

*The fanfabulous, marshmallowistic and magnaflorious*

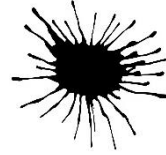
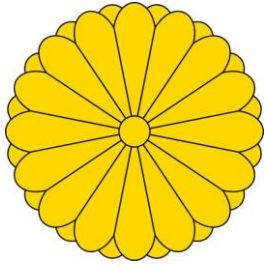


# **WESTERN AUSTRALIAN**

# **CHRYSANTHEMUM**

*"the golden flower and queen of the autumn"*

# **SOCIETY**



**January - February 2024**

## **President's Notes**

Greetings अभिवाद ברכות 問候 привет 인사말 cyfarchion GrüÙe Χαρητίσματα вітання lời chào hỏi تحيات

Another new year, another set of resolutions that will likely remain unfulfilled. On a more encouraging note, the fellowship of the chrysanthemum causes us all to celebrate the friendships that we have made and the creation of beauty through honest toil. Let's, for the moment, conveniently ignore the impending "silent spring" due to the use pesticides that is required to protect our queens of the autumn from damage (chilli thrips; grrrr).

This year promises to be different for our Society due to the new Annual Show regime. The Kalamunda Agricultural Hall will be the venue for our one-day extravaganza on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May (9am - 3pm). We will be doing some preparatory work on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> and putting out show entries on Friday morning with judging of the exhibits in the afternoon. Hopefully, all will go well. With our thoughts and prayers, hopes and wishes and resolutions we are giving ourselves the best chance of success.

Mainly due to the work of our own Ron Seaton there are a lot of new cultivars available now but we also have a number of newly reintroduced cultivars that were lost to us. There are also a few ring-ins from parts unknown that may produce a few surprises. Not all of these newbies will turn out to be champions but it is fun trying to find out which ones do. I hope to see many of them in our show. Keep in mind that we have a "Special Display" class in the Show Schedule which allows you to enter anything that you like, as long as it is chrysanthemum related.

We hope to have an updated 2024 Australian Register of Cultivars available soon which will list some of these newbies. Bear in mind that there is also a Western Australian Register of Cultivars. This is purely a portion of the full and large Australian Register that lists the cultivars known, by the editor of the list, to be grown in WA. If you have a cultivar not listed in the WA Register that you would like to exhibit in the other show classes then check the Australian Register because that is the Register that matters when it comes to showing. I will endeavour to put out the Show Schedule some time in January.

## Cultural Notes

What can I tell you that you do not already know? Well, that depends on who you are. If you know it all, then I can tell you nothing. If you know nothing then start with Ted Elms' Third Edition of "Chrysanthemum Culture in Western Australia" available on our website at [www.chrysanthemumwa.com](http://www.chrysanthemumwa.com).

For those in-between I offer the following advice -

Hopefully, your plants are now in their final pots, have had the tops of the main stems taken off once (aka "pinched" or "stopped") and have had the weak branches removed. This is the preparatory phase, where you have established the proper foundations upon which to build your blooms. That is, a well-developed root system with room for further growth and a sturdy framework of branches to support the development of flowering stems.

From now on we turn our attention to the production of those flowering stems. This requires that the tops of all the stems be removed for a second time. How much to remove is a matter for you to decide. Some growers like to remove a lot and some like to remove a little only. This probably means that it does not matter much. If you are growing outside in the wind and the rain it is probably better to remove at least half the length so that the plants remain short.

New shoots will emerge from the leaf axils that remain. Remove all of the weaker shoots. From there you must decide how many blooms you wish to grow on each plant. If you are growing for garden display and picking a few colourful bunches for yourself and your friends then let all of the stronger shoots remain. If you wish to produce the maximum sized and quality blooms that the plants are capable of producing then you must be ruthless. There is a general rule that says that if the plant is left to its own devices then the weight of the roots, stems and blooms will always be in proportion. This rule is broken to some extent by the tampering that growers inflict upon their plants but the general rule still applies. If you want big blooms then you must limit the number that each plant carries and that means limiting the number of stems that each plant grows.

There are a few provisos that relate to tampering with our plants. Some growers restrict their plants to one or two stems only throughout the season in the view that that will force all the plant's strength into one or two king-sized blooms. Other growers allow several stems to grow in order to encourage a bigger root system before later reducing the number of branches to force this larger root system and extra sap flow into producing the largest blooms. However, it must be borne in mind that each cultivar has a maximum size potential and reducing the number of stems beyond a certain number will not result in any further gain in size, or else that the gain in size is accompanied by a loss of form or freshness. It is interesting to perform a few experiments each year to test these things for yourself. Unfortunately, few of us grow enough plants of each cultivar to make such tests very reliable but sometimes the results are obvious.

If you wish to follow the general advice for the production of show blooms in southern WA then remove the ends of the stems on the following dates and keep the number of stems shown after the second beheading -

- Large and Medium Exhibition (sections 1 and 2) - 3<sup>rd</sup> January, two stems
- Incurved, Reflexed and Intermediate Decoratives (Sections 3, 4 and 5) - 15<sup>th</sup> January, four stems
- Anemones and Show Singles (Sections 6 and 7) - 21<sup>st</sup> January, six stems
- Cuts of Single and Sprays (Sections 7 and 9) - 1<sup>st</sup> February, three stems
- Pompones (Section 8) - 21<sup>st</sup> January, six stems
- Fantasies - Spiders and Quills (Sections 10a and 10b) - 21<sup>st</sup> January, four stems

But wait, there are more provisos! Some cultivars are non-conformers and require individual attention. For instance, Princess Anne and sports (Reflexed Decoratives - Section 4) should be stopped for the second time on 30<sup>th</sup> January by cutting the branches back hard. Some growers like to leave one or two more stems than advised above to either build a stronger root system or provide insurance against a damaged growing point or a malformed bud. These extra stems will be removed sometime prior to flowering. If a plant is weaker than average due to some misfortune or late planting then the number of stems should be reduced. In all cases no weak shoot should be allowed to remain as nothing good will come of it. That is, unless you wish to do some breeding. If so, then plan your crosses now so that you will be more likely to follow through on your resolution. Hopes and prayers will not get the job done.

Correct watering during the forthcoming hot months is essential. At each watering make sure that the soil is fully saturated. The experts call this "at field capacity". If growing in pots, this requires that there is some run off of water from the drainage holes following watering. Be aware that run off is not a good indication of adequate watering if the pot has been allowed to dry out excessively as then the water will tend to run through the potting mix without being adequately absorbed by the soil. In this case a second or third application of water is required later to re-wet the soil. The occasional application of a soil wetting agent to the pots is an excellent idea. The frequency of watering required is related to many factors. Most of the water loss from a large pot is due to its absorption from the roots and loss from the leaves. This is called transpiration. The loss of water from the surface of the soil through evaporation is also a factor but of lesser importance, especially with large pots. The easiest way to tell how much water is in the pot is to lift it up and feel the weight. Some experienced growers like "to read" the condition of the plant but this is misleading in very hot weather as at some point the leaves will droop regardless of the amount of water in the pots. If this happens and the pots are light then water them by all means but wetting the leaves is very helpful. The type of potting mix used is very important to watering. Some mixes hold a lot more water than others. This year, due to cost, I have used Osmocote Premium potting mix (50 litre bags, about \$17) which holds less water than my previous choice, Bailey's Premium (25 litre bags, about \$11). As a result, I have had to water more often.

Fungal infections of the leaves is almost unknown in our summer but fungal infections of the roots does occur and the best way of preventing it is by not over watering. Watering in the morning rather than the evening reduces the time that the pots are fully wet. Some growers have introduced "beneficial microbes" into their pots. All potting mixes contain microbes, some of which are helpful and some of which are potentially harmful. By increasing the number of helpful ones we hope to outgrow the harmful ones and it is also believed that certain microbes have direct growth promoting benefits to the plant. Search the web for "beneficial microbes for plants" and you will come across plenty of information and products. There are some slow release fertilisers that also incorporate microbes. My local garden centre has a product called "Troforte", which is one such product.

On the subject of fertilisers, all fertiliser blends ("complete" NPK types) are suitable for growing chrysanthemums. Some may be better than others but they all work. It is generally accepted that higher nitrogen types are more suited to the growth stage and high potassium types to the flowering stage but using an average blend and sticking to it will be quite adequate for most growers. There is a debate about the benefits of organic (animal waste) versus inorganic (chemical salts) fertilisers. Unless you are growing in an inert (non-soil) medium then it does not matter much. Chrysanthemums are gross feeders and will tolerate higher levels of fertiliser than most other plants. Do not go too gung-ho however as you can still burn the roots if you overdo it. With most things, a little and often is best except that with chrysanthemums you can use a little more and more often.

Pests are pests. In hot weather spider mites cause problems and the dreaded chilli thrips will be multiplying mostly unseen. The mites are difficult to see as they are very small but the tell-tale sign is a frosted appearance of the underside of the leaves. Regularly spraying water under the leaves will deter them. If that fails then there are some chemical options available. The most environmentally friendly are wettable sulphur and horticultural oils and soaps. Application to the undersides of the leaves is essential. Tau-fluvalinate is claimed to work for mites and Yates' "Mavrik" and "Rose Shield" are two products that are readily available. This chemical is claimed to kill thrips and aphids as well. Personally, I would not trust it against Chilli Thrips (grrrr) and fortunately Imidacloprid is known to work. This can be found in sprays, which are difficult to obtain outside agricultural suppliers but also in granular form for soil application which are more easily sourced. "Richgro Bug Killa Granular Garden Insecticide" is one such product. To be successful it needs to be applied no later than bud formation which is no later than the beginning of March.

Do not forget to stake your plants and once the new branches are growing away they will need a stake for each one. If growing for garden display the branches can be allowed to grow up through 10 - 15cm square mesh which will keep the stems straight enough.

## Princess Anne

As advised under 'provisos' in the Cultural Notes, this cultivar is a non-conformist. When chrysanthemums are grown under conditions of long days (short nights) they will not flower but will eventually produce a non-flowering bud ('break bud') at the end of the stem and then will send branches from below it. The number of leaves produced before the break bud is formed is referred to as the 'long day leaf count' (LDLC). The LDLC can be determined by growing plants under day length and temperature controlled greenhouse conditions. LDLC varies a lot between cultivars. Charm chrysanthemums have a very low LDLC and that is what causes them to produce profusely branched plants. Most disbud show bench type cultivars have a high LDLC, often more than thirty, and this allows them to build up strong stems before they branch. Another aspect of the LDLC is that the top six branches below the break bud will have a lower leaf count than the maximum possible LDLC. The uppermost of the six will have the lowest leaf count until the full LDLC is restored by the seventh branch.

LDLC is not so simple in real world conditions as day length and temperature vary with climate and season. Unfortunately, in Perth we do not get a lot of long days and our climate is warm which results in low leaf counts. Princess Anne presents a significant problem in that it has a long day leaf count of twenty, which is probably the lowest of all the show cultivars that we grow, and under our conditions we will never get anywhere near twenty leaves on a stem. This means that it is difficult to get a bloom on a stem long enough for showing (55cm bloom height). Further complications are its short growth habit and almost horizontal take off of the new branches.

The way in which we overcome these problems is as follows -

- Stop late, around the very end of January to reduce the risk of producing a bud that is too early to flower
- Stop hard, to make sure that the new branches do not arise from any of the six leaf axils below a break bud.
- Stop above an upward facing bud, so that the flowering branch will emerge more vertically.

## Programme of Events for Show Week

### Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup>

- 3pm - 7pm Entries to be received by the Show Secretary, Carl Slusarczyk  
Phone: 0480 188 875 or email: [carl.lina.slu@gmail.com](mailto:carl.lina.slu@gmail.com)

### Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May

- Throughout the morning, bottles, vases and central display items loaded for transport to Kalamunda Agricultural Hall
- Load Sale plants
- Exhibitors with many blooms may bring them into the hall for overnight storage. Other exhibitors are expected to bring their blooms in on Friday morning
- 3:30 pm - Open hall
- 3:30 pm to 5 pm - All members to help unload bottles and vases from the trailer and fill them in the hall kitchen sink.
- Set out tables and fit table covers.
- Unload central exhibition plants and props.
- Set up Sale area and bring in sale plants.
- Show Secretary and Chief Steward to prepare show benches
- 5 pm - Hall closed

## Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May

- 8 am - Hall open
- 8 am - Exhibitors commence arriving at the hall in sufficient time to complete staging their blooms by 12.30 pm. Exhibitors will have a work area to stage entries. Exhibitors to collect bottles from the kitchen and place blooms and name tags on the bench
- 12:30 pm Exhibitors finish setting up entries
- 1 pm – 5 pm Erect central display
- 1 pm – 5 pm Judges/Stewards report to Show Secretary for judging.
- 5 pm Hall closed

## Saturday 11th May

- 8 am – 9 am Place prize cards on the benches.
- Prepare the entry table to receive the public.
- 9 am to 3 pm Show open and members on roster duty to take entry fees and assist the public with information and plant sales
- 10 am - Official opening of the show and presentation of State Championships
- 2 pm - Commence free entry for the public. Collect prize cards and bunch and wrap flowers for sale
- 3 pm - Pack up equipment and clear the show area.
- 5pm - Hall closed.

## Show Schedule

Please note that there is a minor change to the Show Schedule from 2023. Classes for two Daruma and two Fukusuke have been deleted and have been replaced by classes for one Sanbon Jitate and one Specimen plant with a minimum of five blooms. Classes for one Daruma and one Fukusuke remain. Sanbon Jitate is a traditional East-Asian three bloom potted plant where the blooms are carried on individual branches which all arise close to ground level from the main stem. The flowers represent heaven, earth and human. In Japanese they are called Ten, Chi and Jin. The heaven bloom is traditionally positioned a little higher than the others. This is the same for Daruma except that a Daruma is a dwarf form of Sanbon Jitate. For Specimen Plants, they should provide an impressive floral display. In this first year we have specified a minimum of five blooms in order to generate some interest. Hopefully in years to come we will see plants with many more blooms than that.



## Editor's Notes (All opinions expressed are those of the author and are not the views of the society.)

Greetings अभिवाद ברכות 問候 привет 인사말 cyfarchion GrüÙe Χαίρετίσματα вітання lòi chào hỏi تحيات

I share the President's felicitations above and I see that he has used the same international greetings for the second edition in a row. He is probably even harder up for new ideas than I am. Then again, maybe he is, somewhat labouredly, trying to emphasise the universality that exists for the love of chrysanthemums throughout the world.

I am aware that this is true for much of the world but I was wondering to what extent this love exists in parts of Africa. You cannot say "darkest Africa" anymore because the source of the Nile was discovered by John Speke in 1862 and you can see all of Africa now on Google Maps. I internet searched "chrysanthemum Africa" and this confirmed a lot of interest in South Africa. Searching other African countries by name with chrysanthemum confirms that there is at least some interest in many of them. Interestingly, Tanzania has a branch of the Dutch company, Dekker Chrysanten BV, operating there. I quote from their webpage:

*Tanzania is an important international hub for Dekker Chrysanten. On an annual basis, over 500 million cuttings are propagated there. Dekker Chrysanten has production locations in Moshi, Kili, and Arusha, all at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro. Here, the company propagates cuttings, operating under the name Dekker Bruins. There are Dutch supervisors at the three production locations. The remaining staff, between 800 and 900 employees, is comprised of local people. This means that Dekker is one of the largest employers in the area.*

*Dekker Bruin took the decision to provide lunch to all its employees in the afternoon each working day. A nurse who trained in a hospital is present on each working day. Children of employees are offered the opportunity to receive education.*

*The employees working at the three Chrysanthemum farms enjoy standard terms of employment. They are also offered opportunities to progress. Staff members in a supervisory role receive English classes as standard practice.*

It seems that the love of beauty in its myriad forms is universal in humanity. What about blind people? - I hear you ask. They probably do not like chrysanthemum flowers much because they have no perfume. So then, we might say that when it comes to chrysanthemums "beauty is altogether in the eye of the beholder". Strangely, it is known that even some people with perfect eyesight do not find beauty in chrysanthemums. So, the love of beauty is universal but not its perception. Or is it? Did I mention that I purchased a copy of "The Penguin Thesaurus of Quotations"?

*I hate that aesthetic game of the eye and the mind ... played by these connoisseurs, these mandarins who 'appreciate' beauty. What is beauty anyway? There's no such thing. I never 'appreciate', any more than I 'like'. I love or I hate. - Pablo Picasso*

I note that the President did not wish you all "Happy New Year". Some complain, rightly or wrongly, that it is becoming less acceptable now to say "Merry Christmas" and "Happy New Year" but if we all celebrated each other's special days then we could be happy and merry more often. Unfortunately, it seems that in all the lands of the earth the blind live and the kings are one eyed people.

*The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, and wiser people so full of doubts. - Bertrand Russell*

According to "24/7 Wall St", which "is a financial news and opinion company with content delivered over the internet", there were twenty-nine countries at war on 19/5/2023. Israel and Palestine are now added to that list. If that were not bad enough we now have yet another mass shooting. This time in Belgium.

For a time I wondered, that if armaments were limited to a gun with one only bullet, given to each person at birth, whether the world would be at peace. The Second Amendment of the USA Constitution reads -

*A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.*

The true meaning of this amendment and its implications has been a subject of great, and at times fierce, debate. Much of this debate relates to whether “the people” means an individual or a collective right. That is, whether the right includes each person or rather groups of people, such as “a well regulated militia”. As recently as 2008 the US Supreme Court ruled that the Second Amendment affirmed that individual US citizens have a Constitutional right to possess firearms. However, the decision of the full nine member court was split five for and four against. This and subsequent decisions of the court do not entirely preclude governments imposing some restrictions, although it remains to be seen which if any of them would survive an appeal. President Obama stated in October 2015 -

*The ineffectiveness of "thoughts and prayers" can be a deliberate choice. That to actively do nothing is a decision as well.*

A man rushes towards a game keeper at an African wildlife park. In a horrified voice he cries - *There has been a terrible accident. My friend has been killed by a lion and is being eaten.* The gamekeeper replies - *That is no accident, the lion did it on purpose.*

Proponents of individual gun ownership say - *Guns don't kill people, people kill people.*

*no firearm has ever killed anyone unless directed by a person who acted either from malice, madness or idiocy. Sadly, not all of our elected officials are willing to accept this as fact. Somehow, guns themselves—pieces of hardware, no more, no less—have become the source of evil, while the actions of depraved individuals are conveniently ignored.* - Tom Clancy, in the Foreword of “Guns, Crime, and Freedom” 1994

While unrelated commercial interests are rarely promoted in this Newsletter, baseball caps and T-shirts with the following slogans are available at <https://www.southfaces.com/>

- *I'm An Asshole So If You Don't Want Your Feelings Hurt Walk Away*
- *Warning Grumpy Old Bastard Approach With Caution*
- *If You Think I'm An Idiot You Should Meet My Brother*
- *I'm Not Totally Useless I Can Be Used As A Bad Example*
- *I'm Not Always A Dick Just Kidding Go F... (censored) Yourself*
- *Long Range Shooting It's Like Golf But For Men*
- *.308 Because Rocks Aren't Effective At 700 Meters*

... and, as an alternative to “hopes and prayers”

- *Ain't Nothing That A Beer Can't Fix*



Enbee Wedding

So, if guns do not kill people and everything can be fixed by a beer, why should we have arms controls and a nuclear non-proliferation treaty? Maybe because there are so many assholes, grumpy old bastards, dicks and idiots.

*And the Lord said unto Satan, “Whence comest thou?” Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, “From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.”* - Job 1:7

*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.* - 1 Peter 5:8

I interrupt this diatribe to report the sad news that the much loved Patricia Janečková passed away on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 at the age of twenty-five due to breast cancer. Avid readers of the musical recommendations contained in these notes will recall that she was a Slovakian soprano that came to the attention of the civilised world at a young age, certainly by the age of twelve, due to her undoubted talent. There have been a number of tributes to her posted on the internet and one of the most poignant was uploaded by “Dutch Video Productions”. The webmaster says:

*I made this video in memory of Patricia Janečková on the day of her funeral. It's so sad, she is only 25 years old, I have to do something. So I made this video and dedicated it to Patricia, the only thing I can do.*

In memory of Patricia Janečková <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icBJoBkvg70>

Returning to the diatribe, I note a Save the Children Fund report advised that -

*A total of 93,236 children have been killed or maimed in conflicts in the last ten years. (2010-2019)*

and that -

*approximately 426 million children (over one in six) were living in a conflict zone in 2019.*

Since then, UNICEF reports that in the first eighteen months since the war started in Ukraine (to October 2023), there have been at least 545 children killed and 1156 injured and Aljazeera reports an estimate that more than ten thousand children have died and another eighteen thousand have been injured as at 15<sup>th</sup> December in the current Gaza conflict.

So, what has this got to do with chrysanthemums? Well, we have observed that the love of chrysanthemums is not universal and so is unlikely to bring world peace, even if it may help a little. If it were not for writing these Editor's Notes I never would have heard of Patricia Janečková and her death made me sad, especially as I have a daughter the same age who has just finished university and will start her new life in January. The late Leila Blackwell, WACS member and wife of our Life Member Frank (also deceased), is remembered by me as a lady of great inner beauty and once remarked that all people are the same in that they all love their children.

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On the subject of music, for those of you who like both types, Rock and Roll, below is a link to the "History of Rock Music in 500 songs". This is a series of five hundred programs each discussing one song. The most recently posted was the three hour thirty-six minute Episode 171 on The Beatles' "Hey Jude". All up, you can look forward to over one thousand hours of content once the series is complete. As Spotify can be accessed for free, that is excellent value for money.

<https://open.spotify.com/show/7KGhTDsEpOgBAT24WfpTkk?si=b781d7ba5aea47d4>

According to one of my musical tennis playing mates, who alerted it to me, it is a fascinating journey through - *the who, why and what of the business. History is littered with bastards and brilliance.*

Given the litany and littering of bastards in its history I guess that rocking and rolling is also unlikely to bring world peace even though we are encouraged to make love and not war.

There are many of Patricia Janečková's recordings on YouTube and elsewhere on the internet. You can spend a pleasant evening or three listening to them if you wish. Recalling the discussions in the last Notes, whether your mind should drift to philosophical questions on the meaning of life and death is up to you.

What about a song to end with.

Patricia Janečková: "Les oiseaux dans la charmille"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mVUpKIFHgZk>

Live Patricia Janečková: "Think Of Me", 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2019.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O1PFGZcnmuU>



Allan Aitken



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## Forthcoming Meetings & Events

<b>General Meeting</b>	Noon, Tuesday 13 February 2024 John McGrath Pavilion, 97 Hensman Street, South Perth.
<b>Garden Clubs Plant Fair</b>	Sat Sun 24-25 February 2024 South Perth Community Centre, South Terrace, South Perth. Setup and delivery of sale plants Friday 23 February.
<b>Social Day</b>	17 March 2024 Carl & Lina Slusarczyk, 6 Regent St West, Mount Lawley
<b>General Meeting</b>	Noon, Tuesday 9 April 2024 John McGrath Pavilion, 97 Hensman Street, South Perth. (Yes, this is the Tuesday after Easter)
<b>Social Day</b>	21 April 2024 Michael & Judy Drake-Brockman, 136 Merivale Rd, Pickering Brook
<b>Annual Show</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> May 2024 Kalamunda Agricultural Hall, 48 Canning Road, Kalamunda (with setting up 9 - 10 <sup>th</sup> May)
<b>Awards Luncheon</b>	Noon, Tuesday 28 May 2024 John McGrath Pavilion, 97 Hensman Street, South Perth.
<b>AGM and General Meeting</b>	Noon, Tuesday 10 September 2024 John McGrath Pavilion, 97 Hensman Street, South Perth.

## Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/chrysanthemumwa/>

## Website

[www.chrysanthemumwa.com](http://www.chrysanthemumwa.com)

**Mentors:** feel free to give them a call for advice

**Ian Blackwell** – Kelmscott 0424 432 608

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**Richard Williams** – Inglewood 0439 103 500



Kiyomi No Yurai