

# Turrumurra Lookout community garden

Everything grows better with TLC

## NEWSLETTER - JUNE 2014



### SOME RECENT ACTIVITY AT TLCG



"We had a very generous visit from the VEGESAFE soil testing unit at Macquarie Uni recently, and they are testing soil for many of the members and friends. Whilst there they tested various spots around the Garden and gave us the general " all clear".



Member  
of the  
Month



## PRUE GIBSON:

a garden-oriented history

I grew up in Hurstville in the southern suburbs of Sydney in the 1950s & 60s with my parents and two brothers. It was a happy time centred around our backyard. There was a sloping lawn to roll down, a giant rubber plant overgrowing our cubbyhouse, and a lemon tree, a nurtured mango tree against the back shed (my father had grown up in Mullumbimby on the north coast), rhubarb in the corner and a Silky Oak up the back near the incinerator.

My father died very young and when my mother later re-married we became a blended family and moved to a house with a gravel drive and a lovely established garden in Hunters Hill. This garden had camellias, azaleas and the remains of an old underground air-raid shelter. I wasn't particularly interested in gardens or gardening at this stage as I was finishing high school and then to uni studying architecture. Gardening was more my mother's thing.

My mother, Nan Barbour, studied horticulture at Ryde TAFE and opened a nursery at Hunters Hill. She started Horticultural Therapy as a group to assist teaching horticulture to people with disabilities. She was instrumental in gaining funding to set up the Telopea Centre at Ryde TAFE for Horticultural Therapy. I had some design input to the design of this centre.

I finished my architecture degrees at UNSW, one of five women of fifty to graduate in my year, and worked with a few practices in Sydney before setting up my own solo architectural practice. I worked from home as by now I was married with two sons Jono and Huw. My architectural work has included mostly residential work, additions and alterations, a few new houses (including my own house designed with my then husband) and quite a few pre-school playgrounds.

I returned to study a Master of Design when my children were young and I felt somewhat brain-dead and later began teaching part-time at uni and TAFE. I kept my architectural practice going and now teach Building Design at TAFE. Recently I've been "hands on" renovating a house at Cowan with my son Jono.

I still live in the house we designed which is on a sloping bush block adjoining the Lane Cove National Park at Fox Valley. With no hope of a veggie garden on this site, although possible plans for a roof veggie garden, I'm very happy to be a TLC gardener.

# RAINFALL



MAY: 15MM

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

## A WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Dympna Sly from Wahroonga

Great to have you on board.

**HAPPY GARDENING!**

## CONGRATULATIONS



To Emina and Rod at the birth of their Baby Boy,  
**Thorsten Alexander Maslovsky**  
born on Sunday 17th May 2014

*"Great to see you all up at the Garden on May 31"*

## DID YOU KNOW?

English seamen grew endive as potted plants on ships. The plants provided a welcome source of greens that were believed to help prevent scurvy, but the vegetable is only a moderate source of vitamin C.

Folklore suggests that endive is an aphrodisiac.

## POND NEWS

A big thanks to the team that worked on the pond. It is looking really good.

Thanks Doug for the equipment and Doug and Paul for co-ordinating the effort.

Paul and Mark will now continue their research on plants/pumps/fish to finish off the job. Doug has taken a couple of fish and a frog home to nurture for a while.

A big thanks to Martin for netting the frog. Sharp eyes and a steady hand !! Well done Martin.

We were really happy to hear there were still a few animals in the pond.

Well done to you all.



### June 4th

11:30 am

Roseville College visits (Tina/Sue/John)

### June 7th

9:00 am – 12:00 noon

Working Bee

10 am

Wentworthville visits

### June 14th

9:00 am – 12:00 noon

Working Bee

### June 21st

9:00 am – 12:00 noon

Working Bee

10:30

Garden Talk: tba

### June 26th

2.15pm

Woy Woy Garden visits (John/Sue/Julie)

### June 28th

9:00 am – 12:00 noon

Working Bee

12 noon

Members Meeting (Chair: Tina Howard)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

The time for the WENTWORTHVILLE COMMUNITY GARDENS visit has arrived and we will be visited by about 15 of their members next *Saturday the 7th June* from about 9.30. This is a return visit as they kindly invited some of our members to see their greenhouse when we were looking for information before buying ours.

Our garden is looking wonderful and it will be a great pleasure to show a group of fellow gardeners the results of all our hard work. And don't forget our great morning tea.

*Beginning of June*, Nada Burke, from ROSEVILLE COLLEGE is beginning a garden project with about 20 of her year 8 students, and is bringing them to our Garden on June 4 to see a successful community garden and getting any general garden tips for developing their own garden.

LINDFIELD ACTIVITY CENTRE (before and after school care), are starting an Environmental Sustainability Program at the Centre which will include setting up a Green Club for children at the Centre. As part of this club they want the children to:

- Establish and maintain a herb garden - to pick the herbs and a small amount of veggies
- Establish and maintain a Worm Farm
- Sponsor (\$50), a Tree from the Turrumurra Community Garden ( and have selected a Valencia Orange)

Tina will talk to them about setting up a herb garden, along with John, on Wednesday June 11.

### TURRAMURRA PUBLIC SCHOOL visit

Many thanks to Julie, Frank, Sebastian, Annie and Janet for all your good work up at the Garden.

I think we had 75 or so kids who really enjoyed their visit. Particularly the “ worm man” down the back and Frank's significant financial incentives for finding a fish in the pond!

And didn't the boys like the climbing tree( not allowed to do that at school).

It was a bit tiring but quite good fun.

Interestingly it was mentioned that in each of the 3 classes the balance of boys to girls was around 17 boys to 7 girls, so in the 7-8 year young population, at least at Turrumurra the girls have a lot of choice.

And out of 75 kids, there was not one “ John”, what is the world coming to.

## WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT!



### REMINDER

Please make sure that the shed and greenhouse are locked when you leave.





## CHICKWEED *STELLARIA MEDIA*

This very delicate yet sprawling vigorous winter annual plant from Europe has tiny white ‘starlike’ flowers. It is a prolific seeder and they are seeds which are highly viable. Flowers and seeds occur at the same time.

Chickweed has a number of uses. It is a favourite green with ‘chooks’, hence the common name. It is particularly useful for its cooling, anti-inflammatory soothing properties for eczema, cuts, burns, bruises and insect stings, and psoriasis. It can be used as a poultice or as an ointment.

Personally, I found chickweed was the only thing to bring relief from my dog’s severe itching after she had been walking in ‘wandering jew’ when it was in flower in summer. I used to keep a bundle of dried chickweed from the winter, then boil it and make a chickweed bath for her to stand in. After a few minutes the itching ceased.

I have also used chickweed in a green soup and the tips in salad. The Japanese like to use it in a special springtime festival. Because there are saponins in the leaves, it is better not to have large quantities of chickweed internally. It is also useful as a green manure if you don’t mind it reappearing the next year.



## RECIPES

### CHICKWEED PIE

By William Woys Weaver

This heirloom recipe for Chickweed Pie, a Pennsylvania Dutch country version of quiche, makes a delicious lunch or light supper dish.

- One 10-inch pie crust
- 3 cups chopped chickweed (*Stellaria media*)
- 1 cup diced slab bacon
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- 3 large eggs
- 1 1/2 cups sour cream
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon grated nutmeg

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Line a 10-inch pie dish with crust and make a raised border around the rim to prevent filling from overflowing during baking.

2. To prepare chickweed, remove all leaves, twigs and root ends, reserving only the greenest, leafiest parts. Rinse thoroughly in a colander and gently dry with paper towels. Bunch the chickweed together into a ball and chop it with a sharp knife until reduced to a confetti texture. Measure, then put chickweed in a large bowl.

3. Fry diced bacon in a skillet until it begins to brown, then add onion. Cook about 3 minutes, or until onion wilts. Using a slotted spoon, transfer bacon and onions to bowl with chickweed. Discard drippings from pan.

4. In a separate bowl, beat eggs until lemon coloured, then add sour cream, flour and nutmeg. Add egg mixture to chickweed, onions and bacon. Spread filling evenly in the pie shell and pat down firmly with a spoon. Bake 45 to 50 minutes, or until pie has set in center and top looks golden.

*Adapted from Pennsylvania Dutch Country Cooking by William Woys Weaver (Abbeville Press, 1993).*

*Read more: <http://www.motherearthliving.com/cooking-methods/wild-edible-greens-chickweed-pie.aspx#ixzz33KsiqA1n>*