

# Turrumurra Lookout community garden

*Everything grows better with TLC*

## NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER 2014



### FINALLY - IT'S NEARLY TIME ...

To prove that the year is flashing by, it's now only a few days until members get to show off our wonderful Community Garden and for the general public and members to buy lots of cakes and seedlings.

Sue and the team have done a wonderful job, lovingly nursing the seeds through to where we have a product to sell.

Most of the seeds have been purchased from organic suppliers with some harvested from our own gardens. They are named varieties raised by us and there should be something for most gardens.

We will be selling lots of variety, especially in the tomatoes; some examples are Beams Yellow Pear, Tony Tommy Berry Mix, Mary Italian and Brandy Wine. There will also be beetroots, kohlrabi, lettuce and

lots of herbs such as parsley, marjoram, curry herb, spearmint and chives. This list is just some examples and by no means the complete stock.

Get your friends, family and neighbours to come along for a great morning and don't forget to buy your guessing game tickets. All the money raised stays in the garden.

*Kerry*



# WESTSIDE GARDEN CLUB

Sue, John, Tina, Mark, Kerry, Janet FC and Helen visited the Westside Garden Club recently, at their invitation.



This Club administers the communal gardens associated with the 115 acre Anglican Retirement Village at Castle Hill.



Residents of the very large village complex are eligible to apply for a plot and are charged a membership fee of \$5. They can also utilise propagation glasshouses on site and have tank water nearby.

The ARV Communal Gardens occupy around one half an acre and are divided into some 35 plots.



The site was a farm originally and the old homestead (quite substantial), and outbuildings together with twin silos still exist on the property, and are utilised by residents.



It was also the site of Yates seeds Head Office and trial grounds for many years and they have a number of old photos etc on site.

We were well received by the President and other members and had a really interesting talk, morning tea and then a tour of the site.

We have invited the WGC to visit the TCG on some future occasion.

Member  
of the  
Month



## TINA HOWARD

### A gardener's journey

In my memory bank is a vivid picture of my Opa (grandfather) offering me a sun kissed raspberry from his vegetable garden in Holland when I was four or five years old. He would wait until I arrived each day so that I could help him pick his fruits - red and black currants, gooseberries and raspberries. I think he knew he had a gardener in his palm even then.

We immigrated to Tasmania as a family of eight and eventually lived on a small farm. My father grew beans as a hobby - he was passionate about them - beans of every variety imaginable. Our family would sit around the kitchen table snipping and salting the beans into enamel buckets for winter vegetables for the family. We also had fruit trees galore and every autumn became harvest and bottling time. The pantry was full of the most obscure European vegetables and fruits all bottled and stacked. Australian neighbours thought we ate the most obscure vegetables - kale, fennel, sauerkraut, witlof, red cabbage, sugar beet and chicory.

My mother was an avid admirer and grower of plants. She would take my arm in hers and we

would visit properties nearby with beautiful gardens where she would charmingly lean over the fence, start a conversation with the owner until she had a personal tour of the property - and an armful of cuttings - and she spoke very little English but managed to convey her gardening desires!

Like most good Tasmanians, Mark and I left the island in search of mainland adventures and when we finally bought a house and garden, I was ready to learn about a whole new set of Sydney gardening experiences... many from the jolly Italian garden mentor, Guiseppi, who lived next door. He would call out to me with bunches of organic vegetables in his arms enthusiastically sharing both harvest and knowledge.

Our home is now in St Ives and the challenges here are many. Our site nestles into the lush bush land where wildlife is plentiful and whilst beautiful to view, can be most frustrating especially the possum highway, tick territory, bandicoot diggings and wallaby run at the bottom of our cliff face. Growing vegetables is virtually impossible as the trees, both native and exotic, have become greedy sun seekers leaving most of the earth in shade.

I have been a teacher in one capacity or another all my working life. Firstly teaching gorgeous kindergartens, then a demonstration teacher and a teacher of gifted students in a specially formed unit until I finally became an administrator.

When the community garden was first muted I wanted to be involved. I guess it was only natural to include the education of children in our planning. They are such natural learners and their curiosity melts me. I was at a school in Pymble last week and started my talk with, 'I am a gardener!' and the teacher in me realised that this is what I have now become.

*Tina Howard*

# Spring Seedling Sale

Saturday 6th September, 2014 - 9am to 12pm

Turrumurra Lookout Community Garden

Pacific Highway, Turrumurra (top of Rohini St)

Buy seedlings



Walk through the garden



Cake stall



Hurry to get your  
**Guessing-Game**  
tickets to win one of our  
fabulous prizes



Turrumurra Lookout  
community garden

1 ticket = \$2  
3 tickets = \$5  
7 tickets = \$10



Turrumurra Lookout  
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## ENTHUSIASM IN 'SPADE FULLS'

I received a plea for help from *Sacred Heart Catholic School* at Pymble last week. They wished to establish quite a large vegetable garden on their premises and needed an introduction into vegetable growing for their 43 Year 3 students.

It was 2pm on a Friday afternoon and I thought I would find their interest waning at such a late time of day. How wrong I was! They were the most enthusiastic bunch of nine year olds that I had spoken to for a

long time. There were several children in the group whose families grew every vegetable known to man it seemed. The knowledge and enthusiasm the children shared was astounding.

After I had finished our chat they had to design a vegetable garden and include many of the elements we had defined. I walked out of the classroom feeling that future vegetable gardening was in good hands! I have been invited back to help the project begin... can't wait!

*Tina*

## TICK ALERT

Since Fox baiting has significantly reduced the fox population, the native wildlife such as Bandicoots have appeared in locations where they have not been seen for many years which is great but, apart from digging in all the wrong places, they are also hosts for ticks.

Unfortunately, after a number of tick bites in the past few years I recently found I am highly allergic to them. Recently, after failing to kill an adult tick, in my scalp I tugged it out and 15 minutes later went into anaphylaxis which required oxygen, a shot of adrenalin, and a trip in an ambulance. I must now carry a life saving epi pen which I have in a bag in the shed ready to use.

While severe allergy to ticks, Lyme Disease (or the local variation) is rare, it makes sense to protect yourself by using insecticide around the bottom of your trousers, around wrists, neck and face (they frequently end up in your hair). A good DEET spray or ointment like Bushman is the recommended preventative but there

is also an essential oil called Kunzea that Janet Fairlie-Cunninghame has been using, which while as yet unproven shows promising results.

Whichever path you choose to deter ticks, if you do get bitten there are two currently recommended treatments: Lyclear, an ointment for the treatment of Scabies which is applied to the tick area and covered with a band-aid for several hours when the tick can then be safely removed if it hasn't already dropped off. The newest method is freezing with a wart treatment like Wart Off which works well but should probably not be used on the face as it may leave a mark.

We are fortunate that Doug has arranged for Dr Cameron Webb of Sydney University's Department of Medical Entomology to talk to us in October about ticks and other insects pests. You might like to look at the attached website from his Department.

<http://medent.usyd.edu.au/fact/ticks.htm>

*Janet Pollock*



# EVENTS

## September 6th

9:00 am – 12:00 noon  
Seedling Sale

## September 13th

9:00 am – 12:00 noon  
Working Bee

Monthly Garden Talk: *A representative from seedsavers will join us and we will be taught how to successfully save and store seeds, as well as how to join out local "Seed Library"*

## September 20th

9:00 am – 12:00 noon  
Working Bee

## September 27th

9:00 am – 12:00 noon  
Working Bee

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT!**

**RAINFALL**

**AUGUST: 208MM**

Thanks to Janet and Ian Pollock for taking the rainfall readings at the garden!

**PLEASE, if you open the shed or greenhouse at any time**

**ENSURE THEY ARE LEFT LOCKED**

**when you leave!!!**

## MORE EVENTS

Follow up visits from both the Hillview Playgroup on **October 13th** and Roseville College on **October 14th** to the Garden are planned. (Tina/ John)

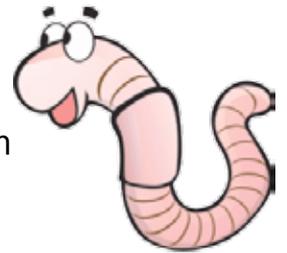
**Saturday October 18th** Garden Talk at Rotary Cottage, "Protecting against summer biting pests" Dr Cameron Webb.

**Saturday October 25th** 9.30 to noon, Council "Growing vegetables workshop" at the Garden, staffed by Garden members.

## WORM FARMS

Sebastian has asked that we do not turn off any of the 4 worm farm taps, regardless of the weather etc. This has been happening and causing him some difficulty with his overall programme.

If you notice any other "kind souls" doing so at any time please request that the taps be left open, Thanks



## HANDY HINT



How about painting the handles of your gardens tools a bright, color (maybe not green) to help you find them

amongst your plants.

You can also keep a mailbox in your garden for easy tool storage (secured and locked!).





## KUNZEA AMBIGUA

Kunzea ambigua known as Tick Bush, belongs to the Myrtaceae family.

It is woody shrub mostly of the dry sandstone forest soils in eastern Australia, from the Grand High Tops of the Warrumbungles to Tasmania. It grows about 3 to 5 metres tall, with small white flowers in spring, which attract many native insects and bees for pollination. It gives shelter and protection to small native birds. Bandicoots have been seen to live under it too. It propagates from its small woody capsules, or by cuttings. It is killed by fire and regenerates from seed.

This was one of the first Australian species to be introduced and cultivated in England. It is a hardy and adaptable primary colonising plant after disturbance.

For a long time people have believed that its common name of Tick Bush was because it harboured ticks. It seems the opposite is true and in the last 20 years research shows that the Essential oil which is distilled from the leaves may yet become a most important and valuable medicinal aid for its many beneficial properties.

In 1993, John Hood, a Tasmanian farmer decided to investigate why his 35 year old boundary fence was not rusty like all the others of similar age. As a result he found that the wire netting was being protected by an oil from a woody shrub Kunzea ambigua, which grew beside it and brushed against the adjacent fence.

Mr. Hood realised that the oil must contain a fairly powerful antioxidant, and so sought further information about other uses. Accidentally, one day John spilled a sample of the distilled oil onto his hand and then happened to rub his nose. John suffered from serious sinus damage and a problem of a blocked nose from a previous industrial accident. The immediate result was that "it blew the sinus problem away". He then began a period of research and development culminating in the Therapeutic Goods Administration approving Kunzea oil for external medical use.

John Hood is the only distiller of Du Cane Kunzea Oil. A French physician, Dr. Daniel Penoel, who specialises in the therapeutic use of essential oils gives high praise to Kunzea ambigua Essential oil, and is further researching its clinical potential.

1998 saw the University of Tasmania finding that Kunzea oil was an effective killer of bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics. Now Ducane Kunzea Oil is known to kill the superbug Golden Staph, as well as yeasts, moulds and other bacterial infections.

It's registered uses include: -

- \* The temporary relief of pain of arthritis
- \* Relief of the symptoms of influenza
- \* Relief of muscular aches and pains
- \* Helps relieve nervous tension, stress and mild anxiety
- \* Temporary relief of the pain of rheumatism
- \* Helps heal cuts and bruises.

Users of Ducane Kunzea oil have found it to be good for rashes and itchiness, for some forms of excema, dermatitis, under nail infections and leg ulcers.

Others have reported it to be effective in easing insect bites, minor burns and stings, shingles and migraine headaches.

I have recently spoken with John Hood and he is very keen for people to experiment with its use as a tick repellent and soother after tick bites. My own use of the essential oil when working in the bush has been favourable. Recently, I was in the garden without a hat and did not put Kunzea oil on because it was winter. I believe I had a few tick nymphs on the back of my neck. After applying the oil I suffered little discomfort or itching. Now I use it each time I am out as ticks are said to be at their most potent in the spring.

The oil can be used full strength, but I find that putting a few mls/drops on top of a small bottle of rice bran oil or on top of witchhazel is an effective way to use it. On a hot day it would need to be re-applied if perspiration is heavy. Ducane Kunzea Oil can be obtained on line from [www.biodistributors.com.au](http://www.biodistributors.com.au)

I believe in future we will come to regard this as a miracle household remedy, but we need to work with it and use it to demonstrate that it is so.

*Prepared by Janet Fairlie-Cuninghame 23rd August 2014*

# PRUNING AND CUTTING PROPAGATION DEMONSTRATION ON FICUS CARICA

White Adriatic and Black Genoa Figs

On Saturday 2nd August, Judy Moore, and Janet F-C. with assistance from Winnie Fu gave a demonstration of pruning the two Fig trees followed by propagating the cuttings and layered stems.

These edible figs originate in the Mediterranean. They are hardy trees that can live to a great age. They need full sun and prefer a calcine, well-drained soil. Given a restricted root run they will crop well, and therefor can do well in large pots. Figs tend to have few pests. Evidence of recent attack by the cochineal scale on the White Fig only were shown possibly indicating that our figs are growing in too 'soft' a situation, or lack of sufficient air flow possibly due to netting.

Fig fruit is a 'cryptic flower ' that self-pollinates.

The White Genoa fig is a variety with brown-green fruit that has deep pink colour inside. This fruit is suitable for drying; whilst the Black Genoa variety has purple fruit with dark red flesh that is very rich and sweet. This fruit is not suited to drying. Both types require netting during the fruiting season to prevent birds from harvesting them.

## Considerations before Pruning.

**Hygiene...** Explain the need for clean sharp secateurs and 'lopers'. Wipe before and after use with 30% methylated spirits in 70% water .

**When to prune?..** Figs need to be pruned each winter after leaf fall....

**Why prune figs?....** natural growth is all over the place... look at shape... need good air flow, and to access tree ... note and rub off cochineal scale.

**What do we want?...** to maximise fruit bearing next season.....Main crop... remove any 'breber crop' or late fruiting, which may not ripen.

**Where is the fruit produced?...** on 2nd year wood.....

**What to prune?....**we need to be able to easily harvest without damage to tree etc . and to ensure a good airflow ...

**Aim for vase shape.....** Therefore we need to look at each tree individually, and to plan our operation. (See black tape for placement of cuts)

## Propagation:

Take 20-30 cm cuttings, preferably with short internodes. Place them in water immediately until they can be placed into pots of sharp sand. Dip bottom ends in honey to stimulate root development and prevent pathogens on cut end.

It is important to maintain polarity, by adopting a practice of making a square cut at the bottom and an angle cut for the top. The cutting should be selected from the previous season's wood if possible with a heel of 2 year old wood at the base. Plant deeply, with 2 or 3 nodes buried below the surface and 2 buds exposed.

These hardwood cuttings should be kept moist, but not wet for up to 3 months to produce roots.

## Potting mix

Use sharp sand for cuttings and put rooted material into a pot of good potting mix.

It is important to label all pots with the name, date and what mix was used.

by Janet F-C



# PHOTO ALBUM



Let's do another lot.

Now all we need is a new fence and some lovely little seedlings.



The helpers are ready and OHS is done.



Mix it all together ... it smells so good!



Neat job!



"Can I help too?"