

# Western Australian Chrysanthemum Society Inc.



September  
|  
October  
  
2022



## President's Notes

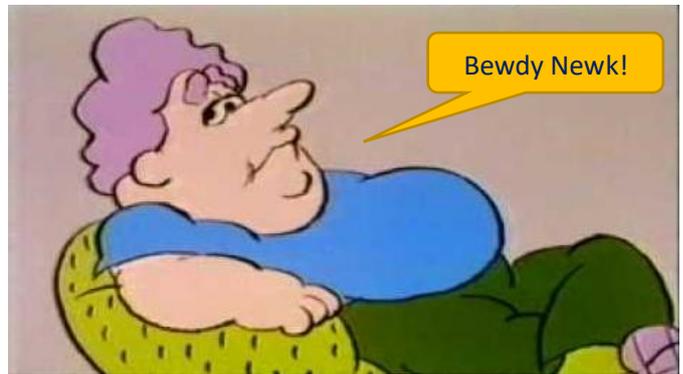
Many of you will be familiar with the tale of Rip van Winkle. For those of you who are not, the story goes as follows.

*Rip Van Winkle, a Dutch-American man with a habit of avoiding useful work, lives in a village at the foot of New York's Catskill Mountains in the years before the American Revolution. One autumn day, he goes squirrel hunting in the mountains with his dog Wolf to escape his (trials and tribulations). As evening falls, he hears a voice calling his name and finds a man dressed in antiquated Dutch clothing and carrying a keg. Rip helps the man carry his burden to a cleft in the rocks from which thunderous noises are emanating; the source proves to be a group of ornately dressed and bearded men playing nine-pins. Not asking who these men are or how they know his name, Rip joins them in drinking from the keg he has helped carry and soon becomes so intoxicated that he falls asleep. Rip awakens on a sunny morning, at the spot where he first saw the keg-carrier, and finds that many drastic changes have occurred; his beard is a foot long and has turned gray, his musket is badly deteriorated, and Wolf is nowhere to be found. Returning to his village, he discovers it to be larger than he remembers and filled with people in unfamiliar clothing, none of whom recognize him. When asked how he voted in the election that has just been held, he declares himself a loyal subject of King George III, unaware that the American Revolution has taken place in his absence. He learns that many of his old friends were either killed in the war or have left the village, and is disturbed to find a young man who shares his name, mannerisms, and younger appearance. A young woman states that her father is Rip Van Winkle, who has been missing for 20 years, and an old woman recognizes him as Rip. The young woman and the young Rip are his children, and the former has named her infant son after him as well.*

OK, so what has this got to do with growing chrysanthemums?

Well, this year WACS is again hosting the Australian Championship and you have two choices. The first choice is to be like Rip and avoid useful work, practise escapism, get drunk, grow old without any care for the world surrounding

you to and then to wake up later in life to find that you have missed out on all that might have been. The second is to shake yourself out of complacency and commit yourself to produce five spherical, untarnished, refulgent blooms of staggering immensity glorified by brilliant art shades for the 2023 Australian Chrysanthemum Championship starting on 11<sup>th</sup> May. As of the 1<sup>st</sup> September that is only 253 sleeps away. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> September there will only be 252 sleeps.



*Like sands through the hourglass, so are the days of our lives.*

You know the story Norm/Norma - "Life Be In It". So, what are you waiting for? Another cliché?

The Garden Clubs & Societies Plant Fair is the first official activity for the Society this season. It is to be held at the South Perth Civic Centre Hall once again and the dates are Saturday 10th & Sunday 11th September, with set up on Friday 9th September. Michael Drake-Brockman is, once again, coordinating the event so he should be advised of all offers of plants and assistance and all offers will undoubtedly be greatly appreciated.

The Annual General Meeting comes straight after that on the 13th September. The AGM will be followed by the **presentation of trophies and awards from the 2022 Annual Show**. We did not hold our customary Presentation Luncheon this year due to some concern with Covid, which was at its peak at that time.

The Distribution Day follows on 23rd October. I hope to have cuttings of some more new old cultivars available that have been resurrected from apparent extinction. Some of them are good for exhibition and you may have seen a few at our last show, including Stoakes Toledo which was the champion Fantasy bloom.

We intend to have some further opportunities for members to enjoy each other's company during the growing season, in addition to our regular meetings, but that will be decided by the new Committee.

## Cultural Notes 1

Avid readers of the last edition will recall the discussion on why some year's results are better than others and the observation that "for every complex problem there's a simple solution; and it's wrong". Undeterred by that I boldly offered the opinion that complacency was at least part of the explanation for the bad years. When considering the psychology of complacency we expose ourselves to the full gamut of ideas ranging from research published in peer reviewed scientific journals through to the idle reflections of bird brains in Twitter. Because we live in a democratic, pluralistic and open society all of these ideas can be freely expressed and what better place for it than the internet. Any ideas that appear in a reputable periodical, such as the WACS (Inc.) Newsletter, is controlled by the editor. Unfortunately, if the editor is the village idiot, or the stooge of a Machiavellian schemer intent on personal advancement, then what hope do we have?

With that weight of responsibility in mind I came across the following **5 Strategies to Avoid Complacency** at [www.sublimereflection.com](http://www.sublimereflection.com) This is the site of Kimberly, who is a Certified Life Coach, author, and mother of TEN! She's passionate about journaling, self love, personal growth and helping you put yourself at the top of your to do list.

### 1. **Strive for something.**

*Set a big goal (2023 Australian Championship) and come up with a plan to work toward it. Breaking big goals that seem impossible into little bite-size steps (bi-monthly cultural advice) can keep you from being complacent.*

## 2. **Step outside the circle of your comfort zone.**

*The majority of our lives we live inside our comfort zone. It's human nature to want to feel safe. Inside our own circle of comfort we feel safe, but unfortunately, we don't grow. Right outside that circle is where the magic happens. As you step outside your comfort zone, and do things that are hard and take courage (Australian Chrysanthemum Championship), you'll soon notice that the circle of your comfort zone has increased in size.*

## 3. **Find a mentor.**

*Find someone you know who is doing better than you. This can apply in any area, you name it (chrysanthemum growing), this applies! Find out what their strengths are and make it a goal to develop in those areas. Ask them how they stay at the top of their game? Join a Facebook group on the topic (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/chrysanthemumwa/>). There are so many awesome people you can reach out to. (see the list on the back page of this edition)*

## 4. **Plan to avoid failure ahead of time.**

*Any time you set a new goal, make sure part of your planning process involves asking what is likely to trip you up (holidays, heat waves, pests and diseases). If you consider these things ahead of time, it also allows you to create a plan for avoiding or quickly recognizing the slip-ups so you can get back on track.*

## 5. **Be kind to yourself.**

*Often when I feel complacency start to slip in, I also let the negative voices slip in. I might mentally berate myself over my lack of self discipline which can quickly lead to (defeatism), if I'm not careful. (stay positive)*

The above advice relates to Kimberley's weight loss journey. The relevance to chrysanthemum growing is questionable in parts but you get the general idea. I have included it as it avoids the need for me to think for myself and is in keeping with my priority for quantity over quality. It is a shame that the juice is sweeter than the pith; which explains the attraction of TikTok and Instagram.

The late Ted Elms advised that if growing for exhibition purposes then it is important to prioritise quality over quantity. To this end he had a few pieces of advice including -

1. Weed out and dispose of poor or diseased plants.
2. Do not grow more plants than you can properly and enjoyably cope with.
3. Concentrate your efforts on cultivars that are known to be the most reliably successful and grow any others, that you have a soft spot for, as general garden plants.

It is entirely acceptable to be a member of WACS and not grow for exhibition purposes but the advice still applies

## **Cultural Notes 2 (material surprisingly relevant to growing chrysanthemums)**



The task for the next two months is the rooting and establishment of small plants with the potential to grow up big and strong later. I hope that you cut back your stools at the beginning of August and sprayed with pesticide and fungicide as recommended in the last edition.

The late Ted Elms provided the following advice relevant to this phase of growing. This advice is contained in the third edition of his growing guide which is available at -

[https://www.chrysanthemumwa.com/uploads/4/1/8/4/4184909/chrysanthemum\\_culture\\_booklet.pdf](https://www.chrysanthemumwa.com/uploads/4/1/8/4/4184909/chrysanthemum_culture_booklet.pdf)

*The chrysanthemum is a very adaptable and extremely responsive plant, consequently growing them to perfection can be a rewarding experience. The extent of this reward will depend on your diligence and attention to detail which will in turn measure the degree of your success.*



*It is usual for people growing for cut flowers or garden display to first cut back old stools or simply set out their plants and let them grow, support them with a few sticks, fertilise, water and leave them to grow as they wish. A little extra time and attention at certain times will see the production of far superior blooms and specimen plants.*

*Cuttings can be successfully struck from July to late October but the exhibitor should commence striking at a convenient time as close to 1st September as possible. It is important that an effort be made to propagate by stool or tip cutting, even when growing for cut flowers, to obtain the best result and although a rooted sucker may be easier to strike the same well developed root system will not result and consequently there must be a fall off in bloom quality.*

*Exhibition growers should certainly strive to propagate by tip cuttings. Although stool cuttings will give a very good result the extra effort can be the difference between winning prizes and exhibiting very good blooms. If you do strike stool cuttings leave the very minimum of roots and trim those remaining right back to prevent your cutting becoming lazy and living on the existing root system. Remember that potential cuttings, healthy, clean and in active growth will strike much easier than those still dormant. A good watering of the stool the day before selection will ensure that cuttings are nice and fresh when taken. It is common practice to remove bottom leaves from the cutting preparatory to setting out. Some growers use a soft wood cutting powder as it helps sustain the cutting while roots form and will ensure the development of a good root system and seal out any virus or disease from the open wound. Roots should form in about ten days.*

*The best means of setting out cuttings is in a seed tray or round the edge of pots. Use a base of good garden soil lightly dressed with bone meal and superphosphate then, if available, place a layer of clean sand on top of trays or pots, pressing holes with a stick and firming in. A good watering down after planting is essential. When the cutting stands erect, greens up and the growing tip starts to open and extend it is time to pot out your cuttings. It is advisable to protect them from the hot sun for several days when first set out and then harden up in full sunshine for about a week before potting on is commenced.*

*It is not recommended that in this State terracotta pots be used for potting on as the heat causes them to dry out too rapidly and young plants tend to become root bound. However, this type of pot is ideal for striking as the porous wall of the pot allows it to breathe and so minimises the possibility of stem rot. In areas where frosts are prevalent four thin sticks or knitting needles can be placed in the pot and a plastic bag pulled over to protect the young cuttings and provide artificial hot house conditions. Corks placed on the end of these sticks or needles will prevent the bag being pierced and so collapsing. This method will also retain moisture around cuttings and eliminate the need to water for several days.*

*Watering of cuttings is best done with a very fine spray after the pots are placed in the nursery. Alternatively, use of a watering can is recommended to ensure that overwatering does not occur.*

There are many modifications of Ted's methods and several regimes and suggestions are available in previous years' editions of the September - October Notes. These are available on our website at -

<https://www.chrysanthemumwa.com/newsletters.html>

You are cordially invited to review them and are encouraged to do so.



## Ron Seaton's Seedlings

The Seaton name is known to chrysanthemum growers throughout the English speaking world due to the large number of his creations that have achieved favour in those countries. Not content to rest on his laurels, Ron has ramped up his production of seedlings over the last few years. Shown below is a small selection of his latest creations that were displayed at our 2022 Annual Show, together with a Spray Single (with Ryski as a comparison) that he gave me to trial. Some of these have now been named and released to WA growers. A bigger selection of his seedlings, together with many other cultivars, can be seen on the Facebook page "Ron Seaton's Chrysanthemums".



## Editor's Notes

It is with great humility that I can report to you, dear, gentle, reader, that I have been overwhelmed by the support that I have received from members and friends (including the former President and members of the Novosibirsk Chrysanthemum Society, opponents of O Presidente do República da Corrupção and politically aware taxonomists, entomologists and etymologists too numerous to mention) after our President's unseemly attempt to deny the democratically expressed will of esteemed members that had installed me as the editorial custodian of this time honoured and widely respected journal which has been gracing the libraries of chrysanthemum growers since its initial promulgation in 1965. The President's action was seen to be not only unseemly but also untimely, given the recent emboldenment and proliferation of autocratic regimes in many parts of our 'Mother Earth', that cosmic conundrum that has given birth and succour to countless generations of person-kind and -unkind in seemingly equal measure.

It is with this in mind that your editor has been researching the 'Putinic' belief that, according to history, Ukrainians and Russians are one people. History is a funny thing as, with statistics, it can be used to justify almost anything. If you care to go to <https://www.britannica.com/place/Russia> you can read all about Russia, especially its history, albeit from a Britannic viewpoint. So what exactly is the historic Russia? Early on in the Britannica exposition we find that (t)he inhabitants of Russia are quite diverse. Most are ethnic Russians (slavs), but there also are more than 120 other ethnic groups present, speaking many languages and following disparate religious and cultural traditions. Historically these more than 120 other ethnic groups were once all independent and indigenous to their own geographical area. Due to military force and 'Russification', by the movement of Slavic Russians into their lands, they were integrated into Russia.

So what has this got to do with chrysanthemums?

Nothing really, but searching the internet with keywords "Russia" and "chrysanthemum" leads to a few things of interest. "**How Chrysanthemums Color an Orphanage in Russia**" (St Petersburg) details a *special project* (operation?) *to teach children who don't have the chance to learn from parents something about Russian culture*. This involved the creation of floral art using Dutch grown chrysanthemums. As there were no suitable vases available in the orphanage the director *came up with a solution that really appealed to the children: pumpkins were prepared with oasis*. (budding WACS floral artists take note)

You can see a pleasant one minute YouTube video on this at - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4T5rXp-bZE> The author of the article provides the following sage observation. *The opportunities you can take advantage of go beyond national borders*.

St Petersburg is also linked to chrysanthemums via the House of Fabergé. They produced this *spray of two chrysanthemums, thinly enamelled, one of pale yellow and the other of pink, attached to green gold stalks with nephrite (jade) leaves, set in a square rock crystal vase. The large enamelled flower heads are held on gold stems, strengthened inside by steel in order to support the weight of the flowers*.

This was purchased by Stanislaw Poklewski-Koziell, a councillor at the Russian embassy in London and a good friend of King Edward VII, from Fabergé's London branch on 27 December 1908 for £117. He gifted it to Queen Alexandra who was the aunt of the reigning Tsar of Russia, Nicholas the Second. It is one of twenty-six Fabergé flowers now in the UK Royal Collection.



After Fabergé's business was nationalised by the Bolsheviks in 1918 the family reopened in Paris in 1924. In 1951, rights to the Fabergé brand name for the marketing of perfume were sold to an American and in 1964 the best known men's perfume bearing their name, 'Brut', was launched. Brut 33 (33% concentration) was released in 1968.



*'Kiku' (chrysanthemum) by Fabergé ... an Amber Floral fragrance for women ... was launched in 1967. Top notes are Aldehydes and Bergamot; middle notes are Rose, Lily, Coconut, Tahitian Gardenia, Orange Blossom and Ylang-Ylang (from flowers of the cananga tree); base notes are Sandalwood, Amber, Vanilla, Oakmoss and Musk. Kiku - like love - smooths her body, soothes her soul, embraces her whole being with long-lingering, spirit-sparkling scent. In gleaming yellow and golden treasure boxes. Shamelessly feminine. Fabulously Fabergé.*



It was discontinued in 1976, possibly because the following thirty second advertorial states that - *every woman is a little bit kiku and some, some are completely kiku.* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2FvWhz8DKA>

On a sinister note, from 2007-2012 *yellow chrysanthemums (желтые хризантемы) became notorious in Russia thanks to the Yellow Chrysanthemum Gang, a band of robbers, and their uncalled for, cold blooded murders perpetrated on innocent civilians. The gang gained their moniker thanks to their calling card, a bouquet of Yellow Chrysanthemums, which they carried with them when they committed murders. CCTV of one robbery shows a man holding a bouquet of Yellow Chrysanthemums in his hands walk into a wedding and jewellery salon at Butyrskaya Street in Moscow, casually ask the owner behind the counter "Как дела?" (How are you?) then pull a gun out and shoot the man in the head at close range, followed by another headshot for good measure. Just for the pleasure to kill.*

Chrysanthemums have also been associated with murder in the USA. *With the passage of Prohibition and the rise of bootlegging in Chicago, Mike Merlo, head of the Unione Siciliana fraternal group, used his position to mediate the frequent territorial disputes between the bootlegging gangs. These gangs included the predominantly Irish North Side Gang, under boss Dion O'Banion, the Sicilian Genna Brothers gang and the South Side gang, then run by Johnny Torrio and Al Capone. During the early years of Prohibition, Merlo was able to maintain an uneasy peace between the three gangs and other criminal organizations.*

Two days after Merlo's death, the Chicago gangs broke into open warfare. On the pretence of picking up flowers for Merlo's funeral Frankie Yale, a New York associate of Capone unknown to North Side Gang's Dion O'Banion, entered Schofield's Flower Shop along with South Side Gang members, John Scalise and Albert Anselmi. O'Banion was clipping chrysanthemums in Schofield's back room. *"Hello, boys" greeted O'Banion, "You from Mike Merlo's?" Yale nodded, and returned O'Banion's handshake in a clasped death grip. At the same time, Scalise and Anselmi fired two bullets into O'Banion's chest, two in his cheeks, and two in his throat.*

*Schofield's Flower Shop, located at 738 North State Street in Chicago, became a prominent meeting site for North Side Gang leader Dion O'Banion when he entered a partnership with William S. Schofield in the 1920s. O'Banion needed a legitimate front for his criminal operations; in addition, he was fond of flowers and was an excellent arranger. The shop not only became a front for the monster and his bootlegging deals, but also became the unofficial flower shop for the funerals of many North Side Gang members, including O'Banion's.*



I am fairly confident that WACS members should have no fear of assassination while clipping their chrysanthemums, unless they have opted to start growing marijuana as well, after being corrupted by their local hydroponics store. It took me a while to work out why anyone would want to pay \$3900 for a four plant indoor hydroponic grow tent.

Those of you who have no interest in crime and destruction and are instead gladdened by quietude and productive endeavour may be interested in this YouTube video which demonstrates the method of producing the needlework pictured.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UwucgN4RqrA>

Be advised that if you are not keen on bloodshed then you should consider the use of a thimble. Here are some that may be suitable.



As there is a bit of room left over on the page, what could be better than to fill it with love and music?

*You'd think that people would have had enough of silly love songs  
But I look around me  
And I see it isn't so  
Some people want to fill the world  
With silly love songs  
And what's wrong with that?  
I'd like to know  
Cos here I go again*

Asi Fue ♂ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0O4CLgXvbJU>

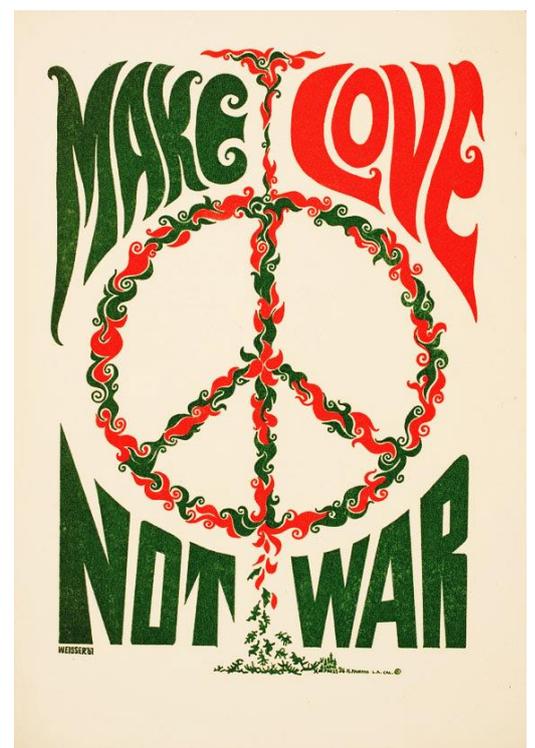
♀ [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2c\\_OGRzLv8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2c_OGRzLv8)

Despacito <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-bCoFRsKpww>

Amado Mio <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCbzWjJLVhk>

The Power of Love <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eiFre0FK-s0>

The Miracle of Love <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=481GuSgiyI4>



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## Forthcoming Events

**Garden Clubs' & Societies' Plant Fair** Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September  
South Perth Community Centre

**Presentation of Awards from 2022 Annual Show, AGM and General Meeting**  
Tuesday 13 September 12:00 noon  
John McGrath Pavilion Social Room

**Distribution Day** Sunday 23 October 1:30 pm  
John McGrath Pavilion Social Room

## Website

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

## Facebook Page

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

## 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/uploads/4/1/8/4/4184909/chrysantemum\\_culture\\_booklet.pdf](https://www.chrysanthemumwa.com/uploads/4/1/8/4/4184909/chrysantemum_culture_booklet.pdf)

