HORTULANUS

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

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AUGUST 2025

COMING EVENTS

Aug. 5	**KHS Meeting: Speaker is Stuart Read and his topic is the garden designer, Paul Sorensen**
Aug. 8	**Eryldene House and Garden, 17 McIntosh St, Gordon. Open 10am-12.30pm**
Aug. 8-31	**Margaret Flockton Exhibition, Garden Galley of the Royal Botanic Gardens 10am-4pm**
Aug. 10	**Eryldene House and Garden, 17 McIntosh St, Gordon. Open 10am-3pm**
Aug. 15-17	**St. Ives Orchid Fair, St. Ives Showground. Open 9am-4pm (Sun 9am-3pm) Entry: $8**
Aug. 16	**Bonsai Society of Sydney—Exhibition at the Community Art Centre, 6 Darley Street, Forestville 9am-3.30pm Enq. Ph: 0434 681 542 Entry - gold coin donation**
Sept. 2	**KHS Meeting and AGM - Speaker: Paul Nicholson, Royal Botanic Gardens**
Sept. 6/7	**Plant Lovers Fair, Kariong. Sat. 8-4pm, Sun. 9-3pm. Further information: https://www.plantloversfair.com.au/**
Sept. 13/14	**Spring Clivia Show and Sales, Phyllis Ave, Thornleigh Sat. 9am-4pm, Sun. 9am- 3pm Entry: $5**

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that our Annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday, 5 September 2025.
The purpose of the meeting is:
* *To confirm the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting.*
* *To receive the President's Report for 2025*
* *To receive and consider the accounts for the year ended 30 June 2025.*
* *To elect office bearers and committee members.*

All existing officers and committee members will stand down. Evelyn Mason, Ted Shaw, Christine Rethers, Robyn Brown, Helen Gilkes and Jenny Watsford offer themselves for election. Additional nominations would be welcomed.
If you wish to offer yourself for nomination or would like more information, please phone Christine Rethers on 9449 6245.

MEMBER NEWS

It was a very wet and cool evening for our July meeting but despite this, 30 members and visitors ventured out to enjoy the activities. We were very pleased to find that our hall was at a very comfortable temperature throughout the evening.

Membership subscriptions were due on 1st July 2025 - $25 for a single and $35 for a double. Please complete the attached renewal form and return it with your payment (cash, cheque or by direct debit) in an envelope with your name on it to Helen Gilkes at the August meeting or post it to Mrs Robyn Brown, P O Box 508, Forestville 2087. Please fill in the subscription form as it is needed to check that we have your details correctly recorded.

OUTINGS

We have made a booking for a one-day trip to the Bundanoon Garden Ramble on Saturday, 25th October. The booking form and further details are available with this newsletter.

The Society's Members' Garden Ramble will take place on Sunday, 12th October, starting at 1.30pm and finishing at about 4pm. We will give you all the details closer to the date. Grateful thanks to the members who have volunteered to open their gardens.

RAFFLE

There were some lovely native plants provided by the Society on the raffle table. The other raffle prizes were donated by members—thank you to all those anonymous members who bring along some very nice prizes.

GARDEN TABLE

Understandably, there were only a few plants available this month due to the very bad weather. Don't forget to check out the Garden Table each month for some real bargains.

GUEST SPEAKER JULY

Our guest speaker was the well-known horticulturalist, Judy Horton. Judy was for many years a spokesperson for the Yates garden company and in this picture she is holding a copy of one of the earlier editions of the Yates Garden Guide. She edited six of these editions which were published every few years.

Rosa rugosa

Judy's talk, 'My Life with Roses', started right at the beginning - fossil fragments of rose leaves dating 23-25 million years old; rose fragments found in ancient Egyptian tombs; roses depicted in paintings down through the ages. Josephine Bonaparte, wife of Napoleon Bonaparte, brought over 200 roses, mostly from China, to her garden outside Paris. Roses can be divided into three groups: species roses, Old World roses and modern roses. An example of a species rose that is widely grown today is the Banksia Rose. It only flowers once in spring but is very hardy and is often used to cover sheds and fences. Other popular species roses are *Rosa mutabilis* and *Rosa rugosa* (often grown for its lovely rose hips as well as its flowers).

Iceberg roses

From about the 1920's, rose breeding took off and went in the direction of producing hybrid tea roses. Typically, these roses produce one large flower per stem, are repeat flowering and often have perfume. This type of rose has become immensely popular and many different cultivars have been produced. Some of the best known ones include Mr. Lincoln, Papa Meilland (two red and highly perfumed roses) as well as Double Delight and Just Joey. Rose breeding has also produced the floribunda type roses such as Iceberg, Seduction and Friesa that have a flowerhead with multiple buds. One of the best known rose breeders in the UK was David Austin who set out to produce a rose that had the 'old fashioned' multi-petalled flower heads, was highly perfumed and was repeat flowering.

***R.* Graham Thomas**

Judy then took us through the rather painful process of how roses are bred - from pollinating the selected rose, collecting seed, sowing seed and waiting several years for the young plants to produce flowers. Only then can the final selection be made and even then this does not guarantee a rose that can go on to further production.

Some of the best rose collections can be found at the Victorian State Rose Garden at Werribee, Woolmers Rose Garden in Tasmania, the Veale Garden in Adelaide and the Hunter Valley Gardens in NSW.

Judy then explained that she actually doesn't grow roses! The reasons she gave included 'over-exposure' while working on roses at Swane's Nursery in Dural, the rather ugly look of roses in winter before they are pruned and the fact that she does not have a suitable place in her very shady garden.

We were all very appreciative of Judy's efforts to come to speak to us on such an unpleasant evening weatherwise.

Main Speaker August: This will be Stuart Read who will give us a talk on the noted landscape designer, Paul Sorensen. Best known for his design for the Everglades garden in Leura and for other gardens in the Blue Mountains, Sorensen's garden designs are to be found in the Southern Highlands, Wollongong, 'Yarralumla' in Canberra and parts of country NSW. 'Maratta' in Wahroonga was also designed by Sorensen.

MEMBER SPEAKER JULY

This was Bob Ballinger who continued his talk on his and Sue's trip to Scandinavia last year as part of the Rose Society's trip to the Heritage Rose Conference which was held in the Swedish city of Kalmar, approximately 400km due south from the capital Stockholm. When not required at the conference, Sue and Bob visited some of the stately homes in the area including Solliden Palace which had a beautiful interior as well as interesting gardens adorned with sculptures including Auguste Rodin's 'The Thinker'. Continuing on with the tour, they visited Fredriksdal Manor and its beautiful rose garden. They continued their travels to see more gardens and roses as well as some extensive vegetable gardens. In Sofiero they visited a palace of the Swedish royal family, since donated to the State. The gardens there were extensive and very beautiful. The next part of their trip will be their travels in Norway which we will hear in October.

Member speaker August: This will be Ted Shaw who will show us some of the places of horticultural interest that he and Nancy visited on their trip last year to India.

IN THE VEGIE PATCH IN AUGUST by Christine Rethers

All your winter vegetables need to be pushed along with regular (every two weeks) applications of liquid fertiliser. Seeds can now be sown of crops that you will be planting in September and October. These include tomatoes, egg-plant, capsicums, zucchinis and cucumbers. They will need a nice and warm, north-facing window sill to grown on. Be careful when watering not to drown them, they need to be kept moist but not wet.

As you harvest your winter vegetables, start planning ahead where your summer crops will go. You do need to be mindful that crop rotation will always produce the best results. Try not to plant the same vegies where you planted them last year, especially the members of the Solanaceae family (potatoes, tomatoes, capsicum and chillis and egg-plants) as they are particularly susceptible to fungal diseases which can linger in the soil for a while.

Every good vegie gardener will have a nice sunny place in their garden for growing herbs. Herbs make such a difference to many dishes that you are going make with vegies from your garden. I am still using pesto which I made from our basil last summer and froze in small containers. It is lovely on any kind of pasta and also plain boiled potatoes cut into smallish chunks. Parsley is particularly good as it is high in vitamin C and can be used in many dishes.

I hope you are all harvesting lots of lovely citrus. Some members have reported that cockatoos have been a big problem this year as they pick the fruit off the tree, take a bite or two and then drop them on the ground. This should be a reminder to you to prune your citrus trees straight after you take off the fruit (and before flowering starts) and take your trees back to a manageable height so that you can throw a net over them when next season's fruit start to develop.

Why gardening is good for you!

Gardening is a fantastic way to nourish both your body and mind! It's more than just growing plants—it's about cultivating a sense of well-being. Here's why it's so good for you:

- **Physical Benefits**: Digging, planting, and weeding get you moving, improving strength, flexibility, and cardiovascular health.
- **Mental Health Boost**: Spending time in nature reduces stress, anxiety, and depression. There's something incredibly soothing about tending to plants and watching them thrive.
- **Fresh Air and Vitamin D**: Being outdoors exposes you to sunlight, helping your body produce vitamin D, which supports bone health and immune function.
- **Connection to Nature**: Gardening helps you slow down and appreciate the beauty of the natural world, fostering mindfulness and relaxation.
- **Fresh, Homegrown Food**: If you grow fruits, veggies, or herbs, you get the satisfaction of eating fresh produce while reducing your reliance on store-bought food.
- **Sense of Accomplishment**: Watching plants grow from seedlings to full bloom is incredibly rewarding!

It doesn't matter if you have a sprawling garden or just a few potted plants—caring for them can be a meaningful and restorative experience.

To summarise these activities, here's a quick table overview:

Gardening Task	Movement/Exercise Type	Targeted Muscles	Benefits
Digging	Squatting and twisting	Legs, glutes, core, back	Builds lower body strength and stability
Weeding	Bending, reaching, pulling	Core, arms, back, shoulders	Enhances flexibility and balance
Planting/Transplanting	Squatting/ kneeling	Legs, core	Improves mobility and leg strength
Pruning/Trimming	Lifting, reaching	Arms, shoulders, back	Tones upper body muscles
Raking/Sweeping	Repetitive sweeping motion	Arms, core, and moderate cardio	Boosts endurance and cardiovascular health
Pushing/Carrying	Walking, pushing or lifting	Full body, especially legs and arms	Increases strength, coordination, and stamina

YOUR AUGUST GARDEN by Maureene Smith

As we are now well into winter, the garden can benefit from some spring preparation.

Digging in some compost, manure or organic matter will enrich the soil and aid moisture retention, making it ready for the spring growth. This is also a good time for pruning woody plants as they will recover quickly and be ready for their new spring growth. A warning - do not prune the spring-flowering varieties or you will lose the flowers. Pruning also helps you to see where you have dead or damaged material.

Hydrangea stems that flowered last season can now be cut back to a set of healthy buds. Stems that did not flower can be left as they will produce flowers in this coming season. Buddleias benefit from a strong prune. You can take off 1/3 to 1/2 of the previous year's growth. This prevents them getting too straggly. As you prune, keep in mind what shape you want to achieve for the coming season. Prunings are great for adding a woody element to the compost bin or alternatively chopping up and using as mulch. They can also be used to produce new plants – both hydrangeas and buddleias can be propagated very successfully from pencil-think prunings (just make sure you know which way is up!). Use a propagating gel for hardwood cuttings and place half-a-dozen stems round the outside of a pot filled with potting mix or preferably a mixture of potting mix and coarse sand. You do not need to cover them, just put them in a shady spot until you see some sprouting of new leaves and then bring them out into more sun to harden them off.

Other than woody plants, some shrubs that are itching to be tidied up are the Irisine and some of the Alternantheras, especially *Alternanthera dentata.* If you have frosts, it is best to wait until they are over, but in the frost-free areas such as where most of us live, they are about to receive some judicious clipping!

I don't know if it is climate change but our Cymbidium orchids are flowering earlier than usual and these together with a *Tetradenia ripara* (Nutmeg bush) and Salvia Timboon are providing cheering colour at the moment and the latter two, good foraging for the native bees. On the other hand, the hellebores have yet to flower.

Although it is too late to plant spring flowering bulbs, there are many summer flowering bulbs that can be planted now. They all need well drained soil to prevent bulb rot, plenty of sun, but protection in the hot afternoon, and all are good for gardens or containers. Some suggestions are gladioli, hippeastrum, calla lilies and liliums. There are some exciting new hybrids in all these available now. Remember, unlike the others, hippeastrums like to be planted with a third of the bulb above the level of the soil.

One final thing, if you like Australian native plants, the *Chorizema cordatum* (Heart Flame Pea) is a beautiful small shrub that flowers through winter and spring.

Happy gardening!

Tetradenia riparia
Nutmeg Bush

Salvia Timboon

Gladioli

Chorizema cordatum