

# NEWSLETTER

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## Committee Message

Dear Members,

Welcome to the March newsletter. Autumn is a time of harvest and I hope you have had bountiful crop of pumpkins, figs, zucchini and whatever else your garden produces.

### Ivanhoe Autumn Bus Trip

Ivanhoe Garden Club notified us last week of the upcoming Autumn Bus Trip, on **Sunday, 13 April 2025**.

The itinerary includes:

**The Artful Meadow Nursery, Lyonville** (morning tea); then on to **Wombat Botanic Gardens** in Daylesford (lunch); and **Claire's garden** – a private garden in Creswick.

The bus departs The Centre, Ivanhoe at 9am sharp and is expected to return by 5pm. **Tickets can be purchased now at \$37.50 per person.**

Payment can be made at the March General Meeting or by direct transfer to the club account by no later than Tuesday, 1st April 2025. (see flyer for more details).

### Bunnings Sausage Sizzle 26 April 2025 – volunteers needed

Bunnings Preston has allocated our club its sausage sizzle for **Saturday, 26th April 2025**. To run the event successfully we will require volunteers to assist with tasks such as cooking sausages, serving customers, cleaning and general assistance. Volunteers will be rostered on in 2-hour shifts from 7.30am to 4pm. If you would like to volunteer, please put your name down on the list with Anita at the Trading Table. Outside of the General Meeting you can express your interest via email: [prestongardenclub@hotmail.com](mailto:prestongardenclub@hotmail.com).

### Kate Aplin

The committee would like to thank Kate and acknowledge the significant contribution she has made to the club during her time on the committee. The committee sadly accepted Kate Aplin's resignation for health reasons at the last meeting.

Kate was part of the 90th Anniversary subcommittee and was the brains behind the 90<sup>th</sup> Commemorative Opinel knives, which we continue to use as a gift for guest speakers. In July, Kate came on board as a general member of the committee and has been a key contributor to the committee including the introduction of the "odd one" category for our Monthly Competitions. Kate's level headedness and collaborative working approach has contributed to the management of the club. Thank you, Kate, we look forward to your continued involvement with the club.

Regards,

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

## Guest Speaker Report

### **February speaker review – Katarina and Dr Anders Wennstrom Phd on Nordic Gardening**

Our February speakers were guests from Sweden - Anders and Katerina.

Anders and Katerina outlined some of the challenges and delights of growing plants in a Nordic environment. With a shorter growing season many gardeners utilise greenhouses to grow plants and choose plants which grow well in the cooler climate.

Anders and Katerina are well travelled Swedish biologists, plant and animal lovers and their conversation with members also covered the differences between living in Melbourne and Sweden with Anders referring to Australian houses as “glorified tents” when compared to houses built to withstand winters with freezing temperatures and heavy snow.

### **March – Hilary May**

Our very own Hilary May will be guest speaker for March’s meeting. Hilary will talk about the garden lovingly curated by Geoff and Hilary over many years at their family home in Essendon.



### **April – Clancy Lester, the Bee Man**



## **Preston Garden Club is now on Instagram!**

Preston Garden Club has just started its own Instagram feed which allows us to post information about upcoming events and photos of interest to members and “followers”.

To find us on Instagram, you can search for our “handle” **preston\_garden\_club** and then click to follow.

For more information, please see a committee member or have a chat to Sarah at our next meeting.

## **Happy Birthday!**



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

*Hilary May, Rosa Nardella, Carolyn Scott and Robert Strugnell.*

## **Instagram**

Log in

Open app



preston\_garden\_club ...

Follow

### **Preston Garden Club**

A club for garden enthusiasts. 🌱  
Sharing in the joy of gardening since 1934.  
Join us : 4th Wed of the Mth (excl Dec)... more  
🌐 [www.prestongardenclub.org.au](http://www.prestongardenclub.org.au) + 1

12  
posts

5  
followers

1  
following



## **Preston Garden Club wishes to acknowledge the support of:**

**Darebin City Council-** via its Community Support Grant Program and event management staff for the hall hire each month.

**The Office of Nathan Lambert MP-** for printing this Newsletter each month.

**Bunnings Preston** – Sponsorship of the Club’s Best Exhibit of the Month prize for 2025.

**Darebin Northwest Uniting Church** – Provide the venue for our monthly committee meetings.



## MEMBERS NEWS

### Kate Aplin's trip to Japan

Earlier in the year I was fortunate to travel to Japan with my family. I was very keen to see some iconic Japanese planting. The vertical repetition of bamboo was very beautiful and relaxing, and we enjoyed this bamboo garden at Hokoku tea house.



Another form, which I admit to not being a fan of, is cloud pruning – it seems like a lot of hard work! But we saw that it is commonly used as a contrast against a wild area, or to enhance a place of importance. In this context, I could see how it really enhances the green space and is beautiful. This amazing example is from Hasedera temple.



Winter is cold but also very dry, so plants are really taking it easy. And doubly so, as they are given extra looking after. Larger plants might be given extra support, string lines to protect from snow and frost damage or even wrapped in straw! At first, I thought this was a sculpture, and was surprised to learn that this is three palms rugged up for winter!

### Carolyn Asquith's trip to Gardenworld in Keysborough

Carolyn accompanied friends and our February guest speakers, Anders and Katerina on a trip to Gardenworld in Keysborough to view a Titan Arum plant, known as the "corpse flower".



#### **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.



# Photos from the February General Meeting



## **Monthly 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 commences at **7.30 pm start with guest speaker.**

### **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



## Geoff May's famous date slice

Thank you to Hilary May for sharing Geoff's recipe for the newsletter. Carolyn and Anita had a lovely afternoon tea visit to gather information and pictures for the newsletter. Hilary and Geoff have a stunning garden, filled with vegetables, fruit trees and beautiful flowers. Hilary made a delicious date slice and a cracking cuppa!

### Shortbread -for base and top layer

125g butter

90g sugar

250g SR Flour

1 egg

Cream Butter and sugar until white. Beat in the egg.

Add SR Flour to creamed mixture. Knead lightly on a floured board. Roll out thinly (¼ inch or less).

Cut dough into two pieces.

### Date filling

1 ½ cups dates, chopped

¾ cup milk

1 dessertspoon butter

Heat dates, milk and butter in a saucepan, until the dates have softened. Allow to cool.

### Assemble

On a greased baking tray, place one of the shortbread portions and then spread the date filling.

Then place remaining portion of shortbread on top. Pinch the edges together -so the mixture won't run out.

Bake for 20 mins in a moderate oven.

### Icing

1 ½ cups Soft Icing Mixture, sifted; 25g butter, softened; 1 tbsp milk, or water

Few drops of food colouring (*Geoff always used pink!*)

Spread icing on the cooled slice, cut into pieces and enjoy.



### **Up coming events:**

**26- 30 March**

Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show

**29 March -27 April**

Tesselaars KABLOOM Festival of Flowers, Silvan

**5 April**

Victorian Carnivorous Plants Gardenworld Centre, Springvale Rd Keysborough.

**5 April**

Gippsland Rare and Unusual Plant Fair, Jindivick

**12-13 April**

Yarra Valley Autumn Plant Fair & Garden Expo, Wandin.

**13 April**

Autumn Bus Trip with Ivanhoe Garden Club

**3 May 2025**

- Cacti and Succulents Sale Day, Skye  
- Ferny Creek Horticultural Society Autumn Flower Festival, Sassafras



## **WORD QUIZ**

*How did you go with finding the 7 letter word in the last newsletter? The word last month was – **APRICOT.***

The word this month has 5 letters.

What could it be? Look at the four pictures for the clue.

Answer in the next newsletter

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## Monthly Competitions

The February meeting saw a whopping 71 entries in our monthly competitions! In addition to receiving many entries judges also made special comment on the high standard of the entries – kudos to all exhibitors.

A minimum of four entries were received in every category making our judges work very hard to award winners. A shout out to Laura Saunders and Diane Ryan who have both registered as novices. A big thank you to our judges' led by Wayne and ably supported by Robert, Bill Saunders and Daksha for their work in setting up the new format, grading entrants and judging the entries. Members were once again provided with useful tips on exhibiting by Chief Judge Wayne Hurley and members were encouraged to get their entries in for the March item of the month Giant Veggies.

Whilst there were many worthwhile entrants in February, Hilary May's Cut Flowers were awarded the Best Exhibit– well done Hilary!

## February Results

Category	1st place
Cut flowers	Hilary May <b>Laura Saunders - Novice</b>
Specimen Bloom, Truss or Spike	Sarah Borg
Plants in a container	Robert Strugnell
The Odd One	Bill Chamberlain
Vegetables	Sarah Borg
Fruit and Herbs	Anita Chamberlain
Floral Art	Helen Salisbury
Item of the month - Marigold	Daksha Singh
Best Exhibit – sponsored by Bunnings	Hilary May



## Coloured entry cards for Novice exhibitors

Novice exhibitors are reminded to use the coloured (blue or pink) cards provided whilst Open exhibitors will continue to use white cards.

## April Item of the Month - Chrysanthemums

There are many cultivars of Chrysanthemums – the Australian Chrysanthemum Council recognises 1390 cultivars!

### Key Aspects of Judging Chrysanthemums

**Form and Shape:** Flowers not past their peak.

**Freshness:** Florets should be unspotted and fresh. No dead or marked petals.



**Uniformity:** A good balance between blooms in terms of size, form and colour.

**Foliage:** Leaves to be free of pests and no disease or damage of any kind.

**Staging:** 6 to 10 stems, counted at the top of the green flower tube. Stems arranged with flowers to face the front.

## Photos from February's Monthly Competitions





# Meet Preston Garden clubber Hilary May



## **Tell us your gardening story.**

I grew up in Essendon, my mum was a teacher and dad a postal worker. Growing up we spent most school holidays between our grandparent's farms one outside of Euroa or the farm in Gippsland, we loved it always things to do!

I always liked gardening and helping in the veggie patch with mum. I met Geoff at a local church group. When we first married, we lived in Mt Waverly and then moved back to Essendon to be closer to our parents. I studied to be a radiographer and worked part time as our two boys grew up.

## **How long have you been a member of Preston Garden Club?**

I joined the club with Geoff.

## **How did you find out about the club?**

Geoff's grandfather had been the garden curator at Brunswick City Council. Before he emigrated to Australia, he was head

gardener at a stately home in England. It was in Geoff's genes to be a horticulturalist. Geoff loved to show his vegetables and flowers at shows around Melbourne.



## **Any particular gardening interests?**

I love going out to the garden and collecting fresh veggies from the garden for dinner and to have freshly cut flowers around the house. I hardly buy any vegetables or fruit, except for bananas and now Carloyn has planted two banana trees for me, so far so good. I hope I can reap a banana crop!

## **Favourite thing about Preston Garden Club?**

I enjoy the monthly meetings and competitions. Geoff and I have made some lovely friends through the various clubs we belong to, and we are also keen cyclists.

## **Tell us about your garden or plants.**

Geoff always had the vegetables, and I had the roses and flowers out the front. Geoff's

veggies always won prizes at shows.

## **Favourite season?**

It would have to be Spring when the garden explodes into colour with poppies, roses and pansies etc.

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

My advice in order to cope with our long hot dry summers is to grow the tried and tested flowers and shrubs that can handle these conditions such as salvias, lavenders and roses. And for the vegies its compost, compost and more compost! Happy gardening.

