

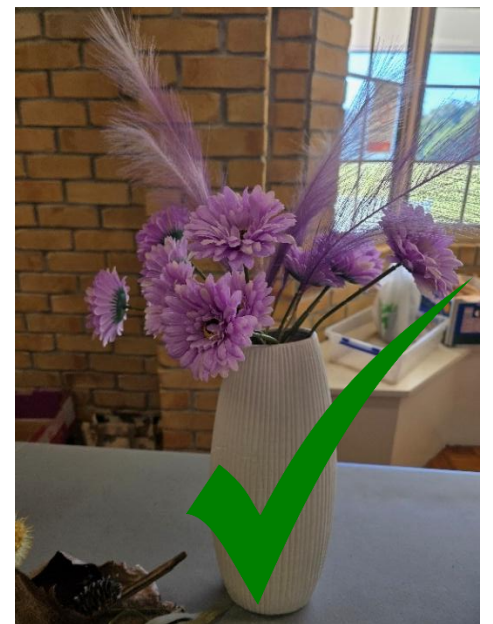
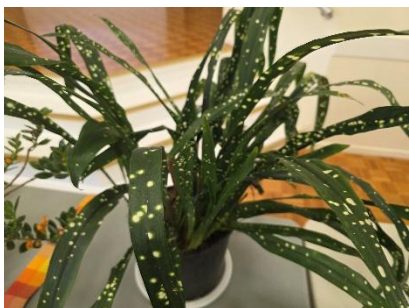


Our meeting of July 30th saw 74 members attend with 12 apologies and 5 visitors. That number of 74 is around our average for 2026. (When, pre-COVID, our membership was at its peak of 159 we averaged around 100 people per meeting so with 118 financial members now the average attendance remains the same at around two thirds of members at each meeting.)

Those 74 were certainly in a generous mood as they spent \$299 at our raffle (at right) – beating our previous 2026 record of \$282 in April. There were fourteen prizes this meeting so it was good to see more people recompensed for that generosity. \$86 was added to our Christmas Fund with takings from our Cuttings and Sales Tables so (again) thanks for those contributing to the fund raiser. In that same vein, Treasurer Trevor, thanked the 68 people who attended our June AGM meeting. He noted (as stated in the July newsletter) that one aim of that day had been to return excess funds to members. Thus, \$450 had been allocated to the Cent Auction as a way of returning some funds. With those attending buying \$445 worth of tickets that did not achieve its aim, but he thanked those people for their continued support.



Another highlight of the meeting was that we had 62 entries in the Benching competition. (voting at left). After over-hearing a couple of people remark that an entry should be disqualified as it was not in a clear glass container it is worth referring people once again to a recent newsletter article on that issue. Clubs that have paid judges do often demand such clear glass so the judge can count the number of stems as they often restrict entries to a specific number of stems. **WE ARE NOT ONE OF THOSE CLUBS.** Ours is a GARDEN CLUB rather than a horticultural society and we like to see people display their 'treasures' as they would do so at home. Decorative pots like that at right are as welcome as plain old plastic at left. (P.S. That is a more unusual Aspidistra called **Aspidistra vingjiangensis** 'Singapore Sling').



It was announced that final arrangements for our next bus trip are being finalized. A poster with cost and so on will be e-mailed out by mid-August for a trip in early October. Finally, another thanks to our Cuttings Table staff (including Laine Russell at right) and to Pam and her kitchen staff for what (below) was clearly a very welcome afternoon tea.



GUEST SPEAKER – BRIAN HEATH

Our Guest Speaker on the day was **BRIAN HEATH** – one of the most active gardening administrators in south-east Queensland. He is involved in numerous clubs, including being President of the group who organize the upcoming **Marburg Garden Expo** (see the 'Things to Do and See' section on our web-site).



Brian's focus on the day was **CHRYSANTHEMUMS**. There are some 40 plus species with some 13 of those used for exhibition and commercial sales. With cultivars that makes at least 20,000 named varieties with the simpler types (as below right) being the most common. They were first developed as 'flowers' in China at least 3000 years ago. When they spread to Japan around the time of Christ they were developed even further – thus the Japanese Imperial Family is not named the **CHRYSTANTHEMUM THRONE** for nothing! They remain very popular mainly because they are so long-lasting as a cut flower and come in such a huge variety of colours. (A couple of purples even exist now as a result of a genetic anomaly in one grower's yard but not (yet) blue).



Brian (apart from bringing a wide variety of plants to sell at left) was generous with his time and in answering questions.

Among information he gave were things like the fact that in China and Japan they are given as gifts to symbolize virility, strength, longevity and happiness. All parts of them are also edible and they are used in herbal remedies. They're easy to propagate by just letting them sucker (which they do easily) or removing a node bearing section. They take barely a week in summer to root and as short as ten days in winter to do the same. For sale two types exist. **DISBUDS** are where all but one bud is removed from a developing flower spike. The plant puts all its effort into that one remaining bud which then can grow huge. **SPRAYS** are when the central bud is removed so all the other buds develop and you get a 'bunch of flowers' effect (as at right). At home we can do either. Many thanks to Brian for such an excellent talk. It was one of the best of the year.

