



### Spring 2015

Editor President Hon. Secretary Hon. Treasurer Marnie Trass Marie Hegerty Jim Laundy Margaret Owens 5435 8406 5494 4404 5499 9317 5429 6789

Mailing Address: The Secretary, P.O. Box 563, Maleny Qld 4552

Website www.malenygardenclub.org

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

Well, I visited my sister in Townsville for ten days leaving my flowering peach with a few blooms. Attached and came home to the tree in full bloom. What a difference a few days

Apart from the fun of looking forward to our coming to life in spring, the club looks forward to, a new Committee to take over next month.

We say a very big thanks to Jan and Glenys For the time and effort they have given to our Club over the past few years.

Lee whilst not officially a committee member has done a great job with the labelling for GOE and we thank you also for your work.

It was so lovely to receive a note from Clint Kenny to say how much he enjoyed coming over from Warwick to spend time at our meeting and he felt right at home with everyone treating him as an old friend. Mind you some of our ladies said he was a Great eye candy, what on earth do they mean?

Please make sure you attend in September if you can as we will have our usual picnic lunch, weather permitting and it is a nice time to spend catching up with one another.

Sip n Snip will be here at home in September and I hope that my roses will be blooming As I think I may have cut them back a little late. Never mind it's not so much about the garden as the get together and I hope as many of you can come as possible.

We have had some very enjoyable outings this Year to our member's homes and it is just a shame in some ways that our club has grown to a stage where general meetings are hard to organise in members gardens because a lot of

us just don't have the room for the number attending.

Keep well,

Yours in the garden, Marnie

#### A Riot of Rhododendrons

Azaleas and their big brothers, the rhododendrons are amongst the most floriferous shrubs to grow in our gardens. Many gardeners do not realise that botanically, azaleas are the same as rhododendrons. This means that they need similar soils and conditions to grow successfully.

Azaleas are undoubtedly more popular with most home gardeners and the beautiful rhododendrons have been largely ignored, except in very cold districts where their hardiness is appreciated.

These plants need slightly acid soils with plenty of humus in the form of leaf mould and compost. Fresh manure and lime should never be used near these plants. Good drainage is important as they will not tolerate wet or waterlogged soil. But they do need regular watering and a layer of mulch over the root areas to prevent the shallow and fibrous root system from drying out.

In areas where soil is heavy clay or very alkaline, azaleas and rhododendrons will survive better in tubs filled with a suitable potting mix.

The rhododendron family is a native of woodland areas and thrives in the filtered sunlight of taller trees. In home gardens they will also be happy in partial shade. The tall, single azaleas can even be grown in full sun if given plenty of summer watering.

The rhododendrons most familiar to gardeners originated mainly in the Himalayan region and North America and were hybridised for the different conditions in Britain, Europe and the United States. They do best in cool to temperate hilly areas.

Good news for Australian gardeners along the humid coast is that many of the species native to the tropical highland areas of Papua New Guinea, Borneo, the Philippines and one species from North Queensland are being hybridised and grown successfully in warm climates.

These rhododendrons are called vireyas and they develop into smaller and more open shrubs than the densely foliaged, broad leafed type. The flowers range in size from tiny, heath-like bells to large, open trumpets and are highly fragrant. Colours range from white to pink, yellow, orange, red and bi-colours and many of the plants flower freely year round.

One of Australian's leading hybridists of vireya rhododendrons is Dr John Rouse, a Melbourne nuclear physicists who has developed many beautiful varieties. One of the most spectacular is Clare Rouse (named after his wife), a strong grower producing brilliant yellow flowers with orange edges.

In their native state, many of the vireyas are epiphytic and are found growing in the leaf mould that has collected in forks of trees. Grown in the garden, they need plenty of leaf mulch and compost dug into the soil to ensure free drainage and free root run.

Though the Victorian climate is rather cold for these rhododendrons, the only wholesale nursery specialising in vireyas is Shrublands Nursery at Boronia where Graham Snell lists almost 100 different species and named varieties in his catalogue.

Vireyas make excellent potted plants because of their small root system which enables them to grow for many tears in 28cm to 30cm pots. They need soil less potting mix similar to an orchid compost and growers use mixtures containing pine bark, coarse sand and perlite. As this contains no nutrients a slow release fertiliser should be used in small amounts (half the recommended quantity) twice a year or half strength Aquasol or similar foliar fertiliser can be used several times yearly. Vireyas should be re-potted into new potting mix regularly as the mixture breaks down. Grower Graham Snell recommends tree fern logs and baskets lined with sphagnum moss. Grown this way, St. Valentine and Tropic Fanfare have developed into very wide plants that flower all year round.

Vireyas grow naturally where summers are wet and winters are dry, so they need plenty of water in summer, particularly in the hot, dry weather such as Melbourne's where humidity is often low in summer Shirley Stackhouse, Women's Day 1987

(This is an extract of an article by Shirley Stackhouse, a well known garden enthusiast and writer.. I also opted to submit this interesting article because of it's mention of Graham Snell. Many will remember Graham and his wife who lived in Maleny for several years before moving to Toowoomba and who was well known by garden club members...

>>>>>>>>>>>>

#### Retired

Tom retired in his early 50's and started a second career. However, even though he loved his new job, he just couldn't seem to get to work on time. Every day, he was 5, 10, 15 minutes late.

But he was a good worker and really sharp, so his boss was in a quandary about how to deal with it. Finally, one day, his boss called him into the office for a talk.

"Tom, I must tell you, I truly like your work ethic, you do a bang-up job, but being late for work nearly every day is quite annoying to me as well as your fellow workers."

Tom replied, "Yes, sir, I know. I'm sorry, but I am working on it."

"That's what I like to hear." his boss said. "However. the fact that you consistently come to work late does puzzle me, because I understand that you retired from the United States Air Force, and they have some pretty rigid rules about tardiness. Isn't that correct?"

"Yes. I did retire from the Air Force, and I'm mighty proud of it!" said Tom.

"Well, what did they say when you came in late?" asked his boss.

"They said, 'Good morning, General'."

#### Mission to the Philippines

Recently Harvey and I went on a two week mission trip to the Philippines with our son, David, daughter in law, Robyn and our three delightful grandchildren aged from 10 to 16 years of age.. It was such a memorable experience!.

David, a civil engineer, set up a foundation in 2004 to support ministry funding, livelihood projects, feeding programs, outreach programs and supply of equipment needed for ministry such as cars, motor bikes, musical instruments

etc in various parts of the Philippines but especially in areas around Cagayan de Oro(C.D.O.) in Mindanao. A few times each year friends and family help pack containers to ship over medical equipment, school supplies, clothing etc.

We so enjoyed seeing the stunning tropical flowers, especially the amazing orchids at Changi Airport.

It was so special to catch up with our Philippino "family" whom we hadn't seen for 7 years. To many of them we are "Mum" and "Dad". This trip we worked with a talented, young school teacher who calls me "Mother Dearest" which is so quaint.

Much of the first week was involved in training days and purchasing and packaging food parcels in readiness for our visits to isolated tribal communities up in the mountains. While we were there, Mindanao was experiencing drought conditions and the countryside was hot, dry and dusty.

The visit which had the most impact on us was a 5hr trip south of CDO into a high mountainous area. Here we met the most poverty-stricken tribes of people we have ever seen! All of their fertile lands have been taken away from them by rich cane farmers with their own private soldiers. This group of 4 clans have no electricity or running water. Their only water supply is an almost dried up well which is far away from many folk. While there, the team purchased a hand pump to make things a little easier and will look at future options. I will always have vivid memories etched in my mind.....hugging older women whose eyes were bleeding grief...signs of malnutrition in some of the precious children....ramshackled small shanties, some just put together with a mixture of materials such as old worn tarpaulins, cardboard sheets with old bits of timber etc(none of these looked rainproof).

Toward the end of our 2 weeks we had a 3 day Leader's Retreat on spectacular Camiguin Island, known as the "island born of fire". There are 7 volcanoes on the island with 4 of them still active... rugged mountains, lush vegetation, hot and cold springs and plunging waterfalls.

With teary eyes we hugged each of the 2 dozen Philippino friends who came to see us off at the

airport. Our love, prayers and a chunk of our hearts will always be with them.

Betty Weston

#### How Does Your Garden Grow?

**Q** My 10y/o lemon tree fruits well but the fruit drops when full size and starts to rot from the end, moving through the centre towards the stem end. It has little juice and the flesh is a green colour. It also has no seeds. Maybe it isn't a lemon?

A It is possible your lemon is a lemonade(a lemon \*mandarin hybrid). These vigorous growers produce fruit the size of and shape of a lemon but are fully ripe when still green

Water and nutrient stress can result in the premature breakdown in fruit. Fruit with little juice is also an indication of water and nutrient deficiency. I also suspect you are simply leaving the fruit on the tree too long before harvesting (in the hope that that it will turn yellow). Over mature fruit is prone to stylar end rot which causes the base of the fruit to develop a soft rot and fruit to fall to the ground.

## Q Is it possible to kill white curl grubs in potting mix in order to reuse it?

A Curl grubs are the larvae of beetles. Pots found to be infested with curl grubs can be watered with a strong solution of molasses (up to 4tbsp per litre of water). Keep in mind however, that potting mix breaks down over time. Spent potting mix should be recycled via the compost heap.

Q I planted five kentia palms in my garden20yrs ago. In the last 12 months, each palm has begun to drop healthy fronds every few weeks so now each palm has only a top notch and I fear all will eventually die. A Cane beetles feeding on the roots of palms can cause plants to deteriorate, so check the soil for curl grub larvae. But I suspect these palms suffer from root rot. Palms cannot stand poor drainage and if your subsoil is clay it is possible the palm roots have now reached this depth. Soil treatment with a fungicide drench is an option but I suspect your palms have deteriorated too far for this. Once decay enters the water-conducting tissue (implied by the healthy frond drop) it's nearly impossible to eradicate. e; homeground@thesundaymail.com.au submitted by Marie Hagerty

# Things we Love about the Maleny Garden Club

So many things, here are but a few.

During 1995 when Pat Powell was President and Shirley Hollonds, the incoming President, a survey was conducted of the members with 15 questions, ranging from 'do you think the meetings are too long, 'what do you want from the speakers', 'where do you prefer the meetings held' finally asking 'What do you like about the Garden Club' without any speculation or leads on what the answers should be.

To the last question 67 members responded with a fairly even split between 'Learning about Gardening' \_\_\_ 35 members thought so, while 32 members thought 'friendship'. I guess that all 67 agreed that friendship was the glue that held it all together. It is interesting in some of the handwritten meeting minutes reference is sometimes made to 'an enjoyable meeting with some noisy chatterboxes' no doubt catching up with old friends. That's a win-win, some getting garden knowledge and the others keeping up friendships (although the speakers might have thought otherwise).

As an example of what the Garden Club means to its members Val Bengston (as the Club Secretary in 1999) wrote a piece for the Range News when one of the longest standing members Thalia Skerman passed away and to do it justice it is reproduced as written.

"In April we lost a dedicated lifetime member of our Garden Club. Thalia Skerman had been a participator in the Maleny towns active and growing community. She told many tales of the "early days" and fledgling organisations, many of which she was a founding member. Her small garden at the retirement village was a joy, and will continue to delight all who reside there.

Until the end Thalia served where she was able and gave the Range News her descriptive pieces for publication.

There have been many 'Thalia's' in our club, and we miss them all, but little snips of them live on in the gardens all over Maleny, as voices say "Oh, that, that came from Thalia's garden"

The idea of friendship and sharing goes back to the very beginnings of the Club, twice yearly fairs (Autumn and Spring) were organised to benefit many organisations much like GOE today, we forget the Ambulance Service relied on donations, the School of Arts destroyed by fire in 1951 had to be funded by public donations in which the M&DHS played no small part in fundraising.

In our garden we share many plants that have come from the generosity of members who open their gardens for friendship. Thank you all.

Brian Robertson

#### Garden-lovers Quotations

I don't know how people deal with their moods when they have no garden, raspberry patch or field to work in. You can take your angers, frustrations, bewilderments to the earth, working savagely, working up a sweat and an ache and a great weariness. The work rinses out the cup of your spirit, leaves it washed and clean and ready to be freshly filled with new hope. It is one of the reasons I am addicted to raspberry patches.

Rachel Peden

#### Editor's note.

As we are soon to go overseas for a few weeks this edition has had to be completed ahead of time. I'd like to thank Jan Mcguire for assistance in getting Snippets out to you on time. Thank you also thos who have contributed to this season's edition. They are;

......

Marnie Trass, Brian Robertson Bette Weston, Marie Hagerty, 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.

All contributions to: Margaret Owens email: margaret.owens@bigpond.com
Disclaimer Articles contributed to this newsletter are published as a service to members and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or policy of the club..