

Bowral Garden Club Inc

(Established in 1963) Affiliated with Garden Clubs of Australia Inc

ADDRESS: PO Box 910, BOWRAL NSW 2676



NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2012

Friendship through Gardening



The fragrant 'Double Delight' hybrid rose (see Keith Bailey's article, p. 2)

Plant Stall 20 October 2012

The weather was almost perfect and the plants looked very healthy and attractive. Thanks for the success of the sale are due to all the growers, nurturers, and helpers on the stall, but most of all to Eric Paananen who organised the event and brought his trailer full of plants, tables and brooms.

There were irises, maples, foxgloves, fuchsias, pelargoniums, cineraria, sedum, succulents, daisies, pansies, roses, hellebores—a veritable gardener's delight. We raised over \$1,900 from the sales and the raffle (won by Meg Probyn).



Eric arranging the plants at Corbett Plaza (more photos can be found on the website)

What's on in November

5 November (Monday): Club Meeting, 1.30 pm at the Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley St, Bowral. The guest speaker will be Sue Kingsford, who will be talking about roses.

7 November (Wednesday): 2 - 4pm Sue Kingsford is presenting a workshop for the Highlands Garden Society on **Presenting and Showing Roses**. Our members are invited to attend. The workshop will be held at 'Roses and Friends', *Serenity*, 881 Nowra Road, Fitzroy Falls. If you would like to come, please contact Bob Bailey 4862 3741 (rnbailey@bigpond.com). Tea and coffee will be provided. All are welcome and there is no charge.

8 and 9 November (Thursday and Friday): Whitney Garden, 217 Oldbury Road, Sutton Forest, open 9.30 am to 3.30 pm (arrive before 2.30 pm or you will not be able to see it all). This may be the last year that it opens so if you haven't seen it you are advised to visit!

12 November (Monday): 10.30 am: Garden visit and morning tea at the home of Tony Davis and Maureen Purtell, 62 Burradoo Road, Burradoo. They are both plant lovers and propagators *extraordinaire* and their garden contains many rare and special plants.

13 November (Tuesday): 1.30 pm. The HGS Floral Art Demonstration at the Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley St, Bowral will be by Netta McKay, a very talented retired florist — "Creating simple arrangements for your home". Participants will be provided with two containers, flowers & foliage, etc. Please bring a cloth or towel to work on, plus scissors and secateurs. If you would like to attend, please book with Deidre Hill on 4887 1254 (quindalupnursery@bigpond.com). Afternoon tea will be served following the workshop. The cost is \$20.

19 November (Monday): 10.30 am: A garden visit to Red Cow Farm, Illawarra Highway, Sutton Forest. This is one of the favourite gardens for club members with its variety of garden 'rooms'—from woodland, bog and cottage gardens, featuring rare and unusual plants.

Garden Tips

November must be one of the busiest months of the year—what with weeding and planting and mulching, not to mention all the gardens to visit.

Peonies: The peonies in flower at Retford Park impressed us all—the deep burgundy was stunning. If you have recently acquired some tubers, be patient as they may take two to three years to flower. They can cope with part shade and sun but might require some protection from very hot sun. (Dominic Wong at Chinoiserie uses colourful parasols to keep the burning sun off his.)

Roses: Keep feeding regularly—there is an excellent Dynamic Lifter for Roses—and spray against black spot

and mildew. If you have a climbing rose, prune when it has finished flowering. The old canes should be removed and the long stems shortened back to two or three good eyes—but don't be too savage with it. New climbers shouldn't be pruned for the first two years.

Vegetables: It's time to plant Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, peas, sweet corn and potatoes. Sow or plant tomatoes. Keep watering the vegetable beds, particularly on windy days and fertilise regularly—fortnightly doses of liquid fertilizer works very well.

Prune: Lightly prune deutzia, choisya, bottlebrush, native shrubs, cutting behind the spent flower heads. Philadelphus should be pruned after flowering by cutting out the old branches to allow the newer canes to flourish.

Dahlias: The tubers can be planted out all this month for a lovely display in the summer months. They should be staked as soon as they are planted so that the winds can't knock them about. Don't forget the snail bait!

Many of you will have old dahlia plants in need of some attention. Dig out the dahlia tuber mass—small dahlias may be uprooted by using a garden trowel, while for larger dahlias you may need a spade. Once you have brushed off the dirt and you will find a plant stem from which several dahlia tubers are hanging. To separate the individual tubers, cut with a knife so that the single stem is split up between each of the tubers.

Dust the cut portion of the stem and tuber with plant fungicide powder, which will help to prevent fungus growth and rot.

Replant the dahlia tubers in loose, well-drained soil so the cut stem appears just above the surface of the dirt. Unless it rains, water every day to keep the soil moist. A new shoot will appear from the tuber at the joint where the old stem meets the tuber.

Bulbs: The old leaves on spring-flowering bulbs can be removed when they have turned yellow. Tulip bulbs may be lifted and stored in a dry place for autumn planting (though many of us leave them in the ground for next year).

Fruit trees: spray the leaves with pyrethrum or carbaryl if pear and cherry slugs are evident on plums, pears, cherries or quinces (and hawthorns). Talcum powder works well on small areas.

Hellebores may be divided now. There will be many seedlings under the plants, which may be potted on or transferred to another shady spot.

Visit the garden centres for new seedlings to replace the old spring annuals. It seems much easier to weed if you are planting at the same time!

Take Cuttings: semi-hardwood cuttings of buddleia, camellia and grevillea and tip cuttings of azalea. Pot them up for next year's plant stall.

Lift and divide polyanthus, primrose and violets. Plant under trees or shrubs in the shady part of your garden.

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Keith Bailey's Economic Garden Ramble

Economics is based on assumptions of rational behaviour; the latter occurs where expenditure of time and effort is matched or exceeded by the financial returns on that expenditure.

The question that has pressed for an answer over my many gardening years, therefore, is to what extent is gardening representative of rational behaviour?

When living in Canberra I often joked that if Martians were looking down on the suburbs and observed the actions of Earthlings as they sowed lawn seed, fertilized and watered the grass, then used machines to cut the growth, which was then trailered to the local tip, they might have cause to wonder which actual point they were missing.

An observance of a golf course would have added a further dimension to their perplexity.

Closer to home and more recently there have been times when the marginal cost of my gardening may well have exceeded its marginal revenue product.

For example, in the days of drought and the conventional wisdom surrounding global warming I invested in an extra water tank. Its 9000-litre product saved me \$14.00 of town water—an annual return on investment of perhaps 1%, so hedge fund managers did not rush to my door.

More recently I have tried to persuade my assistant gardener to grow higher value crops in her vegetable area, e.g. parsnips - good, broad beans - good, leeks - good, but cabbage and the like, bad. It really is more efficient to buy at the supermarket, given your labour cost, fertilizer, pesticides, etc. (to say nothing of the rising cost of the seedlings). I remember well our small farming days and the performance we had persuading "Buttercup" our Jersey house cow to co-operate and provide enough milk without all the drama.

All of the theory assumes a good growing season—we really need to be harvesting our own bumper crop when everyone else commercially has a disaster. This is hardly likely in Continent Australia.

Despite this, a recent visit to a nursery revealed my tendency to impulse buy, coupled with economics amnesia. They had small bags of seed potatoes displaying pictures of healthy products.

For some reason my assistant gardener likes to plant potatoes—usually the ones found lurking, forgotten and with 15 cm sprouts at the back of the cupboard. I think she harkens back to the days in England when the first "new potatoes" came in from the Channel Islands, with skins so delicate you could scrape them with your fingernail. Have 'early' potatoes ever been available in Australia?

As spuds require a considerable garden space (plus 22 inches of rain in their ideal growing season) I designated the area, full of potash, which serves as my garden bonfire area.

The first spade in hit a big hillside rock, which I set about removing. This was quickly followed by two more much larger, which I struggled to lift out with a spud bar, timber levers and a pick. I then hit the challenge, a major rock, over a metre long and locked in by two deep supporters.

Three hours into the struggle, perspiring profusely with my heart seemingly ricocheting around my ribcage I realised I was not the man I had been. These potatoes were building up a hefty marginal cost and would need to have a marginal product worthy of the Guinness Book of Records and highly gourmet to boot.

At this point my assistant gardener, surveying the scene and fearing the house would be dislodged and roll down the hill into the bar of the Moss Vale golf club, advised "Leave well alone". Countering that as it was not a well and as a Leo I planned to "leave no stone unturned" I soldiered on. "I need some plastic" I murmured "No, not the kitchen wrap, Pamela".

After trying to winch the rock out using the stem of a sturdy 'lawsonia' and suffering the final indignity of a pair of kookaburras settling in the nearby maple and emitting hilarious comments I decided that discretion was the better part of backache and left the monster in peace. The potatoes were finally planted elsewhere.

The week ended on a more uplifting note however; it almost restored my faith in both economics and gardening.

I had expanded a border in order to plant more dahlias. This proved to have been the very spot where the builder had stored gravel and building sand, so I proceeded to sieve the offending material out by hand. (The last time the sieve had been used was to sieve sapphires from a creek bed at Grabben Gullen)

Finally, I collected and spread a trailer load of mushroom compost from the local landscape supplies yard. After rain and warmth I noticed small hills arising. Before long the area was covered with large mushrooms (one mushroom weighed in at 0.75 kilo!). At the final weigh in, the marginal revenue product in retail term was \$120.00, a 300% return on investment. Would that all gardening was so rewarding!

P.S. Gardening outcomes really rest on how you value outputs. What value do you put on catching the perfume of a "Double Delight" rose or the simple peace and quiet of a hillside?

Retford Park Visit 22 October



A view from the Green Room to the house. Tony had mown the lawn beautifully before we arrived. (More photos on the website).

Thirty of us enjoyed a tour round Retford Park garden guided by the horticulturist, Tony Reynolds. He took us on a wonderful ramble round the whole park— although the morning was cool, we were lucky that the rain kept away and the sun even shone.

Samuel Hordern (1849-1909) built the house at Retford Park in 1887 but it was the next generation of Horderns who planted most of the large trees and camellias, which now grace the garden. Sir Samuel Hordern (1870-1956) and his wife Charlotte (née See) were keen gardeners and it's their legacy that we continue to enjoy.

It is hard to single out a feature that was the most pleasing to the eye—the pool and pavilion, the peony walk, the fountain path (known as the Grey Garden), the Millenium canal, the Green Room—but perhaps the loveliest part is the Park with its magnificent old trees, including two Algerian oaks (*Quercus canariensis*). Mr James Fairfax has added so many more beautiful trees—chestnut, dogwood, ginko, nyssa and oak.

It was a wonderful opportunity to visit this lovely garden and enjoy the rhododendrons and azaleas in full bloom.

Hint from Yates' Garden Guide

Some spots in the garden are impossible to get anything to grow—they may be congested with tree roots, too shallow, too wet or solid clay. The best solution is to use one or more large pots to grow your plants. They look surprisingly good within the garden, chosen to match the garden style and placed strategically to draw the eye. Hook them up to the garden's irrigation system to save you watering them separately.

(Helen Young, p. 429)

Muriel's Musings

The spring flowers have exceeded all expectations and I can't remember the blossom trees putting on such a show. Even my Granny garden has never had a more colourful display, and an added pleasure for me has been watching the activity of so many bees—I don't know where they are coming from, but they leave with their little pantaloons bulging with yellow pollen.

Have you noticed in recent years that the growing habit of some plants has been altered by the 'plant propagators'? Two disappointments for me have been that the tall Sweet Williams and the creamy Apricot Alstroemeria (Peruvian Lily) have become dwarfs in height—I wonder why? I'm not happy Jan!!

I'm sorry I missed all the activity of our plant stall at Corbett Plaza—but I was lost and relaxed at the end of a hose at the planting morning when the Centennial Park bush care group planted out most of the 2000 natives beside the little rivulet that meanders through the park. Tis a wonder I didn't fall asleep as I mentally counted to 25 for each plant I watered in (25 = a ¼ of a bucket). My group worked from 8.30am until 12.30pm and we planted hundreds—I do hope I didn't miss many.

Believe me, I slept very soundly on Saturday night. Which reminds me of the little story of mothers talking about how difficult it is to get their teenage sons awake and up of a morning. "Oh, I don't have any trouble," said one mother, "My son's dog sleeps on his bed, so I just open the door and throw the cat onto the bed." That's one of my favourite mental pictures.

With the Melbourne Cup to be run the day after our meeting, can I run this piece of punting advice past you?? It's not infallible—but it sometimes works. The British actor, Leslie Phillips, devised this scheme—he enjoyed the Melbourne Cup Carnival so much that he used to make it his annual holiday venue. I take no responsibility, but it has been known to work.

*You find the top weight and the bottom weight.
Add the weights together, then divide by half.
Then you look for the 4-year old with the nearest
weight and the best form.*

The following is a sure tip:

*Don't put off until tomorrow
what you can do today
because if you do it today and like it
you can always do it again tomorrow.*

Muriel Stuart

Minutes of General Meeting 8 Oct 2012

Presbyterian Church Hall, Bowral

Present: 44 Visitors: 2

Apologies: Susan May Notley, Jennifer Braithwaite, Doreen Plumridge, Elizabeth Nicol



*Raymond Bradley (centre) and Deirdre Hill (right)
(photo Lorraine Stott)*

President Meg Probyn opened the meeting at 1.35pm and expressed great pleasure in welcoming well-known local horticulturist Deidre Hill as the guest speaker.

Deidre opened her talk with an observation that rhododendrons and azaleas had fallen a little out of favour during the past dry years but with the return of more normal rain fall patterns were again proving popular in local gardens. When considering their planting position, there was a need to be aware that most plants in this group came originally from the Himalayas, Burma and parts of Indonesia. The cold, damp and well-drained areas of the mountains could be adapted with the provision of loamy soil that was a bit damp and with good air circulation. The use of water crystals scratched around the surface soil would aid these conditions. The use of soft mulch such as mushroom compost and planting under deciduous trees was advisable, while ericas and heaths made good companion plantings. Problems with lace-bugs and spider-mites could be controlled by using Condifor spray in the first week of November and January respectively. Deidre provided beautiful specimens to illustrate her talk about species selection and garden planting as well as answering many audience questions.

Ulishka Virag thanked Deidre on behalf of the club and presented her with a small gift.

Minutes of the September 3rd meeting were taken as read and accepted with one amendment, Mary Mowbray omitted from the list of apologies. Moved: Bob Bailey; Seconded: Elizabeth Meredith

Correspondence in:

- Flyers: Bundanoon Garden Ramble, 2012 Iris Show
- Information package from GCA re insurance and fees. Correspondence out:
- Appreciation to Stuart Read

Treasurers Report:

Pam Bailey moved that the records show, Income: \$140.90 and Expenditure \$332.00, leaving a balance of \$3656.00. This amount together with \$2593.00 in the savings account gives a total of \$6249.00. Seconded: Noelene Bailey

General Business:

- Great photos are available of the Tulip Time parade on the website. Thanks to all who helped and participated. Four members re-donned the Dutch costumes to guide a tourist group through Corbett Gardens. The group was enthusiastic in their praise of the gardens, which did look spectacular this year. It was moved that a letter of congratulations be forwarded to the council in appreciation of their efforts.
- Reminder to book for the Christmas Party and pay by November meeting.
- A form is at the entrance table for those members who are willing to open their garden for a club visit in 2013.
- Pens are still available for purchase.
- A Plant Stall Meeting will be held at 15 Kimberley Drive on Monday 15th October commencing at 10.30am. All are welcome to attend. A reminder to clean pots and clearly label plants that are to be sold.
- Reminders for the month: Redford Park 22nd October and Marilyn's Gleeson's on 29th October.

Exhibition Table Draw: Drawn by Robyn Stevens and won by Pamela Bailey.

Lucky Door Prize: Drawn by Deidre Hill and won by Sandra Regtop

The meeting closed at 2.45pm for afternoon tea.

The next Meeting will be at the Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley Street on Monday 5th November commencing at 1.30pm.

Management and General Committee		
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Afternoon tea hosts:	Glenys Lilliendal	4861 2849
	Margaret Buckland	4862 5963
	Wendy Gamble	4862 2766
	Doreen Plumridge	4868 3517

Website: bowralgardenclub.com

Last chance to book for the Christmas Party
Monday 3 December 2012
at Centennial Winery.

*The event will start at 11.30am for lunch (high tea menu with glass of wine).
The cost is \$40 per person. Catherine Mah will be taking bookings and payments up to the end of the meeting on 5 November 2012.*