

Bowral Garden Club Inc.

(Established in 1963)

Affiliated with Garden Clubs of Australia Inc

ADDRESS: PO BOX 910, BOWRAL NSW 2676

Patrons: Chris & Charlotte Webb OAM

NEWSLETTER JUNE 2013



Friendship through Gardening



Narcissus 'Tahiti' (won the Award of Garden merit from the Royal Horticultural Society)

The first days of winter may make us long for springtime, but winter has a beauty of its own and many special flowers. The sweet-smelling *Daphne odora*, which originally came from China, is in many of our gardens and the delightful scent permeates the air.

The *Daphne* generally prefers cool, humus-rich, and well-drained soil—it doesn't like to be constantly wet. A light pruning by picking the flowers will both prevent the plant from becoming woody and enhance your home with its fragrance.

Once established, the plant needs to be well mulched and the roots should not be disturbed, but given the right growing conditions they will last a long time and develop into large shrubs.

Another plant to enhance the garden in winter is one recommended by Michael Bligh in his April talk—*Chimonanthus praecox* or 'Winter Sweet'. If it isn't pruned it can grow to three metres high and three metres wide, but you can keep it to the shape you want by careful pruning. All it requires is a well-drained, sunny site to flourish.

Its name: *Chimonanthus* means 'winter flowered', and *praecox* means 'early'—it flowers early in the season and its little lemon bells last for months. The perfume is intoxicating too and one small sprig will fill a whole room with its scent.



A sprig of Chimonanthus praecox

What's on in June

3 June (Monday) 1.30 pm: Club meeting at Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley Street, Bowral. Guest speaker is Stuart Read: *Spanish gardens: shade, shade and a sense of mystery*.

Stuart is the Heritage Officer (Landscape Specialist), NSW Office of Environment & Heritage, Premier's Department. In 2005 Stuart won an overseas fellowship from the Pratt Foundation/International Specialised Skills Institute to travel through Spain in order to study the management of change in historic and new parks and gardens. In 2010 he led a three-week tour of Spanish gardens for the Members of the Historic Houses Trust of NSW.

10 June (Monday) 10.30 am: Coffee and Pruning demonstration by Phil Maher at Plants Plus, Braemar.

19 June (Wednesday) 10.30 am: Morning tea and gallery visit to Sturt Craft Centre (corner of Range Road and Waverley Parade, Mittagong)—the exhibition on show will be 'Parallels' by Barbara Rogers—contemporary textiles.

Theme for the month: Bulbs

What's on in July

1 July (Monday) 1.30 pm: Club meeting at Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley Street, Bowral. Guest speaker will be the ABC's *Gardening Australia* Angus Stewart. His topic is *Composting and worm farms*.

20 July (Saturday): 9.45 am to 2.15 pm: Highlands Garden Society Winter Seminar at the Uniting Church Hall, Corner of Boolwey and Bendooley Streets, Bowral. RSVP Friday 12 July. Cost \$25 per person including morning tea and lunch.

Speakers: Simon Rickard on 'Designing a herbaceous border' and 'Heirloom vegetables'; Paul Tyerman on 'Rare bulbs'.

22 July (Monday) 10.30 am: Coffee morning at The Post, Moss Vale.

29 July (Monday) 10.30 am: Morning tea and Garden Visit to be arranged.

Theme for the month: Hellebores

Berrima Remembrance Driveway Grove



Valerie Davey posing with the Bowral Garden Club tree
(photo Marilyn Gleeson)

Marilyn Gleeson and Valerie Davey attended the Zone Friendship and Arbour Day (organised by the Robertson Garden Club) at the Berrima Remembrance Drive Grove, Old Hume Highway, on Wednesday 8 May. The Bowral Garden Club donated a Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*), which Marilyn bought from Mt Murray nursery. It was a pity that more members weren't able to attend on the day but it is worth going to look at the grove when you next visit Berrima. Thanks to Marilyn for organising our contribution and for her representation on the day.

Gardening then and now

It struck me the other day how infrequently gardeners appear in literature, plays and the like. Leafing through the Bard's *Richard II** (as you do!) eventually I came across an aside from the main drama marked 'Enter a gardener and two servants'. Realizing I needed to double my staff, I read on.

The gardener was concerned about his crop of apricots. 'Go, bind thou up yond dangling apricocks, which, like unruly children make their sire stoop with oppression of their prodigal weight. Give some supportance to the bending twigs. Go then, and like an executioner cut off the heads of too-fast-growing sprays that look too lofty in our commonwealth. All must be even in our government.' (He must have been a socialist gardener!)

He then attends to 'the noisesome weeds'. A lovely word which I must substitute for the one I generally use for weeds, which I'm sure would survive a nuclear exchange. The gardener is concerned that weeds are 'without profit' and 'suck the soil's fertility from wholesome flowers'.

The first servant (a bit of a Bolshevik) questions why they should 'keep law and form and due proportion' in their model garden while the rest of the country has been let go by the government—'full of weeds, the flower beds choked, fruit tree unpruned, hedges ruined, knots disordered and herbs swarming with caterpillars'. Sounds familiar?

The gardener moans that if only their King had followed good gardening practice, he would not be at risk of losing his crown. 'Superfluous branches we lop away, that bearing boughs may live'—(an economist gardener!)

He also points out the practice, then, of wounding the bark of fruit trees 'lest being over proud in sap and blood with too much richness it confound itself.' (I'm not sure how this would translate into political terms today but the political messages over six centuries do perhaps have an element of similarity.)

The gardener's conclusion on the politico/gardening scene as he saw it? 'Black tidings—depressed he is already, and deposed tis doubt he will be' (this proved to be correct—Richard II was deposed by his cousin Bolingbroke, who became Henry IV).

- *This was not the Richard (III) whose remains were recently found under a car park in Leicester in England. (Can you imagine what a parking ticket he must have built up since 1400?)*

Keith Bailey

Muriel's Musings

It started at 8°C and warmed up to 11°C—the night before wasn't too flash either—as my premonition was fulfilled. At Woolworths on Thursday I inquired if the hot-water bottles had come in? 'NO, not yet,' they said. On Friday night when I went to bed, clutching my hottie to my chest, it occurred to me that my hottie was feeling hotter 'n wetter than usual—Yes you've guessed it—VALE 'Cuddle-me'. I hope I can find another 'Hug-me' very soon.

We have had some sunny warm days of late—perfect for gardening and I've made the most of them. One evening, post Johnnie Walker and pre the resulting 'Nanna Nap', I had several good ideas for the front garden makeover. So next morning, as soon as I had finished my wakeup cup of coffee, I was out and into the garden. First, I dug up and re-located a rose bush to a sunnier place. (Roses like six to eight hours of sunshine.) Next, I moved an *Aucuba japonica* 'Variegata' 'Gold Dust' to where it can spread out and form a windbreak against the chill winter winds from the South-West.

Then the real work began—I had two fairly large cement pots to be moved to a more prominent position. To do this I had to lay them on their side and roll them. They tend to go in a semi circle—so far this way and then so far that way, and the only way to manage them is to bend over, head down and tail up while walking slowly backwards towards the chosen location. Of course, you must be listening all the while for passing cars—should you hear one coming you immediately stand up and give them a friendly wave—can't have them thinking I'm having a spasm or something.

I finally reached the new location and heaved each one of the pots into position, filled them with fresh potting mix and planted up the blue violas and pink Sweet Williams (those miniature ones I moaned about last year have self-seeded big time). I will go to the nursery and buy some punnets of white primulas to finish off the colour scheme. By mid-day I was pretty much feeling 'flat battery' and called it a day. There's still the three Russell lupins and six white foxgloves that are growing on in plastic pots while I decide where I'm going to plant

them. Maybe I need to have another Johnnie Walker moment.

The Golden Anniversary celebration at Milton Park in April was superb—I'm still basking in the afterglow of it. Being me, I couldn't help myself so I dressed up with all the bling I could lay my hands on—thinking that I may or may not be there for our Diamond anniversary! But as Mrs Aeneas Gunn, the writer of *We of the Never Never*, wrote

WHEN THE HEART IS HAPPY
IT FORGETS TO GROW OLD.

Muriel Stuart

From the Patch:

Broad Beans (*Vicia faba*)

While it seems an eternity to get a crop from your Broad Beans the wait is definitely worth it. Broad Beans (or otherwise known as Faba beans) are one of the few crops which are truly seasonal and will only appear for sale in late winter through to mid-spring. However, you can always grow your own.

Like most leguminous crops, Broad Beans are a great soil improver and will fix atmospheric nitrogen into the soil—consequently very useful in your vegetable garden crop rotation. Broad Beans should be planted from mid-April to June so that they can grow through winter to begin cropping late August and throughout most of spring. It is best to stagger your planting to extend the cropping period. Plant at three-weekly intervals, however do not plant beyond June as the later you plant, the lower will be the yield.

Plant the beans in a sunny open position with some wind protection. Prepare your soil well with ample applications of organic matter such as cow manure and an application of lime or dolomite if the soil is acidic. Plant the beans in rows 3cm deep and 100-150 cm apart. Plant multiple rows as the densely planted rows allow the plants to support one another.

The tall fully-grown plants will benefit from support so it is worthwhile installing stakes and a network of string or twine as the plants grow. Quite often unsupported Broad Beans will wind up as collapsed heap of tangled mouldy leaves.

Broad Bean Trivia

The Broad Bean is one of the most ancient beans and is probably a native to the Mediterranean northern Africa. In Roman times it was cultivated to provide a rich source of protein in the late winter when other food sources were often depleted.

They are rich in vitamins A and C, iron and potassium as well as a good source of L-dopa the precursor for Dopamine (the feel good chemical). They have been used as natural alternative to Viagra!!

Broad Bean Cultivars

There are many Broad Bean cultivars including:

- 'Aquadulce' - heirloom variety with a nutty flavour and ripening early. Pods are 150cm long with an average of 5 seeds and the plants grow 1m high. Good for windy areas.
- 'Scarlet Cambridge' - an old English variety with scarlet/purple seeds. Young pods can be cooked whole.

- 'Coles Dwarf' - a heavily cropping variety with good wind firmness. Grows to 1.5metres and is one of the earliest to mature.
- 'Crimson Flowering' - ornamental crimson flowers set this variety apart. Grows to 1m tall and is early maturing

Other things to plant

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, Onion, Parsley, Snow Peas, Spinach, Turnips and Swedes.

A Vegetable Thought

'An addiction to gardening is not all bad when you consider all the other choices in life.'

Cora Lea Bell

Chris Webb (*Garden addict*)

Organic Pest Control

Diseases in the garden are often a signal for gardeners to use a chemical, such as a fungicide to get rid of powdery mildew. But chemicals often cause other problems - and can affect beneficial micro-organisms in the soil, and kill pollinators or other beneficial insects.

Obviously pests and diseases need to be controlled. But there are alternatives to chemicals, which are safe for pets, wildlife and children. Many ingredients are everyday products found in most kitchens and include milk, coffee, bicarbonate of soda, vegetable oils, detergent and white vinegar.

Fungicides work best as a preventative—not a cure. A milk fungicide, which has been proven to work on plants within the cucumber family (cucurbits) and begonias, can be made by mixing one part milk with 10 parts water. Stir well and it's ready for use. The objective of spraying is to cover every part of the plant, both sides of the leaves and coat the stems. Research in South Australia has proven this mixture is also effective in controlling mildew on grapevines. If you use organic milk it contains all the antibiotic qualities necessary to make it work. But keep to the recipe as research has shown too much milk in the solution will encourage sooty mould.

An organic fungicide, which is particularly useful on soft leaf vegetables, is 2 litres of water, a drop of vegetable oil (*which helps to fix the spray to the leaf when it is dried*); a drop of detergent which assists in spreading the mix over the leaf and the active ingredient of bicarbonate of soda—add two teaspoons per litre. The bicarbonate of soda makes the leaf surface alkaline inhibiting the germination of fungal spores. Use on tomatoes and Chinese celery. This spray has been found to be effective on powdery mildew, rust and black spot on roses. Some gardeners replace the oil with a tablespoon of fish emulsion which has a little oil in it but more importantly it contains beneficial bacteria that have antifungal properties which the plant absorbs making it healthier and more disease resistant.

Algae ruins paintwork and if it grows on footpaths they become slippery and dangerous. To make an organic algae killer, mix one part vinegar with three parts water and spray the mixture on the algae. The acid in the vinegar kills the algae. If chlorine bleach is used to eradicate algae and it touches the soil it damages plant

roots and seedlings. When it combines with organic matter it forms chloramines, which are highly toxic.

A mix of 10 parts water and one part strong caffeine-rich coffee is a great slug and snail killer. Spray over the foliage of your plants and surrounding soil surface where slugs and snails might crawl. Alternatively sprinkle cheap instant coffee or coffee grounds in a circle around your seedlings or the border of your garden. Snails absorb the coffee through their skin and the caffeine kills them. Coffee grounds spread over the surface of soil or potting mix have proved effective in killing mealy bugs and scale that overwinter in the soil.

As coffee grounds break down they add a little nitrogen to the soil as well as other minor elements that promote growth. Being slightly acidic they make great mulch for acid-loving plants such as blueberry, camellias and azaleas. They won't alter the soil pH unless you use commercial quantities. Worms love coffee grounds so they can be safely added to worm farms and the micro-organisms that break down the coffee grounds, change the pH level from acidic to neutral.

Aphids, lace bugs, bronze orange bugs, whitefly and scale (*on ferns*) can be removed with a simple soap spray. Combine 2 parts water with 2 teaspoons of dishwashing liquid (*or 5-10 g of pure soap*) in a spray bottle. Give the mixture a good shake and spray all over the insects 3-4 times every 5 days to eliminate big infestations. Apply late in the day to avoid leaf burn.

Homemade white oil is effective in controlling scale, mites, aphids, soft skinned grubs and citrus leaf minor. Mix a cup of ordinary cooking oil with ¼ cup of dishwashing liquid and give a good shake—you will see it turn white and that is your white oil concentrate. Use one tablespoon per litre of water—it is important to maintain this rate as too much oil will cause leaf burn. Mix well before and during use ensuring you cover the under surface of the leaves. Avoid using in very hot weather as it can burn foliage.

Many organic gardeners find molasses useful to repel leaf chewers like caterpillars. Dilute 1 tablespoon of molasses (*available from Bowral Co-op*) in a litre of warm water, add a few drops of liquid soap and let it cool before spraying on foliage regularly.

Molasses is also an effective deterrent to root knot nematodes that attack plants like tomatoes causing wilt. Dissolve 1 litre of molasses in 4 litres of warm water and allow too cool before drenching the soil.

Caterpillars, aphids and ants are reluctant to feed on plants that have been sprayed with chilli. Puree a handful of chilli with 1 litre of water and add a squirt of detergent. Wear gloves when handling the chilli and be careful not to allow the chilli to contact eyes.

An effective fruit fly trap can be made by combining a ¼ teaspoon of vegemite with a cup of water. Pour into a plastic bottle after making some holes in the side and hang in trees neighbouring the one you want to protect. Fruit flies enter through the holes and drown in the water. You need to hang a lot of traps to maximise the impact and it is important to empty and replace the traps weekly.

Using non-toxic controls such as those described can keep your plants healthy while maintaining the biodiversity in your garden, and minimising risk to the gardener and to children and pets.

Ray Bradley (first published in the HGS Bulletin)

Japanese gardens in Springtime



Rikugien Garden in Tokyo

I can't resist showing you a photo or two from our recent trip to Japan. We visited 15 gardens, most of which were absolutely stunning. Although we missed the Cherry Blossom time (April is quite cold in Japan and too lovely a month in the Southern Highlands to be away!), the Azaleas are in bloom in early May and the soft new leaves on all the trees enhance every garden.

Rikugien (六義園) is often considered Tokyo's most beautiful Japanese garden. It was built around 1700 for the 5th Tokugawa Shogun.



Katsura Imperial Villa Garden in Kyoto

When we were in Kyoto we managed to get permission to visit the garden at Katsura Imperial Villa (桂離宮, Katsura Rikyū), which is one of the most beautiful gardens we have ever visited. The villa and garden in their present form were completed in 1645 as the residence for the Katsura Family, members the Imperial family. So many photo opportunities and so many beautiful sights – a fantastic holiday!

The Editor

Minutes of General Meeting 6 May 2013

Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley St. Bowral

Present: 41 members **Visitors:** 1

Apologies: Miriam Denton, Wendy Gamble, Robert Bailey, Shonagh Moore, Kay Lawson,

President Meg Probyn opened the meeting at 1.35pm and expressed great pleasure in welcoming all especially new members and a visitor new to the area attending her first meeting. The meeting would take a slightly different format. The AGM would proceed after the

business meeting, followed by gardeners' question time before afternoon tea.

Minutes of the April 8th meeting were taken as read and accepted. Moved: Noelene Bailey; seconded Lorraine Stott.

Correspondence in:

- Flyers: Galston Open Gardens, Condobolin Garden Festival;
- Information: Highland Garden Society Newsletter, Hellebore Catalogue, GCA Garden Magazine;
- Thank you cards from Diana Squires and Muriel Stuart;
- Seven membership renewals and one resignation.

Correspondence out:

- Letters of appreciation to Michael Bligh and Jo Lees.
- Letters including the donations to Centennial Bush Care, SHBG Committee and Moss Vale High School.

Treasurers Report:

Pam Bailey moved that the records for the Financial Year ending 30 April 2013 be accepted as follows: Income: \$6383, Expenditure: \$5303, Balance: \$1079. Balance carried forward from 2011/12: \$5153. The balance to be brought forward to 2013/14: \$ 6232.92. Seconded: Clive Probyn. The motion was carried.

General Business:

- A reminder that membership fees are now due.
- Wednesday 8th is the day of the Berrima Picnic. Marilyn has purchased a Pin Oak from Mt Murray as the club donation to the Remembrance Drive. Marilyn also has some pots of rosemary and would encourage more donations if they are available.
- The celebration lunch was enjoyed by all and thank you to everyone for their attendance.
- The Baptist Church Hall has been investigated as a possibility for meetings in the future. The Hall has been inspected and is beautiful and modern with all amenities, but there is a problem with parking. Keith Bailey moved that a decision be made at the next meeting when people have had a time to consider this possibility. Seconded: Jo Lees. Motion carried.
- The trip to Canberra is still being planned and will probably cost \$25. Please put your name down and friends would be welcome.
- Open Gardens for the SHBG raised over \$50,000 and we have been fortunate to have had a donation of plants as a result which are for sale today.
- Thursday 9th there will be a talk on Sasanqua Camellias at Mittagong Garden Centre.

Show and Tell: The wombat has at last been sighted in Clive and Meg's garden—the large hole being the only visible evidence in past years.

Exhibition Lucky Draw: Drawn by Valerie Davey and won by Marilyn Gleeson. **Lucky Door Prize:** Drawn by Meg Probyn and won by Kay Fintan. The meeting closed at 2.00pm for the AGM.

Question Time

Following the AGM a very interesting question and answer session took place with discussion on a variety of horticultural problems. Topics ranged from White

Curl Grubs, misshapen carrots, azalea lace bug, aphids, caterpillars and many other pests and diseases affecting our gardens. Members, who had shared the same problems, suggested solutions that had worked in their own gardens—including organic and non-organic methods. This proved very informative and of great benefit to all.

Marilyn then gave a talk on the many plants for sale on the trading table, advising on their growth habits and the most suitable positions in the garden.

The session closed at 2.45pm for afternoon tea.

The next meeting will be on Monday 3rd June when the speaker will be Stuart Reed on the topic of Spanish Gardens.

**Minutes of Annual General Meeting:
6 May 2013**

Minutes of the previous AGM (2012): The minutes were circulated in the June 2012 Newsletter and tabled at the meeting. There were no amendments and were taken as read and approved unanimously.

Presentation of the President's Report: The report was presented by the President Meg Probyn and the motion to accept the President's Report was carried.

The Treasurer's report: Pam Bailey moved that the records for the Financial Year ending 30 April 2013 be accepted as follows: Income: \$6383, Expenditure: \$5303, Balance: \$1079. Balance carried forward from 2011/12: \$5153. The balance to be brought forward to 2013/14 is \$ 6232.92. Seconded: Clive Probyn. The motion was carried.

Election of the New Committee: The President stood aside and the Returning Officer, Keith Bailey, took the chair. The names of the nominees and their positions were read out and additional nominations from the floor were asked for. None was forthcoming.

Names of the 2013-2014 committee and their positions were elected as follows:

President: Meg Probyn
 Vice-President: Pam Bailey
 Secretary: Jo Lees
 Treasurer: Noelene Bailey
 Committee members: Pat Keen, Michael Launders, Catherine Mah, Eric Paananen, Lorraine Richardson, Janice Scott, Anne Stegman, Barbara Wilson
 Afternoon Tea Hosts: Margaret Buckland, Wendy Gamble, Glenys Lilliendal, Doreen Plumridge

The meeting closed at 2.15 pm.

Management Committee		
President:	Meg Probyn	4871 3134
Vice-President:	Pam Bailey	4869 5117
Secretary:	Jo Lees	4861 2594
Treasurer:	Noelene Bailey	4862 3741
General Members:		
Pat Keen, Michael Launders, Catherine Mah, Eric Paananen, Lorraine Richardson, Janice Scott, Anne Stegman, Barbara Wilson		
Afternoon Tea Hosts:		
Glenys Lilliendal, Margaret Buckland, Wendy Gamble, Doreen Plumridge		

Website: bowralgardenclub.com