



Crowea exalata ssp magnifolia
image by Maria Hitchcock

Australian Plants Society Armidale & District Group

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Summer Edition 2016 - 4



Daisy bed from the Sinclair garden
(*Xerochrysum 'Glencoe'* in full bloom)

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Treasurer: Carole Fullalove _____

From the Editor: Dear members, this is your newsletter and all articles, snippets and photos are welcome. Deadlines for each issue is 3 weeks before the Forum in the months of:
February, May, August and November.

OFFICEBEARERS FOR 2015/16

President: Phil Rose Phone: 6775 3767
Vice President: Colin Wilson
Secretary: Helen Schwarz Phone: 6772 1584
Treasurer: Carole Fullalove
Membership: Colin Mulquiney and Ingrid Kalf
Auditor: John Nevin
Markets in the Mall, Outings and Arboretum Coordinator:
Patrick Laher Phone: 0427327719
Newsletter Editor, Web Master and OHS and Environmental Officer:
Neil Wilson Phone: 0434196604 e-mail: hn2905@gmail.com
Hospitality: Glenda Mulquiney
Our website: <http://www.aps-armidale.org.au/>

President's Report 2016

Our regular monthly meetings have been well attended with a wide range of topics from speakers on wetlands, growing *Banksia*, growing potted plants, the ANPSA conference, fire ecology, plants of the Tingha Plateau and botanical illustration. We are fortunate to have access to speakers of the highest calibre on such a wide range of topics.

Our newsletter continues to be of the highest standard with contributions on growing a wide range of local plants, recent activities, trips taken by members and planned events. The monthly markets stall continues to be a centre piece as a connection with the public not only answering a wide range of questions but also finding plants well suited to our climate. The arboretum has been maintained with new plantings, weeding and pruning. We owe all members who work on any of these activities a very special thanks.

A number of members entered in the Armidale Show and they were impressed that the native flowers on display survived the hot conditions much better than their exotic cousins.

We visited Mole Station in autumn and spring this year which always includes an interesting outing to nearby flora but also an opportunity to learn better propagation skills.

Other activities included stands at the open garden under the Botanic Gardens of Australia and N.Z. scheme and the St Peters Open Garden. A special thanks to the member owners of the gardens and those who contributed to the stalls. We also visited members' gardens, explored the Tingha Plateau, heard about the Black Gully project close to NERAM in Armidale, lunched together on the winter solstice and Wattle Day and last but not least a very entertaining morning producing smoked water.

Earlier in the year we were pleased to welcome John Andrews from APS NSW who came to inform us about the efforts of the current State executive to ensure that the Society is not

only running efficiently but will also ensure its future survival. Members were subsequently invited to comment via a survey and there have been meetings in Sydney and Tamworth during the State-get-together to inform about progress. This work is vital and we can only offer our full support.

At the time of writing, our membership officer Colin Mulquiney and secretary Helen Schwarz have indicated they will not be nominating for their positions next year. They have both played a valuable role for a number of years and I can only thank them for their effort. It is not possible to name all of those who have also contributed to such a successful year but to each and every one I can only say "thank you".

Phil Rose

Excursion to Tingha Plateau August 27

by Penelope Sinclair

Two cars left the Armidale Information Centre soon after 8.30. The first contained Pat our Leader, Colin, John and Neil. The second, Phil, Julia and Penelope. It was the first visit to the area for all of us and there were a couple of false turns before our first stop in the Tingha Plateau State Conservation Area NE of Tingha, just east of Old Mill road.

The area is open woodland with an upper story of scattered Eucalypts, Cypress pines and wattles with *Acacia fillicifolia*, the Fern-leaved wattle making a colourful display; a lot of shrubs and herbs were still in bud with promise of a great display in the next few weeks. *Leucopogon*



melaleuroides, the Beard Heath was flowering, spectacular and common. *Eucalyptus prava*, the Orange Gum was greatly admired as Phil made an attempt to measure its girth. The tiny sundews *Drosera peltata* nearby provided a great contrast.



After morning tea we spent time exploring the nearby granite domes where the rock depressions held more sundews, *Wurmbea* sp. Early

Nancy and *Brachyscombe stuartii* the Granite daisy. Returning to the vehicles we passed *Acacia triptera* the Spurwing Wattle, loaded with buds, together with more *Leucopogon melaleuroides*.



Next stop was further north and by a flowing creek. There was evidence of mining in the past with deep excavations and piles of spoil. Additional species seen included *Jacksonia scoparia* Dogwood, *Grevillea triternata* Spider flower, *Angophora floribunda* Rough Barked Apple, *Acacia penninervis* and *Callistemon pungens*. We were too early for the flowers.



After lunch we headed back towards Tingha passing an enormous fenced excavation,

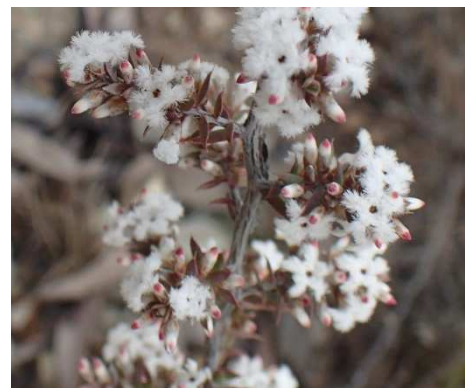
possibly an old mining site. A roadside stop nearby revealed an extensive stand of *Crowea exalta* in full bud. This is our society emblem and it was great to see such healthy plants. Other species nearby in the grassy woodland included *Davesia latifolia* the Bitter Pea, *Bossiaea* spp. *Hibbertia* spp. and *Hovea linearis*.





Leucopogon sp. emphasized the toughness of many of our local species. *Olearia* spp and *Grevillea ramosissima* were also present.

Once through Tingha we chose to return to Guyra on a different route; the first attempt resulted in a turnaround when we were confronted by a wide, swiftly flowing stretch of water, Widermans Creek. The attempt via Moredon Dams Road was more successful. A stop near Limestone Creek allowed us to enjoy the flowering wattles including *Acacia buxifolia*, Box-leaf wattle, *A. gunii*, the Ploughshare Wattle and more *A. ulcifolia* Prickly Moses. Fine specimens of



P.S. Six weeks later on 7th October, Eric and I returned to the Tingha Plateau, as I was keen to see the *Crowea exalta* in flower. There had been rain in the meantime and the area was quite

wet so we did not entirely retrace our steps. However some additional species were flowering - these included the Sundews *Drosera peltata* and the Spurwing Wattle *Acacia triptera*.



Other plants that had not previously caught my attention included *Kunzea oppositifolia* and the grey leafed *Hibbertia*.



It was disappointing to find the *Crowea* was still in bud and quite inconspicuous. However the *Daviesia latifolia* was making a great display and *Bossiaea obcordata* was also in flower.

We were quite daring and started following some of the many tracks through the area. As these were often narrow, wet and very rough our exploring involved a few trunabouts. As recompense the *Hakea microcarpa* together with



the mauve *Kunzea* made the bush light up. Persistence towards the north west brought us out at Gilgai and we were able to head back to Armidale via Bundarra, a smoother ride.

Vale Dr Mervyn Hegarty AM FRACI

Mervyn, who was Elwyn Hegarty's husband, recently passed away at Ken Thompson in his 90th year, after nearly five years in care there.

His whole working life was spent in Brisbane, as a CSIRO research biochemist, and for a time he was officer-in-charge of the former Cunningham Laboratory at St Lucia. He had retired in 1987, but continued for some years with the Division of Tropical Crops and Pastures as an honorary Post-retirement Fellow. He and Elwyn also formed a private consultancy, Plantchem Pty Ltd, assisting companies in the food, pharmaceutical and bushfood industries. RIRDC supported the publication of their book on sourcing, preparation, traditional uses and safety issues of commercial and other potentially used bushfood plants: <https://rirdc.infoservices.com.au/downloads/01-028.pdf>

Mervyn had also published about 70 scientific papers and reports on his work to identify and deal with plant toxins in pasture plants. Most notably, on *Indigofera spicata* in relation to uses of horsemeat, *Castanospermum australe* for use as human food, and *Leucaena leucocephala* in relation to chemical defleecing of sheep and some issues involving animal health,

He had also been vice-chairman of QUT (now QIT) Council, and became a Life Fellow. Merv had also been involved in setting up new tertiary institutions in Queensland, two of which later became Universities. His AM was awarded in 1992 for services to biochemistry, particularly in the field of plant toxins, and to technical education. Despite such a long retirement, and his having not had opportunities to make new friends since moving to Armidale in 2010, very many of his former colleagues and friends have been in contact with the family in recent weeks, mentioning their former association and particularly remembering him as a kind and gentle man.

Elwyn Hegarty



You are invited to the APS Christmas lunch, Saturday 10th December at Julia and Phil Rose's property, "Carwell" 236 Middle Farm Road, (turn LEFT off Waterfall Way, just past Commissioner Water Bridge – follow for about 2km on the left just after a tight corner).

Please arrive around 11.30 or any later time throughout the day. Any questions just ring 67753767. You will need to bring;

- Something for lunch perhaps to share,
- What you want to drink besides tea or coffee which will be provided,



- A piece of fruit, cut up, to put into a common fruit salad bowl. We will provide the ice-cream and cream.

Please bring surplus plants to swap with other members.

My Sixth Native Garden

by Verna Aslin

Native plant gardening seems to be something I am addicted to. In five different locations, I have set about establishing native gardens either from scratch or where only a handful of trees and shrubs constituted an existing garden. I'm currently embarked on my sixth native garden. Again it's a pioneer effort, trying to turn a half-acre grazing paddock with a thick carpet of kikuyu into a space which combines a mini-arboretum, small wetland and garden beds.

My block will comprise my retirement home, and currently I am visiting it every couple of months. It has (mostly) friable black loam and a sunny north-easterly aspect. It's located in



the far south coast town of Cobargo, and the volcanic soil derives from the nearby extinct volcano called Gulaga (formerly known as Mount Dromedary). The soil reminds me of my childhood home at Mount Gambier, another volcano, and likewise is reputed to grow almost anything. I'm appreciating the easy digging compared with my crowbar exertion at my Armidale house. Frosts are experienced but only to a few degrees below. Every location brings different challenges and learning experiences for the native plant gardener, I find. Where establishment is easy and growth rapid (as at Cobargo), I find that pests and diseases are equally rampant, and plants get leggy very rapidly. Possibly this also means they have shorter life-spans. However in the meantime I am appreciating the lower loss rate experienced so far, compared to

Armidale gardening, particularly as the plantings I've done receive no maintenance when I'm back in Armidale.

I started with a shelter belt at the back boundary at the top of the slope, where a variety of medium to tall shrubs have done well since planted in September 2014. I have also done some plantings along the other two boundaries (it is a triangular block), however these are on the low side and the soil seems pretty constantly moist from water seeping down the block and from adjoining blocks. *Melaleuca sp*, *Casuarina sp* and *Callistemon sp* are doing best, with some *Leptospermum sp* and *Banksia sp* performing reasonably. The eucalypts and wattles I have tried in these conditions have by and large not done so well.

As I mentioned, where growth conditions are good, other factors tend to limit success. Your plants look good and then they get eaten! Webbing caterpillar is a recurring problem – I clear the webs away by hand and they are back within the week. Other fauna of a larger variety are also a problem. One of the things I liked about the block was its situation on the slope of a hill crowned by remnant eucalypt forest, home to a variety of fauna. The latter includes grey kangaroos, swamp wallabies, and wombats, which wander down the hill to sample the diverse flora I have thoughtfully provided. The problem seems worse in the

wintertime, but is ameliorated by the observation that, strangely, they will browse a plant heavily and thereafter leave it alone. So nothing actually gets killed although they look terrible for a while.

Initial plantings have been dotted about in the grass, protected by plastic tree guards around three small stakes. The plastic does help to provide a favourable microclimate, protect at least the lower leaves from browsers, and provide visibility. The latter is important as each visit I make involves whipper-snipping to uncover plants from the thick smothering grass. I have to admit however, that two plants I did accidentally whipper-snipped off have come back looking better than their initially leggy versions.

Memo to self: must prune more often for better plants.



I was obliged to provide a landscaping plan when submitting my building plans to council. As I have subsequently learnt more about the block, this plan has already changed considerably. When I found that runoff down the hill was constantly scouring out my gravel driveway, I had mounds of soil put in place to divert the runoff to the culvert just outside the gate. Never one to ignore a planting opportunity, this spring I have planted these mounds with small-to-medium plants liking better drainage (such as *Grevillea sp*, *Eremophila sp* and *Correa sp*) and surrounded them with woodchip mulch. More extensive landscaping around the house is yet to be done, to provide more planting areas.

My Armidale garden is now looking rather neglected and overgrown and I am more than a little dissatisfied with it, as the hardier things have now smothered everything else. However one thing I have been blown away by recently, is the number of small birds constantly visiting it - thornbills, wrens, silveryeyes, spinebills and honeyeaters, all appreciating the shelter from currawongs and butcherbirds that the thicket provides. It's been a nasty winter here but I found that any day when the weather was less than absolutely vile, the garden has been positively zipping with small birds. It certainly is nice to have your efforts appreciated.

Meanwhile in Cobargo, I am waiting to see what small birds arrive when. Eastern spinebills started to visit when some grevilleas reached knee-high, as I have previously experienced. Blue wrens have reappeared after previously retreating when I cleared a sheltering blackberry mound. I have also had yellow robins coming down from the hilltop to approve any soil-turning efforts. What will be next I wonder?

Planning 2017 Meeting Tuesday 13th December at Neil Wilson's

All are welcome to come along at 5:00pm to discuss activities and direction for the Armidale Group in 2017.

Please think about speakers &/or topics, outings and activities that you would like to be involved with or have.

The incoming committee need your input to make 2017 as good if not better than 2016.

Propagating Native Plants from Seed and Cuttings by Warren Sheather

Propagating your own plants is an interesting and inexpensive way to produce plants for your garden. Commercial Seed Raising Mix may be used for both seed and cutting propagation.

Seed Propagation:

The majority of native plant seeds required no treatment before sowing. Acacia or wattle seeds are the exception. They have a hard seed coat that needs to be treated before sowing. The seeds are placed in a container and covered with boiling water. Leave to soak for an hour or so before sowing.

Seeds may be sown into punnets, small pots, tubes or margarine containers with holes punched in the bottom for drainage.

Sow seeds on the surface of the propagating mix and cover to a depth about double the seed diameter. Fine seeds such as *Eucalypt sp*, *Callistemon sp* and *Leptospermum sp* only need to be covered by a sprinkling of the mix. Large seeds such as *Acacia sp*, *Banksia sp* and *Hakea sp* should be covered to a depth of one centimetre.

Place the seed pot in a sheltered position that receives morning sun. Protect from rain as this may wash small seeds out of the mix.

Seedlings are ready for transplanting, into individual tubes, when they are at least one centimetre tall. Use a good quality potting mix that meets the Australian regular standard for potting mix. Image A shows a punnet of *Hakea* seeds ready for transplanting.

Seedlings are ready to plant out when they are as tall as the tube and the roots have reached the tube base.



Cutting Propagation:

Firstly we should mention why we propagate native plants from cutting.

Some native plants do not produce viable seed or have seeds that are difficult to germinate.

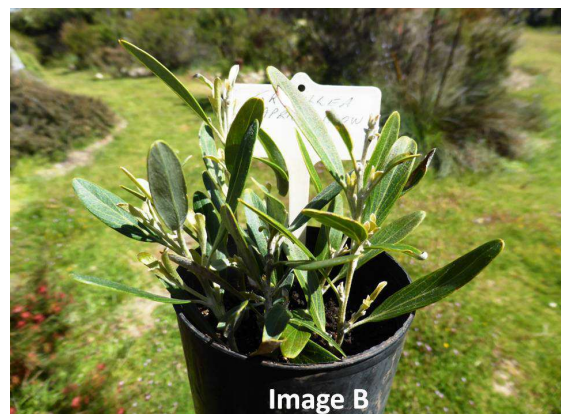
Hybrids should be propagated from cuttings to preserve their characteristics.

Plants with variegated foliage must be propagated from cuttings.

Cutting grown plants usually flower sooner than those grown from seed.

Cutting material should be taken from firm, current season's growth. Hard, woody material and soft, limp growth are both usually unsuccessful.

They should be between 8 to 12 centimetres long. Leaves (& branches if present - Ed) are removed from the lower half of the cutting. The bottom one centimetre of the cutting is dipped in a powder or gel containing root promoting hormones. We find **Red** 'Clonex' gel has proved to be very successful in encouraging root development. A 50 ml bottle will treat many hundreds of cuttings.



Cuttings should be placed in pots filled with commercial seed raising mix. Make a hole with a pencil, place the cutting in the hole up to a third of its length and firm the mix around the cutting. A 7cm diameter pot will accommodate up to 6 cuttings (see Image B).

Pots containing the cuttings should be placed in a warm, humid place that receives the morning sun. A number of methods may be used to maintain warmth and humidity. With a small pot a clear plastic drink bottle could be used. Cut off the base and cover the pot with the bottle. Leave the cap on. This could be used to regulate humidity. Remove the cap to reduce humidity and replace to maintain a humid atmosphere. With larger pots maintain the warmth and humidity by covering with a clear plastic bag supported by a couple of wire hoops. For a number of pots a cold frame will fulfil the requirements for cutting propagation. A cold frame is a rectangular box with no top or bottom with sloping sides and sitting on a bed of sand. The cutting pots are placed on the sand bed and the cold frame covered with a plastic sheet or recycled window. In all cases keep the seed raising mix moist but not saturated. To prevent the foliage drying out spray when necessary with a hand held spray.

When the cuttings take root they are potted into individual tubes using a potting mix that meets the Australian regular standard.

Cutting grown plants are ready to be planted when they are as tall as the tube and when the roots reach the base of the tube.



Image C shows a range of cuttings that have taken root.

With both seeds and cuttings remember to label the pots.

Some of the native plants that are grown successfully from cuttings are: *Boronia sp*, *Correa sp*, *Crowea sp*, *Eremophila sp*, *Grevillea sp*, *Prostanthera sp* and *Westringia sp*.

After our great visit to Warren and Gloria's garden, most people were seen carrying copious quantities of cuttings in plastic bags. I approached Warren to write an article about propagating to encourage more members to 'give it a go'. The preceding article is Warren's contribution to hopefully see more people getting the full benefit from propagating and planting their own stock, which I personally, find most rewarding.

Neil Wilson (Ed).

Armidale Bi-centennial Arboretum Report

November 2015 – October 2016

Due to extremely hot and dry weather, our working bees didn't commence until May. During the twelve months, members picked up rubbish, pruned and removed dead material, sprayed weeds, planted and mulched.

Some work was done at all the beds during this period.

Thanks to the following members for their assistance at the working bees : Colin Wilson, John Nevin, Neil Wilson, Andrew Kollosh, Phil & Julia Rose, Eric & Penelope Sinclair, Helen Schwarz.

Thanks also to Ray Dufty from ADC for removing the pruning's from site.

Summary

| | <u>2016</u> | <u>2015</u> | <u>2014</u> | <u>2013</u> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Total labour hours | 42.5 | 37 | 55.5 | 101 |
| Number of working bees | 4 | 5 | 5 | 8 |
| Number of volunteers | 10 | 6 | 20 | 10 |
| Number of shrubs planted | 56 | 523 | 32 | 377 |
| Plants at cost | \$338.8 | \$990.05 | \$204.30 | \$488.78 |
| Bobcat hire | | \$200 | | |
| Lomandra planting hire [ATG] | | \$600 | | |

Patrick Laher

Arboretum Co-ordinator

Armidale Sunday Markets Annual Report

November 2015 – October 2016

Plant sales this year have been excellent. Although of some concern has been the steady drop of stall holders participating at the Markets.

Whilst the Markets make the Society a small profit, its main value is that it's a valuable source of profile for APS and an opportunity to increase membership for our Group. It's also an important means of assisting the public in the various growing conditions of native plants generally, and especially the plants that we sell.

As in previous years, the plants on display each month are always a surprise to the public and are a means of showing what can be grown locally in gardens.

Thanks to John Nevin for providing the plants on the display board each month, and thanks also to the following members for their help at the Markets : Colin Wilson, Phil Rose, Eric & Penelope Sinclair.

| <u>Comparison Table</u> | <u>2016</u> | <u>2015</u> | <u>2014</u> | <u>2013</u> |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| November 2015 | 24 | 27 | 27 | - |
| December 2015 | 21 | 29 | 29 | - |
| February 2016 | 38 | 17 | 44 | 48 |
| March | 32 | 28 | 42 | 22 |
| April | 30 | 31 | 42 | 57 |

| | | | | |
|--------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| May | 26 | 0 | 37 | 52 |
| June | 24 | 31 | 26 | 36 |
| July | 48 | 15 | 20 | 41 |
| August | 45 | 48 | 40 | 47 |
| September | 37 | 39 | 38 | 47 |
| October | 50 | 30 | 37 | 41 |
| Totals | 375 | 290 | 382 | 391 |
| <u>St.Peters</u> | | | | |
| <u>Plant Sales</u> | 376 (446) | 338 | 249 | 281 |

Patrick Laher
Markets Co-ordinator

Treasurer's Report

November 2015- 31 October 2016

The financial management this year has, I believe, worked very well. It was only in the last year that we moved to paying all our invoices and reimbursements, other than to Nifty's Courier Service, by EFT. I am also able to view our statements on line which is a big improvement in keeping our records up to date as well as making it a quicker and simpler job to update do so.

The opening balance in our accounts, at 1 November 2015, was \$10,800.20 and \$3,256.84 in our investment account.

Our closing balances at 31 October 2016 were \$7,678.26 and \$3,324.31 in the investment account which earned a total of \$67.47 in interest.

While this shows a decrease of \$3,121.94 in our operating account over the year this figure should be adjusted for the following items to determine a better indication of the year's activities.

- This year we paid rent for the meeting room for all of 2016 of \$160.00, plus rent for May & August to November 2015 of \$100 as the EFT payment at the end of last year was bounced by the bank due to problems with the account number for U3A.
- Purchase of a box of Canberra ANPS books for \$180.00 but revenue from the sale of only one copy. Payment for the current box, now half empty, has been recorded in the current year as has the catch up of the sale of the first box of books.
- Through EFT we have been able to make payments promptly, while this is a good thing it has shown in this year's results as the payment to Mole Station for plants for St Peters for both last year and this year though without the matching revenue for this year. Our purchase to Mole Station was made in October of \$2,772.00. It should be noted that this also included plants for the October markets. Of course the revenue from St Peters is recorded in the current year (November 2016).

As usual our main sources of revenue have been from the plant stalls at the markets and St Peters. The total income from these over the year, which includes St Peters plant stall last year, is \$5,723.50.

This is matched, of course, by the cost of plant purchases which for the year to the end of October totals \$7,410.90. But this total includes plant purchases for this year of \$2,772.00 and last year for \$1,938.00.

Our next biggest revenue item is of course memberships with a total income of \$1,825.25 but again offset by payments to Sydney of \$1,552.25.

Again, as in previous years, I would like to thank Pat Laher for his prompt banking of the market stall proceeds each month and passing on the deposit slips and Nifty's invoices. Also thank you to Phil Rose for taking my spreadsheet figures each month and turning them into "proper" financial statements.

Carole Fullalove, Treasurer. 12 November 2016

FOR YOUR DIARY

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------|--|
| November | 15 | <u>AGM</u> & Native Plants Forum at 7.30 - 9.30 in ASCA House Armidale. with the AGM Quiz – Native Plant Trivia. |
| | 27 | 8.00-12.30 Markets in the Mall |
| December | 10 | 11:00 am APS Christmas Lunch at Phil and Julia's place. |
| | 13 | 5.00 - 6.30pm Think Tank for the 2017 AGENDA. at Neil Wilson's place. Details to Follow. |
| January | 9 | 2 nd week in January - Trip to Snowy Mountains – John Nevin. |
| February | 11 | Deadline for Newsletter articles to be tendered. |
| | 12 | Newsletter issued (and posted). |
| | 21 | Business meeting at 6.00 pm in ASCA House Armidale. All welcome, followed by the Forum at 7.30 - 9.30pm. Speaker: <i>To Be Announced</i> . |
| | 26 | 8:00-12:30 Markets in the Mall |

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

for Australian Plant Society (ABN 87 002 680 408)

MEMBERSHIP TYPE: (please tick appropriate box) **Annual Fee** **Concession**

Single ☐ \$53 ☐ \$45
Joint (two adults at the same address) ☐ \$61 ☐ \$53

Concession applied for: ☐ Limited Fixed Income ☐ Full Time Student

PERSONAL Details: {Joint members please complete BOTH **a)** and **b)**}

| | |
|--|--|
| a) Mr Mrs Miss Ms Dr other | b) Mr Mrs Miss Ms Dr other |
| Given Name(s): | Given Name(s): |
| Surname: | Surname: |
| Postal Address: | |
| Postcode: | |
| Tel: Home () Work: () | Tel: Home () if different Work: () if different |
| Fax: () Email: | Fax: () if different Email: if different |

Please return form with payment to:

Membership Officer, APS Armidale Branch, PO Box 735, Armidale NSW 2350

PAYMENT: \$..... is enclosed by:

- ☐ Cash
- ☐ Cheque, payable to APS Armidale Branch
- ☐ Money Order, payable to APS Armidale Branch

☐ **EFT** is available, please email the membership officer if you are paying by this method.

Col Mulquiney - cmul8752@bigpond.net.au

Name of Account: **APS Armidale and District**

BSB: **932000**

Account No: **642450**

Include your surname as a reference to allow payments to be allotted to you.

IF APPLICABLE (please tick)

- ☐ I do *NOT* wish my contact details to be made available to other members.

Signature: