

# Bowral Garden Club Inc

(established in 1963)

*Address: PO Box 910, Bowral NSW 2576*



*'Friendship through Gardening'  
Affiliated with Garden Clubs of  
Australia Inc*

## NEWSLETTER JUNE 2012

### The Winter Rose - Hellebore



*One way to photograph hellebores is to lie on the ground and point the camera up!*

June ushers in the winter months but despite the cold weather there are still flowers in bloom. The flower of the month is the hellebore now beginning to emerge in our gardens. If you don't have any hellebores in flower please bring something in flower from your garden—Daphne, roses, azaleas, camellias—to decorate the exhibition table.



*Jennifer Braithwaite at the AGM 7 May 2012*

After six years of service as President and Vice-President, Jennifer Braithwaite retired from the committee this May. She was elected as president in May 2006 and then served as vice-president from 2009 until 2012. The club owes her a debt of gratitude for all her leadership and friendship over the years. She was presented with a bouquet from the incoming President, Meg Probyn.

### What's on in June

**4 June (Monday): PLEASE NOTE THE TIME: 1.00pm** Sandwich and Slice Luncheon and Club Meeting at the Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley St, Bowral.

Following lunch there will be a display of the landscape design and plans of the newest Botanic Gardens in Australia—the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens. In addition the committee will reveal details of the program for the remainder of 2012.

**18 June (Monday):** 10.30am Mittagong Garden Centre where Phil Mather will demonstrate how to create beautiful potted colour for your patio, deck or front door. Coffee afterwards at Gilbert's, Mittagong.

**25 June (Monday):** 12.00pm Pub Lunch at the Scottish Arms, East Bowral.

### What's on in July

**2 July (Monday):** 1.30pm Club Meeting at the Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley St, Bowral. The guest speaker is Carolyn Dwyer on "Japanese Gardens". In early April she was the tour leader to Japan (where she has visited many times in the past). She will talk about her experiences, including in the mountains at Shirakaeago Fol Village, Kanazawa in the geisha district and Tokyo where the Yoshinoe cherries were in full bloom. In May she flew off to Europe to conduct a tour in Copenhagen, Uppsala, Oslo, Bergen and St Petersburg. She lives in Mittagong and is on the committee for the Friends of the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens.

**9 July (Monday):** 10.30am Working Bee with coffee at Muriel Stuart's garden, 7 Myosotis Street, Bowral.

**30 July (Monday):** We plan to catch the early fast train (8.20am) to Sydney to visit the Royal Botanic Gardens. It should be warmer in Sydney.

### **Please note:**

***If you have forgotten to pay your annual subscription of \$30, please contact Marilyn Gleeson (4869 3881) as you are unfinancial from 1 May 2012.***

*'I believe in green fingers, or thumbs perhaps, but mine do not seem to change from a grubby brown.'*

Beatrice Bligh (1916-1973), horticulturist and author of *Down to Earth* (1968) and *Cherish the Earth: The Story of Gardening in Australia* (1973)

## Mt Annan Botanic Gardens



Mt Annan Botanic Gardens (photos M. Probyn)

Only seven members braved the cold May morning for the tour of the Mt Annan Botanic Gardens but it was certainly worth the effort. Kate, our guide, took us by bus on roads not usually available to vehicles and the blue skies and bright sunshine made the trip a delight. If you haven't been to these gardens then it's a treat awaiting you. Since they were opened in 1988 the gardens have developed into a major attraction. Huge amount of construction work is still ongoing with new plant research facilities and seed bank—see next column.

The views from the top of Mt Annan towards Sydney and the Blue Mountains are stunning. The sweeping areas of native plants and lakes impressed us. The eradication of the African Olive Tree (*Olea europaea* subsp. *Cuspidata*) is slowly being achieved. 80,000 people used to visit the garden but since the entry was made free that number has grown to 30,000 per year.

## Seed Bank

The seed bank or more correctly the PlantBank currently under construction at Mt Annan (at a cost of nearly \$20m) is one of the most important conservation activities happening in Australia. The building, which covers 3,000sq m ( $\frac{3}{4}$  acre), will be the largest seed bank in the southern hemisphere, storing 200 million seeds from Australia, PNG, parts of South-East Asia and the Pacific region. The PlantBank will house thermal-efficient seed storage vaults, climate controlled glasshouses, state of the art laboratories, teaching facilities, exhibition and conference spaces.

It is estimated that 50 per cent of the world's plant species are under threat of extinction. In Australia over 10 per cent are already listed as endangered. It is hoped that the PlantBank will safeguard our plants from an uncertain future.

## Ten Favourite Garden Plants

Mary Mowbray writes: "The favourite plants in my garden have to be hellebores which I order each year from Post Office Nursery in Victoria, particularly for the delicate colour of flowers against their robust leaves and their hardiness in awful weather. Another favourite is *Viburnum Burkwoodii*—its exquisite flowers facing upwards and lying along the length of its branches and in Autumn its leaves are a beautiful bronze. My variety of dogwoods are also high on the list as are the David Austin roses. I think these plants are the ones I talk to most."

Catherine Mah's favourite plants are as follows: "Roses; snowdrops (*Galanthus*); species geraniums; pelargoniums; violets; pansies and violas; poppies; all kinds of trees; camellias; rhododendrons; phalaenopsis orchids; hydrangeas; viburnums; salvias; fritillarias.

Ulishka Virag's list of plants that she couldn't do without—"Clematis; roses; maples and birch trees (standard and weeping); camellias; 'Mollis' azalea; lemon tree; bearded iris; magnolia and lilac trees; *Viburnum opulus* (snowball tree); pelargoniums and geraniums; wisteria; potted clumping bamboo; crocus; peony; orchids; jacaranda."

## Garden Tips from a Frustrated Gardener!

To protect your fruit trees from being nibbled by possums, birds and caterpillars...

We all have an abundance of wildlife in our gardens. What birds do not attack during the day, the possums have a go at as soon as the sun goes down. I would not mind if they just ate ONE piece of fruit, but they only sample it, find it sadly lacking in taste or texture and go on to the next one to have another bite.

Netting the trees is really a cruel way of trapping the little critters.

So I bought some material normally used for bridal veils and other festive decorations (cheap from Lincraft). According to the size the fruit will eventually be, one lucky day, I sewed some bags and slipped them over the little unripe fruit and fastened them with string or garden wire onto the branches.

The trees look as though they are dressed up for Christmas but it works. I had lovely pears, plums and figs without a blemish on any of them. Of course if your trees are 20 feet high you just have to grin and bear it!

### Mulching...

Instead of laying down sheets of newspapers to prevent weeds coming out amongst your favourite plants, I found it is better to put down shredded paper (NOT SO MUCH COLOURED) if you have a shredder. After a sprinkle of fertilizer, on goes the shredded newspaper, quite thick, water it thoroughly so that it doesn't fly away, then cover it with lawn clippings.

It is an easy and organic way of putting your plants to bed for winter; and should it rain, the rain can get to the roots much easier.

Lolita Godsell

### **Fudge Brownies**

This is an adaptation of a Margaret Fulton recipe. Different nuts, such as walnuts, hazelnuts or pecans can be substituted but almonds are my preference.

*250g (8oz) softened butter; 2 cups castor sugar; 3 eggs  
1 tsp vanilla essence; 125g (4oz) dark chocolate; 1 cup plain flour; 1 cup chopped almonds.*

Cream half the butter with the sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time and beat until light. Stir in vanilla essence.

Break the chocolate into small pieces and put with remaining butter in a heatproof basin over a pan of hot water. When the butter and chocolate have melted together, remove from the heat to cool down. Once cool, pour the butter chocolate mixture into the butter and sugar mixture and combine them well together.

Stir in the sifted flour and chopped nuts. Pour into a shallow cake tin about 32 x 23 cm (13 x 9 inches) either well greased or lined with baking paper.

Bake in a pre-heated oven (180°C/ 350°F) for 45 minutes or until a skewer inserted in centre comes out clean. Allow the brownie to cool in the tin and then cut into small squares to serve.

If you want to ice it, use a butter icing made with butter, icing sugar and cocoa and sprinkle nuts on top. Makes about 48.

Editor

### **Deciduous Plants**

It's now time to plant those deciduous trees, shrubs and climbers, which you have been thinking about through the autumn months. In our cool climate there are a range of beautiful **deciduous trees** to choose from: many different *Malus* (crabapple) are in the garden centres—all delightful spring-flowering small trees; *Cornus* (dogwood) with white spring flowers and reddish autumn foliage—these prefer deep, rich well-drained, acid soils; *Quercus* (Oak)—large trees in varying shapes and sizes; and if you have a damp spot, the *Nyssa*—one of the most handsome trees; and how can we resist maples, maples, maples!

**Deciduous ornamental shrubs** include *Berberis* (Barberry)—usually spiny shrubs with brilliant autumn foliage and yellow flowers in spring; *Cotinus coggygria* (smoke tree)—medium to large shrub with smokey-grey tiny flowers in spring and vibrant autumn foliage; *hydrangeas* are a delight from spring through to the end of autumn with their showy flower heads and large leaves; the sweetest smelling plant is the *Chimonanthus praecox* (Wintersweet), much maligned

in June's *ABC Gardening Australia* as 'ugly-as and the best place for it is behind the shed'—others may disagree with Michael McCoy about its appearance. (He will be coming to stay in Bowral/Mittagong in August as he is the guest speaker for the Australian Garden History Society AGM).

**Deciduous climbers** include the most popular *wisteria* with its pendulous clusters of pea-like flowers in white, lavender and lilac; *Parthenocissus* (Virginia creeper)—a vigorous climber with leaves that colour brilliantly in autumn; probably the favourite for many gardens in this area—*Clematis*—so many varieties to choose from—they like to keep their roots in the shade but they enjoy growing towards the sun.

Choose your plants carefully, taking into consideration the space available in the garden and the size of the plant after 10 or 20 years. Avoid the temptation to choose something that will require regular pruning to keep it within its reasonable bounds. If you have deciduous plants that are causing problems through root competition or shading, they may be moved during winter months when they are dormant.

### **Vegetables**

June is a good time to plant seedlings of cabbage, cauliflower, celery, leek, onion, silver beet and spinach. Plant rhubarb crowns in soil enriched with old manure, blood and bone and super-phosphate. Your old rhubarb plants will enjoy a mulch of manure and a dressing of blood and bone. By the way, green rhubarb stems are quite safe to eat (unlike the leaves that are very poisonous) —just add some red food colouring or cook with frozen raspberries to improve the colour.

### **Slugs and Snails and other pests**

The slugs and snails are about so protect your new seedlings and hellebores, which they seem to particularly love. Coffee grains, tealeaves and mulch all help to stop the pests getting to the leaves.

We transplanted clumps of violets down the garden and something (not snails) has feasted on them. It could be a rabbit though we haven't seen any since last year and suspect that someone has poisoned them. There are no rabbit droppings in the garden but there is plenty of wombat scats. Whether our resident wombat has a partiality to violets is yet to be confirmed but it looks as though he might be the culprit. Or is it the neighbourhood swamp wallaby, which also regularly leaves his mark?

### **Quince (*Cydonia oblonga*)**

Did you know that all quinces must be removed from trees by 30 April in all areas in New South Wales? This is a legal requirement, which aims to reduce the spread of pests and diseases.

### **The Big Three**

*From Yates Garden Guide, p.73*

Nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, often called 'the big three', are the most important elements required by plants. Each is needed in large amounts and the presence or absence of any one of them has a dramatic effect on plant growth.

Lack of nitrogen leads to stunted plants with pale or yellow leaves, sometimes with reddish tints. A quick

solution is to use a water-soluble fertilizer mixture, which contain urea (46% N), such as *Thrive* or *Aquasol*.

Poor root development, stunted growth and often a purplish tinge to the leaves may indicate a lack of phosphorus in your soil. Most soils have enough phosphorus for native plants but if your garden is filled with exotic plants then you may need to supplement the phosphorus levels with superphosphate (9% P). Native plants are sensitive to phosphorus so be careful in your use especially where there is runoff into waterways, where algal blooms may be encouraged to flourish.

If your soils are deficient in potassium the plants may have weak stems, the leaves may be floppy, with yellow or brown tips or scorched margins. If your soil is very sandy this may be a problem in our rainy Southern Highlands. Potassium chloride (49.8% K), or muriate of potash is the most widely used of all potassium fertilizers. Potassium sulphate (40% K and 16% S) is also widely used (and is especially recommended for some plants, including strawberries and potatoes) but is more expensive than potassium chloride.

The secret to good gardening is ensuring that plants have a combination of organic matter and appropriate fertilizers with major elements: nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K); and secondary elements: calcium (Ca), magnesium (Mg), sulphur (S); and minor elements: iron (Fe), manganese (Mn), copper (Cu), zinc (Z), boron (B), molybdenum (Mo). Read the labels on your fertilizer packets.

*Editor*

### Muriel's Musings

The other evening while watching the TV—with the beautiful, black long-haired voluptuous Sheba curled up on my lap—there began such a 'KERTHUMP, KERTHUMP KERTHUMPING' (that's the only way I can describe it) at the cat flap in the back door. Sheba immediately had a hissy fit and all fluffed up (an impressive sight) and stood her ground on her side of the door. That put an end to the kerthumping and Sheba reverted to her former position of lap cat again. Mid-morning the next day when my friend Lesley called in, she remarked, "I see you had a visit from the neighbourhood wombat last night—it left its calling card on your doorstep." Calling card!! That wombat must be on a very, very hi-fibre diet!!

Last week Samantha brought my little great-grandsons to visit for four hours, before heading back to Canberra again. Being forewarned I had put things at risk above flood and Alexander level—or so I thought.

He is well named 'the Seagull' for he picks up everything. Can you believe that at 15 months he can use the TV remote? After lunch, Liam (5yrs and 9 days) went to the bathroom (my dears, he is such a cutie). He managed to turn the lever to turn the tap on but panicked when he couldn't turn it off. So a little voice called "Mummm, there's something wrong with Nanna's water." So he did what any 5yrs and 9 days old would do—he put his finger up the spout of the tap turning the flow into a right garden hose spray that thoroughly soaked the little lad and half the bathroom.

Sami never travels light—she brings three changes each for her boys. Alex had the last laugh because

when going to bed at midnight I turned the bedside radio on and was almost bowled over by a blast of outer space static—he had changed the setting from AM702 to FM150000000. It took me an age to find Tony Delroy's program again.

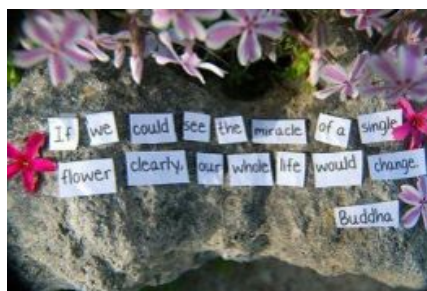
Well that's enough of things that go bump in the night so I will pass on this more relaxing piece of information. Australia being an old continent has unique wild flowers and unique colours in nature—ochre, lavender, mauve and lilac purples (colours that Albert Namatjira used). The flowers and fragrances are worn and subtle like the landscape—different altogether from the European and American light and colours.

So I am reminded of the following lines:

*God of colour and patterns*

*God of refreshing rains*

*God of these, be my God too.*



*Muriel Stuart*

### Minutes of General Meeting 7 May 2012, Presbyterian Church Hall, Bowral.

**Apologies:** D. Squires, M. Buckland, M. Moran, B. Wilson, J. Atkinson, A. McColl, M. Stuart.

**Members:** 36 **Visitors:** 3 (A. Stegman, F. Richards & J. Donohue)

Vice-President Jennifer Braithwaite opened the meeting at 1.30pm, welcomed all and introduced the guest speaker, Jim Powell. Jim gave a wonderful illustrated talk about some of the more memorable varieties of Camellias.

There are more than 32,000 different camellia varieties including the fragrant small white flowers of "Camellia Lutchuensis". Due to petal blight on camellias in other countries we no longer import plants into Australia. Seeds are allowed though.

Jim gave us some good ideas for care of camellias. These included planting them in at least half day of sunlight. Best time to fertilise is February and March. He recommended that a good organic fertiliser to use on them is chook poo and to use mushroom compost every 3 years placed on top of soil to enhance nutrients content.

Clive Probyn thanked Jim for his inspiring talk and presented him with a gift on the club's behalf.

**Minutes** from 2 April General Meeting were taken as read and the motion to have them accepted was moved by K. Fintan and seconded by L. Stott. The motion was carried.

#### **Correspondence Out:**

- Thank you letters to J. Purvis, S. Wilson and M. Buckland.

### Correspondence In:

- Thank you letter from Challenge Southern Highlands Inc. *for donation.*
- Thank you letter from Margaret Missingham *who was recently ill.*
- Pamphlets from Leura Gardens, Gairloch Gardens, Galston Gardens.
- Journal "Winter" from Gardens Clubs of Aust.
- Highlands Garden Society Bulletin - May

**Treasurer's Report:** P. Bailey reported that the income for 2011/12 was \$5296.92 and expenditure for 2011/12 was \$2702.01. This left a total of \$2594.91 credit for 2011/12. Accumulated funds carried forward from 30/4/2011 was \$2558.60. The total from 4/2011 and 4/2012 is \$5153.51. This total is made up from Saving a/c \$2298.55 and Cheque a/c \$2854.96. P. Bailey moved that her report be accepted: **Seconded** : C. Probyn. The motion was carried.

### General Business:

- The door fee of \$3.00 is abolished from 1 May. Membership cards will not be issued this year.
- Entries for the Highlife competition for the Best Tulip Time Gardens for 2012 need to be in by 31 May 2012.
- Kay Fintan advised of a change of venue for the coffee morning on Monday 21 May. Instead of Braemar Garden World we will be visiting the Berrima Cottage Nursery and then having coffee at the Magpie Café next door.
- M. Gleeson asked members to bring in any plants or cuttings for the plant stall or trading table for sale.
- Shonagh Moore issued a general invitation to her home in Mittagong for a Biggest Morning Tea event to raise money for the Cancer Council to aid in cancer research.

**Plant of the month:** Members brought along displays of Camellias from their gardens and the lucky dip was drawn by J. Powell and won by Michael O'Boyle. Michael bought in "Showgirl" camellia flowers (large light pink single).

**Trading Table and Seed Bank:** U. Virag had iris, fuchsias, begonias and chutney on offer.

**Show and Tell:** Keith Bailey brought along a beautiful bonsai maple in full deciduous colour of reds, browns, and oranges. We all admired it.

**Lucky Door Prize:** Won by E. Paananen. Drawn by J. Foy.

The next General meeting will be at the Presbyterian Church Hall in Bowral, on Monday 4 June commencing 1.00pm. At the conclusion of the General Committee, the AGM took place.

### Annual General Meeting

**Minutes of the 2011 AGM:** As these minutes had been previously circulated they were taken as read. No corrections to the minutes were noted. The motion to accept the minutes was proposed by C. Probyn, seconded by M. O'Boyle, and the motion was carried.

**Presentation of the President's Report:** The report was presented by the Vice-President J. Braithwaite and the motion to accept the President's Report was proposed by E. Meredith and seconded by U. Virag. The motion was carried.

**Election of the New Committee:** The Vice President stood aside and the Returning Officer, Keith Bailey took the chair. The nominees and their positions were read out and additional nominations from the floor were asked for. As the number of nominees was the same as the number of positions for elections, the Chair declared that all nominees were elected unopposed.

### Names of the 2012-2013 committee and their positions are as follows:

President: *Meg Probyn*  
Vice-President: *Elizabeth Meredith*  
Secretary: *Kay Fintan*  
Treasurer: *Pamela Bailey*  
Meet & Greet: *Janice Scott*  
Membership Secretary: *Pat Keen*  
Newsletter Editor: *Meg Probyn*  
Publicity: *Lorraine Stott*  
Social Secretary: *Catherine Mah*  
Program: *Ulishka Virag*  
Trading Table: *Marilyn Gleeson*  
Seed Bank: *Barbara Wilson*  
Tea Hosts: *Margaret Buckland, Wendy Gamble, Glenys Lilliendal, Doreen Plumridge*

Keith thanked Vice-President, J. Braithwaite for doing a great job organising the election sheets. Meg Probyn gave a short speech thanking Jennifer Braithwaite for all her hard work as Vice-President and President over the last six years and presented her with a lovely bouquet of flowers from the Bowral Garden Club.

The meeting closed at 3pm.

### The Public Officer

In line with the Constitution of the Club, the Committee appointed Eric Paananen as Public Officer in 2012-2013. He will continue to be an active member of the Committee.

### Management and General Committee

President & Editor:	Meg Probyn	4871 3134
Vice-President:	Elizabeth Meredith	4862 4566
Secretary:	Kay Fintan	4861 2594
Treasurer:	Pam Bailey	4869 5117
Meet & Greet:	Janice Scott	4861 7101
Membership:	Pat Keen	4861 5815
Program:	Ulishka Virag	4872 2243
Public Officer:	Eric Paananen	4862 1570
Publicity:	Lorraine Stott	4869 4797
Seed Bank:	Barbara Wilson	4869 3925
Social Secretary:	Catherine Mah	4861 7268
Trading Table:	Marilyn Gleeson	4869 3881
Afternoon tea hosts:	Glenys Lilliendal	4861 2849
	Margaret Buckland	4862 5963
	Wendy Gamble	4862 2766
	Doreen Plumridge	4868 3517

Contributions to the newsletter are always gratefully received. Please send them to the editor ([probyn44@bigpond.com](mailto:probyn44@bigpond.com)) or post to 158 Oxley Drive, Mittagong, NSW 2575.