



LEURA HOME GARDEN CLUB INC.



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Meetings: 3rd Tuesday of each
month at St. Alban's Church Hall,
Leura commencing at 9.45am

We regret to announce that Bill Darley, the husband of Emily Darley, has passed away last month.

Social and Touring.

Winter Lunch: Tuesday 18th July, today at 12.45 pm, at the Alexandra Hotel, Leura. This is immediately following today's Meeting..

Wednesday 23 August: Magical Mystery Tour. Bus \$15.00; pay today or next month. M.tea and lunch at own expense.

Depart: 8.30 am Leura Bus Bay.

Suggestions for other trips are always welcome - speak to Richard Landon: email: richardlandon45@gmail.com Phone **4759 1669** or mob **0458 239 259**.

Please contact Richard if you book on a trip and then find you are unable to attend, as there are often waiting lists for the trips.

Please do not arrange anyone to take your place as members on the waiting list must have first option on any vacancy.

Garden Rambles.

Suspended during the winter months.

Today's Speaker :

.Our talk today is by Ms Liz Benson. Her subject will be 'Gardening with Birds'.

Club Meeting 20 June 2017

Attendance: 49 **Apologies:** 19 . We welcomed one visitor:
Joia Thornton.

General Business:

Ann asked members to check their membership details with John and Terry to ensure the Club records are up to date and accurate. This applies particularly to email addresses, as these are used to email the monthly Newsletter to any member sending in an apology for that Meeting.

Leura Garden Festival

In an effort to reduce the use of new plastic bags at the Plant Sales, Richard has requested any smallish or medium boxes, clean plastic bags with handles (such as Supermarket bags) and clean newspapers. If you can help with any of these please bring to August or September Meetings or drop down to Plant Sales during the Festival.

Welfare:

Ann advised she had sent cards to Judy Hay, Maureen Bailey, Robyn Stone and Marie Wood, and had received a card from Di Cox thanking her for the card she had sent. Ann had also visited Emily Darley for her 98th birthday.

Trading Table, Hospital Garden and Railway Garden.

Merle Hansard advised members there were a number of gardening books, dahlia bulbs and lemons donated for sale at the Trading Table.

The Hospital Garden, which is a joint project with the Katoomba

Garden Club, has been mulched, weeded and plants trimmed back.

Roz Sing gave an update of their work in the Railway Garden. They had continued to mulch and had placed rocks in the garden that had been excavated from their own garden. Roz also expressed her thanks for plants from the Trading Table. Liaison was continuing with Sydney Trains for the water supply to the garden to be retained and a meeting with the Sydney Trains contractors is to be arranged. Community support for the retention of the water supply would also be sought from the Leura Village Association.

Raffle: (with a prize donated by Birches of Leura). The raffle was drawn by Mirva Crinnion..The 1st prize was won by Christine Sutcliffe; 2nd prize by Merle Hansard,

This Month in Your Garden:

Lorraine McMiles gave an interesting talk on plant variation particularly in relation to the selection of plants. Lorraine also described her 5 point plan for the onset of Winter. This included the inspection of plants for disease and treatment, weeding, mulching and planting for Spring.

Speaker:

Ann introduced Mirva Crinnion of Fothergills Seeds. Mirva described the range of products available from Fothergills. These covered four areas including seeds, bulbs, propagation and seed kits while packet seeds were at the heart of the Company. In addition to these areas, Fothergills also had all-in-one seed kits which were suitable for those less experienced and for smaller garden spaces. Fothergills also had products for children which were designed to encourage children to garden. Mirva passed around photo illustrations of trials showing the comparisons between growing vegetable plants from seeds and growing them from seedlings. This showed that plants grown from seeds achieved full growth either before or at the same time as seedlings. Among the displays of Fothergills products, Mirva showed a range of seed mats for pots and seed tape which included vegetable seeds carefully spaced in biodegradable paper, for rolling out onto prepared rows to allow even spacing and reduce the need for thinning. She also described the resources available on the Fothergills website, Facebook and newsletters and an app that provided advice by postcode on what to plant at each part of the year and with advice on crop rotation.

Ann thanked Mirva on behalf of the members for a very informative and interesting talk.

Back Page:

This month we have some information about a tree which many of us have growing in our garden: Banksias

BEAUTIFUL BANKSIAS

Banksias are best known for their iconic, bird-attracting flowers that give way to long-lasting woody cones, but there is much more to these Aussie beauties. The diversity of this genus is astounding, not just in plant size and form but also in their foliage shape, texture and colours. In fact the closer you look, the more fascinating this group becomes, from the intricate patterning of the flower buds to the detail of the seed capsules. Banksias are truly a plant collector's dream.

GROWING BANKSIAS

It makes good sense to choose banksia species that are well-suited to your local conditions. As a general rule most of the species in the eastern states are frost-tolerant and better suited to heavier soils. Western Australian species on the other hand require well-grained soils and tend not to be as frost-tolerant.

If you are keen to try growing Western Australian species in heavy soils, it's vital to improve the drainage by incorporating gypsum and to mound up the garden beds. Growing smaller habitat specimens in large pots filled with a coarse native formulated potting mix is also worth a try.

All banksias are drought-tolerant once mature, but young plants appreciate an occasional drink until they become established. New planting is best done from autumn to spring, but if you are planting banksias in summer or when it is very dry, up to two waterings a week may be required. Gradually reduce this until the plants are coping on their own.

Like all members of the Proteaceae family, banksias are sensitive to the over-application of phosphorous. In fact, over fertilising with any general-purpose fertiliser quickly kills them. Instead, use a slow-release native fertiliser and plenty of bark and leaf-litter mulch.

Banksias need little care once fully established apart from an occasional light prune to shape. Many plants develop attractive seed heads and interesting shapes, which only add to their beauty.

PESTS AND DISEASES

The main disease to watch out for is phytophthora or 'die back', a soil-borne fungus that damages roots and prevents plants from taking up water. Phytophthora

also affects many other native and exotic plant species.

The best way to prevent it spreading is to reduce the movement of contaminated soils. Once banksias are infected they quickly deteriorate and can collapse within weeks. Treatment against the disease is possible using potassium phosphite (phosacid) as a drench or injected systemically.

Boring insects are common and can be identified by the presence of holes in the stem with sawdust droppings around the outside. Healthy plants normally survive or borer attacks by outgrowing the damage. Badly affected branches can be cut off and destroyed.

BANKSIA FARM

If you're keen to see all the *Banksia* genus has to offer, a trip to the Banksia Farm in WA is a must.

Located near the ancient Porongurup Ranges about four hours south of Perth, plant enthusiasts Kevin and Kathy Collins have assembled all 77 known species of banksia on their five-hectare property. They maintain it is the only complete collection open to the public in the world.

Kevin's interest in banksias is infectious and he generously shares his knowledge with visitors to the property. He encourages people to look, touch and taste to really appreciate all the banksia's amazing qualities. Kevin and Kathy are co-authoring a revision of the popular banksia reference *The Banksia Book* (Kangaroo Press) with Alex George, due for release in late 2007.

The Banksia Farm is at Pearce Road, Mt Barker, WA. Call (08) 9851 1770 or visit www.banksiafarm.com.au

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The genus *Banksia* was named after Sir Joseph Banks (1743-1820), who was the first European to collect specimens. There are 77 species, with 60 of these naturally occurring only in the south-west of WA. Banksias belong to the Proteaceae family along with their Australian cousins the grevillea, waratah, dryandra, hakea, macadamia, and their South African cousin, protea .

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