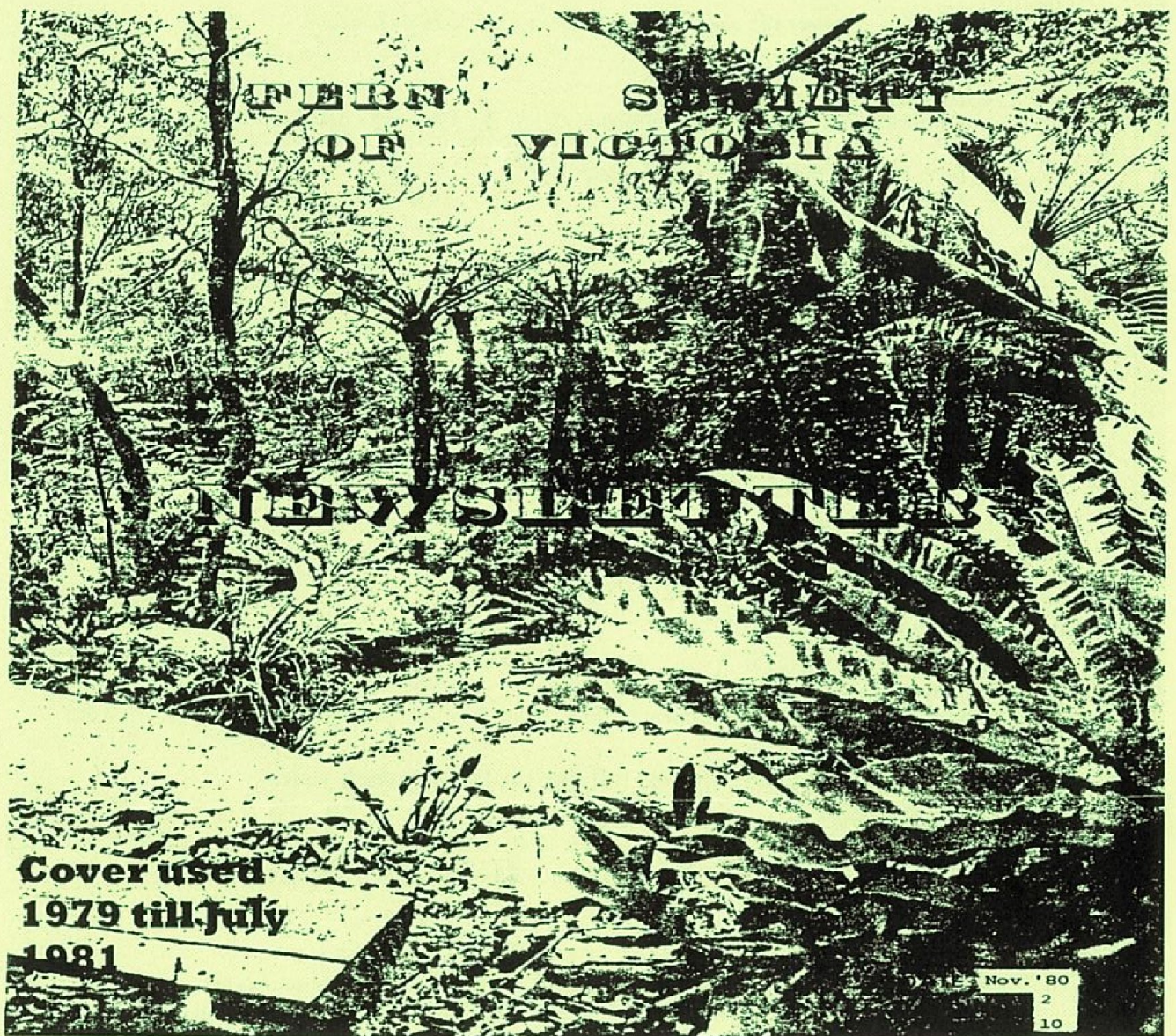


II

Fern Society of Victoria Inc.

NEWSLETTER



Vol. 26, Number 1.
January/February 2004

FERN SOCIETY OF VICTORIA Inc.

POSTAL ADDRESS:

P.O. Box 45, Heidelberg West, Victoria, 3081

E-mail: http://gardenbed.com/clubs/clubs_vicferns.cfm

Our Society's Objectives.

The objectives of the Society are:

- *to bring together persons interested in ferns and allied plants*
- *to promote the gathering and dissemination of information about ferns*
- *to stimulate public interest in ferns and*
- *to promote the conservation of ferns and their habitats.*

OFFICE BEARERS:

President:	Rex Gresham	Phone/Fax (03) 5796 2466
	"Kilpara", Selectors Road, Mangalore, Vic, 3663. e-mail <lynrex@optusnet.com.au>.	
Imm. Past President	Ian Broughton	
Vice-President	George Start	" 5962 5059
Secretary	Barry White	" 9740 2724
Treasurer	Don Fuller	" 9354 2656
Membership Secretary	Rex Gresham	" 5796 2466
Spore Bank Manager	Barry White	" 9337 9793
Librarian	Mirini Lang	" 9886 6109
Book Sales	Ivan Traverso	" 9836 4658
Editor	Brenda Girdlestone	9390 7073

Email: macstone@hotmail.net.au

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Jack Barrett 9375 3670, Gay Stagoll 9844 1558,
Norma Hodges 9878 9584, Brenda Girdlestone 9390 7073 and Mirini Lang 9886 6109.

SILVER ANNIVERSARY SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Norma Hodges 9878 9584, Mirini Lang 9886 6109, Keith Hutchinson 9457 2997,
and Bernadette Thomson 9399 1587, Brian Nicholls 9836 6507,

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

- * Single.....\$15.00 * Pensioner/student\$12.00 * Family\$17.00
- * Pensioner Family...\$14.00 * Organisation.....\$17.00
- * Overseas\$22.00 (Payment by international bank cheque in \$A please. Sent by Airmail.)

Subscriptions fall due on 1st July each year.

MEETING VENUES:

The Kevin Heinze Garden Centre at 39 Wetherby Road, Doncaster (Melway 47; H1).
Other meetings at members' gardens or as advertised on the following page.



Opinions expressed in this newsletter are the personal views of the authors and are not necessarily endorsed by the Society, nor does mention of a product constitute its endorsement.

TIMETABLE for EVENING GENERAL MEETINGS:

- 7.30 Pre-meeting activities - Sale of ferns, spore, books, merchandise and Special Effort tickets. Also library loans and lots of conversation.
- 8.00 General Meeting.
- 8.15 workshops and demonstrations.
- 9.15 Fern identification and pathology, Special Effort draw.
- 9.45 Supper and another good yarn.
- 10.00 Close.

2004 Calendar of Monthly Events

No meeting January 2004.

THURSDAY 19TH FEBRUARY 2004

Our first meeting for 2004, will be Barry White leading a very informative talk on Lady Ferns. These forums are always informative and bring out a lot of discussion, with loads of information to be gathered. This is a good time to tap into some of the experience from our older members, our newer members get the chance to tell some of the problems they may have experienced, [you don't need to be an expert to participate]
Come along and be part of this discussion.

Our competition will be lady ferns Ahtyrium, Diplazium, Deparia and Lunathyrium.

Thursday 18th March 2004

This meeting will be a talk on Pteris Ferns given by Don Fuller_its sure to have lots of good sound advise and evoke lots of well grown Pteris ferns in the near future

The 2004 Fern and Vireya Rhododendron Show
will be at the Mount Waverley Community Centre
on April 17th and 18th.

There will be no meeting in April, 2004, as the committee feels that it would be difficult for some of our members to attend a meeting the night before setting up for the show.

The show feature Fern will be **Ferns from New Zealand**. A complete list of these ferns will be published in the next newsletter.

FRONT COVER:

The front cover of this issue was the original cover used in the first newsletter from September 1979 until July 1981.

It was produced in black and white on white paper.

REFX

FERN and VIREYA RHODODENDRON SHOW

Saturday 17th - Sunday 18th April 2004

Our Show in 2004 will again be a **joint venture with the Australian Rhododendron Society** (this is our 7th) and will be **held on the weekend of the 17th/18th April 2004**. Please put this date in your **diary**. **Once again it will be held at the Mount Waverley Community Centre (crn. Miller Cres. and Stephenson Road, opposite the Mount Waverley Railway Station).**

The Show will be open 10-00am to 5-00pm **on Saturday and 10-00am to 4-00pm on Sunday**. The admission charge **will be unchanged at Adults \$4-00, Concession \$3-00, and Children under 15 free**. **Members of both societies who contribute to either the competition or the display, plus those acting in an official capacity for the day, will be admitted free**. For other **members the admission charge will be the concession rate of \$3-00**.

Because of reduced participating membership **the Show will again provide us with a significant challenge**, but we ask that all **members support the Show to the best of their ability**. The Show provides us with the **opportunity to attract new members** so it is important to the Society. We ask all **our members to seriously consider the following ways that can help achieve a successful outcome**.

1. **Contribute to the fern display and competition.**
2. **Grow ferns (or sell your excess ferns) for the sales bench**
We will welcome small numbers.
3. **Attend the Show and assist with its activities.**
4. **Publicise the Show.**

We would especially request those members **unable to attend our monthly meetings** to come along and contribute to the competition **and display**. Advertising flyers will be available at the February meeting and will **also be included in the March/April newsletter**.

The Fern Competition will again be held and it **would be great to have even more members enter into the spirit of the competition**. **Please remember that to enter a fern you must have owned it for 6 months**. The categories are as follows, 1. *Adiantum* 2. *Asplenium* 3. *Davalliaceae* - restricted to *Arthopteris*, *Davallia*, *Humata*, *Rumohra*, *Scyphularia*. 4. *New Zealand Fern*. 5. *Polypodiaceae* - restricted to *Goniophlebium*, *Microsorium*, *Phlebodium*, *Polypodium*, *Pyrrosia*. 6. *Fern in Container 150mm. or Less*. 7. *Any Other Fern* - not covered by categories 1 - 5.

Our feature fern display will be **New Zealand Ferns** and we would like to have a large number and variety of these ferns. The **committee is interested** in receiving any ideas on how we might display these ferns.

The Show provides a great opportunity to **display your best and most interesting ferns** so please start selecting and grooming **them now as time passes** quickly. Please ensure that all plants are free of pests **and are clearly labelled with their botanical name**. If you are unsure of the name you **may be able to get help** at our monthly meetings.

Members who enter ferns in the competition or **display have the opportunity** to bring in ferns for sale on a 15% commission basis. **We are most interested** in having some of the rarer and more unusual ferns **available for sale**. Members of the Show Committee are, Jack Barrett 9375 3670 Brenda Girdlestone 9390 7073 Fran and Ray Harrison 9337 7573 Norma and John Hodges 9878 9584 Bernadette Thomson 9399 9793 Barry White 9740 2724 Don Fuller 9354 2656.

More details in the March/April Newsletter.

A Letter from afar

From our past President Ian Broughton

Dear Fern Friends

We have arrived in Albany and are settling into our new home. The trip over went really well, though driving the truck wasn't a big thrill and, after four days behind the wheel, I was more than glad to get here. The quarantine check at the border crossing into WA was straightforward. With all of our birds, and the plants I was bringing, I had expected a lot of work unloading, so things could be checked, but all we had to do was to clean out our bird cages and hand in all of the spare seed. We were on our way again in about 45 minutes.

As we left Kimba in outback South Australia, we drove in patchy, but at times quite heavy, fog for a few hours. With the sun behind us, we were treated to the spectacular sight of rainbows in the fog. They were almost white with just a hint of colour and there were times when we could see five concentric bows at once. Some of them ended on the road verge right next to us but, unfortunately, the pots of gold were just as ghostly and elusive as the rainbows.

Jurien, who has his learner's permit, did most of the daylight driving in the Landcruiser, totalling 23 hours of highway driving, which was a good experience for him. Driving between Norseman and Esperance in WA, we had a full moon. There had recently been heavy rain and there were large pools of water beside the road. At one place, where the road was elevated a few metres, I looked out to the side and saw the moon reflected in one of the pools. It looked as though the water was three or four thousand metres below the road and I felt my whole body being drawn into the depths. It took a huge amount of willpower to wrench my attention back to the road keep myself from driving off the side into the water.

Our house here is fantastic, the living areas focus on views of the Porongurup Ranges 25Km to the north. When we arrived, we discovered that we also have views of the Stiffing Ra. about 50Km north and another range, called Manypeaks, to the east of us. When we inspected the property prior to purchase, the Stirlings and Manypeaks were shrouded in cloud, so we thought our view was limited to the Porongurups. Over here they are called mountains, although the highest peak in the Porongurups is only around 500m and the whole range is about 12Km long. The Stirlings are about twice the

size and height and get snow on their highest peak on rare occasions.

The weather here has been really enjoyable after the Upper Yarra Valley, which is cold and wet in Winter and hotter than Melbourne in Summer. We haven't yet bought firewood, though I have ordered some to be delivered on Saturday. The locals all complain about the cold, and people from Perth hold Albany's Winter weather in derision, but I have been in shirt sleeves on many days and only a few nights have been below eight or nine degrees. As an indication of how mild the weather has been, we have a young black passionfruit vine that has fruit ripening, a has also had a few flowers through June and early July that have set fruit! In one garden bed, there is a self-sown cherry tomato that we have been picking fruit from. We were shopping one day and saw a local (we'll be locals in another 20 years) who was shivering and complaining about the cold. I had been thinking that it was about time that I took off my jumper which I did soon after. I was reminded of a friend who manages the clothing department of a K-Mart store in Cairns - she had a customer ask for thermal underwear and when she asked where he was going that he would need thermal underwear he said "Brisbane!" We've been to Brisbane in June and found t-shirts and shorts to be acceptable wear, he needed thermal underwear - our perception of weather is so dependant on what we are used to isn't it?

For the move, we hired a container and packed ourselves, with help from a few friends. Nothing at all was broken! Apart from about 20 boxes of books, everything has been unpacked and the worst damage has been some scuff marks on a few items of furniture. Even the contents of a box that fell from the top of a stack of three on a trolley, escaped unscathed. We have been delighted with the way things have travelled, especially seeing we saved at least \$8-10,000 on the cost of having removalists do the whole job. Since arriving, we have also bought a lot of new furniture as our last house had many built-in cupboards and bookcases and here we have none apart from the kitchen, laundry and bedrooms. I am really appreciating having a large lock-up shed as well as a double garage. The real attraction for me is that the shed isn't full of nursery things - I almost don't know what to do with all of the space.

If I had come with any thoughts of starting a nursery here, they would have been blown into oblivion! Perth is said to be the second most windy city in the world but, Albany would have to be very close behind and it may only be its size that precludes the "city" definition. Today is sunny and there is only the most gentle breeze but nursery-flattening winds are quite normal and, in our four weeks here, we must have had at least 10 days with strong wind or gate warnings. We knew that it would be windy here but it has still been a little surprising just how windy it is. A local wind farm of just 12 windmills generates 70% of the area's power requirements. When rain comes, it is usually in short showers with fine or sunny spells in between, so getting washing dried is not often a problem on a windy day. However, keeping it on the clothesline requires a degree in engineering and the use of substantial numbers of pegs! What we haven't had is the sort of devastating storm that can hit Melbourne and cause so much damage.

Along with new furniture, I have had to buy a ride-on mower and brush cutter to help keep our 4 acres in check. We intend buying a few alpacas soon to mow the back paddock, we hope they will pay for their own upkeep by producing babies each year. They sell locally for around \$3,000+ for females worth breeding from, with stud fees from \$500 depending on the quality and value of the male. It won't be a big business on a paddock of just 1 V2acres, but they are such beautiful, gentle animals, and so easy to care for, that they make great pets.

I've been keeping half an eye on Melbourne Water's web site and it looks as though the water situation isn't getting any better for you. The timing of our departure from the nursery industry couldn't have been better from our point of view. Most of the south west of WA has been similarly affected by the prolonged drought but, with good consistent rains over the last couple of months, there is talk of the drought here being over and an expectation of bumper crop harvests this year.

Meryl is settling into her new job and really enjoying having her own consulting room - rather than having to use another doctor's room and finding her way through his scatter! The others in the practice are really easy to work with and the receptionists are very helpful. Jurien and Talitha have had two weeks of school, which went well. Both of them have some work they are doing during the school holidays to catch up on areas where they are behind. Talitha has moved from year 9 in Melbourne to year 10 here - because of age differences in starting school, she would have been six months older than the oldest year nines. The change in year is proving to be quite straightforward. What has been difficult is moving from a small private school with 450 students from prep to 12, with very committed staff and students, to a public school with 900 students from years 8 to 12, with some

staff and students who just don't care.

At this stage, I haven't been looking for work, though I have been putting out feelers with businesses we've been dealing with and others we've been contacting. With Meryl working three days a week, our financial needs are well covered but, in due course, I hope to find work for the same three days a week, so we have time together to do some, of the things we haven't had the opportunity to do in the 20 years we were running the nursery. There are a lot of places here for bushwalking with some areas that have huge varieties of wild flowers. The Porongurups and Stirlings are both well known for their show of flowers in Spring, and many coastal areas are well set up for bushwalking. I also hope to get many hundreds of native plants into our garden over the next few years. Our front yard would be about 1/4acre of lawn, which I would eventually like to see without any grass at all - though, with the local preference for Kikuyu for lawn or pasture, we will probably always have grass there!

We would like to thank all of you for our farewell in May. It was a really special evening for us. I was presented with a Mountain Ash clock, made by George Start. It draws my thoughts to you every time I see it. George also gave Meryl a beautiful potpourri bowl, turned from a piece of red gum that had been lying in a billabong for at least 50 years. The certificate of appreciation, made by Lyn, is in a prominent position in our study. I thoroughly enjoyed my involvement in the Fern Society, and the third Thursday each month is going to be a little hollow and empty in the future. John Hodges said to me that my true feelings about you all would be shown by my eyes as I left. I may have held my emotions in check fairly well during the evening but, as we drove away, I had to stop on the driveway until I could see again.

Thanks for your friendship and support over the years.

Your friend from afar

Ian Broughton



FERN COMPETITION and RAFFLE RESULTS

November Competition

1st John Hodges:
Adiantum formosa

2nd Don Fuller
Adiantum dissect

3rd Don Fuller
Adiantum marshas pride

Raffle Winners: Keith Hutchison
Margaret Radley
Brenda Girdlestone
Fran Harrison
Ray Harrison

**December No Competition
Held**

Raffle Winners:-

Lyn Gresham winner of the Christmas cake
Jack Barrett x 2
Margaret Radley x 2
Keith Hutchison
Mavis Potter
Barry White



Multicrop
Maxicrop

Australia's original liquid SEAWEED plant food concentrate

- Stimulates vigorous root development
- Builds resistance to insect and fungal attack
- Enhances fruit and flower formation
- Non burning, easy to use on all plants
- Minimise transplanting shock
- Harden plants during periods of stress
- Establishes plants quickly after planting or transplanting

Multicrop & Maxicrop products are available at all leading garden supply outlets.

100% AUSTRALIAN GROWN

AUSTRAL FERNS
Wholesale Propagators.
Phone (03)5282 3084.
▮ Specialising in supplying retail nurseries with a wide range of hardy ferns; no tubes.



FERN ACRES NURSERY 
Retail.
Specialising in elks, stags, bird's nest ferns, native epiphytic orchids; species and hybrids.
1052 Whittlesea-Kinglake Rd, Kinglake West (opposite Primary School) Melway 510 N11.
Phone (03) 5786 5031.
For full list and photos; www.fernacres.com.au also; www.ferns.com.au

Our Visit to The Turney mountain garden “ Sherbrooke Maples ”

On Saturday the 18th of October, 2003, some 30 members and friends made our way to sunny Sherbrooke at the invitation of Terry and Sharon Turney. Some members taking the opportunity to stop at the Ferntree Gully market to get their Fern fix for the day.

The weather couldn't have been more perfect for us to meander around the gardens and be awe struck by the color and variety of rhododendrons which were on display. If you have ever thought about growing a rhododendron and wanted to know what it should look like then this was the place you should have been, with trees hundreds of years old. With room to grow to their full splendor (but I suppose most back yards wouldn't give you the growing space to achieve this).

Lunch was provided by Terry (a sausage sizzle) which most took advantage of. This was greatly appreciated and gave everyone time to sit under the trees and admire

the surrounding beauty in a most relaxed way.

After lunch it was time to take the Terry tour of the gardens which gave Terry the opportunity to point out the various tree ferns that he has planted in amongst the rhododendrons at the same time explaining what some of the future plans are for the property.

Terry has very graciously offered his property for future outings for the fern society and we thank him for this, as I'm sure we all look forward to attending again to see the improvements as they occur.

A VERY RARE FERN *Adiantum poiretii* var. *sulphureum*

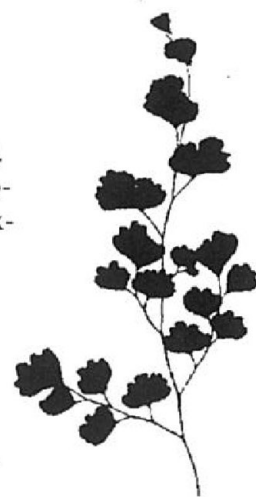
'The golden maidenhair'

Adiantum poiretii has round pinnules and crescent shaped sori. The rhizome is widely creeping. It is not a fern often encountered, but occurs mainly in the eastern and southern parts of our sub-continent (Southern Africa). It is also found higher up in Africa, the islands around Africa, Mexico and South America.

The variety *sulphureum* is similar to the type variety of *A. poiretii*, except for a yellow waxy powder on the underside of the pinnules. The colouration is exuded from the terminal cells of small hairs that completely cover the underside of the pinnules. It was first described in Chile, by Christiansen. Specimens were also found in South Africa. In 1896 it was found in the Dordrecht area. There were also specimens found at Boschfontein, in Natal, near Harrismith, in the Free State and Van Riebeeck. (Sim 1915). It was also documented in Zimbabwe, Kenya and Tanzania (Jacobson, 1983).

Some taxonomists do not recognize the variety, therefore the name is not often encountered. It is also a very rarely encountered fern.

FERNATIX*ZA Nov/Dec 2002



INDEX TO VOLUME 25

2003

Auditors report	92,93	Mystery in Fernery	8
Away from Ferns Nearly		Odd Bods of Fern World	40
by John Hodges	44,45	One Hundred Ways to Enjoy Ferns	70,71
Collectors Corner	94	Passion for Ferns	12,13
Dahlia talk		Polypodies	72,73,74
by Rex Grisham	86,87	Polystyrene Growing Mix	78
Bits and Pieces	75	Propagation from Spore	
Books	27	by Rod Hill	76,77
Brisbane Fern house	57	Propagating Platycerium	
Buggy Solution	11	by Ron Robbins	37
Cyathea Exilis Holttum	59,60	Protect the Bush	38
Ferns companions	90,91,94	Repotting Ferns	42,43
Ferns of Ireland	47	Road Trauma support team	94
Ferns of Lord Howe Island	75	Sex-Who Needs It	
Fern Odyssey	56,57	by Dr Terry Turney	23,24,25
Ferns of St Helens District	55	Show Fern	5,21,41,54
Ferns to press	89	Snippets and Snails	58
Fern Yarn	12	Spira Mirabilis	28,29,30
Gems from Rod Noonan	54	Spore Lists	14,15,46,47,79
Green Dreams	78	Staghorn Fronds	75
Growing ferns or how to prevent		Stumperies	9,10,11
ferns going to plant heaven	85	Ten Questions about Foliage Plants	39,61
Index to 2002	13	Vale Rod and Lyn Hill	
Interesting Fern sites on the Internet	6	by Keith Hutchinson	69
Killing Platycerium	31	Want to grow ferns for competition	88
Legal Tree Ferns	63	Woodsia Ilvensis in Britain	22
Life Cycle	26		
Marsileas			
Don Wood	62		

Thank you to all those members who assisted with the newsletter {providing articles or pictures}. Your assistance has been greatly appreciated by both editors.

the bush house nursery
wholesale and retail

Visitors welcome

Lorraine Deppeler
Phone (03) 5565 1665
18 Hermitage Drive,
Allansford 3277



DID YOU KNOW?

The word "Fern" comes from the old English "Fern", which means 'feather'.
Why feather? Most people think of ferns as plants with lacy, delicate fronds. The fronds thus look very much like feathers.

Wee Yeow Chin,

"FERNS OF THE TROPICS", 1998.

MEMBER PROFILE:

CHRISTOPHER JOHN GOUDEY

By Mirini Lang and Brenda Girdlestone

Chris's interest in ferns developed in rural Victoria, on a farm in South Gippsland and even more so in the beautiful Dandenong Ranges, where he lived with his parents. His mother, Gladys Goudey had a fernery in her garden at Tecoma and Chris would often bring home ferns or other shade-loving plants to add to his mother's collection of plants.

In 1968, Chris and his fiancé Lorraine were married and shortly after built a house at Werribee. Chris worked at that time as a Commonwealth Meat Inspector and was occasionally transferred to country and interstate locations for short periods where they used a caravan as their home. Chris fondly remembers one of these transfers to Portland where he befriended a fellow who was growing ferns under his water tank and although Chris says that they were not rare or uncommon ferns at the time he was impressed by these. Due to circumstances at the time this fellow had to vacate Portland in a hurry and Chris received a knock on the door one night at midnight and was handed the collection of ferns which he gratefully received. As you can imagine this would be difficult in a caravan park in normal circumstances but Chris never let adversity get in his way set up a make shift fernery in the caravan park with some old Hessian from the local carpet shop and a passion was formed. Chris is the type of person who will do something very thoroughly or not at all as a result as his passion grew he would take books to work where he could be found at quiet times to have his head buried into these, not being one to waste precious time.

When the transfers were over, Chris built a small fernery in their garden at Werribee, followed by a glasshouse. It wasn't long, before the yard became too small and the adjoining block of land at the rear was purchased and more glasshouses and ferneries were erected. It was during this time that he mastered growing ferns from spore.

Chris and Lorraine would go on holidays with the caravan to places like Queensland and they would spend much of their time locating and talking to the local fern growers, "Chris knew every fern grower in Queensland" they spent many hours traipsing through the bush looking at where and how the ferns were growing in the wild. Because of these trips the caravan had to have its wheels changed to light truck ones so it could carry the heavy loads of collected ferns. Before leaving to go on these holidays Chris would read all he could get his hands on regarding ferns he could expect to find, growing habitat of the local ferns.

Many trips were undertaken overseas where Chris would bring back ferns which need to be quarantined for a period of time (by people who knew nothing of the requirements of their needs) consequently there were large losses encountered by this process. In the later years Chris had the opportunity to purchase a small quarantine house which he erected on their property in Lara and the results were dramatic, with 100% success rates achieved.

This has given him the chance to introduce a large number of new ferns into Australia from all over the world, specializing in species which come from cool climates, such as New Zealand, United Kingdom, South Africa, Japan, United States of America, Canada and Lord Howe Island, that will grow well in cool-temperate Victoria.

Chris joined the British Pteridological Society, Los Angeles International Fern Society and the Nelson Fern Society, in addition to the Field Naturalist Club of Victoria and the Society for Growing Australian Plants. His knowledge on ferns grew rapidly and he soon found himself speaking at garden clubs, on radio and television and was quite often featured in the garden pages of local and Melbourne newspapers.

After nine years of residing in Werribee, with the family having grown with two daughters, Carolyn and Yvonne, they moved to Lara with 5 acres with a view to opening up a wholesale fern nursery. Because of the close proximity to the sea, they had little trouble with frosts and temperature extremes and as a result his collection grew to well over 1,000 species and cultivars. He was able to grow most of the species from tropical Australia without artificial heat. The nursery expanded also, and Chris specialized in growing rare and exotic species and cultivars, supplying fern nurseries from Queensland and New South Wales to Western Australia..

With some pressure from Jimmy Dyce (British Pteridological Society) with the view of having a Chapter of the British Pteridological Society in Victoria, and the Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria looking for a break away study group, and the SGAP Fern study Group, Chris got together with Irene Bolster and Ian Buckmaster to look at establishing the Fern Society of Victoria. After several months of meetings and planning, it was decided that each of the members would use whatever means they had at their disposal to publicise the forthcoming meeting.

As Chris was giving advice to one of the gardening writers of the Morning Sun Newspaper he used this avenue for his advertising. In early 1979 all the planning and work came to fruition with the inaugural meeting. This meeting was chaired by Neil Williams at the Burnley Horticulture college. The turn up was more than anyone had expected with a full house leaving little standing room. The Fern Society of Victoria was born with a membership of around 500.

Chris was elected president and served for the following three years Chris having had involvement in the other societies knew that some basic requirements were need for the society to succeed. He implemented Newsletter Editor, Spore Bank Manager, and Show committee. These basic positions are today still an important and necessary part of our survival. During his time as President he led field excursions in various parts of Victoria and Tasmania, as well as Lord Howe Island and New Zealand and has also travelled widely himself, particularly in the Pacific region.

Chris served as President from 1979 till July, 1982. In 1995 the Society found it self in trouble with no President again Chris stepped into the position, from September 1995 till October 1998.

Chris was very much one of the early pioneers of fern growing and as such his knowledge was learned by trial and error over many years but he was able to path the way for others to follow without having to make some of the same mistakes by writing and co-writing books on his favourite subject "FERNS". In 1981, Chris co-authored the book 'Exotic Ferns in Australia' with David Jones which has now been revised and expanded due to popular demand. His next project was 'Maidenhair Ferns in Cultivation', a major work which covered approximately 167 species and cultivars of *Adiantum* in Australia, with 400 coloured illustrations. A large number of choice cultivars have been developed in Australia such as the *Adiantum tenerum* cvs *Marshas Pride* and *Pacific May* and many others. In his book, Chris attempted to record their origin before it was too late. His most recent book is "A Handbook of Ferns for Australia and New Zealand". This book covers all the ferns commonly cultivated in Australia and New Zealand, with in excess of 600 different species and cultivars.

He is a keen photographer and takes most of his own photographs for his books and lectures. Throughout the years, he has made a number of notable botanical finds on field trips.

Chris is particularly interested in filmy-ferns and has traveled extensively throughout Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific to collect all the known species of *Leptopteris*. In recent years, he has constructed a large filmy-fern house, where they grow to perfection and has developed a number of interesting hybrids of *Leptopteris*, particularly involving *L. superba*. See "Pteridologist" 2 (2) 63-64, 1991.

He has also been experimenting with *Asplenium* hybrids and a few years ago released a new fern *Asplenium bulbiferum* x *oblongifolium*, which he named 'Maori Princess'. He has sold over 35,000 plants of this hybrid.. A more recent and attractive hybrid Chris developed is *Asplenium bulbiferum* x *surrogatum*, which he named 'Island Beauty'. This cultivar is very attractive and at this early stage, could prove to be more popular than 'Maori Princess'. Both 'Maori Princess' and 'Island Beauty' are sterile, but can be reproduced by the bulbils. Although he does say that you tend to move from family to family over the years which keeps the interest alive as you delve into another new world of ferns.

Chris is modest to say the least, he tells us his only claim to fame is the location of a new species of *Asplenium*, a Malayan fern growing here thought to be the only place outside of Malaya *Asplenium gaudeyi* which named after him.

Some of Chris's most memorable moments in the society are the field trips namely to New Zealand and Lord Howe Island, which he remembers fondly.

When asked what future direction he would like to see the society take he simply said "to see it continue long enough for the membership to grow to the numbers we have previously experienced".

He is a mainstay of the Fern Society of Victoria still providing us with talks and plant material for many of our meetings. He is and always will be there for the benefit of the society.

In 1983 the Fern Society of Victoria awarded Chris with an honorary life membership in recognition for his outstanding contributions to the Society."

Asplenium



Bird's nest fern
Asplenium nidus

COLLECTORS CORNER:



Can you help Colin is looking for *Platycerium* Fern Facts by Wendy Franks. If you have this book in your library that you no longer need or maybe you know where Colin can get a copy from, please contact Colin Cleak on 03 5794 1889.

South Australia has a member who no longer has a need for his "Fern Book" library, he is willing to part with these to members at very reasonable prices, so if you have been looking for a book that is no longer in print, or are after a rare hard to get book, then this may be your change to pick it up. I don't have a list to print here but if your interested, you need to be quick and ring Ron Robbins on (08) 8268 2974. Ron will tell you if the book your after is part of this collection.

Ferns (From the Internet) KILLING PLATYCERIUM

Sometimes I wonder if I haven't killed more Platys than I have had. This has been the WORST summer for my collection that I have ever had. They have been outside two summers now, and next summer they will stay in the greenhouse. The biggest problem has been insects. Those little white dot things, I thought were called snow scale. What in the world will kill them?

It seems to me it is not right to consider all *Platycerium* like they required the same conditions. When someone says what works for them, it would be helpful to know what species they are talking about.

Over the long run I have had *Platycerium veitchii* survive my care the best. It can get very dry and it doesn't bother it. It can also take a lot of light. If you water it too much, and keep it in too little light, it will become long, lanky, and the top of the shields will become round. It doesn't look like it does in nature.

The easiest for me to kill with too much water is true *grande*. I've never had one over about 2 or 3 years. *P. superbum* is almost as bad. Someone told me they decided they could not keep the solitary species. Looking at my own collection, I wonder why I didn't decide that long ago. I have a *P. wandae* that seems to be far less sensitive to over watering than *P. superbum* or *grande*.

It seems to me that if a person is in the business of selling *Platycerium*, he/she should consider what the person is apt to do to the plant. Most people will over-water, so *P. hillii* cultivars are great choices. So is *Platycerium alcorni*, and *P. ellisii* (which few hobbyists grow). *P. superbum* is a poor one. People selling *Platycerium*, and ferns in general, to the general public, should do so in a way that will cause the buyer to have a good experience with the plant. If they don't and the plant dies, then the person has a bad experience, and we loose a potential hobbyist.

By the way, I don't think you can tell much about the requirements of a *Platycerium* by how thick the shields become. The shields of *Platycerium hillii* become very thick, and it lives in very wet places. The same is true for *P. coronarium*. The shape of the upper part of the shields is a far better indication. I've proposed the idea that species like *P. hillii*, *P. alcorni*, and *P. madagascariense* that have shields that close the top of the cluster, are adapted to ample rainfall, not collecting water. Those with shields that extend forward, leaving the top of the plant, or cluster, open, are adapted to collecting water and are adapted to dryer conditions. *P. elephantotus* has an interesting adaptation. The large veins of dead shields, when dry, bend forward, opening the top of the plant, and when wet bend backward, closing the top of the plant.

Roy Vail
Mena, Arkansas
Zone 7A USA

FERNATIX*ZA November/December 2002

MY FAVOURITE FERN

Number 8.

Davillia pyxiatta

By Keith Hutchison

Davillia pyxidata is found mainly in Queensland and New South Wales, but also in a few spots in Victoria. It grows equally well in trees, in soil and over rocks and is often found in the nest of fronds of *platyceriums*. It will tolerate quite a deal of sun it has a unique habit of shedding fronds during hot spells, then uncoiling new ones after rain. Hence the node on the rhizomes in my sketch.

I find it very easy to grow in a pot or basket in an open well drained potting mix. Unlike most davillias, pyxiatta is of an upright habit which I feel gives it an attractive grace all of it's own

A feed of osmocote or dynamic lifter twice a year will keep it in good condition and a repot once a year.

I have one on my back porch which takes a turn inside for a couple of weeks occasionally where it is often admired. A hardy fern well worth growing wing.



If you want to be happy for an hour, get drunk.
 If you want to be happy for three days, get married.
 If you want to be happy for eight days, kill your pig and eat it.
 If you want to be happy for ever, make a garden.
 - Old Chinese proverb

FERN SOCIETY OF VICTORIA

SPORE LIST

ORDERING The following spore is free to members who donate spore; otherwise members 20 cents per sample, non-members 50 cents, plus \$1.00 to cover postage and handling. Available at meetings or by mail from Barry White, 34 Noble Way Sunbury, Vic. 3429 Australia, Ph. (03) 9740 2724. There is no charge for spore for overseas members however to cover postage two international coupons would be appreciated. Overseas non-members may purchase spore at three packets for one international reply coupon, plus two coupons for postage and handling. There is a limit of 20 packets per order

- | | |
|---|--|
| <i>Adiantum concinnum</i> 3/02 | <i>Elaphoglossum</i> sp. 1/02 |
| <i>Adiantum pedatum</i> /02 | <i>Gymnocarpium oyamense</i> 4/02 |
| <i>Adiantum radd.</i> 'Micropinnulum' 9/02 | <i>Histiopteris incisa</i> 5/02 |
| <i>Adiantum radd.</i> 'Pacific Maid' 8/02 | <i>Hypolepis glandulifera</i> 1/02 |
| <i>Adiantum raddianum</i> 'Blue Moon' 3/02 | <i>Hypolepis rugosula</i> 5/02 |
| <i>Adiantum raddianum</i> 'Legrand Morgan' 3/03 | <i>Lastreopsis acuminata</i> 10/02 |
| <i>Adiantum raddianum</i> 'Micropinnulum' 3/02 | <i>Lastreopsis glabella</i> 10/02 |
| <i>Adiantum raddianum</i> 'Pacific Maid' 8/02 | <i>Macrothelypteris polypodioides</i> 4/01 |
| <i>Anemia mexicana</i> 2/02 | <i>Microgramma piloselloides</i> 1/03 |
| <i>Anemia tomentosa</i> 3/03 | <i>Pellaea falcata</i> 3/03 |
| <i>Asplenium aethiopicum</i> 4/03 | <i>Pellaea sagittata</i> 3/03 |
| <i>Asplenium pycnocarpum</i> /02 | <i>Pellaea viridis</i> 1/03 |
| <i>Athyrium niponicum</i> 'Pictum' 3/03 | <i>Pityrogramma calomelanos</i> v. <i>austroamericana</i> 8/02 |
| <i>Athyrium niponicum</i> 'Pictum' large 3/03 | <i>Platynerium bifurc.</i> cv <i>German Hybrid</i> 9/01 |
| <i>Athyrium otophorum</i> 1/02 | <i>Platynerium bifurc.</i> cv <i>Lemoinei</i> 9/01 |
| <i>Blechnum articulatum</i> 1/02 | <i>Platynerium bifurc.</i> cv <i>Roberts</i> 9/01 |
| <i>Blechnum camfieldii</i> 9/02 | <i>Platynerium bifurc.</i> Mt. <i>Lewis</i> 9/01 |
| <i>Blechnum cartilagineum</i> 2/02 | <i>Platynerium bifurc.</i> ssp. <i>veitchii</i> 9/01 |
| <i>Blechnum fluviatile</i> 5/03 | <i>Platynerium bifurcatum</i> 3/03 |
| <i>Blechnum gibbum</i> 1/02 | <i>Platynerium superbum</i> 5/02 |
| <i>Blechnum minus</i> 5/02 | <i>Pneumatopteris pennigera</i> 11/01 |
| <i>Blechnum penna-marina</i> 5/03 | <i>Polypodium californicum</i> 1/03 |
| <i>Blechnum punctulatum</i> v. <i>punctulatum</i> 11/02 | <i>Polypodium pellucidum</i> 1/03 |
| <i>Blechnum</i> sp. (Philippines) 2/02 | <i>Polypodium phyllitidis</i> 1/03 |
| <i>Blechnum wattsii</i> 5/02 | <i>Polypodium scolieri</i> 8/02 |
| <i>Blechnum wattsii</i> (bifurcated) 5/03 | <i>Polystichum australiense</i> 3/03 |
| <i>Botrychium dissectum</i> /01 | <i>Polystichum braunii</i> 2/02 |
| <i>Coniogramme intermedia</i> 3/03 | <i>Polystichum fallax</i> 4/02 |
| <i>Coniogramme japonica</i> variegated 3/03 | <i>Polystichum retroso-palaceum</i> 10/01 |
| <i>Cyathea brownii</i> 3/03 | <i>Polystichum tsus-simense</i> 3/01 |
| <i>Cyathea cooperi</i> 5/02 | <i>Pseudophegopteris aurita</i> 4/01 |
| <i>Cyathea cunninghamii</i> 11/01 | <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> /02 |
| <i>Cyathea howeana</i> 5/02 | <i>Pteris baurita</i> 2/02 |
| <i>Cyathea manniana</i> 6/02 | <i>Pteris cretica</i> 'Alexandrae' 3/03 |
| <i>Cyathea robusta</i> 4/02 | <i>Pteris dentata</i> 1/02 |
| <i>Cyathea spinulosa</i> / | <i>Pteris macilenta</i> 1/02 |
| <i>Cyathea tomentosissima</i> 4/03 | <i>Pteris quadriaurita</i> 4/03 |
| <i>Dicksonia antarctica</i> 5/02 | <i>Pteris ryukyuensis</i> 3/03 |
| <i>Dicksonia baudouini</i> 6/02 | <i>Pteris tremula</i> 3/03 |
| <i>Dicksonia fibrosa</i> 10/01 | <i>Pteris umbrosa</i> 1/02 |
| <i>Dicksonia</i> sp. (Vanuata??) 10/01 | <i>Pteris vittata</i> 3/03 |
| <i>Doodia media</i> 4/03 | <i>Pteris zahlbruckneriana</i> 4/01 |
| <i>Dryopteris cycadina</i> 3/03 | <i>Pyrrosia polydactyla</i> 1/03 |
| <i>Dryopteris dilatata</i> 'Crispa whiteside' 3/03 | <i>Rumohra adiantiformis</i> (Cape form) 3/03 |
| <i>Dryopteris erythrosora</i> 3/03 | <i>Sticherus urceolatus</i> 5/02 |
| <i>Dryopteris gymnosora</i> 4/02 | <i>Thelypteris navarrensis</i> 3/03 |
| <i>Dryopteris sieboldii</i> 4/02 | <i>Thelypteris patens</i> 'Lepida' 4/02 |
| <i>Dryopteris wallichiana</i> 4/02 | <i>Woodwardia fimbriata</i> 3/03 |

Thankyou to the following spore donors:
Lorraine Deppeler and Don Fuller.

NEWSLETTER

If undeliverable return to:
FERN SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INC.
P O Box 45, Heidelberg West, 3081
Victoria Australia.
Print Post approved PP334633/0002

**SURFACE
MAIL**

Postage
Paid
West
Heidelberg
Vic. Aust.
3081

J. & B. GEEKIE,
6 NELSON STREET,
THORNLEIGH,
NSW

2120