

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

NEWSLETTER APRIL 2017



Friendship through Gardening

For your diary April

10 April (Monday) 2.00pm: Club Meeting: Speaker Jill Cockram "Successful Composting and Soil Improvement Strategies": and Esther Landells "Recycle and Waste Management"

For your diary May

8 May (Monday) 2.00pm: Club Meeting: speaker Lyn Esdaile "Some Modern French Gardens"

15 May (Monday) Day Trip by train to Wendy Whiteley's garden Lavender Bay

Theme for the month: Autumn



From the President

I was delighted to recently receive an email from the Wollondilly Garden Club informing us that with our donation they have been able to purchase five trees, *Nyssa Sylvatica*, Purple Plum *Prunus*, Manchurian Pear, Flowering Pink Apricot and Chinese Tallow tree, which have been planted by the Council's horticulturist team. Their club will donate a similar amount of money to purchase more trees and erect two small plaques to commemorate the occasion. You may recall the club gave this donation after Picton suffered the devastating flood in June 2016.

As we have had sixteen new members join us this year, I'd like to take this opportunity to inform new members & remind others of a few housekeeping requirements. When attending our meetings please ensure you register at the Welcome Desk and if bringing visitors we ask them to sign in the book to ensure we have an accurate list of attendees. Our Insurance broker recommends clubs maintain a record of attendees at meetings and outings. Your cooperation in this matter is most appreciated.

Members are encouraged to bring a plate to share for afternoon tea and if not able to do so, to please give a gold coin at the Welcome Desk. This money is then donated to local charities as decided by the club each year. The Trading Table always welcomes cuttings, pot plants, preserves, bulbs or other produce that members can purchase for a very small amount. If you have something

you would like to share, bring it in for the "Show & Tell" table. Please remember to collect your items before going home.

A Reminder that the Autumn Town and Country Open Garden Weekend is on 22nd & 23rd April to raise money for the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens. Six gardens are open and in addition you have the opportunity to buy plants, including "rare, unusual and hard-to-find" plants, from the Plant Fair at the SHBG site.

Happy Gardening

Anne Curvers.

From the Editor

I do apologise for this late edition of our newsletter I have been out of the country with a fellow member Glenys Lilliendal. We went to Japan for cherry blossom time and on the last couple of days we saw the sakura in full bloom on a particularly special day in Japan when people picnic under the trees in full blossom. It is a favourite day for weddings and we saw both traditional and western brides. We did see quite a lot of interesting towns and cities, however, Japan really needs to be dressed up in blossom as it is quite grey otherwise. I believe it is beautiful in autumn. One superb day for us was when the clouds left the modest maid, Mount Fuji and we saw it on a sunny bright day.

Back home, and we noticed in the 2 weeks we were away the leaves were beginning to change colour. I expected to see limp begonias which had delighted me all summer, however, there they were glowing and beautiful under the first flowers of the camellias. What a grand place we live in, beauty everywhere.

Carole Scott

Garden tips for March

We've never seen so many mushrooms, toadstools and fungi of all sorts in our garden—even growing up the tree trunks. After the very dry start to the year, the rains came as a relief but then we began to think 'enough is enough'. Fortunately the damage hasn't been as bad as in other years—a few fallen branches from the sodden trees—but the paths haven't washed away. The dams in the paddock at the bottom of the garden are full to overflowing. Now the sun is shining and the plants are looking healthy and happy.

How delightful it is to walk into the garden and suddenly see a flower you had completely forgotten about. On a wet, misty morning I wandered down the pathway and rediscovered the bright yellow *Sternbergia lutea*. It has many different names—the winter daffodil, autumn daffodil, lily-of-the-field, or yellow autumn crocus. It's in the family of *Amaryllidaceae* and whatever you like to call it, it's a beautiful flower, crocus-like but of the purest yellow to gladden the heart on a rainy miserable day. The tiny cyclamen are blooming too in their shady nooks, and the *Salvias* and *Plectranthus* are looking gorgeous.

In March I planted some *Colchicum autumnale* (Meadow Saffron), which are also referred erroneously as 'autumn crocus' or 'naked lady'. They were on sale at the Southern

Highlands Botanic Gardens working bee (held on the first Tuesday of every month). A cormous perennial with erect, lance-shaped leaves, each little corm produces one to six goblet-shaped, lavender flowers in the autumn. Unfortunately it was so stormy after I planted them the flowers flopped down as soon as they appeared. (Clive decided he didn't like them at all so I hope next year they don't disappoint him!) Most of the species found in Australian gardens originate from Turkey or Greece.

The true Crocuses are in the Iris family and current chromosome research on the species has shown that there aren't ninety species as previously thought (and stated in Wikipedia), but nearly two hundred. They originate from Portugal and Morocco to western China. Most species are winter- or spring-flowering but there are a few that bloom in the autumn. I have been busy planting more! It seems so easy to order bulbs—a hundred of this and a hundred of that—but the planting has taken me ages because I first have to weed and prepare the borders. Only a few left to plant, including a large bag of tulips.

On a rare hot dry day in March, when our grandsons were playing yet another game of cricket on the lawn, they came rushing in to tell us that they had seen a snake with a yellow belly. When the adults went to investigate, they found two smallish snakes enjoying the heat emanating from a brick wall in our seating area. The Highland Copperhead *Austrelaps ramayi* is one of six species of snakes known to occur on Mount Gibraltar and although it is supposed to be the most common snake on the Gib we had never seen any in our garden before—in fact, the only snake we have seen (and rarely) is the Red-bellied Blacksnake *Pseudechis porphyriacus* and we haven't seen any for about four years. They must be around but keep out of sight.

The snakes feed on skinks and frogs—both are in great supply in our garden. Smaller than the lowland species, the Highland Copperheads rarely exceed a metre and tend to slither away very quickly if disturbed. Remember that snakes are a protected species and if you are worried call the snake-catcher, Ray McGibbon on 0400 734 225—he can also be contacted on the Reptile, Rescue and Relocations Southern Highlands Facebook page. He will catch and relocate them safely for you.

This is one of the busiest months in the garden and the following are just a sample of all the jobs you need to do!

Perennials: If they have finished flowering remove the yellowing stems and leaves. If the plant has grown too large for the area, now is the time to divide. You can tell whether they are too large by the centre (the crown) of the plant pushing itself upwards. This happens very clearly with sedums. One method is to dig out the whole clump and select the rooted offsets from the outside of the clump and discard the rest. Or simply put your spade through the plant and divide it up into sections. If it is dry weather, you will need to water the new and old plants to ensure they become well established. A handful of blood and bone will help give them a lift. I enjoyed Phil's description of feeding plants at Mittagong Garden Centre: 'Seasol is like a gin and tonic—a pre-dinner drink—and then you want the main course—fertiliser like Organic Life.' We've been using Dyno-Fert—cheaper but looks and smells the same.

Lawns: I loved the sign spotted in China: "Do not disturb. Tiny grass is dreaming." Now is the time to fertilise your lawn. It may need a bit of loving care and attention if there have been cricket matches on it like ours. Where it is compacted, aerate by plunging your garden fork as deep as you can get it and give it a bit of a 'rock and roll'. If you

do this all over it will allow the air and moisture to refresh the lawn and stimulate new growth. You can then top dress or just fertilise (best at this time of year with a product that is high in phosphorus and potassium but low in nitrogen).

Camellias: The sasanqua are already in flower. If the buds are very crowded (especially on your *Camellia japonica*) thin them to reduce bud drop and to encourage larger blooms. Don't forget these plants love lots of fertiliser.

Hellebores: Some people like to remove all the old hellebore leaves but I would rather clean up the plants by just removing the damaged ones. If you look under the leaves you should find plenty of little seedlings—these can be carefully moved to the areas where you want them to spread.

Roses: Keep deadheading your roses to encourage repeat flowering. Watch out for any sap-sucking aphids and squish them with your fingers or spray with a soapy spray. If there is mildew or black spot on any leaves, remove and bag them for the red-lidded bin.

Prune: It's an excellent time to prune and shape your abelias and hebes. Remove any deadwood and thin the remaining growth to about a third.

Plant: Now is the time to finish planting all the spring-flowering bulbs, and the winter- and spring-flowering annuals. The Plant Fair on the weekend of 22-23 April at the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens is a must for a visit—it will be open at 9am until 4pm both days. They have a wonderful array of top quality plants for sale—I shall be going especially for the salvias.

Happy Easter and happy gardening!

Meg Probyn

From the Patch

Cauliflower *Brassica oleracea* var. botrytis

Now is the time to think about growing those winter vegetables which provide the essence of hearty winter comfort food, in particular cauliflower. Although not easy to grow the experience of picking a plump white cauliflower, fresh from the garden, is something not to be missed.

Cauliflowers should be planted as seedlings from April to August in cool areas, in a bright sunny area. They are gross feeders and require well enriched free draining soil which should be prepared well in advance. They also require a pH between 6.5 and 7 so a side application of lime or dolomite maybe be necessary.

Sow the seedlings at least 400mm apart which will provide ample room for the plants and heads to expand. Water regularly and be aware they are very susceptible to stress and will fail if conditions become extreme. There is probably no need to fertilise during the growing period as long as the soil has been well prepared and enriched.

The cauliflower head (curd) develops very quickly and should be harvested earlier rather than later as once the head begins to open the flavour and colour diminishes. A handy hint to stop bleaching of the curd is to pick a leaf and place it over the curd where it is tucked into the surrounding upright leaves. When harvesting it is advisable to make a sharp cut with a knife or secateurs just below the curd, leaving the plant to grow, and you may be rewarded with small side curds developing.

Pests & Diseases

The enemy of cauliflower grower are the caterpillars of the Cabbage White butterfly, these can easily decimate a crop in a few days. Chemical control is difficult and limited to

various dusts but perhaps the best control is by covering the plants with insect screen covered canopies.

Slugs and snails can also be a problem but are more easily controlled by conventional methods.

Club rot, a soil borne fungi, can be a problem in warmer months but is best controlled by following a sensible crop rotation program.

Cauliflower Trivia

The cauliflower originated in the eastern end of the Mediterranean in the 6th Century. The Moors introduced it to Spain in the 12th century and from here it was introduced to Italy in the late 15th century and France in the 16th century.

Cauliflower is low in fat and carbohydrates and high in dietary fibre, Vitamin C and Folate

It contains phytochemicals which may be beneficial to human health, Sulphoraphane which may help protect from Prostate cancer and Glucosinolates which may help with DNA repair and may be beneficial in slowing cancer cell development.

Cauliflower Cultivars

'Cauliflower Green Macerata' A green coloured curd variety

'Mini' A dwarf cultivar

'Sicily Purple' A purple curd variety

'Quickheart' Pure white curd, good flavour

'All Year Round' Large white heads, holds well

Other things to plant in April

Now is also the time to plant a huge number of Winter vegetables including

Beetroot, Broad Beans, Broccoli, Brussel Spouts, Cabbage, Chicory, Chives, Carrots, Fennel, Garlic, Kohlrabi, Leek, Lettuce, Mustard Greens, Onion, Parsley, Parsnips, Swedes, Peas, Spinach and Turnips

A Vegetable Thought

'Cauliflower is nothing but a cabbage with a college education.'

- Mark Twain-

Ghris Webb

Muriel's Musings

While I'm penning these musings I'm also watching the drama of the terrorist attack outside the Houses of Parliament in London and I'm remembering the time in 1994 when I stood & listened to Big Ben strike the hour of 5 as my nephew Russel & I made our way to Westminster Abbey to attend the Evensong service. I have "A sense of Belonging to London " as my Hugonot Ancestors were Silk thread weavers who wove the velvet for the Coronation robes for one of the King Georges . They lived in a building in Silver St near the Roman Rd (sadly wiped out during the London blitz) within the sound of Bow Bells ___ which made them true Cockneys. Understandably I don't feel very amusing just now But as my Editor is waiting for my musings A,S,A,P I'm going to do an archiological dig into my memory & see what I can come up with. AH!!

Finally, a grey woollies placky bag has sparked a memory & ive remembered the times when. as a little girl at Sutton Forest during those awful days of the Depression in the early 1930,s we would buy our groceries at the village shop. I can still picture the scene as Mr Wickens put the grocery order together___ pages of newspaper would be spread on the counter & it was an art form the way Norman stacked the items 1st the calico bag of Sydney brand flour , then the items

graduating in size rose up to a pyramid as the children looked on expectantly waiting to see if he hadn't forgotten to pack in the little white paper bag of boiled lollies. Then the paper wrapping would be drawn together & the parcel would be tied with string that dangled down from a large ball of string attached to the ceiling . We were always anxious as Mr Wickens wrapped the string around his finger to break the string that he didn't cut his finger off!! we used to practice breaking pieces of string but never succeeded as we reached our pain barrier long before the string was likely to snap. The calico Sydney brand flour bags were put to further use as they would be boiled up in the Monday morning copper washing & spread out on the grass overnight in the hope that the frost would fade the image of the cruiser HMAS Sydney__ I don't think that there are many of those little village girls still with us for me to embarrass them but those calico bags used to be made up as knickers for us to wear. In those hard times nothing was thrown away if a second way of using it could be found. Those of us children of the depression years have those times indelibly imprinted in our minds.

It is a sad but true thought that we need the bad times so that we can appreciate the good times

Muriel Stuart

BOWRAL GARDEN CLUB INC.

Minutes of General Meeting 13 March 2017

Uniting Church Hall, Bendooley Street, Bowral

Present: 74 Members, 10 Visitors

Apologies; Maryann Hewitt, Judith Lewis, Carole Smith, Ursula Hopkins, Elizabeth Meredith, Camilla Williams, Helen Fisher, Mary Leigh, Patti Reeve.

President Anne Curvers opened the meeting at 2pm and welcomed everyone present especially new members and guests. Our member Elaine Lye who is currently President of the Mosman Garden Club, introduced our guest speaker Libby Cameron (Vice President of the same club) whose talk was titled "The Past, the Present and the Future of the Royal Botanic Gardens." Libby enlightened us on the history of Lady Macquarie's Chair, the Garden Palace 1879 Exhibition Centre which in 1882 went up in flames; the Spring Walk; the new Rose Garden (1993) in the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney; Mt Tomah guided walks; the first Scientific Institution for seeds and specimens and mention of Sir Joseph Banks Banksia seed, still in existence and collected in 1770. The Plant Bank at Mount Annan is open 11 am - 2 pm each day and the Botanic Gardens Sydney have tours and walks every day. Libby encouraged us to take advantage of these great tours. We were thoroughly entertained by the many other interesting facts and figures accompanied by Libby's power point presentation. Margaret Parkinson presented Libby with a token of our appreciation.

MINUTES of the February meeting were printed in the March newsletter. Anne moved that the minutes of 13th February be accepted as a true record of the meeting. Proposed - Mary Mowbray. Seconded - Glenys Lilliendal. Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE IN:

The Secretary, Lorraine Richardson read out the correspondence which was also placed on the notice board as follows:

SHBG Plant Fair 22 & 23 April 2017.

Garden Clubs of Australia – Insurance matters and advised that members up to 100 years of age will now be covered.

My Open Gardens – Chinnoiserie open from 8th April 2017.

My Open Garden – Upcoming Events for 2017.

Moss Vale Pony Club Fund Raising though selling bulbs online.

Flyer – Floral display 18 March 2017 Jamberoo.

TREASURER'S REPORT: In the absence of our Treasurer, Maryann Hewitt, Noelene Bailey kindly stepped up to read out the comprehensive report which was placed on the notice board. Total of all funds currently available is \$11,345.66.

Proposed Noelene Bailey and Seconded by Margaret Buckland. Carried.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

Tours: Ray Bradley our tours co-ordinator advised we have three trips coming up. On 15th May a day trip by train to Wendy Whiteley's garden, Lavender Bay; 24th July a coach trip to Eryldene Camellia Garden, Gordon, Sydney; 4th September a coach trip to the Rookwood Cemetery Heritage Walk & Auburn Botanic Gardens and a two night coach trip on 16&18 October to Nimmitabel's stunning private gardens. Ray asked if you would please let him know and he will put your name down.

Membership – Membership Secretary, Lorraine Richardson advised we now have 151 members.

Committee - We are happy to advise that **Deb Evered** has agreed to join the committee and take on the role of Hon. Secretary. Thank you Deb.

The Membership Secretary role is now available to a member who would like to be involved and on the committee. Please contact Lorraine for further information on 4862 2677.

NEW MEMBERS:

Last month 10 new members joined our club. Muriel Stuart our highly esteemed Hon. Member presented the following with a welcome gift: Rae Gambrill, Catherine Job, Annette Lane, Diana Taylor & Diana Rankin.

TRADING TABLE: Anne thanked the members who kindly brought books and plants. Your efforts are very much appreciated.

SHOW & TELL: Anne thanked everyone who brought flowers for the S&T table.

Q&A: Lois Morrison asked why won't her Crepe Myrtle flower. Meg Probyn said her Crepe Myrtle took seven years to flower and suggested adding potassum, sulphate of potash to the soil.

LUCKY DOOR PRIZE: Won by Liz Madsen. Anne thanked Doreen Plumridge for providing the beautiful Fuchsia for the prize.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Honorary Member, Shonagh Moore, had great success at the recent Robertson Show winning the following awards. Picked onions 1st prize; bread & butter pickles 2nd prize; Blackberry jam 1st prize; 3 different marmales 1st prize. All ingredients, except the onions, came from Shonagh & Frank's garden.

Jonquil Temple reminded us to cut the tops of agapanthas and put them in a separate bag and place them in the red bin or place them in a black plastic bag, throw them behind the shed and they will disintegrate over a year.

Jan Scott reminded members that she, on behalf of the View Club, is holding a garden party at her home on 29th March with the proceeds to go to underprivileged children. All welcome.

The meeting closed at 3.05 pm

NEXT MEETING: Monday 10th April 2017 at 2.00 pm – Uniting Church Hall, Bendooley Street, Bowral.

GUEST SPEAKER: Jill Cockram “Successful Composting and Soil Improvement Strategies.”



Social Liaison: Jan Scott

Please contact Jan Scott at the Welcome Desk or by mobile phone 0418215036 to notify the Club of a member's change of circumstance and welfare. Thank you, Anne.

President:	Anne Curvers	48613061
Vice-President:	Janice Scott	
Secretary/		
Membership:	Lorraine Richardson	48622677
Treasurer:	Maryann Hewitt	
Newsletter Editor:	Carole Scott	48624766
Public Officer:	Eric Paananen	
Committee:	Kristine Gow, Jan Scott, Judith Lewis Catherine Mah, Noelene Bailey, Margaret Parkinson, Ray Bradley, Judy White, Wendy Gamble, Glenys Lilliendal,	



This could be the reason the cherry blossoms were so late



Website: bowralgardenclub.com