



The Launceston Landscape



August 2019

Issue No 123

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Society Meetings

A reminder that our regular monthly meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month starting at 8:00pm (it would be appreciated if you could arrive at 7:45pm for 8:00pm start) at Windmill Hill Hall (next to the Launceston Aquatic Centre). These meetings include a trade table, *Flower of the Month*, guest speakers, general business and raffles. Members are invited to bring a plate of supper to share with others at the end of the meeting.

Meeting Dates

21 August
18 September
16 October
20 November

Guests and new members welcome!

Guest Speakers

Aug 21 Bob Reid – rare small bulbs
Sept 18 Mark Hay – plants and garden products
Oct 16 Les Hodge – growing and landscaping with annuals
Nov 20 Robert Armstrong – cacti and other succulents

Show Calendar 2019

Sept 14 & 15 Early Spring
Nov 9 & 10 Late Spring

Results of Autumn Show Raffle

1st Bruce Beattie
2nd Greg Green
3rd Peter Pollock
4th Bernice Kelly

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Our Executive:

Patron:	Her Excellency, Professor, The Honourable Kate Warner, AM	
President:	Noel Button	6394 4750
Treasurer:	Marilyn Fraterman	0419 036 833
Minutes Secretary:	Liz Atkins	0448 852 552
Show Secretary:	Sarah Katarzynski	6344 1200

Committee Members:

Pauline Torrents	6330 1299	0409 493 184
Helen Connor	041 210 5077	
Suzanne MacDonald	6343 1308	
Kay Maloney	0403 906 462	
Michael Webster	0400 831 984	
Vicki McCormack	040 921 7806	
Maureen Coady	6391 8424	
Maria Lawson	6391 8017	
Abby Gray	044 705 0077	

Message from the Newsletter Editor

Thank you everyone who contributed articles and photos for this edition of The Launceston Landscape. A reminder to please check if there are any copyright conditions of any articles before submitting.

Please forward any items to

Noel Button

noel.button@hotmail.com

or give to him at the next meeting.

Hope you enjoy this edition and I look forward to receiving and publishing your contributions in future newsletters.

Happy gardening from Patricia



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to our Spring edition of Landscape. I am writing this report at the beginning of August and we already have daffodils in flower – maybe a very early Spring!

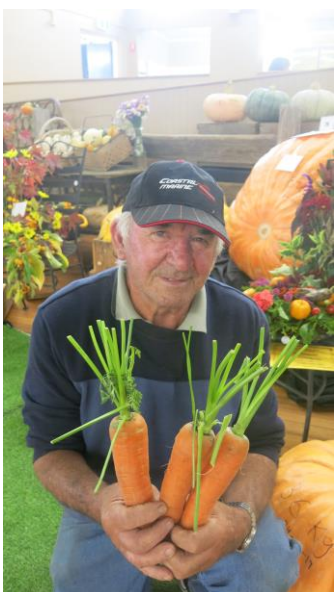
You may have noticed the slightly different layout of this edition. We have a new editor, Patricia Beams, who has kindly taken up the position.

Our not so recent Autumn Show proved to be popular with nearly 500 non – members attending. The floor display of produce combined with the floral art on chairs created, in my view, one of the best displays we have presented. I must thank Warren Prewer, Anne Talbot (Westbury Garden Club), our Floral Art team for their support and contributions and also Coen Marshall for bringing along his giant pumpkin.

Once again the stage looked a picture. A big thank you must go to the team of Neil and Irene Jordan, Bob Cherry and Shane O'Connell. These guys put a great effort into transporting and setting up this wonderful display.

The one metre displays continue to make the cut flower section. Congratulations must go to the Imlachs on winning the open section and to Anne Talbot on winning the Intermediate section. Ros Groom, our cut flower judge, made this comment on them:

Congratulations to all 9 exhibitors – the Free Choice displays contained beautiful varied flowers and foliage, making it very difficult to judge.



Bill Torrents



Les Hodge & Warren Prewer



Anne Talbot

Ros went on to say: *Thank you for asking me to judge. The stewards and society need to be congratulated on such a beautiful show.*

Les Hodge, our fruit and vegetable judge, made the following comments:

Every year I'm amazed at the variety and quality of the vegetables. This year was the best section I have ever judged....I am so impressed by the efforts of the exhibitors to stage their produce so professionally.

Congratulations must go to Bill Torrents on winning the best exhibit in the Vegetable Section with his carrots.

The Begonia Floret display certainly filled the chrysanthemum void. This section, in addition to the wonderful floral art display, added much colour to the hall.

My sincere thanks go to ALL of our members who helped to make this show such a success. For those of you who have been able to attend meetings, our guest speakers have provided a varied set of presentations:

Neil Jordan	hybridising sweet peas
Heather Pryor	gardens in Vancouver
Shane Newitt	growing big pumpkins
Andrea O'Halloran	berry fruits at Hillwood

Neil, Heather and Shane have kindly provided articles for this edition

Our website is close to completion. Andrew Connor has all the relevant material and it should be up and running shortly. Tas TAFE was presented with a \$200 cheque as a thank you for their web site design. Chris Adams (teacher) and Mark Dickenson (student) made a presentation at our July meeting.

I also mentioned at this meeting that my 3 year term as President will be up in March next year. There is a Vice President space on the committee to provide someone with a transition period to the role. Our constitution allows the committee to find somebody to fill this position. This person will have my full support and I am prepared to carry on with some of my current roles if this helps out and lightens their load.

Members will ALL receive a hard copy of this Landscape. This is our only sure way to contact all members to ensure we have your CORRECT email address. Before the end of August all members will also receive their Landscape by email as a trial run. If you DO NOT receive this by the END OF AUGUST it will be YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to forward an email to me noel.button@hotmail.com so we can correct any errors.

Looking forward to a successful Spring Show.

Cheers, Noel Button



Basket of vegetables



Ros Groom, Rosalie McCullagh & Gill Forsythe



SWEET PEAS

Sweet Peas are thought to have originated in Sicily in 1695 with the recording by Franciscus Cupani of a pea that is still available to this day as 'Cupani'. It is generally referred to as a purple bi-colour with the standard tending to be stronger and reddish, whilst the wings are paler and more bluish.

What is a Sweet Pea?

Sweet Peas are known botanically as *Lathyrus odoratus*. All other *Lathyrus* species are not really Sweet Peas. *Lathyrus odoratus* does not readily hybridize with other species.

There ends the lecture.



What do Tasmanian gardeners need to know about Sweet Peas?

There can be few flowers that provide a more amazing combination of beauty and fragrance and can be so readily grown by Tasmanian gardeners. Another interesting plus to that is that unlike many fragrant plants, I am unaware of anyone having a bad reaction to the fragrance of Sweet Peas.

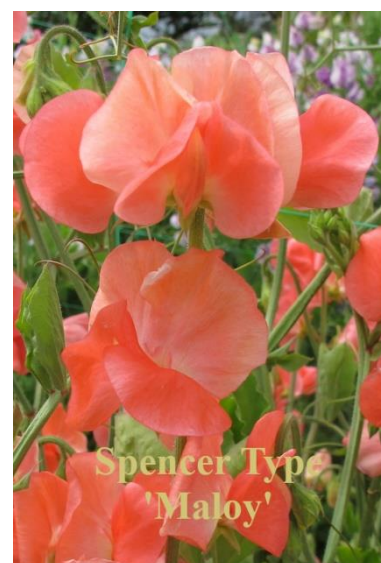


For several decades now, the only breeders of Sweet Peas in Australia have been two brothers of the McDougall family in South Australia. They produce what is known as the **Gawler Strain Sweet Peas**. These are generally regarded as having superior size, good ruffling of petals, good scent, and a high incidence of duplex standards. In the UK, Gawlers tend to have only about three flowers per stem, rather than the four required for competition there, hence they have not been successful in that country, but have been long regarded as an excellent source of new colours and better flowers in breeding their Spencer varieties.

Gawler Sweet Peas are Early Sweet Peas. That is, they are usually sown in March and flower from early spring to mid-summer. This avoids the more severe heat of Australian summers that tend to destroy good flower size and stem length.

The other widely grown Sweet Peas internationally, are **Spencer Sweet Peas**. These are the main Sweet Peas grown in the UK. They are similar to the Gawler Strain, although the flowers are generally smaller and less full or ruffled. They are summer flowering Sweet Peas and are bred to be sown in September here, and flower in summer. Hence they fail to thrive in our summer heat.

Both Gawler and Spencer Sweet Peas are **exhibition** Sweet Peas. They are grown to meet the rules of the show bench, and for the commercial cut-flower trade. Both grow to around 3 metres tall and hence require a very high trellis to achieve their full potential.





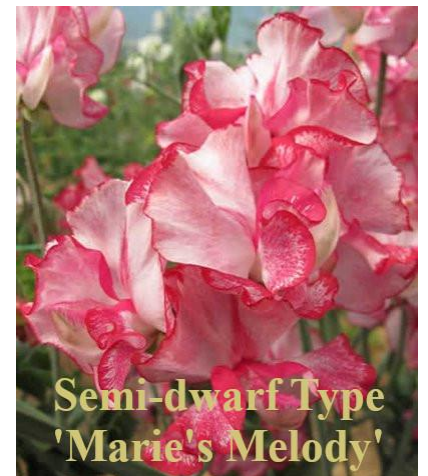
To this end they are usually grown by the **cordon** method. This system requires a 2 metre frame with the Sweet Peas having all but the main leader removed and the grown up strings or canes. As they approach the top of the frame, each vine is laid flat and run along the ground for about a metre. They are then allowed to grow up the frame again, thus allowing an easier harvest of flowers as they bloom from the bottom up.

Most Sweet Peas purchased from hardware stores and nurseries in Australia are simply purchased in bulk from overseas producers, repackaged and sold here. They are generally Spencer varieties that are unsuitable for early Sweet Pea production and will only perform well for a very brief period during early summer.

The other type of Sweet Peas that are sometimes sold by retailers in Australia are the Grandiflora or Old-Fashioned types. These have smaller, much simpler flowers and are also summer flowering.

Some dwarf types are also sold in retail packets, but these are also generally bred from either Spencer or Grandiflora types and are not generally well suited to Australian situations.

Another type, not generally sold in Australia, but more suited to the home garden, are **Semi-dwarf Sweet Peas**. Although being bred from Spencer & Grandiflora types, these tend to handle summer heat much better, and notably only grow to around 1 metre in height, making them much easier to accommodate in the home garden. Whilst their flowers are not as large as Gawler or Spencer types, there are some excellent colours and styles that can be an asset to any garden.



Where do we see the future in Sweet Peas?

Bob Cherry, Irene and I have been trying to cross Gawler and Semi-dwarf types. We feel that if we can put the superior Gawler flowers onto the shorter Semi-dwarf frames then we would achieve an amazing new Sweet Pea form that should be very welcome in Australian and American gardens.

Having said that, our efforts in the past season have been spectacularly unsuccessful. From some 150 attempted crossings, we harvested all of 13 seeds from 4 crosses.

Sweet Peas have a closed keel that encloses the stamens and stigma of their flowers. Hence they are naturally self-pollinating. Our problems appear to be related to the required timing of our attempts at hybridization. Fortunately we have some excellent and well-experienced mentors in the UK and with one of the McDougall brothers in South Australia and will be taking more astute advice ahead of the next flowering season.

How to Grow Sweet Peas

Seeds should be sown in good, deep, fertile soil, but no more than 1 cm deep. The closer they are to the surface, the sooner the shoots emerge and the plants can take advantage of photosynthesis to provide the energy they need for optimum growth.

There are many methods used to assist with germination. Personally, I usually place my seeds

in a cup or bowl and pour on boiling water. They are then allowed to stand overnight before sowing.

Do take some precautions against snails as they do find emerging shoots a delicacy.

As pulses, Sweet Peas have no need for nitrogen as they fix their own on root nodules. They do like phosphorous and to a lesser extent, potassium. They detest copper so don't use any fertilizer containing copper.

The taller varieties, Gawler and Spencer Hybrids, will grow to 3 metres and need a good trellis. Semi-dwarf types will only grow to 1 metre and can easily be grown on a fence or even on criss-crossed canes.

A major problem with all seed of annual flowers

In earlier times plant breeders re-selected their floral introductions on an ongoing basis. This way they were able to harvest seed from the best varieties available, effectively eliminating inferior or mediocre plants from the subsequent year's seed sales. This resulted in an ongoing improvement in their products.

In modern times plant breeders typically supply an initial quantity of seed to a specialized grower. These are typically located in third world countries where production costs are very low. They can soon turn a small quantity of seed into the massive quantities demanded by international markets. From there the same seed lots get repeated year in, year out. Without the quality control provided through ongoing reselection what was initially an excellent introduction, steadily goes into decline. This is why we now find that the old favourites we knew in years gone by, simply aren't what they used to be.

Bob Cherry has done, and continues to do, a lot of this reselection work. Of course there are many plants and only so much can be achieved by any individual. Hence Bob's efforts have to be confined to a few plants at any one time.

We will continue to offer quality seeds and plants that will get better every year thanks to ongoing and vigilant reselection.



*Shane O'Connell, Bob Cherry,
Irene & Neil Jordan*



Heather Bernard Pryor

VANCOUVER ISLAND – A gardener’s paradise!

While the famous Butchart Gardens are well known around the world, there are other gardening ‘gems’ to visit on this enchanting island. Named by Capt. James Cook on his fateful 3rd voyage of discovery for the Master of his ship ‘Resolution’, George Vancouver, the island is about the same size as Tasmania.

Butchart Gardens remain a major tourist attraction on the island and we were lucky enough to visit on a non-cruise-ship day, so had the place (almost!) to

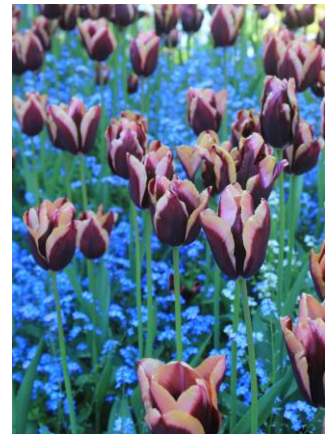


Butchart Gardens



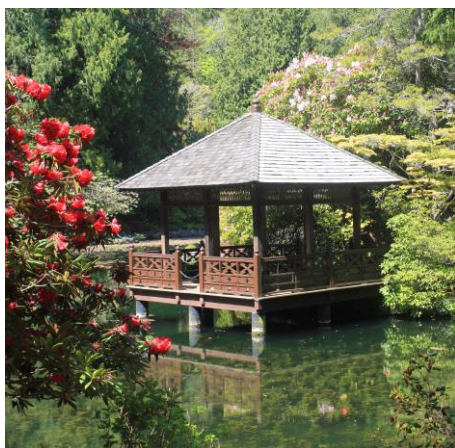
Butchart Gardens

ourselves. This was our third visit to these magnificent gardens over four years and we noticed some changes to the garden ‘jewellery’, but the basics of forget-me-nots overplanted by tulips remained the basic and overwhelmingly outstanding feature. This garden can be visited during any season. There are ‘dancing’ waterfalls, fabulous statuary, wonderfully colour-themed areas, an expansive rose garden, a Japanese garden and some amazing plantings of bulbs with ever-changing colour combinations that delight the eye at every turn. One can enjoy a fabulous



Butchart Gardens

meal (or just a cuppa!) in the former Butchart home, which in itself, is lovely to see.



Hatley Park

During the presentation Heather Pryor showed us the fascinating Hatley Park gardens, whose main castle-like home has been used in the ‘X-Files’ series. The Gardens are about 100 years old and feature a fantastic Japanese-inspired garden, complete with reflection pond, tea house, oodles of maples and other Asian-inspired horticulture. The non-garden areas of this expansive landscape have



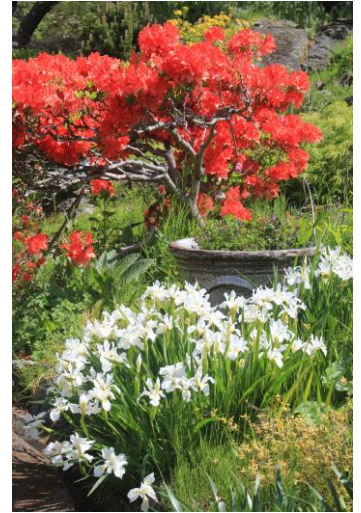
Hatley Park

been converted to incorporate the Royal Roads University.



Abkhazi Gardens

The lesser-known Abkhazi Gardens, in downtown Victoria, are a testament to the gardening efforts of a Russian Prince and Princess, who fled Russia in the early 1900's. Their garden and home are located on a very rocky area and the landscape is flooded with azaleas, rhododendrons and Pacific Coast irises. The couple bequeathed their home and garden to the City of Victoria and their home remains a priceless 'frozen moment' in time.



Abkhazi Gardens

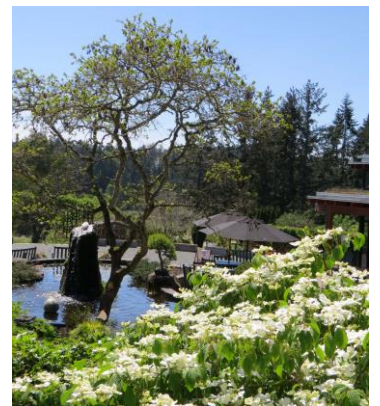
Bernard and I were also given the rare privilege of visiting the gardens surrounding Government House in downtown Victoria. We had visited these wonderful gardens four years earlier with an iris convention group and were given unrestricted and unescorted access to the grounds for our morning visit. The grounds did not disappoint - with lots of Canadian-themed features to delight.



Pacific Hort. College

These four beautiful gardens were all within a 20 minute drive of downtown Victoria and we were able to travel easily to each of them over four separate days on our own in our rental car. Driving on the other side of the road does require a lot of extra concentration for the driver (and navigator!) but the effort was well worthwhile. So, when next in Canada, spare a thought for a little side-trip to

Vancouver Island. The people are extremely friendly, they share our 'commonwealth' mindset (unlike their southern cousins!) and we felt extremely safe and comfortable during our stay.



Pacific Hort. College

Thank you again for giving me the opportunity to share our gardening adventure to Vancouver Island with members of the Launceston Horticultural Society. It was a pleasure to spend an evening with like-minded folk who enjoy and appreciate the great outdoors.

Heather Pryor

GIANT PUMPKIN GROWING

When starting giant pumpkin seeds.

- 1 File seed edges until you can see a fine or thin line on the edges. Only file the rounded part and down the sides. Do not file near the pointy end.
- 2 Soak seeds for 2 to 4 hours in half strength seaweed kelp mix.
- 3 Pot into moist potting growing media.
- 4 Do not water until seed has germinated.

The trick is to keep the pots and media at 29 degrees C or 85 Fahrenheit. So keeping pots indoors by the light on a heated area would work well.

Plant tips

- (a) Always plant the seedling with the second true leaf facing in the direction that you wish the pumpkin plants main vine to run. Wind protection for young plants in early Spring and late Spring.
- (b) Never attempt to move any vines in the morning and if you are wishing to train or move vines then do so in the heat of the day when vines are more supple. So this is usually done between 12:00 noon and 3:00pm. If you move them in the morning then the vines can be very brittle and simply snap.
- (c) Pollinating pumpkins needs to be done between 7:30am and 9:00am. Pumpkins can abort when attempting to do pollinations in the heat.
- (d) Simply pick 4 to 5 male flowers from your plant and strip back the flower exposing the stamen and then paint the inside of the ovaries and lobes of the female flower. Pollination will show if baby pumpkin remains shiny after the following 10 days. If the baby pumpkin loses its shine at 7 to 8 days then this is a good indication that the pollination has not taken.
- (e) When you have a baby pumpkin set on a vine then you need to make sure that all root systems close to the pumpkin are removed or cut. This will allow the vines to lift up with the pumpkin. Allow plenty of room around your pumpkin and do not have vines close to the fruit. The vines will only damage the pumpkin as it grows if they are too close. Put some protective barrier under your pumpkin and so to allow for drainage of moisture.
- (f) The weight of the pumpkin on hard ground with moisture or irrigation is asking for trouble and can cause rotting. Most growers use some fine sand built up to about 3



inches for the entire area of the pumpkin. The pumpkin will grow and slide across this fine sand without causing any damage.

- (g) Foliar feeds of seaweed kelp is given one day per week and the same for Calcium. Sulphate of Potash foliar is also applied one day in the week. Try to have one normal day of irrigation between your 3 separate days of foliar feeding. I usually do foliar my feeds on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and the other days are simply straight irrigation. So Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday are just normal waterings.
- (h) Protect your pumpkins from the sunlight with some type of shade barrier, this will keep your pumpkins skin younger and therefore more supple and able to stretch easier as it grows older. When you have grown your plants to which ever size that you feel fit then you will need to pinch out the Mary stem bundle on each vine which terminates the vines. All your growing energy will then be given to your pumpkins. Attempt to have 3 to 4 pumpkin pollinated or set and then watch and choose your best and cull all others back to just one on your plant.



I do hope that these brief notes can help you all improve your pumpkin growing skills and create a more enjoyable experience.

Shane Newitt



Coen Marshall & Shane Newitt

SPRING SHOW HELPERS

Early Spring Show Helpers - Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th September

We are seeking additional helpers so please feel free to contact the following members to find out more and add your name to the rosters.

Door Roster :	Kay Maloney	0403 906 462
Raffle Roster :	Ian & Dorothy Denman	6330 1786
Plant Stall :	Helen Lennard or	0418 377 118
	Helen Connor	6331 4184
Refreshments :	Norma Purton	6327 4304
Setting up :	Noel Button	6394 4750
Stewarding :	Jean Roper or	0407 367 409
	Sue McFarlane	0409145407

Setting up will occur on Thursday, 12th September at 7:00pm. We will need to be flexible as parts of St Ailbes Hall have been closed off for renovations.

Marilyn Fraterman, our new Treasurer, will be available between 3:00pm and 5:00pm Saturday for membership renewals etc.

Flower of the Night

September : Spring Bulb

October : Primula

November : Rose

Cacti & Succulent Group

This group has some very keen growers, young and old. We meet to swap plants and share information, on these interesting and popular specimens. All members are welcome. Next meetings Wed August 28th, September 25th, October 23rd and November 27th at 7:30pm at Windmill Hill Hall (under). Enquiries to Pam Bennell 0427 637 208.

Bulb & Alpine Group

Next meetings: Sat August 24th and September 21st at 2:00pm at Windmill Hill Hall (under).

All members interested in growing and learning about bulbs of all kinds and/or alpine and rockery plants, are most welcome to attend.

Enquiries to Jean Roper, 0407 367 409, or Norma Purton, 6327 4304.

AUTUMN SHOW



AUTUMN SHOW



AUTUMN SHOW



Ron Camplin & David Pyke



Gayle Carroll, Robyn Matthews & Marilyn Donald



AUTUMN SHOW



RESULTS OF THE LAUNCESTON HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY'S

AUTUMN SHOW – 13th April 2019

SASANQUA CAMELLIAS

- **BEST EXHIBIT –**

Winner: Ray Hawkins

Flower Name: “Betty Baker”

FREE CHOICE SECTION

- **1ST – OPEN – Free Choice**

Winner: Errol & Stephanie Imlach

- **2ND – OPEN – Free Choice**

Winner: Susan Prewer

- **1ST – INTERMEDIATE – Free Choice**

Winner: Anne Talbot

- **2ND – INTERMEDIATE – Free Choice**

Winner: Suzanne MacDonald



CUT FLOWER SECTION

- **BEST EXHIBIT OPEN SECTION**

Winner: Neil & Irene Jordan

Flower Name: Rhododendron

- **BEST EXHIBIT INTERMEDIATE SECTION**

Winner: Sadie Roberts

Flower Name: Nerines

- **BEST EXHIBIT FOR 3 FLOWERS, SAME COLOUR, DIFFERENT SPECIES – OPEN TO ALL**

1st: Noel Button

2nd: Suzanne MacDonald

BEGONIA FLORETS - OPEN TO ALL

BEST EXHIBIT FOR COLLECTION OF BEGONIA FLORETS OVER 130MM

Winner: Peter Bugg

BEST EXHIBIT FOR COLLECTION OF BEGONIA FLORETS UNDER 130MM

Winner: Shane O'Donnell

BEST BEGONIA FLORET OVERALL

Winner: Peter Bugg



Begonia Display

CONTAINER GROWN PLANTS

- **BEST EXHIBIT – OPEN**

Winner: Pauline Torrents

Plant Name: Aeonium

- **BEST EXHIBIT – INTERMEDIATE**

Winner: Susan Prewer

Plant Name: Moth Orchid

VEGETABLES, FRUIT AND NUTS

- **BEST EXHIBIT – VEGETABLE –**

Winner: Bill Torrents

Vegetable: Carrots

- **LARGEST PUMPKIN**

Winner: Coen Marshall

- **MOST UNUSUALLY SHAPED VEGETABLE OR FRUIT**

Winner: Noel Button

Vegetable/Fruit: Ornamental Gourd

- **UGLIEST VEGETABLE OR FRUIT**

Winner: Warren Prewer

Vegetable/Fruit: Pumpkin

- **BEST EXHIBIT FRUIT/NUTS**

Winner: Warren Prewer

Fruit/Nuts: Jam Melon

- **BEST EXHIBIT BASKET OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES**

Winner: Noel Button

Potato – Winner:	Noel Button
Beetroot – Winner:	Noel Button
Carrot – Winner:	Noel Button
Marrow – Winner:	Warren Prewer
Onion – Winner:	T & M Squires
Largest any other vegetable Winner: Warren Prewer – capsicum (Best Overall)	



OPEN TO ALL

1st: Kath Tole 2nd: Rae Lindsay 3rd: Gayle Carroll Highly Commended: H Wheeldon

JOAN WARD TROPHY AWARDED TO MOST OUTSTANDING EXHIBIT IN OPEN
FLORAL ART

Winner: Gayle Carroll For: Thoughts of Easter

Thoughts of Easter

1st: Gayle Carroll 2nd: Rae Lindsay

Contemporary autumn table arrangement

1st: Gayle Carroll 2nd: Rae Lindsay

INTERMEDIATE FLORAL ART

- MYRTLE BURROWS' TROPHY AWARDED TO THE MOST OUTSTANDING EXHIBIT IN INTERMEDIATE FLORAL ART

Winner: Marilyn Donald For: Vulcan

A Vulcan.

1st: Marilyn Donald 2nd: Jannine Walker

An Easter wreath

1st: Rosie McCullagh

2nd: Marilyn Donald

AMATEUR FLORAL ART

BEST EXHIBIT IN AMATEUR SECTION

Winner: Alice Imlach

For: An autumn crescent

- Autumn crescent

1st: Alice Imlach

- An Easter gift basket

1st: Alice Imlach

JUNIOR FLORAL ART SECTIONS

- BEST EXHIBIT IN CHILDREN'S SECTION

Winner: Noah Bullock

For: Tapestry design depicting Anzac Day

6 Years and Under

Vegetable man

1st: Mabel Skinner

Decorated saucer using foliage, nuts or berries

1st: Mabel Skinner

2nd: Maisy Swift

7– 10 years

Easter in an egg carton

1st: Jez Lubke

2nd: Alex Bullock

Autumn foliage in a small basket

1st: Isobel Archer

2nd: Levi Swift

11 – 14 years

A tapestry design to depict Anzac Day

1st: Noah Bullock

An autumn crescent

1st: Noah Bullock
