



MONTHLY MEETING THURSDAY AUGUST 28TH 2025

Our meeting of Thursday the 28th saw a number of new announcements – some hopefully exciting while others were clarifications of club rules and procedures that some newer members have yet to catch up on.



On the hopefully exciting front was that our CHRISTMAS PARTY is confirmed to be on **FRIDAY DECEMBER 12** at the **CARRARA COMMUNITY CENTRE**. Behind the scenes issues (and as a result less than satisfactory catering) over the last three years with outside venues helped the Executive decide that, with the success of our self-catered AGM Lunch, we will try the same idea again. That AGM Lunch was prepared by just six 'cooks' so Denise asked if others would like to volunteer to help out with providing something – with the aim of getting around 20 'cooks' rather than just the six of the AGM. Thanks to those who readily put their names down at this meeting. We have three months to prepare it all.



Our raffle took \$305 that in part reflected that the prize pool was the best of the year. It included a small but complete herb garden, a wall plaque and the usual array of plants. Our benching saw 56 entries, a little down on last month's record but still a display of some lovely plants.



With Thanks

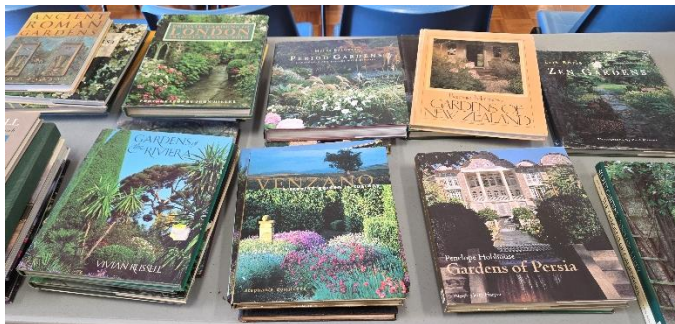
Two of the worst jobs that need to be done for any of our meetings to function are setting up then putting away the tables and chairs. The volunteers who do these jobs vary from month to month and we thank all of them. On Thursday the early birds who did most of the setting up **included** the people below – with **IAN LEE** and I suspect a couple of others masterfully avoiding the camera!

THANKS TO ALL.



The clarifications mentioned above concerned mainly the Benching. Members were reminded that we are judging members plants **NOT BUNNINGS** so all entries (except in the Creative Display) must have been owned/grown by the exhibitor for three months. In the interests of fairness any points won will need to be withheld and entry into the competition suspended for the year. Members were also reminded that you must be present at the meeting to bench.

An innovation at the meeting was **COLIN CASHMAN'S BOOK CLUB**. Colin has a huge collection of gardening books – most of them very good quality 'coffee table books'. For a \$2 donation each he offered members a chance to take the book/s home, have a good read then return to swap for another. Many thanks to Colin for his offer. We seem to have become book averse in this the 'google age' so for some of us at least it was great to get that 'book feel' back.



Treasurer Trevor announced that the bus trip (of 57 seats) was full. Even after one cancellation we have a waiting list of four but if others are still interested, they can be added to that list. 4-5 cancellations per trip is very typical. He also referred members to the AGM Lunch financial report in the newsletter. It reported that we achieved our aim of returning all 2023/24/25 excess bus trip funds to members by having made that lunch free just for the one year. In the benching, perhaps the most interest was in the spotted plant at left – a type of aspidistra (*Aspidistra yingjiangensis*). President Denise also expressed thanks to all those who contributed to the cuttings and sales tables at this meeting.

GUEST SPEAKER – BELINDA VERITON



Our Guest Speaker was **BELINDA VERITON** from RFS Aged Care Advice. More than a few members questioned why we were having a private sector guest speaker and especially one on a clearly non-gardening topic such as financial advice. Apart from the fact that an even larger number of us are 'aged', Belinda's talk was not about her business as such but about **major changes to the Aged Care System** being introduced by the Federal Government starting in September.

It took barely a few minutes before the meeting realized that this was information that is potentially critical to our next few years – gardening or not. Belinda mentioned that most of the changes were initiated to solve major problems such as the almost impossible task of carers getting any RESPITE CARE. This in part is connected to the fact that 37% of all aged care facilities are not profitable – thus the critical shortage of such respite care and the difficulty of getting good care on what is often short notice.



Just one example Belinda explained was that starting soon 2% a year (to a max of 10% after 5 years) of the cost of an aged care room will be able to be kept by the homes. Other changes to costs are far too complex to even hint at here. Belinda's message was clear – **GET DETAILED ADVICE!**