fumbling across the octaves.

The 'doing nothing well' feeling is not entirely new to me. I well remember over 55 years ago attempting to marshal a detachment of naval ratings on the gun deck of *HMS Vanguard* and watching them about to disappear over the side of the ship whilst the petty officer alongside murmured, 'Where shall we search for the sons of the sea?'

So should I give due thought to downsizing the garden and chopping up the piano? (NB: I have form regarding the latter!) Certainly cutting a large amount of grass (seemingly daily in this weather pattern) I am not exactly persuaded by the American poet, Walt Whitman who espoused belief that 'a leaf of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars'.

However, after much thought and analysis I have drawn on economic theory to come up with the proposition that the sum total of marginal skill in many fields can go some way towards a major talent in one.

Keith Bailey

Coffee Morning at the Probyns' Garden

It didn't get much better for the 35 Members who enjoyed coffee and a wander around this very pretty garden on such a perfect spring day. Clive and Meg have been developing their garden (just over an acre) since taking it over in 2008. They've felled trees to let in more light, developed hard landscaping and planted in abundance to merge with the existing vegetation.



Arum lilies (photo Sandra Regtop)



Enjoying morning tea after their stroll round the garden (photo S. Westwood)

Situated on quite a steep and treed site, the garden slopes down to a Nattai creek-let where local natives have been left to thrive. Higher up and nearer the house, areas have been terraced and filled mostly with a variety of exotics and potted colour, all at their spring best following an excellent season and of course, much loving attention.

Visits to Members' gardens not only provide opportunity for us all to learn and get ideas, but also allows the 'gardeners' a chance to talk about their garden, its challenges, successes and failures. Any member who would like to share their garden and provide coffee and biscuits, contact our Program Coordinator, Kay Fintan, as the committee is in the process of planning the program for 2012.

Jennifer Braithwaite

Garden Tips

Lift and divide polyanthus and violets, and replant outer pieces.

Care of bulbs: Lift tulip bulbs, place in mesh bags and store them by hanging them in a cool, dim place. (If you have a cool dark wine cellar/ cupboard that could be the ideal place.) As the foliage on your spring-flowering bulb turns yellow, the leaves can be removed but better still let

it die down completely so that the bulb gets all the nourishment it can for next year's flowering.

Dahlias: One of the most striking flowers in the garden and becoming even more popular, the dahlia tubers can be planted out this month if they are not already in the ground. Staking the plants is important as they grow very fast and will topple in the wind and rain. The favourite food for snails and slugs, make sure the pet-friendly bait is renewed regularly. Coffee grounds are a deterrent for those of you with organic gardens.

***Dierama pulcherricum* (Angel's fishing rod or fairy bells):** There were plenty of these plants on the trading table last month and also on the Plant Stall. It's a lovely addition to the garden beds, growing in clumps of evergreen, narrow leaves with beautiful bell-shaped flowers hanging on the thinnest stems imaginable. The colours of the flowers range from white, through various shades of pink to mauve. Watch out for more plants on the trading table.

Prune: When the shrubs finish flowering it's time to give them a trim or a heavy prune if they need it. The Hebe hedges on either side of one of our paths are almost meeting so they will require a hard prune after we have enjoyed the lilac blossom. While pruning or trimming, take semi-hardwood cuttings of buddleia, camellia, grevillea.

Spray apple and pear trees every three months with carbaryl – unfortunately this month the codling moth and light brown apple moth are out and about. And watch out for pear and cherry slugs on leaves of hawthorns, plums, pears, cherries and quinces. Spray with carbaryl or try talcum powder if there is just a small area to cover.

Vegetables: Plant potatoes and seedlings of cabbage, celery, leek, silver beet, spinach, tomato. Fortnightly doses of liquid fertilizer in the vegetable bed works wonders.

Pat Keen brought our attention to the thrifty tip about tea juice for roses in the September edition of the 'Gardening Australia Magazine'. G. Melican wrote. "My secret for long-flowering roses is watering the plants with 'tea juice'. I keep my used tea bags, without the staples, in a jar of water, and regularly splash this around the base of my roses."

Muriel's Musings

Here I am, in cruise control, living life in the fast lane—and loving it. What a busy month this has been. Wish the weather would warm up (must be careful and stipulate how warm I would like it) so I can spend more time re-organising the garden. It's time to simplify things—next year who knows? It may be my body telling my head what it is to do and not my head. I'm planning to let some beds go back to lawn but will always keep and cherish my 'Friendship Cottage Garden' as it is a constant reminder of my friends.

But I'm thinking along the lines of a Japanese themed garden with wood-chipped surfaces to save on digging 'n weeding 'n watering—I'm quite into Snow Lanterns and Deer Scarers and I LOVE wind chimes that sing the Song of the Wind. I have a beauty that hangs from a branch on the Japanese Maple in the front garden.

We used to have a family of possums and late at night they would play chasings across the roof then leap across onto the branches of the Maple and that would set the chimes off into a veritable carillon. Even worse the

swaying of the branches would set the two security lights to flash on and remain so for the next five minutes. No sooner did the lights go out than the possums were ready to leap from the tree back onto the roof and 'kerthunder' back to start the fun 'n games all over again.

Must away now—I will be in the very fast lane for the rest of the day and most of the evening as the Bathurst 1000 is about to start—followed by the Rugby Wallabies (that's us) versus the Springboks. At 10.30pm it will be the Formula 1—racing cars will be burning rubber in Japan and they should finish in time for me to watch the main event: The All Blacks versus the Pumas in New Zealand—round about midnight. As the saying goes—too much of a good thing is barely enough. 'How does she do it?' I hear you cry?? 'With an endless supply of Xxxxtra strong Peppermint sweeties', she replies.

My environmentally friendly cleaning paste

This paste is excellent for wiping the stove and bench tops and it smells so clean and healthy.

About half a box of bi-carbonate of soda, enough eucalyptus oil and lemon juice to mix to a paste. (If you don't have a fresh lemon you can use the juice that comes in the little plastic bottles.) Mix all the ingredients until you have the right consistency. Put the mixture in a glass jar with a metal lid.

When the bench dries you may need to wipe it over with a damp Chux as there may be a fine powdery residue if you have been over generous with the amount of paste you have applied.

The Breton Fisherman's Prayer: Oh Lord, Be good to me. Thy seas are so wide, and my boat is so small.

Muriel Stuart

Minutes of General Meeting – 10 October 2011, Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley St. Bowral

Present: 44 **Visitors:** 3

Apologies: Margaret Buckland, Keith Bailey, Cheryl Moore and Patricia Black

President Rosemary Simmons opened the meeting at 1.30pm with a welcome to all.

Presentation: Representatives from the Southern Highlands Business Chamber presented the Club with the certificate and cup for Best Tulip Time Parade Float, for the second time. Congratulations to all involved in decorating the float and participating in the parade.

Guest Speaker: Victoria Kleeburg, herbalist and nutritionist, gave an entertaining and interesting talk on all the different types of herbs and flowers which may be used to assist a range of symptoms and diseases—from indigestion, sore throat to cancer and liver problems. She also recommended *The Book of Herbs* by Dorothy Hall.

Minutes: It was noted Catherine Mah had brought the Snakes Head Fritillary to the September meeting and not Sandy Westwood. With that correction the minutes of 5 September 2011 were accepted. Moved: Noelene Bailey, seconded: Wendy Gamble.

Correspondence Out:

- ❖ Payment to Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens
- ❖ Non-renewal letter to Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney

- ❖ Card to Ann Luker

Correspondence In:

- ❖ Brochures: Bundanoon garden ramble, Blooming Tasmania, Highlands Garden Society Rose show,
- ❖ Blue Mountains holiday planner
- ❖ Garden art - Patricia Hardman.

Treasurer's Report: Pam Bailey reported income for September as \$258.15 and expenditure at \$54.60, leaving a balance of accumulated funds of \$4286.00 Moved as accepted Lorraine Stott; seconded Glenys Lilliandal.

General Business:

- ❖ As Sandy is moving back to England, Jennifer presented her with a lovely bunch of flowers from the club.
- ❖ Ann Luker's daughter has reported that Ann is happily settling in her nursing home.
- ❖ The plant stall is on Saturday 15 October at 8.00am. Please bring your plants to Corbett Plaza.
- ❖ Christmas lunch at Fitzroy Inn on 5 December will cost \$40.00 per person, including a glass of wine/beer etc. and the club will pay the tip for the day. It was agreed that there would be no Kris Kringle this year.
- ❖ Committee has proposed that there will be a theme for each month—e.g., roses, dahlias, camellias, etc.
- ❖ The Probyn's' garden will be open on Monday 17 October at 10.30am for morning tea.
- ❖ Tulip bulb dig-up in Corbett Gardens is on 12 November. A good idea is to take photos or note tulip colours you like and their location so you know where to dig.
- ❖ Committee meeting to plan schedule for 2012 will take place on 26 October. Please bring as many ideas as possible for future activities.

Trading Table: Lots of lemons, irises and Angel's fishing rod plants for sale.

Seed Bank: Barbara Wilson reported that there were some different seeds in the bank.

Lucky Door Prize: Won by Lorraine Stott; drawn by Sandy Westwood.

The meeting closed at 2.45pm followed by afternoon tea.

The next meeting will be at the Presbyterian Church Hall in Bowral on Monday 7 November at 1.30pm.

Management Committee

| | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|-----------|
| Vice-President: | Jennifer Braithwaite | 4869 1389 |
| Secretary: | Lynne Moore | 4872 2433 |
| Treasurer: | Pam Bailey | 4869 5117 |
| Program: | Kay Fintan | 4861 2594 |
| Meet & Greet: | Pat Keen | 4861 5815 |
| 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 |
| General Member: | Lindsey Arroll | 4872 2005 |
| Afternoon Tea | | |
| Hosts: | Glenys Lilliandal | 4861 2849 |
| | Margaret Buckland | 4862 5963 |
| | Wendy Gamble | 4862 2766 |
| | Doreen Plumridge | 4868 3517 |