

Uki Garden Club

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President's Report Gillian Woodward

As 2019 draws to a close, it is time to reflect on another 12 months of sharing knowledge and experience in our beautiful Tweed Valley gardens. For the Uki Garden Club it has been another year of growth in numbers, with membership now higher than ever in our 21 year history. Although we have had battles this year with drought and bushfires in the area, our shared interest in gardening has been able to bring us together to enjoy friendship, food and pleasure, helping to relieve the worried and sometimes depressive thoughts that inevitably come in difficult circumstances.

Our Garden Gathering Xmas Party at Don and Sandy Capner's was a great day of giving, sharing food and drinks, and enjoying friendships in the beautiful surrounds. With 56 in attendance, it was a good chance to relax and catch up before the true Christmas rush began. It was my pleasure to reward all the wonderful garden hosts of 2019 with their Mitre 10 gift vouchers. May you enjoy spending your \$30 on anything you need or want for your garden or otherwise (rest assured we won't be checking on your purchases!). It is our way of showing our appreciation for your kind hospitality during the year. Without willing hosts like you, our Club would flounder – you are all VIP's!

Another exceedingly great pleasure was to make 'Life Membership' awards to two very worthy recipients – Lynn O'Hara and Lyn Reid. Both of these women have given their time, expertise and support in many ways to our club over the years. Read more about the contributions of these wonderful people on pages 5 and 7-8.

Our Food Group's Xmas Party atop the highest hill in Uki at Mark Collison's home was another spectacular affair. With our Club founder, Julia Hancock, at the helm, we had a very enjoyable time. Evidence surrounded us of Mark's extensive hours of hard work on his terraced land and in his lovely house. We hope he can soon sit back and enjoy the fruits of his labour – with so many fruit trees of different varieties, his hillside will become a virtual supermarket. What a great inspiration to us all and a true food group experience indeed!

Our Club new year doesn't start until February 2020, when you will receive your next newsletter detailing meeting venues for the first 4 months of the year. As usual our first Garden Gathering in February will be on a Sunday – the last in the month – at the Aveo Mountain View Community Centre. We have invited 3 of our members to show us some slides of gardens they visited while overseas in 2019. It should be a great chance to learn more about fascinating places that we too might visit in our world travels.

May you all enjoy the coming Festive Season in a way that pleases and uplifts. Take time to gather with friends, family and those you love, sharing the joy of Christmas. I hope your gardening gives you the 'time out' that you might need if things get too stressful. And let's hope that the recent rain is a sign that there is much more to come for our thirsty rivers, dams, tanks and garden beds. That, I think, would be the best Christmas gift we could all hope for after our very dry year in the Tweed!

Happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year to you all

Gillian



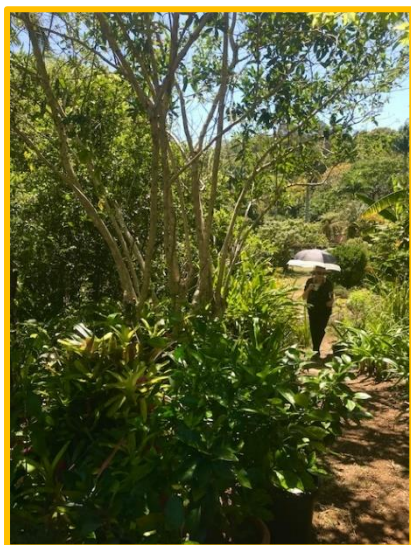
Titbits from the November Food Group

Julia Hancock

November's Food Group meeting coincided with one of the worst bush fire events in Australia's history. At the time of writing Doon Doon members Kirsteen Hornick, Desirée Saunders and Helen Fleming were all at home, watching the Mt Nardi and Nimbin fires approach. Jenny and David Kidd were busy keeping watch at North Tumbulgum and several other members could not come because of fire-related issues. Despite that, a good number of people came and enjoyed a beautiful morning at the Holzknecht's gorgeous garden in Burringbar. And yes, despite the drought it was still gorgeous. Sue expended much water and energy maintaining a



green lawn for us all to sit on. Friends and neighbours had held working bees in the weeks prior to our visit to help Sue and Hartmut make the place ship-shape and even the weather was relatively kind to us. Luckily there was plenty of shade to shelter under.



Sue and Hartmut arrived in Burringbar in 2013 and set about clearing loads of overgrown vegetation, then planted mainly fruit trees and edible food. Hartmut grew up in Papua New Guinea and has a keen interest in growing tropical food – luckily their 2.5 acres offers plenty of space for this. He likes to grow lots of rosellas which he makes into delicious jam. At the bottom of their garden they agist two horses while at the top of the plot near the house Sue maintains a small vegie and herb garden. Their son Martin's bonsai and Adeniums were on display, many of which are for sale.

General Discussion

Some interesting topics were discussed at the meeting.

- ☼ Barb Waters has covered her entire vegie garden with shade cloth and it is doing really well. In the rest of the garden she's transitioning from ornamentals to succulents.
- ☼ Having recently moved back to Murwillumbah, Diana Eriksen says her gardening is all in the future tense! She's planning to repurpose a large cat cage into a bush-turkey-proof growing area for her vegies (even in the centre of town the turkeys are a menace).
- ☼ Sharyn is able to continue building her rammed earth home in Tyalgum thanks to a spring-fed dam on the property. She's enjoying lovely peaches from her garden.
- ☼ Jan and Rex are also enjoying stone fruit at Nunderi but their nectarines and peachcots have to be tightly netted. They also had a good crop of apples and enjoyed eating those fruits the birds didn't get.
- ☼ Nellmary has a huge crop of avocados and mangoes coming on.
- ☼ Annie's dead front lawn has now been transformed into a new focal point as she's created two new garden beds with potted succulents and pebbles. Looks really good.
- ☼ Marcella and Phil's house is on the market so they are compelled to keep the garden looking as good as possible.
- ☼ Jean's good news story is that the flowers on her Grevilleas have been better than ever during the drought and the birds have visited in droves. She's seen species never before spotted in her garden, which goes a long way to compensating her for the lack of rain.
- ☼ Di Morrison's three dams have dried up and she's buying water for the first time ever. She's giving priority to watering the orchard and fruit-bearing trees. She's shutting down the vegie patch. Her neighbours keep free-range chickens which have been causing a few problems but at least they provide Di with three fresh eggs each day.

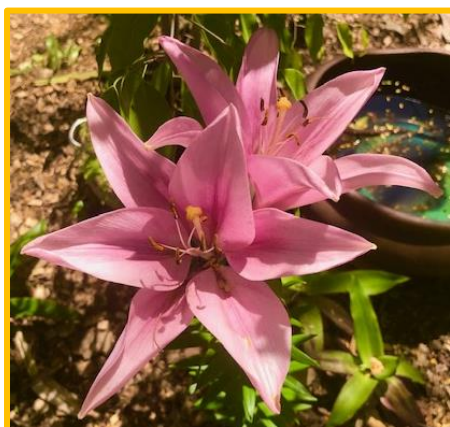
- ☼ Laine and her house-mates have tackled a huge project removing bamboo from their property which lies on the banks of the Tweed, and replacing it with native plants. With Council's advice they've stabilised the river bank with sisal and coir matting, into which they will insert pockets of plants. Her own corner of the garden consists of raised vegie beds and potted plants transported from her former home in Adelaide.
- ☼ Grant spent much time and energy mulching his Uki orchard only to have it 'rearranged' by turkeys. Don Capner suggesting using mirrors to deter them so Grant purchased a couple at the TPS shop and has had fun watching the turkey attacking its reflection. His purchase of a chipper means he's able to use all the waste material in his garden as mulch and compost.
- ☼ Tim advised us that bush turkeys don't like camphor mulch. He's used it around the fruit trees with no bad effects on the citrus.
- ☼ Susan's star performance has been collard greens which have thrived despite the drought.
- ☼ Amanda said Tyalgum is about to go under water restrictions. She's using shower water to keep her avocado and mango trees going, and water from the duck pond on trees at the back of the garden.
- ☼ We all sympathised with Linda Rees who has lost 50 per cent of her fruit set. The upside of the drought at her place is that she has no leeches or funnel ants.
- ☼ Graham was a novice gardener 20 years ago and reckons his first crop of three tomatoes cost him \$27 each! He says his garden enjoys "huge potential" (in "realestatespeak").
- ☼ Bonnie and Buzz have been trying to maintain their garden around the house so they can sell their property, by pumping water from the dam. But on extremely windy days it's not worth it. They are plagued by Monolepta beetles. What to do? Baygon (says Nellmary); keep the outside lights on at night then zap them with pesticide as they're clustered around the lights.
- ☼ At the end of the discussion Julia summarised how we're all learning to respond to climate change: a) by shrinking our gardening footprint; b) by growing hardier plants; c) by using grey water; and d) by not being afraid to close down our gardens until conditions improve.

New Members

We were delighted to welcome two new members: Susan who has purchased Barbara Thomas's property in Rowland's Creek Road, Uki; and Laine Langridge who has moved back to the Tweed after many years in Adelaide and now resides in South Murwillumbah. Both have very green thumbs!



*Below left and centre – some of the pockets of colour in the verdant garden of Sue and Hartmut.
Below right: The hardworking hosts Sue and Hartmut in front of their 'Bromeliad Pyramid'.*



(Ed: thanks to Marcella Keegan and Laine Langridge for the lovely meeting pics)



November Garden Gathering – Sheila Stephenson & Fran O'Hara

Our annual Garden Gathering Christmas party was again hosted by Sandra & Don Capner in their resplendent garden which was thriving despite the dry.

Santa (AKA Tim Hunt) was on hand to meet and greet guests and the present & food tables were soon filled to overflowing.



Gillian began the meeting by explaining that it was also a Special General Meeting for members to vote to adopt the Model Constitution under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009*. This was passed unanimously and the Special General Meeting was over before we knew it.



Gillian thanked the hosts of the meetings in 2019 and all were awarded gift vouchers from Mitre 10. As Gillian mentioned in her President's Report at the start of this newsletter – without willing hosts we would not have the wonderful meetings we all enjoy. There are still a few vacancies on both the Garden Gathering and Food Group calendars for 2020 so if you are willing to host a meeting please contact Gillian ASAP.

Gillian then had the pleasure of presenting Life Membership to Couz'n Lynn O'Hara – see more about that a bit further on.



Gillian also made a special presentation to Bonnie Buzolic for her significant contribution to the Club over her years as a member – having stood as the Club's Treasurer and Public Officer for many years – a vital role for the Club.

Jan Brooks, our very capable Bus Trip organiser, spoke about the bus trips in the planning stages for 2020 and if anyone has any wish-list places to visit in our region, please get in touch with Jan.

Santa's sack (or table) was full when the gift swap began. Jackie Balk did a wonderful job in organising the swap which went like clockwork, ably assisted by Annie Simmonds in the display of the gifts. Many oohs and

ahhs were heard as gift recipients opened their presents to reveal the contents. (*Ed note: I was particularly happy with the wondrous gardening apron designed and made by the extremely clever Sue Holzkecht and I can tell you it has been put to good use many times since the party!*).

And Santa's knee got quite a workout during the gift swap – pics to follow.



Then the Christmas Raffle was drawn. The Hamper (worth over \$125) contained many, many items – both edible and extremely useful gardening-wise and was put together by the undisputed Club Raffle Queen Couz'n Lynn. Nellmary was the surprised and delighted raffle winner, exclaiming as she got up to collect her bounty that she had only won 3 raffles in her life. Luckily Santa was on hand to help Couz'n Lynn present the huge raffle basket as it was pretty heavy.

Then it was time for lunch, happy chatter and catch-ups between members and friends.

Our huge thanks to Sandra and Don for opening up their magnificent property to the Club – not once but twice this year. It is very much appreciated by all.



Life Membership for Lynn O'Hara

Gillian Woodward had the honour of awarding Lynn O'Hara Life Membership at the Garden Gathering's Christmas Party. Lynn has been one of the most dedicated supporters of the club since she joined, and has played a huge part in keeping the ball rolling for the past 10 years.

She has hosted several meetings at her delightful garden in Hastings Point, where she has proved that a property doesn't have to be big to be beautiful. Lynn manages to cram all sorts of plants into her back yard, which has a sub-tropical, coastal theme in keeping with her surroundings.

Lynn has been a long-serving member of the committee and is the undisputed queen of the club's monthly raffle drawn at meetings and on bus trips, tirelessly sourcing a cornucopia of prizes for the lucky winners. She also prepares the Club's Christmas raffle prize – a huge hamper filled with many goodies that never fails to delight the lucky winner.

Her horticultural speciality is the creation of mini pot gardens filled with home-propagated succulents, which she often donates to the raffle. Lynn also loves taking photos, which she makes into gift cards, many of which have been donated to the club as gifts for guest speakers.

Lynn has been our 'meet and greet' person when the occasion calls, and can always be relied on to lend a helping hand when necessary. She makes new members feel welcome and has introduced several of her friends to the club.

Lynn is unfailingly cheerful and few members are as sorely missed when they go on holidays than she – without drawing attention to herself in any way Lynn quietly gets the job done and makes sure that everyone is having a good time at meetings.



Christmas Photos with Santa

It didn't matter if you had been naughty or nice during the year – everyone was treated equally by Santa. Huge thanks to Tim Hunt, our most favourite Santa, for making this year's Christmas party one to be remembered for many years to come.



Titbits from the December Food Group

Julia Hancock



Mark Collison hosted the Food Group's Christmas party on 10 December and despite the 35°C temperature there was a large turnout. Mark moved from Sydney 15 months ago and set about wrestling a badly overgrown 5-acre plot into a landscape of views and accessibility. Now that it's largely free of weeds, Mark is aiming to establish a food forest with flowering, scented plants around the house and a thriving vegie patch down the hill. He has already used 100 bales of cane tops and 8 cubic metres of tree mulch on the project.

Mark's 10-year-old pug Rocky acts as site manager (*pic of the pair at right*) and works his human very hard! Mark generously made his entire house available for us to escape from the heat and enjoy our delicious lunch in comfort. We did not have a meeting as such, save for Gillian handing out gift vouchers for host members through 2019, but a couple of people had things to share with the group.



- ✿ Lyn put something on Facebook on garden survival but for those of us who don't do social media it has been reproduced a little further on in the newsletter. She's working hard to keep the nature strip alive for the hundreds of birds, bees and butterflies that visit it. Her garden is registered as a Wildlife Garden with Tweed Shire Council.
- ✿ David and Bronwyn Hancox are enjoying lots of Richmond birdwing butterflies in their Limpinwood garden.
- ✿ Sue Yarrow has koalas for the first time in 50 years.
- ✿ Diana had sheep when she was living in Dungay and now that she's back in Murwillumbah she's using their fleeces as mulch. The wool can be put up against trunks and stems without rotting them.

Life Membership for Lyn Reid

As part of the Food Group Christmas Party celebrations Julia Hancock presented Lyn Reid with life membership. Lyn joined the Garden Club in 1999 and soon became known as an expert on historic roses and perennials which she grew in the garden of her 100-year-old cottage in Uki.

Lyn has hosted both Food Group and Garden Gathering meetings regularly over the last 20 years, always ensuring that there is something new and interesting to look at in her garden.

Several years ago Lyn terraced her steeply-sloping back garden to maximise the opportunity for growing vegetables and herbs. Never afraid of hard manual labour, she did much of the rock work herself.



We've seen her small house transform into one of the most impressive properties in the village, with the addition of another (matching) house craned onto the property seven years ago. She has been helped in her landscaping and home renovation work by club member Don Capner whose building skills and sculptures add an impressive dimension to the new layout.

Lyn has also played an active part in the running of the club, serving as president from 2001-2002. More recently she's been a regular contributor to the Club's facebook page and often posts on our website. She is a keen photographer of all things horticultural and loves to share information with gardeners online.

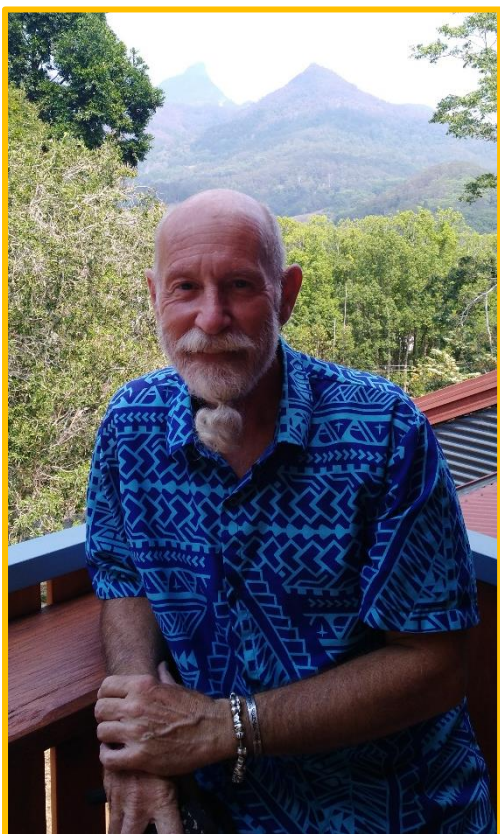
In the last quarter of each year Lyn breaks out in a serious case of sash rash, when she wins numerous prizes in the Murwillumbah Garden Club Competition, the Murwillumbah Agricultural Show flower arranging, and Tweed Shire Council's garden competition.

A highly-skilled plantswoman, Lyn continues to inspire members with her hands-on approach to developing new parts of her garden. Lately her interest in native plants has resulted in what must surely be the most gorgeous nature strip in the whole of Tweed Shire.

Lyn is an organic gardener who makes her garden welcome to all visitors, whether birds, bees, insects or humans.



Top left, top right and left: The view, some delightful potted colour and the charming host with the backdrop of Mt Warning.



At right: Linda Rees, Marie Luxford and Janice Thomas also enjoying the view from Mark's home.



With thanks to Jackie Balk and Couz'n Lynn for the pics.



We recently received these lovely letters from 2 of our Club members who wanted to share their thoughts with us.

From Lynn O'Hara

I would like to say Thank you to the Garden Club for giving me Life Membership. I was so surprised to be receiving this award, that I was "TOTALLY GABBERFLASTED" & then lost for words (that's a 1st !) completely, so I did not do a good job of a thankyou speech...obviously, raffle ticket selling is my forte.

To be rewarded for doing something you enjoy is amazing. I will keep being part of this wonderful Club and surrounding myself with lovely & interesting people, who have passed onto me such a bounty of gardening knowledge & is run by a committee with wonderful leadership.

I let everyone know about our Club & I am proud to be a part of the UKI GARDEN CLUB.

Thank you once again

Lynn O'Hara (new life member!)

From Annie Simmonds

I just want to say thank you for all the help and kindness shown to me.

Also to Nellmary and Julia for organising and picking me up.

I thank you all with all my heart.

It's a great club

Regards

Annie



Merle Munsie's still growing great stuff

Despite the dreadful dry on the Sunshine Coast, Merle is still managing to grow heaps of edibles in her Yandina garden. At right is a selection of the tomatoes she grows in pots on her back patio.



Members' Recipes

Moist Coconut Cake – Barry Stratton

A moist cake which keeps for a week at least.

Ingredients

- ✓ 125g butter
- ✓ 1 cup desiccated coconut
- ✓ 1 egg, beaten
- ✓ 1 cup self-raising flour
- ✓ 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- ✓ 1/2 cup milk
- ✓ 3/4 cup white sugar

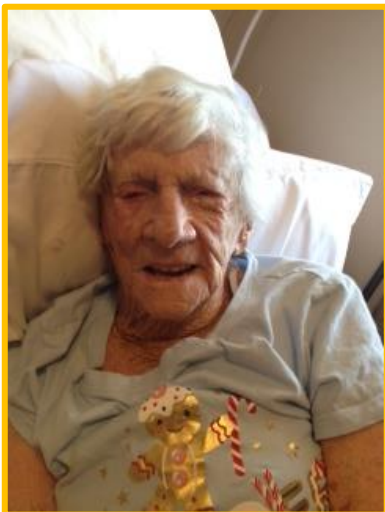
Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. Melt butter and put in bowl. Add vanilla and beaten egg, stir quickly
2. Mix in sugar, coconut, sifted flour and milk until combined. Pour into greased lamington tin.
3. Bake for 30 minutes. Ice with lemon icing while still warm

Yum - enjoy.



Happy 104th Stella!



Stella Wilkie was 104 years young on her birthday on 6 December.

Although she now finds it hard to see and hear, Stella is still the life and soul of the party and insists that she will live for another few years yet.

Stella attributes her longevity to never worrying, drinking lots of milk and always having fun. Her motto is "every day is a lovely day."

Thanks Julia!



On the Road Again – Travellers' Tales

Sublime Switzerland – Julia Hancock & Nellmary McEwan

Nellmary and Julia were fortunate to escape the Tweed Valley bush fires in October and travel to Switzerland for three weeks of fresh air and general magnificence. The pair had organised the trip with military precision to make the most of the Swiss Rail Pass they used to traverse the country from border to border. Initially they thought it was expensive at around \$750 but it turned out to be terrific value as it got them into most galleries and museums for free, as well as the use of cable cars and ferries.

Below: One of the vintage cable cars still in use.



R: Boats are an important mode of transport for lake-side villages



Switzerland is one of the costliest places on earth so anything for free was a total bonus! Since Switzerland has more galleries and museums than anywhere else and as Nellmary and Julia are both culture vultures, they truly got their money's worth.

First stop Zurich where we walked off our jetlag and took in the marvellous ambience of this lively city which straddles the Limat River. Northern Switzerland was enjoying an Indian summer so there were still flowers in profusion. Saturday flea markets and an exhibition on the history of the Swiss cotton industry were highlights.

From there it was a short train ride over the border to Germany which Julia had visited but was keen to show Nellmary. They were based in Freiburg im Breisgau, one of the world's first sustainable cities. The medieval centre is dominated by a large church, as are so many northern European cities. Although their visit to the Black Forest coincided with one of the few wet days during the trip, their pleasure was not diminished as the pair caught a small train to the lovely village from where they walked around the lake.

Back in Switzerland they were delighted with Basel – an architectural masterpiece. Gracious buildings dating from the 13th century lined cobbled streets. Several hours were spent in the Kunstmuseum drooling over the treasures housed there.

A scenic train trip down the Western border of Switzerland brought them to Geneva, a busy city at the southern end of Lac Lemman. Despite its reputation for glamour, it was the Swiss city we liked least.

Lausanne is the home of the word-famous Zentrum Paul Klee, a museum devoted to the works of artist Paul Klee who has been one of Julia's favourite artists since she discovered him at age 14. The collection is housed in a stunning, custom-made building overlooking the old city and fields beyond.

Bern, the capital and centre of Swiss power and wealth, more than made up for their disappointment with Geneva. From the window of their centrally-located hostel they enjoyed front row seats to Switzerland's largest ever demonstration – this protest against climate change. All ages, from babies to octogenarians, held up beautifully hand-made banners and placards heralding their fears for the generations to follow. Being Swiss, the demonstrators were exceptionally well-behaved.



L: A stunning example of a Swiss clock.

When Julia arrived in Luzern she thought she'd died and gone to heaven. This ancient city on the edge of Lake Vierwaldstättersee is surely the jewel in Switzerland's crown.

L: Rivers are the life-blood of ancient European cities.

The English artist J.M.W Turner (1775-1851) made several visits to Switzerland in his



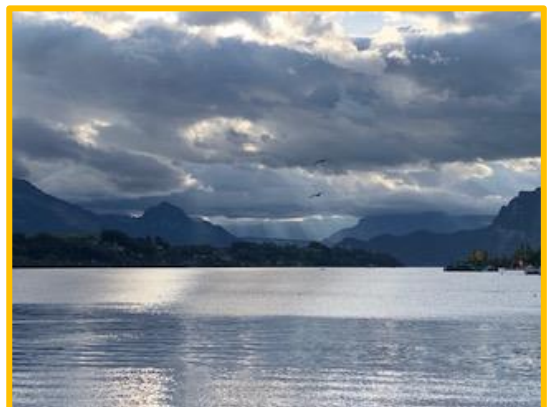
lifetime and Nellmary and Julia were lucky enough to catch a large exhibition on loan from the British Tate Gallery depicting many of the scenes he painted while in Luzern. The following day the girls made a boat trip around Lake Vierwaldstättersee and saw for themselves some of the magnificent scenery that he depicted so dramatically. He was truly an artist way ahead of his time.

R: Nature imitating art – Turner would have done this scene proud.

What can be said about the Swiss Alps that hasn't already been said? Suffice to say it was so beautiful Nellmary and Julia almost wept. Their first stop was Meiringen, made famous by Sir

Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Final Problem*, in which Sherlock Holmes and his nemesis plunge off the Reichenbach Falls. The girls couldn't resist taking a cable car up to view the Falls and were afforded a magnificent vista from the viewing platform. Back in town the Sherlock Holmes Museum entertained them with its faithful recreation of Holmes' drawing room at 122B Baker Street.

Lauterbrunnen was their launch pad for the Glacier Express rail trip up to Jungfrauoch – the highest point in Europe. They were so glad they'd brought their winter woollies as the viewing terrace at the top of the glacier was freezing! The ice carvings within the main building were fabulous and they judged it to be one of the best tourist attractions they'd ever visited. It was only the third time in her life that Nellmary had seen snow, so she was super excited.



L: Nellmary and Julia huddle together for warmth at Jungfrauoch

Glaciers and permafrost hold fragile mountains together and with global warming they are starting to melt, bringing down crumbling mountains with them. On the lower slopes of the mountain they spotted some Alpine flowers despite the fact that their season was well passed. Edelweiss are rare in the wild but seem to grow happily in containers around the pretty village cottages. *R: Beautiful Edelweiss*





The mountain scenery literally takes your breath away (not much oxygen in the air).

Nellmary and Julia couldn't go to Switzerland without seeing the Matterhorn – so a trip to Zermatt was a must. They were not disappointed. No wonder tourists have flocked there since the early 18th century. The highlight was the 16th century Hinterdorfstrasse where two-story wooden cottages housed beasts beneath and humans above.

Their longest train ride of the journey brought Nellmary and Julia to Chur – which has been an important commercial central-European hub for centuries. From there it was a relatively short trip to St Moritz, where the real glamour is. Set at the head of the Engadine Valley this small town is

invaded during the ski season by the mega-rich keen to be seen on the *pistes*. The girls' imaginations were captured by a small museum custom-built to house a collection of antique Engadine-style furniture, housewares, paintings, utensils and weapons and enclosed within rooms constructed of intricately-carved timber. Both girls could quite happily have lived there.

Autumn arrived as the travellers reached their last destination, the Roman spa town of Baden. The highlight was the fabulous impressionist art at the Langmatt Museum, a collection donated to the city by a family of philanthropists, together with their fin-de-siècle mansion and garden. What a treat! *R: The gorgeous garden at Baden's Langmatt Museum.*



The pair were also amused by a visit to a textile museum in St Gallen which displayed a collection of Circus Klem's clown costumes spanning 100 years – all made by Paris designers!

Switzerland stole the girls' hearts so much that Julia instantly decided to have her 70th birthday in Luzern. There is no doubt that trains are the way to go – they are immaculate, punctual and frequent. Seeing this small put perfectly-formed country unfold from the large carriage windows was as good as it gets.



L: A bit of alpine artistry.

R: Most of the wooden chalets are festooned with window boxes containing bright geraniums.



Text: Julia Hancock

Photos: Nellmary McEwan



Dealing with Water Restrictions – Some Hints & Tips From Newly-Minted Life Member Lyn Reid

With level 2 water restrictions beginning, I have started preparing the garden.

Yesterday was spent removing all semi-finished plants from the veg garden (broad bean seed was gathered, I'll leave a couple of corn plants to gather seed in the next few weeks). Coriander & dill past their prime came out. The last of the celery went to the chooks, beets & onions were harvested. Perennial herbs were trimmed, fed, watered well & mulched. All bare ground was given a sprinkling of dynamic lifter, a good drink then heavily mulched. There will be only a few perennial herbs left to water in my big vegie beds, which I will water with grey water.

All annual flowering plants will come out of the cottage gardens this week & a new layer of mulch added over the top of what is there. Any perennials like roses, salvias, clumping plants will pretty much be on their own with an odd bucket of grey water added to individual plants when I have time.

The remainder of the garden especially the orchard is already heavily mulched & will be on its own.

My native section is where I'll be using my 30 min every other day hand watering allowance to keep new, rare & expensive grafted plants going. The natives are my priority as they are what is keeping the birds, bees, butterflies & other native critters going. Each morning I have a huge number of birds feeding on the Grevilleas, Callistemons, kangaroo paws etc. Native bees & honey bees are massed on any flowers at the moment. Butterflies have just started to build in numbers.

Thanks Lyn!

Farewell Kyla

We are very sorry to be saying goodbye to Kyla White who, in her short time as a member of the garden club, has inspired us with her knowledge and inspiration on all things permaculture. The meeting held at her farm at Terragon was fascinating, as few of us even knew that enclave existed. Sadly her large, drought-stricken property became too much for her and she has now relocated to the Gold Coast hinterland and has taken a job at Burleigh Heads. We wish her all the very best with her new home and career.



RIP Don Edwards



Sadly we have lost another of our group this year – former club member Don Edwards has died. Don hosted the garden club several times at his magnificent 200-acre property, Tree Haven, at the foot of Mt Warning. A 20-year member of the Tweed-Byron Reafforestation Committee Don had an encyclopaedic knowledge of growing native trees and was responsible for planting hundreds of thousands of seedlings around the Shire. His own property boasted many rare and endangered species, most of which he had propagated himself. A collection of stories by written by locals and compiled by Club member Diana Eriksen entitled *Part of the Landscape: The Challenges of Living in the Tweed Valley* includes a chapter by Don.

(Ed: thanks Julia for sharing these pieces of news with us)

December/January Job File – Julia Hancock

- ☼ Feed hibiscus with a soluble fertiliser to keep the blooms coming all summer.
- ☼ Holiday-proof your plants by making sure they are well mulched. Remember to always mulch after rain to capture the moisture in the soil. Move pots into the shade and cluster them so it's easier for a neighbour to water while you are away. Consider mulching your larger pots with pebbles, wine corks or pine cones to prevent them from drying out rapidly.
- ☼ Summer is not the ideal time for propagating most plants, but cuttings can be confidently taken from Cordylines and Dracaenas because they are struck in water. It's a good idea to cut the heads off Cordylines and Dracaenas to induce bushy growth, because where you cut, two shoots form. Likewise, aquatic plants can be divided up and potted on and kept in a bucket of water in the shade-house until they have formed a healthy root ball.
- ☼ Be diligent in emptying saucers under pots on a regular basis to prevent mozzies from laying eggs in them.
- ☼ Spring bulbs have died down now so it's a good opportunity to sprinkle some dynamic lifter around where they grow and place a blanket of mulch on top to protect them over the summer.
- ☼ If your azaleas have shown signs of lace bug, give them a light trim and throw the cuttings in the bin. Clear away any dead and diseased foliage from around the base of the plant and dispose of this in the bin too.
- ☼ Ixoras are coming into flower now (*pic at right*). Check that they are not covered in ants and scale. If they are, spray with some white oil and keep an eye on them.
- ☼ If you want to grow tomatoes this summer try doing so in straw bales and make sure you mix some dolomite in with the potting mix before you plant. As they grow, feed regularly with a liquid plant food and keep the bale moist.
- ☼ Parsley plants sometimes collapse when a day of intense heat is followed by rain. There is nothing one can do to revive them once they're gone, so pull them up and replant with fresh plants when this happens. It usually affects older plants, so as a preventative why not start off some young plants in a shady area so you never run out of parsley?
- ☼ Remove dead flower heads and spotty foliage from flowering plants, especially roses. Check for powdery mildew on Cucurbits and try spraying it with a weak solution of milk and water.
- ☼ As you weed around your favourite plants, give them a bit of dynamic lifter and water well. Do a small patch at a time so as not to encourage bandicoots.
- ☼ If you love blue plants remember that you need at least three blue ones to every red or yellow flowering plant, as blue is a recessive colour and can get lost in the garden if not generously grouped.
- ☼ If you've got things in the shade house that are straggly and forlorn, trim them back, check for scale, repot if necessary and give them a long soak in a bucket of liquid fertiliser.
- ☼ Treat yourself to an annual subscription to a gardening magazine for Christmas!
- ☼ If you've got a superabundance of basil, simply pick it, whiz the leaves in a food processor, and freeze spoonfuls in ice trays for use in soups, pesto and stews later.



Relax! All the hard work is done for this year. Just sit back and enjoy the fruits of your labour.



February 2020 Meetings

February 2020 Garden Gathering – Sunday 23rd February, 2pm start time

Our hosts are Marilyn and Graeme Gough and it will be held at Aveo Mountainview, Village Community Centre, Ingram Place,, Murwillumbah.

There will be a presentation by 3 of our well-travelled members.

Please note: This meeting is on **SUNDAY** 23rd February.

February Food Group Meeting, Tuesday 11th February, 9.30am start time

In the garden of Phil and Marcella Keegan
48 Binalong Court, Burringbar
02 6677 0210, 0412 178 381

Directions to get there: Turn off Tweed Valley way into Broadway, drive through Burringbar village, and cross the railway line. Binalong Court is the first street on your right after the (disused) rail crossing. No 48 is on the right. Park along the road as there is very little parking space at No 48.

For both meetings please bring along your cup, chair, a hat, a plate to share, and any produce or plants for the swap table.



That's all Folks for This Year...

Huge, huge, huge thanks to all the contributors for this month's bumper newsletter and your last one for 2019

Next newsletter will be out sometime in February 2020 and as always, all of your contributions are welcome and we would love to hear what you've all been up to over the summer. Send your hints, tips, recipes, travel stories, bragging photos to us at ugcnew@gmail.com

We wish you all the best for the festive season and may 2020 be a bright and beautiful year filled with much fun, love, laughter and good gardening!

And thanks as always to our printer – Sandra & Alan Guthrie at **Poster Paradise, Murwillumbah.**