

Dibble & Hoe Gardeners Inc 2015

March/April 2016

Volume 16, No 2

Hi Everyone,

Thank you Margaret Gibson for allowing us to start this year with a visit to your garden. I am sure everyone who attended enjoyed their day. Discussions were held about events for 2016 and some of the points that were noted are as follows:-

June - basket weaving with cost \$10 per person but you take home a basket

July - native bees and make a bee/insect hotel

October - AGM

November - Open Gardens at Castlemaine.

There will be no garden club, but you might like to drive to Castlemaine for one of the days, or book accommodation to enjoy two days of gardens. I will organise a dinner for the people who would like to meet on the Saturday evening. More to follow in the May newsletter.

If anyone has an idea for our Christmas get together which will be held on Saturday 3 December 2016, please let one of the committee know. We are looking for a venue which can fully cater for lunch, etc. Any suggestions would be gladly accepted. One suggestion was for a progressive meal. However, the committee decided that there is too much work for each individual. Robyn Rooke organised a fantastic day many years ago, but it was very time consuming for all the people involved. Our idea is that everyone including the committee members, should have a fun relaxing day.

A discussion was held re the membership criteria which currently includes members' spouses and this was acceptable as membership is open to all including members' families. Our membership currently is able to accommodate new members as there is no waiting list and all members are encouraged to seek new members including younger ones.

Michael and I planning four weeks holiday to Corowa, Adelaide and then to Canberra for the National Folk Festival. Hence, I have decided to make my life easy and produce one newsletter for the months of March and April.

If anyone would like to contribute a few of your senior stamps to help cover postage, can you please pass them onto me or any other committee member at a meeting It would be very much appreciated (see more information on page 12). Also, if new members would like to share how they become interested in gardening, I would be interested in hearing from you to place an article in this newsletter. Please contact me on 0408122780.

Cheers, Julie



2016 COMMITTEE

President	Julie Adams	0408122780
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MARCH 2016 MEETING

WHEN: Saturday 5 March

TIME: 10.30am

WHERE: Nonesuch, 150 Hereford Rd, Lilydale

The property has two entrances, one at 150 Hereford Road and the other is 3 Bramwell Street, which is better for parking. On arrival, morning tea will be provided. Then a walk around the garden. The garden features a formal walkway of magnificent copper beeches, standard roses and box hedge pyramids. Beyond the walkway is where mature weeping willows, Japanese maples and various shrubs in their autumn finery shelter creative and eclectic plantings.

TIME: 12.30pm

WHERE: Polly Ashburner's, 6 Douglas Crescent, Monbulk.

Lunch and plant swap. Everyone enjoys our shared lunches. Most people gain a few more delicious recipes this way. Plant swap - just a reminder to bring a suitable amount of plants cuttings to distribute. Please bring what you think you would like to receive..

Polly's neighbour over the back, Lisa, is happy for us to wander around her garden and Lisa will be there to give us a talk about what she is doing and she also has plants for sale.

Yamina Collectors Nursery, 34 Mount Pleasant Rd Monbulk 1-4pm

Paddys Plants, 103 Main Rd, Monbulk Open until 5:00 pm

WHAT TO BRING: Chair, cup, plate to share for lunch

APRIL 2016 MEETING

WHEN: Saturday 2 April

TIME: 10.30am.

WHERE: Maddie's Embellished Garden, 80 Pembroke Rd, Mooroolbark.

Maddie's garden revolves around "found objects" and there are always aspects to look at. She is on three quarters of an acre and the garden is made up of several "rooms", each based around a different colour. She charges \$10 per head (to be paid by each club member) and for that she provides a Devonshire tea (money is given to charity).

TIME: 1 pm

WHERE: Robyn Rooke's, 6 Sharnalee Court, Lilydale.

Lunch and a good chat and laugh.

WHAT TO BRING: Chair, cup, plate to share for lunch

FEBRUARY 2016 MEETING

Our first meeting for the year was held at Margaret's St Ann's in Montrose. The weather was fantastic with only a few lingering fluffy clouds, but everyone was greeted with bubbly and strawberries. Thank you for the suggestion Margaret - it was a great treat for everyone.



After the hugging, kissing, talking and laughing, we sat around the pool and discussed what was happening during 2016. Many good ideas were discussed and I have included them on the first page of this newsletter.

As usual, the shared lunch was enjoyed by everyone. Thank you for the time that every member puts into to make these lunches memorable. And if you have a recipe that you would like to share, please remember that I am always looking for them to put into this newsletter.

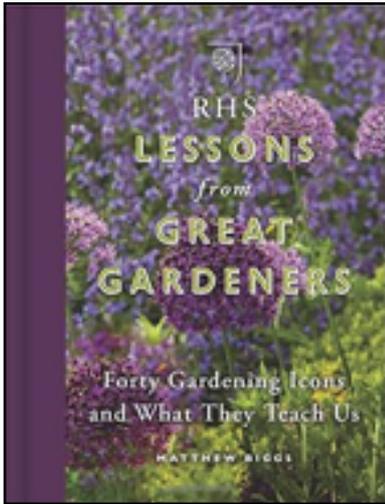
After lunch, Michael and I walked around Margaret's beautiful garden and i was able to relate many stories about the number of times I have visited St Ann's and especially, the funny events. The one memory that Margaret and I share, is the time were were drinking a cup of tea out near her wonderful statue in the front lawn, and we heard some 'possum' noises. Now it was midday, sunny, etc, not in the middle of the night! Anyway, we looked up and the pencil pine in the

neighbour's yard was swaying at the top quite severely. The next thing we saw was this possum tumbling out of the tree, heading fast towards the ground. However, this didn't stop the animal! Up it shoot, straight up the tree at 100kph and the arguing and tree swaying continued for some time. Yes, we still laugh about this argument!



It was wonderful to see so many attending this meeting. I feel that after not seeing members from early December to early February, we always have so much to catch up on about family, friends, gardens, etc. A big thank you Margaret and Pat for opening up your house, garden and pool to our group. We really appreciate it.

BOOK REVIEW

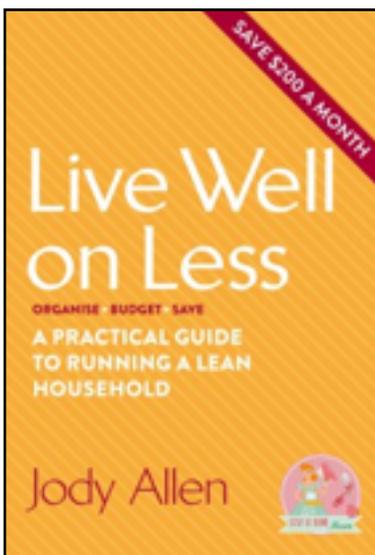


Lessons from great gardeners : forty gardening icons and what they teach us by Matthew Biggs

Since its earliest days, the art and science of gardening has been continually transformed and enhanced by great gardeners - men and women whose passion for gardening has driven them to improve and innovate, to overcome challenges and experiment with new ideas. These gardeners have provided inspiration for future generations, as have their gardens, which attract millions of visitors every year. *Lessons from Great Gardeners* profiles forty of these remarkable figures and explores how their work can be used to inspire and instruct gardeners of all levels and abilities. From the greats of yesteryear to the best modern-day practitioners, the gardeners are drawn from throughout history and from around the world - including Australia's own Jeremy Francis and New Zealand's Bev McConnell. The stories of their life and work are revealed, along with practical hints and tips that unlock the secrets gained from their long years of trial and error. Packed with botanical illustrations of their signature plants, the book also includes stunning photographs of twelve of the world's most iconic gardens, from Jardin Majorelle in Morocco to Sissinghurst in Kent. This is a journey through the world of gardening past and present, and a beautifully presented source of inspiration and ideas for all gardens, great and small.

Jeremy Francis of was a wheat and sheep farmer in Western Australia with an eye for gardening. He started to import ornamentals from overseas and selling them to various nurseries in WA. In 1990 a back injury occurred and was unable to continue with heavy work, so he decided to move to the Dandenongs with the express desire of making a garden in its moist, cool conditions. Hence, Cloudehill. Beech trees had been imported from Britain, weeping maples from Japan and bulbs from Holland in the 1920s, when it became a cut-flower and foliage farm. Jim Woolrich, who ran the farm until the late 1960s, was still living there when Francis arrived from the west. Jeremy bought Cloudehill in 1992 and he set about slowly dividing the garden into compartments, each with its own season of interest.

Live well on less : a practical guide to running a lean household by Jody Allen.



Live lean, not mean! Want to put your money on a diet and save hundreds of dollars? This book gives you the lowdown on spring-cleaning your finances so you can be frugal while still living well. Jody Allen, of Stay at Home Mum fame, will help you set up your household budget, get the best deals, and save money on everything from your car to your clothes. And with over 50 thrifty - but fabulous - recipes, you can be a cost cutter in the kitchen as well! Inside you'll find: A room-by-room guide to household economy, hints and tips for getting organised, ideas for turning leftovers into delicious family meals and inspiring stories from other savvy women.

I have read this book and enjoyed the simplicity and common sense of all the chapters. Thanks to a friend at work who introduced me to the Chicken & Spinach Meatloaf.

JULIE

RECIPE



Chicken and spinach meatloaf

Ingredients

- 3 Large handfuls spinach leaves, chopped
- 2 tsp Lemon zest
- 2 Eggs, slightly beaten
- 500 g Leftover chicken, chopped roughly
- 1 Cup Breadcrumbs
- 100 g Pinenuts
- 100 g Feta cheese, crumbled
- 2 Cloves Garlic, crushed
- 2 Tbsp Mayonnaise

Directions

- 1 Preheat oven to 180oC. Line a baking tray with baking paper. Combine spinach, lemon zest and eggs in a large bowl. Add remaining ingredients and mix together with your hands. Place the mixture in the centre of the baking tray and mound into a log shape, smoothing with your hands. Bake for 45 minutes or until outside just starts to brown.
- 2 Serve with a dollop of Greek yoghurt and a garden salad.

UPCOMING EVENTS

27 & 28 FEBRUARY:

Dahlia Society of Victoria, Mt Waverley Community Centre, Miller Crescent, Mt Waverley. Sat 12.30pm-5pm, Sun 10am-3.30pm. \$4 adults, conc \$1, child free. Up to 1000 blooms on display. Wide range of dahlia talks. Sales, refreshments. Contact 0419 221 200

Melbourne Begonia Society - Annual Begonia Show, Moorabbin Senior Citizens Hall, 964 Nepean Hwy, Moorabbin, MEL 77:D6 Sat 10am-4pm, Sun 10am-3pm, free entry. Display and sales of all types of begonias. Many not available elsewhere. Information, advice and talks on Begonia growing. Devonshire tea and sausage sizzle. Contact Anne 9489 9680

SATURDAY NIGHTS FROM 6 FEBRUARY TO 5 MARCH:

Caribbean Gardens, 1280 Ferntree Gully Road, Scoresby is hosting a series of twilight markets are being held in honour of fifty years of the Caribbean Market, demonstrating that the iconic marketplace can move with the times. Peruse the market stalls, dine on delicious food truck snacks, and hydrate yourself with a beverage or two. The family-friendly event will boast rides, children's entertainment, roving street performers, and an impressive holographic water display set in the Caribbean Lake. As always, the event at Caribbean Gardens is a cheap thrill, with entry just \$2.50 per adult and \$1 per child.

5 & 6 MARCH:

Arundle, 478 Ryrie St, East Geelong. 10am - 4.30pm \$8 (Children U18 free) Students \$5 This romantic garden is a hidden treasure just two kilometres from the Geelong city centre. It is surrounded by thirteen properties yet invisible from the main road. A beautiful Golden Elm and other mature trees give dappled shade to a series of beautifully designed rooms filled with perennials, hardy Mediterranean species, grasses, vegetable beds and a young orchard. The imaginative plantings are wonderful, with vegetables and picking plants complementing each other in unexpected combinations. Bee-keeping, worm farming and composting are features. 0.25 ha (0.6ac).

12 & 13 MARCH 2016:

Ferry Creek Horticultural Society's Annual Plant Collectors Sale and Garden Expo, Ferry Creek Horticultural Society, 100 Hilton Rd, Ferry Creek. Mel: 75 D1. There is a \$5.00 entry fee (Children U14 free). Rare plants, garden tools and book sales, Botanical Artist and Wood Turning, Tours of the gardens, Light luncheons & refreshments available and Ample free on-site parking.

16-20 MARCH:

Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show, Melbourne Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens, Nicholson St, Carlton. 9am-5pm each day \$27 conc \$23. Friday 18 March 6pm-9.30pm \$20. Pre purchase at www.tickets.racv.com.au or 131329.

THURSDAY 17 MARCH:

Water Smart Gardening, Horticultural Centre, 82 Jolimont Road, Forest Hill, 6.30pm-8.30pm. Water is critical to a garden's success but it is becoming an increasingly scarce and expensive resource so gardeners need to be mindful about how it is used. Join SGA's own Richard Rowe and learn about garden design options and choices that reduce water usage; the role of garden zones and plant selection; characteristics of indigenous and exotic plants that love dry climates; the important role of soil and how you can improve your soil's water holding capacity; mulch - types, how, when, pro's and con's; capture and storage of rain water; grey water and how to safely use it; irrigation options and technologies to help you be Water Smart

19 & 20 MARCH:

Karen Sutherland's Productive Garden, 22 Lochinvar St, Pascoe Vale South. (Parking in adjoining street) 10.00am - 4.30pm. Entry price \$8 (children U18 free) The inspiring urban food garden of designer Karen Sutherland. More than 200 edible and useful plants are displayed in an ornamental setting: herbs, vegetable, vines, citrus, fruit and nut trees, South American edible species and Australian bush foods. Aquaponics, rooftop gardens, bees, chickens. Interesting nature strip plantings. 13m X 35m. Talks on native herbs, bush foods and perennial vegetables at 11am, 1pm and 3pm each day. Regular guided tours of the garden.

26 & 27 MARCH:

Lubra Bend, 135 Simpson Lane, Yarra Glen. 3775 Melway 275:G2, 10.00am to 4.30pm, \$10 (Children U18 free) Students \$5. Lubra Bend is a fascinating and inspiring garden that marries traditional and contemporary elements with great flair. A dramatic Australian plant garden, designed by Phil Johnson, greets you at the entry gate and sweeps down the site to the Yarra River. Massive rocks, a lushly planted billabong and overflowing pools are surrounded by hardy, dry-tolerant plants. This part of the garden is a source of inspiration for dry landscape gardening and there will be 'landscape tours' on both days. Beyond, the house is surrounded by a mature country garden with camellias, perennial borders, shrubberies, a long rose arbour underplanted with white iris and productive orchard plantings. A Seville orange walk enables the owner to carry on a long-held family tradition of marmalade-making.

2 & 3 APRIL 2016:

Tesselaar Plant & Garden Expo, 357 Monbulk Road, Silvan. Mel: 123 B5, 9am-4pm. The entry fee is \$18.00 for adults, concession \$15.00 and bulk/group ticket purchase \$15.00 each (minimum of 4 tickets per group purchase). There will be over 40 nursery and plant growers' stalls, garden products, demonstrations and displays, as well as salvia plants, books and seeds for sale. Garden expert and personality Stephen Ryan is compere throughout the weekend, adding his informative and fun approach.

9 APRIL:

The Gippsland Rare and Unusual Plant Fair, 9 am to 3.30 pm. Jindivick Public Hall, Jacksons Track, Jindivick. Mel: Touring map 916. U6. A gold coin donation is the only entry cost. As well as the plant stalls there will be coffee, food and garden related products, including tools and sculptures. Jindivick has much to offer the visitor including 2 eateries, an antique shop and art gallery and the Jindivick Country Gardener Rare Plant Nursery.

Brighton Floral Art Group - Festival of Flowers, St. Leonards Uniting Church Hall, Cnr New St & Wolseley Gr, Brighton. 1pm-4pm, cost \$5. Exhibition of floral art, sale of cakes, plants and Devonshire teas. Susan 9596 5268.

11 APRIL:

Frogmore - The Well Composed Garden Workshop, 1560 Greendale-Trentham Forest Rd, Newbury. Time 9.30am - 3.30pm. \$95 includes lunch As part of Frogmore's 2016 open garden season (Mar 7th – Apr 25th) Frogmore Gardens in association with Open Gardens Victoria will be hosting a day of talks and workshops conducted by three pre-eminent practitioners of the art of gardening in Australia: Guests: Michael Mc Coy, Cathy Newing and Jack Marshall. What elevates a garden out of the ordinary? Is it the design, the plants or the maintenance? Or, maybe it's the creators and their knowledge of all three. In a day of talks and discussions three speakers who have made gardens their life will explore the elements that most make an exceptional garden.

SUNDAY 17 APRIL:

Templestowe College, 7 Cypress Ave, Templestowe Lower, 1pm-4pm. Simple garden structures can make the garden a more comfortable and productive space, can protect plants from the elements, can contribute to a harmonious garden design, and can help attract wildlife and beneficial creatures. However, all too often the materials and techniques used to build these structures can cause environmental damage. Many common commercial building materials can be toxic, energy-intensive, impact the environment when mined or manufactured or can be sourced from old-growth forests. Construction can also contribute to carbon emissions or damage to your garden and local environment. You can reduce these consequences through careful design, selecting environmentally friendly materials, by being creative with waste products and by using simple techniques which minimize earthworks and transportation. Cost \$35, early bird \$30, bring a friend \$32

23& 24 APRIL:

The Nook, 5 Tavistock Road, Monbulk. 10.00am to 4.30pm. \$8 (Children U18 free) Students \$5.

Hillcrest, 2 Braeside Avenue, Sherbrooke. 10.00am to 4.30pm. \$8 (Children U18 free) Students \$5.

30 APRIL-1 MAY:

KES (Knox Environmental Society), Autumn Sale, 1170 Burwood Highway, Ferntree Gully. 10am-1pm each day. Free event.

MARKETS:

Alexandra : Held every 2nd Saturday of the month. 9am-1pm at the Alexandra Timber Tramway, Station Street, Alexandra. www.alexandratramway.org.au Bric-a-brac, local produce, handicrafts, collectables, plants and herbs & BBQ.

Kinglake: Bollygum Community Market (Kinglake) Held every 2nd Sunday of the month. 9am-1pm at Bollygum Park, 40 Whittlesea-Kinglake Road, Kinglake. www.bollygumpark.org.au Kids will love the adventure playground while parents enjoy the market atmosphere. Search for treasure and try some local produce.

Flowerdale Community Market. Held every 3rd Sunday of the month. 9am-1pm at the Flowerdale Community Hall, Whittlesea-Yea Road, Flowerdale. This country-style market will enchant with arts & crafts, fresh produce, plants and bric-a-brac. Devonshire tea and hot food available. New stallholders always welcome.

Kinglake Produce & Artisan Market. Held on the 4th Sunday of every month. 10am-3pm (except December) in the Kinglake Township, Whittlesea-Kinglake Road, Kinglake. www.kinglakemarket.com Bread, olive oil, fresh produce, even meat. Wine, jams, sauces, cakes, pies, roses and more. Entry by gold coin donation – Contribution to the Rotary Club to assist with community projects.

Marysville Market. Every 2nd & 4th Sunday of the month. Murchison Street, Marysville. Crafts, gifts, clothing, plants, local produce, jams, preserves, chutney, lavender products, baked goods, honey, fruit and wine. New stallholders always welcome.

Yarck Country Market. Held on the 3rd Saturday of every month. 9am-1.30pm at the Yarck Hall, Maroondah Hwy, Yarck. www.visityarck.com.au Local produce, jams, craft, plants and wine.

Yea Country Market. Held the 1st Sunday of every month. 9am-2pm. Yea Railway Park, Station Street, Yea. Set next to the playground and skate park, this market showcases local growers and producers with fresh produce, arts & crafts & children's activities. Entry by gold coin donation – Donated to local charities.

FROM GARDEN TO POT

Normally gardeners do it the other way around, from pot to garden, but I have been doing from garden to pot. After the fire last July which extensively damaged our house in Seville, we lived with our son in Mitcham for three months.

I had been back once to Seville and moved all my pot plants – 20 of them, into the garden under a tree and I told them to look after themselves for a while. This meant they had to survive the cold, slugs, snails and whatever weather was thrown at them. Some of them had heat damage with lots of dead foliage.

For the last three months I had made grand statements that it was too hard to dig up any of my treasures from the garden – where would I put them I said? And I had now moved from a large house on a huge block to a fairly small suburban block which we rent in Ringwood, with all the garden beds full of box hedges!

In October, my partner and I went up and collected all the pots. More than half of them needed repotting with new soil, they were not all in a healthy state.

The other daunting task for me was my water gardens. I had 2 old baths full of lotuses (which I was pretty obsessed with), and a water trough with water lilies, a large round tub with water cannas and an old fish pond also full of water plants. Another grand statement was made by me – too heavy, too hard and I don't know how to move lotuses in hundreds of kilograms of mud.

My partner looked at the lotuses, just showing new shoots above the mud. He simply said – you cant leave them to die. This was all the encouragement I needed, of course I couldn't leave them. So, the next weekend, armed with 2 buckets and a spade, I headed up to collect lotus roots and water plants. I was able to take the water plants out of the water and put them on their sides to drain = soooo heavy when full of water. The water lilies had already dried out with no water in the trough!

Now the lotuses. I have never dug up my lotuses before, and although I adore them, I really knew little about growing them. I knew they need full sun to flower successfully, and if you transplant then you have to be very careful of the growing shoot, if it gets damaged that root is useless.

I soon discovered the spade was not the tool I needed as I couldn't see the roots for mud. So I played in the mud for a couple of hours! I collected about 20 roots with lovely new growth at one end of a root. All I could do then was put them in the buckets with water and return with them to Ringwood. My partner had to go up the next day and put the water plants, and tubs and trough, on the back of the ute as they don't fit in my car. Then a trip to Bunnings, again with the ute and partner, to buy 15 bags of garden soil. The lotuses sat in the buckets of water for 2 days, I had no idea if they would survive after this, but I shoved them carefully into the soil, filled the tubs with water and waited.

My dearest friend, Robyn Rooke, knowing of my grand statements about not digging up anything from the garden, asked if she and her daughter could go and dig up some hellebores from Seville for their gardens. While they were there, Robyn rang and asked where my most loved ones were and she and Ashleigh dug them up, and delivered about 10 pots to me next day!



So then I had 30 potted plants and 10 water pots! And of course I have discovered I couldn't stop! I have 62 pots at last count, plus 4 with cuttings from plants at Seville that were just too big to dig up.

I am finding the Abutilons are struggling moving from garden to pots. I have four that I bought in Yea on our garden club weekend away which I don't want to lose, so I am thinking they might end up in the garden soon and I will just take cuttings when I move from the rental property. Five

salvias are also planted back in a garden bed and much happier, flowering profusely which the native bees love.

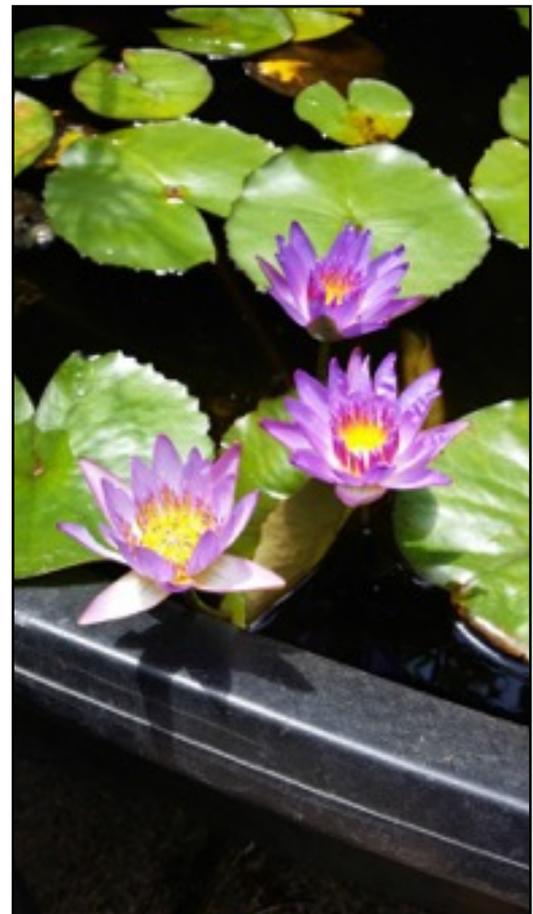
I had never wanted many pot plants, as I thought them so much work. Although the pots need a lot of water over summer, I find being able to move them to a shady place when its really hot makes for a happy plant, or into the sun as needed, or if in flower the pot gets moved to the courtyard for our enjoyment. So pots aren't that bad, and I have discovered its much easier to move a pot around the garden to find the best position than have to dig up a plant from the garden when its in the wrong spot.

I am also fertilising every fortnight to get them growing strongly, which of course means I am up potting quite a few of them. But remember these are not really pot plants, but large garden shrubs I am trying to keep growing for a few years until I have a garden again. I think I may trim roots of some of them over winter to allow them to stay in the pots. My partner now gets the moving trolley out when I ask for a pot to be moved!

My lotuses are thriving. And some of you may know I am not fond of pink flowers! One of my lotuses, I have two different ones, is very pink but I love it so much. I have had more than 30 blooms with 15 more to come. I have never had this many before – the only difference for them that I can work out is the climate – the nights are not nearly so cold in Ringwood!

My Seville garden? Mulched heavily and left to survive (or not!) as there is no water other than getting a hose connected to the neighbour across the road. Most of the hellebores have died without water, some of the smaller plants have also perished. February and March will be the hardest months as these are the hottest and driest months in Seville. Salvias and abutilons are growing still, as are the citrus. I have sent Julie a photo of my 'pink' lotus, and a water lily which luckily survived as it was a special one which I have been told is hard to buy now.

What would I have done without these plants to distract me I wonder – gone batty I think ☺



Thank you Susan Peel-Smith for this article. I really enjoyed looking at pots in a new way. Julie

BANANAS

BANANA for Breakfast anyone???

This is interesting. After reading this, you'll never look at a banana in the same way again. Bananas contain three natural sugars - sucrose, fructose and glucose combined with fiber. A banana gives an instant, sustained and substantial boost of energy.

Research has proven that just two bananas provide enough energy for a strenuous 90-minute workout. No wonder the banana is the number one fruit with the world's leading athletes. But energy isn't the only way a banana can help us keep fit. It can also help overcome or prevent a substantial number of illnesses and conditions, making it a must to add to our daily diet.

DEPRESSION: According to a recent survey undertaken by MIND amongst people suffering from depression, many felt much better after eating a banana. This is because bananas contain tryptophan, a type of protein that the body converts into serotonin, known to make you relax, improve your mood and generally make you feel happier.

PMS: Forget the pills - eat a banana. The vitamin B6 it contains regulates blood glucose levels, which can affect your mood.

ANAEMIA: High in iron, bananas can stimulate the production of haemoglobin in the blood and so helps in cases of anaemia.

BLOOD PRESSURE: This unique tropical fruit is extremely high in potassium yet low in salt, making it perfect to beat blood pressure. So much so, the US Food and Drug Administration has just allowed the banana industry to make official claims for the fruit's ability to reduce the risk of blood pressure and stroke.

BRAIN POWER: 200 students at a Twickenham school (England) were helped through their exams this year by eating bananas at breakfast, break, and lunch in a bid to boost their brain power. Research has shown that the potassium-packed fruit can assist learning by making pupils more alert.

CONSTIPATION: High in fiber, including bananas in the diet can help restore normal bowel action, helping to overcome the problem without resorting to laxatives.

HANGOVERS: One of the quickest ways of curing a hangover is to make a banana milkshake, sweetened with honey. The banana calms the stomach and, with the help of the honey, builds up depleted blood sugar levels, while the milk soothes and re-hydrates your system.

HEARTBURN: Bananas have a natural antacid effect in the body, so if you suffer from heartburn, try eating a banana for soothing relief.

MORNING SICKNESS: Snacking on bananas between meals helps to keep blood sugar levels up and avoid morning sickness.

MOSQUITO BITES: Before reaching for the insect bite cream, try rubbing the affected area with the inside of a banana skin. Many people find it amazingly successful at reducing swelling and irritation.

NERVES: Bananas are high in B vitamins that help calm the nervous system..

Overweight and at work? Studies at the Institute of Psychology in Austria found pressure at work leads to gorging on comfort food like chocolate and chips. Looking at 5,000 hospital patients, researchers found the most obese were more likely to be in high-pressure jobs. The report concluded that, to avoid panic-induced food cravings, we need to control our blood sugar levels by snacking on high carbohydrate foods every two hours to keep levels steady.

ULCERS: The banana is used as the dietary food against intestinal disorders because of its soft texture and smoothness. It is the only raw fruit that can be eaten without distress in over-chroniclercases. It also neutralizes over-acidity and reduces irritation by coating the lining of the stomach.

TEMPERATURE CONTROL: Many other cultures see bananas as a 'cooling' fruit that can lower both the physical and emotional temperature of expectant mothers. In Thailand , for example, pregnant women eat bananas to ensure their baby is born with a cool temperature.

So, a banana really is a natural remedy for many ills. When you compare it to an apple, it has **FOUR TIMES** the protein, **TWICE** the carbohydrate, **THREE TIMES** the phosphorus, five times the vitamin A and iron, and twice the other vitamins and minerals.. It is also rich in potassium and is one of the best value foods around So maybe its time to change that well-known phrase so that we say, 'A BANANA a day keeps the doctor away!'



SENIOR STAMPS

For any seniors out there who have not yet got their card to get 60c stamps, here's what you do:-

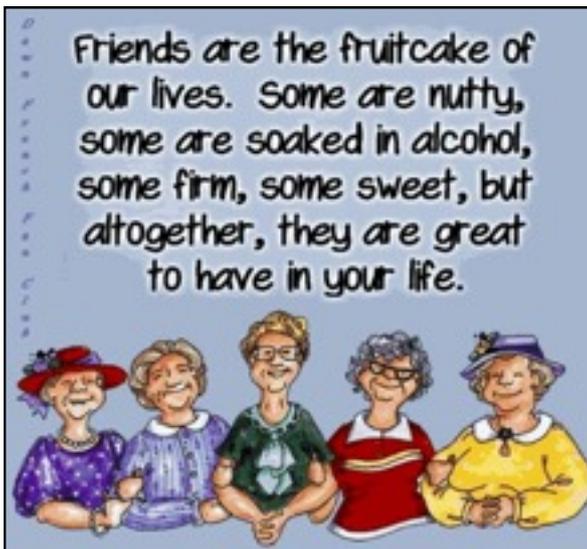
Go into any Post Office and ask for a form, fill out form and present:

The following Australian Federal Government concession cards are accepted as proof of eligibility for a MyPost Concession account

- Pensioner Concession Card
- Health Care Card (all types)
- Commonwealth Seniors Health Card
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Card
- Veterans' Repatriation Health Card

and they will send you a plastic card which you present whenever you want to buy stamps. I believe you get 55 stamps per year at this rate, but I've never exceeded it yet.

Many thanks for this information, Jill Farrow.



HOP TO IT!

If you have ever planted a deciduous climber on a pergola to give summer shade and thus passive sickle benefits to your home, you may well have realised that the bare winter stems do cut out quite a bit of water sun and the foliage is usually thick and shade creating by early October, when it is still cool enough to still want some sun.

Have you ever looked at a big deciduous shrub or small tree in the garden that is a bit of a bore for most of the year but you like it for its flowers during its short season? So you wish to plant a climber through it but don't want something that will completely swamp its host or in fact hide the show when the shrub is in bloom. Well, the answer to both of these quandaries is the same: plant a herbaceous perennial climber!

I always find that people scratch their collective heads when I suggest plants in this category as what use can they possibly be? After all aren't climbers there to hide the shed or the fence and herbaceous ones won't do that year round. As an aside I would like to know why so many people erect sheds that need hiding in the first place, wouldn't a pretty shed be much more desirable?

The trick to selecting the best species for the job is to know how much growth it can put on in one growing season so as to cover the pergola or grow neatly up into a host plant without over doing it. One of my favourites for both jobs is the Golden Hop, *Humulus lupulus 'Aureus'*. It is in fact an ornamental form of the commercial Hop, so there could be a by product of 'Amber Fluid' to be had by those interested in self-sufficiency!



Before I start waxing lyrical about the virtues of this plant I should I guess at this point out it is a vigorous suckered so that you will need to dig out wayward rhizomes fairly regularly, put down root barriers or grow it in a large pot to stop it misbehaving.

Now for the good stuff! This plant climbs by twisting round its support and can grow to 4 or 5 metres in a season if in good soil, so a couple of plants could cover quite a large area. The gold green maple shaped leaves are the main game and once they are up and over the pergola the sun shining through them is a delight.

The accompanying photo is of one growing through a Miscanthus grass that I spray painted the dead winter stems bright yellow and I have to say that I think it was an inspired idea.

*The first 60 years of childhood
are always the hardest.*



Text by Stephen Ryan, taken from RHSV Gardeners Gazette, Summer 2015.