

# NEWSLETTER

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Friends,  
What a fantastic April it has been for the garden! After one of the driest months of March in many years, we have had a pleasant April with warm weather and intermittent, refreshing rains to rejuvenate the garden.

I hope that you have all been able to take advantage of the great autumn weather and to attend some of the many gardening events and gardens open to us at this time of year.

I visited "Bishopscourt" in East Melbourne on its open day on Saturday April 1st. Founded in 1848, Bishopscourt is one of the oldest properties in East Melbourne and is the official residence of the Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne. It is the last intact urban estate within the City of Melbourne.

The garden was designed in the Gardenesque style and features extensive plantings, sweeping lawns and fruit and vegetables all interwoven with a series of meandering paths. The house and garden are both included on the Victorian Heritage Register and 18 trees are included on the citation. Nine of the major trees are also on the City of Melbourne's register of exceptional trees. These include two English Elms (*Ulmus procera*), the Port Jackson Fig

(*Ficus rubiginosa*), the Italian Cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens*), 2 Monterey Cypresses (*Cupressus macrocarpa*), the River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*), and 2 Dutch Elms (*Ulmus x hollandica*), some of which were planted in the late 1800s.



Dr Philip Freier Archbishop of Melbourne.



In the last 16 years, a dedicated group of volunteers have established regular working bees and made massive efforts to restore and breathe new life into this beautiful garden. Original paths have been uncovered, garden beds rejuvenated and replanted and significant trees preserved. The garden continues to be maintained by volunteers today.

From Bishopscourt I wandered through the Fitzroy Gardens and checked out the Begonia display in the conservatory. The hanging baskets, containing Tuberous Begonias were amazing.



I then hot footed it down to the Carlton Gardens, where I took in the sights of The Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show and met up with Don and Jennifer Rickerby, the president and secretary of the RHSV at the Great Hanging Basket display. I was fortunate to come across Sharon Pollard, who volunteered to help out at the event on the day, and Sharon was able to show me her own display basket, created in the colours of her grand final winning team, Footscray. Go the Bulldogs.



Unfortunately we had to withdraw our Preston Garden Club basket at the last minute as it was covered in mildew after the previous week of very humid weather.

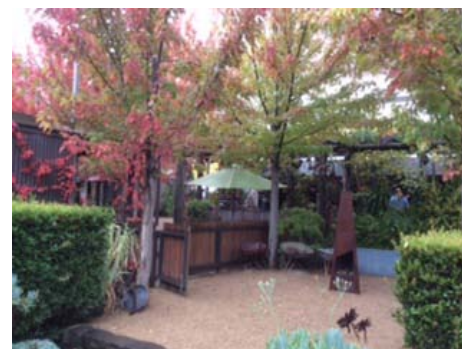
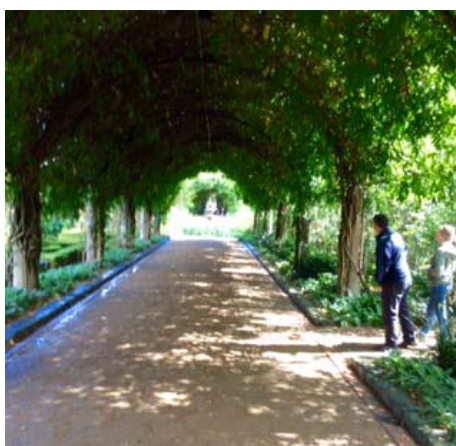
Actually this whole month has been full of excitement. We staged our Autumn Garden Show on 19th March and once again you were able to stage an enormous number of quality exhibits, which was a surprise to all considering the weather prior to the show, and predictions that entry numbers would be low. Well 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.

Of course, we also had a fantastic bus trip to the Yarra Valley visiting Alowen Gardens and the Chocolaterie. Despite predictions of foul weather, the sun shone on us long enough to casually stroll around the nursery and gardens, which were interesting, vast, and immaculately maintained.

Our only hiccup was trying to get everybody back onto the bus after tasting the chocolates and slurping on ice creams at the chocolaterie. The variety of chocolates on offer was amazing. Yummy!

Good Gardening, Bill.

### BUS TRIP PHOTOS



Jack & Glenda. Ice cream was good too!



Daksha & Barbara chocolate shopping



## RAFFLE WINNERS

Below are the raffle winners from the Autumn Show -

### **1st prize Folding Trolley**

Tracey Green ticket D17

### **2nd prize Hanging Basket & Koala**

June Ball Green ticket D31

### **3rd prize Secateurs, Flower Snips & Garden Products**

Jack Edgar Red ticket C20

### **4th prize Large Pottery Casserole Dish**

Glenda Edgar Red ticket C95

### **5th prize RODD Silver Dessert Set**

June Ball Blue ticket B70

Thank you to Bunnings Northland, Noelene Park, Daksha Singh & Pat Kilpatrick for their donations to our raffle.

## HANGING BASKET



Sharon Pollard with her entry in the MIFGS - RHSV Great Hanging Basket Competition.

Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS) – The Great Victorian Hanging Basket Competition – The Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria.

If you are a keen gardener it is worth your while to be a member of the Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria (RHSV). Each year I sign up for an individual membership of the RHSV. Currently the cost of an individual membership is \$25.

One of the benefits you are privileged with by being a member of the RHSV, is the chance to enter The Great Victorian Hanging Basket Competition, which is held annually in autumn at the MIFGS.

A form is sent out around September each year which you can fill in and say you would like to put a basket in the competition and nominate a nursery as your pick up location. The basket along with some potting mix and a \$10 voucher is then sent to this nursery for you to pick up and prepare a basket to display at The Great Victorian Hanging Basket Competition at the MIFGS.

As long as you pick up the basket from your nominated nursery even if you decided not to enter the basket at MIFGS you have recuperated your \$25 membership money back. If you enter the basket you even get a free ticket for entry into the MIFGS – for an adult this year the cost of a ticket was around \$30.

I have been entering a basket in The Great Victorian Hanging Basket Competition for around 5 years now possibly longer. I have never won a prize but that does not faze me it is the fun of entering that I enjoy.

This year my aim was to create a Western Bulldogs themed basket (My favourite AFL team). My idea was to pick out some red, white and blue (purple) flowers – the colours of the Western Bulldogs and plant them in the basket. I visited my local Bunnings Nursery a couple of months before the show

was on and picked out some flowers in these colours from what was available. The flowers that I chose to plant in my basket were a red geranium as my red flower and the centre piece for the basket. I then chose some white Alyssum which I placed around the geranium. I then finished off with some blue/purple lobelia. Like any show timing is the key. Your basket has to look its best when the show is on. Once again my timing was out. My basket looked its best about a month before the show while it was hanging on my clothes line. To try and make the basket look a little better before the show I revisited Bunnings a couple of weeks before hand. I picked up some more Alyssum to top this up and also some more red flowers to put in basket - some red Salvia, as I was worried my red geranium would not have any flowers on as one lot of bloom had died and the next lot was just starting to come.

If you are not a member of the RHSV I recommend you join and become a member as then like me you can enter a basket and have the fun of participating in The Great Victorian Hanging Basket Competition at MIFGS.

Sharon Pollard

## JOHN PASCOE FAWKNER AWARDS

Congratulations to Mr Geoff May on being recognised by the Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria for valued work in horticulture over many years. RHSV President Mr Don Rickerby presented the Gold John Pascoe Fawkner medal to Geoff at the Preston Garden Club Christmas breakup. While Geoff's horticultural contributions may not immediately register with all judges, many would have judged his outstanding fruit and vegetables at shows, including Preston, Essendon, Northcote and Ivanhoe. The schedule item "A

collection of fruit and vegetables” was always a ribbon winner for Geoff, a WOW display for public viewing and envy. Geoff has always been willing to give growing and exhibiting information to those needing help. He has a second string to his showing skills as is seen in the Cooking Section, collecting the Gold Ribbon many times for his unbeatable fruitcake at Preston and Northcote Garden Clubs.

Geoff’s wife Hillary also regularly takes home prizes and ribbons for cut flowers, container plants, floral art and cooking. Her Iceland Poppies and Sweet Peas always draw plenty of attention at shows. Geoff and Hillary, great supporters of our hobby, will continue to provide stiff opposition at our shows in the future with their outstanding garden produce.

Following Geoff’s presentation, to my surprise, Don Rickerby invited me to the stage to receive the Silver John Pascoe Fawcner Medal. This was a humbling honour for having a long-standing passion in gardening, showing and judging horticulture. I have been a member of Preston Garden Club for over 35 years, AHJA for 23 years and RHSV for over 20 years and also with stints in Horticultural Societies and Floral Art Society of Victoria. Over the years, I’ve successfully exhibited in many shows with prizes and ribbons for floral art, cut flowers, container plants and vegetables. I get great enjoyment out of gardening and visiting nurseries and other folks’ gardens.

My green thumb goes back to rural NSW when, as a toddler along with my twin brother and eighteen-year old step brother (in the army), we watched the Land Army Girls picking pumpkins and turnips on my family’s farm for the War Effort. My mum had a prolific flower and vegetable garden; I was

always with her as she tended the beds and plots. Later I was given a section of the garden to tend myself; from there many roses, snapdragons, pansies and sweet peas coloured the garden. When my mother came home from hospital with my younger sister, there on the farm’s kitchen table was a large glass jar of lovely bright yellow sunflowers (I was 9 years old). I guess one of my first floral arrangements.

by Noelene Park

### MEMBERS NEWS



**Happy birthday to you!  
Happy birthday to you!**

John Mathie, Hazel McGlone, Joan McNair, Rita Page, Bill Saunders, Margaret Trewella & Pam White.

Wishing you all a wonderful day.

### COMING EVENTS

**Saturday 29th April.** Australian Native Plants Society Yarra Yarra Group, Native Plant Sale. Senior Citizens Centre, 903 Main Road, Eltham. Enquiries: 9439 7228

**Saturday 29th April, 10am - 4pm**  
**Sunday 30th April, 10am - 3pm**  
Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens, Growing Friends 2017. Autumn Plant Sale. Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne. Gate E, Birdwood Drive, Sth Yarra. Listing available on website a week prior to sale. Entry Free. Enquiries: 9650 6398 or email friends@frbgmelb.org.au

**Saturday 6th May 1pm - 4pm**  
**Sunday 7th May 12pm - 4pm**  
The Chrysanthemum Society of Vic Inc. Annual Exhibition.

Burwood Heights Uniting Church Hall, Cnr Burwood Hwy & Blackburn Road, (MW Map 61 K7). Entry: \$4.00. Plants available for sale. Enquiries: 0424 557 600

### FIND THE WORD

Well, how did you go with finding the word last month? Of course the word is –

### **OLD**

Again you have 12 letters to choose from. The word this month has 5 letters. What could it be?

Look at the four pictures for the clue. Answer next month.



### MONTHLY COMPETITION

**May 24th:** One Container of Chrysanthemum, C.V.A. (cut flowers)

### MONTHLY MEETING

**May 24th:** My Green Garden, Thrifty Gardening, Savings in the Garden - Maria Ciavarell