

S.A. BROMELIAD GAZETTE

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Born 1977 and still offsetting!!

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Tillandsia display October sales.

MEETING & SALES 2016 DATES. 10/1/2016 (Aechmea), 14/2/2016 AGM (Preparing for shows), 6/3/2016 1st Sunday (Summer brag), [2/04/2016 & 3/04/2016 Sales](#), 10/4/2016 (Neutrog presentation) 1/5/2016 1st Sunday (Len's Tillandsia presentation), 5/6/2016 1st Sunday (Workshop), 10/07/2016 (Christmas in July & uncommon genera in SA), 7/08/2016 1st Sunday (winter brag) 18/09/2016 3rd Sunday (Mini's) 9/10/2016 (Billbergia) [22/10/2016 & 23/10/2016 Sales](#) 13/11/2016 130PM start, pup exchange, special afternoon tea – bring a plate of finger food to share, plant auction.

Applications for membership always welcome.

Subscriptions due Feb 2016 (see note page 8)

Meetings Venue:

Maltese Cultural Centre,
6 Jeanes Street,
Beverley

Time: 2.00pm.

Second Sunday of each month
Exceptions – 1st Sunday in March
May, & August & no meeting in
December or unless advised
otherwise

**VISITORS & NEW MEMBERS
WELCOME.**

Page	Details
1	Cover page – Photo: Tillandsia display October sales: Committee: Meeting & sales dates 2016
2	Index: Roving Reporter October 2015
3	Roving Reporter October 2015cont: 2
4	Roving Reporter October 2015cont: 3Roving reporter October show & sales
5	Roving reporter October show & sales cont: 2
6	Roving reporter October show & sales cont: 3, Deuterocohnia brevispicata article by Derek 10/2006
7	Deuterocohnia brevispicata article by Derek 10/2006 cont: 2. November/ Christmas meeting
8	Membership fees/ subscriptions for 2016: Reflections from you Secretary. Christmas greetings



Roving Reporter October 2015

The popular plant was won by Julie Batty with her flowering *Quesnelia* ‘Tim Plowman’. This is a select form of *Q. marmorata* with extra curly leaves. This caused Bill Treloar (who had been volunteered to be the orator) to wax eloquent on its beauty and its similarity to a *Billbergia* flower. Yes, there is a subgenus of *Quesnelia* called *Billbergioides* but as I pointed out things get technical to try to tell what is a *Billbergia* and what is a *Quesnelia*. I can now tell you that among other things botanists are looking for sepals with obtuse apex, petals double the length of the sepals and stamens adnate to the middle portion of the petals for a *Quesnelia*. Discussion ensued as to how we could learn about the different genera. As I said it is hard to do without being technical. Technical is an interesting word because it is a challenge to some and a complete turn-off for others.



Quesnelia ‘Tim Plowman’.
(Photo J. Batty)

There is a half page Bromeliad key for Dummies in the Society’s Guide book AND I can also supply an 8 page expanded version which IS technical. The best way, as Bill pointed out, is to go slowly and ask questions at meetings so it gets absorbed. Yes, I can be technical to some and when I see a stunned look on faces I find it a challenge to get myself out of a technical mode. This happened at the meeting when a visitor wanted to know the name of a plant she had that had been in flower for months. I said that is the advantage of Bromeliads but they are really cheating because we tend to see the colour of the whole inflorescence with its bracts and things but the actual flowers are quite small and insignificant and not long lasting. It turned that the plant had been bought from Bunnings without a name, no doubt to bypass any possible Plant Breeding Rights! Yes, it was one of those *Aechmea fasciata* hybrids that featured in our July? Meeting about Bromeliad names which could go under the names of ‘Stefani ‘ or ‘Felicia’

I did think we would have a short meeting because of the topic “Resurrected plants from the Raffle Table” Was I in for a surprise! Some members had done a great job. One was called *Billbergia* ‘Hallelujah’. I say called, because when it first came into this country some years ago it was hybridised by so many that it has clouded the issue and has me scratching my head as to identity. It certainly had hybrid vigour and as with many *Billbergias* they are at their best when under watered and underfed. Talking of *Billbergias* looking different with different spots on leaves because of cultural conditions, you must remember Julie’s ‘Golden Joy’. I have now convinced Julie that it is great fun checking up names in Bromeliad Cultivar register just to compare. She had a problem because there is also a ‘Golden Joy Purple’ there too. Which one was hers? In the 1990’s after one of their Brom crawls in the Eastern States, the Butchers brought home a ‘Golden Joy’ from Bill Morris. It had a complicated parentage where you would expect varied offspring. Anyway, our plant finally flowered with green petals which sometimes took on a hint of blue at the tip. It was popular and offsets were in great demand. Only recently via the various chat groups on the internet Geoff Lawn found out there was a ‘Golden Joy’ growing in NSW with dark blue or purple petals.

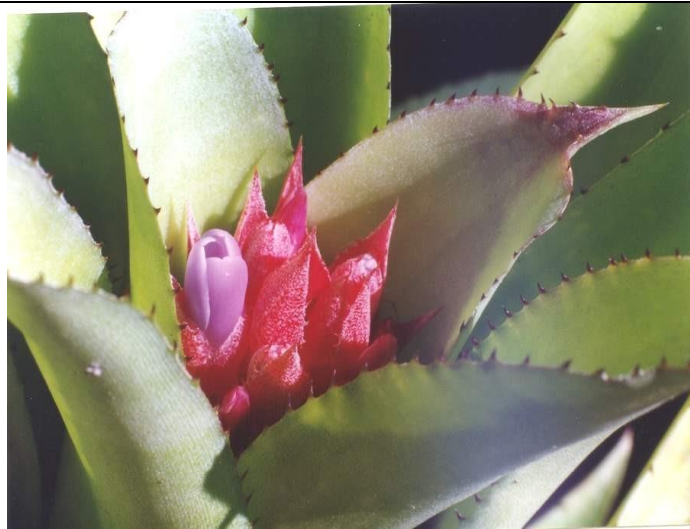
Roving Reporter October 2015 cont: 2

He had no option but to create 'Golden Joy Purple' and hope that those growing this plant would notice the difference. I would like to suggest that Julie's plant is home grown and has green petals.

Neo 'Maggies Pride' as Bill pointed out is an easily recognisable variegated Neo that originated in Adelaide. Margaret Hick was never shy in pointing out its good points. I am reminded of the time we were on holiday in the US and were visiting Dennis Cathcart's nursery in Florida and saw rows and rows of this plant. As I said to Dennis, "You don't have to tell me the name of those."

We must not forget the offset lying there called Billbergia 'Raffle Prize'. This name originated in March 2000 so you excuse us if our memory is hazy. Bill was involved in getting this plant off the Trading Table and wanted to know its name. Nobody could help so Margaret said "Why not call it 'Raffle Prize'?" AND the name stuck. I have a feeling that this outstanding plant has not left South Australia.

Finally we must remember the *Aechmea recurvata* 'Blue Bonnet' which I queried but need further investigation. Julie has since come to the rescue by letting me know we had looked at this anomaly in our Gazette Vol 3 in 2013. This time we must show the true 'Blue Bonnet' that originated in NSW. It is shy because the inflorescence stays hidden in the leaf rosette and not at all like our imposter. I can only suggest that Geoff changes his label to *Aechmea recurvata* hybrid. It is such a hardy plant with lots of offsets it may well appear on the Raffle table again – so beware.



Aechmea recurvata 'Blue Bonnet' (Photo P. Franklin)



Aechmea recurvata 'Blue Bonnet' IMPOSTER
(Photo J. Batty)

Margaret was really proud of the *Dyckia marnier-lapostollei* var *estesviesii* that she had rescued from my *Dyckia* patch and removed all the dead leaves and weeds. Long handled pliers do come in handy for such a task if you want to reduce swearing and BLOOD. She nearly won a prize for her efforts.

Dean Roberts showed what can be done with a candle holder, some mallee roots and a few tillandsias. Seems he is following in the footsteps of George Rudolph. Talking of Dean he showed us the South Australia Cactus & Succulent Society Journal for 2014. It appears it was their 50th anniversary and they gave a summary of past officers. The Butchers featured as did Noel Richards and it brought back memories. I was also reminded that they include *Dyckia* and *Deuterocohnia* plus some of our other pricklies in their succulent section but they don't seem to be up to date with their naming. For example there were some great photos of an *Abrometiella* which we know became *Deuterocohnia* 23 years ago.



Dyckia marnier-lapostollei var *estesviesii* (Photo J. Batty)

This month I am pleased that I have no unregistered plant names to report on. I have been chided by the Registrar that although I report these he doesn't see many that actually get registered. As I pointed out these problems did not originate in SA but had been imported from the eastern States. So those who have such plants are urged to contact your supplier and twist their arms.

Remember if a plant is worth growing it is worth a proper registered name Mind you, if you have a plant with a nurseryman's name like Super Select it is better not to change because your supplier will never listen to you.

It was good to see a *Racinaea multiflora* just coming into flower. You don't often see this genus around in Adelaide. Some may think them difficult because of their somewhat wider leaves but they are as hardy as Tillandias which they were classified as, before 1993. Yes, 'multiflora' sounds a grand name suggesting many flowers and it does have many of these but the petals are very small. I wonder what variety it is because there is the insipid one with green floral bracts or var. *tomensis* with its red floral bracts.

This leads us to the *Tillandsia* stand which was full of colour. One that did catch Bill's eye was one called *carminea* x *recurvifolia* v. *subsecundifolia*. It is so new that I did not recognise the name. It has just been registered as 'Carmen Gem' a hybrid done by Barry Genn. *T. carminea* can be described as a small *T. stricta* with secund leaves – that is the leaves all bent one way. This is often seen with Tillandsias that grow on vertical rockfaces and need to grow this way to stop them falling off and to gather whatever moisture they get. It is not a common species and I am not sure if it is in Adelaide. I know that many years ago I imported a plant with this name and when it flowered the only thing that linked it to this species was the secund leaves. It has white flowers and is called 'Dennis'. Some of you may have this.

Talking of littlies we had both *T. sprengeliana* and *T. kautskyi* there but who could tell the difference. Officially, it differs from *T. sprengeliana* by having leaves which are uniformly covered by appressed grey scales. They look metallic grey. *T. sprengeliana* has green leaves which have asymmetric, erect, rough, spreading scales which appear grey green velvet punctulate. All other characters are identical within the normal range.

I am reminded of our August meeting when Len brought in 'Ormesby' which is said to be a hybrid between these two species but not registered and wonder how you tell the difference if it is halfway way between the parents.



Roving Reporter Oct 2015 Show

Another successful show. It certainly looked like that to me. There were a few grumbles about the lack of numbers in the display and yet if there is space between plants you see them better. Some other Societies offer a free raffle ticket for bringing in display plants.

Now to the second task that was off loaded onto us on the front desk regarding what prompted visitors to come to our show. I have been there for YEARS and have a gut feeling from where they emerge but as for getting a count it becomes very tricky. Some you can tell that they are regular or is it 'a' regular because they whizz past to the sales area and you think you can catch them on the way back. No hope! Some that have a starry look you can consider as newbies. But what do you ask? If it is a personal reminder, is it email or letter. If it is advertising, which paper. If Radio, which station. If show which show. If promotional talks that Bev or Adam gets involved in, which one. Etc. By the time I know the answer I forgot to write it down. Shamira seemed to have better luck than I and was able to record some detail. If you can get free advertising that is great. If you have to pay, then are you after those who buy up big or just browse. Undoubtedly those who buy big are more likely to have come because of the personal reminders. Great if they are on Email but if not why not treat the letter as an automatic renewal if handed in at the Show. Those who do not attend are crossed off the postal list.

The checkout chicks and the bloke from Nairne could keep an eye on the big spenders and make sure they are looked after but they are probably doing this anyway. And then there is Adam keeping an eye on such customers with his personal touch.

Mention must be made of Bob from Nairne because we know he has progressed from L to P and is now proficient. He has now requested that his right index finger plays such a vital role in his unpaid job that it be insured. The Secretary refused AND those who were 'front of house' gave him two index fingers.

Roving Reporter Oct 2015 Show cont: 2

And so to the plants on display. The recently purchases of stands with arms showed off many plants to perfection.

Blasts from the past included Neoregelia 'Barbarian' which looks like the one that got to Adelaide. This is a Grace Goode hybrid from over 30 years ago and in those days I assumed that hybridists selected the best and destroyed the rest, Now this is the norm when you do a primary cross between two species because the seedlings should look very similar and have hybrid vigour. But when you cross using hybrids you get a motley of seedlings, This is where the hybridist should be selecting the best which I believe they do, but then sell the rest. The parents in this case were ('Beefsteak' x 'Durispina') where you would expect varied seedlings. Photos on the Bromeliad Cultivar Register seems to suggest that plants grown interstate are not quite the same as we have in Adelaide which I think is just as good.



Neoregelia 'Barbarian' (Photo J. Batty)

Another one was Vriesea 'Hoelscheriana' which you would think, by it having a Latin name was a species, but just to confuse you we now start the name with a Capital letter. The following shows what I wrote about 18 years ago:

Vriesea 'Hoelscheriana' by Butcher 1997

Vic Przetocki of Perth, Western Australia sent me details of a hybrid he had done (Vriesea 'Infatuation') where he used Vriesea 'Hoelscheriana'. His description of Vriesea 'Hoelscheriana' did not match the parentage as stated in the International Checklist (1979) by Padilla of (*heterostachys x simplex*) Note that parentage is not given in Flora Neotropica (1977) p1272 nor in Bromeliaceen (1962) by Richter so where did it come from? Vic's plant had leaves that were spotted suggesting *Vriesea saundersii* as a probable parent. This had me contacting Bill Morris who has been growing Bromeliads in Australia since the 1950's. Bill has a good memory and remembered importing this Vriesea 'Hoelscheriana' from David Barry Jr. The Bromeliad Society Bulletin 1954 #3 and #4 shows that David Barry Jr brought back Vriesea 'Hoelscheriana' from the Munich Botanic Gardens.

In 1997 I contacted Josef Bogner, Curator at the Munich Botanic Gardens and Vriesea 'Hoelscheriana' is still growing there. Alas, he was unable to advise parentage and he was unable to find any reference in any publication other than Richter's Bromeliaceen. So we were no further forward.

We know that Billbergia 'Hoelscheriana' was done by Kittel in 1898 so it is highly probable that Vriesea 'Hoelscheriana' came from the same era and the same hybridist. If we were guessing at parentage we would suggest *V. saundersii* and *V. guttata* because both were popular with hybridists in this era and both have traits that are seen in Vriesea 'Hoelscheriana'.

For other information see under Vriesea 'Kitteliana'

May 2010 Matthias Asmuss in Venezuela reported an unknown Vriesea which we feel sure is the same as this hybrid even though the quoted parentage seems wrong. We can only assume that Padilla guessed the wrong parents some 30 years ago. There does seem differences in the amount of scurfing on the floral bracts but not enough to warrant a different cultivar name."

One Tillandsia that caught the eye had very dark blue petals and reminiscent of the original paintings from the 1800's. So many of the same species in collections these days are just a darkish blue. If you checked the label you would have seen ex Marnier Lapostolle. Many of you will know the name because he made his money in liqueurs in France so how did it get to Australia? I got mine from Andy Staelens from Sydney who got it in 1960. He is not with us now but he was a refugee who made good here in Australia. During World War 2 he was helped by a French girl. When the War was over he went back to that area of France and found the girl and married her! These are the sorts of memories I get just looking at my plant.



T. aeranthos ex marnier lapostolle
(Photo J. Batty)

Roving Reporter Oct 2015 Show cont: 3

I am sure that on seeing the clump of *Tillandsia kirschnekii* in flower made many make a bee-line for the sales tables. It was certainly impressive.

“*T. kirschnekii*, named after E. Kirschnek who discovered the plant, is a remarkable, small species of *Tillandsia* with large, blue-violet flowers which resemble those of *T. caerulea*, *T. streptocarpa*, *T. paleacea* and *T. arhiza*, but these other species have no relationship with *T. kirschnekii*. The key in L.B. Smith's *Flora Neotropica*, No. 14, Part 2, Tillandsioideae, leads to *T. caerulea* on the basis of "flowers divergent" and it has a similar distribution: South Ecuador and northern Peru; but there is no relationship between the 2 species. So far, *T. kirschnekii* is known only from the type locality.”

So if you did buy one, cherish it even though it will take a long time to form a clump the size on display.



T. kirschnekii, (Photo J. Batty)

Vriesea ‘Margarita’ with its two-tone green variegation looked so different to the normal stark green and white variegation that is so popular. This hybrid originates from Florida from Grant Groves who is a prolific hybridiser who rarely registers so he must have considered this one, extra special.



Vriesea ‘Margarita’ (Photo J. Batty)

Finally, let us finish on a prickly note with the fairly large plant on the end of the table near the door. I just hope you did not brush against it! It was *Deuterocohnia brevispicata* which must be ready to flower soon. Here is its story

***Deuterocohnia brevispicata* by Derek Butcher Oct 2006**

It all started when Lieselotte Hromadnik and her husband collected a plant near Chuquisaca at 1300m in Bolivia some 20 years ago. Lieselotte is known more for her *Tillandsia* collecting in the highlands of Bolivia and Peru but she had an interest in the pricklies too! This particular specimen was grown on at the Heidelberg Botanic Garden in Germany under the watchful eye of Werner Rauh. It flowered in captivity and was named *Deuterocohnia brevispicata* by Lieselotte and Werner jointly in 1988 in what is lovingly called Trop. Subtrop. Pflanz. I duly translated the description from German to English for my own records and there it stayed, just in case it may come in useful in the future.

In 2002, on one of the many trips that Len Colgan from Adelaide made to Germany to visit Renate Ehlers to increase his *Tillandsia* collection, he was able to visit Heidelberg Botanic Gardens and even acquired rare *Tillandsia* from there too. He must have really impressed them because shortly after he was sent seed which had previously been stored in a frozen state to increase their longevity of viability. One of the batches was called *Deuterocohnia brevispicata*. We don't know much about freezing seed although we do know that in this case Timm Stolten had frozen the seed as an experiment in a regular freezer at -18C for nearly two years before sending some to Len. Non-frozen seed from this species are viable after 12 months so we did not learn much! However, we do know that the seed came from the type specimen where the same flower spike has flowered 3 times a year regularly for the last 18 years!

On receipt of the seed out came my records so we knew what the plant should look like but I was not going to wax lyrical because it was only seed we had. As is usual with generous Len, he spread the seed around growers in Australia (and Adelaide). We had little success but there were rumours that John Catlan and Genny Vauhkonen had succeeded. We are growing seedlings from John but they are exceedingly slow. I had heard rumours that one of these plants was producing a long long flower spike and no sign of it flowering. So it was great to get photos in the Sept/Oct 2006 issue of Bromlink – The Goldcoast Group Newsletter – of the plant in flower.

I contacted the owner of the plant, Lyn Hall who supplied me with coloured photos. So here is the next part of the story. John Catlan got the seed in 2002 and, Ian and Lyn bought a small seedling in Oct 2004 because they wanted something different for their cactus and succulent rockery. Less than 2 years later it was in flower. We know that in every seed batch there are always one or two plants that grow much faster than the rest – was this one of them? Or is it just the fabled Queensland weather plus fertiliser? Lyn tells me no fertiliser and sandy soil so the only other option is that the plant likes free root room. Outside plantings are great but you must have plans to weed from time to time! Anyway, Lyn did not expect such a flowering phenomenon. Remember that the description said flowering to 1.2m and here the inflorescence was up to 2m long and bending towards the ground. With the aid of ropes and a nearby tree the flower stem was kept fairly erect. The flowering habit is odd to say the least although the name 'brevispicata' gives a hint but 'strobilata' may have been more descriptive. Brevispicate means short spike which does not refer to the generally-called flower spike but to the short side branches. Strobilate means like a pine-cone and here you have a scape some 50cm long emerging before the first red 'pinecone' appears and every 10cm or so a new red 'pinecone' stretching to over 2metres if you live on the Gold Coast.

Eventually from these 2.5 cm diam 'pinecones' flowers emerge where the petals form a bicoloured tube which is predominantly red but with a clear bright green tip. A colour combination only nature could think up!

Please remember not to remove the flower head because it will just flower again, again and again. The Germans want to know what magical climate you have on the Gold Coast because it takes them 10 years from seed to flowering. I have told them the secret is 'hot air' caused by bragging!!

I am told that John and Genny at Jacob's Well have 'hundreds' of these plants if you are interested in something different by way of pricklies. But remember if you do come from down south in Australia you will have to wait a bit longer for flowering.

November meeting / Christmas breakup

Again another good roll-up for our last meeting of the year. The special afternoon tea was only one of the draw cards & the opportunity to swap a pup & participate in the auction another.

There was a short meeting with a relaxed & social atmosphere with everyone happy to mix and chat.

Unfortunately Derek & Margaret were noticeably absent due to health challenges (only 1 of very few meetings they have missed over the years!) & they were missed.

There was spirited bidding at the auction. Bill Treloar showed he has a many talents by taking over as auctioneer assisted by Adam who gave descriptions of each plant. Some got bargains but others may have spent more than they would have liked, due to more than one person after the plant concerned. Yes, some get carried away by the heat of the moment - the same situation arises at our sales days for those who are there anxiously waiting for the time the doors open.

The best plants must be there at the beginning – mustn't they? if the person next to you in the crush takes an interest in a plant it must be good. He who hesitates is lost so you buy / bid for the plant and count the cost later.



Bill & Adam during the auction (Photo J. Batty)

Membership fees/ subscriptions for 2016

Our subs have been \$10 per person per year for a long time & are recommended to be increased. Further discussion at January meeting then ratified at our AGM in February.

Reflections- From your Secretary

2015 has been another successful yet busy “Bromaholic” year involving several presentations to Garden clubs, Festival of Flowers, visits to members gardens by garden clubs & a visit to Peters inspirational garden, sales extravaganzas, meetings, display of Bromeliads in Orchid club Royal show display & Home and Garden show yet there was still time to nurture & appreciate our Bromeliads.

It is an appropriate instance to recall those friendships we have lost in the last couple of years but memories remain dear (Jeanne, Bob, George-Gerd, Colin & Trevor) & again acknowledge their contributions to our Society- sadly missed but never forgotten. Our thoughts are with members who have lost loved ones.

I would like to extend sincere thanks to all with special appreciation to individual members who assist with the many mundane but necessary chores. Also gratitude is given to those who continue to give me support & friendship. It is great to be part of a friendly, inclusive & informative group.

Seasons greetings, wishing everyone a safe & prosperous 2016.

I look forward to January when we meet again to continue the mutually rewarding yet at times challenging pastime. Bev

Christmas



Safe & rewarding gardening!