

# Dibble & Hoe Gardeners Inc 2015

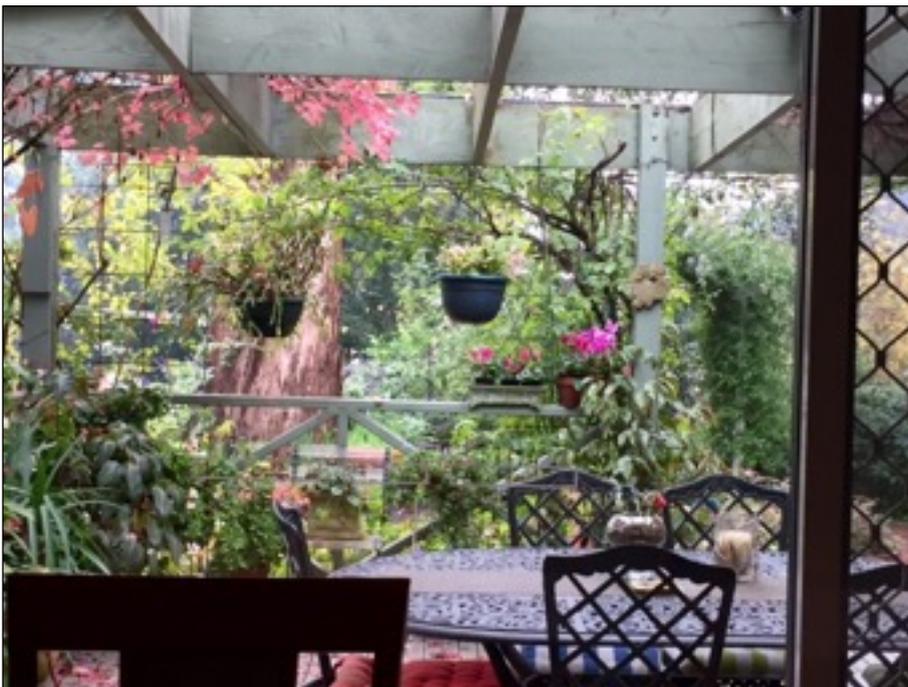
July 2016

Volume 16, No 5

Hi Everyone,

On Saturday 18 June, Judy Percy, Tine and I attended the RHSV Gardener's Day Out. We had the most fantastic time. Last year I was told that registration was very tedious and the speakers were OK. This year, registration was well thought out and we all got our name tags incredibly quick and I even paid for my next year's RHVS fees in two minutes! And parking was a breeze! Definitely because Tine drove and knew what to do! I will certainly be going next year. In this newsletter, I will summarise what the guest speakers talked about. There were plenty of plants for sale and many people used this opportunity to talk to the experts.

I have included photographs taken by Tine from the June meeting as I was unable to attend. I admired the resulting baskets that were made on the day. Our July meeting should be wonderful. A garden to visit and a talk on bees.



This month's profile is Kathy Smalley from June 2010 - hope you enjoy her story. And this photograph was taken in Kathy's backyard this year whilst Michael and I were looking after their house and cat. This is the view we had whilst eating brunch. We have been very fortunate to have been able to stay a few times at their home and enjoy their garden.

And, as yet, I haven't heard from any of our

new members about writing their profile. Don't be shy! I will even help you write the article if you require help, Cup of tea/glass of wine - these are the bribes I accept.

I read somewhere that flower fragrance seems sharper and stronger in the winter air. Go out and smell the garden, but remember to rug up warmly.

Happy gardening,  
Julie

## 2016 COMMITTEE

President	Julie Adams	0408122780
Minutes Secretary	Kathy Smalley	9761 8251
Treasurer	Tine Grimston	9752 9897
Newsletter Editor	Julie Adams	0408122780
Committee:	Polly Ashburner	9756 7342
	Julie Groves	9723 1762
	Janine McAlpine	9723 6867
	Judy Percy	9723 5069

## JULY 2016 MEETING

### 10:am - NOTE the early start

Meet at Tines house- 4 Crimea Close Rowville - for a very quick cuppa, then we carpool to Larkin garden which has very limited parking

### 10:30am - Larkin Garden in Lysterfield

Please wear sturdy shoes - the garden is steep. The Larkin Garden is a large (1.25 acre) Australian native plant garden on a north facing hillside on clay soils. A small section of garden was started in 1991 with the assistance of the landscape gardener Roger Stone. Further development has occurred over many years with the latest significant changes in 2010. The garden is naturalistic in style with many softly curving pathways allowing you to enjoy the experience of exploring the garden. There are several water features, an Allocasurina forest and a wide variety of Australian plants. There is also a significant use of local indigenous plants in some border plantings. Chris has a long standing interest in landscape design with Australian native plants so despite the addiction to collecting plants attention is paid to the best use and placement of these plants to meet the design vision. Framing views, near and distant, preserving a feeling of spaciousness with the use of ground-covering plants, planting to get a good balance between sunshine and shade and screen planting are some of the things that are part of the design vision.

### 12:30pm:

Back to Tine's for a Shared lunch

### 1:30pm:

Talk on bees by Renate Crow, an amateur but very enthusiastic bee keeper who lives in Ferntree Gully. She has had a hive now for just under one year but has learnt heaps in a very short time. Her story goes like this : *I am on the becoming a Bee Keeper rapid learning curve. Today I collected a random swarm of bees that decided my garden would be a friendly new home. First experience at doing this and survived with no stings. Thanks to Marcus who talked me through what to do( and the bee keeping manual ), kinda like delivering a baby over the phone, nah not quite as exciting as that. If any friends or family find a swarm settling in their garden don't call the pest people, please call me or another bee person and we can rehouse them in a safe place. So the bees are over nighting in a box and tomorrow brings more new adventures in the bee world for me.*

You will enjoy hearing her adventures with bees.

### RAFFLE:

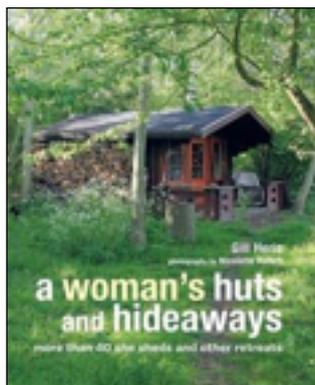
Raffle of a book and some Bromeliad - MatchStix (Aechmea gamosepala) This is a stunning pink and purple flowered bromeliad that we admired in Maddies garden earlier this year. I have included the notes on page 8.

**What to bring:** Your mug, lunch to share and some coins for the raffle

# JUNE 2016 MEETING



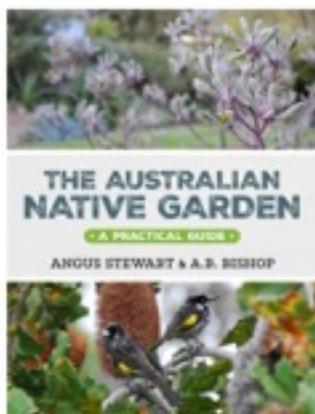
## BOOK REVIEWS



### A Woman's hut and hideaways : more than 40 she sheds and other retreats by Gill Heriz

Gill Heriz presents another inspirational collection of women's sheds and other small spaces. In *A Woman's Huts and Hideaways*, each place has its own story, a reason for being, whether it's somewhere to escape, to create, to work or just a place to "be". A bespoke shed in an Urban backyard, surrounded by pots of plants and flowers, serves as an isle of peace for its owner, Wendy. By the Waterside, Mary has built a beach hut on the coast, perched on stilts with a view out to the sea. Hidden away, in an enchanting wilderness in Norfolk, UK, is Janet and Sue's Secret Garden. Here, there are three sheds: an old summerhouse full of light; a hide nestled in the bushes for watching the local wildlife; and a renovated wagon used as a base for recording their wildlife observations. In Portland, Oregon, Polly uses her inland boathouse as a Creative space for writing. From yurts to Airstreams, beach huts to bothies, the huts and hideaways have one thing in common--they are all inspirational spaces created by women, for women.

Beautifully illustrated with photography by Nicolette Hallett, *A Woman's Huts and Hideaways* takes the "she sheds" movement one step further, into all sorts of outdoor buildings and spaces.



### The Australian Native Garden A practical guide by Angus Stewart and AB Bishop

A highly illustrated, authoritative and practical book focused on all aspects of using native plants in the home garden, from design through to plant choice and cultivation.

This authoritative and practical book--written in an approachable and accessible style--focuses on growing and using native plants in the home garden. It provides expert information on the fundamentals--soils, cultivation techniques, pruning, fertilising and maintenance--and looks at different styles of garden design, using Australian plants not only for aesthetic reasons but for creating droughtproof gardens, fire resistant gardens, and environments attractive to native fauna as well. Growing your own bush foods is also covered. Highly illustrated and

information-packed, *The Australian Native Garden* showcases some of the best designed Australian gardens and explores rural areas around Australia where indigenous species thrive in the wild, representing a fascinating source of inspiration and information.

#### Author bio:

Angus Stewart's groundbreaking work with native plants and his appearances on ABC Radio's Weekends with Simon Marnie and ABC TV's Gardening Australia have seen him emerge as Australia's leading expert when it comes to native plants and their untapped possibilities. Creating an Australian Garden (Allen and Unwin 2010) won Book Laurel for best general gardening book at the Horticultural Media Association of Australia in 2011. Angus's other books include *500 Plants* (CSIRO Publishing November 2012) and *Let's Propagate* (A&U February 2012).

AB Bishop is a qualified writer and horticulturalist. She operated her own landscaping business before landing a dream job as an ABC TV's Gardening Australia Researcher (2008-2012). In this position she was responsible for finding, researching and writing briefs for stories Australia wide. AB also offers professional gardening advice to home gardeners. She writes for *The Age* and for magazines including *Gardening Australia*, blogs about her home garden experiences at [kkgarden.com](http://kkgarden.com) and is also a monthly guest on the 3CR gardening program. AB worked with Angus Stewart as researcher on *Creating an Australian Garden*.

## GARDENER'S DAY OUT

The first speaker for the day was Craig Castree, an educational consultant and a qualified Horticulturist of 40 years experience. He has grown his own food traditionally and organically over this period. Craig works in Melbourne with not-for-profit organisations and businesses to deliver workshops on self-sufficiency and the important message of eating healthy food raised without chemicals. He is the President of the Werribee Park Heritage Orchard which is being restored with his guidance.

Craig has often been on 'Vasili's Garden to Kitchen' show teaching us how to graft and care for fruit trees. Craig is also a cheese maker, an apiarist, and has worked as an educator for the Gordon Institute. He gave many excellent gardening tips.

He talked about companion planting, eg placing garlic, tomatoes and basil together as you would in a salad. He suggested that you should not plant in rows and suggested that if you pull out a weed, you could place a food seedling in the same spot, cover the ground around with sugar cane mulch (he says that this is the best mulch) and sprinkle a good handful of Dynamic Lifter around the base. To prevent codling moth in apples, plant garlic around the base of the tree. Think carefully before buying fruit and vegetables out of season - have they been chemically ripen? Thin out your fruit on trees to encourage larger growth and better taste. Also prune your tree to your own height to make

picking easier. Prune whilst leaves are still on the tree. Pruning shouldn't be attempted on apple and pear trees until they are two/three years old. You should never have only two chooks as they are too busy trying to show which one is in charge! and suggested no free ranging if you want to eat your produce. Also, did you know that you can train your chooks to eat bugs, etc? When your one chooks is trying to eat your delicious young sprouting broccoli or whatever food plants are in your garden, take the time to watch carefully and instead of eating the young shots, find the grubs on the plant and feed it to the chook. Continue feeding the grubs until the chook understands about how delicious the grubs are compared to the plant. Might take



An enthusiastic Tine with one of her purchases

time, but well worth the effort. Honey bees are attracted to European vegetable plants. Native bees won't help our as much with cross pollination. It is advisable to surround corn with peas/beans as corn depletes nitrogen but legumes replaces the nitrogen. Such an inspirational talk.

This second presenter was Chloe Thomson, no relation to Sophie Thomson. Chloe works for Eco Organic Garden, is a presenter on The Garden Gurus, has articles in Good Organic Gardening magazine and her own website - Bean There, Dug That. She talked about her early years of studying and how she become involved in gardens/gardening. She is young and enthusiastic, with two small sons and a husband that is ready to share her knowledge in their garden. She suggested to use diluted molasses for grasshopper, caterpillar and a possum deterrent. Mix a cup of molasses into one litre of water and spray it over new foliage. She is a firm believer in Eco Hydrate - a unique water saving product that draws extra moisture into the root zone of plants.

Plants need up to 50% less watering and are better able to cope with drought stress and transplant shock, perfect for seedlings, potted plants, lawns and for when you go on holidays and 100% biodegradable. Chloe is starting a new endeavour - The Gardenettes, which is 100% online gardening program that will air fortnightly for ten minutes. This will start on 14 September so the people who use the internet, look out for this program. Chloe talked about the lasagne technique - no-dig, no-till organic gardening method that results in rich, fluffy soil with very little work from the

gardener. Will write about this in another newsletter. I absolutely enjoyed listening to this young energetic and enthusiastic lady.

After lunch and the presentation of the Hanging Basket Competition, Sophie Thomson was the last guest speaker. Sophie's passion for plants and gardening was passed on to her by her parents and she cut her teeth working in the family plant nursery, David Thomson Nursery at Summertown in the Adelaide Hills. As well as presenting for the ABC Television's *Gardening Australia* and writing for the *Gardening Australia Magazine*, she writes the weekly gardening column for the *Sunday Mail* and the *Weekender Herald*. Sophie is patron of a number of organisations including the Duck Flat Community Garden, Friends of Waite Arboretum, Beekeepers' Society of South Australia, the Cactus and Succulent Society of SA and Ambassador for Horticultural Therapy SA.

Her main theme was the important of health and gardening - how we must encourage our young children to be proactive in gardening for their health and wellbeing as 25% of Australian children are overweight. Also, it has been proven that depression, old age and length of hospitalisation can be improved with gardens and gardening. To read more of this, I encourage you to look at her website [Sophie's Patch](#). She suggested everyone should read the book *Last Child in the Woods* by Richard Louv as it shows how our children have become increasingly alienated and distant from nature, why this matters, and what we can do to make a difference.

And she quoted Audrey Hepburn "To **plant a garden** is to believe in tomorrow."

Yes it was a wonderful day. Left me with plenty to think about.

## RECIPE

### Oven-baked meatballs in cheesy tomato sauce

#### INGREDIENTS:

600 g Pork and veal mince  
1/2 Cup Fresh breadcrumbs  
1 Egg  
1/3 Cup Parmesan Cheese (Grated)  
1 Tbsp Fresh oregano, coarsely chopped  
2 Tbsp Fresh basil, chopped  
1 Tbsp Extra virgin olive oil  
500 g Passatta  
180 g Bocconcini

#### METHOD:

Preheat oven to 220oC. Place mince, breadcrumbs, egg, Parmesan, oregano and basil in a large bowl. Mix well to combine. Shape into 12 balls. Heat oil in frypan, add meatballs, turning for 5 minutes or until browned.



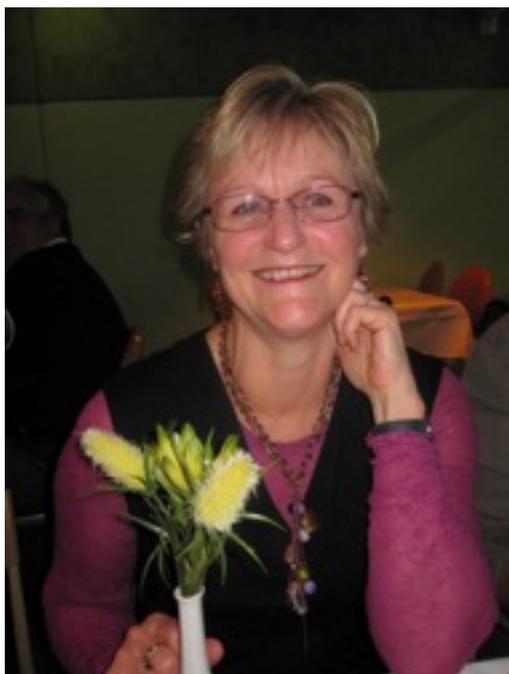
Warm passatta, put meatballs and sauce into casserole dish, scatter with cheese. Bake uncovered 15-20 minutes until meatballs are cooked.

Top with extra basil, serve with garlic bread and rocket.

Very easy but tasty recipe. **JULIE ADAMS**

## PROFILE - Kathy Smalley

To write these few words has challenged me to wonder where my interest in gardening stemmed from. My mother gardened, but as she was the wife of a school teacher, she more often maintained a garden she inherited, rather than create one. I have a black and white photo of her taken in front of the school residence at Macks Creek (near Yarram) taken in the late 1930's. She proudly told me that the flowers were cosmos and she could still picture them and that was 60 years on! Our last school residence was Moe and I had the chore of watering the garden and I can still picture that garden and especially the brown Boronia at the back door. I must have had an interest to know its name when I was aged 17 years.



I have been inspired over the years by my older siblings and their gardens. In my family we always take the time to go and "see the garden" at any relatives place including those of my siblings and I have 7 of them so it must run in the genes, and I recently discovered that one of my grandmother's grew flowers for the cut flower industry during the 1930's.

I had my first garden at my first rented flat in Hawthorn. I planted seedlings along the driveway and in a small garden alongside the outside laundry with its old copper. The following flats I lived in didn't have gardens, but I always had pot plants.

My first husband was in the RAAF so like my mother, I inherited gardens. I have just realised I have planted and maintained ten gardens thus far in my life. The RAAF always had nurseries and would give plants free to those who wanted them, mostly trees and natives though. I always had pots to liven the place up and our trailer would be full of plants when we were on the move! I used gardens and plants to put our imprint on a home that we were generally in only for a short period of time.

I also had a brother-in-law who was an enthusiastic gardener and as a young wife newly back in Melbourne, he was the one who taught me about composting, feeding and plant propagation. He named plants for me and was very generous with cuttings.

When I moved to Croydon it was to my husband Leigh's house. He had planted the garden, but it wasn't to my liking, though the structure was there. So I replanted all the azaleas together and all the ferns together as well as other like-minded plants. That's me, the typical librarian, planting to make sure everything is in its proper place.

My garden in Montrose is a shady garden and with the gums, is also quite a dry one with the drought. So that of course has presented itself with dilemmas that I haven't had previously.

Why do I garden? I love the sense of planting something and watching it grow and transform all of its own accord. I especially love bulbs for that reason, that they are dormant, then sprout and then produce the most wonderful, beautiful flower. I also treasure that plants that have been handed onto me. Among my zygo cactus there are some of my mother's which over forty years old are, many I inherited from other friends. I have 3 hoyas one from my mother, one from my brother and one I inherited when I moved into the Croydon house. I love looking at plants that have come as gifts or as cuttings from loved ones either family or friends, or ones bought in the good company of family and friends when out together enjoying a nursery or "garden day".

## Bromeliad - MatchStix (*Aechmea gamosepala*)

When mature this plant has 30cm height and 30cm spread and is moderately hardy. Will tolerate full sun or semi shade, indoors and use as a cut flower.



**Description:** An exotic looking plant with a stunning flower spike that lasts as a cut flower. It is amazingly adaptable, tough and easy to grow even in cooler climates, and readily multiplies to create a tropical looking groundcover. Matchstix is a great beginners bromeliad as it is so hardy and lacks the painful spines that many species have.

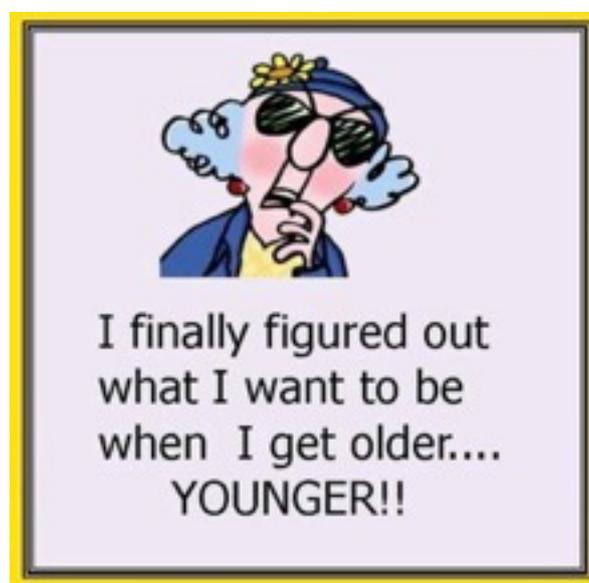
Very hardy and beautiful, bromeliads handle life differently than other plants. Most are epiphytic, their roots are little more than supports or hold-fasts. Their leaves do most of the work. The leaves form a tank to collect and hold moisture. These tanks also catch the leaves discarded by the trees towering over them. As the detritus decays, the bromeliad leaves absorb the nutrients. Bromeliads are adapted to making do with few resources and they do it very well.

A fauna refuge: create a sanctuary for little frogs in the water-filled well of the Bromeliad. To use as a habitat for frogs, plant in a shady spot around a water feature (or up a tree) and remember to keep the vessel of the plant topped up with water.

**Care:** Can be in part shade to full sun except in tropical areas where its best in shade. Plant under (or in) trees so the fallen leaves landing in the vase of the bromeliad provide all the necessary nutrients. Prefers an Orchid potting mix or a porous mixture such as equal parts bark chips, humus, peat moss and sand. During the growing season it is advisable to keep water in the funnel at the centre of the rosette most of the time. Keep the soil barely moist - only water when the soil is dry to the touch. If the plant is growing well but does not flower, try wrapping it in a plastic bag with some ripe apples for a few days. The ethylene gas released by the apples should induce flowering.

**Indoor plants:** Feed in spring/summer by spraying with a weak seaweed emulsion (half the strength recommended on the label).

**Pests/Diseases:** Indoor pests to watch for include scale and thrips (take outdoors for a week, remove by hand). Yellow leaves may mean either too much direct sun or too cool temperatures.



## HOW TO GET RID OF SLUGS IN THE GARDEN

You've tried beer and salt, but now there's another item from the pantry that can help you win the war against slugs in the garden. Scientists have accidentally discovered that coffee is an effective way to repel the slimy pests before they eat their way through your garden.



It seems that both slugs and snails are not a fan of caffeine. You can simply sprinkle the coffee grounds from your morning brew around your herbs and veggies to keep them away. The researchers were investigating whether a caffeine-based solution would be effective against frogs when they made the discovery. The frogs were not affected but it did kill slugs and snails in the area. Once this occurred they moved their attention to the slugs and sought to find out if water with two per cent of caffeine would be an effective deterrent. In a single area

in just a few hours, three-quarters of the slugs had moved out. Within two days, there were no slugs in there and 92 per cent were dead.

They then decided to test whether spraying cabbage plants with a caffeine solution would deter the slugs from eating them. It worked, using a solution that was just 0.01 per cent caffeine. While it isn't known how the caffeine kills the creatures, its effectiveness has been proven. And the good news is that most plants are not affected by caffeine, although some lettuce and ferns became yellowed after exposure.

The research is great news for producers of slug repellants. Slugs are not only a pest for gardeners, they also cost the farming industry big money. The trouble with most chemicals to remove them is that they can be harmful to the animals that feed on the slugs. With such low doses of caffeine proving to be effective, coffee could become a regular feature in commercial slug removal products.

Taken from <http://www.oversixty.com.au>

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### 25-26 JUNE:

**North East Melbourne Orchid Society Orchid Show**, Bulleen Heights School Hall, Pleasant Road, Bulleen MEL 32:G6, Saturday 9am-4pm, Sunday 10am-4pm. \$4, orchids on show and for sale, light lunch and refreshments available. Michael Coker 0417 334 232

### 25-26 JUNE:

**Winter Flower Show & Plant Sales**, Robert Clark Horticultural Centre, Ballarat Botanical Gardens, Wendouree Parade, Ballarat, 10.30am-3.30pm, \$5 includes tea/coffee and cake. Organised by the Australian Plants Society Ballarat. Native plants and secondhand gardening book for sale. Light lunch available.

### 27 JUNE:

**Painfree gardening - how to look after your back in the gardening**, 74-86 Croydon Hills Dr, Croydon Hills, 10am. Sponsored by Yarrunga Retirees \$3 includes morning tea. Visitors are most welcome payment at the door. Book by emailing Glenda Nicholson [yarrungaretirees@outlook.com](mailto:yarrungaretirees@outlook.com) stating your name and contact number.

**Thursday, 30. JUNE:**

**Floral Art Society of Victoria - Annual Floral Presentation.** Presentation by multi-award Winning international floral designer Bart Hassam, in the Music Auditorium, Methodist Ladies' College, Kew. Bookings Janet Alesich 03 9894 4131.

**9 & 10 JULY:**

**Maribyrnong Orchid Society Inc- Winter Show**, Marybyrnong Community Centre, Randall Street, Maribyrnong. Tram No. 57-82 Stop No. 45 9am - 4pm both days. Cost: Entry \$5  
[www.mosorchid.org](http://www.mosorchid.org)

**10 JULY:**

**Telopea Gardens**, 80 Beaconsfield Emerald Road (opposite Paternoster Road) Emerald. Come and visit this 10 acre garden, which is set in a natural amphitheatre just 2.5 kms from Emerald. Meander through the numerous paths to discover a diverse range of exotic and native trees and shrubs, perennials, bulbs and succulents. Tea/coffee will be provided. Bring lunch to share, a chair, your camera and notebook. Garden entry is \$8.00. Ring David Hoskins, Ph: 0359 68458 if attending.

**Saturday, 23. JULY:**

**Mill Park Garden Club - Rose Pruning Demonstration**, Parks Victoria's Historic Le Page Homestead at Plenty Gorge Park. Hawkstowe Picnic Area, 40 Gordons Rd, Sth Morang. Times 11am & 2pm. Rose Society of Victoria will give an informative talk and demonstrate rose pruning techniques around the cottage garden. Free event and light refreshments available. BYO Secateurs for "Hands On Tuition". Chris on 03 94041554 or Shirley on 03 94674135

**Friends of the Royal Botanical Gardens Cranbourne Inc - Growing Friends Winter - 2016**

**Plantsale**, Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne, 1000 Ballarto Road, Cranbourne (Melway ref: 133K10). Times: 10am - 4pm. A great selection of Australian Plants. Plant list will be available 1 or 2 weeks prior to the sale. Check the website  
[www.rbg.vic.gov.au](http://www.rbg.vic.gov.au) or [www.rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au](http://www.rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au) or email [growing.friends@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au](mailto:growing.friends@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au). Follow the signs in the carpark. Cash or cheque only.

**Saturday, 30. JULY:**

**Creswick Garden Club - Sophie Thomson.** Tangled Maze 2301 Midland Hwy Springmount 3364 Times: 9:30am - 3:30pm. Cost: \$55. Sophie Thomson - ABC Gardening Australia's presenter in South Australia. Cost includes Morning and Afternoon Tea plus a 2 Course Luncheon. For bookings call Keith on 0490 104 332 or Phyllis on 03 5345 2514. Payment please by the 5th July 2016. E-mail [creswickgardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:creswickgardenclub@gmail.com). Mail - Creswick Garden Club P.o. Box 159 Creswick 3363

**30 & 31 JULY:**

**Open House Melbourne Weekend**, Since 2008, Open House Melbourne has been connecting people with good design and architecture in the city. We invite people to explore outstanding houses, buildings, infrastructure and landscapes that illustrate our rich history, reflect how we live and work, and offer insights into our future city. We do this through our annual free weekend at the end of July and through a series of accessible, informative and entertaining talks, tours, workshops and events throughout the year. The Weekend puts a spotlight on the unique spaces and places that form the foundation of Melbourne, providing an opportunity for you to consider what makes Melbourne unique. The Weekend showcases buildings of significance in a free and accessible format so everyone can experience the value of good design and architecture, and consider what makes a liveable city. More information is available <http://www.openhousemelbourne.org/> or will be in our August newsletter.

## 6 SIMPLE TRICKS TO HELP BOOST YOUR MEMORY

While age-related brain lapses are a reality that we will most likely face at some stage, it doesn't mean you can't fight back. Before forgetfulness starts taking hold, take on board some of these simple approaches to help keep the grey matter sharp.

**Close your eyes** – When British researchers had people watch short films and then recall details by answering a series of questions, those who were instructed to keep their eyes closed answered correctly 23 per cent more of the time than people who were told to keep their eyes open. The findings add to the body of evidence that suggests that cutting out surrounding interference can help you focus more intensely on remembering an important piece of information.

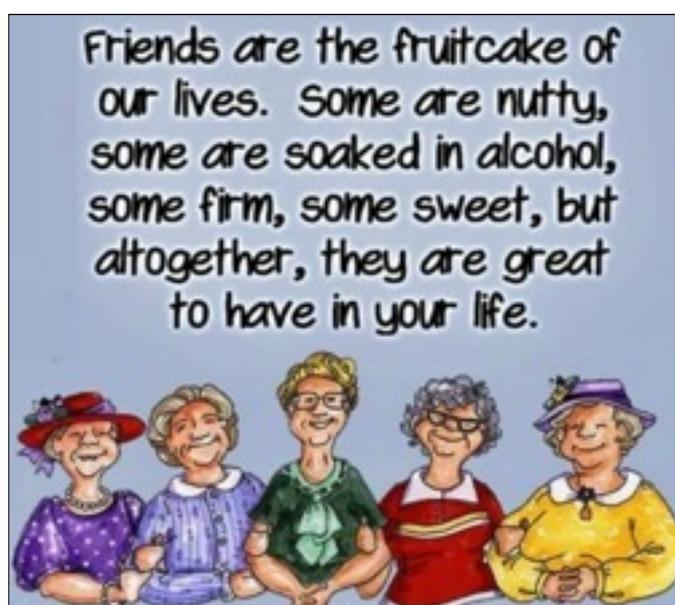
**Healthy body, healthy brain** – Treating your body well can enhance your ability to process and recall information. Physical exercise increases oxygen to your brain and reduces the risk for disorders that lead to memory loss, such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Exercise may also enhance the effects of helpful brain chemicals and protect brain cells.

**Mental gymnastics** – By the time you've reached adulthood, your brain has developed millions of neural pathways that help you process and recall information quickly, solve familiar problems, and execute familiar tasks with a minimum of mental effort. But if you always stick to these well-worn paths, you aren't giving your brain the stimulation it needs to keep growing and developing. It's worth shaking things up from time to time. Try taking a new route home from work or the shops, visiting new places at the weekend, or reading different kinds of books.

**Just sleep on it** – When you're sleep deprived, your brain can't operate at full capacity. Creativity, problem-solving abilities, and critical thinking skills are compromised. Whether you're studying, working, or trying to juggle life's many demands, sleep deprivation is a recipe for disaster. But sleep is critical to learning and memory in an even more fundamental way. Research shows that sleep is necessary for memory consolidation, with the key memory-enhancing activity occurring during the deepest stages of sleep.

**The marvels of meditation** – The scientific evidence for the mental health benefits of meditation continues to grow. Studies show that meditation helps improve many different types of conditions, including depression, anxiety, chronic pain, diabetes, and high blood pressure. Meditation can also improve focus, concentration, creativity, memory, and learning and reasoning skills.

**Try a brain-boosting diet** – Just as the body needs fuel, so does the brain. You probably already know that a diet based on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, healthy fats such as olive oil, nuts, and fish as well as lean protein will provide lots of health benefits, but such a diet can also improve memory.



## **WINTER**

**by CJ Dennis**

### *Red-capped Robin*

*NOW golden days of autumn are no more.  
Down on the forest ruthless Winter frees--  
First with far rumblings, waxing to a roar--  
His shouting winds that riot thro' the trees,  
Raging like savage seas.  
Bedraggled now the gown this garden wore;  
Lost are those evanescent gems she bore;  
Lost, half the melodies.  
A grey thrush, every morn hops round the door,  
His wise head cocked inquiringly aslant;  
Magpie and robin, these are shy no more,  
And every songster, as his fare grows scant,  
Becomes a mendicant.  
Small their demands upon the larder's store  
On these dark, sodden days or mornings hoar,  
Cruel to bird and plant.  
A strange and ghostly silence came last night,  
After the wind's wild clamour and the rain;  
And now, at dawn, a coverlet of white  
Swathes many a long, fantastic forest lane  
And unfamiliar plain.  
Beneath the burden spar and sapling slight  
Bow down, revealing many a vista bright  
In this once green domain.  
The silence shouts in this new, muffled world  
After the tempest's nerve-destroying din . . .  
Here, like three pixies, impudently curled  
In a giant's pallet, sheets up to each chin,  
Three pert violas grin . . .  
The forest is a lady richly pearled,  
Else a white penitent in pure robes furled,  
And newly cleansed of sin.*