

SNIPPETS from Here and There



Summer 2015

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The Maleny Garden Club extends a warm invitation to all members and visitors to attend the monthly general meetings held on the last Tuesday of each month, as per program for the year.

A Note from Marnie.

This is the time of the year when it all comes together In the garden and the efforts of the past months give a lovely display.

As this is the last opportunity for me to write before our break over the festive season, I would like to wish all our members a very Merry, Christmas, and look forward to joining as many of you as can attend the Xmas party at the Maleny Manor. Each year we just seem to get there with numbers and are able to accommodate everyone who wishes to come.

I feel very fortunate to once again take on the role of President of our Club, it has allowed me to come to know members on a more personal level. I have been attending many friendship days and outings on behalf of the club with other members of the Committee and we are much envied for our good rainfall and growing conditions.

I am sure you all enjoyed as I did the picnic after the AGM, and we must try to have a lunch after some meetings next year as the park does lend itself doesn't It?

On a much sadder note, our heart-felt sympathies go to Trevor and his family, after we heard of the passing of our dear Elsie, a friendship of twenty years with some of our members, such a soft and gentle soul, you will be very much missed from our company.

I hope you look forward as much as I do to our monthly meetings, and as a Committee we try very hard to keep the business side of things short and the enjoyment of learning from one another and guest speakers more to the forefront.

Enjoy your days in the garden,
Merry Xmas, Marnie

Quick Quiz.

1. In the poem "The Night Before Christmas", what does St Nick's belly shake like?
2. When did the tradition of a Christmas tree first become popular?
3. Which famous artist designed a rope-making machine?.

(see back page for answers)

Travelogue

Very recently Peter and I travelled overseas to attend a family function in the UK. While there we also included a few days in Zurich, Paris and Singapore. We visited many points of interest during that time but probably chief among them for us, was a visit to Versailles and Giverney, the home of Claude Monet the famous French impressionist painter.

Versailles is a must for visitors to Paris and there were simply thousands from all parts of the globe who seemed to gather there the day we visited. Our tour guide was able to take us through some of the King and Queen's apartments, the Hall of Mirrors, the Chapelle Royal and the Palace gardens.

This stunning Chateaux, the largest palace in Europe was begun by Louis XIV who moved his court there in 1678. It was the royal residence for more than a century until Louis XVI and his queen Marie Antoinette tried to flee during the French Revolution in the late 18th century.

It is overwhelming in its opulence, scale and beauty. The spectacular 70m long Hall of Mirrors has been beautifully restored but we found it difficult to fully appreciate its splendour when thousands of others were sharing the space with us. It was in this room that the Treaty of Versailles was signed in 1919 putting a formal end to World War 1. For me it was a privilege to view Marie Antoinette's private salons. The decor was feminine, extravagant and colourful using expensive fabrics like silks, brocades and velvets.

The many large and magnificent gardens vary in style from the formal French gardens with their geometric paths and shrubberies to the wandering paths through the English gardens. The royal family and other French aristocrat's increasingly lavish lifestyle and the growing gulf between rich and poor in the 18th century was their eventual undoing.

Giverney, a small village 40mins by car to the Nth West of Paris is where Claude Monet (1840-1926) lived most of life. Here he built a lovely garden with trees,

cottage style plants and a large pond with a Japanese style bridge at one end, then he filled the pond with water lilies, some of the original water lilies still there today. He actually developed 2 gardens, the main one around the house and the second one on the opposite side of the road. When we were there in September the gardens were massed with dahlias, roses and many other garden plants in full bloom. The size and colour of the dahlias was amazing, many of which I have never seen before. There was even a kiwi fruit vine loaded with almost ripe kiwi fruit. The morning of our visit was quite misty lending an lovely ethereal look to the garden.

It was in this garden that Monet painted so many of his paintings, the series with water lilies among his most well known.

Age and bomb damage during World War 2 made it necessary to repair and replace some of the structures in both the house and garden but I'm sure that if Monet could see the garden as it is today, he would be just as delighted with it as we were.

The history behind some of the monuments, churches, palaces and buildings that make up Paris becomes so tangible when one visits this beautiful city.

Margaret Owens

I would like to thank Gillian from Maleny Cruise and Travel who went above and beyond her professional duty to see that our travel arrangements went smoothly.

..... **Fridge Magnet Humour**

Hang onto your husband he might come back into fashion.

Sometimes I wake up grumpy, other days I let him sleep.

Retirement is when you stop living at work and start working at living.

Everyone brings joy to the house, some when they enter, some when they leave.

Men are like chocolates - wait too long and only the weird nutty ones are left.

..... **World War Two Vignette**

Ted Fisher joined the army during the Second World War as a sapper in the Royal Engineers. He received his commission in 1942 and sailed to India in early 1943. In June 1944 he joined the campaign in Burma and was posted as a lieutenant to 20 Fd Sqn Indian Engineers, supporting 9th. Brigade of the 5th. Indian Division based at Imphal, a defended area of five square miles, which was resupplied by air. His first command in India was a platoon of Indian Sappers about 100 strong.

Shortly after Ted's arrival the 5th. Division moved south from Imphal in pursuit of the Japanese Army retreating down the mountainous Tiddim Road.

Engineers had the dubious privilege of being sent ahead of the advancing army to clear obstacles such

as mines and booby traps also to build bridges over the many streams along the way.

After the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima 6th. August reports were received that the Japanese army in Malaya were ready to surrender. Consequently the 5th. Division was dispatched from Burma to carry out an armed reconnaissance of the Malay Peninsula. Ted, a major by this time and in command of a small force was sent to find out the situation in Singapore. They arrived at night and anchored at some distance from the island. On the morning of August 25th. Ted decided to carry out an initial reconnaissance. As he and his men approached the island he seriously wondered what to expect. For all he knew the Japanese might be waiting to oppose them in force.

As it happened they docked peacefully where the flying boats used to moor before the war and scrambled up a steep bank where to their astonishment they found five Japanese officers in full dress uniform standing in line like a guard of honour with drawn swords held upright above their heads .

Ted did not have an interpreter with his group and oral communication was difficult, however , the Japanese general somehow made it clear that he wished to surrender the entire Japanese garrison of Singapore to Ted and also proposed that the Japanese forces should remain responsible for law and order until the arrival of the main allied force, which seemed an eminently sensible solution, to which Ted readily agreed .

Ted's tenure of Singapore lasted about 3 weeks until Admiral Mountbatten and his retinue arrived on the island to take the surrender of all Japanese forces in south east Asia.

Peter Owens

This is a copy of an article from a UK newspaper given to me by my cousin when I was in the UK recently.

Ted Fisher in this story was her uncle.

..... **Keep Your Mind on the Job.**

(Even if your head is in the Clouds)

This morning I was filling jars,
Jars of this and that:
Some were for my husband,
and some were for the cat.

There were Whiskettes for the pussy,
there were Bran Buds for my spouse;
And my mind was miles away
as I bustled round the house.

I had a kind of mix -up
as I sipped my Golden Roast;
And Kev pushed away his porridge
and grabbed a piece of toast.

Then the cat looked at her Bran Buds
mixed in with Whiskettes;
And gave a rather catty look
I somehow can't forget.

I lined up spouse and pussy
"It's really no big deal;
I don't see why you both can't share,
Imagine how I feel."

Now the cat is in the garden
her bowels are working well;
And will my husband start to miaow?
Well--only time will tell.
Lisa Gerhard-Plucknett

Gardening Wit.

A bachelor flat is where all the house plants are dead
but there's something growing in the fridge.
Marshal Williams

A man should never plant a garden larger than his wife
can take care of.
T.H.Everett

The husbands may mow the lawn but it's the women
who do the planting, digging, the weeding and all the
real work that goes into making a garden.
Charlie Dimmock

I was flattered to have a rose named after me until I
read the description in the catalogue: No good in a
bed, but perfect against a wall. *Eleanor Roosevelt*

If a queen bee were crossed with a Fresian bull,
would not the land flow with milk and honey?
Oliver St John
Submitted by Susan Myring.

A Year to Remember 1928

Almost 10yrs after the Armistice which ended the
First World War, international powers signed the
Kellogg-Briand pact outlawing all war.
Britain was among the 15 signatories and the
German Foreign Minister was loudly cheered when
flourishing a large gold pen, he appended his own
name. It was a euphoric time, with those who
warned of the potential menace of the infant Nazi
party voices in the wilderness and no sign yet of the
stock market collapse which was to shatter the
economy of the West.

For people at home one of the main concerns
stemmed, not from recession but from prosperity.
Figures released in November showed that traffic
accidents had continued to soar, with the 1927
deaths total of 5,329 certain to be exceeded.
The number of private cars registered was forecast to
top a million by the end of the decade and new laws
were demanded to control the boom in private
motoring. There was no driving test and the speed
limit of 20mph was widely ignored. The Austin
Seven introduced in 1921 at a price of £225 had
continued to bring cars within reach of far more
people -and the launch of the Morris Minor family
saloon in August was sure to accelerate the trend.

Events of the Year:

Home Affairs: Five million more women will be
able to vote in the next general election thanks to an
Act of Parliament which puts them on an equal
footing with men, bringing down their age of
suffrage from 30 to 21. Legislation for the so-called
"flapper vote" was introduced by the Conservatives.

• The *Flying Scotsman* non-stop rail service is
launched between London and Edinburgh. Speeds
of more than 70mph are reached during the 392 mile
journey.

The World at Large: Herbert Hoover is elected
president of the USA.

• Amelia Earhart becomes the first woman to fly the
Atlantic.

• Mary Pickford finally, with full publicity has her
curls cut off.

Social History: Britain is world leader in cigarette
smoking. The Imperial Economic Committee reports
we burn up an average of 3.4 pounds of tobacco each
year, with the increase coming from cigarettes.

• The Graf Zeppelin flies from Germany to New
Jersey in four days 15hours 30minutes.

Medicine: Professor Alexander Fleming, of St.
Mary's Hospital, London, discovers by accident that
when the blue mould that appear on stale bread,
penicillin notatum, comes into contact with the
bacterium *staphylococcus*, responsible for many human
infections, the bacterium is killed off. However
extracting the active chemical may be difficult.

Popular Songs: Among the hits this year are
'Ol' Man River', from the musical 'Show Boat,' by
Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II, sung by
Paul Robeson; 'Are You Lonesome Tonight', by Roy
Turk and Lou Handman, sung by Al Jolson.

Sport: Bill Ponsford, the Australian cricketer,
becomes the first man to score two quadruple
centuries. West Indies become the fourth Test nation
when they play England at Lord's, Old Trafford and
the Oval, losing by an innings each time. Donald
Bradman, batting in his first test match, scores 18
in the first innings and 1 in the second.

Collins B. (Winter 1995/96) Evergreen, Cheltenham UK.

December in the Garden

***For a burst** of continuing colour check out the
bicoloured Flower Carpet rose, 'Pink Splash'. It's super
hardy and will flower from spring until autumn. It
needs little attention apart from an annual clip-back and
an occasional fertilising.

***White candytuft** has long been a standby gap-filler
with it's mass of delicate white blooms but, for a touch
of colour, try *Iberis* 'Mauve Ice'. It's compact with
clusters of mauve flowers from late spring through
summer. For more info, visit Colourwise,
www.colourwise.com

* **If your petunias** have shown a tendency to wilt
under the blazing summer sun, try the hardy, two-tone

pink 'Raspberry Blast', a low spreading and cascading plant bred to withstand extreme heat.

***Have a go** at growing sunflowers from seed. Check out Yates' 'Yellow Empress' and the more compact 'Dwarf Sensation', which can be grown in pots. Sow seeds in a full sun position with good drainage and water frequently.

***If you like to keep your garden** on a strictly organic diet, check out the new organic liquid fertiliser, Uplift, from Yates., containing a mix of fish, seaweed, bio-active soil microbes and fulvic acid. It's sold as a concentrate and is simply mixed and applied via a watering can.

***Let your lawns** grow a little longer. This way, it forms a protective summer thatch to slow down moisture evaporation from the soil. A light feed with a slow-release lawn fertiliser is also a good idea.

***With the tomato-growing season** now in full swing, check out one or both of these varieties. 'Large Fruit Truss Tomato' bears trusses of 5-6 good-sized fruit which are ready to eat within 5-6 weeks of planting seedlings. 'Tomato No Mess' has been specially bred to hold its juice, so it's great as a sandwich filling. Both varieties are from Oasis, 1800 650 341 or www.oasishorticulture.com.au

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Bird of Paradise. *Submitted by Peter Owens*

Queen Charlotte, King George III's wife whose attempts at economy in the royal household led to the dish known as "Apple Charlotte". The Queen who was keenly interested in botany and growing apple trees also played an active part in the development of Kew Botanical Gardens, London.

In 1773 a spectacular plant arrived at Kew Botanical Gardens from South Africa. The plant had blue and orange flowers which sprouted vertically from a horizontal bract. The flower resembled a tropical bird in flight, hence the name "Bird of Paradise".

Queen Charlotte before her marriage to George was known as the Duchess of Mecklenburg – Strelitz, from a small duchy in north Germany. In honour of Queen Charlotte the flower was given the latin name, *Strelitzia reginae* in honour of her family name. *Strelitzia reginae* is a member of the banana family and is found outdoors in tropical and sub tropical parks and gardens. The flower is the emblem of Los Angeles.

Vaux-le-Vicomte

When King Louis XIV of France was on the throne, his Finance Minister was Nicholas Fouquet. In 1653 Fouquet decided to build a new house with a garden located between Paris and Fontainebleau. Fouquet chose as his garden designer and

constructor a man named André Le Notre, later to be known as the Garden Master of Europe. Le Notre commenced work on Fouquet's garden in 1656 and completed his work in 1661. On its completion Fouquet arranged a grand gala opening of his house and garden. To this gala opening the king and his courtiers were invited. The gala entertainment included a play by Moliere, followed by a ballet. The King had little to say during the course of the evening. While it was obvious that the King's gardens couldn't match those of Fouquet's, Fouquet interpreted the King's silence to be admiration for the house, garden and gala entertainment. The reality was that the king was envious, angry and suspected Nicholas Fouquet of "having his hand in the till", abusing his position as France's Minister of Finance and "feathering his own nest".

Consequently Fouquet was arrested, even though he was innocent and had amassed a large fortune before he built his house and garden, he was imprisoned never to be released, dying 19 years later. The garden created by Le Notre for Fouquet is "Vaux le Vicomte". The gardens have been restored to something resembling their original glory in spite of the jealous King having many of the trees and statues removed. The King then acquired Le Notre to design and construct his own palace gardens. One of those is the garden at Versailles.

D.G.Hessayon (1983), *The Armchair Book of the Garden*. Century Publishing Co. Ltd., London.

Quick Quiz answers.

1. A bowl of jelly.
2. In the 19th century, during the reign of Queen Victoria, her husband, Prince Albert, introduced the German tradition.
3. Leonardo da Vinci.

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Editor's note.

Thank you very much to the following members who contributed to this edition of Snippets - your contributions are always gratefully received. Lisa Plucknett, Susan Myring, Marnie Trass. Please don't forget me should you travel, or if you have an interesting article, we would love to hear from you.

The Club's Objectives are:

- To further knowledge and enjoyment of horticulture.
- To raise awareness in the club and community of local environment and to encourage planting of local indigenous species.
- To enjoy social interaction between members of this and similar clubs.

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