

NEWSLETTER

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Committee Message

Dear Members,

Happy New Year to all and welcome to another exciting year ahead for Preston Garden Club.

Christmas Dinner function

Our Christmas dinner at the Junction Hotel on 1st December, saw 48 members and 4 guests celebrating the end of a great year. Members and guests enjoyed a delicious two course meal, followed by the presentation of the monthly competition winners for 2024 and a Christmas Raffle. Most importantly it was a great evening of catching up with friends and sharing a drink and a laugh. A big thank you to the committee for the work in organising all aspects of the dinner and also to the staff at the Junction Hotel for their attention to detail and care for our group.

Monthly Competitions for 2025

The Monthly Competitions for this year will see some changes with the introduction of a Novice exhibitor level, feedback from the judging panel on prize winners, a refresh of the categories and items of the month. The changes are intended to increase member participation and to provide them with valuable tips when exhibiting.

Supper arrangements for 2025

At the November General Meeting members were given the opportunity to vote on the club's supper arrangements for this year. As of the January 2025 General Meeting, a roster will no longer operate for supper.

The club will provide 2 items for supper each meeting. Members are welcome to contribute an item for supper if they wish. These arrangements will be reviewed at the end of the year. Please speak with Anita if you have any questions.

Members feedback.

The committee welcomes members feedback in supporting the club to achieve its aims as well suggestions for improvement. Members can email the club secretary prestongardenclub@hotmail.com with any queries, concerns or compliments.

Regards,

Bill Chamberlain, Mia Mikin, Daksha Singh, Anita Chamberlain, Kate Aplin, Antoine Enichtayan and Heather Meaklim

Guest Speaker Report

November 2024 – Peter Bloem on Carnivorous Plants

Our November meeting featured a fascinating talk by Peter Bloem. Peter is the Secretary of the Victorian Carnivorous Plant Society (The Society). The Society meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month – just like us!

The Society was formed in 1984 primarily for the enjoyment of carnivorous plants and their study, conservation and cultivation. They have members from all over the world with most being in Victoria.

Peter brought with him an array of exhibits from his own extensive collection of carnivorous plants. Peter talked about and answered members questions about the care required for carnivorous plants including: care and maintenance, common varieties, easy varieties for beginners, common problems and showcased the amazing diversity of plants in the carnivorous plant family.

January 2025 – John Weldon from the Yarraville Marrow Growers Association

John is the President of the Yarraville Marrow Growers Association, a small community group in the western suburbs of Melbourne. The group was originally formed by a group of friends looking for an excuse to get together and show off their overgrown Zucchini's.

We look forward to hearing John's tips on marrow growing.



HANGING BASKET COMPETITION

Just reaching out to let you know that the Hanging Basket Competition has now opened for The Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show 2025, and they would love to invite you back to enter!

If you are interested, please fill out the Application form found here.
<https://melbflowershow.com.au/the-2025-hanging-basket-competition/>



Next Meeting

Wednesday, 26 February 2025

Guest speaker topic – Nordic Gardening

Preston Garden Club wishes to acknowledge the support of:

Darebin City Council- Supports Preston Garden Club via its Community Support Grant Program and event management staff with hall hire each month.

Bunnings Preston - Sponsors Preston Garden Club's Best Exhibit of the Month prize 2025.

The Office of Nathan Lambert MP- Supports Preston Garden Club by printing this Newsletter

MEMBERS NEWS

RITA PAGE

Rita Page's son has given an update to pass onto members. Rita was living in the Mernda Retirement village and last February the family moved her to Whittlesea, TLC Sunlight Age Care. Rita is still active but starting to have problems with current memory. Family members visit Rita a couple of times every week and take her out for a drive on weekends, which she enjoys. In April 2025 Rita will be 91 years old. The Club wishes her well.

HELEN SHUGG

The Garden Club received a lovely Christmas card thanking the committee and members for their support of Helen in attending at the Christmas dinner. Helen is getting better on a daily basis and is able to walk around with her walker. Helen wishes all at the Garden Club a very Happy New Year and hopes everyone is well. Helen also looks forward to once again joining the monthly meetings and bringing in fresh sandwiches for supper. Helen welcomes visitors as she recovers. Helen is staying at Twin Parks Nursing Home, in the Western Wing, advisable to ring first:

(03) 8470 9888

33/47 Blake St, Reservoir VIC (near Darebin Creek) on site parking available

VALE – JOHN MATHIE

1-11-2024

It is with sincere sadness that we report that John Mathie passed away 1st November 2024, John was 90 years old.

John and his devoted wife Desiree first joined Preston Garden Club in November 1990, when they reside in Coburg and were always enthusiastic and passionate exhibitors at all of our flower shows from then right up to our last show.

They took a break in membership after a move to Rosanna and as passionate gardeners joined their local Ivanhoe Garden Club. In 2005 they rejoined Preston and John continued to give valuable service to both clubs. He served on committees, serving as Treasurer, Vice President, and most successfully as organiser of bus trips and outings with great success.

Whatever he did, he did with professionalism, energy and enthusiasm from which our club benefitted greatly. Our sincerest thoughts go out to Desiree and David.



Life Members

Mrs. H. McGlone, Mr. R. W. Strugnell, Mr. W. Saunders, Mr. N. Lenne, Mrs. P. Kilpatrick, Mrs. R. Page, Mrs. N. Park, Mrs. M. Trewella, Mrs. N. Thomas, Mr. W. Hurley, Mr. G. Warner.

New members

Welcome to new members Mattea Brislin and Dianne McKenzie who joined at the last meeting.



Happy Birthdays

Happy Birthday to the following members who are celebrating their birthday in January:

Dorothy Berrill, Barbara Duggan, Glenda Edgar, Barbara Lee, Dianne McKenzie, Mia Mikin, Noelene Park and Jaswant Singh.

MONTHLY COMPETITIONS FOR 2024

Winners of the monthly competition, members who have scored the highest number of points in each section overall for 2024.

Name	Prize	Amount
Robert Strugnell	First Bloom First Container	\$40
Hilary May	First Cut flowers Second Bloom Second Fruit	\$40
Geoff May	First Vegetables First Fruit	\$40
Bill Chamberlain	Second Vegetables	\$10
Anita Chamberlain	Second Container	\$10
Antoine Enichtayan	First Floral Art Second Cut flowers	\$30
Total		\$170



General Meetings procedures:

Date and address

- Fourth Wednesday of each month (except December)
- Preston Shire Hall, 286 Gower Street Preston VIC 3072
- Hall opens **7pm** and meeting for **7.30 pm start**

On arrival

- Members are to sign the attendance book located at the Registration desk.
- Collect your newsletter (if your preference is a hardcopy version).
- Renew your membership, if due, or join the club, if visiting.
- Peruse the information and flyers available for members situated at the registration desk.
- Purchase raffle tickets for the chance to win one of the plant/or other prizes.

Monthly Competition Tables

- There are **eight** competition categories for members to exhibit plants, vegetable and flower arrangements for judging.
- Confirm with the Judging Panel whether you wish to enter as an Open or Novice exhibitor and then enter your plant in the relevant category.
- Entry tags and plant tubes are available for exhibiting in the kitchen.
- Results are announced during General business after the Guest speaker.

Guest speaker

- There is a different guest speaker each month.
- Take a seat and enjoy the presentation.
- Guests and members are welcome to ask question of the speakers.

General Business

- The committee will discuss any general business for the club including correspondence, upcoming events, member updates and gardens.

Supper

- All members and guests are invited to stay for supper.
- The club provides two items each month.
- Members are welcome to bring an item to share for supper.

Meeting closes at 9.30pm

Photos from the Christmas Function





Blood orange loaf cake

Ingredients

- 2 blood oranges (about 300g each)
- 180g golden caster sugar, plus 3 tbsp
- 3 medium eggs
- 50ml sunflower oil
- 180g self-raising flour

For the icing

- 100g unsalted butter, softened
- 130g icing sugar

Specialist kit

- 900g loaf tin

Method

1. Put 1 blood orange in a pan and cover with water. Bring to the boil, then simmer for 1 hour until soft. Drain and set aside to cool.
2. Meanwhile, heat the oven to 120°C/100°C fan/gas ½. Cut two thirds of the second blood orange into 3mm slices, then cut these in half so you have semi circles (set the rest aside for the icing). Put 3 tbsp caster sugar in a frying pan with 4 tbsp water. Bring to the boil and allow to simmer for a minute until syrupy. Add the orange slices in one layer across the base of the pan. Simmer for 10 minutes, turning halfway, until tender, then put on a lined baking tray. Bake the orange slices for 1 hour, turning halfway, until set and stiffened. Set aside to cool.
3. Increase the oven temperature to 170°C/150°C fan/gas 3. Line a loaf cake tin with baking paper. Roughly chop the boiled orange and remove the pips. Transfer it (peel and all) to a food processor and whizz to a purée.



WORD QUIZ

Find out the five letter word which simultaneously expresses the inner meaning of the four pictures.



Monthly Competitions

In 2025 we will see the start of the expanded Monthly Competitions which includes the “novice” entry category.

Members are encouraged to get involved - the introduction of the “Odd One” category provides the opportunity for members to get creative and utilise whatever is blooming in their garden.

We have a sponsor!!!

This year’s Best Exhibit category will be proudly sponsored by Bunnings Preston.



February Item of the Month – Marigolds



Tips for exhibiting Marigolds

Ref: The Australian Horticultural Show & Judges Manual, Chapter 8, Page 8.



“Meritorious”

- Flowers are to be:
 - good form,
 - fully double,
 - collarette or single according to type,
 - not coarse.
- Double flowers showing no centre.
- Clear, well-defined colour, good size, strong straight stems, foliage fresh and unblemished.



“Defective”

- Flowers of irregular form ☒
- Colours dull and not clearly defined ☒
- Small or excessively large in size ☒
- Deformed stems, foliage old or blemished ☒
- Poor condition ☒

Meet Preston Garden clubber Carolyn Asquith

Tell us your gardening story.

I have always been a gardener. Even as a small child I would be in the veggie garden or orchard planting, harvesting, eating or preparing produce. When you grow up on a generational family farm, I guess it's just in your blood. I love to push boundaries and explore options.

Any particular gardening interests?

I rescue plants like some people rescue dogs and cats. I have a very diverse garden featuring edibles such as vegetables and fruits, flowering plants, feature trees and indoor plants. I have chickens for eggs and bees for honey.



Tell us about your garden or plants.

I tend to concentrate on an edible and productive garden. All the regular vegetables and herbs along with cumquats, orange, lime, fig, strawberry guava, almond, banana, passionfruit as well as stag horns, potted plants such as Monstera's and orchids. The large sloping north facing garden also has feature trees such as Liquid Amber, Robina and Jacaranda.

Favourite plant and why?

My most exciting achievement is growing enough tropical root ginger each year- the last ten years! By trial and error, I have fine-tuned growing my own ginger in pots of my own compost in my little plastic hot house.



If space and cost were not an issue, what sort of garden would you choose?

Acreage on a river with room for an orchard and berry garden... a sunny spot for my chickens and bee hives and a paddock for my lovely milking cow.

How long have you been a member of Preston Garden Club and how did you find out about the club?

As a member of Niddrie CWA, I was invited to judge some cooking at an Alphington community event. As chance would have it Bill Saunders and Wayne Hurley were judging the horticultural exhibits. Well, get three garden chatterboxes in the same room and what would you expect? From that fortuitous meeting five years ago, I have thoroughly enjoyed being a member of Preston Garden Club.

Favourite thing about Preston Garden Club?

The interesting guest speakers along with the amazing knowledge and camaraderie of our members makes each monthly meeting something to look forward to. The monthly competitions are entered into with much support and goodwill by fellow members – I think we are all excited and interested in each other's achievements.

What advice would you give to anyone looking to create their own garden?

I always suggest that a couple of pots of herbs is a great starting place for a beginner gardener. And most importantly, remember and celebrate all your successes in your gardening endeavours. Happy Gardening!