



FRASER COAST BROMELIAD SOCIETY INC. NEWSLETTER

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Christmas Edition 2025

Office Bearers Contact Details

President:

David Ward
fcbspresident@gmail.com
 Mobile: 0421 645 255

Vice President:

Giles Blaber
Giles.blaber@optusnet.com.au
 Phone: 0411 721 559

Secretary:

Sue Loughran
fcbsecretary@gmail.com
 Mobile: 0414 757 162

Treasurer:

Janine Blaber
fcbstreasurer@gmail.com
 Mobile: 0413 571 620

Committee Members:

John Hoffmann
 Narelle Hoffmann
 Les Hutchins
 Vacant

Editor:

Kim Fitzgerald
fcbseeditor@gmail.com
 Mobile: 0409 122 490

Stock Sales:

Jan Hutchins
Ententers@bigpond.com
 Mobile: 0419 799 483

Life Members:

Debbie & Hans Kruger
 Narelle & John Hoffmann
 Karen Thomson
 Maxine O'Shea

'Christmas is a season not only for rejoicing but of reflection'
Winston Churchill



Content of Newsletter

- Christmas Celebration lunch 2025
- Fantastic meals
- Raffle
- Bathroom facilities
- President David Ward 2025 review
- Christmas Cracker
- Presentation of "plant of the month" overall winners
- 45th Wedding Anniversary
- December plant of the month
- Music and plants
- Editor's note
- Christmas with Costa



A garden
 flowers with beauty,
 offering peace joy
 and
 natures wisdom



Christmas Celebration 2025



On 13th December 2025 everyone arrived safely at the Hervey Bay RSL club. Up the lift to the second floor out the lift, walking down a narrow hallway, then entering the designated room. Members selecting their seats had a bit of waffle with everyone and purchasing a beverage or two, non-alcoholic that is or maybe not. Looking forward to the meal and ready in anticipation of fun filled afternoon.



Fantastic Meals

I would like to take you to the “plates” where the meal were piled high with meat, vegetables, gravy with bread roll and butter. It was delicious, not a scrap was left on the plate as you see at our table. It shows just how delicious the meal was. Thank you to the Hervey Bay RSL Club for a wonderful meal and friendly customer service.

There was a murmur in the room from table to table saying the colour of the plate was refreshing, the lip up the plate was very upbeat as gen Y may say.



Then one person in the crowd, was laughing as she explained, “these plates are used for the older population, so they don’t slide their plate and loose their meal. Allowing them to still be able to soak up the gravy with their bread roll, with this design of plate.

Yes, it only takes one to make us all laugh and perhaps may be another reason why we liked these plates, not much more to say on this subject. (giggle giggle).

Raffle

Raffle tickets purchased and prize tables were full of wonderful plants and different size Christmas wrapped gifts.



There were lots of winners that walked out with amazing bromeliads, foliage plants and some with interesting packages wrapped in Christmas paper for under their tree.

Bathroom Facilities



One of the first questions was “where are the toilets?” The directions provided were go down the narrow hallway and walk to the end and you will find them. What they forgot to say is that there would be a lady standing in the corner to welcome you. Yes, a lady standing in the corner! Now after you left the toilet facilities to your surprise the lady was still in the corner watching she hadn’t moved. This lady absolutely took me off guard first time, but then it kept happening all I could do was laugh and wonder if anyone felt the same. Yes, there was at the end of the proceedings. Narelle thought the same as we laughed even more. I even went over to her to have a chat, she was tightly lipped and didn’t share any gossip and I don’t think she was a gardener, her shoes were to clean.

President’s Review 2025



David welcomed everyone for coming and sharing in the celebration of the events in 2025. He started with a successful holiday road trip , focusing that one person cannot do it alone. With enthusiasm, he spoke about planning and researching the trip to Cairns and what needed to be completed before heading off. There are so many components:

- Eating - snacks, drinks and meals to build up resilience for the body, mind and soul.
- Car - serviced and tank full and with RACQ membership in wallet (I hope it was)
- Trailer – lights/coupling chain/hair pin
- Accommodation prebooked and parking equipment

David learnt over the podium, disheartened and with one arm up in the air and showed us a circle link! His voice was quivering, saying without this one component, yes one component disaster could occur. David shook his head as he turned to laughter as he knew that people would understand just what this circle link meant for travelers towing a trailer.

- The “safety pin” or “lock pin” or “hair pin” depending which State of Australia you come from. The most important is “the pin’ must be used on the trailer to stay connected to the car via the tow ball.
- The additional ‘locking chain’ or ‘coupling chain” or ‘safety chain” is also attached to providing extra protection if the pin breaks off the tow ball the secondary chain will keep the trailer and car connected, with time to quickly pull over.

Then when you get out of the car, jump up and down, swear and curse, turn around in circles you realise the most important person is with you, slowly looking at your wife, say in a sweet voice “I love you” then you know it will be ok no matter how long it takes. Thank goodness there were munchies and drinks were packed.

Contributions by Members

This then brings us to the Monthly meeting, being on the FCBS committee this year, David shared that there are so many tasks that are done behind the scenes that everyone may not know about, that make this Society the best.

- Keys to the hall - without the key there are no meetings!
- Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-president - The main connection of the Society that brings kindness, understanding, time and effort in so many ways for members enjoyment, fun and structure to give back to the community
- Hall set up - chairs and tables
- Plant of the Month - organising and administration in tallying books and showing winning plants
- Plant of the month – contributors that provide a wonderful assortment for everyone to enjoy
- Raffle – contributors who provide plants and items create a wonderful atmosphere with anticipation of what you could take home with a win
- Raffle – organising and selling tickets
- Product sales organising and selling of pots, fertilizer, tags and so much more at a discounted price with information to help with your growing journey for members
- Plants sale – organising and helping with information on the plants on offer to achieve an opportunity to expand your knowledge and share with like-minded people
- Show and Tell – questions from the floor, the interactions help others learn to use these skills or tips in their garden
- Guest speakers – “Out of towners” are billeted by local members
- Media – computer/projector and sound set up in the hall is a must to help everyone have a full experience at the meetings
- Communications – Newsletter excellent and interesting a record of ideas and Facebook administration
- Catering - Let’s not forget food made for “yummy tummy enjoyment” either bought or made.

As you all can see the success of the “monthly meeting” is not possible without the “least” of these functions which is truly appreciated. Thank you.

The introduction of foliage plants has provided a wealth of knowledge in different types of plants that work well with bromeliads. Also, the Novice section has been well supported at monthly competitions.

Show and Tell

Support and contributions have been very enjoyable and educational on different types of weather conditions, soils and how well they grow and the “not so good” stories.

Guest Speakers

Have been very diverse and create memories for us all.

Lorraine Ward – Life time of passion growing edible and decorative plants

Sue Loughran – Plant presentation for competition and judging exceptional. One was trimming of burnt plant leaves and using to shape the existing leave. Wolar !

Neville Ryan – lifetime of fascination with Tillandsias at John and Narelle Hoffmann’s home with BBQ lunch. Yum!

Ron and Stan Show – David as he laughed sharing his new understanding to what it means to fertalise plants! It is very different to David’s approach and maybe others. The crowd also started to have a bit of a chuckle as he continued. David’s pinch vs a new approach presented that opened his eyes.

- Scoop of potting mix,
- then a handful of **fertiliser**,
- then pop in the plant,
- then another scope of potting mix and
- then low and behold another hand full of **fertiliser**!

The crowd in the room laughed out loud as the way David described the process in a slow tone, emphasising the word “**fertiliser**”. Then came the clincher, why are we using potting mix at all? Well, the crowd lost it, laughing uncontrollably, as they looked at each other, then at Stan and Ron table.

Now I will just take a pause here from David’s speech and here is a Christmas cheer.



F.C.B.S. Inc. Newsletter

T’was the night before Christmas (in Queensland)
And all through the backyard, the cane toads were croaking,

and the roosters were crowing out loud,
 While the kangaroos were dancing and prancing with excitement and cheer as they knew who was near
 As I slowly walked to the shade house to have a sneak peek
 I found a tall person in a Bunnings hat, smelling the aroma now that was unique!
 To my surprise as fast as I turned to take a snap,
 He left bags of fertilizer to give my plants a good slap
 Who was the tall man in a Bunnings hat, he wasn't dressed as Santa Clause that was a fact
 My guess it was you, Stan Walkley the fertilizer goo ru!
 Now, in the distance behind the trees, I heard Ron Murray screams, he definitely found the bees.
 As they both hobbled down the road to escape, Santa arrived ready to landscape!
 Happy fertilising over Christmas and the New Year Everyone!

Now back to David splendid journey this year as president

Joy Duke – Foliage arranging, showed us how to make something beautiful and structured out of bits and pieces of foliage and bromeliads. Stunning and no fertiliser used here!

Leslie Hamilton – Her passion and sharing of information of cordylines provided everyone a great companion plant to bromeliads in their garden.

Colin Furnell – Earth Life providing everyone with an alternative look at soil components. David extended the humor with that's right use of "Fertiliser Garden Mate"! The crowd in the hall laughed and turned and looked at Stan and Ron relating the story to above.

Nigel Thomson - Trip to Hawaii was a reminder of the risk and service to us all bringing bromeliads into the country.

External Participation in the Community!

Hervey Bay Botanic Gardens	Hervey Bay Orchid Society Spring show	Exhibitors Maryborough show
Childers Orchard show	Bromeliad Society Queensland Brisbane shows	2025 conference Brisbane

All these activities contribute to the goal of introducing and promoting bromeliads to the wider community to build a diverse garden. This also includes visiting other Bromeliad Societies to keep the connection and presence at each other meetings.

Monster Sale

This year saw us return to the TAFE hall albeit with much increased costs for the hall hire. There was hard work from all involved which resulted in a successful event. There were good sales and some buyers driving many hours to attend and they were not disappointed. The hall was full of colourful bromeliads and foliage plants, also pens, corks and tags for sale. The spectacular bromeliad display was inspiring and provide an immense amount of interest from the community and members. David expressed the willingness of members to help and contribute to the diverse tasks was pivotal to this wonderful social weekend.

Again there is a vast amount of planning and detail that goes into making an event like this, run as smoothly as possible. Much is unseen and unsung:-

- Overall Coordinator - Planning start to finish with members contributing to support each other on the days.
- Hall requirements - Set up the hall with tables, chairs and tablecloths and bromeliad display
- Financial Controller – managing the sales & raffles (no relation to Thomas the tank engine fat controller)
- Advertising external – driving, putting up designated signs in local streets
- Promotional options – local television, radio and emails sent to local businesses and Facebook

- Catering – everyone loves some food to eat
- Interactions with the community on different types of bromeliads and/or foliage and care
- Display and plant contributors

Let's not forget Sunday at 12 noon dings on the mobile phone it's time to close the doors. BUT that's not when the work stops. The teamwork and cooperation provide clear the tables, chairs fold tablecloths and sweep and/or use an electric blower to leave the hall as found it is a must. This provides everyone with the opportunity to get their home destination quicker and not to a few people. Remember **"Many hands make light work"**.

David held his head high, arms spread on either side of the podium, took a deep breath and spoke with kindness and gratitude in his tone. The club would not be a success..... pausewithout the contributions each person makes. So, to you all I thank you for your contribution to making this club what it is.

May you have a Blessed Christmas and an enjoyable new year. President David Ward

Christmas Cracker

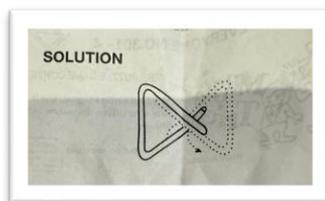


On each table there were Christmas Crackers to share
The competition of who gets the prize is alive and kickin that is for sure. So who at your table didn't win the opportunity to wear the paper hat, reading the jokes and playing with plastic toys so much fun. I am sure your table was a group of sharers!
This was a practice run before Christmas day that is for sure.

JOKES

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Q. What did the frog order at the fast-food restaurant? | A. French flies and diet croak |
| Q. What lives at the bottom of the sea and shakes? | A. A nervous wreck |
| Q. What school subject are snakes best at? | A. Hissss-tory |
| Q. What do you do if you cross Santa with a duck? | A. A Christmas Quacker |
| Q. Why do fish live in salt water? | A. Because pepper makes them sneeze |

PUZZLE TIME



Graham had great concentration on the day he was able to untangle the puzzle and we left him putting it back together to show Leslie his achievement.

Marbles



Peter found some marbles; anyone lost theirs!

2025 Plant of the month winners

Presented by David Ward (President) and Janine Blaber (Treasurer)



Overall winner 2025
Congratulations



Nigel Thomson (Great photo I must say)

Patterned Leaf Vriesea

First Place	Nigel Thomson	22 points
Second Place	John & Narelle Hoffmann	17 points
Third Place	Sue Loughran	12 points



Other Genera

First Place	Nigel Thomson	18 points
Second Place	David Ward	16 points
Third Place (tie)	Val Honeywood & John & Narelle Hoffmann	9 points



Flowering Bromeliad

First Place	Nigel Thomson	22 points
Second Place	David Ward	20 points
Third Place	Val Honeywood	4 points



Neoregelia

First Place	Nigel Thomson	19 points
Second Place	John & Narelle Hoffmann	16 points
Third Place	Val Honeywood	11 points



Species

First Place	Jan Hutchins	15 points
Second Place	Val Honeywood	13 points
Third Place (tie)	David Ward & Nigel Thomson	10 points



Tillandsia

First Place	Nigel Thomson	15 points
Second Place	Jan Hutchins	13 points
Third Place	Ray Gough	11 points



Foliage

First Place	David Ward	24 points
Second Place (tie)	Anne Walsh & Giles and Janine Blaber	8 points
Third Place	Val Honeywood	7 points



Novice

First Place	Peter Maczi
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Drum roll please. Congratulations to everyone, we are all winners, sharing and caring to allow everyone to learn a little bit more about the world of bromeliads and foliage plants.

Another pause in the Christmas Celebration



Jiggle those hands
Jiggle those legs
Jiggle those plants ready to bed
Jiggle that body, now the garden is done!
Jiggle that drink, enjoy a sip and soak up the sun!

Congratulations

Peter and Deb Maczi
celebrating your 45th wedding anniversary with us at the Christmas Celebration



Do plants like music?

I can hear you having a little giggle as you read. Yes, we know plants don't have ears!

How can playing music for plants help them grow, I hear you say. Well, it is about vibration through studies and experimenting in your own garden.

This is more natural approach; there seems to be at least three different types of stimulation.

- Plain vibration and music with a stronger beat may mimic wind and other plant stressors, telling the plant that it needs to bulk up.
- Gentler music with a higher pitch that's more similar to bird song encourages stomata dilation, boosting nutrient intake so plants grow faster.
- Other research suggests boosts in sap flow and plant hormones

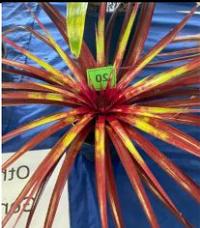
Experimental results include:

- Tomatoes 2.5 times larger with a sweeter flavor
- Vegetable yield increased by 40%
- Reduction in tomato mosaic virus
- Faster time to maturity, with fruits, vegetables and flower ready 1-3 weeks early
- Improved frost resistance
- Better germination rates
- Fruit size of edible mushrooms increased by 43.3%
- Longer lasting and more abundant flowers

This Christmas or times throughout the year you may like to experiment with music in the garden. Let us know how it goes and the type of music that was selected.

Interesting article By [Laurie Neverman](#) May 3, 2019 [Music for Plants - What Helps Plants Grow and What Doesn't](#)

Plant of the Month – December 2025

NEOREGELIA OVER 250MM DIAMETER			
	First ←	NEOREGELIA Julia	Stan Walkley (8 points)
	Second:	NEOREGELIA Optimus Prime	Nigel Thomson (6 points)
	Third	NEOREGELIA Powder Puff NEOREGELIA Broken Heart NEOREGELIA Chester	Peter Maczi (2 points) Sue McDonald (2 points) John and Narelle Hoffmann (2 points)
PATTERN LEAF VRIESEA			
	First: ←	VRIESEA Hawaiian Fantasy	Nigel Thomson (14 points)
	Second	VRIESEA Gympie Kiwi	John & Narelle Hoffmann (7 points)
	Third	No Third place	
FLOWERING BROMELIADS (BILLBERGIA/GUZMANIA/ AECHEMEA)			
	First: ←	LUTHER AND SPLENDEN Vista	Nigel Thomson (10 points)
	Second:	AECHEMEA Cannabel	Graham Spence (8 points)
	Third:	GUZMANIA Denise	David Ward (3 points)
TILLANDSIA HANGING			
	First: ←	TILLANDSIA Funckiana	Nigel Thomson (8 points)
	Second	TILLANDSIA Octopus	Ray Gough (5 points)
	Second	TILLANDSIA Tricolor	Maxine O'Shea (4 points)
OTHER GENERA			
	First ←	SINCORAEA NAVIOIDES Golden Eye	Stan Walkley (8 points)
	Second	Vrieslandsia Garry's delight	Nigel Thomson (3 points)
	Third	NID Ruthless CRYPTANTHUS Bruitatus	David Ward (1 point) Peter Maczi (1 point)

SPECIES		
	First: ←	deutercohnia abstrusa Jan Hutchins (10 points)
	Second:	verensia flammea John and Narelle Hoffmann (4 points)
	Third	verensia flammea Maxine O'Shea (3 points)
FOLIAGE		
	First: ←	Birds Nest Alocasia Asplenium australasicum Stan Walkley (5 points)
	Second:	Caladium Caladium David Ward (3 points) Sue McDonald (3 points)
	Third	ZZ plant Zanzibar gem Sinningia Peter Maczi (2 points) Val Honeywood (2 points)



That is a wrap for the 2025 newsletter, I hope you have all enjoyed reading and catching up. Keep providing feedback, remember this is your newsletter so let me know what you would like to read. I would like to acknowledge and thank:

- Sue Loughran and her unwavering support throughout the year in relation to the newsletter, regardless of the time of day. I am grateful for her generosity in welcoming us into her home and sharing her knowledge of the Hervey Bay area and bromeliads. Sue, your exceptional kindness and assistance are truly appreciated.
- Narelle Hoffmann, Val Honeywood, and Anne Walsh, for your great photos and help with the popular vote tally. Your support is invaluable, especially when we are unable to come to a meeting.
- Sue and Ron Murray, your incredible knowledge of bromeliads and their history is truly impressive. You both are walking and talking encyclopedias, and your willingness to share has helped tremendously, especially for the Newsletter and beyond.
- Everyone, you make it very easy to drive to Hervey Bay the atmosphere is friendly great chats, and all provide amazing insight with laughter.

The FBS newsletter will be back early January 2026 with inspiring information and so much more.

Enjoy your Christmas
with less aches and pains or breaks and strains
No bandages or Band-Aids and no arm and legs in brace
No falls and bruises, take every step at a slow and steady pace



Costa what a man, what a mighty good man and my favourite chatterbox man

T'was the night before Christmas when all through the yard,
Not a plant left standing, and the ground was hard.
The Billbergia's were hung by the garage with care,
In hope that Costa Georgiadis would sit on our gardening chair!

The Gasmania's were nestled all snug in their pots,
While the visions of fly speck so many odd spots!
When out from the Alcantarea spikes, there arose such a clatter,
I sprung from my mattress and held onto my bladder,
Away to the back door, I quickly dashed,
Half expecting to find more bromeliads maybe a new stash!

When I flew open the door, it was suddenly clear,
A Bunnings sleigh and 8 strapping horses appeared,

As he whistled and shouted and called them by name,
Now Aechmea! Now Neoregelia! Now Guzmania and parsley,
On Tillandsia, On Ananas, Alcantarea and barley.
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in moment it must be Costa Georgiadis he looked so slick,

He stood up quickly and went straight to work.
He shoveled and shoveled Eco 88 it's a natural perk!
A quick mix and water too and he didn't forget to add the horse poo.

So many gardening gifts that he takes worldwide,
He had the "Starting with Bromeliads" book right by his side.

Were Mr and Mrs Pots naughty or were they nice?
our local Members of Parliament gave him the right advice!

His Bunnings sleigh now empty of dirt, he gave his team an Australian Gardening shirt. But I heard Costa exclaim as he drove out of sight, "Happy Christmas to all eat some light fruit cake on this fabulous night".

Now HOE! HOE! HOE!

Connections sharing with like-minded people,
that support each other,
share kindness and
eerie stories about bromeliads
that would make your friends' hair stand on end!
Come along and be part of the community of bromeliads and foliage
and so much more!
See you next year at the first meeting, Saturday 24th January 2026

Editor's Note ...

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