

Community Garden 3231 Newsletter

Growing food, friendships & community

September 2017



Working bees:
Saturday 2nd and
Sunday 17th September

Friday October 20th: Pizza
Friday

Saturday October 21st:
Recycle Shop, Anglesea

Our Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held on Sunday 20th August with 25 members of the Garden attending.

The Committee of Management for 2017-18 was elected and the following positions were filled:

Gretel Lamont - Co-ordinator

Leonie Mugavin - Secretary

Debra White - Treasurer and Membership

Gay Fuller - Garden Team Leader (interim)

Events Team Leader – Jen McIver

Keith Bremner - Building and Maintenance Team Leader

Jo Murray - Sustainability Team Leader

The new Sustainability Team aims to provide members with ideas and practical solutions to live and promote sustainable lifestyles. A very enthusiastic Jo Murray will lead the Sustainability Team. More details are provided in the Introducing a sustainability Team (see below).

Two positions remain unfilled, Communications Team Leader and Education and Learning Team leader. If you are interested taking on one of these Team Leader roles or joining one the teams, please let Gretel know. We are always keen to have members join the Garden teams.

Each of the teams reported on their activities during the year. With a growing membership, a very productive garden and great social activities, it's been another very successful year. And there is a lot more to come.

The Gardening Team's report to the meeting is included below:

Gardening Team Report

A very busy 14 months since the last AGM and since I took on this role. Here are some of our team's highlights:

- Introduced "Friends of" teams and we have seen great improvements in many areas of the garden, particularly in the compost, worm farm and the fruit trees
- Completed next stage of rotation plans and reduced number of the main community beds to 4 with extras for other crops such as garlic and potatoes and also additional space for big crops like tomatoes
- Dedicated beds – asparagus, rhubarb, artichokes, strawberries, berry canes
- Established the espalier and planted 6 new fruit trees. Replaced the apricot tree and have planned a mini food field to be planted around this area in spring. Established a bramble bed with the necessary trellising
- The Fraser Drive verge planting is being further expanded, with more citrus to be planted in spring, the idea being to share this produce with the community.
- Established 2 new vertical planting areas – the reo frame on eastern boundary which grew a fabulous crop of pumpkins and also the arbour over the pathway near the lower entrance gate which will be planted for the first time this spring
- We're also sowing more flowers to increase the biodiversity in the garden, attracting more beneficial insects and small birds which will help to minimise pests and diseases
- Crops were sown in the wicking beds for the first time in summer. We're learning how these work and have done a lot of work to improve the

soil over autumn and winter so we're hoping for greater success with this summer's crops

- We have labelled our crops as they have been sown and planted this year and this is something we'll continue to work on
- We've been saving seed for a couple of seasons now and this is enabling us to do more of our own seed-sowing and seedling production of the varieties which we have found to grow well in our climate and soil. Also enabled us to grow lots of seedlings and to give these away to members
- We are gradually introducing the idea of a sharing table at working bees, not only to share the garden produce but also produce from our own gardens (fruit and vegetables and also flowers such as proteas and ginger plants). I think this is a major part of why our Community Garden exists and I hope we can continue this on a regular basis and expand this idea. The citrus planting on the Fraser Drive verge is also part of this theme of "Food is Free ..." and is about sharing and building community.
- We're in the process of producing a "harvest poster" for the noticeboard so that all members know what is ready for harvest at any particular time
- We have reorganised the tool storage and also the shelving in the shed to improve access and safety
- We have a new hardening-off shelf below the propagating bed
- We have begun a major effort on path maintenance, removing potentially toxic materials and laying cardboard and mulch to try to get the weeds under control

I would like to thank BME team for all the construction. We have asked a lot of them this year and they have delivered in spades and I would particularly like to thank them for sourcing and using recycled materials in the recent projects

We have a great gardening team (Angela, Barb, Gabs & Kim) and I would like to thank them for their enthusiasm, ideas and hard work. We have achieved a huge amount as a team.

I would also like to thank Gretel for her leadership and all the other members of the Committee of Management for their hard work and support. It's great to be part of such a dedicated and hardworking group.

Jo Murray

Introducing a Sustainability Team

I feel excited and energised with the prospect of setting up a sustainability team. I believe it is part of the ethos of our garden.

The reason why I suggested this team to Gretel is because I'm concerned about the future of our planet, as I know all members of our garden are. We're all trying to do our best to minimise our ecological footprint and live as sustainably as possible so that future generations will be able to enjoy access to the healthy food, clean air and beautiful environment that we have enjoyed but which are all being destroyed.

We hear terms like "think global, act local", "be the change you want to see in the world" and "conscious unconsumer", and these are all things which ring true with me.

It can be difficult in a busy world to take the time to slow down and think about our actions. I think we all want to play our part but sometimes it's hard to know where to start and sometimes we can feel that we are the only ones doing anything.

A focus on sustainability in the garden can help us tackle this problem together, where we can share ideas and get support from each other. The garden can be a role model and a support base for the rest of the community.

The way I like to tackle it is to focus on individual actions and try to change these one at a time so that gradually, over time, there is a major change.

I'm inspired and energised by programs such as the ABC's 'War on Waste' and also the 4 Corners show on Recycling in Australia, as well as the work of Plastic Bag Free Torquay with the Boomerang Bags and other groups such as this. I believe there is a real impetus in Australia for tackling these issues.

We are the problem but we are also the solution, so if we can each think about our own actions and their impacts that's the starting point for change and there are so many ideas out there to help us.

So I want to share the ideas, the national and international programs, the successes and the strategies people use within our own community, because when we work together and share ideas and support each other then that's a powerful strategy for change.

So what does that mean:

I'm thinking we might just choose 3 or 4 key themes to focus on in our first year.

Examples might be:

Plastic Free July whereby for 3 months we use the ideas from the national campaign to help us reduce our use of plastic

Composting – we use the National Composting Awareness Week to focus our efforts and ensure that not only are we all composting here in the garden and in our own homes but, by our efforts, we're also encouraging others and showing them how

Recycling – where we focus not only on what goes in our yellow bins but also all the other items we throw away and making sure they are recycled correctly and only go in the rubbish bin or to the tip as a last resort, and if they can't be fixed at the Repair Café!

The Community Garden is a small group within our community, but if we are all living sustainably then our actions create a ripple effect and others see how easy it can be.

But I can't do it on my own and I know other members will have great ideas about how we can do some of these things and so I want to get together a small team to progress this. So if anyone is interested then come and talk to me.

I don't know how we do it. Obviously I have some ideas – maybe our group gets together once a month for dinner and brainstorms how to do it, maybe we show films, hopefully we will use social media. It's up to the team to work it out.

Jo Murray

Our Coordinator's Comments



Soup in the Garden was a great success! There were seven different soups, three using pumpkins from the garden, crusty baguettes and recipes to take home. Lots of members and visitors enjoyed the sunshine and food - and four people joined the garden.

The changed AGM format worked well with a guest speaker and food and drinks to follow. I'm looking forward to the follow up from Liz's session where we explored what is important to us about being a part of the garden.

Don't forget that need more people on the teams and people to pick up the compostable waste from the Pub and Little Feast.

I'm looking forward to the next working bee – there is some pumpkin soup left over. Plus I hope people have lots of great ideas for activities for the coming year.

Gretel Lamont



What's happening in the Garden this month

Asparagus

The asparagus is ready to harvest; harvest the fattest spears (as fat as your finger) and 10-20cm long and leave any spindly ones (see photos on notice board) to grow into foliage fronds like we did this year so the plants will continue to grow strongly again next year. Please remember that everyone wants some so only take a couple of spears per member.



Asparagus Harvesting by Camilla Lazzar, Diggers

The usual time for picking is in early spring. The new growth produces the best new spears. I usually pick a few at this time and then let the other spears produce into foliage fronds, allowing at least 4-6 fronds per plant. These fronds are needed to ensure the plant has enough foliage / photosynthetic material to actively grow in future years. If additional spears keep coming you can then harvest these again whilst maintaining the 4-6 main fronds. The usual harvest period is Sept to Dec, occasionally producing spears in autumn. Protect emerging fronds from snails and slugs. It is best not to harvest spears for the first few years to enable good long term establishment.

Sprouting Broccoli

The sprouting broccoli in bed N is also ready - cut off the florets and leave the rest of the plant to produce more.



Romanescu broccoli

Did you know??

That the head of a Romanescu broccoli *Brassica oleracea* is in a logarithmic spiral and the number of spirals is Fibonacci number. Not only that, it tastes good



We need your help

Always Needed for Compost

- Wood ash - put in metal rubbish bin beside Bay 1
- Shredded paper
- Autumn leaves
- Grass clippings
- Manures
- Egg shells
- Kitchen green waste

We need a couple of large ceramic pots in which to grow horseradish and ginger. If you know of anyone who such items sitting in someone's back yard begging for a home, let us know.

Now we are getting lots of compostable waste from the Pub we need to collect it regularly. If you can do it regularly that would be great - you need a car as it is heavy - we will try and set up a roster so it is not too much of a chore.

Please send articles or ideas for the newsletter to communitygarden3231@gmail.com