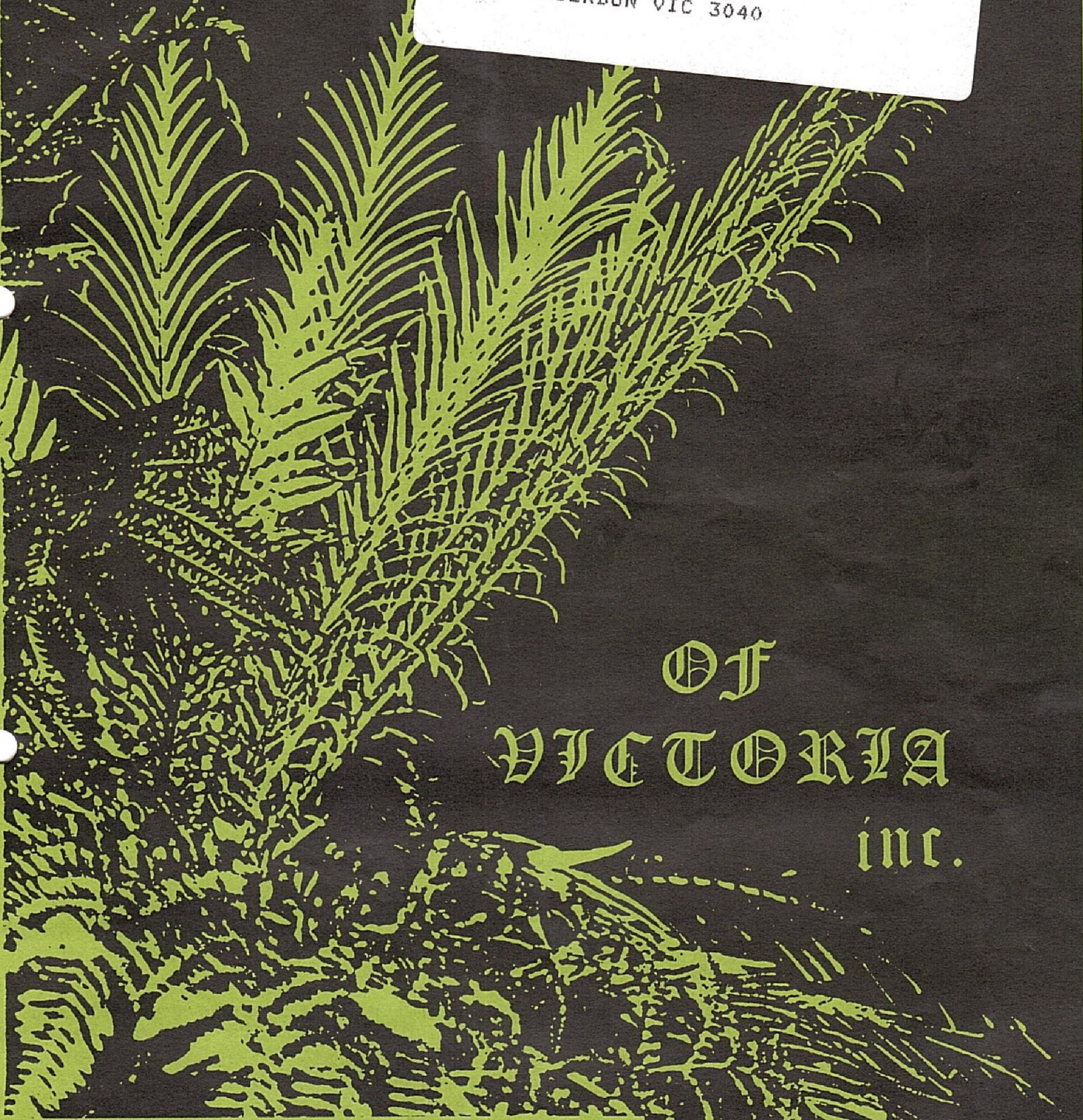


THE
JOURNAL

M B WHITE
24 RUBY STREET
WEST ESSENDON VIC 3040



OF
VICTORIA
inc.

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NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 8 NUMBER 4 MAY 1986

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE.

Our North Victorian trip proved to be a very enjoyable experience for the thirty nine members who attended.

The highlights included:- An atmosphere of friendliness and co-operation which prevailed during the weekend.



Viewing the magnificent ferns at Paradise, Norma's Fernery, Mary and Garnett Frosts and the Wangaratta Garden Clubs fern setting under giant elm trees in the Shire Gardens.

The amount of time given by Mary and Garnett Frost escorting us to the interesting areas which we could not have found without them.

Noonameena Lodge, our overnight stop, where Geoff the Manager did everything possible to make our weekend a memorable one - for example, arranging for the Mount Buffalo Ranger to come along and give us a very interesting talk about the area, and a Member of the Porepunkah Garden Club showed an enjoyable video tape.

The President of the Wangaratta Garden Club, Dick Edwards and the dedicated ladies who provided a delightful morning tea with cakes, sandwiches, scones etc on the terrace of the Shire Hall which is set in the centre of ninety acres of parkland.

Dick, full of infectious enthusiasm, left no doubt that his beloved Wangaratta was the best city in Australia; and that the Garden Club was going to keep it that way.

The tireless work and dry humour of our coach driver Ian (his jokes were definitely original) and the well planned itinerary by Chris Goudey.

The crisp fresh morning air, and invigorating walk before breakfast.
A sincere thankyou to all concerned.



8th. MAY MEETING - 8.00 P.M. AT BURNLEY

MR. DOUG THOMAS - AN EVENING FOR BEGINNERS

June Meeting We are asking members to bring along their favourite fern- and for a number to briefly share with us the reasons for their choice.

April Meeting The mini talks on practical subjects proved quite popular and are reported fully in our Newsletter. We hope to have another of these later in the year.

Change of Venue for July Meeting.

As the Burnley Hall is unavailable for our July Meeting, please watch for notification of Venue in our Newsletter.

Well deserved Award.

Mary and Garnett Frost have been awarded a Gold Medal by the Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria for thirty years service to horticulture. We offer congratulations to them.

Special Effort Winners.

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Terry Turney | 2. Margaret Radley |
| 2. Emanuel Pickard | 4. Marion Kennedy |
| 5. John Hodges | 6. Ann Bryant |
| 7. Joel Macher | 8. Kath Brown |

FERNS PURCHASED BY FERN SOCIETY FOR RIPPONLEA FERNERY.

The following list of ferns are some of the rare varieties bought with the money donated and raised by special effort for Rippon Lea.

1	Cyathea cunninghamii	\$130.00
1	Cyathea medularis	60.00
1	Cyathea australis norfolkiensis	50.00
1	Dicksonia squarrosa	60.00
1	Cyathea marcesens	70.00
1	Sadleria pallida	20.00
1	Asplenium simplicifrons	6.00
1	Dictymia brownii	6.00
1	Pyrrosia rupestris	10.00
3	ferns at 4.00 ea.	12.00
6	ferns at 2.50 ea.	15.00
	ferns at 7.50 ea.	15.00
3	ferns at 1.50 ea.	4.50
1	Platycterium Hillii	6.00
		<u>\$464.50</u>
	less trade discount	<u>\$118.62</u>
	receipt supplied for	<u>\$345.98</u>

Kind Regards,

Keith Hutchinson

SPEAKER REPORTS: GENERAL MEETING, 10th April, 1986.

Albert Jenkins, Neil Baillie and Keith Hutchinson were joint Guest Speakers who presented interesting and informative demonstrations and talks.

Albert Jenkins: Albert began by describing yet another insect pest. He said that recently he had had a maidenhair fern brought to him which simply could not be encouraged to grow. Croziers would develop normally but would always disappear before unfurling.

Entrusted with the task of rejuvenation, Albert cut all frond stubs back to the soil surface, then sunk what was left into a tub of water making sure that the mass was below water level. Soon after Albert collected fifteen tiny snail-like creatures which had surfaced to avoid drowning.

These snails are no larger than the head of a match and when crushed raise an odour which is akin to the smell of garlic. They are not attracted to snail baits but can be seen and despatched at night. Bill Taylor commented that a saturation of both soil and plant with Carbryl is effective in their control.

Specimens of the snails were passed among Members for scrutiny and recognition.

* * * * *

Albert then demonstrated a new product named Terrasorb which is being researched by the Maxicrop Company. Terrasorb consists of white granules which when mixed with water produce a jel 200 times larger than its original volume. A plant can survive for three weeks by absorbing the moisture in the jel.

Albert treats his plants with Terrasorb twice a year and has had excellent results. The product can also be used for controlling the moisture content in spore growing cultures. In all applications any excess water drains through.

* * * * *

A practical demonstration of lining a wire basket with Meleleuca bark followed. Albert said that to many people this bark is hard to process and that it appears to have, "a mind of its own".

Albert's method is first of all to make the bark pliable by dunking it in boiling water. When cool enough he cuts the bark into suitable segments. Albert fits a segment at a time and holds each in place with a spring loaded clothes peg attached to the rim. After the basket is circled with these he cuts pieces of black plastic to serve as an inside liner. As he works Albert uses pegs again to hold the liner pieces in place and partially shreds the bottom edges to assist drainage of surplus water.

Albert's method was very effective and under his hands the materials soon took up the contour shape of the basket. He said that he preferred to use Meleleuca bark as a basket liner because it held moisture for long periods. He felt that other liners dried out too quickly.

* * * * *

Finally Albert introduced Members to another new Maxicrop product called "Wettorsorb". He explained that it is often very hard to re-moisten some of the materials which we all use and which at times dry right out. Tree fern fibre and peat moss are two of these.

The recommended method of use is to soak the dry material in Wettorsorb for five minutes. The proportions are: 15mls Wettorsorb in 3 litres of water.

The effectiveness of this product was obvious when Albert showed Members an outstanding specimen of Polypodium formosanum (Caterpillar fern) which is growing in a Wettorsorb treated piece of tree fern trunk.

The wholesale price of Wettorsorb will be \$5.00

* * * * *

Neil Baillie: Neil dealt with the cultivation of *Platycterium* (Elk and Staghorn ferns). He said that young *Platycterium*s do best in a simple mixture of 6 parts Oak leaf mould, 6 parts tree fern fibre (gleaned from old material) 1 part sand and 1 part sandy loam.

A common problem in growing this genus is that of rot which is usually caused by overwatering.

Neil demonstrated a special wire mesh container fixed to a back board. The wire retains the mix and also provides the means for attaching the plants. This enables the plant to send roots through the mesh and into the mix.

In growing the plants from spores Neil uses tree fern fibre gleaned from old material and pushed through a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seive. The material is then sterilized, either in a Microwave oven or with boiling water. From May and then right through the Melbourne winter. Neil uses a slow combustion stove to provide the required warmth.

When sporelings are large enough, Neil uses another special rack of his own manufacturing for growing them on. A smaller version of the one previously described, this rack functions in a similar way.

Plastic ice-cream containers were shown containing bounteous crops of young sporelings. Neil said that rot is also a problem with the spores and that he has to take remedial action at the first sign of this problem.

Other tips for Members were: Use spores as fresh as possible. Use plastic coated wire for attaching mature plants to back boards. If a sporeling stag appears self sown in your collection leave it alone if it is doing well; only take action if the sporeling begins to look sick. The native elk *Platycterium bifurcatum* can be grown outside in a protected garden but care should be taken not to overwater. *Platycterium*s are advantaged by the application of fertilizers such as Nitrosol, Maxicrop, Blood and Bone or Photogen.

Neil had brought an outstanding collection of his stags and elks to the meeting including a cultivar of *Platycterium bifurcatum* called San Diego, *Platycterium holtumii* and sporelings of *Platycterium willinckii* cv. scofield.

* * * * *

Keith Hutchinson: Dividing a large elk.

Keith had brought in a magnificent specimen elk fern, (*Platycterium bifurcatum*). He told Members that reducing the size of such a huge colony of plants could be done without harming the mass.

Keith's aids for the work were: a pruning saw, a circular piece of tree fern trunk, some galvanized wire, wet sphagnum moss, leaf mould and a pair of pliers.

Having removed old wires from the mass of elks, Keith selected one portion which had a healthy "eye" or rhizome. He then cut the piece out with the pruning saw making sure that the roots came out with the piece. Keith said that too often he has seen elks offered for sale which have been completely stripped of roots. There is little chance of success with these.

Keith passed wires through the backing disc in such positions as would provide support for the elk at its top and bottom. He then proceeded to pack wet sphagnum in a circle close to and around the edges of the disc, after which he filled in the centre with leaf mould.

The reason for placing the sphagnum in a circle is to ensure that air does not enter at the back of the elk and cause the plant food to dry out.

Continued Page 11

ADIANTUM PERUVIANUM KLOTSCH - The Famous Silver Dollar Maidenhair Fern

Adiantum peruvianum is now widespread in cultivation and certainly one of the most beautiful and most sought after of the maidenhair ferns. There are upwards of 200 known species of tropical and temperate *Adiantums*. The foliage can vary from the very large leaflets of *A. peruvianum* and *A. trapeziforme* to the extremely fine leaflets of *A. raddianum* 'Gracillimum'. The large, roundish and bluntly tapered, silvery leaflets of the silver dollar maidenhair fern are very impressive. The individual leaflets may be as large as $2\frac{1}{2}$ by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the fronds may arch as long as three feet and the short-creeping rhizomes are massive.

COMMON NAME: Silver dollar maidenhair fern, Peruvian maidenhair.

CONFUSING SPECIES: *A. anceps*, *A. cultratum*, *A. pentadactylon*, or *A. trapeziforme*.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES: Most noted for its enormous individual leaflets which are somewhat rounded. The mature plants are among the largest of the *Adiantums*. Undoubtedly one of the most sought-after members of the genus.

GROWTH HABIT: Very similar to that of the other *Adiantums* in that it requires rather high humidity. It grows in small "drifts" or clumps that develop as the creeping rhizomes reach out from the original base of the plant. Achieves a maximum height of three feet, but generally the weight of the larger fronds contributes to their arching habit.

DESCRIPTION: Fronds 2-3 pinnate, lax, rounded triangular in overall out-line, to about 1 m, the blades composing half of this length. The stipes and rachises are wiry, shiny, black to brownish black. The rhizomes are thick, scaly, short-creeping. The ultimate divisions or pinnae are light green to grey green in colour, papery, usually about 6 cm long and 4 cm wide, but can be as large as 8 cm by 6 or more cm wide, rhomboid to ovate-trapeziform; the apex rounded to rounded-acute; the upper and inner margins plain, entire; the lower and outer margins somewhat irregular with occasional shallow notches. Sori borne on outer and lower margins of the segments, covered with close-set oblong to nearly round false indusia that are blackish at the fold even before maturity.

COLOUR: The rosy pink shade of the new fronds changes to soft greenish pink with a slight metallic sheen, then develops to a brighter green, finally dulling to a darker green as the fronds age. The stipes are very dark and striking in contrast with the foliage.

CONTAINERS: This species grows well in plastic and terra cotta pots, moss-lined wire baskets or fern fibre containers. Do NOT overpot this fern. Overpotting can lead to root rot.

GROWING MEDIUMS: *Adiantums* need good drainage. A mixture of fibrous peat or leaf mould, loam and coarse sterilized sand will serve as a good basic medium. Many growers use a good quality planting mix of commercial origin amended with perlite, redwood bark, fern fibre and/or chunk peat. Crushed oyster shells or baked and crushed egg shells may be added to the mixture to supply additional calcium. This element is usually found in the native habitats of *Adiantums* and may be required as an additive in many localities.

FERTILIZING: Use a high nitrogen fertilizer approximately twice a month during active growing season. Keep the fertilizing at a bare minimum during the dormant or resting periods. The plant does not utilize much food when it is not producing foliage and it is only wasted. Fish base fertilizers seem to cause foliage burn and should be avoided in many areas.

TEMPERATURES: This plant requires temperatures of 13-16° C to a maximum of 30°C. Best in range of 21 - 27°C.

ADIANTUM PERUVIANUM KLOTSCH

WATERING: Frequent regular watering is required to keep the medium evenly moist but not soggy. Do not allow the root system to dry out completely as this does severe cell damage that can kill the plant.

Avoid overhead watering. It is best not to wet the foliage since this practice can lead to mildew growth, or can cause the brittle stipes to snap. A common error of plant collectors is to use water force from a hose on the foliage, a practice which can lead to damage. The risk is lessened when the temperature is moderate to warm as the plant becomes more pliable with heat and may bend to resist snapping. We recommend that you take a little more time to water individual plants at the soil level.

When watering it is a good idea to leach the soil thoroughly to avoid salt build-up and leaf burn.

HUMIDITY: To achieve best frond and leaflet size it is necessary to maintain the humidity at approximately 75%. If not in a greenhouse, it may be necessary to use a humidifier or gravel evaporating trays.

PROPAGATION: This plant divides rather easily but is often set back by doing so. Small plants should not be divided. Large ones are easily cut in half. Examine the size, extent and direction of the rhizome before cutting. Remove older foliage before dividing since it will decline as a result of the trauma of cutting and will only slow the growth of new fronds.

This plant is generally produced in quantities by sowing spores.

GLOSSARY:

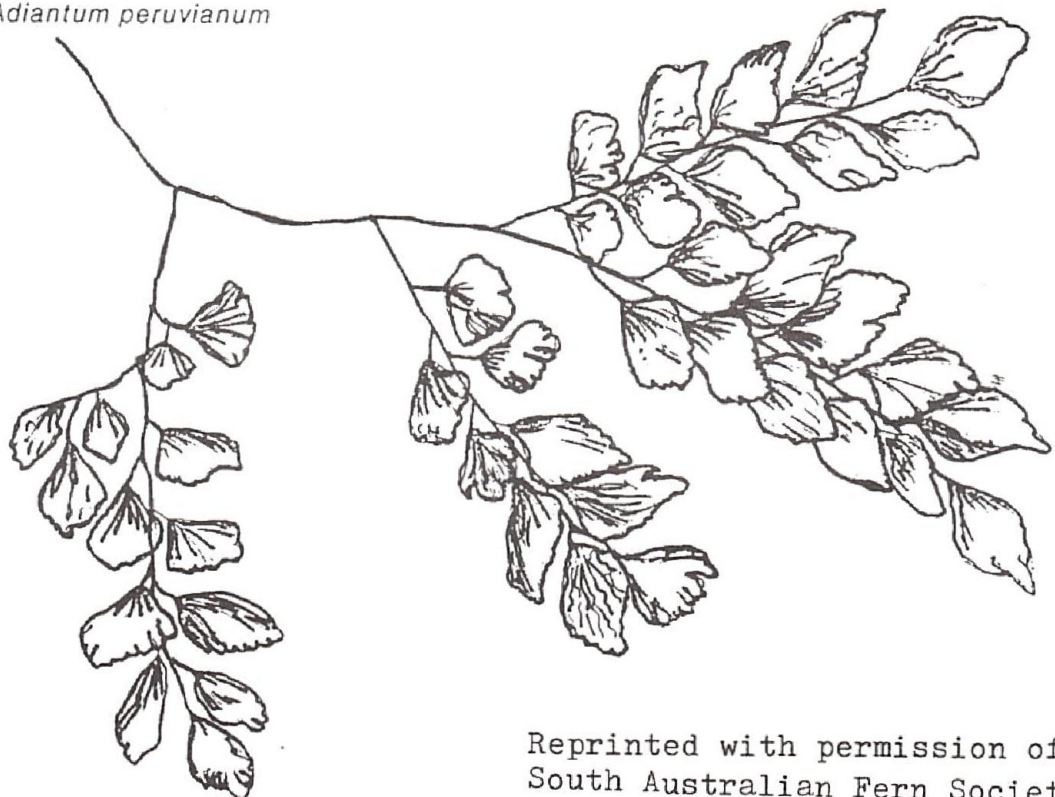
OVATE - shaped like an egg

INDUSIA (singular = indusium) - the membranes covering the sori

RHOMBOID - having the shape of a slanted or skewed rectangle

TRAPEZIFORMIS - having four sides of unequal lengths

Adiantum peruvianum



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South Australian Fern Society

PROPOSED TASMANIAN FERN TOUR 7th - 16th MARCH 1987

Having visited Tasmania a number of times on specialized fern trips, many people have expressed to me a great interest in the ferns and the natural beauty of the Island State. Especially places such as Cradle Mountain, the West Coast and the fascinating southwest wilderness area.

As such I decided to put together an interesting nine day tour to give Society members and their friends, a chance to see the ferns and the magnificent unspoiled rainforests of Tasmania, and to travel with friends in the comfort of our own private modern coach.

To keep costs down, it has been decided to use modern hostel-type accommodation. We will have our own Cook and all meals will be provided. At the time of writing I have thirty-nine seats booked, with only six vacancies left.

I hope you can join with me on this interesting tour in 1987.

OUR ITINERARYFriday 7th March

Meet other tour members at Station Pier at 4.30pm. Check-in and depart at 6.00pm on the Abel Tasman ferry, arriving at Devonport at 8.30am.

Saturday 8th MarchCradle Valley

On arrival at Devonport, we will meet up with Michael Garrett and board our coach for Cradle Valley where there are plenty of short walks with good scenery. A number of alpine ferns and mosses can be seen here. Overnight at Turners Beach.

Sunday 9th MarchNorth Coast

Today we will visit Leven Canyon and the Fern Glade Park at Burnie. Overnight at Turners Beach.

Monday 10th MarchNorthwest Coast

A busy day, visiting Dip Falls, Copper Creek, Milkshakes Reserve, Julius River and Lake Chisolm. Overnight at Turners Beach.

Tuesday 11th MarchWest Coast

Leave Turners Beach for Queenstown, stopping at the beautiful Hellyer Gorge to view, possibly the rarest fern in Australia, the Maidenhair Spleenwort, Asplenium hookerianum. Overnight at Queenstown.

Wednesday 12th MarchWest Coast

Visit Hemmskirk Falls, Regatta Point (Strahan) and Crotty Road which leads into deep rainforest gullies, which abound with ferns, lichens and mosses and hopefully the Oval Wedgefern, Lindsaea trichomanoides. Overnight Queenstown.

Thursday 13th MarchQueenstown to Hobart

Afternoon free time in Hobart or a visit to Westlands Wholesale Nursery, to view spore propagation. Overnight in Hobart.

Friday 14th MarchSouthwest Tasmania

Visiting Serpentine Dam, Scotts Peak Dam site, where we will see the beauty of the southwest with its mountains, gorges and horizontal scrub, the Wedge Water Fern, Blechnum vulcanicum, the Dwarf Coral Fern, Gleichenia abscida, the Brittle Bladder Fern, Cystopteris filix-fragilis, the Common Spleenwort, Asplenium trichomanes, the rare Bordered Filmy Fern, Hymenophyllum marginatum and many more. We will also visit Mt. Field National Park to view Lady Barron Falls, with its massive treeferns covered with filmy ferns. Overnight in Hobart.

Saturday 15th MarchPort Arthur

Travel to Port Arthur and onto Remarkable Caves to see the Maritime Fern, Asplenium obtusatum. Overnight in Hobart.

Sunday 16th MarchMt. Wellington

Spectacular views of Hobart and the Derwent River, more alpine ferns and beautiful walks along O'Grady's Falls track, to view Asplenium terrestre.

Afternoon - Hobart to Devonport. Ferry departure time 6.00pm arriving in Melbourne at 8.30am 17th March.

TOUR COSTS

\$437.00 per person if all seats are booked.

A \$10.00 holding deposit per person is all that is required at this stage. A larger deposit will be required at a later date.

Included in the cost - transfer to and from Tasmania on the Abel Tasman Ferry, all meals provided once the tour commences and accommodation in Tasmania.

Bookings will be confirmed on a first-come basis.

All enquiries to be directed to -

Mr. Christopher Goudey
Tour Leader
R.M.B. 1175 Cozens Road,
LARA Victoria 3212

1986 ANNUAL FERN SHOW

The move to the Nunawading Horticultural Centre for our sixth Annual Fern Show after five years at the Herbarium proved beneficial in nearly all respects, and the consensus of opinion of members present was that the event was a great success.

The decline in patronage over the last few years was dramatically reversed and the number of visitors rose to 2290 (up 47% on 1985). Included among these were our own Society member Natalia Jayanata from Indonesia and Michael Garrett, the President of the Tasmanian Fern Society.

One very pleasing feature was that this large crowd was handled without undue congestion in the display area (always a problem in the past) and the general atmosphere of the weekend, including the setting up period on the Friday, was much more relaxed than on previous occasions. The people working in the fern sales area where over 3400 plants were sold (2200 last year) may think the word "relaxed" is not quite appropriate!

The bush houses and glass houses of the Horticultural Centre were open for inspection during the Show and many visitors took advantage of the opportunity. The whole site was in beautiful condition and a tribute to the Council staff who went to a great deal of trouble to have the place looking its best for us.

An innovation this year was the provision of an outdoor refreshment service of which many visitors took advantage, especially on the Sunday when the weather could only be described as superb.

There has not yet been time to work out the financial return for the Show in detail, but a preliminary balance shows that profit for the weekend should be well over \$5000, compared with \$3012 last year. All involved in the Show activities can feel well pleased with their efforts.

The Show Sub-Committee would like to sincerely thank those people who contributed to the preparation and running of the Show. It was good to have many of the "regulars" back again and encouraging to see a number of new faces. It must be pointed out, however, that we were very understaffed on several occasions and would like to encourage more members to participate in future Shows.

To sustain the success achieved by this year's Show we need to make the next one even better, and the Show Sub-Committee would be grateful for suggestions to help us to achieve this objective.

BOB LEE
Chairman
Fern Show Sub-Committee

WANTED TO SWAP BY QUEENSLAND MEMBER.

TO swap newly discovered *Drynaria rigidula* cv. for say *Asplenium Nidus variegata*, *Asplenium nidus multilobum*, *Pyrossia confluens*, *lobatum* or any other like native cultivar.

R. J. Pattinson
P.O. Box 567,
Rochedale South.
QUEENSLAND. 4123

* * * * *

SPEAKER REPORTS CONTINUED from page 5. - by Keith Hutchinson

The selected elk piece was then set down in place, i.e. with the roots over the leaf mould. The wires were then pulled tight, twisted at the back and any excess length tucked into the tree fern fibre. The border of sphagnum was then tucked in more tightly around the edges of the elk. A wire handle was inserted and the elk made ready for re-hanging as a new plant.

* * * * *

Vote of thanks:

In ably moving a vote of thanks to the three speakers, Derek Griffiths commented on the wealth of expertise and talent that existed within the Fern Society Members. The demonstrations and talks were, "First rate for information and entertainment". The large audience heartily agreed.

* * * * *

FERN LESSON OF THE MONTH.

Pteris ensiformis cv. *victoriae*.

This neat compact fern is distributed throughout Northern Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia and India. Being a tropical and sub-tropical fern it needs some protection during winter but is an excellent indoor fern. Given good light it will thrive and with its white margins along the midrib adds colour to any fern display.

* * * * *





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D I A R Y D A T E S .

MAY MEETING - DOUG THOMAS

AN EVENING FOR BEGINNERS

JUNE MEETING - MEMBERS FAVOURITE FERN NIGHT.

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.

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