

**FERN SOCIETY
OF VICTORIA**

NEWSLETTER

DATE DEC. '79

VOLUME 1

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OFFICE BEARERS:

CHRIS GOUDEY	President	IRENE BOLSTER	Secretary
IAN BUCKMASTER	Vice-President	LORRAINE GOUDEY	Book Sales
ALBERT JENKINS	Vice-President & Treasurer	KEITH HUTCHINSON	Editor

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

A very enthusiastic audience attended our last meeting, to listen to Harry Jackson from Idaho Nursery speak on cultivating ferns at his Nursery.

We all learned a great deal from Harry, through his experience over many years as a nurseryman.

He discussed such items as spore raising, tissue culture, division of ferns such as Maiden Hair and Lace Ferns, and taking of cuttings from ferns like Hares Foot and Caterpillar Ferns. Also covered in this interesting presentation were different sprays and Nursery products.

Harry not only shared his knowledge with us, but also donated several very attractive ferns for the Fern Society Plant Stall.

Later in the evening, our Treasurer & Vice-President, Albert Jenkins, gave a short but very interesting talk on rhizomes of ferns, for the benefit of our less experienced members. Albert brought along many beautifully grown specimens to use as examples, and donated one of these for the Special Effort.

We would have liked to have seen more ferns entered in the monthly competition perhaps next month?

The fern chosen for the December competition is a Birds Nest Fern, so if you have one, bring it along - it may be a prize winner!

Our display of hardy ferns at the Garden State Festival in the Fitzroy Gardens was a fantastic success. An endless queue of people filed past our display, with questions and words of praise.

The display was a result of the efforts of Albert Jenkins, Ted Bolster and myself; we worked late into the night preparing the display, but was well worthwhile.

I must give special thanks to Albert, for all the time he gave manning our display. He spent two full days answering people's questions, and promoting our Society.

It is difficult to get volunteers for our displays. If we had more people willing to lend their ferns and their time, we wouldn't have to turn down all the offers we get to stage displays.

Several parcels of books have arrived from America, to fill some of the orders we have taken. They will be available at the next meeting.

We have worked out our Syllabus for the first half of 1980 - you will find this set out later in this issue, under the heading "DIARY DATES". Please note that there will be no General Meeting in January.

Finally, I would like to wish all members a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

CHRIS GOUDEY
President

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

This month's Newsletter does not include a report from our Secretary. Members will be very sorry to hear that Irene Bolster has had a spell in hospital.

Those present at our November meeting contributed towards the cost of a sheaf of flowers, which was sent to Irene with our best wishes for a complete recovery.

Thank you, Irene, for all your excellent reports during 1979, and we wish you a happy Christmas, and a very healthy 1980!

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The month of November saw a further increase in membership by fourteen members.

Receipts for the month included subscriptions of \$113.00, profit from Special Effort \$54.80, and plant sales levy \$13.50.

Expenses incurred were for Lapel Labels \$130.00, Newsletter printing and postage \$146.13, and Guest Speaker's expenses \$10.00.

Our working balance stands at \$1,052.59.

ALBERT JENKINS
Treasurer

RESUME OF TALK BY OUR NOVEMBER SPEAKER

by Keith Hutchinson

The guest speaker at our November meeting, Mr. Harry Jackson of Idaho Nursery, East Malvern, told those present of his experience as a nurseryman over a period of thirty-six years, and in particular, about the growing of ferns for retail sale.

Although Harry felt he was not an expert on ferns, his great practical knowledge was soon apparent to his listeners.

He believes that ferns should be grown in a position free from wind or draught, but told how he finds nephrolepis ferns multiply very rapidly in a glasshouse with circulated air, and when divided soon grow into excellent plants. He then divided one, and gave most members a sample to pot on. Harry also brought along a magnificent Davallia fijiensis, a Microsorium diversifolium, a Polypodium aureum mandianum, and a large Polypodium formosanum (Caterpillar fern). Finally, he explained the growing of ferns using the tissue culture method, and then answered members' questions.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

The following letters have been received during the month. I would be delighted to receive more letters, so if you have an idea to contribute, or an opinion to express, please put them on paper, and then into the mail.
Ed.

Dear Keith,

I hope you will find the following idea of mine good enough for inclusion in a future Fern Society Newsletter.

The idea is to obtain a plastic soft drink bottle (Coca Cola 2 litre Easy-Goer), and make it into an ideal container for fern spore and for starting off all types of seed.

Step 1: Fill the bottle with hot water; this enables the black plastic base to be twisted off.

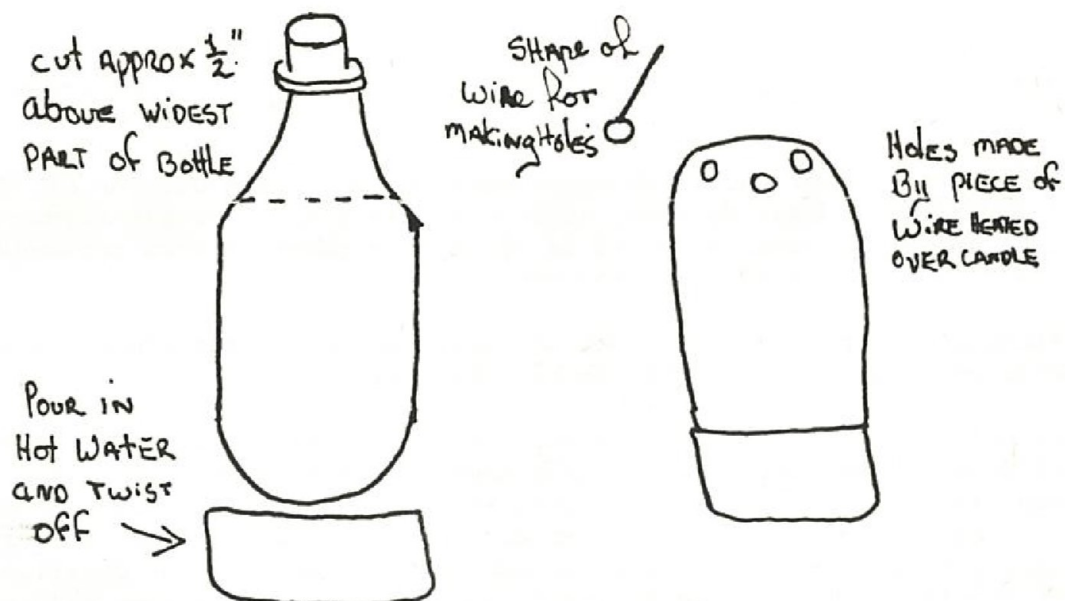
Step 2: Cut the top part of the bottle away, approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ " above the widest part of the bottle (I use a Stanley Knife for this).

Step 3: To put holes in the plastic dome which results, I use a piece of wire shaped into a circle about the size of a one cent piece. This can be heated over a candle, and pressed through the plastic at the top of the dome.

Step 4: The plastic dome will now fit into the black base, making a very good container for spore raising.

JOCK STURROCK, Laverton

Reply: Many thanks for this suggestion - I'm sure that many of our members will be trying this method. Ed. (Jock's illustration is reproduced below for readers' information.)



To the Editor:

As an enthusiastic country fern collector who has done several displays for local charities, I was appalled at the way some club members descended like vultures on Mr. Jackson's caterpillar fern while he was busy elsewhere, and broke off a number of cuttings.

If they wanted it so badly, why didn't they ask him if he would sell them a cutting? He had suggested that he may cut off some old fronds and give away spore, but it was inexcusable to vandalise it like that.

If the Fern Club is to succeed, let us thank Chris and the others who bring rare and valuable ferns for us to enjoy, by keeping our hands right off them.

DOROTHY FORTE, "Fern Glen"

PATHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

PATHOLOGY HINTS

by IAN BUCKMASTER

The Garlic Spray and 1/10th of the recommended strength of other marketed sprays is only suitable for ferns as a preventative rather than a cure. The "House and Garden Spray" in pressure pack could also fall into this category. Dysiston 5 granules at half strength every six weeks, at the moment, appears to be satisfactory, but it is really still in the trial stage for Adiantum fern.

DON'T just take a quick glance and think your fern is free of bugs. A close look at one of mine recently revealed a small caterpillar, which didn't seem to have done any damage. How he grew without eating anything, I don't really know, unless he chose fresh new croziers.

Be patient with your fern, and don't be afraid to ask questions on the subject. Have you any short story about ferns for the Newsletter? Members would be interested to hear it.

Recent trials:

Treatment: Malathion/White Oil - 1/10th. Okay for Adiantum, Nephrolepis, Microlepis, Davallia and Polypodium. The granules were covered up and watered in, and each trial consisted of three pots each.

Treatment: Nicotine Sulphate - 1/10th of recommended strength
Three pots of the same kind of fern - okay.

You must be 'spot on' with pesticide dilutions and spray on without a great deal of pressure. It is always best to make a 48 hour trial on a marked frond, to find out if it is satisfactory, before treating the whole fern. Do not spray ferns on a hot day, or in temperatures above 25°C. Slugs seem to be my biggest menace in the glasshouse; they hide in the pot vents.

PATHOLOGY DEPARTMENT (Cont'd.)

FERN BANK

A number of members have responded to the forming of a 'fern bank'. This part of the Society can be regarded as an important one, and to date it has afforded members the opportunity to lodge the spore with me in the Pathology Department.

The Committee has not yet chosen a member to be in charge of the cataloguing, dating, naming and storing of this material which, in due course, could be used for swapping with other societies. For the moment, the Pathology Department is a 'natural' for keeping the collection, so keep it coming in! Spore may be sent by mail by those who cannot attend the meetings. When mailing it, please name it if you can, or provide a frond for identification.

We now have a new PATHOLOGY DEPT. sign. Please make the time and money spent worthwhile, by bringing in your sick fern, or by using the free service.

My apologies for last month - we were short-handed, and I was called away to take care of the judging of competitions.

IAN BUCKMASTER
Vice-President

EDITOR'S MESSAGE:

The increasing pressures placed on all of us as the Christmas season approaches are reflected in this slightly smaller edition of the Newsletter.

We are looking forward to receiving many more contributions for the Newsletter from members in the New Year.

1980 promises to be an extremely interesting year for the Fern Society of Victoria - diary dates are listed on the following page.

Any photographs (black & white, and clearly marked on the back with source, subject and date), queries or suggestions should be forwarded to me at 17 Grandview Grove, Rosanna, 3084.

KEITH HUTCHINSON
Editor

DIARY DATES

FEBRUARY: Chris Goudey -
"MAIDEN HAIR FERNS AND
THEIR CULTIVATION"

MARCH: Albert Jenkins -
"COMPOSTING IN RELATION
TO FERNS"

APRIL: Ian Buckmaster -
"FERNS IN CONTRAST"

MAY: DEMONSTRATION NIGHT
(Various Speakers)

JUNE: Neil Laird -
"A SELECTION OF
UNCOMMON FERNS"

