

# NEWSLETTER

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**F**riends,

It rained! You can't help but have noticed; it actually rained! Good steady, soaking drizzle for two days non-stop, with a little follow up showers.

You can tell that I am excited. For months now I have been moaning about how dry and unrewarding my garden has been, but within a few days the lawn has turned green again, the drooping plants have lifted their heads again, which in turn has also lifted my spirits. I spent last weekend dead heading, pruning out dead wood, raking leaves, composting and preparing to plant for spring. How great it feels to get dirt under my finger nails again. I have virtually been watching things grow and in a day or two I expect to rev up the mower again. What a drop of natural rain can do for a garden and, in my case, a gardener is phenomenal.

Actually this whole month has been full of excitement. We staged our Autumn Garden Show on 22<sup>nd</sup> March and once again you were able to stage an enormous number of quality exhibits, which was a surprise to all considering the weather prior to the show, and predictions that entry numbers

would be low. Well done to exhibitors and volunteers alike, who were able to present, what was described as a friendly and colourful show. Teamwork is what it is all about, and teamwork is something that we are good at.

Another highlight was our bus trip. John Mathie puts a lot of work into organising and making these trips not only interesting, but friendly and well run. Well done John. Not only did John organise a smooth trip, but even ordered the most perfect of weather just to top it all off. Those who were fortunate to attend will have to agree that the gardens visited were interesting, different from the norm, being Mediterranean in style and plant selection, and achievable by all. Not only were the gardens great, but where could you find more hospitable hosts, who not only made us feel welcome and comfortable in their gardens, but made sure that anybody who desired came away with a multitude of cuttings of their favourite plants from the garden.

Whilst our hanging basket did not take out a prize this year, I am sure that those of you who attended MIFGS would agree that there were some excellent baskets on display (about three hundred of them) and that ours held its own amongst them.



It is a tremendous task to organise this display, and Jennifer and Don Rickerby and committee must be congratulated on the many, many hours of work put in to bring it to fruition, and that is even before the staging of the baskets at the show.

Good gardening,  
Cheers, Bill.

## SHOW RAFFLE WINNERS

1st Prize - Tiered Garden - Orange Ticket A87 - John Mathie  
2nd Prize - Hot House - Orange Ticket C95 - Gerard Schoofs  
3rd Prize - Garden Products - Black Ticket C73 - Ken Beer  
4th Prize - Lemon Tree - Black Ticket C51 - Wendy Baird  
5th Prize - Vegetable Tray - Red Ticket B27 - Joe Dunstone

## WENG'S POEM

Trees and shrubs,  
Flowers and clubs,  
Gardeners and landscapers,  
Volunteers and visitors,  
Spring breeze from Hounslow,  
All ready for the Chelsea show,  
Lawns are clean and green,  
Hope to walk with the Queen.

Weng Lim

Recently Weng entered a poem competition run by Fleming's Nurseries. We have reprinted it here for all members to enjoy. Would you believe he was one of the top two winners in the competition.

## KNIPHOFIA LIMELIGHT



I am always excited about finding something new in the plants on offer at a nursery, and I was tickled pink to find Kniphofia Limelight at this year's MIFGS. We all know the Red Hot Poker, the common name, and I have seen it in red, orange and yellow, but this new variety is lime green and I think that it would look fantastic as a contrast grown with the other colours. What are your thoughts?

Flowers – Summer, strong stems of lime-yellow flowers.

Size – 60cm tall by 45 wide.

Position – Sun or part-shade.

## AUTUMN SHOW PHOTOS



## MEMBERS NEWS



**Happy Birthday Greetings to our members for April.**

John Mathie (turning 80!)

Joan McNair

Bill Saunders

Margaret Trewella

Best wishes to you all.

## APRIL IN THE GARDEN

At this time of the year it is all about harvesting Summer crops and preparing for Winter and Spring crops. Shortly the pumpkins will be ready to harvest but wait until the foliage dies down and the stems become quite dry if you are planning to keep them for storage. Always leave the stem intact and make sure there are no blemishes or marks on the skin. Carrots and parsnips can remain in the soil over Winter and will keep quite well but if they are early sown crops and are now about to run to seed they are better removed and put into the soup pot. I always sow my last crop of french beans in early February and they often have ideal weather in April for harvesting and nothing beats a tender crop of these nutritious legumes.

In the fruit garden the quinces are now ripe and as the possums are not around they can stay on the tree and be picked at leisure; a lot different to the stone fruit that needs to be picked all at once. Towards the end of the month is a good time to sow broad beans; these plants will grow over winter and as soon as the frosts are finished will start to set their crop.

I will be on the lookout for seed potatoes soon as although they can be more expensive than buying from dubious sources they are worth the extra cost in disease resistance and productivity.

Enjoy the Autumn garden.

Geoff May



## AUTUMN BUS TRIP

Autumn Bus Trip 6th April 2014. Barkers Creek - Castlemaine. 55 of us met at the Preston Town Hall, and boarded the coach leaving at 9 am. Fortunately it was a glorious 25 degree day. On our way playing 3 games of Bingo, with prizes.

We proceeded towards Kyneton where we had morning tea and delicious date scones made by Geoff and Hilary May Thank you!

Back on the coach to Barkers Creek to "Hedgehogs" Garden a lovely setting hosted by Margot and Morry, beautifully set out with many retaining walls built from Castlemaine stone and steel structures that they have created themselves, also many fruit trees and a vegetable garden. Members were also given cuttings.

Next it was down the road to "The Garden of Lixouri" another delightful rural property, the house and garden look out onto rolling hills and an established olive grove. The garden is terraced with stone walls overlooking a tranquil dam with water iris. We sat down and had our picnic lunch in front of the mud brick house with established grapevines and wisteria providing deep shade. Then, we were privileged to be graciously shown through Margaret and Max's artistic & tastefully furnished home, featuring amazing leadlight windows created by Margaret.

A hot cuppa was supplied by Margaret, and then we drew the raffles and the three winners of 2 hanging baskets and a plant were thrilled.

On to the coach again, stopping off at the Woodend Nursery to make a few purchases, then homeward bound, arriving at 5.30pm pleasantly tired – all happy and ready for the next trip in November!



I would like to thank our coach driver Gordon for his capable driving and pleasant manner.

Thank you to all members, friends and members of other garden clubs for making this such a happy bus trip, and also to Desiree & Pat for the eight lucky ticket prizes, and to Gavin for again being our great photographer.

Preston Garden Club would also like to thank Margot & Morry Rottem and Margaret & Max Beyers for giving us the opportunity to visit their beautiful and well established gardens, and for making us all so welcome.  
John Mathie

## COMING EVENTS

**April 26th & 27th**, Ferny Creek Horticultural Society Autumn Show. Saturday 12pm - 4.30pm, Sunday 10am - 4.30pm. Ferny Creek Horticultural Hall, Hilton Road, Sassafras. Entry \$5.00  
Enquires: 9755 1882

**May 2nd-4th**. Better Homes & Gardens Live, Melbourne Showgrounds. Epsom Road, Ascot Vale. Entrance fee will apply.

**May 3rd** 9am - 1pm. Australian Plant Society Melton & Bacchus Marsh, Annual Plant Sale. St Andrews Uniting Church Car Park Cnr Gisborne Road & Lederberg Street, Bacchus Marsh. Huge Native Plant Sale

**May 3rd & 4th**. The Growing Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne. Super Autumn Plant Sale. Saturday 10am - 4pm, Sunday 10am - 3pm.  
Enquiries: 9650 6398

**May 3rd & 4th**. Chrysanthemum Society of Victoria Annual Exhibition. Saturday 1pm - 4pm, Sunday 12pm - 4pm. Burwood Heights Uniting Church Community Hall, Cnr Burwood Highway and Blackburn Road.  
Entry \$3.00

**May 4th**. Australian Plant Society Yarra Yarra Group Native Plant Sale, 10am - 3pm. Eltham Local History Centre, Cnr Brougham Street & Main Street Eltham.  
Enquiries: 9439 7228

## MONTHLY COMPETITION

**May 28th**: Bowl of Floating Flowers. No More Than 6 Blooms

## MONTHLY MEETING

**May 28th**: Hybrids & Species Hellebores, Growing - Peter Leigh, Post Office Nursery Woodend



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