

# Western Australian Chrysanthemum Society Incorporated



**March – April 2021**

## President's Notes

Welcome to another edition of the newsletter. At this stage you will probably be starting to see buds forming on your plants and hopefully that will be a source of some increased enthusiasm. Do not allow the season's work to go to waste by taking it easy now.

We are looking forward to our Annual Show and hopefully there will not be any more lock downs due to community spread of Covid. Especially with the new and more infectious strains if there is community spread then I think that the cancellation of the show will be the least of our worries. We cannot take anything for granted but we remain optimistic that the show will go on. If so, then I hope that there will be a good level of support as, after having no show in 2020, we are hoping for a good one this year.

We reintroduced prize money for last year's show and as we did not have a chance to pay any out it is now starting to burn a hole in our pocket. So make sure that you get your share.

Hopefully you are all aware that we are the host society for the Australian Chrysanthemum Championship again this year.

The show schedules for our WACS show, including the State Championships, and the Australian Championship can be found on our website at the following link -

<https://www.chrysanthemumwa.com/show-schedule-2021.html>

Have a look at the Show Schedules and take note that you only need five blooms to enter the Australian Championship and only one to enter the WACS show.

The Gosnells Horticultural Society has confirmed that they will be running an Autumn Show again this year. It will be their seventieth Autumn Show and as usual it will be the weekend prior to our WACS show. We will do our best to circulate the Show Schedule on our Facebook page and website when it is available.

This year our members once again have the opportunity to compete in the Australian Chrysanthemum Council endorsed "Virtual Show". Entries consist of three photographs of each exhibit, taken from different angles. Most classes are for single blooms of each Section but there are also classes for Charms, Cascades and Sprays, as well as a Championship class for five blooms along the lines of the Australian Championship. The photos can be taken on whatever day each exhibit is at its peak but all entries must be received by 9<sup>th</sup> of May by email or Dropbox. Prizemoney is available for the winners of each class. John and Sue Morvell from the Bendigo Club are once again coordinating this event and we are greatly appreciative of their efforts. Unfortunately the "in person" Bendigo show has been cancelled for a second year due to Covid 19 related restrictions. The Show Schedule for this event will also be posted to our website and Facebook.

We have two social events coming up with open days at my home in Mount Lawley in March and Michael and Judy Drake-Brockman's home in Pickering Brook in April. You are also welcome to drop by at Murray and Colleen Ryall's home in Lesmurdie on your way to Pickering Brook.

The passing of Frank Blackwell, a Life Member of WACS, in December, was conveyed to readers in the last newsletter. We were not aware at that time that another two of our Life Members, Len Stoakes and Betty Eastlake, were also taken from us in December.

As if this was not bad enough, another of our Life Members, Keith Robinson, and his wife Betty, were forced to flee their home ahead of the severe bush fire that caused extensive damage to a large area north of Perth at the beginning of February. Their property was damaged by the flames but fortunately their house was spared. I hope that they will be able to get things back to as normal as possible very soon.

On a happier note, the Australian Biome is coming closer to fruition. This is a world class project and we are fortunate indeed that it is to be based in Western Australia. A new state of the art hotel is to be built as part of the complex. Full details can be found at their new and very impressive website - <https://www.australianbiome.com/>

Thank you to Michael Drake-Brockman for writing the Cultural Notes for this edition. Thank you also to Ian Blackwell for writing the tribute to his brother Frank and for providing a number of photographs. The photograph below was taken by Ian on the occasion of the presentation to Len Stoakes of his Australian Chrysanthemum Council Distinguished and Meritorious Service Medal on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2002.



(left to right) Ken May, Len Stoakes, Joe Woodings, Frank Blackwell, Colin Moyser

# In Memorium: Franklyn William Blackwell

17<sup>th</sup> September 1940 – 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Frank was born into an unusual although not unique set of circumstances. His father married late in life and by this time was already an accomplished gardener with a love for all plant genera available that flowered beautifully, but his passion was the chrysanthemum; so it could be argued that Frank was involved with chrysies all his life. He developed a similar love for gardening and not surprisingly a special interest in our favourite flower.



Frank with his mother and younger brothers and his father's chrysanthemums.

He personally began to grow and exhibit chrysies with his brothers as a young man in his early 20's. In those early years he was a member of the Victoria Park Horticultural Society as were his brothers. He enjoyed the cut and thrust of competition with notable growers of the day, including his

brothers, in pursuit of winning the Exhibition Championship, the inaugural championship being won by his father the late Rev. Frank Blackwell in 1960. He was enormously thrilled when he won the State 'B' Championship in 2004.

Other than his postings to remote locations with the Education Department he has maintained his interest and contact with the W.A.C.S. and other local horticultural societies exhibiting and contributing whenever he could.

Later in life Frank focused more attention and time to his passion and was elected President of the W.A.C.S. in 2001 a position he held until 2005. During this time he was a delegate to the Western Australian Horticultural Council and was elected President of that organisation for the three year term 2003-6. In 2007 he was elected to the position of Secretary W.A.C.S. a position he held until 2015. Frank was an elected delegate to the A.C.C. during the whole of his terms in office and served with distinction in executive office with the A.C.C. during this time.

Frank brought to the various executive positions he held, a wealth of knowledge, training and management skills all of which have resulted in a quantum leap forward for the Chrysanthemum at both State and National levels. He placed a great deal of emphasis on moving forward into the technological age resulting in the development of web sites for both the W.A.C.S. and the A.C.C. giving Australia an international profile and linking our organisations with all similar ones globally. Many improvements and developments can be directly attributable to Frank's creative and innovative abilities and this was reflected in the presentation of our flower via Newsletter and Pictorial Show Case that were uploaded onto our websites. The reformatting of the A.C.C. Register of Cultivars and Judges was another fine example of the improvements implemented during the time of his office.

Frank was a qualified Chrysanthemum and General Judge and using his skills in this area developed a Judging Course for A.C.C. affiliated members resulting in a number of newly qualified judges over the following few years. His professional teaching abilities enabled him to present to many horticultural organisations talks on the cultivation of our favourite flower.

Frank was a people person and both the W.A.C.S. and the A.C.C. benefited greatly by his ability to liaise and negotiate with individuals and corporations in the interests of the promotion of the Chrysanthemum and showcasing our flowers.

He played an important ambassadorial role keeping the Australian presence before our counterparts in the U.K. when attending N.C.S.



Frank and his 2015 Champion Yellow Ryski

shows and maintaining liaison with members of the N.C.S. (N.Z.)

Frank introduced a number of Section 12 cultivars that he bred and which carried the "Cottage" prefix. Many of them were grown by Frank and other members for the displays that adorned the shopping centres where our shows were held. Cottage Mushroom was the Champion Charm of our 2013 show and Frank was especially pleased with his Cottage Everlasting, which he considered was possibly the best of those that he produced.

His contributions were acknowledged in Western Australia by being awarded Life Membership of the W.A.C.S. in 2010. Frank's service to the promotion and growing of Chrysanthemums was recognised nationally by being awarded the Distinguished and Meritorious Service Medal of the Australian Chrysanthemum Council in 2016.

Frank's anemones, sprays, mini cascades and charms were always a feature at our shows and this, together with his talented services, will be greatly missed.



Frank's 2004 State B Championship winning set.



Champion Charm "Nell Perrett"

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## In Memorium: Leonard Edward Stoakes

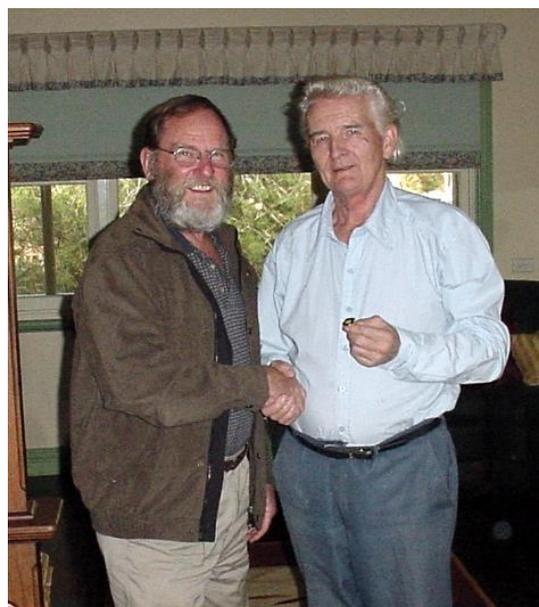
27<sup>th</sup> February 1936 – 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Len's contribution to chrysanthemum growing in Australia, especially through the breeding of new cultivars, was outstanding. He introduced cultivars in every Section, many of which went on to produce Champion Blooms at shows in Western Australia and interstate.

Despite the deterioration of many cultivars over time it is inconceivable that there would be any serious grower of exhibition chrysanthemums in Australia that does not still have several of his introductions in their list of current favourites.

He was awarded an Australian Chrysanthemum Council Distinguished and Meritorious Service Medal in 2002 and was made a Life Member of our society in 2004.

I reproduce here an article written by the late Ken May that appeared in "The Australian Chrysanthemum Yearbook 1992/3".



Ian Blackwell presenting Len with his W.A.C.S. Life Membership badge.

# Len Stoakes

## A profile by Ken May

In more recent years chrysanthemum introductions in Australia have mainly emanated from Victoria and Western Australia. In the former instance it was the work of Bruce Furneaux with his seedlings, and Graham Sharpe with cultivars obtained from New Zealand, Japan etc. In Western Australia we had become familiar with introductions prefixed by the likes of Kelvin, Grove, Pixie, Western and Stoakes. these cultivars of course came from the Orange Grove Chrysanthemum gardens whose proprietor was Len Stoakes.

Over many years I have been a frequent visitor to his gardens and have got to know him very well. In talking with him he tells me that when he was still relatively young, some 15 years of age, he rented his first allotment garden in Birmingham in England. He used the area to grow vegetables and flowers including chrysanthemums, and continued doing so until he was called up for National Service in the Army. On completion of his duration in the Army he once again obtained an allotment and concentrated on growing dahlias and chrysanthemums. By this time he had become introduced to showing and most of the cultivars grown were new releases suitable for the show bench.

As with most of us at his age he became friendly with a lass named Dorothy and subsequently they became engaged and in due course married. They have two children and a number of grandchildren. His interest in flowers was still very much to the fore and he made efforts to obtain a few acres of land in the south of England with the idea of starting a small nursery. However, this was not achieved and he became dissatisfied with his prospects of not being able to follow his chosen field of work.

About this time many families in England began thinking of emigrating and Len and Dorothy, after lots of discussion decided that Western Australia would be their choice. This was in the mid 1960s. In 1968 they were able to purchase their present 5 acres of land in the suburb of Orange Grove and very quickly became involved in growing chrysanthemums, mainly for cut flowers. And then onto growing them in pots for sale to florists and nurseries. He also ventured into the sale of rooted cuttings both locally and also to other parts of Australia.

In 1974 he became the agent for Woolmans of Dorridge, England, distributing their new and recent releases. But after a few years found this aspect became too costly with air freight, quarantine and royalty costs. Together with the fact that many of the cultivars obtained were not suitable for the warmer climates experienced in Western Australia.

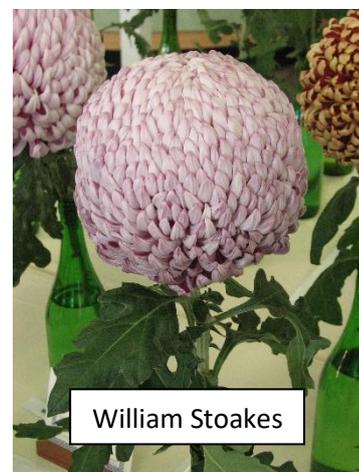
It was around this time that he decided to try his hand at cross-pollination. His first attempts were with the charm and cascade types, several of which were introduced into commerce around the late 1970s. In the early 1980s he tried his hand with the single types, two of which are still rated highly - Charmaine and Wildfire. He also tried pom-poms, anemone centreds, spiders, quilled, decoratives, reflexed and exhibition cultivars. These introductions have certainly impacted the



Stoakes Supreme



Rose Stoakes



William Stoakes



Stoakes Cinnamon



Stoakes Golden Splendour

chrysanthemum scene, not only in Western Australia but throughout Australia and also overseas.

In perusing catalogues of recent years, emanating from Kings in America, we find many of his releases listed which indicates their suitability to most growing areas throughout the world.

At one time he developed an allergy to chrysanthemums which appeared in the form of dermatitis that became so severe he was advised to get out of growing them completely - his wife Dorothy and others having to do all the handling of them - he even sold all his stock including many unreleased seedlings which have unfortunately not subsequently appeared on the chrysanthemum scene. Having viewed many of these which were of top quality it is indeed a disappointing outcome

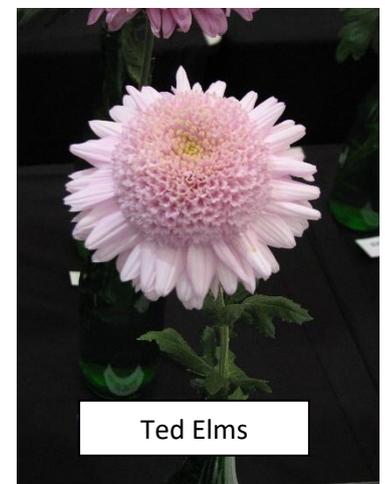
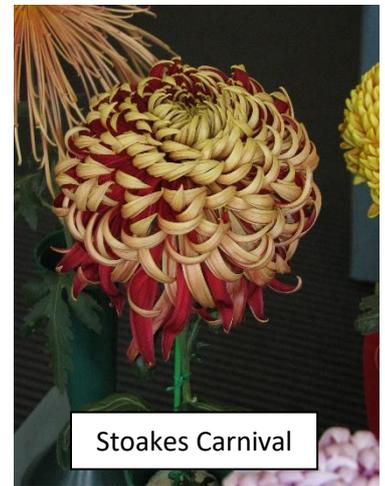
Because of the contribution he had made with his introductions over the years and the fact that the chrysanthemum world would have been the poorer, he was encouraged by myself and others to continue with his hybridising. Luckily the allergy experienced earlier appeared to have improved considerably and the desire to still be involved revitalised his interest and he currently is contemplating his reintroduction into the supplying of rooted cuttings through out the Australian scene. As each April/May approaches he awaits with great expectation as to what will evolve. The current crop of seedlings, which in the 1991/2 season approximates 1000, were planted out encompassing the complete range of differing types. Each autumn several of us journey to Orange Grove and spend an hour or two each weekend browsing and assessing the resultant blooms as to their ultimate potential, either as a cut flower or a show cultivar. And autumn 1992 is no different with many top quality introductions likely to emerge and be offered to growers in the coming years.

Cultivars likely to match the quality of Stoakes' Pioneer, Stoakes' Shannon, Western Ace, Western Voodoo, Ted Elms, Stoakes' Royale, Julianne Stoakes, Kelvin Rose, Kelvin Sapphire, Kelvin Victory and many others.

We in the chrysanthemum world have been very appreciative of his continuing involvement, interest and dedication and all sincerely trust that we will continue to see him maintain his interest in hybridising and will have the opportunity in the years ahead to see his many introductions.

In browsing through some of his earlier catalogues, I note that in 1980 he released several charm catalogues and decorative types. 1981 saw the release of exhibition incurves, some 8 cascades and several spray types. By 1983 to these were added 15 Kelvin pompones, some mini pixie poms, some large exhibitions and single types as well as the first of his anemone centred types (12 in all) and the first spider "Dragonfly". Most of these are still being grown.

His is indeed a valued contribution to the promotion of the chrysanthemum.



Len produced the following cultivars that have been awarded Grand Champion Bloom at WACS Annual Shows –

- Stoakes Limelight (Section 1)
- William Stoakes (Section 3)
- Charmaine (Section 7 – Cut)
- Stoakes Striker (Section 10)

In addition, these cultivars have been WACS Champions of their own Sections –

- Section 1 Stoakes Supreme
- Section 3 Stoakes Cornsilk, Stoakes Serena, Rose Stoakes, Stoakes Mystic, Stoakes Amaranth
- Section 4 Stoakes Carnival, Stoakes Gypsy, Stoakes Golden Splendour
- Section 5 Stoakes Pink Ice, Stoakes Chelsea, Stoakes Vanilla
- Section 6 Ted Elms, Stoakes Cameo, Stoakes Sensation
- Section 7 Stoakes Imperial, Stoakes Freesia
- Section 8 Kelvin Ransom, Kelvin Rose

Another that is not included in the above list is the yellow Exhibition cultivar Stoakes Pioneer. This achieved its greatest success interstate, in cooler climates and was especially successful in Tasmania. “The Australian Chrysanthemum Yearbook 1993/4” records that Stoakes Pioneer was both the Grand and Reserve Champion, to different growers, at the 1993 Hobart Horticultural Society Chrysanthemum Show, at which five current or future Australian Championship winning growers were taking part. This success was despite the fact that these Tasmanian growers were able to present the Thomas Pockett and imported English Large and Medium Exhibition cultivars at a high standard, with the names of several of the best known recorded as winning the lesser prizes.

Len had little active involvement with chrysanthemums in his later years but he liked to attend our shows and despite declining health he was able to attend our last show, in 2019, with his wife, Dorothy, and daughter, Diane.

\* \* \* \* \*

## **In Memorium: Betty Eastlake**

20<sup>th</sup> January 1913 – 30<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Betty Eastlake left us just short of her 108<sup>th</sup> birthday. Few of our current members had the pleasure of meeting her as her active involvement with our Society ceased many years ago. Fortunately, we again have Ken May to thank for another article that he wrote, this time published in “The Australian Chrysanthemum Yearbook 1993/4”, a copy of which follows.

It is clear that her contribution to horticulture in this state was exceptional as she was honoured with Life Membership of not only the Western Australian Chrysanthemum Society but also both the Melville and South Perth Horticultural Societies and the Western Australian Horticultural Council, in addition to her long involvement with the Australian Chrysanthemum Council.

The Eastlake name continues to be associated with our society through the Jack Eastlake Trophy for Cascade and Charm cultivars. While the trophy is named for her late husband, another of our esteemed Life Members, we can see from Ken May’s article that Betty’s support was not inconsequential to the magnificent displays that her husband produced which helped to create the golden age of our society during the latter part of the 1900s.

## *Personality Profiles*

### **Betty Eastlake.**

**A great supporter for the chrysanthemum**

**By Ken May (WA)**

Some twenty-five years ago, Betty Eastlake first became associated with the horticultural scene in the metropolitan area of Perth. She joined the Melville Horticultural and Pot Plant Society and immediately became involved in committee activities of that group. For continued and outstanding services, she was rewarded with life membership in May 1984. It was through one of the members of Melville Society, a well known chrysanthemum enthusiast that she and her husband Jack joined the Western Australian Chrysanthemum Society in July 1970 and again became heavily involved in its affairs in the roles of Assistant Show Secretary, Assistant Secretary and Secretary for varying periods. She occupied the position of Secretary from 1977 to 1990 inclusive and has always been a willing helper in the many displays mounted by the WA Society such as Festival of Flowers, Garden Week and of course, the Society's annual shows. Life membership of this group was awarded to her in July 1992.

She became a delegate from Western Australia on the formation of the Australian Chrysanthemum Council in the early 1980's and retained that role until July 1993. During this period she has on a number of occasions travelled interstate and participated in the events surrounding the Australian Chrysanthemum Championships at their annual gatherings.

Not satisfied with her heavy involvement elsewhere, she joined the South Perth Horticultural Society in 1977 and as was her willingness to be an active member of any organisation to which she belonged, has fulfilled the role of Committee member, Assistant Secretary and Secretary, the latter from 1987 - 1992. Again Life Membership was accorded to her by that Society in recognition of her valued contribution in 1985.

She has been a delegate to the Western Australian Horticultural Council since 1974, initially representing the Melville Society and from 1979 until the present time, the WA Chrysanthemum Society. In this association, she has been a member of the executive committee for quite a number of years and has been a tireless worker at Royal Shows, WA Gardener activities and WA Spectaculars.

She has fulfilled all of these roles with much credit and satisfaction to those with whom she has been associated and with a quiet unassuming but efficient manner. She has during these 25 years been a great supporter of her husband Jack, best known for his Cascades, Miniatures and Charms as well as for his roles as President of the Melville and South Perth groups at different times.

Betty is thanked for her valued contribution given to the horticultural scene in Western Australia, and it is hoped she will continue with the promotion of horticultural activities as she has done in the past..

Part of the Eastlake's  
1990 display at Garden  
City Shopping Centre



## Cultural Notes

March and April is a busy time as the plants grow tall and the blooms form.

Activities include;

- Watering based on the weather conditions. Not too wet or dry. Water in the morning onto the potting mix trying to get a minimum amount on the leaves to reduce the risk of rotting. Avoid having the leaves wet at night.
- Making sure that the stems are straight by using split extendable canes.
- Making sure that surplus side growths are removed so that the energy goes into flower. In the early stage of growth surplus side growth will assist in root development.
- Trim sucker growth coming out of the soil but do not pull them out as this is the source of cuttings for the next season.
- Vigilance looking for pests; aphids, caterpillars and spider mites are the most common. Neem oil is a good product. Apply sprays with a fan shaped spray on an extension pointing upwards to allow ease of wetting the underside of the leaves. A preventative spray just as the buds are about to show colour is recommended.
- Keep blooms from getting wet. This may require moving the pots under cover or installing a clear cover over the plants/shade house.
- Securing a bud. Gradually remove buds over a week or so that the strongest remains to go on to form a show bloom. For garden varieties leave one bud per stem, unless you are growing your Singles as Cuts or Sprays, in which case keep the strong side shoots and remove the weakest.
- Bagging, which is the process of covering the bud with grease proof paper or brown paper. This protects the bloom from weather damage where other methods of covering are not being used. It also protects against fading due to ultra violet light. This is particularly relevant for blooms with red colour. It is best to make your own bags by folding sheets of paper and stapling the edges. Tie the downward pointing opening gently to the stem. Many of the pink and bronze flowers need sunlight to develop their colour, so beware of bagging those. There is no problem with white and yellow flowers.
- Fertilising. This is important but not proscriptive. It is dependent on the potting mix and slow release fertiliser used. At this stage a balanced feed of Nitrogen (promotes growth and stem thickness) Phosphate (encourages root growth and health) and Potassium (promotes bloom development and colour) is required. Seasol every two weeks onto the potting mix supports root health. Maybe the level of potassium in the fertiliser can be taken up a couple of percent as the buds and blooms form.

If you follow these activities repeatedly for March and April then you will have a very good chance of producing show quality blooms.

## Flower Colour

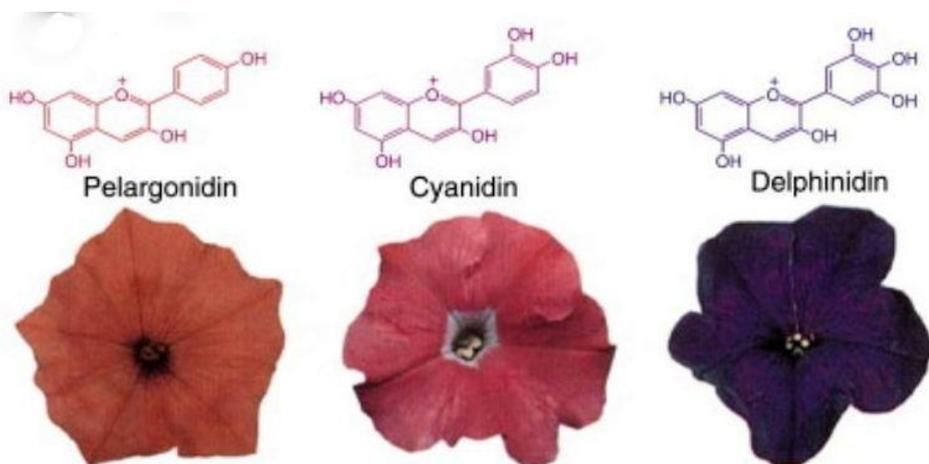
Colour is an interesting thing. White is the combination of all the colours of the rainbow. When there is no light everything is black. When we shine a light on something the colour of the light that is reflected from it determines the colour that we see. All other colours are absorbed. Something that is blue will reflect blue light and absorb the other colours. Something that is white will reflect all light and something that is black will absorb all light.

Flower pigments are mainly chlorophylls (green), anthocyanins (red, blue and purple) and carotenoids (yellow, orange and red).

Leaves and some flowers are green due to the presence of chlorophyll. Chlorophyll absorbs red and blue light and turns this into energy that the plant can use for its growth. The non-absorbed yellow and green light is reflected causing the leaves to appear green. Artificial light can be used to grow plants and some modern systems supply only blue and red light to save on energy costs. It is peculiar to see plants growing in purple light but they grow well. It is possible to make some alterations to the growth characteristics of plants by varying the ratio of blue to red light.

There are many different anthocyanins but they are synthesised from three main precursors; pelargonidin, cyanidin and delphinidin. Chrysanthemums only produce cyanidins.

*Pelargonidin tends to orange-reds familiar in Pelargonium, cyanidin providing magenta shades familiar in Antirrhinum majus (snapdragon), and delphinidin blue and purple shades, familiar in Delphinium.*



Some anthocyanins can change colour at different pH levels or in the presence of some metallic ions. This is well known in hydrangeas where the presence of acidic pH and aluminium ions promotes blue colour in some cultivars. I do not think that any chrysanthemums are subject to significant colour changes but maybe subtle changes are possible.

Carotenoids are of two types: xanthophylls and carotenes. Xanthophylls are usually yellow, while carotenes, as the name suggests, are more toward orange shades, or even red, as is the case with tomatoes. Chrysanthemums predominantly produce yellow xanthophylls in their flowers with little carotene.

A very detailed analysis of anthocyanins in the flower colour of chrysanthemums is available at the following link. This article also contains a table listing all the major plant pigments.

<https://www.mdpi.com/1422-0067/21/18/6537/pdf>

If you wish to read up on carotenoids in chrysanthemums then here is a link. It is not an easy read but there are a few interesting points within it.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1399-3054.2006.00761.x>

If you would like to see what pigments are in your flowers then why not try a bit of chromatography. The method described is quite easy. There are probably no chrysanthemums out at the moment but have a go with any coloured flower or vegetable as a test run and if you are having fun then enjoy yourself even more when your chrysies bloom.

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/bring-science-home-flower-pigment/>

# Onunda

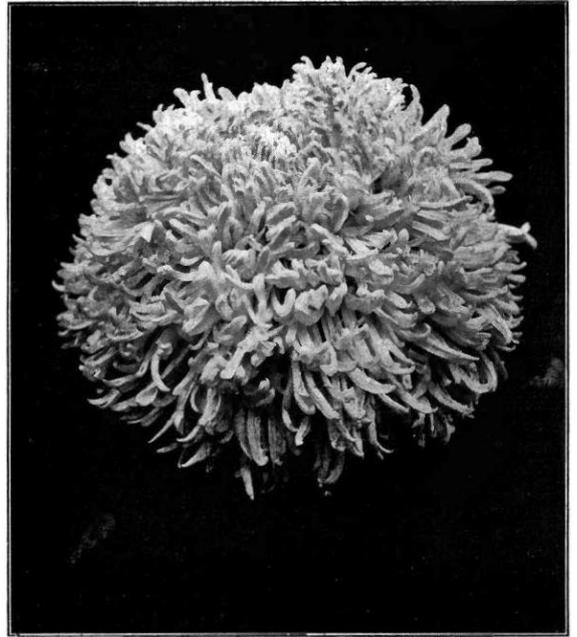
This was the largest chrysanthemum in the world in 1910. Grown in USA and measuring 44 inches (112 cm) in circumference.

The mathematically minded, and primary school children, will know that the diameter can be calculated from the circumference using the formula –

$$\begin{aligned} \text{diameter} &= \text{circumference} / \pi \\ &= 44 / 3.14159 \\ &= 14 \text{ inches} \quad (35.5\text{cm}) \end{aligned}$$

Humongous; and in chrysanthemum grower's measurements it would have been an inch or two bigger than that.

You can use the same formula to calculate that an eight inch Mount Shasta or Kokka Hare Butai has a circumference of more than 25 inches, which sounds really impressive to those old enough to know what an inch is. For the younger ones that converts to about 62 centimetres.



With the caveat that *when you assume, you make an ass out of u* and me it is likely that Onunda was named for the 240 acre estate of that name in Madison, New Jersey, founded in 1892 by Daniel Willis James. In 1916 it was purchased by Marcellus Hartley Dodge and his wife Geraldine Rockefeller Dodge who, at the time, were living in an adjacent property, named Hartley Farms. Onunda was renamed Giralda Farms and they retained both properties.

A 1916 book entitled "Beautiful Gardens in America" by Louise Shelton mentions the Onunda estate and has, as a preface, the following poem. I am not sure how many of us have chestnut trees in our back yards but at least we can appreciate the general sentiments.

## **In Green Old Gardens - by Violet Fane.**

*Here may I live what life I please,  
Married and buried out of sight,  
Married to pleasure, and buried to pain,  
Hidden away amongst scenes like these  
Under the fans of the chestnut trees:  
Living my child-life over again,  
With the further hope of a fuller delight,  
Blithe as the birds and wise as the bees.  
In green old gardens hidden away  
From sight of revel, and sound of strife,  
Here have I leisure to breathe and move,  
And do my work in a nobler way;  
To sing my songs, and to say my say;  
To dream my dreams, and to love my love,  
To hold my faith and to live my life,  
Making the most of its shadowy day.*

## Editor's Notes

My, hasn't the weather been warm and dry lately! The current weather is hardly surprising given that this is the end of summer and we have a Mediterranean climate. We call it that due to our Eurocentric cultural leanings, or perhaps that should be learnings, as Borat would say. Ours is the southern version of the Mediterranean climate. By that I do not mean the southern hemisphere version but rather the North African one. It is much more like Algiers than Monte Carlo.

I like the sound of Monte Carlo. We should have one here in WA, where it would be called Mount Carl. Perhaps we could rename Mount Meharry, which is WA's tallest mountain. It is named after William Thomas Meharry, Chief Geodetic Surveyor for Western Australia from 1959 to 1967. This renaming idea is not new. Mount Meharry was originally called Wiribiwiribi. Wikipedia also reminds us that (i)n 1999, *Gina Rinehart, daughter of Lang Hancock, applied (unsuccessfully) to the Geographic Names Committee to rename the mountain after her father.* Wikipedia also advises that Government Geologist Harry Page Woodward discovered the same Pilbara iron ore reserves in 1890 that Lang Hancock discovered in 1952. Woodward reported that [t]his is essentially an iron ore country. There is enough iron ore to supply the whole world, should the present sources be worked out. Mount Woodward might be a good name, except for the fact that there do not appear to be many (any?) trees there.

In respect of our weather, before it was the Mediterranean climate it was the Noongar Boodja climate. This consisted of six seasons and now it is Bunuru season. Bunuru is *a time of the white flowers with lots of white flowering gums in full bloom, including jarrah, marri and ghost gums.* Bunuru is followed by Djeran, which is when our chrysanthemums flower. It will come as no surprise that there are no native chrysanthemums in WA. In fact, since 1999 there are none in the Mediterranean region either. This is not due to any mass extinction, climate change related or otherwise. You may recall from an earlier newsletter that the edible Mediterranean *Chrysanthemum coronarium* was renamed as *Glebionis coronaria*. This arose due to a decision in 1999 to conserve the genus name *Chrysanthemum* exclusively for Asian species. Perhaps, just to annoy those pesky taxonomists, *Glebionis coronaria* is now widely naturalised in Asia. If Marco Polo had scattered a few seeds along the Silk Road to China in the thirteenth century then that might have created a bit of a problem for the taxonomists now. Of unrelated interest is that *Glebionis coronaria* is one ancestor of some marguerite daisies, but I do not recommend eating any of them.

Earlier in the newsletter I discussed flower colour. Black flowers are not common. There is no black pigment in flowers and the black appearance is due to very concentrated red or purple anthocyanin pigments.

*According to the UK-based Flowers & Plants Association, "a pure black flower is the Holy Grail of plant breeders worldwide." Since there is no such thing as a truly black flower, developing the closest thing became an attractive challenge to botanists".*

As a result of their rarity and allure black flowers have some cultural significance. Alexandre Dumas' novel "The Black Tulip", published in 1850, contributes to this. It contains the lines -

*To despise flowers is to offend God,  
The more beautiful the flower is, the more does one offend God in despising it,  
The tulip is the most beautiful of all flowers,  
Therefore, he who despises the tulip offends God beyond measure.*

WACS members will have some affinity with the sentiments but take issue with the tulip being given the gong for the most beautiful flower. In fairness to the author, the novel is historical and set in the 1600s, before the introduction of chrysanthemums to Europe. Perhaps we can agree that the tulip is one candidate for the most beautiful spring flower.

(Breeders) have produced many different (black) tulip varieties including: "Queen of the Night," "Negrita," "Black Jack," "Black Diamond," "Black Horse," "Ebony Queen," "Black Hero" and "Black Parrot." Interestingly, five of these black tulip cultivars are available from WA owned and operated "Tulips With A Difference", located in Boyup Brook. Now is the time to order them for planting in May, after cutting down your chrysies.

<https://wabulbs.com/>

I am not aware of any black flowered chrysanthemums. *Petunia* 'Black Velvet', *Viola cornuta* 'Bowles Black' and the hollyhock, *Alcea rosea* 'Nigra', are amongst the darkest of all flowers. The blackest flower that I know of is an orchid.



Fredclarkeara After Dark  
'SVO Black Pearl'

Fredclarkeara is a man-made (by Fred Clarke) hybrid genus combining *Catasetum*, *Clowesia* and *Mormodes*

From feedback to the Notes from previous editions of the Newsletter I am aware that there are a large number of enthusiastic amateur etymologists and grammarphiles amongst our readers. I am sure that on many lips there will have been the question "Is there a word in the English language that contains all the vowels?" There is, unquestionably.

The language continues to evolve and a new word that I quite like is "Doomscrolling". This is *the practice of continuing to read news feeds online or on social media, despite the fact that the news is predominantly negative and often upsetting*. With the coronavirus, share market crash and the bush fires in 2020 there was a lot of doomscrolling going on. Some people reacted to that, like Clive and his "Twisted Sister", with the attitude that - *We're not gonna take it anymore*. Unfortunately for Clive, the High Court put him in his place - Queensland.

Other people took a different approach. After months of pandemic lockdown in Melbourne, forty-seven days of which were with Stage Four restrictions, talented Victorian songstress Danielle Matthews used her frustrations as inspiration for this reworking of a popular song.

I've Never BIN to me <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScjuNDZ2Xi0>

Victorian Assistant Police Commissioner, Luke Cornelius, has had his own problems during the pandemic and was particularly perturbed about "covidots" when he addressed the media throng last year as follows –

*The tinfoil hat-wearing brigade<sup>1</sup> are alive and well out there in our community and they are taking every opportunity to leverage the current situation to serve their own ridiculous notions about so-called sovereign citizens, about constitutional issues about how 5G is going to kill your grandkids. ... It's just crazy, it's batshit crazy nonsense. People need to wake up to themselves because the wider community is awake to you and you need to stop it.*

Biographical details indicate that Luke Cornelius has attained high academic honours and had a very distinguished career in the Federal and Victorian Police, winning a number of awards, including one from the United Nations<sup>2</sup>. He

<sup>1</sup> A tin foil hat is a hat made from one or more sheets of aluminium foil, or a piece of conventional headgear lined with foil, worn in the belief or hope that it shields the brain from threats such as electromagnetic fields, mind control, and mind reading.

<sup>2</sup> His curriculum vitae is available at <https://www.vifm.org/about-us/governance/vifm-council-and-committees/luke-cornelius/>

is, after fourteen years in the job, Victoria Police's longest serving Assistant Commissioner and his honest, heartfelt and refreshingly straight talking manner is obviously the reason why he has not been further promoted.

In gentler times batshit was referred to as bat guano. Like chicken manure, it is a mixture of faeces and urine. You will recall that as bats are mammals they do not have a cloaca and so their poo and wee only gets mixed together on the floor of the cave, or belfry. Bats choose to spend a lot of their time upside down atop a pile of their own excrement. The philosophers amongst you may care to consider whether this is really borne of free will or, rather, as a necessity, to avoid the bullies. As you know, the price of liberty is eternal vigilance<sup>3</sup>, and putting up with shit<sup>4</sup>.

The word guano originally referred to Peruvian sea-bird excrement.

*The word Guano derives from the Peruvian original language Quechua; of "Huano", which means "dung to fertilize"*

Quechua was the language of the Incas and also some of their adversaries, including their arch enemy, the Wankas<sup>5</sup>. Quechua is still widely spoken today and is an official language of Peru. Huano looks like a Spanish word, which is unsurprising as there was no written Quechua language before the arrival of Spanish missionaries.

Peruvian guano is an excellent source of nitrogen and phosphate, whereas many other guanos, such as that from Nauru, contain mostly phosphate. The scientific explanation for the formation of the different types of guano is quite interesting. This article is very informative regarding the science and history of guano.

<https://www.intechopen.com/books/seabirds/guano-the-white-gold-of-the-seabirds>

It appears that, prior to the arrival of Europeans, the native Peruvians were good custodians of their guano deposits and its collection during the sea-bird's breeding season was punishable by death. Presumably this was to appease Huamancantac, the God of Guano. The more culturally advanced interlopers on the other hand had Eurocentric learnings and so, after realising its monetary value, stripped out over 300 000 tons in very short order whilst simultaneously devastating the sea-bird population.

OK, how is the Relevance Deprivation Syndrome therapy going? Well, I did mention something about chrysanthemum taxonomy, Ron Atyeo and I saw hundreds of bats in the trees of Bendigo's Rosalind Park when we attended the Australian Chrysanthemum Championship in 2017 and guano has been successfully used as a chrysanthemum fertiliser. Nevertheless, despite this plaintive appeal to forbearance, some of you may instead be now yearning for a return to Latino music video recommendations while others will be unable to tell the difference between the Latinx's songs and their guano.

To be successful in a democracy it is necessary to appeal to those in the middle ground. Hence, I would like you to consider these very famous English language songs. They are more unintelligible than any of the Latino ones, as at least Spanish speakers can understand those.

Eagles - Hotel California (Live Acoustic Hell Freezes Over) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EHYLvwv5BFc>

Stairway to Heaven - Led Zeppelin <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qHFxncb1gRY>

MacArthur Park - Richard Harris (Live) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-GhK4X-hMKA>

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<sup>3</sup> *Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty; power is ever stealing from the many to the few. The manna of popular liberty must be gathered each day or it is rotten. The living sap of today outgrows the dead rind of yesterday. The hand entrusted with power becomes, either from human depravity or esprit de corps, the necessary enemy of the people. Only by continued oversight can the democrat in office be prevented from hardening into a despot; only by unintermittent agitation can a people be sufficiently awake to principle not to let liberty be smothered in material prosperity.*

<sup>4</sup> If a cultured and erudite pillar of the community like Luke Cornelius can say it then so can I.

<sup>5</sup> Sometimes written as Huancas. They were originally llama herders and assisted the Spanish with their conquest of the Incas.

If you like compromise, which as gentle horticulturalists I am sure that you do, then what about two Louisianan American sisters of Mexican, German and Spanish heritage, Hannah and Ashley, with the stage name Ha\*Ash, singing "Sorry Sorry" in Spanish with a Mexican cumbia sonidera/cumbia sinfónica band, the Blue Angels.

Los Ángeles Azules - Perdón, Perdón ft. Ha\*Ash <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xUI3UjyAvzo>

Ha\*Ash have a lot of excellent music videos on YouTube. On September 13, 2020, their music video for "Lo Aprendí de Ti", became the first ballad sung in Spanish to reach one billion views.

HA-ASH - Lo Aprendí de Ti (Primera Fila - Hecho Realidad [En Vivo])

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uws510cVia4>

If you like a good foot tapper then this will most certainly please.

HA-ASH - No Te Quiero Nada (En Vivo) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GllMHxOWiIE>

Sorry, no Haiku this time but you can assuage your disappointment by having a look at two Japanese identical twin sisters, Emi and Yumi Itō, singing a favourite Latino song in Japanese.

Peanuts: Quien Sera <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jiPLcLaalUM>

For all you Natalia Lafourcade fans, and I know that there are many, here is something with a little extra exotic appeal.

Danza de Gardenias (Versión Acústica) ft. Rozalén <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E6wuWc6w9D8>

For any story-book lovers this is a Latino style effort, recently released in November 2020. (There have been more than 200 million views already and several parody versions.)

Christian Nodal, Ángela Aguilar - Dime Cómo Quieres

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ge4AKbnr6ME>

If you like story-books but are not keen on Latino songs then this song, "Storybook Love" was used on Mark Knopfler's soundtrack for "The Princess Bride", and was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Song in 1987.

Mark Knopfler & Willy DeVille - Storybook Love

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=svbv0ArjPGU>



The following songs were played at the funeral of Frank Blackwell. "Stay" was sung bravely and with love by his grand-daughter, Imogen Blackwell.

Alison Krauss – Stay [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hq\\_9vZ0udLA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hq_9vZ0udLA)

The Snowman - Walking In The Air <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=upH1QZU4Z0Y&t=1s>

These songs were played at the funeral of Len Stoakes.

Acker Bilk - Stranger On The Shore <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VsKTG30g3mw>

Gerry & The Pacemakers - You'll Never Walk Alone <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOXwzvK1WTc>

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## Mentors

**Ian Blackwell** – Kelmscott 0424 432 608  
**Ralph Coombes** – Maida Vale 9454 3373  
**Michael Drake-Brockman** – Pickering Brook 9293 7650  
**Carl Slusarczyk** – Mount Lawley 9272 1356  
**Richard Williams** – Inglewood 0439 103 500

## Chrysanthemum Culture in Western Australia

... a booklet written by Ted Elms. <https://www.chrysanthemumwa.com/chrysanthemum-culture-wa.html>

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## Forthcoming Events

**Home Visit** Sunday 14th March 2021  
1.30pm Carl and Lina Slusarczyk's home, 6 Regent St West, Mount Lawley.

**Home Visit** Sunday 11th April 2021  
1.30pm Michael and Judy Drake-Brockman's home, 136 Merrivale Rd, Pickering Brook  
*You are welcome to break your journey and pay a visit to Murray and Colleen Ryall's home at 7 Turner Grove, Lesmurdie, between 12.30 and 1.30pm.*

**General Meeting** Tuesday 13th April 2021  
12 noon John McGrath Pavilion, Hensman Rd South Perth

**WACS Annual Show and Australian Championship** Thursday 6th – Saturday 8th May 2021  
Official Opening - 11am Friday 7th May  
Hawaiian Forrestfield Shopping Centre, corner of Strelitzia Ave and Hale Rd, Forrestfield.

**Presentation Luncheon** Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> May  
12 noon John McGrath Pavilion, Hensman Rd South Perth

## Website

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

## Facebook Page

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

