

# SNIPPETS

From here and there



Summer 2019

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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.

## Note from The President.

Recently the committee and helpers hosted a lunch to honour our life members. Unfortunately, Olga Webster and Pat Powell were unable to attend but we very much enjoyed the company of Mollie Cock, Joyce Butterfield, Norma McLeod, Val Bengston, Corrine Taylor and Di Hall. It was fascinating to hear the reminiscences and stories of events and personalities from over the years. Brian Robertson has put together a history of our club and filled in some gaps in our history during conversations on the day. Many of the life members have contributed not only stories but photographs going back many years. We are experiencing unprecedented heat and dryness, not good conditions for ourselves and our gardens. Some plants thrive on this and these may be the new favourites into the future. My favourite heliotropes and cleomes keep going forever with no extra water.

Enjoy the Christmas break and travel safely.

Happy Christmas from Dot

(see back page for photo of life members and their husbands)

## Quick Quiz

1. How many gallons of fuel does a jet use during takeoff?
2. Which language is the most commonly spoken language in the world?
3. The opera Aida by Verdi, is set in which country?
4. Who was the Japanese Emperor at the start of World War II?

## Ever Wonder?

**Why .....**

**do Tesco's make the sick walk all the way to the back of the store to get their prescriptions while healthy people can buy cigarettes at the front.**

**Why**

**is lemon juice made with artificial flavour, and dishwashing liquid made with real lemons?**

**Why**

**.....do we leave cars worth thousands of dollars in the driveway and put our useless junk in the garage.**

**Why**

**don't you ever see the headline ' Psychic Wins Lottery'?**

Why? Good Question



## Gardening Women

"It had been a long, hard fight. The struggle for women to gain access to training and careers in professional horticulture is the last and longest section in Catherine Horwood's multi-layered *Gardening Women*, but it is the thread which binds the whole together. Waterperry was one of the most famous and longest-surviving of the private training establishments, but it was not the first: Swanley in Kent (later amalgamated with Wye College, itself now subsumed in Imperial College, London) opened its doors to women in 1891, and by the early years of the 20th century there were more than 20 such schools turning out pupils who regularly topped the RHS examinations".

But after training, the problem was still where to find work – and what to wear. The first female gardeners taken on at Kew in 1896 (dubbed the "Kewriositys" by the London press) were attired in bloomers. When passing omnibuses were crowded with rubbernecking sightseers and songs were published with such refrains as "Who wants to see blooms now you've bloomers at Kew?" the girls were quickly told to wear knickerbockers (not trousers) instead".

"A rumour went forth, and the town was aglow  
From Greenwich to Richmond, from Peckham to  
Bow-

And the man-in-the-street made a fine how-de-do,  
When he heard of the ladies who gardened at Kew.

They gardened in bloomers, the newspaper said;  
So to Kew without waiting all Londoners sped:  
From the roofs of the buses they had a fine view  
Of the ladies in bloomers who gardened at Kew.

The orchids were slighted, the lilies were scorned,  
The dahlias were flouted till botanists mourned,  
But the Londoners shouted, 'What ho, there, go to;  
Who wants to see blooms now you've bloomers at  
Kew."

So the botanists held a meeting - a big meeting and  
said;

This won't do, all London has gone off it's head  
This costume we find too painfully 'new',  
It is making a side-show of beautiful Kew.

'These ladies in bloomers are treated as freaks,  
In future they'd better garden in breeks'.  
Now they look so like men no one rushes to view,  
And pastoral quiet has settle at Kew"

C. Horwood(2010) *Gardening Women*, Virago Press.

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## For Seniors Who Have Earned the Right Not To Care.....

**Why rush? 'When I feel like moving, you can move too.'**



**'If you think my car is resting in an odd position,  
you should see my trousers!'**



**The whip is a particularly nice touch!**



## Love My Leaf Blower (Love Affair)

For years I've pandered to my pet hate:  
I've raved and ranted, held up placards and chanted,  
Marched in the street, written to my M.P.  
(As polite as could be).  
Formed a sabotage ring (Just doing my thing).  
Wanted to rid the world of a scourge -  
My own little mission: *leaf blowers* to purge.

But now, alas, I've had a recant, retract, rescind, renege,  
repeal, revoke:  
That burning hate of which I spoke  
Is now all gone and in its stead  
Feelings of love waft around in my head.  
My newest purchase, gleaming, pristine:  
Oh all these years how could I have been  
Without this marvellous *leaf blower*?

My house verandahs are now so clean  
You can see the marks where the furniture's been:  
Chairs and table blown down the yard  
And the dog's kennel up in a tree.  
The driveway gravel scattered all over  
And the rubbish bins not where they should be.  
The chooks nowhere to be seen,  
Two broken windows and dislodged down pipe -  
Don't worry dear I'll repair it all right.

Do you want the paint stripped off your house?  
Your roses deadheaded? That barking dog shredded?  
Would you like that load of bark chip spread?  
Oops, there goes the hat off your head.

It's so powerful I can barely stay on my feet  
And the noise reverberates all down the street.  
So when you pass my house go a little slower  
And together we'll admire my marvellous leaf blower.  
*Ian Pollock , submitted by Carolyn Willadsen*  
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Peter and I were asked by the committee to represent MGC at the Caboolture Christmas in July Friendship Day. They put on a lovely morning tea for each of us, making all the invitees most welcome. Their newsletter for July was distributed and in it was an interesting article that I would like to share with you. It was written by Jeanne Black (WA) and printed here with permission.

### Georgina Malloy One of Australia's First Gardeners-

Georgina Malloy would have to be my favourite pioneer woman of Western Australia. As G. Kennedy, her home was Castle Crosby in the English Lake District-daughter of an affluent upper class family but at the age of 24 she fell in love with Captain Malloy-twice her age. He retired from the

Army Service having fought at Waterloo under the Duke of Wellington and was now about to start a new life in Western Australia. Georgina could never have imagined the hardships she would endure in this young country, so much in contrast to her previous life.

Their first home was at Augusta in the far south-west of Western Australia. Despite having little or no help with domestic chores and pregnancies-seven altogether, she managed always to have a garden. She had brought plants from England including Geraniums. I think that they would have been the Cranesbill variety but she was enchanted with the local wildflowers. She and the children would go on seed collecting expeditions. The seeds that she brought out from England flowered abundantly and gave her the effect of an English cottage garden.

In 1836 she received a surprise in a letter and a box of seeds from Captain Mangles-a cousin of the Governor's wife Lady Sterling. Captain Mangles was a keen horticulturalist and botanist and was consulted by the British Government on improvements to Hyde and Regent's Parks. He asked Georgina if she could send him some specimens of Western Australia's 'native seeds' for scientific research. Georgina not only replied to his request but also collected, labeled and packed the corresponding seeds with their date from her own research and that of local Aborigines. Through her well documented fieldwork and studies, many new species of antipodean (from directly opposite points of the earth) were grown and studied in Britain. Much of this was published under Mangle's name with no reference to Georgina's input.

As her own garden developed at Augusta, Georgina became more content. Captain Mangles sent her large boxes lined with lead full of seeds and plants. She would fill the boxes with Western Australian plants and return them to him. She was later described by Professor Manning Clarke as 'The Madonna of the Bush'. Georgina was just 38 when she died. The loss of her baby son, John, from drowning was a great sorrow. She is buried in a field behind her last home 'Fairlawn'. Her grave is surrounded by her favourite lilies. Both Britain and Australia are indebted to her enterprising spirit.

Recently I visited Augusta and stood on the spot marked by a stone plinth where her cottage stood and the little graveyard where she had walked up the hill carrying her little dead boy. Standing among the trees, no sound but the birds, I felt like a time traveler -no head stones, just some pickets on an unmarked grave.  
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**Life Members Lunch on 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov 2019 with Partners and Committee Members,**



**Seed Reliability:**

While you can't collect seeds from most plants (except garlic), there are distinct categories of vegetables that are well worth collecting and others that are risky. Carrots, Parsley and basil are reliable, open-pollinated plants and do not hybridise easily. Most melons, however, are quite promiscuous and the bees that pollinate them frequently make far too many calls en route to their hive, thus mixing the seed.

Melon pollen on zucchini, zucchini on rockmelons and other similar tasteless combinations, result in useless hybrids. Unless you hand pollinate and then enclose the pollinate stigma or ovary in a light paper bag to stop any further pollination. You are open to the vagaries of where the bees have been. Hand pollination is easy with all the cucurbits or members of the melon family, since they have male and female flowers. The males, from which you take pollen, have a slender stem, while the female ovary is stout at the top and swollen at the base.

**Removing the Doubt:**

Start with fresh seed and you are in front right away. Remember that most seed has an optimum sowing time, according to the season and where you live. There is not much point in trying to sow and germinate petunias in Melbourne's winter unless you have a heat bed. You may achieve germination but what you do with the seedlings while you are waiting for spring? Sowing according to the season is basic good sense. You can crib a month or two for an early start but if direct seeding (often called sowing in situ), you need to be in sympathy with the season. Parsley is exception and will germinate any time, though in summer it will usually bolt straight to seed. Many lettuce and onion varieties do the same, so always honour their season.

In it's wild state, an annual plant will have adapted to germinate when it receives enough rain to mature, set seed and finally die. That seed will have evolved to germinate as the soil temperatures rise or fall, or to stay dormant until rain expands it's seed coat or another mechanism causes it to germinate.

Some flower seed only germinate after a few days of exposure to bright sunlight, while others need total darkness. Some are only slightly influenced by light or darkness but will certainly germinate when given their preferred circumstance.

Any fresh seed will germinate ofcourse but for an even emergence you need to know their exact requirements. Using a digital temperature gauge, I recently tested the temperature variation in several punnets- with surprising results, especially considering that it's winter. I took the reading when the air temperature was 20.1 C. On the dark side of the punnets it was 17.3 C, while on the warm side it was 24.3 C. Most plants can't germinate with this temperature variable.

Bedding plant nurseries attempt to remove this risk and when we buy seedlings in a punnet we are paying for this effort. However, I am astonished at how little information is printed on the seed packets these days. The seed merchants will no doubt claim that in an effort to keep unit costs down they print generic packets for much of their range. However, if you pay a good price for seeds you want good seedlings to realise your dream.

*Gardening Australia 1999*

**Editor's Note:**

Well another year is all but over. Where has 2019 gone? I'd like to thank all those who have so generously contributed to Snippets throughout the year. Without your support my task would be much more difficult. So please try and remember me this coming year especially as you travel.

**Answers to Quick Quiz**

1. 4,000
2. Chinese
3. Egypt.
4. Hirohito.

**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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