ROBINA GARDEN CLUB INC.

October Home Visit and Bus Trip

Our October **HOME VISIT** to Pottsville we combined with three nursery visits and an hour stop at Murwillumbah. We had 61 bookings but with seven cancellations and just the one on the waiting list we ended up with 55 people on the bus. Thanks to their co-operation and bon-homie and co-operative weather the day went well with more than a few of those 55 buying even more plants for their gardens.





After a quick comfort stop at the truck stop at Chinderah *(at left)* our driver Trevor (of the Currumbin Valley Coach Lines) got us down to our Home Visit at Val Marsden/Laurie Baxter's home at Pottsville. Val concentrates on foliage plants (of which the lovely geranium *below* mixed with petunias caught a lot of attention) while Laurie is one of the most successful orchid growers of the whole region.



October is not the best month for orchid flowerings but for those who know their orchids that was a minor issue. Laurie has a collection of some of the rarest orchids you can imagine with more than a few grand champions at various orchid shows around the region and afar.





As you can see in the photo below right their back garden area is dominated by a collection of 'shade houses' of which the largest *(above)* is packed to its non-existant rafters with literally a couple of thousand orchids. No surprise that as a serious collector each one is carefully named with when it was purchased and other essential details.





After a nice morning tea provided by Marianne Franks, she and Judi Young drew our raffle with winners Robyn Booth of Blue Pacific GC ($60), Ian Lee ($40) and Beryl Tucker ($25) the winners.





From there we went to the **BLACK ROCK NURSERY** at Tyagarah *(left and right)*. This large nursery and landscaping business includes a landscaping design business so there is a pleasant water feature full of large koi fish *(below right)*. (Koi are not actually totally banned in Queensland but there are very strict rules on bringing them into the state and on their care so they do not escape into our waterways. Not perhaps a good idea then to buy a mature one at $160!). What they did have was a good collection of larger orchids that a few people failed to resist. For this visit they had a display of colour in the form of 'sunpatients' and various marigolds as well as their usual collection of shade house plants *(above left)*.





















From there we went via the old highway over to **MURWILLUMBAH**. Here people spent 1 and ¼ hours visiting an old favourite - the **AURA NURSERY** in the main street, lunch and a little shopping. Aura included its usual display of flowering plants but compared to previous visits few orchids for some reason. The nearby Reject Shop, a lovely little cheese shop recommended by our driver and visits to the old picture theatre now converted to an arts precient all got 'hit' as did various lunch venues.









Our last stop for the day was at perhaps our favourite bus trip nursery stop – the **KINGSCLIFF NURSERY** at Cudgen *(left and right)*. They grow many of their own plants in their 'nursery' with their main sales section familiar to most of us. As usual their $5, $10 and $15 rows proved popular. Their plants are good quality and compared to many places quite cheap for many things. $6 for a four pack of herbs for example is not exorbitant. Much to our surprise they also had a nice display of orchids for sale. Though none of our group indulged they now have a much larger range of pots than some years ago while they also had a few advanced roses for sale. Daisies are, in places like Bunnings, the 'plant of the moment' and so were here too though prices tend to reflect their 'flavour of the month status'. A more permanent planting that was on offer was the Double White May or ***Spirea.*** Not seen as often as it was once this old favourite was in good supply – along with that other old favourite the ***Tibouchina.***











The trip back proved uneventful thanks to our driver Trevor's warning that no one was permitted to say things like *"traffic looks light"* or *"should be a quick trip back"* – that always dooms you to a 2 hour traffic accident or the like. In conclusion, thanks to **CHRIS LUND** who did all the negotiations with the bus company and the nurseries and to both **LAURIE AND VAL** (at right being presented with a thankyou by President Denise) for welcoming us to their garden/orchid houses. The weather was pleasant and the company on the bus even more so.