



# Australian Institute of Horticulture Inc.

*'Promoting Horticulture - the Profession of the 21st Century'*

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## Green Thumbs & Rooted Cuttings AIH NSW e-Newsletter, May 2009

Welcome to the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of our e-Newsletter. State and National Councils have been working very hard to improve communications, streamline the membership process and have a functional website. These points were some of the issues raised by members when we conducted our members' survey.

The recent National Council meeting was conducted over three days, Friday evening 6.00 to 10.00pm, Saturday 8.30am to 4.30pm and Sunday 8.30am to 3.00pm. It had a full agenda with our National President proving to be a hard task master. The talking amongst ourselves was interrupted for an entertaining Saturday night at the Ryde City Bowling Club and some after dinner discussions were provoked by our guest speaker Bruce Ward.

Some 30 odd tasks that had been assigned at the previous Brisbane NCM were confirmed as completed. Members will already be aware of some – this Newsletter for example. Others include a new membership pack and revamped logo and livery. Members might also be aware that the AIH website is under reconstruction and should be back on the internet shortly with developments to continue for a while.

The next major event for NSW is the Landscape Expo in July and your State Council will be looking for assistance.

The most overlooked and under utilised benefit of belonging to this guild of professional horticulturists is summed up in the catchphrase of networking. We all lead busy lives and despite all of today's technology the best communication is still talking, either in person or by phone. The exchange of information, techniques or new ideas between members is the greatest benefit the AIH can provide. I urge all members to consider sending an item for this newsletter – even if it's only a link to a favourite website, an article or a profile of you and your work. Or you could consider giving some time back to the industry that provides your living and come along to our next meeting on **Thursday, 28 May 2009 at 7.00pm** in the Acacia Building at Ryde TAFE (Parkes St).

*Richard May, AIH NSW State President*

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### INSURANCE MATTERS

Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance for AIH members is handled by Nationwide Insurance Brokers: [www.nationw.com.au](http://www.nationw.com.au) Peter Freeman and his staff handle enquiries: [pfreeman@nationw.com.au](mailto:pfreeman@nationw.com.au)

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### EU PESTICIDE RULING

Later this year, new legislation in the EU will come into force that will restrict the use of pesticides that are potential carcinogens and/or are disruptors of endocrine hormones.

The exact ruling is unclear as to how many active ingredients are involved as the legislation is primarily targeted at agriculture but it is thought that as many as 25 could be involved. Five of those under scrutiny are glyphosate (herbicide), metaldehyde (snail and slug killer), mancozeb (fungicide), bifenthrin (insecticide) and thiacloprid (insecticide). This will obviously affect both professional horticulturists as well as home gardeners in the EU. This legislation will also stop the use of pesticides in public spaces, near schools or in parks, as once in force, use of pesticides will be illegal in these situations.

For further discussion and conflicting views visit

<http://www.icis.com/Articles/2008/10/20/9163779/eu-pesticide-ruling-could-lead-to-ban.html> and

<http://www.celsias.com/article/make-a-difference-support-the-eu-pesticide-ruling/>

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## PLANTMANIA AT THE COLLECTORS' PLANT FAIR



Plants, plants and more plants greeted the 3000 plus visitors to the fifth Collectors' Plant Fair held at Bilpin on the 17 & 18 April.

The weather gods were again kindly disposed and people left with bootloads of plants, many coming both days to load up their cars. Minibuses and coaches bought hundreds of garden club members who filled the plant minding crèche to overflowing and took advantage of the shuttle bus service to transport them and their plants.

*'We were delighted with the number and quality of plants available for sale. Our garden has rapidly filled up so we were only looking for specific plants but were tempted beyond that list'*

*A view of the stall area on Saturday morning (photo by Peter Nixon of Designer Growers Network)*

The Fair is the brainchild of Peta Trahar MAIH, MAILDM, a knowledgeable horticulturist and talented landscape designer, who recognised the need for a coming together of the smaller growers and nurseries selling less mainstream plants - plants not readily available in the usual retail outlets. The focus is all on plants - the quality and diversity of....as Peta says, 'this is not a jumping castle event'.

With help from her husband Peter - a Management Consultant, and long-standing friend and publicist, Beth Stokes, Peta has succeeded in fulfilling the requirements of an untapped gardening market. Peta and Beth were the *Australian Institute of Horticulture NSW Horticulturists of the Year 2005* and received an *Award of Excellence* 'for promoting horticulture, particularly the use and conservation of rare and unusual plants, through the organisation of the Collectors' Plant Fair'. The Fair also won a *Special Judges Award for Excellence in Tourism* at the 2006 Hawkesbury Excellence in Business Awards.

Many of the **stallholders** were returning for the fifth year and were joined by eleven first-time nurseries bringing an exciting new range of plants to keep the plant offerings fresh and interesting. Many of the **visitors** were also returning for the fifth time, having saved up their plant-spending money all year to spend at the Fair. Returning too were the many **volunteers** without which the Fair could not happen - family, friends, garden club

members, fire brigaders – they all enthusiastically joined in to ensure a well-run, happy event.

*'It was a triumph of organisation.....The many fascinating plant stalls ensured our enjoyment and seeing so many keen gardening friends is always a bonus'*

Overheard in the stall area: *'It's a bit liking taking Dracula to the bloodbank....'*

A sad note this year was the absence of Matt Reed and Mike Morant of Antique Perennials nursery who have been to all past Fairs but whose homes and nursery were disastrously destroyed in the Kinglake fires in February. Sally Johansson of the famed Plant Hunters' Nursery in Tasmania came to the Fair specially to run a raffle to raise funds to help Matt and Mike. Ruffled was a wonderful selection of exceptional plants generously donated by the stallholders. Members of the Kurrajong Heights and Bilpin Garden Clubs and Charles and Leonie Sweeney of TyTags helped Sally encouraging the crowd to buy up. The lucky winner of the raffle was Carolyn McPherson from Little Hartley who was overwhelmed with her prize, 'I've never won anything in my life...I am so thrilled'. Carolyn and her sister are developing a new garden. The total raised from the raffle and the money donated to Matt and Mike by Peta, Peter and Beth from entry tickets amounted to \$6200.



*Charles and Leonie Sweeney of TyTags spruiking the crowd to buy raffle tickets to support Matt and Mike*

The special display mounted by **The Secret Garden & Nursery** provided a touch of whimsy with their teapot garden and 'everything you could want, including the kitchen sink'...not to mention their wonderful collection of unusual herbs and vegies. They are located in the grounds of the University of Western Sydney at Richmond where they have a therapy garden and proceeds from their plant sales fund the Food for Thought program for people with mental illness and disabilities.



Discerning gardeners enjoyed talks by renowned plantsmen **David Glenn from Lambley Nursery in Victoria and Ken Gillanders OAM** from Woodbank in Tasmania. David spoke about gardening with his wife, artist Criss Canning and their dry climate garden at Lambley while Ken described some of the plant treasures to be found in Chile and the very rare collection of plants at his Woodbank home.

**A big thank you went to the Australian Institute of Horticulture NSW, Hartley Valley Nursery, Canonbah Bridge Wines and Margaret Mackisack for their generous sponsorship of the Fair.**

Planning is already underway for **next year's Fair, to be held on 17 and 18 April**. Word is getting around that the Fair organisers will be flying **Dan Hinkley** out from America to

speak. This will be a very special chance to hear from one of the world's greatest plantsmen. Dan is best known for his wonderful Heronswood garden in Kingston, Washington – home to an amazing collection of new varieties of plants that Dan collected, propagated and many of which he named. In 2001, the Heronswood Catalogue included over 2,400 plants and the gardens at Heronswood had 10,000 species. The garden and business have been sold but Dan continues his work plant collecting, writing, teaching and developing his new estate, Windcliff.

### **Sydney's treasured gardening event is entering the international arena!**

*'Thank you so much for hosting these weekends - they are the only occasions each year that I take the day off work for.'*

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## **GREEN ROOFS AND VERTICAL WALLS PROJECT**

Last year, Grahame Coote, former NSW Secretary of the AIH, made application for funding from the NSW Dept of Education and Training as part of its "Green Skills" training initiative. The AIH was subsequently successful in obtaining a grant.

The objectives of the project are to develop a sustainable and durable system of green roof and vertical wall applications easily installed, planted and maintained to be used as a training system or package to assist and promote new techniques.

These techniques are seen as an innovative response to climate change in that they are designed to :

- Control storm water run off, erosion and pollution and improve water quality
- Mitigate urban heat island effect cooling and cleaning the air
- Increase the service life of roofs
- Improve energy conservation
- Reduce sound reflection and transmission
- Provide wildlife habitat
- Improve the aesthetic environment
- Promote sustainable living and work practices

For current and future members it will provide professional development training in green roof and vertical green wall technologies.

The Dept of Education and Training is very supportive of the project and we look forward to providing industry with solutions to problems that our professional members need to be aware of and we will keep members informed as the project progresses.

*Wayne Van Balen, AIH NSW Councillor*

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## **GARDEN ORGANIC**

If you think growing your own veggies is big here, well in the UK it is the new black! Everyone you speak to has a veggie patch, or is on a waiting list for an allotment plot and every form of media is advising or directing you to the latest in vegetable growing! While staying for an extended time in the UK, I recently visited and volunteered for the day at Garden Organic at the invitation of the director, Bob Sherman.

'Garden Organic is the national charity for organic growing' but it is much more than that! It is the headquarters for organic gardening research, has 800 vegetable varieties in its' Heritage Seed Library, educates the public including a lot of children on composting and organic gardening techniques, has over 50 years experience in all areas of researching and promoting organic gardening, farming and food production and has 40,000 members in the UK.

If that's not enough they are a really great bunch of people to spend the day with as I happily discovered. I met them all, the scientists, the manager of the Heritage Seed Library and of course the gardeners! I got to plant about 300 vegetable seeds of various rare vegetables. Garden Organic is a working name of the Henry Doubleday Research Association. Check out the website at: [www.gardenorganic.org.uk](http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk)

*The glasshouse in the vegetable patch or 'Kingdom' of Garden Organic*



It all began with Lawrence Hills, a horticulturist who was very interested in learning about growing organically and was researching about the introduction of Comfrey into the UK by a Quaker by the name of Henry Doubleday, in the nineteenth century. As the saying goes, from little things big things grow and the 10 acres of organic garden you see at Ryton-on-Dunsmore is the evolution of his findings and the interest it created with a number of people. In the 80's they had their own television show called 'Muck and Magic' which could possibly find a market now. Teaching people about growing their own veggies and making their own compost.

The gardens are laid out so you can experience different types of gardening and all done totally organically. There is an orchard, an herb garden and a fabulous vegetable garden known as the 'Kingdom' to the Horticulturalists that work there. It has its' very own glasshouse in the middle of the garden holding unusual and non hardy veggies. A woodland garden and a replica of a city garden sit side by side and you can walk through the rose garden to the hedged cut flower garden. There is a wonderful organic shop, which sells everything from organic produce grown on the site, to seeds and tools and helpful reading matter to local organic produce and products. There are educational rooms and a great organic café. If you are intending to visit the UK in the future put this piece of paradise on your 'must visit' list.

*Tim Jackson, AIH Councillor*

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## PLANT OF THE MONTH



The floriferous **Grevillea 'Golden Lyre'** is flowering now.

*Grevillea 'Golden Lyre'* is another lovely subtropical hybrid cross between *Grevillea formosa* from the Kakadu region and another hybrid, *Grevillea 'Honey Gem'*.

*Grevillea* 'Golden Lyre' can be a big grower and in warmer regions north of Sydney can spread up to 6 metres with a height of up to 2 metres and more. Dead heading flowers during the growing season and a big prune just before the growing season can result in a more manageable 1.5m height and a couple of metres spread. Like most *Grevilleas* it needs good drainage and flowers best in a sunny open spot. It does well on the coast but needs some protection from heavy frosts in cooler areas. The main flowering period is in late summer/ autumn.



As you can see by the images this is a spectacular shrub when in full flower and deserves to be featured more in gardens. It has graceful, arching branches and the flowers can be from 15 – 25cm in length which are a magnet for birds, being very generous with their nectar. *Grevillea* 'Golden Lyre' should not be confused with *Grevillea* 'Poorinda Golden Lyre' which is a completely different plant.

The plant pictured was growing on a roadside bank at Annangrove, Sydney and the photo was taken in early April.

Stock should be available in Trade Markets, expect to pay wholesale around \$9.90+ GST for a 200mm pot.

Mark Morrison, MAIH – [www.morrisonsgardencentre.com.au](http://www.morrisonsgardencentre.com.au)

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## NET-WORK

Need a consulting arboriculturist? Find one at [www.iaca.org.au](http://www.iaca.org.au), the website of the Institute of Australian Consulting Arboriculturists. Or purchase the Dictionary for Managing Trees in Urban Environments \$49.95 online.

For a stunning English Spring Garden, take a walk through the Dorothy Clive Garden, [www.dorothyclivegarden.co.uk](http://www.dorothyclivegarden.co.uk)

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## PLACES TO BE, THINGS TO DO....



**Cabbage Tree Hats Saturday 2 May, 1 pm – approximately 3 pm**

**Maiden Theatre, Royal Botanic Gardens**

How did the cabbage tree hat become the Australian iconic headwear, widely worn in the 1800s and early 1900s? Volunteer Guide, Jenny Pattison will discuss the convict origins and demonstrate the intricate process of making a cabbage tree hat.

**\$20, Friends \$14, includes refreshments during the session.**

**Bookings essential Tel 9231 8182**

**AILA TALK Wednesday 6 May 'Sustainability: translating the rhetoric into action City wide initiatives', an overview of the Sydney and Melbourne experience.** A discussion and evaluation of the 2030 strategy for the City of Sydney and City of Melbourne and initiatives and lessons learnt. At Tusculum, 3 Manning St, Potts Point, Sydney. Drinks at 6pm for a prompt start at 6.30pm. Speakers are Rob Moore, Manager Parks & Urban

Design, City of Melbourne and Roderick Simpson of simpson+wilson, architecture+urban design. AILA Members \$5, non members \$10. Pay at the door.



**Hidden Gardens of England Thursday 14 May, 10.30 am – 12 noon. Maiden Theatre, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney.** While England is recognised as having some of the world's best gardens, Lyn Morehen of Tallulah Landscapes will unveil some of the more unusual and little-known gardens including the Thames Barrier Park Garden, Trentham Garden and the Roman Gardens in Sussex. **\$18, Friends \$12, includes morning tea at 10.30 am. Bookings essential Tel 9231 8182**



**Seedbanking Friday 22 May, 10.30 am – 12 noon Maiden Theatre, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney**

Seedbanking is playing an increasingly important role in plant conservation as vegetation clearing, weed invasion and climate change threaten our native flora. Richard Johnstone, the NSW Seedbank Officer at Mount Annan Botanic Garden will describe the processes involved in seed collection, storage and testing. Hear about the SeedQuest NSW project and its contribution to the global effort to conserve 10 per cent of the world's flora as seed collections by 2010. **\$18, Friends \$12, includes morning tea at 10.30 am. Bookings essential Tel 9231 8182**



**Rooftop Gardens Wednesday 27 May, 10.30am-12 noon. Maiden Theatre, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney.**

There is much to be gained by including rooftop gardens in city and town planning: a reduction in radiant and reflective heat and stormwater runoff, breakdown of toxic compounds, carbon capture and the sense of well-being that a beautiful garden provides. Landscape Gardener, Ted Whitley will outline some of the requirements for a successful rooftop garden including assessing the strength of the roof structure, soil media, drainage, plant choice (native and exotic), use of containers and root barriers. **\$18, Friends \$12, includes morning tea at 10.30 am. Bookings essential Tel 9231 8182**

**Fruitful 42' South** A joint meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Chapters of the International Plant Propagators Society is being held in Hobart 14<sup>th</sup> to 17 May. Enquiries [tvanders@bigpond.com](mailto:tvanders@bigpond.com)

**Landscape Australia Expo** AIH NSW will once again be represented at the Expo from 22 to 24 July at the Sydney Showgrounds - stalls 24 & 42 [www.landscapeexpo.com.au](http://www.landscapeexpo.com.au)

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**If you would like to contribute to your newsletter with comments, articles, places-to-be, suggestions – or if you would like to be removed from our mailing list - then please contact the editor: Beth Stokes [beth.stokes@bigpond.com](mailto:beth.stokes@bigpond.com) The deadline for the June issue is 20 May**