



AUSTRALIAN  
PLANTS SOCIETY  
— Geelong —

# Correa Mail

Newsletter No. 314– January 2016

## WELCOME TO 2016

**Matt Baars**

*Another year has begun with a bit more rain than most of us were expecting. We have recorded more rain in January than the previous three months. Most welcome.*

*For those who were not at the Xmas Break-up BBQ last December, here is a short note from our wonderful President, Matt Baars...*

Hello All, I wish to list some thoughts about the various people in our group, who do that bit extra during the year that make our meetings and functions great. We had a great End of Year do at Roger and Sheila's place, many thanks to them for the effort, the decorations and set up were excellent. I made a presentation on the night and gave out some small tokens of appreciation and I want to pass on my thoughts for those who could not attend on the night.

I will start with our Secretary - Bruce, he puts in a lot of work keeping up with all the correspondence and documentation, which even a small club like ours generate. Bruce has a great knowledge of and interest in native plants. He grows many and regularly donates them for our raffles, including a whole trailer load for the last plant sale. On the same subject, Frank our Treasurer also donated a trailer load of plants for the sale. When you think of the work, materials and costs involved in growing this many plants, it works out to be a very valuable gift from them. Frank also organises the Plant growers for the plant sale.

His better half - Tina organises and supplies the food for our Plant Sale and our break up. She is also half the team, the other half being Penny, that bakes, supplies and sets up our fantastic suppers on meeting nights, with Gladys now bringing baked goodies we must have one of the best catered suppers going. It is important to note that they do not ask for anything in return to cover their supper costs.

Another of our leading lights is our Newsletter Editor - Ade, he puts in a lot of work preparing and presenting the newsletter and really needs input from members, a part from the regular contributors, to help him continue on with the task. I personally think it is one of the better newsletters going. Ade also manages the group's web site and Facebook page. The Facebook page attracts many great photos from members.

Roger and Sheila are another couple who put in a lot work for the group, Roger has organised the supply and growing on of hundreds of plants for the plant sale. This included transporting the potting mix from Yarra Junction and watering and caring for them for months, after potting on, at their own cost.

Arthur and Linda are another couple who add a lot to the group, each year they readily and enthusiastically offer their property to host the plant sale. A lot of work goes into preparing for the weekend that ends up with hundreds of people parking and wandering on their property. Currently they are experiencing a difficult situation and our thoughts are with them.

Phil Royce has been our representative at APS Vic. Committee meetings and functions, he did this cheerfully and presented the Geelong group views and reported back on the latest developments. I think we should appreciate the efforts he made on behalf of the group. I hope that when he is back on deck, he will continue in this role ... that is if he still wants to.

I also thank all those members who help out on meeting nights and the various functions we have during the year, it all helps in ensuring everybody enjoys the night. Just keep in mind those, who while leading busy lives, do that extra bit to ensure we have a great group.

Regards, Matt

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

Our February meeting will be a BBQ at Frank and Tina's house, 7 Admiral Court, Highton, on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> February from 4.30 pm onward. **BYO everything.**

Frank and Tina were victims of the massive storm that lashed Highton last week, and their house is in a little disarray. Should it be necessary to move the BBQ to another location, we'll send an 'emergency' email.

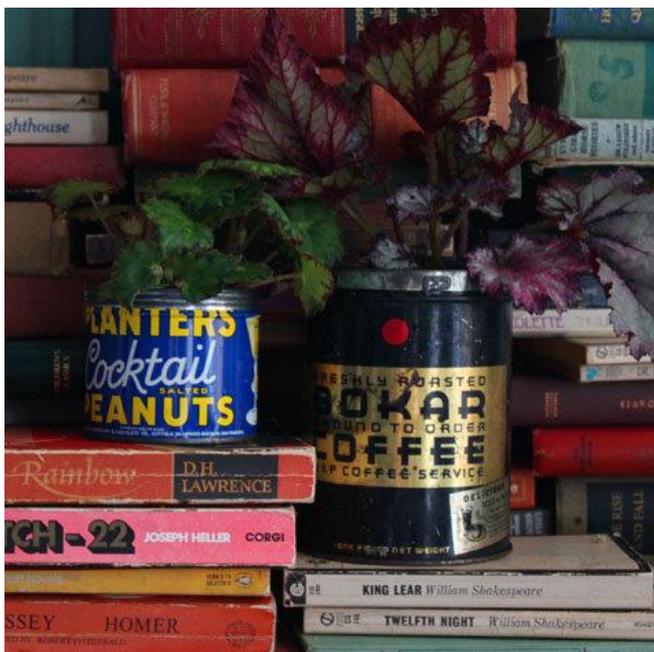
## A SHORT HISTORY OF POTS AND CONTAINERS

By Roger Wileman

This article is about the changes that have come about in the nursery industry that I have noticed over the years. Containers for native, and non-native, plants have come and gone over the years. The nursery industry is not unlike any other, supplying a good product (plants) at the most economic cost to the grower.

As far back as I can remember native plants were grown in terra cotta pots. They were very bulky to store, would break very easily and had only one drainage hole in the bottom. However, they were good at retaining moisture after watering.

Then along came 7lb jam tins, eg Golden Circle pineapple and beetroot tins, and, for the more advanced plants, square kerosene tins. Large beer cans became popular as a container and I can remember seeing large heaps of them at Bodey's Eastern Park nursery in the early 1960's.



All of these had to have drainage holes put in them with a can opener. The major drawback with the cans and tins was the sheet metal which was very thin, so the bases in particular would rust out, allowing the plants to grow into the ground. Equally was difficult

was the need to cut down two sides of the can with tin snips to free the plant for re-potting.

A more advanced 'beer can' type container came out in 1968 with a push up base - a brilliant idea, but the cost per can was too great so they weren't available for very long.

In the early 1970s 3 inch plastic native tubes with straight sides appeared. It was recommended to cut off 1 inch of the roots on the bottom to get them to spread out and not create a ball of roots, when planting out. A drawback with the tubes having straight sides was that they wouldn't stack inside each other, making them very bulky to transport and store. At about the same time 2 inch plastic tubes came onto the market. These early plastic containers were not UV resistant and would break down very quickly. I think they were made from reclaimed plastic and were in every colour of the rainbow.

They were soon replaced with the familiar black plastic containers that are UV tolerant, 6 inches in diameter and seem to be accepted as the right size to grow native plants.

In the mid-1970s, black plastic bags came on the market that were slightly smaller than a 6 inch pot, (saving on potting mix) easy to plant out of and easy to store and transport. There were two types - the first with drainage holes in the base, and a cheaper type without holes which had to be holed with a wad punch for drainage. In the early 1980s, 6 inch containers appeared with individual nursery logos embossed on the side eg. Austraflo.

Forestry tubes started with wooden veneer tubes. These were supplied in flat sheets that would have to be formed around a piece of pipe or timber to the required size, then held together with staples or rubber bands, placed in a box to keep them upright then filled with potting mix. They also came at one time in strips of thin sheet metal or clear plastic. One plastic tube came with a pull down strip on one side to make it easy to get the plant out. Forestry tubes are now mainly PVC.

Most nursery native plants available now are in 140 mm containers, some even colour coded to match the flower colour of the plant. Many different containers have come and gone over the years and there are lots that I have not included. It makes me wonder what the next container may be. Plastic containers are good and plants are grown well in them, but there is an ongoing problem with recycling.

My thanks goes to John Mahoney for his assistance with this article. He has a wealth of knowledge of the nursery industry.