

# Bowral Garden Club Inc.

(Established in 1963)

Affiliated with The Garden Clubs of Australia Inc.

Patrons: Chris & Charlotte Webb OAM



*Friendship through Gardening*

## May 2020 Newsletter

### Important Notice:

The Committee has decided, unanimously, to cancel/postpone all Garden Club activities for the foreseeable future.

All garden visits and Club events are now cancelled.

We will continue to monitor the Highlands situation, but considering the general age of members, it's a no-brainer.

### From the President

**T**oday I planted 134 bulbs, not many compared with some gardens but they are mine and they will multiply. As I dug the holes my mind wandered as it does when gardening. Planting bulbs is a lot like life at the moment, an exercise in faith and hope. Shoved in the dark for a couple or few months and then allowed out in Spring to enjoy warmth and sunshine. As we tolerate our isolation, some actually not tolerating but thoroughly enjoying, we look forward to the day we are allowed out again to participate in our club's activities. Well that's what we hope anyway!

**M**aryann kindly took this beautiful arrangement of native flowers from our Club to the Bowral Memorial for Anzac Day. Thank you Maryann.



**S**eeing we haven't been able to travel or visit other gardens, I have included an article on my visit to Exbury Gardens in Hampshire in 2017. I hope you enjoy your virtual travel and visit to the UK.

**S**adly, at this stage there is no plan to recommence our meetings, we'll just have to see how things go. But it would appear from emails I've received that there is a lot of gardening happening, so there's a plus. I'll continue with the interim chats while we're in isolation, so please keep the articles, recipes and pictures coming. Stay safe.

*Deb*



## From the Editor

Ah! -these beautiful Autumn days, just perfect for time in the garden. Have you noticed though when out in the front garden the number of new faces taking their dogs for walks or families enjoying a ride on bikes around the neighbourhood - staying at home is having its advantages. It reminds me of a 'Simpsons episode' (not that I'm a fan of The Simpsons but my son is – still!) that caught my eye some years ago. *Marge had protested about the amount of time kids were watching the 'Itchy & Scratchy' show. She succeeded in the protest having the show banned from TV – lo and behold kids were out in the fresh air playing with each other, climbing trees, riding bikes and generally enjoying being kids.*

Let's hope staying at home reminds everyone of the value of family time.

What happened with the rest of the Simpson's episode – well Marge was interviewed where she was asked (basically), 'what right did she have to impose her view on society'. Marge being the humanist she is realised she had no right and withdrew the protest – Itch & Scratchy came back on TV and kids abandoned the outdoors.



*Roz*

Newsletter articles can be emailed to:  
[secretary@bowralgardenclub.com](mailto:secretary@bowralgardenclub.com)

## Plant of the Month

### Perennial Salvias



Don't you just love the return in popularity of salvias.

Salvias are classified as annuals, biennials, perennials and herbaceous shrubs. They are rugged plants which grow equally well in rubbly clay or friable loam, providing they are well drained. There are over 500 species of Salvias from edible sages (*S. officinalis*) and small to large shrubs up to 3m high. There is a Salvia to suit any climate, season and garden style. Most Salvias show off their flowers best in spring through to autumn.

Plant salvias en-masse for a stunning display of colour in garden beds or use the smaller more compact varieties for pot displays around patios and entertainment areas. Most love a full sun position and well- drained soil.

Source: <https://www.aboutthegarden.com.au/how-to-grow-salvias-in-australia/>



## Muriel's Musings

**O**H! my dear friends - we didn't see this PANDAMONIUM coming, did we? As a little girl there were the Great Depression years and much of that is still emblazoned on my mind. Then there was the Second WW years and now this.....BUT we *MUST NOT* let it get us down. With our flowers, family and friendships we will overcome these trying times.

**A** few weeks ago, I was delighted to see a clump of yellow crocuses flowering beneath the apricot nectar rose bush and now I have 5 lavender blue colcheums opening. Though I'm most enchanted with the pink and white drifts of the little woodland cyclamen that seem to come up in places that I don't remember planting!! Goodness knows what goes on in the garden once the stars come out!!

**M**aybe there are Faeries in our garden, for anything with wings seems to live in it.



### My thought for the day is:

*When it is dark, you can see the stars.*



*Muriel*

## Garden Tips - Maryann Hewitt

**H**ow wonderful seeing so many glorious colours in our autumn leaves!! and more to come. I still have clematis in bloom, my hibiscus mouschatus are still flowering, the saffron has been and gone with some saffron reserved for cooking, the red runner beans are now cut back and the asparagus must surely soon dry off!! And tastiest of all are the raspberries - we have actually beaten the birds to them this year - the variety is Williamette and you can get 2 crops a season from that variety and it does put up with the cold (and I mean -10 degrees quite often) Despite the neighbours free range chooks, I do have some bulbs left in the front garden - mainly because they haven't come up yet. I am hoping that they are still there!!

**I**t is a good time now to start getting the garden soil ready for spring - yes, it will be here in no time at all!! When you empty the garden of this summer's vegies and flowers, turn the soil in clods rather than smooth it all over - allow the frost to settle on the soil - this tip was given to me many years ago by a gardener who had a really wonderful garden. In the next few weeks, plan what you are going to plant where and get the soil ready - do a ph test to make sure that this is suitable for what you want to grow. If you have to alter the ph, you have time to do it before early spring planting - easy to use and kits are available from Mt. Murray Nursery.



**I**t is a bit early for a solid pruning of most plants but as leaves of vine type plants die back, they can be put into the compost, along with weeds that do not have flowers or seed heads on them. Cover the compost heap with black plastic to keep the heat in which is necessary for the plant material to break down, strong plastic bags are good too; compost breaks down well if the bag/bin/heap is in the sun.



Frost tender plants need to be in shelter now - the next big frost will be here SOON, and don't forget your glazed and terra cotta pots - bubble wrap with two layers at least.

*If* you give your lawn a good feed now, it will look better and will survive the winter frosts well and be ready to burst back into life!!! Seamungus is a good and natural product from Neutrog and available at Mt. Murray Nursery and at Bunnings. Seamungus is not a plant fertilizer but a soil conditioner - it keeps the microbes, etc in the soil in good condition which in turn absorb nutrition from the soil and are there to feed your plant, along with the plant fertilizers you apply.

*So* do spend some time sitting in your garden in the sun, planning for spring - which will be here in no time!!!

*Maryann*

### My Garden – Sue Ciscato

*We* moved to the Southern Highlands in November 2017 into a brand-new home in the new estate of Nattai Ponds. The garden consisted of grass and hedge plants. We had numerous potted plants that came before us and lived in my daughter's backyard in Mittagong. Unfortunately, they were not very happy when it was time for them to come home. After repotting and giving them some much needed TLC, the majority are still alive and giving us much pleasure.

*We* live on a corner block and even though there is a footpath a lot of walkers with children and dogs took a



short cut across the front lawn, we decided to move the hedge plants and follow the footpath to give us a border. We were not happy with the look, too much green so we decided there needed to be colour in the garden replacing the hedge plants with 12 rose plants and removed the grass between them to make a garden along the front. Very happy with the result and have some beautiful roses including Just Joey, Coconut Ice, Happy Anniversary to name just a few. I also planted Gladiolus, had some magnificent blooms and the most beautiful colours.



*It* was then time to add some colour to the back yard, built a garden and planted a lot of the plants that had been in pots and crossed fingers.

*Now* have a

very pretty back yard with Chrysanthemums - rust, yellow and white, Kangaroo Paws - yellow and red, a beautiful purple salvia with velvet like flowers, petite carnations and wall flowers to name a few.

Quite a lot of these plants have come from the trading table, such a wonderful place to share



our plants.





*We* have recently made a shade house which I am hoping will protect my potted plants during the winter. It has

a wooden frame with shade cloth attached - very happy with the result. Also have a vegetable garden, not very productive at the moment as was built during our hot and dry weather so didn't bother to stock it as our 10,000-litre tank was also empty. Also have quite a few Orchids, one is in flower at the moment, not as impressive as I would like, the caterpillars attacked the flowers so only two remain. Didn't notice the spike until too late.

*Happy* gardening everybody, it is a wonderful pastime, especially with the beautiful weather we are enjoying at the moment. Stay safe everyone, until we can meet again.



*Sue*

### An Article of Interest

*I* found this article on Phalaenopsis orchids which aired on Gardening Australia on 27th March, 2020 interesting, mostly in regard to the cutting of spent flowers. An extract follows:

*Phalaenopsis* orchids are some of the easiest, and most rewarding plants you can have in a home.

*Phalaenopsis*

*Orchids, Moth Orchids, Phals – call them what you will, these stunners are hard to*



*resist when we see them sitting at the nursery or the supermarket, their delicate, vibrant blooms beckoning us to take them home. That is, until their blooms fade, fall off and you're left with a sad looking bare stem and a couple of leaves.... this is the point where most people give up, bin the lot and buy another*

### Cutting the Flower Spike

*With the right light, heat and humidity, your orchid should be set for another flush of flowers, but there are a couple of things we can do to help that process along. Phalaenopsis orchids can re-flower on the old stalk, so once the flowers have dropped, you have three options - leave the flower spike (or stem) intact, cut it back to a node, or remove it entirely.*

1. *If you leave the flower stem as it is, you may get a repeat flush of flowers, however they are generally smaller than the first blooms. The stems can also become somewhat inelegant and gangly over time if left.*
2. *Pruning the flower spike back to a node will almost always result in another bunch of brilliant blooms, often within 8 to 12 weeks. To do this, cut the stem, **leaving just two nodes remaining – the little brown lines below where the flowers were.** One of these nodes will become a new flower spike.*
3. *If the spike becomes withered, yellow or brown, it should be removed (by cutting off at the base of the plant) as this will not give you any more flowers. Removing the spent spike allows the plant to put energy into root development and growth.... likely resulting in a brand-new flower spike!*

Source:

<https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/orchid-revival/12096898>



#### **Welfare Officer**

Please contact Maryann Hewitt at the meeting or by mobile phone 0431717634 to notify the Club of a member's change of circumstance and welfare. Thank you

#### **Would you like to join the Committee!!**

The role of Honorary Secretary will be available from June 1, 2020. The Committee is looking for a member to join the team. No experience necessary but previous minute taking would be an advantage. Please contact Deb Evered if you are interested.

#### **From Australian Garden History Society, Southern Highlands Branch**

*Following on from our first email about the Collectors' Plant Marketplace....*

[collectorsplantmarketplace.com](http://collectorsplantmarketplace.com)

It seemed a little unclear on the website, if we could receive deliveries here in the Southern Highlands, so we have checked.

*Linda Ross has confirmed that she is concerned for peoples' health and the strict rules around going out.*

*Saying, this year they have decided not to do a delivery to a pickup location as it puts people at risk.*

*AGHS members will need to arrange for plants to be delivered to friends or family in Sydney at this time.*

*Next year it will be different. Linda apologises for any inconvenience but health is the priority.*

*Response has been fantastic and plants have been added during this week.*

*The last treasures go up today on the website and it closes on 14/4. Plenty of perennials still in the mix. Some lovely things.*

My apologies to all for any inconvenience, hopefully we still have friends in Sydney who are happy to care for our babies for a while.

4 days to go!

Take care and happy gardening.

Jenn McCormac

Secretary

Australian Garden History Society, Southern Highlands Branch

#### **Your Committee**

President:	Deb Evered	48621407
Vice-President:	Maryann Hewitt	0431717634
Secretary:	Rosalyn Mulligan	48713667
Treasurer:	Sue Ciscato	0448112321
Membership:	Sue Ciscato	0448112321
Public Officer:	Maryann Hewitt	0431717634
Welfare Officer	Maryann Hewitt	0431717634
Committee:	Elaine Lye, Glenys Lilliendal, Judith Lewis, Annette Lane, Ray Bradley	

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

**Newsletter Editor:** Rosalyn Mulligan



## EXBURY GARDENS

About an hours drive from Gosport is Exbury Gardens and Steam Train.

This is the home of The Rothschilds and the gardens were the inspiration of Lionel Nathan de Rothschild. He was a keen collector and hybridizer of Rhododendrons and Azaleas and this passion has been continued by his sons and grandsons to this very day. We've all heard of the Rothschild fortunes. Lionel and his elder son Edmund were described as "bankers by hobby and gardeners by profession"



*The House*



*The Garden in Spring*

It's a 200 acre garden with over 250 years of gardening history for all to enjoy. It specializes in Rhododendrons, but sadly we were too late for the main display. There were a few blooms left here and there, and whilst that was sad, it did not detract from a wonderful day out.



Instead, this is the time for Hydrangeas and they were plentiful and varied. I especially liked the cerise coloured ones which are not as common in Australia. The usual mop top, hydrangea macrophylla, variety were well represented as well as the oakleaf or quercifolia hydrangea. Beautiful.....



*Macrophylla*



*Oakleaf hydrangea*



The usual suspects were found sitting around spoiling the view, but Barnsley enjoyed himself and I enjoyed watching the sprinklers in action.

In Bowral we don't have water restrictions, so when the garden is done I'll be able to use my own sprinklers!



I don't think I'll be able to recreate this fantastic Laburnum picture though or this wisteria monstrosity...both past the flowering phase, but still impressive.



It is a garden for all seasons and good walks.

Again, it was very warm and

to walk amongst all the tall shady trees was soothing for the heart and mind.



If you walk far enough you can walk down to the river where important guests arrived on their private boats, Queen Victoria possibly was one of these eminent guests. I say possibly, because I don't know if she definitely arrived by boat, but she definitely did visit, as did many other members of the Royal Family, all and each of whom, planted a tree.

More inspiration....

