



Wentworth Falls Garden Club Inc
Affiliated with The Garden Clubs of Australia Inc

13 August 2015: Edition No 285

From the President ...

On behalf of the committee I would like to thank all of you for your endorsements at last month's AGM. We warmly welcome Karen Handicott and Vic Tuite to the committee and all look forward to another happy gardening year.

We had an overwhelming number of you renew your membership last month. If you haven't done so yet, Henry and Barry will happily take your subs and give you your new membership card this month and next. If you joined anytime from January this year, your membership is carried over without further payment until next year's AGM/financial year, but be sure to collect your new card as well.

Today, Carol and the library team have organised a Silent Auction of books that are no longer needed in the library. These can be found on a table in the morning tea room so take a look and make a bid! The money recouped will be spent on some new books and DVDs.

The mornings and nights are still very chilly but the middle of the day seems to be hinting at Spring. At last we can get back into some serious gardening. One of the most enjoyable parts of our general meetings is the opportunity to wander through one of our member's gardens. They do not have to be show gardens and often they are "a work in progress". If you think that you might like to offer your garden for a ramble, please have a chat to Sharon.

Celeste

Today's Guest Speaker
Andrew Kaye

Andrew commenced employment with the NSW RFS in 2007 with Standards of Fire Cover and Optimum Resourcing. These are processes where the "Optimum" fleet of firefighting appliances is determined based on a number of factors within each Brigade's service delivery area. Andrew then project managed the revision of these two processes into an integrated computer system that allowed this determination to be conducted at a District level. After the successful completion of this major project, Andrew went on to review and document Business Continuity Plans across the NSW RFS, ensuring that emergency services would be provided across the state without interruption. In October 2012, Andrew was transferred to the Blue Mountains District and has held the position of Community Engagement Coordinator for the past two years. Andrew's responsibilities include: overseeing the Hazard Reduction program for the Blue Mountains; ensuring Hazard Complaints are actioned within legislative timeframes; assisting, guiding and mentoring volunteer community engagers within brigades to enable consistency of messaging; and presenting information to key community groups across the Blue Mountains. Andrew joined Hawkesbury Headquarters Brigade in 2009 and is an active fire fighter, becoming Deputy Captain in 2012. He has experienced firsthand a number of significant fires during his time in the Brigade and has been deployed to a variety of places both intrastate and interstate. He recently moved house to Faulconbridge with his wife and step-children and is now a dual member of Headquarters and Faulconbridge Brigades. Andrew's passion lies in community engagement. He believes that an informed and connected community is a resilient one and a resilient community has a greater opportunity to make the right decisions during a crisis and, more importantly, to recover more quickly after an event. Andrew has a Masters Degree in Business Marketing.



Janine's Tulips

I get much joy having my tulips flower earlier than usual, in July and August. This gives me added pleasure as there are not a lot of other bulbs flowering at this time, and the colder weather seems to prolong the flowering period of individual flowers – up to a period of six weeks per bloom. It also means they are not competing with most of the daffodils, and other delights, later in the season. It's like having your cake, and eating it too!

I started preparing my tulips this way some years ago, to mimic the conditions of their much admired flowering conditions in Northern European countries. This required ignoring the traditional Spring flowering times, but it works for me. Our mid- to late winter roughly approximates to Northern European mid- to late Spring temperatures. The day lengths here, in our Winter, are shorter, but the intensity of the sunlight is stronger, and I try to replicate the conditions they would endure there. I put the bulbs (older, or newly purchased) in the fridge, in paper bags, in late February until late April. This simulates the winter chill they would experience in Europe. We have two fridges, and I don't put the bulbs in the household fridge, as the gases produced by ripe fruit and vegetables can damage the flower in it's formative state. I have found though, that the wine and beer in the other fridge causes no detriment to the embryonic tulips. It does, however, require a co-operative partner to give up shelf space to the bulbs – sometimes problematic!

At the end of April, I remove the bulbs and either put them into pots, or baskets to put into the ground. I usually put the new bulbs into pots and enjoy a colour co-ordinated display, and put the older bulbs into the ground. The bulbs that go into the ground are planted at about double the depth of the size of the bulbs. This year, I didn't buy new bulbs, as space really is a problem in the garden for me. All my older bulbs went into large pots to give mixed cheerful displays. They are densely planted, and I'll just have to wait and see what colour combos I've got! I have read that tulip bulbs shouldn't touch each other when planted, but as I don't really like this information, I choose to ignore it. My massed planted pots have been giving me pleasure for many years, both with new and older bulbs, so I'll just continue on blissfully ignoring that bit of advice.

The potting mix is a mixture of a coir expanding potting block, reconstituted, blended approximately with one-third home-made compost, a handful of dolomite and a handful of multi-grow, or similar fertiliser. The bulbs that go into the ground go into bulb baskets in order to make digging them up easier at the end of the season, and are covered by the same mix as the pots have as a potting medium. Ordinary potting mixes, or soil, can often keep the bulbs too wet.

The bulbs are watered sparingly, and appear after 3-4 weeks. Flowering commences mid-July onwards, depending whether they are early/mid/late flowering varieties.

After flowering, I feed the bulbs well with liquid fertilizer, and tomato food – it has all the right things to feed the bulbs. After the foliage has yellowed off, and is easily removed with a gentle tug, I take the bulbs out of the pots/baskets in the ground, and dry the bulbs off – but not in direct sunlight! When they are dry (maybe two weeks?), I pack them in old orange bags, label them with the variety and year, and put several orange bags into large string bags. I hang these from the roof in the garage to keep them dry, and away from possums, rats and other people claiming shed space.

Tulips that consistently perform well for me over a number of years are “World’s Favourite” – yes, they really are(!) – and the “Bokassa” varieties. I usually get about 75% viability of previous year’s bulbs this way, but a really wet summer will mean more will rot. I usually keep bulbs for about five years before deciding they are not worth this effort. Then I dig a nearly knee-deep hole (this is what they do in most of the grand English gardens) and bury them. They will either reappear in early July, and flower in October, or never be seen again. This deep planting is apparently to keep them cooler, and promote stronger stems. Like most things, when it works well, it’s great, but expect much less than 100% success with this method.

Janine Shoemark



August Gardening Tips

- Repot indoor plants and remove any brown or shrivelled fronds from ferns.
- Regularly water azaleas to extend blooms. Avoid wetting the flowers as this spreads petal blight.
- We have dry weather so be sure to check your garden and pot plants and water well.
- Prune camellias to shape if necessary after flowering. Whether you are growing camellias in sun or shade, make sure their root systems are covered with a generous layer of organic matter such as leaf mould, well-rotted cow manure or compost. Renew the mulch when it gets low. There is no need to dig it in as digging round camellias damages their shallow roots. Watch out for an insect called the “camellia tea mite”. It has taken hold in some gardens perhaps during dry spells when the camellias are stressed by lack of water. This pest causes a dull band down the centre of affected leaves around the midrib. The mite is a tiny insect that feeds on the leaf. Remove badly affected leaves and put them in a bag and into the rubbish bin. Spray with PestOil or EcoOil. Water and fertilise camellias to encourage new growth. If the pest continues to be a problem, use a systemic insecticide.
- Prune roses. When pruning a standard rose, start in the middle, where the branches are growing into the centre. Take out the branches that are growing towards the middle. Prune the rest back by about one-third. Don't worry about which bud to cut to because they will flourish even if you don't cut to an outward or inward pointing bud. When pruning a large flowering bush rose, or a hybrid tea rose, be brutal! And that may mean using a saw, as they are quite tough. Open up the middle of the plant to stimulate masses of new shoots. Then cut all the new branches back by about one-third. If you see any dead-looking branches, cut them off. Miniature and ground-cover roses can be cut back hard and quite often the cuttings will strike. The rule for climbing roses is to cut out about one-third of the oldest branches every year so that every three years the entire climber is renewed. But don't cut back the long whippy branches because that's where all the roses appear. When you have finished, get rid of the debris because of disease. Once finished pruning fertilise well. You can use blood and bone with potash. Or buy a prepared rose fertiliser to help developing buds and new spring growth. Mulch with lucerne or sugar cane mulch.
- Keep watch for aphids on new growth and buds.
- Slugs and snails are around, especially in the vegetable patch, bulbs and flowering seedlings.
- Spray for bindii.
- Citrus need a lot of care now with regard to pests, fertilising and watering.

Sources:

<http://flowerpower.com.au/information/garden-diary/august-gardening-diary/>

<http://www.birchesofleura.com/what-is-in-the-nursery.php>

<http://www.abc.net.au/gardening/stories/s1397342.htm>

Elected Committee Members for 2015/2016

PRESIDENT: Celeste Shadie
 VICE PRESIDENT: Carol Conway (Library)
 SECRETARY: Gai Horrocks
 TREASURER: Henry Nelson (Also Webmaster and Public Officer)

Committee Members:

Jane Blackshaw (Hospitality)
 Barry Butler (Membership)
 Karen Handicott (To be confirmed)
 Narelle Nolan (Publicity)
 Sharon Phillips (Tours and Functions)
 Marilyn Shields (Printing of Newsletter)
 Vic Tuite (To be confirmed)

Non-Committee:

Janine Shoemark (Door Prize Coordinator)
 Lea Nelson (Welfare Officer)

Club Tours and Functions

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| Friday 25 September | “Hidden Valleys” Nola’s Garden and the historic St Paul’s Anglican Church (in Cobbitty). Camden Valley Inn for lunch. Cost \$50. <i>Waiting list.</i> | Departure 8.30 am |
| Friday 16 October | “Up the Country” This tour includes visiting the beautiful Mayfield Gardens and the Gairloch Garden. Lunch and morning tea included. Cost \$45. <i>Waiting list.</i> | Departure 8.45 am |
| Friday 13 November | Glenmore House 1840’s sandstone cottage and garden at Camden. Lunch provided (morning tea not included). Cost \$36. <i>Names can only be taken with payment. Thank you.</i> | Departure 10 am |
| Thursday 3 December | Christmas Lunch at Wentworth Falls Country Club. (Note: not our usual Thursday meeting date.) | 12 noon |

Next Meeting

10 September

Guest Speaker

Robyn Bible will speak about Geraniums

Hall set-up

Lea and Henry Nelson

Morning tea duty

Sue Scott and Rosemary Leathwood

Bring a plate

Sue Scott and Rosemary Leathwood

Club Information

All members and visitors are asked to sign in upon arrival.

Members are asked to wear their club name badges to all club meetings, tours and functions. To take part in club functions and tours you must be a bona-fide club member.

General Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month, from January to November, at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts Theatre, Adele Ave (cnr Great Western Hwy), Wentworth Falls. Meetings commence at 9.45 am and finish around noon. The Library and Plant Stall are open before the meeting and at morning tea. \$5 entry fee.

Joining fee is \$30. Thereafter annual subscription is \$20.

For Club Welfare matters, contact Lea Nelson:
Ph 4784 1101.

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