

NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Friends,
1st June each year marks the official coming of winter, the wet and windy season.

On those winter days you can sit back by the fire with a coffee or tea and read those gardening books but don't have time to read because you are too busy in the garden. It is a time to study, plan and plant for our spring show and the sunny seasons which follow.

Would you consider standing for committee? I know that one or two long serving committee members are considering stepping down to take a break in the new financial year.

Bill

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Preston Garden Club Inc. will be held at 8.00pm, on July 26th, 2017, in Preston Shire Hall, corner of High & Gower Streets, Preston.

The Business of the Annual General Meeting will be:
To confirm the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting

To receive the report of the Committee and the statement of Accounts for the year, 30th June, preceding.

To set the fees for the ensuing year. Election of Committee.

***Financial members at each Annual General Meeting shall elect a President, two Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer and five members to form a Committee of Management for the Club.

**Every candidate for office shall be nominated and seconded by financial members of the Club, and such nominations shall be lodged with the Secretary of the Club at least seven days prior to the Annual General Meeting.

To transact any business requested in writing and received by the Secretary at or before the July Committee Meeting, to be held on July 18th.

N.B. All members who have paid their 2016 – 2017 membership subscriptions are financial at the Annual General Meeting, and are entitled to nominate and to vote on any matter. Each member shall be entitled to appoint another member as proxy, provided that notice is given to the Secretary 24 hours before the meeting for which the proxy is appointed. Notice of proxy shall be given on the enclosed form.

***Please consider standing for a position on committee to help run

your club. Nomination forms are available from the secretary.

***Your attendance is needed at the Annual General Meeting in order to make a quorum to deal with the necessary items required of us by the rules of incorporation.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual subscription fees are due on July 1st every year. **Next meeting bring some extra cash to pay your yearly subscription.**

Fees remain at: Single: \$15.00
Family: \$25.00.

Cheques or money orders can be addressed to: Preston Garden Club Inc. P.O. Box 1004, Preston, 3072, or payment made direct to the Treasurer at the next meeting.

“LADY CYNTHIA”



Affectionately known as “Lady Cynthia” to residents of Ladysmith, British Columbia, Canada this century old Rhododendron has sparked worldwide admiration for

its unusual size and stunning blossoms.

This variety of Rhododendron is called 'Cynthia' (hence the nickname) and normally grows to about 7m high. This beauty stands well above the average at an estimated 9m high and over 115 years old and still growing! Currently in full bloom (May), Lady Cynthia is due to be covered with more than 4,000 blossoms by the end of the season (it's Spring in Canada). Rumoured to have come across to Ladysmith by a sailing ship from Scotland.

PLANT STALL

Reminder to pot some plants for our spring show. The public who attend our shows always express interest in purchasing plants. Therefore we would like to expand our plant stall with different varieties of plants from our gardens.

If everyone could provide just 2 pots of plants, named, this would give our stall a real boost.

START COMPOSTING

Part 2

Binless "heap" or "pile" method: This is like a "freestyle" method of composting. You simply choose an area in your yard or garden and start layering your organic materials in a pile. They can be unsightly and might attract animals (from birds to rats) seeking the edible food scraps. In reality, a compost heap should be full of worms and other creepy crawlies—not pests! This can be greatly minimized or eliminated altogether by burying your scraps under other organic materials (like grass).

Binless "trenching" method: An alternative to a binless compost heap is trenching, in which you bury the organic matter and scraps at least 20cm in the ground—directly in your garden beds. Let

nature do its thing beneath the soil, then plant a garden over it. This should be done at least two months before you wish to use the particular area as a fruit, vegetable or flower garden.

DIY garbage bin: One of the easiest and most affordable bins is an inexpensive garbage can that you make into a compost bin. This is great for small gardens. Purchase a large plastic or rubber rubbish bin with a secure-fitting lid. Use a drill to bore 5-6 holes each in the lid, the sides, and bottom of the can to provide airflow that will be essential to breaking down the organic materials placed inside it. You can use a small, medium or large size bin, depending on your needs and space available.

DIY wire compost bin: A wire compost bin provides structure to an otherwise open compost pile while maximizing oxygen circulation. If you're handy, you can make your own wire compost bin, which is ideal for small gardens and households that produce a small amount of food scraps and yard waste. To construct the bin, find an open spot for your compost. Place 3-4 stakes into the ground in a circular or rectangular shape. Purchase about 3mts of 1mt wide wire or plastic mesh. Stretch the mesh fence around the stakes and tie it in place (to each stake) with zip ties or staples.

DIY compost pallets: Pick an accessible, level site in your yard before constructing this type of structure. In essence, you are building a three-sided box secured with heavy-duty wire to a pallet on the bottom. The open top and front allows for easy aerating and turning of the pile and can provide ample compost for a medium to large garden. You could easily build additional adjacent bins that can house multiple piles of compost in various stages of completion (more info below).

Commercial bins: If you're not a do-it-yourselfer, or you are looking for other features in a compost bin, many commercially made bins are available at nurseries, home improvement stores and online retailers. Compared to the DIY method above, store-bought bins can be very expensive, costing up to several hundred dollars. Some commercially made bins are tumblers, which can dramatically speed up the decomposition of your organic waste.

Step 2: Add to your heap: Now that you have your bin and your tools, it's time to compost! The most important thing is to add the right materials and avoid the wrong ones. Even if all you do is throw your kitchen scraps into your compost bin, you're still doing OK—your scraps will break down eventually, even if you never turn it, water it, aerate it, or "balance" its contents. As a general guide, if it came from a plant, you can compost it.

If you want to help your compost break down faster, you can put more time and thought into it in order to achieve the ideal conditions for decomposition. Compost, while easy enough, is an exercise in balance. To best "balance" your compost pile, include 1 part nitrogen-rich "greens" for every 15-30 parts of a carbon-rich "browns" in your compost heap.

"Browns" (carbon-rich materials) include: Fresh leaves, coffee grounds, newspaper strips, peanut shells, sawdust, straw, fruit scraps, bark, pine needles, tea bags, dryer lint, eggshells.

"Greens" (nitrogen-rich materials) include: Food waste, vegetable peels, hay, grass clippings, garden waste, alfalfa, oats.

Think of a compost pile like a sandwich with alternating layers. The first step is to build a

foundation with a 4 inch layer of bulky twigs and small branches. This allows for air to flow upward through it and also keep it off the ground. Water this layer liberally before doing alternating layers of greens and browns, watering every so often. Do this until your heap is 1m or more tall, making sure that no layer is packed too firmly. You want air to be able to reach the inner parts of the pile as much as possible. Finally, sprinkle the top of the heap with a few handfuls of soil from your garden. This soil, while not totally necessary, speeds up the process by using the hundreds of millions of bacteria found in it to your advantage. You will know the process is working when the pile generates heat as it decomposes.

Step 3: Now you wait. If you do nothing from this point, you will probably have finished compost in approximately one year. Most people try to nudge Mother Nature into a speedier delivery on their black gold though by keeping a healthy amount of moisture (water) and air flowing within the pile. As the heat increases in the pile, moisture is lost, so it is important to regularly water your compost to keep it damp, not dripping wet. Using an aerator or fork to turn your pile, anywhere from once a week to a couple times per month, will help reintroduce oxygen. The more often you turn, the quicker it will break down. Weekly aerating and watering should produce a finished compost heap in several months.

Compost shouldn't look or smell gross. When done properly it should not attract animals (although the ones that make it into your backyard may help themselves to the food scraps on occasion). If you notice a foul rotten egg smell, you've put something from the "do NOT compost" list into your pile, it's not receiving enough oxygen or it's

getting too wet. To correct this, work in some dry "browns" such as straw, peanut shells, or sawdust. If your pile smells like ammonia, you have added too many nitrogen-rich "green" materials, so work in more browns.

Finished compost smells earthy, even sweet, is moist like a wrung-out sponge, and is dark like coffee grounds. Work at least 25-50cm of this material into your garden, use as needed in potted plants, or spread around trees and garden beds as mulch. It is among the best substances nature can provide to a gardener!

Composting involves patience, but the reward is absolutely worth it! You can skip on synthetic fertilizers and soil amenders, which cost money and may hurt the environment. Compost also balances your soil's texture, restores nutrients, and diverts countless kgs of useable organic waste from our landfills.

TOP GARDENS



Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan, NSW. The largest botanic garden in Australia at 416 ha, the Australian Botanic Garden at Mount Annan lies 57km southwest of Sydney's CBD. The native plant garden of Sydney's Royal Botanic Gardens, the site at Mount Annan is a mixture of tended grounds and natural growth areas of remnant vegetation. Outdoor sculptures are dotted throughout the landscape and a 20km-long network of paths provides plenty of opportunities for exploration.



The Australian Garden, Cranbourne, Vic. The gardens comprise several different landscape displays, however the most striking of them all is the Red Sand Garden, which showcases the vibrant colours of Central Australia. The gardens also incorporate artificial dry river beds, lakes, and rivers throughout to demonstrate the decisive role water plays in the Australian landscape. The suburb of Cranbourne, where these gardens can be found, is about 40km from Melbourne's CBD.



Hunter Valley Gardens, Pokolbin, NSW. The sleepy village of Pokolbin in the Hunter Valley, about 120km north of Sydney, is best known for the numerous wineries surrounding it. However, those looking for something a little different, or perhaps somewhere quiet to rest a throbbing head, need look no further than the Hunter Valley Gardens.



Kyneton and Malmsbury botanic gardens, Macedon Ranges, Vic. In nearby Kyneton, visitors are greeted at the front gate by the Chilean wine palm (*Jubaea chilensis*), whose trunk strongly resembles a wine bottle. From

there, wide lawns slope down towards the Campaspe River. Kyneton and Malmsbury are located about 87km north-west of Melbourne. Look out for: California redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*) in Malmsbury and the Chilean wine palm (*Jubaea chilensis*) in Kyneton.



Maleny Botanic Gardens, Maleny, Qld. These gardens began as the vision of South African-born Frank Shipp, who moved to the Sunshine Coast north of Brisbane with the express purpose of finding a site to establish his gardens. He found an idyllic property 80km north-west of Brisbane surrounded by rainforest and with views of the nearby Glasshouse Mountains.



Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, Port Augusta, SA. Astounding birdlife, mangroves and the ancient Flinders Ranges make this botanic garden in South Australia truly unique. Located in Port Augusta, 280km north-west of Adelaide, the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden was opened at its site near the head of Spencer Gulf in 1993.



Queens Gardens, Townsville, Qld. The history of these heritage-listed

gardens in Townsville is almost as interesting as the gardens themselves. Established in 1870 as a place to trial food plants, the gardens were initially home to exotic species such as cocoa, African oil palms and mangoes. In 2011, cyclone Yasi's Category Four-strength winds decimated a third of the garden's trees.

MEMBERS NEWS



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

Gavin Warner & Pat Kilpatrick
Best wishes from us all.



Our best wishes to John Mathie for a speedy recovery also to Bill Saunders, Val Stafford and other members that are unwell.

COMING EVENTS

July 22nd Saturday - 11.00am & 2.00pm. ROSE PRUNING DEMONSTRATION. Mill Park Garden Club, Parks Victoria, Plenty Gorge Park, Hawkestone Picnic Area, 40 Gordons Road South Morang. Melways 183-J8 or UBD 199 L13. **BRING SECATEURS.** Enquiries: Chris - 9404-1554 or 0432-049-031

August 25, 26 & 27 - 9.00am - 4.00pm. The Orchid Societies Council of Victoria, 24th Annual Melbourne Orchid Spectacular. KCC Park, Skye (Melways 128 J12). Entry: Adults \$10, Children U15 Free. Enquiries: 0413 599 368

STAMPS

Looking for more stamps.

Some members have been collecting stamps for Robert to take back to China. He will be at the July and August meetings so if you can bring those stamps along. Otherwise give them to Bill anytime.

FIND THE WORD

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

VACUUM

Again you have 12 letters to choose from. The word this month has 3 letters. What could it be?

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



MONTHLY COMPETITION

July 26th: Foliage Arrangement minimum 3 kinds in a Novelty Container

MONTHLY MEETING

July 26th: Travels in China - Robert Strugnell