



ROBINA GARDEN CLUB INC.

Meeting of Thursday
November 30th - 2023
NEWSLETTER NO. 136

TODAY

GUEST SPEAKER

Fire Ants Task Force

MONTHLY FEATURE

Croton

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Today is the last chance to pay for your place at our Christmas Party. Anyone who has paid by Direct Credit and wants a receipt see the Treasurer. As notified last month, **NO REFUNDS AFTER TODAY.** (As usual if you have to drop out you can send someone else in your place and arrange them to pay you). **HAVE I PAID?** If you are not sure, there is a list of who is going (i.e. paid) at the desk. It pays to check you've paid.

SALES TABLE - 2024

A few issues have arisen on the Sales Table. (See last page). All sellers should see Di at the table today to get details about a new 2024 system. **It includes a maximum of 12 sale items per meeting.**

FIRST AID KITS

In response to a recent query, we can confirm that the Club has **two** First Aid Kits – one at each meeting and a second that goes to each Home Visit. If you need it just ask for help.



*Happy
Christmas
and New
Year.*

TREVOR HICKS – EDITOR.

Striking Crotons.

Our Monthly Feature for today is the **CROTON**. They were first named Crotons in Europe in 1753. In its native Indonesia, Malaysia and the western Pacific Islands of course the plant had been used for centuries. The Chinese for example used it in traditional medicine to treat severe constipation and heal lesions while the seeds were in contrast used to treat diarrhea. Now the hundreds of species are seen often as tough, very colourful garden plants that are almost care free.



If you want to strike a piece, then cuttings should be taken from the top of the plant not where the stem is 'hardwood'. Cut at a 45 Degree angle to increase the surface area that will be in contact with your growing medium. Cuttings should be about pencil thickness and 15 to 30 cms long. Remove all but a small amount of leaf at the very top. You can put them into a glass of water (as above right) till they strike but my experience is putting them into a loose potting mix works well. (Air layering is also an option but is far more complex).

It is best to propagate them in the growing season of spring or summer – i. e. **NOW**. Put your cuttings into a small pot of peat moss and normal potting mix. You can use rooting hormone for faster root development and to combat bacterial and fungal infections, but it is not normally necessary. Store out of direct sunlight in a light protected spot.



This newsletter is being printed by the office of the Honourable KAREN ANDREWS M.P. Federal Member for McPherson. Contact Karen at – karen.andrews.mp@aph.gov.au

With our Thanks.

More Garden Ideas

Things seen in garden visits that might be able to be applied to your garden.

Drainage pipe over star pickets with fencing wire makes a solid frame to support climbing plants/vegies.



Instead of throwing out this old rusted outdoor lounge these owners have made it a feature in their garden.



Metal cut-outs like the dragon fly above are sold at Bunnings. Instead of mounting it on a wall consider it free standing.



For anyone with lots of space these normal plastic downpipes have been painted bright red and placed over a star picket. Adds interest for little money. Convention says to do 3 or 5 in one group.



This old gate leads no where. It is used just as an illusion to give the impression this garden is much bigger than it is.

FINANCIAL REPORT – AS OF 1/11/2023



RESERVE	<i>Funds reserved for emergencies</i>	\$2,500.00
ADMINISTRATION	<i>Funded by the Annual Administration Fee.</i>	\$2,071.17
MEMBER'S REWARDS	<i>Afternoon Tea, Prizes, Awards, etc. Funded by the Raffles.</i>	\$1,169.05
AGM LUNCH	<i>Subsidized depending on funds. Funded by Bus Trips.</i>	\$ 736.56
CHRISTMAS PARTY	<i>Subsidized depending on funds. Funded by Cuttings Table.</i>	\$4,439.86
-----	TOTAL CASH FUNDS AVAILABLE -----	\$10,916.64

2023 Income	\$13,564.29	2023 Expenses	\$ 8,809.01	2023 Surplus	\$4,755.28
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If only

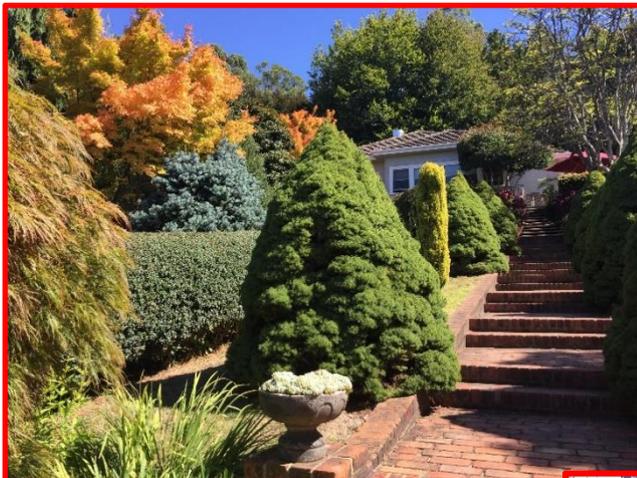
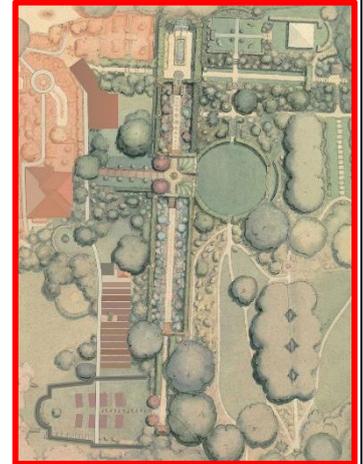
A PRE-MEETING READ
By Trevor Hicks

Our *'that would be a nice garden to visit if only I could'* this month is to **CLOUDEHILL** at Olinda in the Dandenong Ranges of Victoria. This garden, covering around 5 acres, is arguably Australia's most famous and best example of the type of 'Arts and Crafts' style 'garden rooms' based gardens you see in England - such as Hidcote, Sissinghurst and so on. It very much copies the garden design ideas of people such as Gertrude Jekyll and Edwin Lutyens. Situated on the slopes of a range it has the perfect colder climate for such a garden.

Cloudehill was originally a ten acre 'grant' given to George Woolrich in 1895. George grew cherries and raspberries till his sons Jim (who focused on the 'orchard') and Ted (who grew flowers and foliage for flower shops) took over. A huge bushfire in the 1960's destroyed both and the 'farm' went into decline. When Jim died in 1991 Jeremy Francis and Valerie Campbell-Wemys bought the main five acres of the property and in 1992 began building the garden now called CLOUDEHILL.



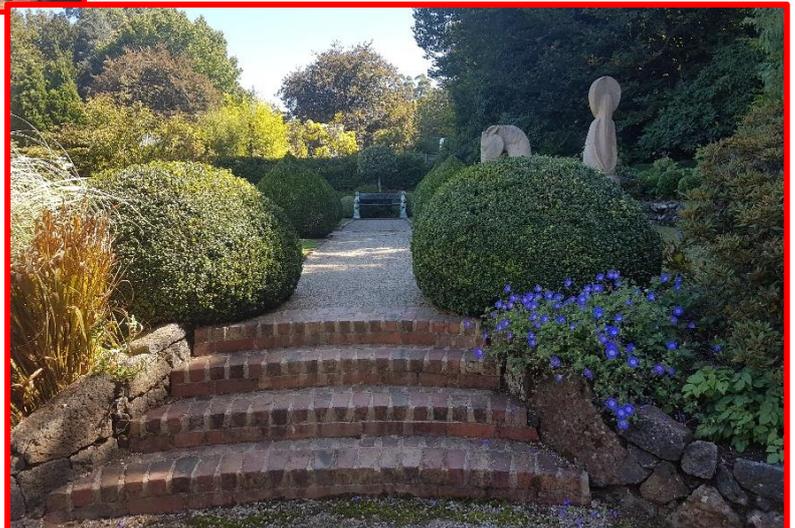
As the plan at right shows the 'garden rooms' concept is key to the garden. Thus, as the photo at left shows, there are a lot of high hedges imitating walls through which various types of 'doorways' lead you into the next garden. Topiary like the two at left are used all over the garden.



Unlike in England where such a garden would surround a large mansion the main house at Cloudehill is a modest mid-century residence. The photo at left shows that what is dominant here are the large trees planted by the Woolrich's. They were the motivation for building this type of garden. They include a large number of rare Maples, Acers, Conifers and so on from all over the world. In autumn therefore the garden is a spectacular example of autumn colour while in spring the fresh new growth shines. A world class collection of different coloured and shaped conifers add permanence and give that more formal feel that these sorts of gardens are famous for.



Especially important is the use of 'hard landscaping'. Curved stone and brick stairways and paved pathways are used all over the sloping garden site.



As mentioned before the use of topiary is vital to the over-all look as is their placement along sight lines. At virtually every turn there is a view down or up to some focal point like the bench above right or the large central urn at above left. Splashes of colour add interest and variety to those views.



All together there are twenty-five separate garden spaces, each one accessed from pathways that meet and cross each other. The result is you get spaces like those at left and below where you must make a decision which way to go – with another of those enticing views to encourage you.



Inevitably at the end of one of those passages is yet another design triumph – like this secret courtyard with its pond, ornamental birds, fake exit door and those two stunning silver/blue plants.



It all makes for a stunning place to visit – if you are lucky when the outdoor theatre (below) is having a show. If you are ever down that way make sure it is on your 'gardens I must visit' list. DON'T MISS IT.





Benching Winners October 2023

Once again, we had **8 different winners** at our October benching. Among the standouts were the lovely dark Daylily that was awarded the Stewards Prize and Wendy Bruce's large pink Hibiscus. The **Albuca Namaquensis** was also interesting even though a relatively small example.

SECTION 2 - ORCHIDS

Melody McIntyre – Known commonly as 'Moth Orchids' this is a **Phalaenopsis**.



SECTION 1 – FOLIAGE DISPLAY

Wendy Clear – two 'spotted' begonia leaves make a great central focus.



SECTION 3 – FOLIAGE ONLY PLANT/S

Trevor Hicks – there are 2000 different species of **Begonia** including this type.



SECTION 5 – A SINGLE BLOOM

Wendy Bruce – a great sample of what are usually called 'Hawaiian' **Hibiscus**.



SECTION 6 – PRODUCE

Anita Fowler – A mix of beans, eggplants (or aubergine), tomato, and grapefruit and lemons.



SECTION 4 – FLOWERING PLANT/S

Wendy Bruce – this **Euphorbia** represents a very large and very diverse genus.



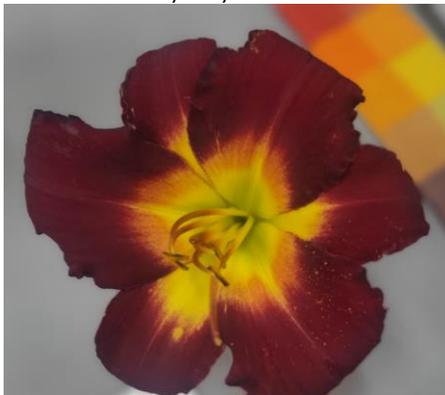
SECTION 8 – VASE OF FLOWERS

Maxine Cochrane – Another great mix of roses, 'grannies lace', salvia etc.



STEWARDS PRIZE

Fay Edwards – a really good dark coloured Day Lilly or **Hemerocallis**.



SECTION 7 – A CUT OF MULTIPLE BLOOMS

Coral Franics – a compound bi-coloured **pelargonium** / geranium.



SECTION 10 FLORAL ART

Trevor Hicks – A 'Three Flowers Only' theme using cactus blooms.



SECTION 9 – SMALL POT PLANT/S

Trevor Hicks – this curly leaved **Albuca Namaquensis** is proof positive that succulents come in different guises.



Our Annual Trophy for benching, a second place and 2 Encouragement Awards will be presented at X-Mas.

CLUB NEWS



1. **87 MEMBERS** attended the October meeting. Apologies = 8, Visitors = 3 and New Members = 3.
2. With new members and resignations, we have **132 FINANCIAL MEMBERS**.
3. **INCOME** at the last meeting was –
Raffle - \$299.00
Cuttings Table - \$ 89.10
Sales Table - \$ 18.10
4. Our 2024 Discretionary **GRANTS PROGRAM** Application **has not be successful**. 217 applications were received totalling \$750,000. We'll have another go next time – *perhaps we should ask for more?*
5. Good news regarding our **2024 MEETING TIMES**. President Denise has met with Jelena (the Carrara Community Centre Manager) and thanks to the early contact and Jelena's generosity our club has booked 12.00 p.m. to 3.00 p.m. for our 2024 meetings. (Saving ½ hour of fees). The group who this year had booked till 12.00 p.m. thus pushing us back half an hour will stop at 11.30 a.m. giving us time to get ready for that 12.00 start. That means we can go back to the **DOORS OPENING AT 12.00 P.M.** (In order to leave the volunteers setting up the hall free to do their jobs unhindered the doors will remain closed till the hall is ready to go).
6. As will be explained at the meeting today our **SALES TABLE PROCEDURES FOR 2024** are changed as of the next meeting. A number of problems have caused concern at the Sales Table for years so at the request of those working there the Executive has approved new procedures. All those wanting to sell items at that table **MUST COLLECT** a SALE TABLE PROCEDURES sheet that explains what they need to do. Do that today for January 2024. Issues regarding how many plants each person actually brought in, which sales tag went with which plant, illegibility of some of the sales tags and how many plants each seller can bring have all been addressed. The new system starts in January 2024.

Looking For -

No requests made via our request forms and the suggestion box in October.

The 'LOOKING FOR' request forms are at the front desk. Put into the Suggestion Box for publication in the next newsletter.



Suggestion Box

1. It was suggested we use some sort of stand to elevate guest speakers who are giving a demonstration. That isn't allowed but we can put such people up on the stage – puts them further away but higher up for those at the back.
2. We were asked if we can afford a sign or 'flag' to put outside Home Visit houses to indicate our event is on there. Pam Wood has agreed to check out the cost of those 'flags'/banners.
3. Someone asked if Alex Blewmann, whose home we visited a while ago would give a talk on DESERT ROSES of which she is a collector. Alex has agreed to be a Guest Speaker in 2024.

Suggestion submissions are in the box at the front desk. Ask the Secretary for help.

LAST CHANCE TODAY TO BOOK FOR X-MAS PARTY

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, 25th of January, 2024
@ 12.00 p.m.

Monthly Feature
Fern/s

Guest Speaker
Alex Blewmann
Desert Roses

NEXT HOME VISIT

Because of the heat and holiday breaks we do not have Home Visits in either December or January. The next one will be February 2024. It will be listed in the January Newsletter.



Any direct debits to
Bank of Queensland
BSB 124-015
Acc. No. 10368149
Name yourself clearly!

Keep up to date via our web-site at – www.robinagardenclub.org.au

Contact us via direct e-mail at – info@robinagardenclub.org.au

President Denise @ 0412 668 193. Secretary Val @ 0416 222 539. Treasurer Trevor @ 0434 251 858.