



THE
FERN SOCIETY

OF
VICTORIA
INC.

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NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE.

At the November meeting, Chris Goudey gave a brief report on the official opening of the restored "Ripponlea Fernery" on Sunday 27th October, 1985 by the Honourable Evan Walker, M.L.C. Minister for planning and environment.

The Fernery planting is incomplete, but it is hoped that Society Members may enjoy an outing to Ripponlea in 1986, when Oliver Frost will act as our guide.

This fernery, 10 metres high, and 40 metres long, is reported to be the largest structure of its type in Australia, and may well be the largest in the world.

DECEMBER MEETING:

Our Christmas meeting will feature "a Fern Forum" - Keith Stubbs will act as chairman. A panel consisting of Albert Jenkins, Harold Olney, Ian Broughton, Chris Goudey, and Barry Stagoll will answer your questions.

For the success of this evening, we need your active participation - bring along your written questions, and please hand them to Keith Stubbs prior to commencement of "The Forum".

DOOR PRIZE:

Our door prize will be a copy of Chris Goudey's new book "Maidenhair Ferns in Cultivation" to receive a ticket, to be eligible to win - you MUST bring a fern for display during the meeting.

SPECIAL EFFORT:

We will feature our Christmas Hampers.

SUPPER:

As usual our Christmas meeting concludes with supper - it would be appreciated if you could bring a plate of sandwiches, savouries, or cakes.

RECESS:

All members are reminded that the Society goes into recess in January, and our first meeting for 1986 is scheduled for Thursday 13th February.

SLIDE BANK:

As the photographic season is now with us - all members are encouraged to enter our competition for the slide Bank.
(See details later in this newsletter.)

QUESTIONNAIRE:

Only twenty two responses have been returned, and our December Meeting is the deadline for return of questionnaires.

Please make an effort - complete one, and leave it with our Secretary Derek Griffiths or myself.

NOVEMBER - SPECIAL EFFORT WINNERS.

Otto Binder	Neil Bailey
Robert Dodson	Nance Logan
Sue Gardner-Berry	Ivy Harris
Margaret Radley	Otto Binder

Congratulations to all these members.

PRESIDENTIAL THANKS.

May I thank all members who have contributed to make 1985 such a success.

- * The excellent response with donations of ferns for Ripponlea.
 - * The dedicated work of Jean Trudgeon, Keith Brown, and Margaret Radley.
 - * Thanks to Maureen Verhagen for typing our Newsletter.
- To a very co-operative Committee (Both past and present).

Our Society has been very well served.

- * I must conclude my thanks, by citing the work of Doug Thomas in transcribing the talks of our monthly speakers - and for his help and encouragement to me during my first three months as President.
- * Wishing all members a very pleasant Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

With Kindest Regards,
Keith Hutchinson.

"A VISIT TO KEW GARDENS - SURREY ENGLAND". by Barry Stagoll.

Report of a talk given by Barry at the General Meeting on 14th November, 1985.

In 1759 the widow of Price Frederick of Wales encouraged and supervised the setting up of Kew Gardens. This original land measured just nine acres and was owned by the Royal Family. Adjoining the Kew Gardens land was another piece also owned by the Royals. It was part of a Richmond Estate which King George later inherited. By 1772 King George had taken over the Kew Gardens segment as well. The botanical work went on however, and was boosted by the appointment of Joseph Banks as official Director. Much of the early botanical success and development of the enterprise is due to him. The inclusion of Australian botany was engineered by Joseph Banks.

During the early 1800's the enterprise went into a decline mainly because of a lack of interest from Officialdom of the day. However,

Continued over . . .

in 1840, the Royal Family made an additional 200 acres of land available for further development of the gardens. Now the total area covers just under 300 acres giving scope for the protection and nurture of natural woodland, forest in its ancient state and the fine array of tropical plant houses.

These plant or glasshouses are heated by a typical central heating system. Barry said that only one is double glazed; not for the purpose of solar heating, but to provide humidity in the filmy fern house.

The largest house is the temperate, built in the 1850's and the most famous is the Palm House. Barry said that when the palms grow so high to reach the roof in the enclosure they are cut down to be replaced by smaller specimens. He also said, that the Palm House reminded him of the newly reconstructed fern house at Ripponlea. The Palm House was built during the era 1844 - 1848 and like its Ripponlea counterpart, has a framework of cast iron.

The fern collections are grown in the soil in small enclosures within the main houses. None of the ferns are grown in pots. The success of Kew Gardens management can be measured by the spectacular increase in the number of introduced species being grown. In 1813 = 80 species, 1850 = 900 species, 1975 = 1,500 species. The collection of ferns is the most comprehensive in the world.

With good quality colour slides Barry took us into the tropical fern house by means of his photographs. We saw two species of *Angeopteris*; one collected from West Sumatra and the other from islands in the Indian Ocean. Other tropicals came from Brazil, New Guinea, Malay Peninsula, the Phillipines, New Hebrides and America. An *Adiantum* from the rocky soilless Galapagos Island was also shown.

Barry said that he and Gaye also visited two other public gardens. The first was the Royal Horticultural Society's own garden south west of London. The fern collection is not extensive, but a spectacular specimen of royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*) with fronds six feet tall, frond clumps one to two metres through, and orange coloured spore heads standing like flower heads is outstanding. A damp, rather swampy environment is provided for this plant. Hart's tongue ferns grow wild here as does common spleenwort (*Asplenium trichomanes*).

Regents Park was also visited and came under notice for its absence of fences and presence of squirrels. The squirrels are deemed a pest!

The final phase of Barry's talk described visits to the homes and private collections of Members of the British Pteridological Society. Mr. A.R. Busby, a "teacher of teachers" at the University of Warwick in Coventry, told Barry that the Society was formed in 1891 and that to the present day it has been served by only three Secretaries. Mr. Busby is currently engaged in a study of *Osmunda regalis* and its many variants.

At Worcestershire Barry and Gaye visited Rita and Ray Rodwell whose fern collection is set up in a protected rock garden. Worthy of special mention is a specimen of *Athyrium victoriae*, a beautiful fern collected in the wild in Somerset during the reign of Queen Victoria; hence the name. This fern is completely deciduous and produces pinnae which criss cross to form a lovely latticed effect.

Keith Hutchinson moved a vote of thanks to Barry on behalf of Members. He complimented Barry on the thoroughness of his preparations and the standard of his photography.

Keith was supported by the enthusiastic applause of a large audience.

COMPETITION.

TO INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE SLIDE BANK WE ARE HOLDING A PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION.

THE COMPETITION IS OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY AND WILL GIVE OUR INTERSTATE AND COUNTRY MEMBERS AN OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN A SOCIETY ACTIVITY.

TO ENTER THE COMPETITION SIMPLY DONATE SLIDES OF FERNS OR A FERN RELATED ACTIVITY TO THE SLIDE BANK.
YOU MAY ENTER AS MANY SLIDES AS YOU WISH.

A JUDGING PANEL WILL SELECT THE BEST SLIDE AND THE PRIZE FOR THE WINNER WILL BE A 75 CM X 50 CM POSTER PRINT OF THEIR SLIDE.
THE PRIZE FOR EVERYONE ELSE WILL BE KNOWING THAT A SLIDE OF THEIR 'PRIDE AND JOY' WILL BE IMMORTILIZED IN THE SLIDE BANK AND SHOWN IN PRESENTATIONS AT THE FERN SOCIETY, GARDEN CLUBS AND OTHER INTERESTED GROUPS.

TO ENABLE PLENTY OF TIME TO PHOTOGRAPH YOUR FERNS WHILE THEY LOOK THEIR BEST DURING SPRING AND EARLY SUMMER, THE COMPETITION WILL BE OPEN UNTIL THE 31ST MARCH 1986.
THE WINNER WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT THE MAY MEETING AND PUBLISHED IN THE JUNE NEWSLETTER.

IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO INCLUDE THE NAME OF YOUR FERN, HOWEVER, IF YOU KNOW THE NAME PLEASE WRITE IT ON THE SLIDE AS IT IS DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY FERNS FROM SLIDES.

SLIDES CAN BE DONATED AT THE MONTHLY MEETINGS, OR SENT TO:
PETER GOSCHNICK
13 VITIS AVE.
NOBLE PARK.
VIC. 3174.

1986 ANNUAL FERN SHOW - New Venue -

It is time again to start preparations in earnest for the next Annual Fern Show - and, hopefully, for all members within travelling distance to make a resolution to participate in the activities in some way and help make it a success.

This will be our sixth Annual Fern Show and after five years at the Herbarium we have found it desirable to shift to another location. After much investigation the Show Sub-Committee has decided to hold next year's Show

at Nunawading Horticultural Centre
82 Jolimont Road
FOREST HILL
(Melway Reference 62 G4)

on Saturday, 12th April and Sunday, 13th April.

We have also had to change the date for the Show to allow for the fact that Easter falls on the last weekend in March in 1986.

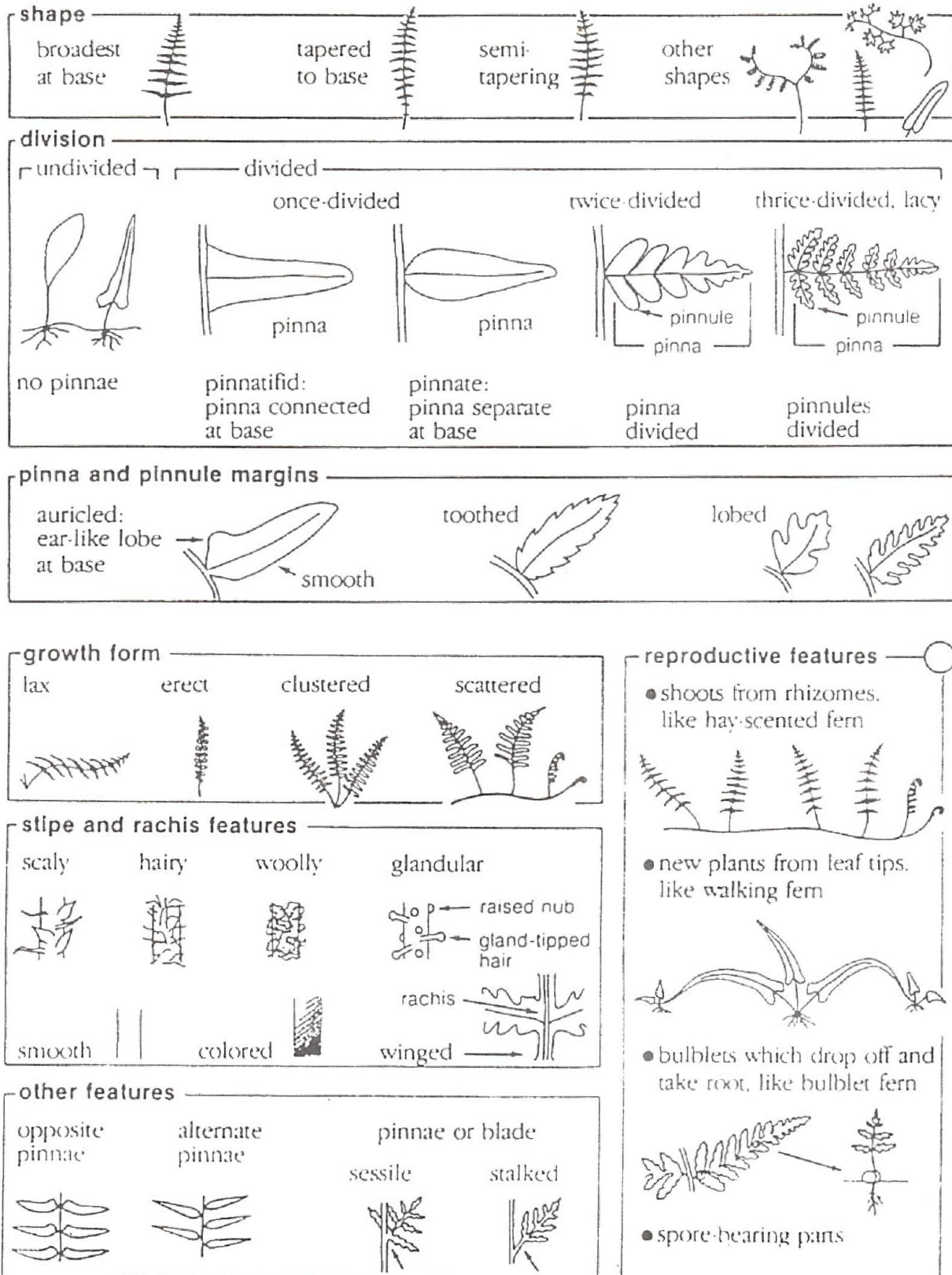
The Horticultural Centre should prove a very pleasant venue for the Show as the display hall backs on to a garden setting with two bush houses, two glass houses and a native garden. It also has a separate large shed where the sales operation can be conducted in comfort (a decided improvement!).

The indoor display space is smaller than at the Herbarium so we do not have to worry so much about the quantity of ferns required but can concentrate more on quality. We hope that everyone will aim to bring in some of their choice ferns and set a high standard for our first Show in the new venue. The end-of-year break could be a good time to start selecting them ready for grooming!

BEGINNERS PAGE

The structure of ferns is basically similar to other plants, consisting of a stem that bears leaves on one side and roots on the other. The following diagrams show how each part of a fern can differ.

To identify a fern, look at:



CAN YOU NAME THIS FERN?

7

(Answer in February, 1986 newsletter)



* TASMANIAN TRIP, * MARCH, 1987.

To be led by Chris Goudey.

45 participants are required - estimated cost is \$500 for 9 days covering 2 weekends.

Travel to and from Tasmania by the Abel Tasman, accommodation and meals are included.

Chris needs to know who will take this excursion by May, 1986 when a deposit of \$5.00 is required.

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D I A R Y D A T E S .

Thursday
December 12th

Fern Forum
and Christmas Meeting.

Burnley Horticultural College Hall, Swan Street,
Burnley, 8.00 p.m.

NOTE. In the event of a power strike on the evening
of any meeting, we regret that the meeting
must be cancelled.

BUYERS' GUIDE TO FERN NURSERIES.

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