



the Propagator

International Plant Propagators' Society
Australian Region - Newsletter Spring 2007 - No: 15

GARDENING EVENTS

Whether it is a local show, or field day or one of the large exhibitions such as MIFGS or Gardening Australia in a capital city, the general public have an opportunity to see first hand what is new in plants, garden design and new products. Well known broadcasting personalities are often at the large events to capture public attention. These events are a great opportunity for the horticultural industry to show off what is new and exciting in a relatively inexpensive way.

At the Gardening Australia show in Sydney I spent time on a stand answering inquiries from the general public. The plants were looking great as they were fully in bloom. You did not need an attractive label to stimulate interest.

Some of questions on the day arose when visitors spotted the range of kangaroo paws, and they would say that they had "had no luck with them". As the discussion progressed I found that some varieties were growing well in their garden but others that would be regarded as generally not suitable to their climate had been a failure.

How can we then name and describe our product better? Most ornamental plant names have no association with the features or benefits of a plant, they are mostly an eye catcher named with either a catchy phrase or derivation from someone's name. So for many gardeners they have only the label to show them how the plant may perform in their situation.

Maybe the real trouble is that labels cannot tell the whole story. The only alternative to most consumers is for them to rely on in-store advice or perhaps less likely look up some reference material. Perhaps the industry may need to look at developing an Internet based service for gardeners based on something like the "grow what where" type of books to improve customer satisfaction. Our customers rely on the web for everything else, why not plant information as well?

It was great to have the opportunity to talk to gardeners first hand and hear their concerns. I was pleased that so many people were there showing an interest in gardening, this is encouraging news for the future.

- Bruce Higgs



Left: Angus Stewart (ABC Gardening Australia presenter and IPPS member) explaining some options for native ground-cover plants. Right: outdoor green-life displays attracted many visitors at Gardening Australia in Sydney this year.



President's Comment

I am delighted to be able to tell you that the Dubbo conference seems to have been a success both as a learning experience and financially. Numbers of attendees were at about 160 and included a number of students that took the trouble to travel from Canberra.



I probably don't need to go to too much detail regarding the conference itself as that has been well covered in Bruce Higgs' excellent winter edition of the Propagator.

As we move on from the conference experience, I am keen to complete some of the tasks that we explained at the AGM arising from the planning workshop held earlier this year with a particular emphasis on attracting new members. Improving our relationship with other horticultural industry bodies and institutions was a key step.

I would also like to encourage the possibility of increasing the number of area meetings we are holding. This has always been a hot topic, but I wonder if the idea forward could be something like that the Victorians have used (where they combined with a day with the State Industry Association which was coordinated with the help of the Industry Development Officer). After all we are all trying to promote horticulture generally. It would be good if we could use this template in the other states as well and I certainly would try to attend these functions if I am able to.

The IPPS International meeting and pre-conference tour is now looming and it seems we will be well represented, not only by our two international directors Greg and Clive, but also Pam Berryman will join part of the tour as well. Pam will then attend a special meeting being held for IPPS secretaries from all of the international regions.

Coupled with this will be Wayne Stephens' young propagators group, who will be on the short tour and attending the conference, we should get some great feedback on these events when they return.

The directors will be looking into ways to link with industry bodies in the future with the view of being able to promote horticulture together and offer more opportunities to our propagators.

- David Cliffe

Pam Berryman promoting IPPS at the Brisbane Green Expo in July



Executive Officer's Comment

Since Dubbo Conference I have been kept busy tending to 'every day' administration tasks.

International Conference

The IPPS Southern Region of North America has invited all Officers, Directors, Alternate Directors, Regional Secretary-Treasurers, Members of IPPS and spouses from all regions to participate in the 2007 International Tour.

The full tour commences in Washington, DC on Tuesday 16th October and concludes on Wednesday 31st October 2007. I will be attending the short tour which commences on Tuesday 23rd October from Asheville, NC and will depart from Nashville on Sunday 28th October 2007. I will be away from the IPPS Australian Office from 24th September '07 to 30th October '07.

Membership

The Australian Region of IPPS has 243 members. Whilst we have seen a slight increase in membership there are still some Members who have not renewed their membership for 2007.

Melbourne Conference – 1st to 4th May 2008

Next years conference will be held at York on Lilydale Resort (1 hrs drive from Melbourne. Theme will be: **OPPORTUNITY THROUGH DIVERSITY**

Contact Details

To ensure Office records are kept 'up-to-date' I would appreciate it if Members could please notify me of changed contact details, especially if you have changed telephone providers. Please forward any changed contact details to pjberry@iprimus.com.au

Financial

IPPS is financially sound and we are on target with the budget.

Payment of US\$13,595 was forwarded to the International Board on 5.06.07. This equates to \$16439.01 at a rate of 0.8275.

New Members who joined after Dubbo conference are;

Ms. Eve Archbold	- Goldfields Revegetation
Mr. Grame Hardidge	- Bush Gum Gardens
Mr. Andrew Lee	
Mr. Mark Raitelli	- Withcott Seedlings
Mr. Tim Sansom	- The Diggers Club
Ms. Karen Seward	- Albany Forestry
Mr. Andrew Watkinson	- Al Darnaky
Mr. Randall Wee	- EcoDynamics
Mr. Bruce Wilson	- Alpine Nurseries

Membership subscription fees for 2008 will be as follows;

Option 1 (Book)	173.00
Option 2 (CD)	155.00
Option 3 (Book & CD)	211.00
Option 4 (Membership)	119.00

Sponsorship

THANK-YOU to Leonie and Charles Sweeney for sponsoring Sianee Guy, who was one of the 'Six Pack' at Dubbo conference, 1 full year IPPS membership to receive Book Option (\$173).

'Let the word of IPPS spread amongst us'.

Pam Berryman

International Directors Report

The next IPPS International conference is to be held in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Apart from Clive and myself there will also be a propagators study tour attending. The 2008 conference is planned for New Zealand.

Finances for the society continue to be monitored and are falling within budget guidelines.

Committees have been established. The 'at large' committee has been discussing the possibility of having members that are geographically remote form a group that is serviced by the International office. Some options have been put and suggestions made. The committee will report to IPPS International in October.

- Greg McPhee

Younger Members Report

The group

Since the last meeting held in Dubbo not much has happened with the group. It would be easier for us to communicate as a group if we were to have the web page set up for us soon as possible. I would like to propose a discussion for the other ideas and suggestions also mentioned at the last meeting.

Next Gen

I have recently been asked to write an article for Next Gen explaining what the IPPS younger members group is, why we have started it and what the benefits of being a member would be. I will write the article as soon as possible and it should be published in the next issue of Next Gen. This could be a step to bringing us closer as young propagators which means more young ideas for the society.

USA Youth tour

Funding for the youth study tour has been approved by HAL. Six young enthusiastic students are attending the trip. The students are:

- John Messina - Sunrays Nurseries Victoria
- Mirim Wright - Swinbourne TAFE Victoria
- Mark Vanderstaay - Westland Nurseries Tasmania
- Tony Voss - Westland Nurseries Tasmania
- Wayne Stephens-Advantage Plant Production NSW

Greg and Lindy McPhee will be our tour guides on the trip. We arrive in Asheville on the 22nd October where we will be joining the Southern Regions short tour which

Southern African Exchange 2008

Now is the time to encourage our young propagators to apply for something that past awardees have said is a life changing experience.

IPPS, Australia and IPPS, Southern Africa have established an exchange program. The intent is to have propagators at the start of their career gain experience of each other's industry and to build a better understanding of each country.

In 2008 a young propagator from Australia will visit South Africa for about three weeks in March and be hosted by a local nursery industry family. They will work with South African propagators as well as visit gardens and other places of botanic interest. The visit will include the Southern Africa IPPS conference which is to be held in Cape Town.

There are only a few things that are not all that challenging that we need to know, for example:

What is your name and contact details.

Are you able to travel to South Africa in March 2008?

Do you have a current passport or could you get one?

Would your employer support this application?

Can you tell us about your background in horticulture, including training and work experience.

Why would you like to travel to South Africa?

Download and send in the form from the IPPS website www.ipps.org.au and you could be selected for the time of a lifetime.

will finish up with their annual conference. We then will fly over to L.A to start the second part of the tour. Places visited will include:

- Getty museum and gardens
- Rose nursery
- Other local nurseries
- San Francisco cable cars
- Suasalito
- Yosemite NP
- Kings Canyon
- Pasadena
- Huntington and nursery

We will fly home on the 7th November.

All the information gathered will be shared with the industry by writing a report to HAL, an article for Australian Horticulture and a presentation for our annual conference in Melbourne 2008.

That's all for the younger members report. -
Wayne Stephens

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR DISCOVERY - MANAGING INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

A number of our members attended the “20 Years of Plant Breeder’ Rights (PBR) Symposium” held in Canberra on the 8 th June 2007. Opinions of those I have spoken to appear mixed about PBR. As it is very applicable to the employment of many of us especially those developing new plants or hoping to stumble on one some day, I thought that it was time we had a review of intellectual property (IP) management.

Businesses seek to keep information about products and processes proprietary in order to give some protection to their development investment so they can recover costs and make a profit. In organisations at large this is done in a number of ways:

- Just keeping information internal and not divulging it. This often involves various internal security systems - which include product codes, confidentiality agreements or contracts with employees and others. Trade Practices and similar legislation also prohibit collusion.
- Having a copyright on designs and published material, and being willing to defend it in the courts.
- Taking out a registered trade mark for a name under which products are sold. For many well known organisations the name may be worth many millions of dollars and they are prepared to defend breaches so that a name does not become generic through common use.
- Taking out patents on products or processes that have been developed. This gives very good protection but costs a significant amount of money to implement and ultimately defend. It is usually not done unless the patent will protect many millions of dollars in sales.

These are some things that I have often thought about as a member of IPPS who seeks and shares. There are many examples of this in industries with a large number of businesses, where collaboration and sharing of knowledge are beneficial compared to those firms that do not take part.

Systems that are observed at conference or in tours may not relate to or even benefit the way you operate. Generally I think we all benefit by being able to see good ideas which raise the bar on what can be achieved in our operations.

So what are the implications for horticulture? The picture is even more complicated for plants where ACRA plant registration and plant breeders rights (PBR) exist in addition to the list above.

The Australian Cultivar Registration Authority Inc. (ACRA) is responsible for

registration of Australian plants and hybrids under the 2004 International Code for Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants. Registration is for names of cultivars of Australian native plants and hybrids. The authority maintains a list of plant cultivars - <http://www.anbg.gov.au/acra/>, as well as data and plants held at the Australian National Botanic Gardens herbarium. ACRA also provide advice on determining if you have a cultivar, and guidelines for their naming.

There are many examples in ornamental horticulture of companies that rely on “their label” design for a plant to protect their investment. Under Australian law (Copyright Act 1968) they may be protected by copyright (as long as you can prove the date when you first issued these), this can be extended by a few simple measures to give more international coverage. It lasts for 50 years past the creator, and there is no registration. When it comes to defending it in the courts, it may be a case of “how deep are your pockets”. It is often recommended that you use the name of the copyright holder and date with the symbol © letting others know that you are prepared to defend your claim. For further information about this see www.copyright.org.au.

Another thing you can do is register a trade mark “™”. Registration of a plant or name in Australia is covered under Class 31 of the Trade Marks Act 1995 through application to IP Australia. Names of invented plants under the PBR register are precluded from having a trade mark. Policing and enforcement are the responsibility of the trade mark owner.

A number of companies have successfully trade marked their name as part of a plant range or even a particular name in conjunction with the botanical name. For example Austriflora™ have trade marked their name, symbol and varieties under a range, such as Yellow Wing™ Banksia (see www.austriflora.com for further examples). Incidentally they also have copyright on labels. For further information see www.ipaustralia.gov.au.

You can take out standard patents for plants and specific cultivars. Examples may include some genetically modified species such as grains. These need to be taken out in a country by country basis.

Otherwise PBR registration is the more common means of protection of cultivars. PVR and now PBR give protection against a limited range of activities such as propagation, import/export, sale or conditioning of goods, and may last for about 20 years (or as long as you pay the fees). It allows purchased tubestock that has royalty paid to be grown and sold by another grower. Labels carry the PBR logo where it has been granted.





Left plant is Pimelia rosea Deep Dream under the Modern Wildflowers trade mark. On the right is Grevillea Lady 'O' a PBR variety with distinctive label.

The government's aim with the PBR system has been to improve the competitiveness of agricultural industries. It seeks to increase investment in breeding, and improve the access to best varieties/breeding lines, and speed technology transfer. This follows from agreements through the specialised UPOV system (*Union internationale pour la protection des obtentions végétales*) which included 17 member states earlier this year. Unfortunately it does not include many near neighbours to Australia.

Many Australian based plant breeders compete in international markets on quality through large investment in R&D (e.g. for food crops such as wheat). At the symposium attendees learnt that through acquisition and development Monsanto, Syngenta AG, DuPont and Groupe Limagrain have a combined market share of world seed sales of 30% (Dr. P. Brennan CropGen International - quoted from UNCTAD, 2005). Applications still increase in the "food" sector.

The story for ornamentals appears to be different, initially in the USA where the system has operated for a longer time the number of PVR applications rose quickly but dropped to zero by 2005 (Brennan et al). In Australia the number of applications for ornamentals exceed double that of all others (D. Waterhouse, IP Australia - paper at symposium). Most are reported to be foreign filings. Reasons given by Dr. Brennan for the decline in the USA were:

- insufficient return on investment
- variety IP protection is not cost effective for varieties with limited short commercial life
- or preference for utility patents

For ornamentals members have suggested at previous IPPS meetings that the average R&D and application cost for PBR on a plant is from \$10,000 to \$20,000, not like the amounts spent on developing new grains or fruit tree varieties. Then there is the investment in time, where a breeding program for ornamentals may take 15 years or so, unless you chance upon a sport or something.

In order to complete an application you may need to consult an approved 'Qualified Person' accredited for the species to assist with the technical details of the application. This includes planning and supervising the comparative growing trials. This person also liaises with the PBR examiner.

But is the reward too small to justify or enforce for many of the ornamentals? Perhaps this again is a case of having "deep pockets", although I note that many nurseries appear to have been successful with PBR registrations.

A concept put forward at the conference was that applicants should consider having a threefold protection for a new plant breed. This could be a name trade mark, PBR and separate patent. I am not sure how this would work for ornamentals. A comment from an attendee at the symposium was that there appeared to be a number of lawyers there.

Instead of registration or a do nothing strategy you could openly use and publish details about your variety. This prevents someone else gaining a PBR or a patent for the same thing but would allow competition to freely use your variety. You should watch the applications, as you can object if someone does try to. Sometimes PBR registrations lapse, at which point you may be able to propagate material without a license.

For the latest list of PBR registrations and much more information on PBR (with a database for searches) and trade marks please see: <http://www.ipaustralia.gov.au> The latest Plant Varieties Journal not only gives information on the latest varieties, applications but also changes to the law, agency changes. In the appendices there are helpful lists of 'Qualified Persons', and 'Centralised Test Centres'. If you are intending a number of applications you should considering having your operation recognised as a centralised test centre.

Also remember that there are a number of fellow members who have registrations who you could ask for help.

This information is provided to help the reader gain a basic understanding of some Intellectual Property principles. It is not designed to provide legal, business or other relevant professional advice. You should seek independent legal, business or other relevant specialist advice if you would like to pursue these options.

- Bruce Higgs

Twenty years of PBR Seminar

On the 8th June 2007 I found myself in Canberra at a seminar organised by The Australian Centre for Intellectual Property in Agriculture (ACIPA) to reflect on 20 years of Plant Breeders Rights in this country.

As the holder of a PBR I was interested to attend this seminar. I was accompanied by fellow IPPS members Peter Ollerenshaw and Ian Paananen but it was disappointing to note the considerable lack of PBR grantees at the seminar and in particular ornamental nurserymen who hold the vast majority of PBR grants.

The seminar was well organised and the papers presented covered the topic well. Papers covering the history and use of the legislation were given but the most contentious issue on the day was the issue of policing.

Graham Fleming (Flemings Nursery) spoke of his companies cost in pursuing 'the bad guys' and the value gained by doing so ??? With so few legal cases being pursued the legal profession also expressed difficulty with a considerable lack of precedent to work with.

If any member is interested in looking at the papers presented at the seminar they are available on the (ACIPA) Website and would strongly recommend they be considered if an application for PBR is being considered. <http://www.acipa.edu.au/conferences.html#8Jun07>

Gaining a PBR grant is a reasonably easy process which is comparatively inexpensive to do, compared to a patent for instance. This being the case I was confident in applying for my PBR as I believe that there is a financial gain to be made, but at the end of the day this gain will only be had because of the honesty of the majority of the industry in Australia.

- Michael Gleeson

REGIONAL MEETINGS

All aboard the Propagation Bus Tour

It seemed like a good idea at the time. Get a few propagators and a small bus and visit some of the 'Hills' better propagators. It became a monster - we not only had to get the biggest bus we could find but had to get a second bus to cope with the number of people

Photos: from Robert Chin

Top - Andrew Raper at Rhodoglen Nurseries

Below - The group at PGA

that wanted to attend! All aboard for the combined NGIV IPPS Propagation Best Practice Bus Tour!

The NGIV, in conjunction with the International Plant Propagators Society (IPPS) organised the tour to show what nurseries are doing with the propagation. The four businesses we visited all offered something a little different. Rhodo Glen Nursery, Great Pine Nursery, Coolwyn Nurseries (Propagation site) and Plant Growers Australia (PGA).

Apart from the obvious advantage of looking at some great nursery businesses that are good at propagation, there was lots of 'networking,' swapping of trade secrets and some beautiful weather - well not quite!

The day finished well with many of the participants joining members of the NGIV's Tree & Shrub Growers group at the Bruce County for an enjoyable and informative dinner. Overall an excellent day which we have decided will be repeated - maybe next time on the Peninsula.

- Robert Chin



Profiles

Sandra Hetherington

Sandra organised the IPPS Launceston conference in 1999 and was President in 2000. She has assisted on the constitutional review team, and has received the Australian Region Award of Honour.



Sandra works for Norske Skog, and explained that her “role is to ensure softwood gets into the mill.” Norske Skog produces newsprint, using native forest regrowth and pine plantation wood. “All the things (well nearly all) that people hate about forestry, like cutting trees, log trucks and environmental issues get put under my umbrella.”

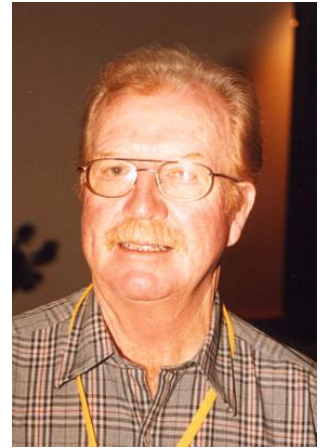
What are the things that you feel have created or made your standing in the industry? “Bruce, I think you are being too polite here, lets call a spade a spade. I don’t have any standing anywhere, let alone in the Industry. I am 4 feet nothing and have devoted my life to propagating my hair so I can be seen above the counter.”

What do you feel you have to share with others (particularly new members) of the ipps regarding “the world of propagation”. “Apart from the address of a very tolerant hairdresser, I have my share of scars from scapels, propagating knives and trolleys. I have certainly made a lot of mistakes in propagation and if anyone will listen I can probably tell you how not to propagate eucalypts and pines. I may even be able to share my experiences of the difficulty of collecting seed from recalcitrant clones of *E. vernicosa*, but we can save that for another edition”.

What are the significant things that you have personally gained through IPPS membership? “Ah you have me now Bruce, I can’t be flippant with this question, as IPPS has done so very much for me. It has increased my stature as a propagator and opened many opportunities for me to grow as a scientist and as a person. Through IPPS I have seen some great places in Australia and learnt a lot about our country. I have been privileged to represent this Region at an International level and have learnt how to “work the bus” to understand the issues that other Regions of IPPS are facing. I have learnt a lot about other cultures and how different we are in Australia, but also how similar we can be. I have learnt the craft of negotiation from some of the best and I have met some incredibly talented, inspiring and down to earth people in our Society. IPPS opens many doors; the opportunities are enormous and so are the friendships you can form. It is truly a grass roots organisation, which is a real bonus when you are 4 foot nothing.”

Ian Gordon

During his working life at the old Gatton College (more recently University of Queensland) Ian says he was always strongly encouraged to work closely with industry. “What better vehicle is there to liaise with industry than IPPS?”



Ian tells us that older members will remember David Simons who was Australian Region Editor for many years. David encouraged him to work with IPPS and he put a lot of effort into the Society.

He served two terms as Australian Region President and then was International President in 1996. He feels that “this definitely established my status with industry.” Today Ian runs a horticultural consultancy business (Horticultural Consultancy Services) as well as taking on the role of Australian Editor for Proceedings of the IPPS. He is also regarded as historian for the Australian Region.

Ian has a wealth of knowledge that he is willing to share, so all you need to do is ask the question. In his early years at Gatton he had the opportunity to build a nursery unit for teaching and commercial production. He tells the story with some pride that there they put together a very good set of propagation and growing on facilities and demonstrated the ability to propagate a range of difficult plants very successfully. A teaching position suited Ian well, as he has always been willing to share knowledge and has presented a large number of papers at IPPS conferences over the last 30 years.

During the 1980’s and 1990’s Ian tells us that he had the good fortune to be able to travel around the world to get to know the nursery and cut flower industries. In the course of this travel he visited all of the IPPS Regions and attended at least one conference in each region. Tony and Frances Biggs (our past Australian Region secretary) and Ian travelled to South Africa in 1996 to start the process of establishing IPPS there. It has been pleasing to see a Region commence there this year as a result of the efforts of many members.

When asked what significant things he had personally gained through membership. Ian said that he had made “a lot of good friends around the world of IPPS over the years and would encourage new members of the Society to take advantage of the benefits of membership.”



Michael Gleeson at the NGINA stand at Gardening Australia in Homebush Bay helping answer gardening questions. Of course he was wearing the IPPS cap and polo shirt.
Photo Bruce Higgs

Challenge

Now I hope that all of you members out there are fully aware of our Motto, "Seek & Share". Now you will notice two words here, SEEK, SHARE. One of these words denotes looking for something and the other denotes a process of giving.

So our motto is a two way street.

There was a time in the history of IPPS where membership required active "Seeking & Sharing" and members activity was recorded. If members did not participate actively their continued membership was threatened. This requirement is not as strict today but IPPS only works if we remember our motto.

So here is my challenge for you this time, have you been doing more Seeking than Sharing or perhaps more Sharing than Seeking. Give this some thought and challenge yourself to spend time driving up both sides of the street.

- Michael Gleeson

COMING EVENTS

NSW Regional Meeting at Scotts Tubes at Mangrove Mountain from 9 a.m. on the 31st of August.

North Brisbane Branch (Qld) – IPPS has been invited by the Nth. Brisbane Branch to be part of a Field Day to be held at Jackies Wholesale Nursery on Saturday 13th October 2007. Subject will be Horticultural Sustainability. Guest speakers will include: Annette McFarlane, John Daly and Des Warnock.

Melbourne Conference: 1-4 May 2008 at the York on Lilydale Resort. Each year the Australian Region holds a conference that is essential for propagators to attend. Watch the website for details. www.ipps.org.au

IPPS MERCHANDISE

Orders for IPPS:

Polo Shirts (Members \$25 and Non-Members \$30) and **Caps** (Members \$12 and Non-Members \$15) can still be placed with John Messina of Sunraysia Nurseries – Contact Details:

John Messina

Sunraysia Nurseries,
P.O. Box 45, Gol Gol NSW 2738
Ph: 02.5024 8502, Fax: 02.5024 8557,
Mobile 0417 389 075
Email: john@sunraysianurseries.com.au

Grafting Techniques – DVD's

Following DVD's are available for sale:

- Grafting of Roses
- Grafting of Rainforest Plants
- Grafting Techniques

\$15.00 each for Members / \$30.00 for Non-Members
Contact Pam Berryman for copies.

NZ Conference (International) May 22- 25 West Auckland, NZ at the Langham Hotel.

Rod Tallis Award

It is that time of year again when our young propagators need to be nudged and encouraged to apply for this prestigious award.

It is not too late to undertake some short duration project or research that could see some worthy propagator at the start of their career gain an award that they can be proud of and mark the start of a successful career in horticulture. Past editions of "the propagator" may give some ideas for projects, and help is available if you are unsure about designing an experiment.

All that needs to be done is do the work and submit an application. Contact details for Peter Lewis are on the IPPS website. Don't delay, or you will miss this great opportunity.

Your Say

Good news: Robert Chin has recently received a Churchill Fellowship to look at invasive plants and the nursery industry in US and Canada next year. We can look forward to hearing about this in future editions of the newsletter.

Newsletter Editors Comment

It really was good to see the humour in responses from Sandra in this issue. I am sure that all members wish Pam and her fiancé a all the best for their wedding.

Please pass one copy of the newsletter around at the workplace or leave it in a public place at work.

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