

President's Notes – March

Dear gardening friends,

Oh what a difference a day makes. We haven't had anywhere near the rain that Dungog has had but Ken was hoping for a few inches and he has had his wish. One day after our wonderful meeting. It was good for me to witness life 'on the other side' so to speak. Providing the venue and hoping that all would run smoothly. Goodness knows why I bothered to dwell on this because we have the most efficient committee ever convened. My daughter Trine commented. She is a super communicator and organiser and she couldn't believe the ease and great structure of our meetings. I said to her... 'that's gardeners for you'.... nearly always at ease, happy and so pleased to be together. Thank you all for driving to "Mullenroo".

The most asked question was the name of the pink tipped hedge near my vegetable patch. It is a Callistemon, "Great Balls of Fire". It should grow to at least a 1.5m. high, does not flower but has stunning red leaves in early spring and pink tips the rest of the year. It's very hardy and a great impact hedge. The most successful trees are the Chinese Elms, *Ulmus parvifolia*, followed by the Golden Rain trees, *Koelreuteria paniculata* and Flowering Ash, *Fraxinus griffithii*. These Ash trees are endemic to Asia but seem very happy in our soils and climate. They are drought tolerant and flower for many months from spring through to summer.

I think that our April meeting will be wonderful after all this rain. It really will set us up for a wonderful autumn and winter.

Yours perennially,

Janie

March PAGG meeting minutes

Meeting held at Janie and Ken Chandler's "Mullenroo" Gresford

Janie welcomed all including our visitors who will be required to visit at least twice before they can become a member; she gave us a brief history of Mullenroo going back to 1860's when her great, grandfather was a surveyor for the area. Coincidentally he leased this property Mullenroo all those years ago. Janie and Ken have never been happier since living at Gresford.

Over the past 18 years since moving here the gardens have now developed into an oasis, she has 70 trees in the garden including 11 plane trees which she says need far too much water. Each year it's her mission to plant 50 trees in the area leading into the property and hopes that one day we will be driving through a forest.

Treasurer's Report: \$2,550.00 Credit

Web Page Report: Liz gave us an up to date report on the Web Page that she and Richard have been working tirelessly on over this month. Liz will advise us all with the full details once we are up and running with the full Domain name and how to use the web page for our own benefit. If at any time you have a reason not to have your photo appear on this page please step aside before the camera shoot or please alert us!

Subs: Will remain at \$10 for the present but payment will be due at the beginning of September each year. This will assist the Treasurer not having to collect money in December at the Christmas Party and you need to be financial to attend. Members not paid up by 30 December are deleted from the member's list.

Garden Venues for 2018: Our next garden in April will be at Glen William to a large Country Garden on the Williams River. May will be Vacy, June will be Paterson. The venues are ever changing due to circumstances beyond our control, we will keep you advised. The AGM will be May, which is always short and sweet. We are looking for new members for the Tea/Coffee, Treasurer and Minutes Secretary.

Bus Tour: Christine gave us a run down on the suggested bus tours for 2018. We were asked to vote on a sheet before leaving indicating our preferences of 1 to 4.

Day trip to garden to Cobbitty near Camden – received 29 votes

Day trip to Botanic Gardens to Sydney in October – received 6 votes

Overnight trip combining the two above in October – received 8 votes

Overnight trip to Galston Gardens, 20-21 October – received 4 votes

Results from the survey, with 52 members and 9 guests attending, 47 members lodged their vote.

The results were a conclusive vote for day trip to the garden to Cobbitty near Camden with 29 votes.

As a post meeting note – the venue team are following up with the Tegels (who own the property) and are hoping to have more details at the April meeting.

Calendar: Di gave us a brief rundown on the proposed calendar for 2019. The brief was requesting photos of gardens we have visited during the past twelve months. Photos must be sent to the email address in High Resolution and or submitted on an A4 sheet by the October meeting. A selection committee will organise the photos and the printing and it should be ready November/December.

Liz had flyers for the “Sculptures on the Farm” being held in conjunction with the Dungog Festival in October and mentioned the Billy Cart Derby, Easter Saturday at Gresford. Gail had an advert for people who would be interested in joining the Historical Society at Gresford; they are seeking new members to carry on the fine job already in action. Details of the planned “Garden Ramble” by our garden club in April 2019. Further information will be advised but we plan to have 5 gardens opened from Paterson to the Allyn.

Q&A with Penny

Barbara Horn had a beautiful vase of Gerbera’s in a dark Burgundy colour which she advised came from Tesselaars last year and claims to be disease resistant, the flower was not overly large but has flowered profusely throughout the season. She is very happy with this shrub.

A butterfly bush was seeking a name; it was a lovely blue flower looking like a butterfly. Luck, seek and you shall find on: https://toptropicals.com/catalog/uid/Clerodendrum_ugandense.htm best known as the Blue Butterfly Bush. Thanks to Jann Booth.

A bunch of the ever familiar Pig Weed, which is everywhere in our weedy lawns was presented. Members have reported that you can eat this but it must be blanched before eating. Lawns were discussed in detail and Penny emphasised the importance to leave your lawns longer to prevent weed growth. The longer and thicker the lawn is the less chance of bindies growing. Avoid the Bindi spray Dicamba as it’s highly toxic. It will kill trees and remain in the soil for years. And another link from Jann Booth – <http://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2007/09/26/2043823.htm> – the remedy is at the end of the article.

Advice was sought as to what lawn mower to buy, a regular one or a mulcher. After much discussion it is just left to personal preference and the necessity required.

Advice on how to filter the water in ponds/dam, suggestion a good lily – Typha or Bulrushes could be considered.

Is it possible to move a 2½ metre Banksia? Penny gave detailed instructions but warned that natives do not move well. Suggestion was grow a new one in an alternative position.

Now with the rain forecasted it is a good time to fertilise a lawn. Barbara suggested it is also a good time to fertilise your roses. She has not fertilised her roses this dry summer.

Hydrangeas can be pruned in July. The suggestion is they grown well from cuttings if 2 buds are sown under the soil.

Members are experiencing scale on Agapanthus this is due to the humidity.

Janie is still having trouble with rust on her daylilies.

Minutes: Eileen

March images by John Denman

