

NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Friends,
Once a month, sometime between our general meeting and committee meeting I try to get out and enjoy the natural beauty that this country has to offer. Most times it is only a day trip quite close to home, sometimes I wander further for a long weekend and occasionally as now, I might go for several days.

This month my report comes from Port Macquarie, at the mouth of the Hastings River on the N.S.W. Mid North Coast.

I timed my departure from Melbourne perfectly, leaving on Mothers' Day, the day that our Indian Summer gave way to wet and windy weather to arrive here to clear, blue skies, hardly a breeze and temperatures varying between 24C - 27C every day.

A delightful town situated between forests, rolling hills and the Tasman Sea, with modern facilities and shopping centres, Port Macquarie started out as a convict settlement. Captain Allman, convicts and guards first arrived in the bay at the mouth of the Hastings River in 1821. There are still a number of convict built buildings and other sites here to make you feel that those harsh beginnings of this beautiful,

relaxing place were not too far away. Although the courthouse 1869, and the Royal Hotel 1841 (rebuilt after a fire in 1886) overlook the Town Green (original landing site), my favourite historical site is St. Thomas' Church, built by convicts 1841. Built on a hill, it overlooks all of the area. The convicts were expected to attend church to help cleanse their souls, but were seated in boxed in pews with high sides at the rear of the church so that the good people of the settlement did not have to look at their miserable faces.

The Town Green also has a life size statue of Sir Edmund Barton seated on a bench overlooking the bay, which commemorates Australian Federation in 1901. Sir Edmund was the local M.P. here for the colony of N.S.W. And became Australia's first prime minister after Federation.

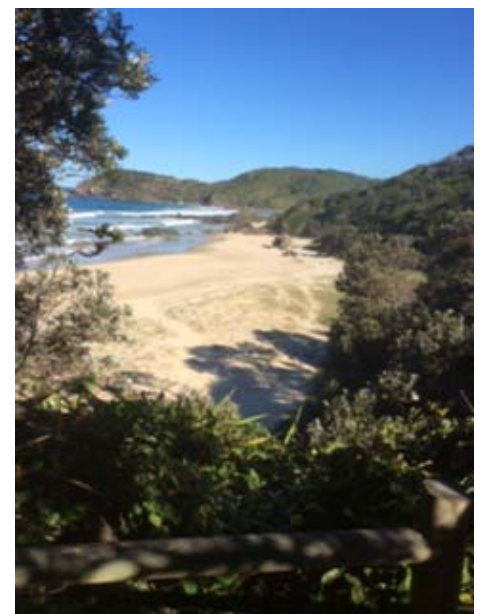
There are no less than ten beaches dotted along this rugged coastline within walking distance of the town centre, all with clear water and squeaky clean sand. Banksias, Melaleucas, Casuarinas, Eucalypts are just a few of the trees, which line the beaches, with mangroves and sledge lands in the river flats.

Yesterday I took a guided tour of the Sea Acres National Park, a small area of sub-tropical forest

wedged in a basin between the open forest of the surrounding hills and the typical coastal growth. A left over from the ancient days of the dinosaurs, it was predominately bangalow palms, strangler figs, elk horn and stag horn ferns, birds nest ferns and many more epiphytes, as well as many bushes and trees used by the local aborigines for food and medicinal purposes.

There is something special about the tranquility of the bush, but for now I can hear the waves calling. Got to grab the beach towel and run.

Bill.



NOVICE CHAMPION



The Novice Championship won by Weng Lim at The Chrysanthemum Society of Victoria's 2016 State Chrysanthemum Show April 30th - 1st May. Name of cultivates – Kokka, Ebino and Mt Shasta (white)

Weng is a member of our club and also an accredited Australian Horticultural Judges Association Judge.

Congratulations Weng!

MAY IN THE GARDEN

I have been busy harvesting and giving away a crop of jam melons, more than I have ever grown before. A clump of 3 or 4 seeds produced 17 melons ranging in size from 3 to 18 kilos in weight. The one I made into jam with a generous addition of ginger will keep us in stock for several years. Somehow the melon must have known the possums were going to eat the persimmons and quinces this year so the melons came in handy to fill the gap. I still have rhubarb to make into jam if necessary so I don't think our nocturnal friends have got the better of our garden yet.

The ranunculus corms I planted only a fortnight ago are showing their first green leaves and if needed the larger clumps can be broken into several plants which is not possible when the corms are in a dry state.

All the Spring flowering bulbs should be in the ground by now as

well as all the annuals especially the ever popular pansies and violas.

Broad beans, peas and garlic should also go in now to make some growth while the soil is still warm.

It is also a good time to divide the rhubarb patch if the clump has been established for more than 10 years or so as the plants benefit greatly from a change of soil and location.

If the weather is still dry keep watering your small plants to get the best results from your garden patch.

Keep up raking those leaves and put in the compost bin; it's the best place for them and the exercise keeps one warm on a cold morning.

Good gardening
Geoff May

MEMBERS NEWS

We welcome a new member to our club.

Fran Costello from Preston.



Happy Birthday to you! Happy Birthday to you!

Jack Edgar, Sharon Pollard, Geoff May, Maria Spagnolo, Cheryl Warner, Jean Thomas & Sibel Toremis.

Wishing you all a lovely birthday.

COMING EVENTS

Saturday June 18th - 8.30am - 4.30pm. Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria Gardener's Day Out. Deakin University - Rusden Theatre. 221 Burwood Highway,

Burwood. Presentations by Sophie Thomson from *Gardening Australia* and Chloe Thomson from *Garden Gurus* Craig Castree from *Vasili's Garden*. Awards presented to winners of Great Hanging Basket Competition, Entry: \$10, Lunch available for \$15. Enquiries: RHSV Secretary 03 5367 6363

Saturday 25th June - 9am - 4pm

Sunday 26th June - 10am - 4pm

North East Melbourne Orchid Society Inc - Orchid Show. Bulleen Heights School Hall. Pleasant Road, Bulleen (Mel 32 G6). Entry: \$4.00. Enquiries: Michael Coker 0417 334 232

MONTHLY COMPETITION

June 22nd – Container Grown Fern

MONTHLY MEETING

June 22nd – Grevilleas & natives growing & maintenance - Graeme Woods

WHERE AM I?



All will be revealed at the July meeting.
Robert Strugnell