

# 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 MAY 2018



*Friendship through Gardening*

### What's on in May

**14 May (Monday) 2.00pm:** Club Meeting: Speaker: Chris Thompson *"The Garden at Harper's Mansion: creating a garden to enhance a heritage property"*

**21 May (Monday) 10.30am:** Visit to Berrima Cottage Nursery 28 Old Hume Hwy, Berrima. Morning Tea at Magpie Café Berrima.

### What's on in June

**4 June (Monday) 2.00pm: Club Meeting and AGM at the Mittagong Community Centre, Queen Street, Mittagong.**

Speaker: C. Webb. *"The Art of Trough Gardens"*

**Membership renewals due.**

**Please note: this is the first Monday of the month as the second Monday is the Queen's Birthday Public Holiday.**

**18 June (Monday)** Coach Day Trip to Canberra to visit the National Arboretum and the National Botanic Gardens. Booking essential.

### Theme for the month autumn colours



*Autumn in Patty Mouhtouris' garden*

### From the President

What a delightful morning I have had going to Retford Park with 35 members and learning about pruning and pruning equipment. We had a demonstration as well as a guided stroll through the garden with commentary on how to prune the various hedges and plants. It is a marvellous garden the high hedges giving us respite from the wind. We were very grateful to Rick Shepherd and his team for giving of their time, sharing their knowledge and providing us with morning tea.

I would like to remind you all, that the renewal of **membership** to BGC is due at our AGM meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> June. The fee will be kept at \$30 and can be paid to Lorraine Richardson, our Membership Secretary, at the May and June meetings as well as by direct debit and post. Details are on the form which is attached with this newsletter. Also coming up in June is the bus trip to Canberra to visit the **National Arboretum and the**

**National Botanic Gardens.** A flyer with all the details will be distributed soon. The trip will be on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June and an early response would be appreciated to indicate if we have sufficient numbers for this winter bus trip. I'm eager to see the changes (five new developments) to the Arboretum since our last visit, take a walk in the Fern Gully in the Botanic Gardens and warm up with a delicious bowl of hot soup for lunch. So I'm hoping there will be at least 34 hardy souls to join me.

In response to questions about our involvement in the **Tulip Parade** this year.....yes, we will be involved. It is on the Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> September at 2.30pm. The nominated theme and colour is "Creating Memories" and blue, respectively. Would anyone interested in being involved, whether by walking in the parade or helping to create the float please come to the front of the hall after our May meeting so we can get an indication of the number of members participating and arrange a planning meeting. If you are an apology for the May meeting and want to be involved, please contact me. It is a lot of fun and an enjoyable way for our club to support a well-known local community event. Can I ask everyone to pot rather than throw out their Forget-Me-Not plants as we are planning to create a carpet of Forget-Me-Nots as the foundation of the float.

I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> May and hearing from Chris Thompson from Harper's Mansion on "Creating a garden to enhance a heritage property".

Happy gardening  
*Anne Curvers.*

### From the Editor

I apologise to Meg for the misleading heading on her garden tips last month. It was, of course, tips for April gardening. I do hope you were able to understand the heading was in error and used the excellent tips prepared for you.

*Carole Scott*

### Garden tips for May

**Dry, dry weather . . .** It seems incredible that we've had so little rain in April—half the average April rainfall. Will May be wet? It was timely that we had the irrigation system installed in our garden—five zones already completed—and now I want another. The computer is equipped for six so I've had discussions with our installer to come back with more pipes. The last thing we have added to the system is a rain gauge so if it rains the sensors will automatically turn off the water. If you are thinking about having an irrigation system installed we can really recommend the Bowral Co-op (02 4861 8400).

During this dry autumn weather, our neighbourhood wallaby has discovered that he loves the leaves on the fuchsias and the new growth on one particular protea. We can't blame rabbits as the eaten parts are too far off the ground and anyway the foxes in the paddock are looking very sleek and quite fat. I am happy to share our garden

produce with all the animals! I do resent the mindless damage of the cockatoos though.

It's not only been dry but also warm so many of the maples haven't taken on their beautiful autumnal shades of yellow, gold and red. The earliest tree to change colour in our garden is always the *Nyssa sylvatica*. Stunning again this year.

**Composting:** Autumn is an excellent time to start composting if you haven't already managed to organise a compost bin or heap. If your garden is small you will probably manage with just one compost bin to collect all your kitchen waste and weeds. You will need at least two bins for a medium size garden—but for a large garden you will need an area where you can make a structure (timber, wire or brick) to house all your garden waste adequately. Two bins (or a divided structure) are better than one—this allows you to organise compost at different stages. We have a large two-section compost heap in addition to two green bins, in which we put all the kitchen waste (except any meat but including crushed eggshells, tea leaves, coffee grounds and peelings). These bins are full of worms—of great interest to the littlest grandchildren. What delicious compost they produce and relatively quickly. The large compost heaps take longer to rot down but we add animal manure and lime (occasionally). Now is the time to add any fallen leaves though not all as they nourish the garden beds where they lie. But we like to rake them off the lawns—I use the 'ROYAL WE' but it's not a job I ever do!

**Hedges:** Clive has been out trimming the hedges with his new (and favourite) small electric (batteries) trimmer. He finds it easy to handle and very quick. Now is the time to ensure that the hedges look neat and compact for winter.

**Hellebores:** This is the time of year you can tidy up the hellebores again and move (or divide) *Helleborus x hybridus*. Dig deeply around the clumps to avoid chopping off the deep roots. Then divide them with a sharp spade or large knife. The seedlings of the taller species (*H. argutifolia*, *H. foetidus*, *H. x sternii*) can be moved around at this time too—we have a new area where I want to plant some so I shall be happily looking under the clumps for any babies I can find. This month and next we will be out with the bags of fertiliser—the hellebores love a good feed.

**Perennials:** Many of our summer perennials have finished flowering and can be cut back. Large clumps can be either be divided this month or left until spring. The autumn flowering plants can be left to add colour to your garden until winter.

**Bulbs:** Now is the time for planting lily and tulip bulbs (and any others you have discovered in your cupboards or fridge). Check the ones you've already bought—if any are sprouting, plant immediately otherwise you can take your time to plant during the month. If you forget where you've put your bulbs in the garden, it's quite a good idea to plant the bulbs surrounded with a few annuals to remind you where they are. I love the tiny annuals and find it hard to resist a punnet of pansies or alyssum. Last week I bought a ten-plant container of purple pansies—perfect, I thought, for the daffodil bed. When I took out the first little plant, I discovered it had virtually no roots at all. So, buyer beware!

**Lawns:** Thoroughly rake (with a stiff wire rake) and sweep to break any mats of grass and moss. A light top dressing of coarse sand and compost may be given if the

lawn is uneven but apply very thinly so that at least half of the grass leaf blades show through the soil. Apply a mixed fertiliser at the recommended rate (read the packet instructions).

Neville Passmore (in *Yates Garden Guide*, p. 474) writes:

*Thatch is the enemy of the dedicated lawn cultivator because it makes a spongy surface, invites turf diseases and shows up as brown marks within a day of mowing. This thatch consists of a layer of brown-coloured grass stems and roots between the soil and the green foliage. Couch lawns are the main sites of thatch but it can be present in buffalo kikuyu lawns too. Verticutting is the traditional means of removing this layer and this has now become an annual job not only for turf professionals but for home gardeners as well. Recent work, however, has shown that using organic fertilisers, together with fish- and kelp-based plant tonics, seems to encourage soil-borne microbes to go to work and eat up the thatch. In effect these organic materials promote a natural composting process.*

**Plants suitable for your garden this month include:** ageratum, alyssum, calendula, Californian poppy, cineraria, cyclamen, coreopsis, cornflower, delphinium, hollyhock, marigolds, pansy, polyanthus, poppy, primula, snapdragon, statice, stock, sweet peas, viola and wallflowers.

**Vegetables:** Sow or plant vegetables such as broad beans, beetroot, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage, English spinach, lettuce, onions, spring onions, peas, potatoes (in frost free areas) radish, rhubarb, shallots, silver beet.

Happy gardening!

Meg Probyn

## Muriel's Musings

2018 isn't working out the way I had anticipated it would—and I don't recall breaking any mirrors harming any Orientals, walking under a ladder or opening an umbrella indoors (there hasn't been enough rain about to need an umbrella) but in January my so dear, 16yr old Shah was sun sleeping in his favourite garden bed when an off leash passing dog came crashing thru the garden & attacked him. Fortunately Shah escaped injury but he now won't venture out doors. February 10th we had a violent thunderstorm & a bolt of lightning struck the NBN node, modem, whatever at the top end of the street & knocked out our computers & cooked our phones all along the street\_ it took 16 days to get our computers back & working \_sort of\_ & the new handset phones we all had to buy took THIRTY TWO DAYS to be activated. That dear friends is why I missed the Musings deadline for March. April up until the 16th was pretty ordinary we were still looking out the windows looking for signs of the beautiful autumn colouring coming into our trees & all the passing clouds were empties. On the Monday morning I woke up feeling a bit off & short of breath & when the nurse arrived to do my BP reading she rang for the Ambulance & despite my protests I was trundled off to emergency. I stopped protesting when they wrapped me in a soft warm blanket & hooked me up to the Ding Dong heart monitor that showed that as my heart was beating occasionally so there was another reason for my breathing difficulty an X-ray showed up a chest infection & I was allowed to return home with a packet

of high octane anti-biotics that took a few days to work but once they kicked in I was well on my way to recovery. But wait there's more; the new local phone book for 2018-19 was delivered & I can now empathise with Mark Twain when he read his premature obituary for the directory people have knocked me off the list. With the Anzac Day commemorations still in my mind may I pass on a story that my Dad used to tell to me?? In 1923 Burslems, the monumental masons in Tunbridge Wells, were given the contract to make the headstones for the War Graves in France & my Dad was a supervisor & had to see that the Portland stone (from Dorset) wasn't chipped or cracked & that the wording on the headstones was correct. The poignant wording on 2 of the many thousands of headstones remained with him forever \_ one heartbroken Scottish mother wrote "You were all the world to me Jamie" & equally distraught parents had the words "The Rose that climbed our garden wall has bloomed the other side" inscribed on the gravestone of their son. I believe those headstones are in the Ypres cemetery.

### Visit to Retford Park

On an extremely windy but sunny Monday April morning, 35 garden lovers braved the weather to attend a Topiary pruning demonstration by Head Gardener Rick Shepherd and a garden tour by Jordan, Rick's assistant. Anyone who has visited Retford Park cannot help but be impressed by the huge array of precisely trimmed "blobs" situated in the long garden bed in front of the magnificent two storey historic home of the late James Fairfax. Rick made it look easy as he wielded long handled shears across the bush which then became a work of art. Scott, Jordan and Rick treated us to a delicious morning tea as we sat out of the wind to admire the sweeping views of the property.

*Lorraine Richardson*



*Photos Mary Mowbray*





Photos Lorraine Richardson

## BOWRAL GARDEN CLUB INC.

Minutes of General Meeting 9 April 2018  
Mittagong Community Centre, Queen St Mittagong  
Present: 70 Members & 4 Visitors

Apologies: 28 members

President Anne Curvers opened the meeting around 2pm and apologised for the last minute change of time and venue due to another funeral

Deb Evered introduced our Guest Speaker this month, Geoff Charlewood, better known to locals as "Curly" assisted by his wife Margie. Curly is an industrial blacksmith by trade and sold his first wheelbarrow of compost aged 7. He gave an entertaining talk on his life, composting in general and how we need to put passion back into gardening. He brought along an array of ornaments he forges including obelisks, hose directors, bush retainers, wall brackets, hooks, bird baths and feeders. Curly also makes house signs.

The website is [www.curlyscompostmanure.com](http://www.curlyscompostmanure.com)

Anne presented Curly with a thank you gift.

**Minutes:** The March Meeting Minutes were printed in the April Newsletter. Anne moved that the minutes of 12 March 2018 be accepted as a true record of the meeting.  
Seconded: Noelene Bailey

Correspondence In:

Garden Clubs of Australia – Annual Insurance papers & Registration Papers

Flyer advertising Leura Garden Festival Sep 29 – Oct 1 & Oct 5 – 7 (with a reminder of the Bowral Club's Coach trip to the Blue Mountains Botanic Gardens in August)

Flyer advertising an Open Day at Retford Park May 5 – 6 with the House & Gardens being opened

My Open Garden – List of Open Gardens on the notice board

Flyer advertising Robertson Open Gardens & Spring Fair 13 – 14 October

Correspondence about our Website costs

Email from Illawarra Grevillea Park, celebrating 25 years anniversary, on May 6 – 7 & 13 – 14

Correspondence Out: None

**Treasurer's Report:** Maryann Hewitt read the financial report for March 2018 and asked that it be accepted.

Balance of General Trading as at 1/3/18 - \$2952:62, Deposits For March - \$1119:90 Withdrawals - \$378:00. Account Balance 31 March 2018 - \$3644:52 Bonus Saver Acc as at 1/3/18 - \$8023:16, Deposits & Interest - \$60:00 + \$12:98. Account Balance 31 March 2018 - \$8096:14. Total funds of both accounts - \$11740:66. Seconded – Maureen Lynch

**General Business:**

Welcome Gift to New Members: New members Sue Melov, Yvonne Parker, Monica Waples and Kate Mitchell were presented with a plant by Muriel Stuart

Lucky Door Prize: Mount Murray Nursery has kindly donated lucky door prizes again, this month beautiful Cyclamens

Q & A: Many questions for guest speaker Curly done informally

**Tulip Time Float:** Bob Bailey asked if there would be a float entered by the Club for this year's Parade. A vote of interest was taken and a working party will be set up to co-ordinate a float. This year's theme is 'Creating Memories'

Next Meeting: Monday May 14 2018 at 2pm Uniting Church Hall, Bendooley St Bowral

Guest Speaker: Chris Thompson – 'The Garden at Harper's Mansion'



Curly and Margie

### 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.

<b>President:</b>	Anne Curvers	4861 3061
<b>Vice-President:</b>	Janice Scott	
<b>Secretary:</b>	Deb Evered	48621407
<b>Membership:</b>	Lorraine Richardson	4862 2677
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Maryann Hewitt	
<b>Newsletter Editor:</b>	Carole Scott	
<b>Public Officer:</b>	Maryann Hewitt	
<b>Committee:</b>	Kristine Gow, Judith Lewis, Catherine Mah, Glenys Lilliendal, Diedre White	

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