

HORTULANUS

Official Publication of Ku-ring-gai Horticultural Society Inc.

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OCTOBER 2024

COMING EVENTS

- Sept. 28/29 Bromeliad Society Spring Show and Sale, Federation Pavilion, Castle Hill Showground, Showground Road, Castle Hill. Sat. 9am-4pm, Sun. 10am-3pm.
- Oct. 1 KHS Meeting and Trading Table
- Oct. 4-7 Leura Gardens Festival, 9 Gardens open. Info: www.leuragardensfestival.com
- Oct. 16 KHS Outing to Little Hartley (see below)
- Oct. 19/20 Hartley Valley Garden Festival & Plant Fair, Little Hartley 10am-4pm. Five gardens open
- Oct. 18-20 Galston Open Gardens. Tickets and map available at the Galston Club, 21 Arcadia Road, Arcadia. 9.30am-4.30pm. Eight gardens open.
- Oct. 17-20 Berry Gardens Festival. Enq. <https://berrygardens.org.au/berry-gardens-festival/>
- Oct. 26/27 Bundanoon Garden Ramble. Tickets available from the Memorial Hall. 9.30am-4.30pm. Eight gardens open.
- Oct. 26/27 Bathurst Spring Spectacular. Tickets available from Bathurst Visitor Centre. Cost \$25. 9.30am to 5pm. Enq. Lorraine Griffin Ph. 0435 786 485. Eight gardens open.
- Nov. 7 KHS Meeting

MEMBER NEWS

As a result of the AGM held at the September meeting, the Officers and Committee of the Society were returned as follows: President - Evelyn Mason, Vice-President - Ted Shaw, Secretary - Christine Rethers, Treasurer - Robyn Brown, Committee - Helen Gilkes and Jenny Watsford.

One of our long time members, Tony Gray, wanted to share some of thoughts and photos of plants in his garden with fellow members.

Tony has very recently lost his wife, Eileen, and finds his garden is a place of solace and beauty. Our gardens are a place where we can go for peace of mind and tranquillity in the turmoil of daily life. A place where we can breathe in the clean air and enjoy the beauty of nature.



Some exciting news for all rose lovers in our part of Sydney... the

Rose Society of New South Wales is establishing a new regional group to be known as Northern Sydney Regional catering to those of us who are rose lovers and growing enthusiasts living on the North Shore and Northern Beaches. Three of our own members Kym Swaby, Penny Whipp and Judith Williamson, have been working hard behind the scenes to make this happen. On Saturday, November 16 there will be a launch event for the new group which you are invited to attend. In the meantime, at our October meeting, Kym, Penny and Judith will tell us about the launch event and more importantly they will explain the exclusive benefits enjoyed by members of the Rose Society including a special membership offer open to foundation members of the new regional group. If you unable to wait till our October meeting to find out about the special membership offer or exclusive benefits of Rose Society membership or you would like to register to attend the launch event in November, please phone 0409 548 561 or email northernsydneyrose@gmail.com.

Christmas Lunch: This will to be held on Tuesday, 21 November 2023 starting at 12.30pm at the Terrey Hills Golf and Country Club, Booralie Road, Terrey Hills. The cost will be \$95 per person and the lunch will include a glass of wine and some canapes on arrival followed by a choice of two main courses and two desserts. Tea/coffee and petits fours will finish the meal. An invitation to this event which contains instructions on how to book and pay is being sent with this newsletter.

OUTINGS

The outing to Little Hartley on Wednesday, 16 October 2024.

Bookings will close this coming Friday, 27 September for the outing to visit three lovely gardens at Little

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Hartley. The outing will include morning tea, lunch at one of the gardens and all garden entries, and the cost will be \$130. A booking form is included with this newsletter. You can make your booking by phoning Helen Gilkes on 9144 4826 by no later than this Friday 27th September.

Four-day outing to Bright, Vic. from Tuesday, 29 April to Friday, 2 May 2025.

Arrangements have been completed for a four-day outing to the Bright Autumn Festival to visit open gardens in Bright and surrounds, and to enjoy activities ear-marked for enroute stops. KHS members and friends are invited, and invitations will be issued to members of other garden clubs in at a later date.

We will travel by luxury coach, with a stay of two nights in Beechworth close to Bright and one night in Tumut. We will visit 7 gardens and 2 nurseries, and will have all meals (except for one lunchtime meal during free time in Bright) and garden entries provided. The total cost of this trip is \$810 per person plus \$180 for those requiring a room on their own. Refer to the attached trip outline for more details. To book complete the attached booking form and pay your \$100 deposit to secure your place on this trip.

What you will see:



RAFFLE

This month's raffle consisted of three lovely native plants sourced for us by Nancy Shaw, some classic gardening books and some chocolates. Many thanks to all the donors. The cost is only 3 tickets for \$2.

GARDEN TABLE

The Garden Table was almost empty this month with just one plant being offered for sale. Maybe everyone was saving up for next month (1st October) when we will be having the Members' Trading Table. Because of this, there will not be a Garden Table in operation for the October meeting only.

MEMBERS' TRADING TABLE

The Trading Table will be operating at the October meeting. Members may bring in a **maximum of 30 plants** to sell and 10% of the proceeds will go to the Society with the rest to the member.

Traders are reminded of the following requirements:

- * Only plants can be sold,
- * All items should be in good condition, pots should be clean with no soil, roots or stains.
- * The plant must be disease- and insect-free with no damaged or dead leaves and weeds should be removed.
- * The plant should be named with a label or sticker. In addition, a paddle pop stick showing the owner's initials, the plant number and the price required should be put in each pot.

On the form there are two sections, the first half is your record. The first column will be ticked off by the sales team as the plant is received. The second column is for the number of the plant so each plant will have a number from 1 to 10. The third column is for the plant name – if you don't know the name then a short description. The fourth column is the price you wish to receive for this plant and the fifth column is the price that the plant sold for. On the second half of the form you should repeat this information so that the sales team can keep a record which they use to process your payment.

If you want to bring more than 10 plants, then simply use another form but continue the numbering, e.g. the next set of plants will be numbered from 11 up to 20. You will receive your payment at the next meeting. You will be handed back the first half of the form at the end of the meeting. **Please take home any of your unsold plants.** Paddle pop sticks and extra forms will be available at the table. Plants will be checked in on arrival at a table outside the hall and the paper work will be signed off.

As the wonderful team who run the Garden Table will be looking after the Trading Table, **there will be no Garden Table for this meeting only.** The form to be completed is available with this newsletter –just print out a copy, fill it in and bring it with you when you bring in your plants that you want to sell. **Remember - this is a cash only sale and you will need to bring your own bags or boxes for your purchases.**

MAIN SPEAKER SEPTEMBER

This was Sandra Marker whose topic was Sogetsu Ikebana. Sandy introduced her topic by first taking us through a brief history of Ikebana (the art of formalised flower arranging). It is thought that Ikebana was introduced into Japan in the 6th century by Chinese Buddhist missionaries who had formalized the ritual of offering flowers to the Buddha.



Sandra Marker

Up to the Meiji period, this was the domain of men only but during this period it was decreed that it was from then on to be a standard part of women's education. In the 1920's the Sogetsu movement was formed which is characterised by a more informal style of arrangement. Containers are usually tall and fairly narrow or they may be low and flat dishes into which the flowers and branches are fixed in hidden kenzan spikes. One of Sōgetsu's central ideas is that an arrangement should have three strong elements, each with certain proportions and arranged at a certain angle. But there is considerable latitude to work with whatever materials are available and to express the spirit of the moment. Containers can be made of ceramics, glass, wood, metal, bamboo, in fact almost anything that can hold water. Any kind of plant material can be used—branches, leaves, flowers, etc. and the arrangement can be any size from miniature to a large installation. Sandra then showed us pictures of some of her amazing creations which can be seen on her website, www.sandymarker.com.



A kenzan

To finish, Sandy demonstrated four creations using plant material and containers that she had brought with her. Her friend, Margaret Hall, had made some of these lovely ceramic containers and had some available for sale. Ted Shaw had set up a camera to film Sandy as she worked and showed this up on the screen in front so that people sitting farther back could see Sandy working.



Sandy made one last creation which she very kindly donated (with the container) to the raffle.

Main speaker October: This will be Jill Richardson who will speak to us about 'A Taste of the Bush'. Jill's interest in bush food started when she visited a stand at a farmers' market selling products made from native plants. She went on to set up a business promoting bush foods, has a cooking school and has written a cookery book which features recipes using native produce. Jill will bring some of her produce for us to purchase.

No member speaker because of the AGM

Member speaker October: This will be Evelyn Mason who will show us some of the places she visited on her recent trip to England and Europe.

IN THE VEGIE PATCH IN OCTOBER by Christine Rethers

Now is the time to get serious about the summer vegie garden and make your selection of what you want to grow. The choice is endless and includes tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchinis, eggplants, beans (bush beans or climbing beans), silver beet and corn. Remember that tomatoes, beans and cucumbers all benefit from having something to support them. This could be as simple as a tee-pee where a number of tall stakes are placed in a circle and tied at the top. An alternative would be a row of stakes up which you can guide the plants as they grow. It is advisable to put in the structure and then plant your plants with the appropriately spacing.



Zucchini and eggplants need to be given a minimum of 75-100cm between plants as they can grow quite big. Silver beet plants can be grown fairly close together with a minimum of about 30cm between plants.



It is always fun to grow pumpkins. Some are quite small and the plants remain quite tidy but if you want to grow the large ones like butternut or Queensland Blue, then you will need to find some space for them to ramble. Along a fence line is sometimes a convenient place to put them and then they can scramble up the fence with a bit of help from you.

Ted Shaw has a good tip to pass on. It concerns matching levels of N-P-K elements with crops planted.

- * Leafy greens (e.g. lettuce) need higher N (nitrogen) and chicken manure is a good source.
- * Root crops (e.g. carrots) need higher P (phosphorous). Blood and bone is a good source as is manure.
- * Flowering crops (e.g. tomatoes, corn, cucumbers, zucchini) need higher K (potassium) and potash and wood ash are good sources.

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YOUR OCTOBER GARDEN by Maureen Smith

Now that the weather is warming up, it's great to be out in the garden, to walk around and use your senses. Watch for pests such as aphids on new spring growth as they are likely at this time of the year and probably in sufficiently small numbers that they can be hosed off. Feel the soil for moisture and if necessary, do some watering if we don't get enough rainwater. Then put down a mulch where you have watered to conserve that moisture. Use a sustainable mulch that will break down and enrich your soil. This could be your own compost or some sugar cane mulch which is plentiful in most nurseries and not too expensive. We don't ever advise pine bark chips as these will draw nitrogen out of the soil as they break down.

The Jacarandas are turning yellow and dropping their leaves and although this can result in the irksome task of sweeping them up, they do presage the beautiful flowering soon to come in late October or early November.

Now could be a good time to create some shade to protect parts of the garden from that hot Sydney summer sun. A quick and easy way is to plant a fast-growing climber over a frame of some kind. Choose a climber that is tough, lushly green and perhaps has the added bonus of a perfumed flower. *Trachelospermum*, also known as Star Jasmine, could be a good choice. Passionfruit can give you the added bonus of fruit. If you prefer natives, *Pandorea pandorana*, the Wonga Wonga vine, comes in a pink/white form or cream/brown. *Hardenbergia*, sometimes sold as Happy Wanderer, is available with either purple or white flowers.

Now is the time to feed your hibiscus and hydrangeas as they come into bud. The resulting flowers will reward you well. You can feed both as you would your roses with a pelletised manure or one of the commercial rose foods.

If you are planning any new additions to your garden, think about attracting pollinators, those very important little creatures. Bees, of course, immediately come to mind and bees love salvias for instance, particularly the blue ones. But there are many other pollinators; hoverflies, wasps, butterflies and moths to name a few. They are all attracted to different plants so diversity in the garden is a good thing. So, think of flowers of different colours, shapes, and perfumes. It's no surprise that lavender is very popular with pollinators because of its beautiful flowers, but also most importantly its perfume. Although it is possible to hand pollinate yourself and if you are trying to produce a specific hybrid, that would be very necessary, there is no substitute for the vast army of insect pollinators that visit our gardens.

Happy Gardening!



The two basic colours of the Pandorea pandorana



Hardenbergia



Trachelospermum (Star Jasmine)

Some handy hints

Free Fertiliser Powerhouse: Unleash the Hidden Potential of Your Kitchen Scraps

Eggshell Fertiliser:

Eggshells provide calcium, which strengthens plant cell walls and promotes healthy fruit growth.

To prepare the Eggshell Fertiliser, crush the dried eggshells into a fine powder using a blender or mortar and pestle.

You can then sprinkle the eggshell powder around the base of the plants or mix it into the soil.

For best results, combine both banana peel (see last month's Hortulanus) and eggshell fertilisers to provide a balanced nutrient supply.

