# PEBN SOCIET

# NEWSLEAPNER

DATE Oct. '79 VOLUME 1 NUMBER 2

# OFFICE BEARERS.

CHRIS GOUDEY IAN BUCKMASTER ALBERT JENKINS IRENE BOLSTER LORRAINE GOUDEY PRESIDENT VICE PRESIDENT VICE PRESIDENT AND TREASURER SECRETARY BOOK SALES.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

Approximately 260 people attended our last meeting, and much interest was shown in the lectures on spore propagation and The Ferns of Lord Howe Island. Our Secretary Irene took notes and these are printed later in this newsletter.

An election was recently held to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of our Treasurer - Peter Franks.

Peter and his family are off to London for twelve months. Our thanks go to Peter for his help on the Steering Committee prior to the inaugural meeting, and for the excellent job he did as treasurer.

Albert Jenks was elected temporary Treasurer and Ted Bolster was elected to our Committee. Ted gave much assistance to the Steering Committee in our early stages, and we welcome him back.

A magnificent array of ferns was entered in last months competition, to all who brought in their hanging baskets, my congratulations and thanks.

The first prize was awarded to Gordon Andrews for a large, well grown basket of Nephrolepis Exaltata CV Verona.

The fern chosen for our next competition will be an Australian Native Fern, so look in your books and bring your selection.

We apologise for the late finish at our last meeting, from now on we will have only one speaker at each meeting and hopefully we will finish at a more reasonable time.

On the unanimous decision of our committee we had much pleasure in advising Garry Lawes, he had been elected an Honorary Life Member of the Fern Society of Victoria. In our early stages, Garry made a large and much needed donation to the Fern Society.

We have received confirmation from America that our first order of fern books is on the way, it will take two to three months to arrive. A list with approximate prices dependent upon the exchange rate at the time of sending is included in this newsletter.

Finally many thanks to all the members who supplied us with ferns and helped with our display at the Sun Home Show. CHRIS GOUDEY

PRESIDENT.

# SECRETARY'S REPORT.

As a result of the interest engendered by Chris Goudey's talk last meeting, we have received enquiries from members wishing to buy spores suitable for propagation.

If any members can supply spores from the following list, would they please let me know and I will put them in touch with the person wishing to buy them:-

Adiantum formosum	Pteris ensiformis
Adiantum fritz lutherii	Pteris ensiformis (Vic)
Adiantum roseum	Pteris Quadriaumta argylea
Alsophylia cooperii	Pteris livertoniana
Pellea rotundefolia	Pteris Tremula
Rumohia adiantiformis	Pteris Umbrosa
Crytomium falcatum	Pteris Wimsettii
Pteris albolineata	

Our thanks to the editor of Your Garden Magazine (Mr. Balhorn). The number of enquiries and members resulting from the article in a recent edition was most gratifying.

A forthcoming event to keep in mind is the Herald and Garden State Festival to be held in the Fitzroy Gardens on November 8th - 11th, 1979.

We are the only specialist society invited to stage a display and we hope as many members as possible will go along and see what promises to be an even bigger and better festival than last year.

We hope to have supplies of the R.H.S.V. Gardening Diary available at the next meeting. This is terrific value at \$2.99 and every copy purchased helps our Society so do buy one (two? three?). They are ideal Xmas presents for your gardening friends.

At the October meeting we have Peter Lumney and Roger Spencer speaking on "The Ferns in the Botanic Gardens". This will enable us to look at the Gardens with more interest, so do try to come. I am sure it will be a most interesting evening. There will be the usual ferns for sale and don't forget Ian Buckmaster is waiting to give advice on your problem ferns, so bring them (or at least a frond) along next meeting.

#### IRENE BOLSTER.

#### COUNTRY COUSINS.

I was recently invited to lecture on ferms at the MOOROOPNA GARDEN CLUB. Having made the arrangements with the Secretary, Mrs. Reid who also arranged an overnight stay with Mr. & Mrs. Kelly, I set off on the two hour journey.

Driving is not much fun by yourself, particularly when you have an unknown destination, but my car has all the 'mod cons'.

Not a fern in sight however, being horticulturally minded, I noticed the continuous splashes of yellow amongst the green. There were Gorse, Brassica, Cytisus (brooms) and naturally wattles. How lucky we are to have this bright colour during winter and spring. I wondered if these plants were distant cousins of the ferns (you think about these things on a long lonely drive) - maybe even 'country cousins'. Around Seymour the eucalypts seem to be draped in two kings of foliage - we know it as mistletoe - a fast spreading parasite. I also wondered if these were 'country cousins' (in love with one another.)

I was late arriving at Shepparton. At a very reasonable speed I passed a car on the left hand side, but had to stop at the lights. That other car also stopped and was full of young 'bricks' who made it their business to carry on a cheap conversation of the derogative type. I gave them a wide birth and wondered 'country cousins'?

I met my host, a charming elderly couple and we shared a few minutes conversation just to satisfy our curiosity. Now these were 'country cousins'. They couldn't do enough for me. Then off we went to the hall to meet the rest of the club where we all enjoyed an evenings entertainment about ferns. The next morning I was invited to go to a farm to pick up a bag of cow manure -(such is the hospitality of our 'country cousins'), and discovered a well furnished fernery. Between gifts from my hosts, gifts of eggs, cow manure, ferns of different kinds, plenty to eat and drink, charcoal I picked up from the roadside enroute, and a lot of good-will, I can recommend our 'country cousins'. A warm thanks to all our friends in the country and may they be able to come and visit me in time.

# IAN BUCKMASTER.

#### A COMMENT ON THE FERN DISPLAY AT THE SUN HOME SHOW.

Although the Fern Society of Victoria was only formed on May 3rd, it certainly "became of age" on August 18th, when it's display at the Sun Home Show was magnificent, among the most eye-catching of the 304 exhibits on display. It was a credit to our President, Chris Goudey, who supplied the majority of the ferns ranging from small ferns to large Elkhorns and Staghorns.

Moreyn Newman and Neil Laird from Fern Frond 7, who are committee members also supplied many plants including an excellent metre high specimen of the blinburg fern (Lygodium japonicum).

I was pleased to buy a delightful Golden Fern (Pitrogramma Chrysophylla), the underside of the fronds are a unique gold colour.

Our competent Secretary, Irene Bolster kept the stand well supplied with membership forms, featuring our maidenhair fern emblem, and with her husband Ted, did a sterling job at the weekend enticing new members with her Essex charm.

Garry Lawes supplied many large plants in containers as background decorations - Orchids, Camellias, Pelargonums, Geraniums, African Violets, Protea and flowering annuals in pots all helped to make a brilliant show flanking our Fern Display, which was outstanding.

#### G. EKBERG.

BOOKS OBTAINABLE THROUGH THE FERN SOCIETY OF VICTORIA.

	\$ Australian.
Fern Dictionary	\$5.39
Hardy Ferns	\$11.71
Platycerium Fern Facts	\$6.72
Ferns to Know & Grow	\$5.80
Southern Fern Guide	\$5.17
Sources of Ferns	\$1.27
Handbook on Ferns	\$2.24
A Review of the Species of Platycerium	\$1.98
Ferns & Fertilizer	37c.
Exotica	\$84.96
Tropica	\$120.12
Ferns Growers Manual	\$16.99
The Genus Adiantum in Cultivation	\$3.57
Fern & Fern Allies	\$9.17
1980 Calendar - Drawings & Planting	
Information on Ferns &	
Exotic Shade Plants	\$4.52

# PLEASE NOTE.

- (a) All books listed above will take 12 weeks for delivery from receipt of order in U.S.A.
- (b) We require a deposit of \$2.00 for all books listed above and below. For Exotica & Tropica we require a deposit of \$20.00.

AUSTRALIAN BOOKS AVAILABLE THROUGH F.S	.C.
Australian Ferns & Fern Allies	\$13.55
Ferns of Victoria & Tasmania	\$3.00
Ferns for Modern Living	\$2.56
Flora of North-East N.S.W.	\$3.50
PLEASE SEND BOOK ORDERS TO -	MRS. C.J. GOUDEY, LOT 8, COZENS ROAD, LARA. VIC. 3212.
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OR ORDER IN PERSON AT OUR MEETING.

#### SEPTEMBER LECTURE BY CHRIS GOUDEY - SPORE PROPAGATION.

#### DESIGNED FOR HOME GARDENERS.

There are many ways of growing ferns from spores, trial and error is the best way of learning, so keep at it and keep on trying new mediums and new methods.

It took me many years to learn. Growing ferns can be divided up into 5 steps:-

- (1) Selecting and collecting spores.
- (2) Preparation of the medium.
- (3) Sowing the spores.
- (4) Pricking out into clumps 1 or 2 times.
- (5) Final pricking out and potting up.

 Spores are found either on a separate frond or on the back of normal fronds. They are covered by a shield or flap which starts to open when the spores are ripe. Most spores are dark in colour when ripe, from yellow through to black, except for the Osmunda family which includes Todea barbara (King Fern) which are green when ripe.

Maidenhair fern spores are concealed by small flaps on the margin of the leaves. If really keen a 10 magnification eyeglass makes it easier to see the spores.

The Asplenium family spores are boat shaped - sample frond shows ripe spores when collecting fronds, place frond in bag or envelope and leave in a warm miry place. After a few days as the frond dries the spores are ejected into the bag.

Tap out the spores onto a clean sheet of white paper. Separate the spore cases (or shells) from the spores by either using a 7 micron sieve, or by holding the paper on a slight angle and tapping it lightly until all the shells have fallen off the side of the paper leaving the spores behind.

(2) Preparation of the Medium.

An open, peaty, sterile mix is desirable. The mixture you use is entirely up to you, the following are some of the ingredients that are used by growers. The mixture must in my opinion be at least 2/3 organic, for this you could use. Peat moss, spagnum moss, leaf mould, old rotted cow manure, tree fern fibre, or a mixture of any of the above.

Half of the mix should be either coarse sand, vermicutibe, perlite or polystyrene. You can also add soil to the mix if you wish. Add lime for Maidenhair ferns P.H. test kits can be bought for approx. \$10.00 (Hortico, or Lnocola Laburatories). Spores can also be grown on inverted terracotta pots filled with wet Spagnum Moss and covered with a bell jar, or on crushed terra cotta pots. Sterlise with boiling water and feed regularly if using this method. When watering it is important to use distilled water or boiled water. It is best to experiment with different soil mixers and keep records of different mixes used.

Any container will do, either terracotta or plastic. If using terracotta pots put one inch of charcoal or crushed rock in the bottom of the pot for drainage. Everything should be sterilized use hot soapy water. Sterilize soil either in a pressure cooker or oven or with boiling water. In oven, place in tray, cover with foil to hold in moisture, set oven at

250° for 1.1/2 hours.

If sterilising with water, pour approximately 2 gallons of boiling water over about 1 gallon of the prepared medium and allow to stand for a least an hour. Strain water off soil using an old pair of stockings or pantyhose.

- (3) Sowing the spores. Clean hands throughly and put soil etc., into containers to approximately half an inch from the top, pat firmly. Put a small quantity of spore onto a sheet of paper, holding the paper on a slight angle above the container, tap it lightly until a small amount falls onto the prepared mix. Don't sow too thickly, about 1/4 of a salt spoon would do for an ice cream container. Cover the container immediately with either glass or gladwrap to avoid contamination. The gladwrap can be held on with an elastic band. If using an ice cream container cut out a circle from the lid to within 3/4" of the edge, cover the container with clear plastic and put on lid. Write out details - date, type etc. and label. Check for moisture, if water is needed use distilled or boiled. Most ferns prefer temperatures from 68° to 86°F for germination, however, this is not required for hardy ferns. The biggest problem is the growth of algae, it grows quicker than ferns and will eventually take over. In the early stages if the light is restricted, growth of algae is retarded. Brake ferns (Pteris) Maiden Hair Ferns (Adiantum) Batswing Fern (Histiopteris) and Ground Ferns (Hypolepis) are good ferns to start with, they are quick growing and present few problems, germination can take from 3 to 12 months.
- (4) PRICKING OUT INTO CLUMPS.

Prick out (as soon as prothallia touch each other), into a new medium. Use either a knife, ticket, spatula or tweezers and lift out small sections about the size of a grain of wheat or perhaps a bit larger. Transplant into a fresh medium (sterilized). If the prothallia spread out and completely cover the new medium, it will be necessary to transplant the prothallia once again.

Germination takes place within the prothallus, the prothallus then dies at the expense of the new fern.

(5) FINAL PRICKING OUT AND POTTING UP.

If pricking out into tubes, put in the mixture and tap down lightly. Prick out small clump of ferns, dip the roots into a liquid fertilizer i.e. Maxicrop at half strength and then plant each clump into a separate tube. If possible, place the tubes in a container and cover with glass to provide maximum humidity while the damaged roots recover. Move the glass off over a period of a few weeks to harden off the new ferns. Keep in a humid atmosphere and do not over water - about once per week is adequate.

FROM NOTES KEPT BY IRENE BOLSTER.

# PATHOLOGY DEPARTMENT.

Come on! Where are all your sick ferns? How about some more questions? A piece of the fern will help - if not, the whole fern. One member had me stumped for a while at the last meeting. It must be remembered that I still can't always be sure that the diagnosis is correct when it comes to soil problems. I will try to arrange a short segment on this subject at the next meeting, so bring along your questions for the segment or write them out and hand them in to the pathology department.

# HINTS.

Be wary of soil mixes prepared for other plants. Learn to recognise that the problems of other plants growing near the fern can be transferred by insects.

# IAN BUCKMASTER.

#### DIARY DATES.

11th Oct. Peter Lumney and Roger Spencer

Ferns in Melbourne Botanic Gardens.

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8th Nov. Harry Jackson of Idaho Nursery

Cultivating Ferns.

13th Dec. Alan Morrison - Photographing Ferns.

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#### URGENTLY NEEDED.

Articles of interest for our Newsletter, plus any suggestions to assist our Fern Society to be more helpful and interesting for you the member.

THE EDITOR.