

Bowral Garden Club Inc.

(Established in 1963)

Affiliated with Garden Clubs of Australia Inc

ADDRESS: PO BOX 910, BOWRAL NSW 2576

Patrons: Chris & Charlotte Webb OAM



Friendship through Gardening

NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2013



The heavenly scent of the Daphne permeates the winter garden

August

The last month of winter is upon us—and what a warm winter we have enjoyed this year. For some days in July the temperature plummeted to cold, but many days have been perfect gardening weather. Winter in the Southern Highlands is really never colder than an English spring, with the occasional frosty days. Some of the new members may not know that our club has an English member—Sandria Westwood—who relocated from Bowral to Wiltshire, in November 2011 for family reasons, and who has experienced a couple of very cold winters. This month she has written an article about her Wiltshire garden—a much smaller piece of land than her old Bowral garden where she developed a beautiful herbaceous border. A plants person, she is very knowledgeable about cold climate gardens and was extremely helpful to us when we started working on our garden nearly five years ago.

When I told her that I was keeping a garden diary with all the plants that we were purchasing and planting, I asked her opinion on whether I should also jot down the cost of the plants. Her emphatic 'No!' stopped me from that dangerous practice—I might have been shocked at the cost of the garden and stopped visiting the garden centres! 'Best not to know', she said. Keith Bailey, an economist, might have different ideas.

The article written by one of our new members, Maureen Barker, is a poignant story of how her garden helped to restore her after the tragedy of her son's death. 'The Healing Garden' will strike a chord with many of you. It is so beneficial to share these stories with friends and I hope that you will make a point of meeting Maureen at the next meeting.

August is a time for weeding and either planting or planning what you want to plant in spring. Enjoy the pleasure of the last winter sun and the thought of spring.

The Editor

What's on in August

5 August (Monday) 1.30pm: Club meeting at the Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley Street, Bowral. Guest speaker will be the renowned photographer of the Southern Highlands, Tony Sheffield. His topic is: *Botanical Southern Highlands*. He will also judge the photo competition. An exhibition of his work is currently on display at the rear of The Brown Bookshop in Bong Bong Street, Bowral.



12 August (Monday) 10.30am: Committee meeting

19 August (Monday) 10.30am: Visit to Clive and Meg Probyn's garden for morning tea and a stroll round the winter garden: 158 Oxley Drive, Mittagong (4871 3134).

26 August (Monday): 10.30am: Meet at Fitzroy Falls Information Centre for coffee and a walk, followed by lunch at Burrawang Pub.

Theme for the month: Daffodils



Floral Art Workshops

The Highlands Garden Society has organised two Floral Art workshops on Tuesday 13 August and Tuesday 15 October from 12.30pm to 4.00pm. The theme will be "Modern Flowers for Traditional Decor". Cost of the workshops will be \$20 each with containers, flowers and foliage provided. The workshops will be conducted at the Presbyterian Church Hall. Further information and bookings to Deidre Hill 4887 1254 or email quindalupnursery@bigpond.com.

What's on in September

2 September (Monday) 1.30pm: Club meeting at the Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley Street, Bowral. Guest speaker will be Carolyn Dwyer: *Sweden's most romantic garden—Sofiero.*

28 September (Saturday): Tulip Time Parade in Bowral.

30 September (Monday): 10.30 am: Coffee morning at the Milk Factory, Bowral.

Angus Stewart In July



(L. to R.) Noelene Bailey (Treasurer), Angus Stewart (Guest speaker), Lorraine Richardson (Secretary)

Angus Stewart's visit to the Garden Club on 1 July 2013 was a delightful occasion and we all enjoyed his entertaining talk on 'Composting and Worm farms'. His horticultural knowledge and communication skills make him one of the top speakers in Australia. We hope he'll make a return visit!

Coffee morning at The Post



(Standing at the back) Phyllis and Eric Paananen, (L. to R.) Carole Smith, Pamela Cornet, Mary Mowbray, Lorraine Richardson, Glenys Lilliendal, Kay Fintan and Catherine Mah (photo by Meg Probyn)

Fifteen members met for coffee at The Post in Argyle Street, Moss Vale on Monday 22 July. It's a lovely old building originating as the Post Office in 1890 and renovated in 2005 when it opened as a cafe/restaurant. Sometimes the monthly general meetings are just too busy for us to sit and chat—so the opportunity to find out about each other is greatly enhanced by the coffee mornings. Eric outlined some of his plans for the Tulip Time float as we exchanged ideas about appropriate costumes and planting themes for the proposed 1860s float.

The Editor

Camellia Show: Highlands Garden Society

Saturday 14 September 2013

At the Uniting Church Hall

Corner of Boolwey and Bendooley Streets, Bowral
Entries are welcome from all members and the public.

The hall will open at 7.00am for the staging of exhibits, which must be completed by 8.45am when the hall will be closed for judging.

The Healing Garden

As a small child my favourite book was *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett, and that story of a magic garden where people were cured, both physically and mentally, has stayed with me. When our son Michael was killed, my world turned upside-down, and I turned into myself, hoping to escape the devastating grief. I lost all feelings and senses.

We had just moved into a new house in the country. The house was set in rugged bush, with a gravel road leading to the house. This road formed one wall of a pond, and a gully led from this to a large dam below. At first I could only wander through the lonely landscape crying in despair.

We were given a few trees to plant in memory of Michael and I asked myself, why a few trees as a memorial, why not a whole garden? Already I could see the bones of a large garden emerging and I felt a spark ignite in the very centre of my being. Firstly an area was fenced off for an orchard and vegetable garden. The pond was seeded with small native fish and the large dam with 200 trout fingerlings. We planted a grove of silver birch to follow the gully from pond to dam. This gave the illusion of a water-course. Throughout that long, hot summer I dug holes in relentless granite country, planting every tree with my tears. I cleared more and more bush, made rustic stone paths through various gardens, and bucketed water to keep young trees alive. At night I was exhausted, but I could empty my mind of all things, except what I would do tomorrow, then I would fall into a deep sleep. Next morning I would have a purpose to get out of bed.

As the garden developed small birds came to build their nests—willy wagtails built along pergola beams, yellow thornbills and blue wrens built in the wisteria, and evening the perfumed pelargoniums. One day I saw a tiny red and black mistletoe bird darting in and out of the Manchurian pear. A few weeks later, when the little bird had gone, I had a closer look to find its nest. It was hanging from a branch like a little silk shoe—a gossamer nest made of spider web—just exquisite! So began my collection of bird's nests.



The wisteria on the pergola

At this stage, I realised I had reached another level of awareness. I noticed everything about me with a clarity I had not had since childhood. I could smell the wisteria and the plum blossom. It was under the plum blossom I would sit for hours watching dozens of little thornbills and finches bathing in the birdbath. I could put out my hand and touch them—tiny balls of fluff like thistle down. In spring the wattle came out, and the roses, and dozens of baby ducklings hatched out on the dams, and as I walked through my magic garden hundreds of butterflies flew into the air. My senses were filled!

We had a heavy snowfall during the second winter—large sticky flakes that clung to everything, creating a winter wonderland. I was overawed by the beauty of the seasons.



The garden covered in snow

As I recovered, people would come out of town to see the garden and thus I felt I was once more in the mainstream of life. Out of our grief, my husband and I had produced something of beauty, and a worthy tribute to our son. Since then I have designed many magic gardens, all of which bring peace. Even on small blocks I have made gardens—a Shakespeare/Chaucer perfumed garden, a Japanese garden, a cottage garden, and native gardens. Whenever I am in one of my gardens I feel close to nature, and to my son.

Maureen E. Barker

Letter from England

When I first saw this Wiltshire garden I was stumped as to what to do with it. It is a very small typical town garden very close to the High Street and is the size of a pocket-handkerchief, both back and front. The open plan front is about 40 x 36 feet on a curve on a corner and was just a lawn of grassy weeds and moss and patches where containers had been removed. There were lots of nails left in the house wall where hanging baskets had been removed. The soil turned out to be light with builders' sand in patches—even though the house is twenty-years-old.

The back garden is about 60 x 40 feet (roughly paced out by me), and the soil is mainly clay. The patio had a falling down pergola attached to the house, held up by a climber. The long raised bed contained rampant mint hiding a range of plants, which had been planted still in their pots—I hadn't seen that before.

My first thought was of Geoff Hamilton—a presenter of *Gardener's World* on the BBC for many years before his early death. He is a gardening hero of mine and I have many of his books. A natural and organic gardener, he was ahead of his time in many ways, including not using up natural resources like peat and moss. He designed many cottage gardens on the program, full of

plants, vegetables and fruit and I thought I could do that with the blank square—but then I began to realise after a few months that a cottage garden wouldn't go down well if we want to sell during the next few years as the town buyer here doesn't want a garden to look after but a space for children to play—a garden that requires no work.

An elderly neighbour I got to know just down the road has a garden I would love to transplant whole—it is so lovely—but she has found that young families don't want to buy her house. Luckily she has decided to take the house off the market and put in a stair lift—it may come to us all!

So that first winter I left everything except the front where I dug three small beds for the winter weather to help break down the soil. The beds give it some shape, colour and help the refuse collectors' big Doc Martens to keep to the edge of the grass—they always want to take a short cut on our corner.



Sandy in her garden on 21 July 2013 (photo by her son, Tim)

In the spring last year, I planted a few key shrubs—all small in scale. An *Acer palmatum* 'Garnet', which has struggled through our long, long winter and lost a few ends of its branches; *Sarcococca confusa* (sweet box, which I also know as Christmas box and has lovely, perfumed tiny flowers around Christmas time); *Osmanthus*, which looks like a low round holly; a dwarf *Syringa* (lilac); a dwarf Japanese cherry *Prunus incisa* 'Kojo-no-mai'—only four feet high full size; *Magnolia stellata*, which has actually done very well and looked lovely with so many flowers on bare stems when all the bulbs were out; two hollies, *Ilex* 'Blue Prince' and *I.* 'Golden King'—they will be someone else's mature plants but pruning will keep them shapely; and finally the mock orange *Philadelphus* 'Innocence', which has just finished flowering and has scented the garden beautifully.

I've filled in the borders with spring bulbs and herbaceous plants for the insects. The sand in the soil is an ant's idea of heaven. I fight a battle on many fronts using all the Nippon products—powder, gel baits and

liquid sachets diluted in a watering can. So far I've only lost a *Hebe* to them—the roots of that poor plant were full of ants and to start with I thought the branches that were going brown had received a 'watering' from a visiting animal!

The back garden is full of clay and had to have really major work—plus a lot of demolition of the sagging structures. I am now on very friendly terms with the chaps at the tip. They help with my struggles to get stuff up the steps to the skips. The only reasonable bit of the garden—the raised bed—also had to be removed because we needed a new fence. The previous 'gardener', who planted pots (!), had also put up a brick wall with no drainage, and then thrown soil in behind it until it reached the top of a bank and next door's garden. And that is where the fence, our responsibility, sat—or I should say—was falling down.



Sandy's back border

Several weeks and three large skips later, I had a new fence, a turfed bank and a couple more feet of garden. I have planted very well spaced evergreen shrubs along that bank in a variety of colours and shapes—including, the purple beech (*Fagus sylvatica* 'atropurpurea'); Holly; *Viburnum tinus* 'Spring Bouquet'; Japanese Spindle (*Euonymus japonicus* 'Aureus' and *E.* 'Bravo'); yew (*Taxus baccata*); and a beautiful spruce (*Picea pungens* 'Edith'). She is silver blue and will only get to 6-7 feet. I love 'Edith'—she was also our Christmas tree last year (the most expensive one I've ever bought I might say) and looked beautiful, so she gets extra water now that we finally have some summer heat. Tim has connected two water butts for me to house down pipes. For shade and for the birds, I put two hedgerow trees in the lawn. They are slender when mature, *Crataegus pru* 'Splendens', which has lovely fruits for the birds and quite large thorns and will reach about 4.5m x 4m after ten years.

In the back garden, a pair of younger hands and a stronger back, Tim, has put up an archway and trellis for me to give privacy to the patio. We enjoyed the concreting of posts and felt very proud of ourselves and

while not a plant for Australia, I have put the quintessentially English garden plants on there—two evergreen honeysuckles and an evergreen clematis, with pots of rosemary, sage and geraniums there.

I also have a very tiny strip of wild grass across the width under the boundary wall, with small water containers for the birds and with two different witch hazels—*Hamamelis intermedia* 'Pallida' and *H. Arnold* 'Promise', which both showed lovely flowers all last winter. In addition I planted primroses and cowslips. I can see this part of the garden from the sitting room—just when you need something after a snowy winter. I added some wild flower seeds this spring/summer—just scattering them there. It is untidy now until I cut it in August.

So I have a framework and now, although it is so small, I still have quite a lot of room to fit plants in around them, which is good because I continue to have the disease that buys plants first and then has to find them a home. I've bought plants from Garden Club speakers, a standard gooseberry which I love and it has fruited well. (You may remember that I bought two gooseberry bushes from Robertson as I missed my gooseberry pie).

I've bought some lovely different lavender plants and wild strawberries and they are in the border with rhubarb, along with green and bronze fennel and lovage and evening primrose that has really shot up this year.

There also are small plants of *Echinacea*, *Monarda*, *Andastrantia* and anything else as fillers that I've got from coffee mornings where people sell their garden extras. It has surprised me what I've been able to fit in. It is also such new planting that it'll need time to blend together and I may get some that keel over.

That is a rough outline of what I've been up to outside—when weather permits! We did have an awful winter and spring—both cold and wet then snowy, and then wet again. So plenty of challenges in a short growing season this year.

Sandria Westwood

From the Patch:

Kohlrabi (*Brassica oleracea* var *gongylodes*)

You may be forgiven for thinking you have been invaded from outer space the first time you see a row of Kohlrabi in the garden!!! These rather stout, rounded, purple tinged vegetables with sparse twisting leaves are surprisingly easy to grow and particularly delicious. They are often used as alternative to Celeriac.

Kohlrabi is a member of the cabbage family and in fact its name is derived from the German for Cabbage, *Kohl* and Turnip, *Rabi*. This is actually quite an accurate description of the flavour of these stout purple beauties.

Kohlrabi first appeared in cultivation in the 14th century and has been widely grown in northern and central Europe. It is believed to be a directly descended from the wild cabbage. The edible portion of Kohlrabi is in fact the swollen stem and is not a root vegetable.

They prefer an open sunny position and a neutral to slightly alkaline soil. Incorporate either lime or dolomite when preparing the garden bed. Kohlrabi is a gross feeder and requires masses of fertiliser. In fact the faster they grow the better the flavour so to gain the best results fertilise and water regularly.

Plant seed directly in the garden bed once the soil temperature is over 8 degrees C or sow in seed trays and

plant out when conditions are appropriate. Plant the seeds or seedlings at 150mm spacing and mulch well. They begin to mature in about 10 weeks and it is better to use them before they get too large.

Like all brassicas, Kohlrabi is susceptible to cabbage moth so beware and carry out your regular control procedures. I would recommend Derris Dust or a fine fly netting cover stretched over a frame.

Kohlrabi Cultivars

There are several Kohlrabi cultivars including:

- 'Purple Vienna': with purple stems and green to white flesh
- 'White Vienna': with white stems and white flesh.

Other vegetables to plant in July

Now is also the time to plant a huge number of winter and spring vegetables including: beetroot, broad beans, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, chives, fennel, kale, leek, lettuce, onion, parsley, parsnip, snow peas, spinach, turnips and swedes.

A Vegetable Thought

Gardening is a kind of disease. It infects you, you cannot escape it. When you go visiting, your eyes rove about the garden; you interrupt the serious cocktail drinking because of an irresistible impulse to get up and pull a weed.

~Lewis Gannit~

Chris Webb

ROASTED KOHLRABI

Hands-on time: 10 minutes

Time to table: 45 minutes

Serves 4 (smallish servings since roasted vegetables shrink so much)

Ingredients

750gm fresh kohlrabi, ends trimmed, thick skin sliced off with a knife, diced

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 tablespoon garlic (optional)

Salt

Good vinegar (White wine)

Method

Preheat the oven to 200°C (fan forced). Toss the diced kohlrabi with olive oil, garlic and salt in a bowl. Spread evenly on a baking sheet and put into oven and roast for 30-35 minutes, stirring every five minutes after about 20 minutes. Sprinkle with a good vinegar (probably at the table so the kohlrabi doesn't get squishy).

Recipe adapted from Jack Bishop, *Vegetables Every Day*.

Garden Tips

Fertilise and mulch: Apply a good fertiliser, preferably a slow release fertiliser, to all of your plants and a good lawn fertiliser over all your grassed areas. This will enable your garden to take advantage of any late August rains and then the warmer weather, which comes around mid-September. Ensure that all your garden beds have a healthy layer of mulch (10cm). Though this winter has been quite dry (except for that very wet week in early July), you still want to lock in as much of the moisture that has fallen as possible. Once again, the weather generally warms up in September, which means more moisture will evaporate.

Azaleas: If you are planting azaleas make sure you tease the root ball out. If the fibrous roots remain bound they will never be able to spread beyond the confines of the

shape of their former pot. Slice through the roots with an old knife from top to bottom, around the outside of the root ball and gently pull the matted roots apart splaying them outwards. This will encourage the new roots to extend to the soil in which it has been planted. After positioning the plants and its roots carefully in the hole, backfill, water well with a seaweed solution, and mulch. It's important to keep the root area of all your azaleas moist so that they will flower really well. Water the soil under the plants and try to avoid the foliage, flowers and buds so that the fungal disease (petal blight) isn't encouraged!

Plants in the Garden Centres: It's very hard at this time of year to resist buying trays of the gorgeous annuals—pansies, primulas, snapdragons, foxgloves, cinerarias, poppies—the list seems endless. It's one of the joys of winter gardening to weed a bed and then pop in the pretty plants that will grow all through spring. Water-soluble fertilisers or a dressing of an all-purpose fertiliser will encourage their roots. Remove any dead flowers (especially on the pansies) to encourage more flowers. The perennials are also wonderful to plant at this time of year. One of my favourite is the *Erysimum* (Wallflower), which can be grown as an annual or a perennial.

The climate in the Southern Highlands is perfect for *Erysimum*—it loves cool summers and mild winters. They should be planted in a sunny open position in moist well-drained soil. Though quite drought tolerant, the plants flourish if they are watered regularly—particularly if they receive regular feeding, trimming, and deadheading. If perennials become woody they should be cut back hard. Annuals are raised from seed; perennials are propagated from cuttings of non-flowering stems.

Hydrangeas: It's pruning time for your hydrangeas and when you've trimmed each one, don't forget to fertilise and if necessary apply a blueing compound—the instructions are on the packet and should be followed. (For established hydrangeas cut back the flowering stems to a pair of strong buds high on the stem. On congested plants, prune back to their base up to one third of the oldest and thinnest branches to produce renewal growth. Renewal pruning can be applied to most winter, spring and early summer flowering shrubs—such as deutzia, mock orange (*Philadelphus*) and weigela. It is better to prune one-third of the plant each year over a three-year period so that at least two-thirds of the plant can produce flowers.

Citrus: Fertilise with citrus food or sulphate of ammonia. Spread round to the outside line of the branches, water in well and mulch. Check for citrus gall wasp (swellings on branches) and remove and destroy any infected parts before the end of August. It's important to do this before the insects reach adult stage.

Lawns: We have two small lawns that are always mossy and we used to worry about them, but having visited the famous Saihōji Temple in Kyoto, we are very happy with our miniature 'moss gardens'. If, however, the damp part of your lawn bothers you there are some remedies. You can use a solution of sulphate of iron at the rate of two tablespoons to half a bucket of water and repeat after a week. You can improve the drainage of the lawn and make sure that the sun reaches it by pruning back any overhanging branches and by spiking the lawn with a garden fork. (Our resident magpie has been spiking the front lawn for the last two weeks while he collects the

worms.) You can lift the turf and spread clinker ash under it. Or you could do away with the lawn altogether and plant groundcover plants or gravel or pave the area. So many solutions! Those of you who love your lawns, moss notwithstanding, feed them with a slow-release fertiliser—the best time to do this is before rain so watch the weather forecasts.

Dig flatweeds (including the roots) out of the lawn with an old knife or spray with a selective weedkiller.

Roses: Finish pruning roses. Clip groundcover and carpet roses all over and don't worry about where the buds are. The aim is to have a rounded shrub about 30cm in diameter. Fertilise roses with animal manure (preferably cow manure) plus a handful of superphosphate or with a special rose food, water and mulch. (Use fresh mulch—the old mulch under all the rose bushes should be moved to another area of your garden in case there are any nasties lurking there.)

Bulbs: Deadhead daffodils and other bulbs as they finish flowering but leave the foliage to feed the bulb. Make a note of those clumps of bulbs that haven't flowered so that when the time is right you can lift, separate and replant with more space for them to flourish.

Hellebores: Cut off any ugly leaves on the hellebores and look for the seedlings underneath the plants. They can be potted up for the plant sale in October—probably won't be large enough for this year, but remember there will be another sale next year and hellebores are always popular with the buyers.



Hellebores in the winter sun

Muriel's Musings

Since last month's musings I've notched up seven recording sessions with William—doing my Oral History Archives thingamyjig—and I'm still only up to where I'm eight and a half years old. But as I'm telling—with my hand on my heart—the truth about life at Sutton Forest in the depth of those dreadful depression days, William says it's most important to get it all down before . . . and then he stops. I wonder if he is thinking, 'Before she forgets or snuffs it.'

No shortage of catastrophies to write about, I just have to decide which one to tell. Being a sports-tragic I've been burning the midnight oil—watching Wimbledon,

Le Tour de France, Formula 1 racing and the cricket. These events I class as my overseas holiday from the comfort of my easy chair beside the fire. I've even developed JET LAG, as I now have puffy feet 'n ankles. How authentic is that!!

When I get to go to bed, I sleep on an antique four-poster cedar bed (it's old like me). It's not of regulation size; I had to have a mattress (3ft 9ins x 5ft 11ins) made for it. Seeing that the single bed electric blanket was three winters old, I went shopping for a new one. Finally found one with a one-year guarantee but I thought it was a tad pricey. But on the shelf next to it there was a soft fleecy underlay that looked like wool but wasn't wool, if you get my drift. So I settled for that.

It is *sooo* cumfy to sleep on—sheer luxury. But there is a catch. You know how mats creep on carpets? Well, that's what happens to me. By morning the undersheet and I are halfway down the bed under the Doona and there's enough electricity in my hair to light up a Christmas tree!!

A friend has just called in and wondered why I wasn't out in the garden—it is so sunny—but I told her I'm not into multi-skilling. I can't be tap, tapping away at the musings and pulling up weeds.

*God makes rainy days
So gardeners can get their
Housework done.*

Muriel Stuart



Minutes of General Meeting 1 July 2013

Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley St. Bowral

Present: members 44 **Visitors:** 4

Apologies: Pat Keen, Jo Lees, Bob Bailey, Stella Barnsley, Ray Bradley, Mary Mowbray, Lorraine Stott, Lorna Thirup, Kathy Watson, Barbara Wilson

President Meg Probyn opened the meeting by welcoming members and guests. Whilst we awaited the arrival of our guest speaker, Meg commenced by thanking Jo Lees who has stepped down as secretary but will remain on the committee until her relocation to her home in Northern New South Wales. Meg wished Jo and her husband our very best wishes. Meg thanked Lorraine Richardson for accepting the role of secretary.

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2013 were accepted. Moved: Lolita Godsell; seconded: Desley Clifford.

Correspondence In:

- A card of congratulations received from Members of the Mittagong Garden Club on our 50th Anniversary.
- A letter of thanks from the Mayor of Wingecarribee Shire Council for our donation of \$100 towards the work of the Centennial Park Bushcare Group.
- Notice from The Garden Clubs of Australia – Annual General Meeting 17 September 2013 in Ballarat.
- Challenge Southern Highlands Inc who support Welby Garden Centre have asked for a donation.
- Invitation from Berry & District Garden Club for the Berry Gardens Festival on Friday 18 & Saturday 19 October.
- Leaflet from The Arbour Berry to visit during the Berry Gardens Festival in October.

- Cymbidium Club of Australia, National Orchid Extravaganza August 9 to 11 at 25a Kenthurst Road, Round Corner Dural.
- Quote from the bus company for Canberra trip.

Treasurer's Report

Noelen Bailey expressed her thanks to Pam Bailey who had stepped in as Treasurer during her absence. Noelene moved that the financial report be accepted as follows: Balance in cheque account \$5359.27 plus balance in savings account \$3179.02. Total funds on hand \$8538.29. Seconded Kay Fintan.

Guest Speaker Angus Stewart arrived and was introduced by Meg and warmly received by the Garden Club members and guests. Angus spoke about his involvement with the winning design for this year's 100th Anniversary Chelsea Flower Show. He helped Philip Johnson, who won first prize, by sourcing Australian native plants in Europe. It was a great honour for Philip to win and a very proud moment for Australian Horticulture.

Angus proceeded to give us a talk with slides on one of his favourite subjects, composting. It is the natural way to build up your plants and helps fertilize your soil. 50% of waste that goes to the tip could be used in our own garden. He identified a variety of composting methods to suit the varying sizes of gardens and households.

- Hot compost heap or trench composting. A sunny position as it needs to generate heat up to 70 degrees Celsius. This will kill even weeds and breaks down material within weeks. Keep aerated by turning every few days.
- Cold composting using timber fence pailings where you put compost in the top with a trapdoor in the bottom and is suitable for small amounts of kitchen waste, lawn clippings or shredded paper. You can use a jiggle stick, which brings up the old compost and moves it around. Keep away from the house as it can attract rodents, best solution is not to put meat or bones in the compost. Can be put under trees as it does not need heat. Cold composting does not kill weeds. Cut orange and lemon peel into small pieces. This method can take 3 to 12 months to break down.
- Compost tumble bins suitable for the small to medium gardens. ABC radio host Simon Manie has become a very keen composter and loves to tell Angus when he's on his show how well he is composting. You can speed up composting by turning bin regularly as it restarts the process, keeps the heat going and encourages the breakdown of material. Best source of material comes out of your kitchen, as it is rich in nutrients.
- Worm farms are another great way to turn kitchen scraps into free organic fertilizer. Worms love banana skins. Take care in very hot weather and don't leave them out in the heat. Easy to harvest from the base and gives humus rich liquid; add 10 litres of water every week or two. Need to dilute to a colour like weak tea. It can smell if you add too much kitchen waste—so add shredded paper, which will give the worms some breathing space. If it smells like rotten eggs it means it is lacking in oxygen and this would not be good for the garden. Harvest regularly then pour through 10 litres of water then it won't burn the plants. Don't put a

whole lot of citrus or onion peel in one go—mix it with other waste. Worm wee is unsurpassed as a liquid fertilizer; (we got the feeling this is one of Angus' favourites).

- In-ground worm farming is great fertilizer for veggie crops. Use a length of PVC piping say 60cm long with a dozen holes bored into the bottom half and push a third of pipe into the ground, put kitchen waste into top end of pipe. Good for one season.
- Bokashi composting bucket, which can sit on your kitchen bench—is a great Japanese invention for apartment dwellers and balcony gardens. Air-tight lid keeps rodents and insects from the compost and the liquid is rich in organic nutrients.

Angus answered various questions and advised the following: autumn leaves are not good for composting as they are not high enough in nutrients for them to break down, so use as mulch on the garden or shred them and then add to compost. Fungi are important to compost. Soldier fly larvae are not necessarily a bad thing in the compost. Vinegar flies are common but are not usually harmful even though they can be annoying. Frogs indicate a healthy ecosystem. Making your own topsoil with earth worms which can be used to create rich topsoil and is perfect for vegies. Get garden friends to share their worms with you.

At the conclusion Keith Bailey thanked Angus on behalf of the Club and presented him with a small gift.

General Business:

- Meg advised that 100 of the new Bowral rose both bare rooted and in pots will be available soon.
- Tulip Time: the committee have agreed our float will be set in the 1860's with a slab hut which hopefully will be drawn by a tractor—the ladies to dress in long skirts and aprons and bonnets with the men wearing outdoor clothing and hats. Members are encouraged to join in.
- Canberra coach trip November 11 now has 35 people signed up for the 48-seat coach.
- Thanks to those members who have entered into the photo competition, which will be judged by Tony Sheffield.

Trading table – thanks to those who brought plants, jams and other items for sale.

Exhibition Lucky Draw: Drawn by Angus Stewart and won by Catherine Mah.

The meeting closed at 2.55 pm for afternoon tea.

Next Meeting: 5th August with guest speaker, renowned photographer Tony Sheffield.

Management Committee

President:	Meg Probyn	4871 3134
Vice-President:	Pam Bailey	4869 5117
Secretary:	Lorraine Richardson	4862 2677
Treasurer:	Noelene Bailey	4862 3741
Public Officer:	Eric Paananen	
Trading table:	Michael Launderers	

Seed Box: Barbara Wilson

Membership and Front Desk: Pat Keen, Jo Lees, Catherine Mah, Janice Scott and Anne Stegman

Afternoon tea hosts: Margaret Buckland, Wendy Gamble, Glenys Lillindal, Doreen Plumridge

Website: bowralgardenclub.com