

# 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 MARCH 2017



*Friendship through Gardening*

### For your diary April

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

**22-23 April (Saturday – Sunday)** Town and Country Open Garden Weekend to raise money for the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens.

### For your diary May

**8 May (Monday) 2.00pm:** Club Meeting: Speaker Lynne Esdaile: *"Some Modern French Gardens"*.

**15 May (Monday)** Train Day Trip to visit Wendy Whiteley's garden Lavender Bay, Sydney. Booking essential.

### Theme for the month: last of summer



### From the President

What a wonderful start to the year. We had 81 members and 15 visitors attend our February meeting to listen to a very humorous presentation by Audrey Tabner. This was then followed by 45 members driving to Avoca for a delightful garden visit at Les & Elaine Musgrave's home. Thank you for coming, it was great to see so many of you there and to hear so many positive comments.

Skipping ahead to June, when it is our AGM. This year it is likely 4 members will be stepping down from the committee. So I'm asking you to consider whether you would like to join the committee and become part of the team that oversees and organises the Club's various

activities. Lorraine, will be staying on the committee, but resigning as Secretary. We have decided to split some tasks and revert to having both an Honorary Secretary and a Membership Secretary. We are delighted that a member has expressed interest in being the Honorary Secretary but we are still looking for a Membership Secretary to process the renewal of memberships, new members and the corresponding updating of the data base.

Also my three year term as President finishes in June 2018 and it would be ideal if members who would consider taking over as President, join the committee in June this year to experience how the present committee operates over the ensuing year.

Please give these requests serious consideration. I'm giving you all plenty of notice. This club has given me, and I know will continue to give, much joy, friendship as well as valuable knowledge about gardening in the Highlands. Membership of the club has greatly contributed to me settling into the area and it becoming my home. This is a sentiment I have heard from others and would therefore encourage new members to get involved.

Please contact me if you would like any information about the various positions or to discuss any facet of the committee's numerous activities. I'm sure there are opportunities to marry you with your interests.

Happy gardening

*Anne Curvers.*

### From the Editor

At last proper Southern Highlands weather! Warm days light rain (except for the one day when the hail was the size of ping pong balls). This year I have changed from my usual soft colours and have delighted in a very French style multi bright coloured plants in one of the annuals gardens. This has contrasted brilliantly with the vivid colours of the tuberous begonias. I have enjoyed looking out on the garden having a cup of tea. I do hope your gardens have given you as much pleasure as mine to me. Please send photos of your gardens and let us know why you have designed them the way you have.



*Carole Scott*

## Garden tips for March

It's been so hot and dry this summer—it's a relief to be welcoming autumn. When it was too hot to garden, I spent a few enjoyable hours wading through catalogues, choosing a range of bulbs for various areas of the garden. The *Lambley Nursery Bulb Catalogue* is probably my favourite, with wonderful descriptions of their stock. It is hard to resist *Crocus chrysanthus* 'Blue Pearl' when it's described as 'a swooningly beautiful crocus with pale blue inner petals, a yellow throat, and lavender blue outer petals.' Definitely on the 'To-Buy List'! The *Narcissus* 'Pipit' is another irresistible bulb—an astonishing variety with each 35cm tall stem producing two or three sparkling flowers, lemon-yellow on opening but soon the cup and the base of the petals turn white giving a unique two-tone effect. A good doer in the garden.' That's on my shopping list. I like to read the catalogue and then go on to the webpage to tick the ones I want—keeping an eye on the total cost in the cart to see if I've overspent my limit. Of course, I've always overspent, so I then read the descriptions again and decide which ones, if any, I can delete—so much pleasure imagining the bulbs flowering in the borders. Over the last eight years we have planted hundreds of bulbs—and most of them have thrived. We don't lift any of our bulbs—even the tulips—and they seem to prosper.

Before you plant, make sure the soil has been fortified with organic matter—compost and fertiliser. If your soil is acidic, add a little ground limestone when planting. Bulbs usually come with supplier's instructions and these should be read carefully, especially if you are not certain about the depth at which you should be planting. Once the bulb is in its hole, firm the soil over it and water lightly. I like to put five or so bulbs in a shallow circle (especially if I have a large number to plant) and then cover over and water. It is important to keep the area weeded so that when the bulbs start to emerge you can enjoy the pleasure of seeing them grow. If the weather is hot and dry, wait for some rain to fall—surely we will get some this autumn. Most bulbs are planted between March and April, though tulips in this area can be planted in the first week of May.

There is so much advice about the depth one should plant bulbs but the rule of thumb is as follows: for **large bulbs** plant 12-15 cm deep and 10-15 cm apart and for **small bulbs** plant 5 cm deep and space 5-10 cm apart. If your soil is very heavy clay, then bulbs would probably prefer to be planted closer to the surface where they won't be waterlogged and then rot. Plant more deeply on light soils but shallowly on heavy clayey soil.

**Annuals and perennials:** I am determined this year to remember to plant some sweet peas (the tradition says by St Patrick's Day, 17 March). This is my favourite time of year for planting annuals—pansies, violas and polyanthus set among the bulbs are a delight. And I won't forget to plant some of the bulbs in pots (with a few annuals). It also helps you remember where those special bulbs are if you surround them by a circle of a particular annual.

When the soil is still warm in early autumn, it's a good time to move, divide or transplant perennials. Water the plant with Seasol during the week before moving, and when you have dug up the plant, soak it in a bucket of water for an hour before replanting. Make sure the holes you dig are large enough and that you have prepared the soil with plenty of organic matter.

**Lawns:** This is an excellent time of year to get your lawns into shape. Hopefully it will have rained because you

really need to fertilise. First, rake vigorously to get all the dead grass off the lawn. Using your fork, or hollow-tined fork, aerate the lawn by making holes all over and then fill with sharp sand or old potting mix to improve the drainage. If there are any damaged areas, add sandy loam and level the lawn; fertilise with a well-balanced fertiliser and water in if there is no rain. Sow grass seed in any poor areas. Make sure the blades on the mower are raised and continue to mow the lawn this month to keep it looking trim.

**Deadhead** your agapanthus if you've not already done so. Don't forget to deadhead the roses, dahlias and any old spikes in the herbaceous border. Prune geraniums hard if you have not already done so. Check plants for scale and spray with white oil.

This month is one of the best months for weeding and if your garden beds are like ours, there's an awful lot to do. If you can mulch as soon as your border is weed-free, that's even better. We have started to use the compost from the kitchen waste compost bins and the number of worms is truly amazing. The plants benefit so much from the nutrient rich fermented waste.

Plan ahead and if you are thinking of planting trees in winter, walk round your neighbourhood to see what other people are growing. It's an opportunity to check on the autumn colours of particular trees and also their shapes and sizes.

Happy gardening!

Meg Probyn

## 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 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 though 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 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 a source 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' 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 in March/April**

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)

### **Muriel's Musings**

WELL the computer gremlins surely made a hash of my February Musings --some of you may even have thought that I had been putting more than sugar 'n cream in my coffee. So before starting on the March Musings will you indulge me & let me finish the February Musings. I wrote that we tithed our fruit n vegetables as follows.

A 1/3 for us

B 1/3 for the birds, bugs n native fauna

C 1/3 for friends n neighbours

That is if the B's don't scoff the lot.

Last year our Apricot tree was loaded with fruit but this year there was only 1 juicy Apricot so we cut it in half & shared it. Apparently the Bees were picnicking on someone else's fruit tree & 1 little straggler Bee dropped off & pollinated our 1 blossom as he made his way to the picnic.

### **MARCH MUSINGS.**

This is the last of the stories about the idealistic time when we lived in the house at the top of Oxley Hill from 1980 - 83. It was a very dry summer during 83. Early morning and it is an awful day already. I was awakened at 5.30 by a couple of persistent little bush flies and the wind had already begun to gather strength, gusting in from the N W, so much so that I had to get out of bed to close the window & so while I was up collected the fly swat & went back to bed and lay in ambush for those two pesky flies - soon settled their fate. I was just drifting off to sleep when Smiley, who sleeps on her beanbag in the laundry, scratched at the door and asked if she could go out please? Stirling the all silver cat wanted out too Tia, our German short haired pointer and little Arnie, the Foxie/Australian terrier or something, who belonged to the home farm at Burradoo but ran away every afternoon so he could spend the night with us, were both fast asleep on their bean bags so I decided to let the sleeping dogs lie. It was somewhat optimistic of me to go back to my ever diminishing 1/2 - 1/4 - 1/8 of the bed. Neil was foxing that he was asleep - but he wasn't fooling me - because I

could see that he was taking up more of the bed each time I left it.

Anyway, by now I was wide awake and as Smiley & Stirling wanted to be let back in, I decided I was parched n needed a cup of tea. That done, and the wind was fairly roaring across Oxley Hill. So I put my Jillaroo farm gear on & began feeding the animals. Ben saw me & gave a friendly whinny so I gave him several bats of meadow hay in the stable. Then fed & watered the hens, Claude the Rhode Island rooster and "the boys" (8 young cockerel's who got lucky & were not quite ready for Christmas but should be prime for Easter providing that the foxes don't figure out the combination of the latch on the gate to the chicken yard & the door to the roosting shed). Jeremy, the huge Santa Gertruda had taken his ladies & their calves down onto the flat where it was more sheltered - they were standing with their backsides to the wind. Sir Hans Hesyen would approve - Have you noticed that all the sheep or cattle in his magnificent paintings are always walking away.

### **Thought for the day**

*Every now & then some beautiful sight or sound touches you & stays with you.*

*At present I am enjoying the early morning & evening songs of the English Blackbirds that are singing, sight unseen, in the safety of the conifers in the garden across the road.*

*Muriel Stuart*

### **Garden Tags**

For those Garden Club Members who are not aware, I introduce Garden Tags. This is a free app available on iPad, iPhone and Android. A program for Plant Inspiration, Garden Management and Flower Recognition.

One joins up by creating a profile which includes name and a nickname and if you wish a short description of where you garden or your garden interests. Then you can choose to follow other members (see their posts) and make posts of your own in the form of pictures. There are two sections - one for plant identification and one for general gardening which may include photos of something of interest/splendour in your garden or a problem you may have whereby others garden taggers will offer advice/solutions.

I find this an enjoyable extension to my gardening interests and hope others will also.

*Helen Fisher*

### **Visit to Les Musgrave's garden**







The General Meeting followed when the Minutes of the last meeting were approved by Noelene Bailey seconded Raymond Bradley.

Correspondence in: Garden Clubs of Australia; NSW Floral Art demonstrations and competition 10-11 February; The Rose society 18 February 1.30 CWA Rooms Mittagong; Australian Garden History Jazz at Prittlewell 19 February; Marulan Coaches; Garden History of Australia magazines; card from Muriel Stuart; email from Julie of Picton.

**Treasurer's Report**

General Trading account \$6412.82, less presented cheques \$1677.41 total funds available \$4735.41

Bonus Savings a/c \$5696.82 t/fer from T/A \$60.00 interest \$9.24 total \$5766.06

Bonus a/c No2 \$1216.00 interest 00.10 total \$1216.10

Total funds available: \$11,717.57

Proposed Maryann seconded Margaret-Anne

The lucky door prize was won by Jenny Glasden.

The meeting closed and Anne reminded members the next meeting will be held on 13 March.



*Celia Finnimore*

**BOWRAL GARDEN CLUB INC.**

**BGC Minutes of meeting 13 February 2017**

Attendance: 81 members: 15 Visitors: 12 Apologies

Anne opened the meeting at 2.00pm welcomed the members back for the first meeting of the year and gave a warm welcome to all visitors.

She then introduced Yetta Wernick, who represented Rainbow Southern highlands, a charity for assisting children with disabilities living in the Highlands. Maryann presented Yetta with a cheque for \$500.00 to assist in the work of the charity.

Anne then introduced Audrey Tabner who gave an entertaining talk about Fuchsias.

Shandra thanked our speaker and presented her with a gift.







Audrey Tabner  
 Photos by Celia Finnimore



**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.



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

*Website: [bowralgardenclub.com](http://bowralgardenclub.com)*