

NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT:
BILL SAUNDERS

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PRESTON GARDEN CLUB COMMITTEE

2018/2019

President:

Bill Saunders
9478-0269

Vice Presidents:

Robert Strugnell
Wayne Hurley
9464 5757

Secretary:

Vacant

Treasurer:

John Mathie
9458 1632

Committee Members:

Pat Kilpatrick
9460 1951
Margaret Trewella
9460 4361
Daksha Singh
9471 2192
Helen Salisbury
9481 6345

WANTED SECRETARY

The Secretary position in our club is still vacant. The job involves attending both monthly general and committee meetings, keeping accurate minutes, dealing with some correspondence, mailing out newsletters. Also from time to time following up on any matters that might arise from the meeting. If you feel you can help or would like to find out more information, have a talk with our President Bill at the next meeting or phone 9478 0269.

NAME BADGES

We have some newer members who have not received their Club's name badge. We know those who joined in 2018 will need a new badge, your name is already on the list. If you don't have a name badge, contact Wayne at the meeting or phone him. At the end of February Wayne will arrange to have them made.

REPEL MOSQUITOES

Here are 5 plants that naturally repel mosquitoes.

Basil



What's not to love about basil? Whether you're making a pesto or a pizza, basil can add a delicious zing to Italian food. Best of all, mosquitoes will be repelled by the scent so you can enjoy your meals bite-free.

Peppermint



Research has shown that peppermint oil repels mosquitoes. You can easily grow peppermint in a pot. Keep it happy with lots of sun and regular watering. And when it's not keeping mozzies at bay, you can use the leaves to brew up a pot of refreshing peppermint tea.

Lavender



Mosquitoes hate the smell of lavender, so it's a good excuse to grow it in abundance. Either in a pot or flower bed, lavender loves full sun and needs to be watered once or twice a week.

Catnip



Keep a pot of catnip around. Catnip loves a lot of sun and well-drained soil, so make sure your pot drains freely and easily.

Lemon Balm



Another fragrant plant, lemon balm will help to keep mozzies at bay. Best contained in a pot, it loves plenty of sun and regular watering.

AUTUMN BUS TRIP

Sunday 7th APRIL

COST- \$35.00 includes Coach & entrance fee to 2 Gardens, full payment must be made by March Meeting. BYO Lunch & Folding Chair or Stool.

COACH LEAVING PRESTON TOWN HALL-GOWER STREET 9.00AM SHARP.

On way 2 or 3 games of free bingo (prizes to winners). Free Lucky Ticket Prizes.

1. GISBORNE OLD TIME MARKET.



Enjoy a relaxing shopping experience at the Old Time Market, over 300 stalls which include local produce, wine, cheese, olives, fruit & vegetables, quality hand made products, trash and treasure and many plant stalls.

2. CASTLEMAINE - THE GARDEN OF LIXOURI BARKERS CREEK.



History of Garden. Lixouri is reminiscent of a rural property in Greece or Italy. The house and garden look out onto rolling hills and the long established olive grove. The garden is terraced with beautiful stone walls, steps and gravel paths overlooking a tranquil dam fringed with water iris, willow birch and white gums. In front the mud brick house established wisteria, roses and grapevine provide deep shade from the summer sun and an adobe wall with a superb wrought iron gate by Trefor Prest joins the house to the outbuildings. A wonderful mixture of softly flowering plants and beautiful formal shapes together with skilful blending of exotic

Mediterranean and native species compliment the formal structure of the garden. Lixouri is a must visit garden.

3 CASTLEMAINE - HEDGEHOGS GARDEN BARKERS CREEK.



'Hedgehogs' is a 3 acre garden. The garden comprises many diverse areas, from a Mediterranean style walled garden surrounding a pond with Medlar, Robina, Salvias, Phlomis, Roses, Abutilon, Exocordia to a native stone garden with granite boulders and native plants and grasses. One of the features is a wonderful granite pond built by Gordon Ford which is a melody of frogs for many months of the year. One can amble along the gravel path, take in the sculptures, look at the ponds, the stone walls or the small dam or just sit on the rocks or seats placed within the garden.

There is a "Secret Garden" surrounding an old Malus Purpurea, many wonderful sculptures within the garden. Also one finds a considerable use of metal works built by the owners, such as gates tables, seating, arbours and archways. For the rose lover there are old climbing roses as well as a picking bed and corner plantings in the vegetable area.

Within the garden there is a wood-fire pizza oven besides an eating area situated just above a new in-ground fenced spa. One section of the garden is devoted to food growing including a large enclosed prolific orchard, an enclosed berry house, a grape and iris walkway, a vegetable area, a walled citrus area with eggplants and peppers, a fig tree and potting shed. Other features in this designed garden include a Sedum and Cordyline bed, besides all this the beautiful stone walls, the many birds give a sense of the beauty of nature.

Visit a nursery in Woodend on the way home, depending on time.

For more info contact John, phone 94581632 or 0402 633 739.

DETER POSSUMS

How to deter possums from your garden? Possums are very fond of eating new plant growth, fruit on fruit trees and many flowers, like annuals, camellias and roses etc. Make some tea using Lapsang Souchong Tea has a strong smoky scent and possums don't like it at all. Put the brew in a spray bottle and spray over the plants the possums seem to like, and around other areas they are visiting. You will need to reapply after a heavy rain or after a regular bout of watering. Give us some feedback if it works for you.



STRAWBERRIES SCIENCE

Strawberries have a long and proud history, even the ancient Romans ate them. We know this from the works of poets Virgil and Ovid, which referred to them as fraga. The medieval artist Hieronymus Bosch had several strawberries in his triptych the "Garden of Earthly Delights", painted around 1500.

Some 500 years ago, the wood strawberry, *Fragaria vesca*, was around in Europe and the musk strawberry, *Fragaria moschata*, was starting to be cultivated. These were what we would recognise today as wild strawberries, characterised by small, misshapen fruit.



Virginia strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*)

The most common type of strawberries we eat today came to us by coincidence via the transatlantic explorations of Christopher Columbus and his successors. First the very hardy Virginia strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*), a native of North America, reached Europe in the 17th century. Then early in the 18th century, the large Chilean strawberry (*Fragaria chiloensis*) came to France. As a result of an initial fortuitous pollination, these two species were crossed, giving rise to the cultivated strawberry we eat today, *Fragaria ananassa*, sometimes known as the "garden strawberry". This combined in one fruit two particular traits inherited from its forerunners: hardiness and large fruit.



Chilean strawberry (*Fragaria chiloensis*)

Back in the 1950s, you only saw strawberries in the shops for a couple of weeks of the summer. Now we have them all the year round. This is because strawberry breeders have been aiming for fruit with particular (and marketable) properties such as uniform appearance, large fruit, freedom from disease and long shelf-life. But by concentrating on genetic factors that favour these qualities, other genes have been lost, such as some of the genes responsible for flavour. The balance of sweetness and acidity is very important to the taste of a strawberry. As strawberries ripen, their sugar content rises from about 5% in unripe green fruit to 6–9% on ripening. At the same time, the acidity decreases, meaning ripe strawberries taste much sweeter. The ripening process is controlled by a hormone called auxin. When its activity reaches its peak, it causes the cell wall to degrade and so a ripe strawberry becomes juicy as well as sweet. At the same time, gaseous molecules from the strawberries make their way up the back of the throat to our nose when we chew on them, where they plug into "smell receptors".

But how do scientists know which molecules are responsible for taste and smell? More than 350 molecules have been identified in the vapour from strawberries and around 20 to 30 of those are important to their flavour.

There is no single molecule with a “strawberry smell”. So what we smell is a blend of these molecules together give the smell sensation we know as “strawberry”.

Some modern varieties of strawberry are lacking in the quantity and range of molecules. Scientists have analysed wild varieties of strawberries, like the musk strawberry and wood strawberry to find out why. It turns out that while this fruit may not look so good, it produces a greater quantity of flavour molecules, as well as molecules that are not found in many of the strawberries we buy in the shop. Methyl anthranilate is one of these, it is also found in grapes and contributes a strong and sweetish edge to the aroma. Another is methyl cinnamate with a spicy note. In their quest for better tasting fruit, scientists are starting to investigate the genes responsible for making particular flavour molecules.



Scientists have recently reported that the perfect strawberry-to-cream weight ratio is 70:30. What’s more, you should eat it within two minutes and 50 seconds of serving, before the strawberries start to get soggy and shrink. Perhaps you should carry out this experiment yourself this summer? Enjoy your strawberries.

TURKISH CARROT DIP

This dip is really quick and easy to make and quite delicious. Great to take to a picnic or BBQ. I put it in sandwiches with rocket and cheese.

When you’ve made it a couple of times you will want to start adding other bits and pieces like pistachio nuts or toasted walnuts, paprika or spring onions. Try it!

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 teaspoons cumin seeds
4-5 grated carrots and a pinch of salt
1 1/2 cups of full fat Greek yogurt (add 1-2 raw minced garlic cloves if you wish)
1 teaspoon of nigella seeds (small black seeds also known as black cumin or kalonji seeds) or 1/2 cup of sliced black olives

1. heat the oil
2. fry the cumin seeds till lightly toasted
3. add the grated carrots and a pinch of salt and stir till they’re wilted
4. tip the cooked carrots into a bowl and stir in the yogurt mix
5. decorate the top of the dip with a sprinkle of nigella seeds or slices of black olives if you prefer.

Lorena Felicetti

COMING EVENTS

The Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show will be held Wednesday 27th to Sunday 31st March.

Royal Exhibition Building & Carlton Gardens.

Wednesday 27th March 9am – 5pm
Thursday 28th March 9am – 5pm
Friday 29th March – 9am – 9pm
Saturday 30th March 9am – 5pm
Sunday 31st March 9am – 5pm

<http://melbflowershow.com.au/>

FIND THE WORD

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

SCOOP

The word this month has 5 letters. What could it be?

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



MONTHLY COMPETITION

February 27th: One Container Marigold, One Variety, C.V.A. (cut flowers).

March 27th: One Pot/Container Succulent/s One variety.

MONTHLY MEETING

February 27th: Maria from Ivanhoe Garden Club - Flower arranging.

March 27th: Janine Kay - Geraniums and Pelargoniums.

STAMPS

Still looking to collect postage stamps. Save them and bring along to the next meeting. Thanks in advance.

Robert