

This newsletter together with our other publications will be placed on our website at [www.chrysanthemumwa.com](http://www.chrysanthemumwa.com)



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## Upcoming Events

### February

- 1. General Meeting** Tuesday 10th at 12 noon  
Rotary Hall, Sandgate Street, South Perth
- 2. Committee Meeting** Tuesday 17th at 12 noon  
Rotary Hall, Sandgate Street, South Perth

- 3. Social Visit Sunday 22nd at 1pm**  
Ralph and Liz Coombes  
13 Bandin Place Maida Vale

### March

- Social Visit Sunday 22nd at 1pm**  
Roy and Anne Shilling  
Edward St Kenwick

## *WAES Subscriptions*

\$10 p.a. single, \$15 p.a. double

Please send to Treasurer

# NEWSLETTER of The Western Australian Chrysanthemum Society Inc.

## FEBRUARY 2015

### President's Notes



Greetings for the start of 2015 and best wishes for a successful year for you, your families and your plants.

Time marches on and waits for no man and so I hope that you are all keeping on top of your chores. If so then that is good because it means there is time left to attend to enjoying yourselves, and what is better than spending some time in the cool of the mornings or evenings pottering about in the chrysie patch. (This also applies to those who grow their plants in the ground!)

The hot days are a bit of a trial and our thoughts are with those facing the perils of bushfires. Growers in Britain start to stress when the temperatures go above 25 degrees

but we seem to cope with 40+. "She'll be right." as they say.

The show season will be upon us soon and hopefully you are all getting a bit excited. I am sure that you have your eye on one or two plants which are growing extra well and might just produce the Champion Bloom.

We have social visits to the homes of Ralph and Liz Coombes and Roy and Anne Shilling coming up and I hope to see as many of you there as possible as I like seeing people enjoying themselves and that is assured.

Our General and Committee meeting times have changed to 12 noon due to the requirements of the hall management. Thankfully a good supply and range of food is supplied by members at all of our meetings and for most of us that will be enough for lunch. Such is the normality of these minor feasts that we may seem to take them for granted. Let me say here on behalf of all members how much this is appreciated as well as the efforts of those preparing the tea and coffee and cleaning up the dishes.

I hope to see you all soon.

*Keith Robinson*

## 50th Anniversary Booklet

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Western Australian Chrysanthemum Society. It is remarkable that we have members who have been present since the beginning with their youthful enthusiasm still undimmed. Due to the level of enthusiasm existing at the time a specialist society was formed and the rest is history. It is this history that we wish to honour with a commemorative publication for members and others to enjoy.

I have only been a member for a few years and so I do not have much useful material in my possession. What is needed to make this a success is some input from members in the form of written or photographic contributions. This is a rare opportunity to get your faces and memories into print. Don't be bashful. If you are not inclined to write something down then see me at any of the functions and I can write it for you. Photos showing members or exhibits from the early years are especially welcome. I hope to have this ready in time for the Presentation Dinner which will also allow some photos and results from our fiftieth show to be included. Hopefully we will have another Australian Champion to record.

## CULTURAL NOTES

The hot weather is the major challenge for this month. It is important to make sure that your pots do not get dry. This will cause damage to the plants and particularly the roots which you will not see except in the subsequent retarded growth. Most of our free draining composts contain organic matter which is difficult to rewet. A good watering may wet the surface of the soil but the lower parts can remain dry. A wetting agent will be needed should this misfortune occur.

There is a temptation to overwater in hot weather but this can also damage the root system. Remember that while growth speeds up with the warmer weather in spring, once the temperature becomes very hot it slows down and so the requirement for fertiliser diminishes. This does not mean you should stop fertilising but rather give it in lower quantities more often if using solid fertilisers or in lower concentration if using liquid fertiliser.

A periodic top dressing of potting mix helps to keep the surface feeding roots protected as well as providing fresh soil to encourage more.

A good way of assisting your plants is to water the lower leaves and between the pots to create some



humidity and evaporative cooling. Those who are very keen could consider a misting system programmed to come on periodically through the day in summer as practiced by the growers of some more delicate plants. This does not use an enormous amount of water as the flow rate is very small.

Nevertheless chrysanthemums are fairly hardy and when slowly acclimatised, as occurs when they are grown in the same position throughout the season, they can cope. A small advantage of being at work during the day is not having to see the growing tips pointing down at the ground!

Watch out also for the heating effect of the sun on the pots which can cause serious overheating of the soil on the sunny side. Plants on the perimeter of the chrysanthemum patch are most at risk as

those more interiorly placed are protected somewhat by the leaves of adjacent plants. The pots most at risk can be buried into the soil, if it is not intended to move them later, or can be protected by tiles, bits of wood, bricks or anything else that might be lying about. (not available in the best run households!)

I now reprint my advice from last year. (How can you improve on perfection?)\* -

For the next month or two the major tasks are -

- ◆ *making sure that each stem is securely tied to its cane to avoid breakages and to keep the stem straight. Remember that the larger the blooms the greater their spacing will need to be.*
- ◆ *removing side growths to force all the plant's energy into the flowering growths. The sucker growth coming out of the soil should not be removed but merely trimmed back as this is the source of cuttings for next season.*
- ◆ *keeping a look out for pests. Aphids and red spider are particularly prevalent and should be eradicated as soon as possible. Red spiders are very difficult to spot at an early stage and a preventative spray may be a good idea.*

3 - \*\*First take a look in the mirror.