

Uki Garden Club

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<http://ukigarden.club/wp/>



Welcome to Spring! However I think that much of our winter this year was really *more like a cool* Spring as it hasn't seemed very cold to me. I did miss August as I was in Italy, experiencing their quite hot summer. It was a relief to be cycling up in the northern alps where daytime temperatures were much more moderate and perfect for the long daily rides.

A very big thank you to the committee for taking the reins so competently while I was overseas – especially to Jenny, Fran, Nellmary, Julia and (outgoing treasurer) Bonnie.

While in northern Italy, I was overwhelmed by the beautiful window boxes of well-tended brilliantly coloured flowers. Just one of the many photos of places we stayed is at right.

Despite there being virtually no rain while I was away it appears that my azaleas have thrived like so many still on display in Murwillumbah gardens. My son, in charge of my garden while I was away, took this photo below on our driveway.



The Wedgetail working group, under Hartmut's diligent guidance, has been very busy setting up a new vegetable garden out there. Thank you so much to members who have donated generously towards this project, both in hours of work, sharing their expertise and with monetary gifts. An update of what they have been doing is included further on in this newsletter.

As a result of the AGM held at Fran's in July, you have elected a new committee (see photo on page 8). We recently met for the first time to allocate tasks (amongst other general business). Apart from the executive – President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer – the following committee members have volunteered in the roles listed:

- Newsletter Editor – Fran O'Hara
- Membership Secretary – Jennifer Kidd
- Treasurer's assistant – Nellmary McEwan (and Tim Hunt in her absence)
- Meeting Host assistant – Sue Holzknecht (contact her if supplies in hosting kit need topping up)
- Raffle organiser – Lynn O'Hara

By the time you receive this newsletter, the October 5th bus trip bookings will have closed. UGC is paying for the entrance fee to the gardening show and it will be a great day out for those who have registered. We look forward to seeing great photos and hearing your reports of the outing in this newsletter next month.

Happy gardening,

Gillian

Titbits from the August Food Group Julia Hancock

Following a cold, windy weekend the Food Group meeting at Limpinwood on 13 August was blessed with a perfect winter's day – warm and still.

The drive over there was spectacular and the view of the Border Ranges from David and Bronwyn Hancox's property is stunning. David and Bronwyn inherited a property that was infested with 8ft high weeds and soil that was contaminated with chemical residue – the legacy of a sweet potato farmer who leased the land from the original orchardist.



Since then Bronwyn and David have concentrated on soil improvement and are happy to report that clover, which is an indication of soil improvement, is now proliferating. The shed they've been living in was riddled with dry rot, so they've been treating that. Their latest purchase is 40% of a house! The previous owners of the house had attempted to transport the whole house from Brisbane to Kyogle but the truck was unable to negotiate a sharp bend at Cawongla so 60% of the house slipped into the ditch. The owners didn't want it after that so Bronwyn and David were able to make an offer for the surviving rooms, which they are now adding onto. David and Bronwyn consider themselves to be very fortunate to live in such a beautiful place, and watch their hard work bearing fruit. Says David: "It's rewarding and it gives us a lot of pleasure."



Of particular interest to garden club members was the lovely patch of garlic (pictured at left) near the front entrance, and the lavender garden in full flower (picture below left). It is perfectly positioned in full sun, on a slope, and has obviously been enjoying the winter cool. David and Bronwyn are selling the lavender to local cafes who use it in cakes and biscuits.

A new netted area houses eight stone fruit trees whose blossom is currently looking very pretty (pic as below).



An enormous crowd attended the meeting so only those members who had something specific to say put their hands up.

- Gloria's question about the use of diatomaceous earth (DE) in the garden was satisfactorily answered by several people. One must only buy food grade DE from Norco or online. The Holzknachts have been using it in and around their poultry houses against mites to excellent effect. It was agreed that it would be a useful deterrent to ants, especially in pots, as well. Warning: don't inhale the finely ground particles (they are made out of fossilised seashells).
- Sharon has 12 espaliered fruit trees including plums, nectarines and peaches. She's heard that it's important to pick all the flowers off young trees. Sue advised to pick the flowers off in the first year only. Others said to leave a few flowers to produce fruit so you can see what they will be like. Most thought that thinning out the flowers would result in better fruit quality.
- Barb Waters has found a wonderful gardener – Tim Burke, from Crystal Creek - 0416 144 101. He's transformed her garden into a low-maintenance paradise to make it easier to manage (*see pic at right kindly supplied by Claudia*) and is looking for more gardening work.
- Claudia wanted to get some advice about using bamboo mulch – she'd seen it for sale at the Channon markets, and is growing bamboo herself which she's keen to use. Jenny Kidd advised that the leaves break down relatively quickly, but the stems don't. It's fairly expensive compared to cane tops, and as both are grasses they both add silica to soils as they break down.
- Tracey wondered how to deter white cockatoos. Netting seems to be the only practical solution.
- Jenny and Nellmary attended Twin Towns Garden Club's 40th birthday party and reported that it was a very jolly occasion. Garden Clubs of Australia president George Hoad was in attendance and showed slides of beautiful gardens both here and overseas.
- Diana Eriksen has dragonfruit stems if anyone wants them.
- We all commiserated with Philip when he told us all his garlic was uprooted in the recent strong winds. He's now trying Russian garlic with bulbs given to him by Philip and Marcella. He brought along some fruits of a tree chilli (called Rocoto) that makes a very good ornamental plant, although it is also edible (but very hot). Philip has been hand pollinating his flowering Epiphyllum cacti to enable them to produce tasty fruits.
- **Nerang Botanical Bazaar** - Gloria had just visited this one-day event on 4 August and recommended it highly. Guest speakers, plants and products combined for a great day out. Perhaps a garden club bus trip next year?



Part of the Hancox pineapple patch above and at right a whopper of a pineapple that was picked & is beautiful eating, according to David.



Above: Spectacular view from the Hancox herb garden

(Ed: thanks to Sue Holzknacht and David Hancox for the lovely meeting pics)

Wedgetail Retreat Update

Through the generosity, both monetary and in kind, of our Club members the new raised veggie bed project has quickly become a reality at Wedgetail Retreat.

As at Thursday, September 5, this project will have reached a critical point, namely the delivery of 5 cubic metres of garden soil into the raised bed structure placed over the bales of sugarcane mulch which went in on Tuesday 3rd September, picked up and placed by Martin Daley and me.

I secured an excellent price for 5 cubic metres of good soil (33 per cent compost and 66 per cent good garden soil) from Billinudgel Landscaping Suppliers for \$330 delivered – amazing value. David Gourlay from SoilLife provided his excellent microbe mix to stimulate healthy soil fauna and this has been applied to the bed.

Thursday also saw, through the services of our UGC member Peter Hall, the connection of the water tank at Wedgetail to the new raised bed so that regular watering can take place.

- At this stage we need to turn our thoughts to the provision of seedlings to plant. Meredith Dennis, the Manager at Wedgetail, suggests that the following kinds of seedlings will be gladly accepted:
- Lettuce - lots and of a wide range of varieties Spring onions
- Capsicum Parsley
- Sugarsnap peas Bok choi
- Chinese cabbage Coriander
- Tomatoes (small/medium and tougher varieties if possible)

Please either bring seedling punnets to garden club meetings and pass them on to me there or drop them in to the Palliative Care Op Shop in Murwillumbah. There will be a labelled box there to receive plants, Alternatively, if you have many seedlings please ring me on 0448880209 and I can come and collect them from you.

I have been humbled and pleased by the willingness of UGC members to continue to contribute to the implementation of this project. And we know that when the first plantings are in place this will not be the end of involvement by UGC and other volunteers. Every few weeks new seedlings will need to be planted so that there is a regular refreshing of greens and herbs as the plants mature and are harvested. If any members wish to be involved in this regular care and replanting program (at least this is a raised garden bed making maintenance much easier!) please do contact Philip Wilson or myself.

My sincere thanks to everybody who has contributed and who has been involved up to this point and let us keep up with the effort.

Hartmut

(Celebratory morning tea for the hard workers – left to right – Graham Higgins, Trish Bonnor, Hartmut and Peter Hall

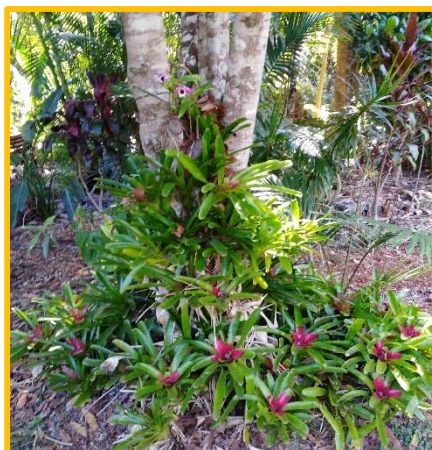
Right:
Trish
Bonnor
watering
the garden
bed for
the first
time.



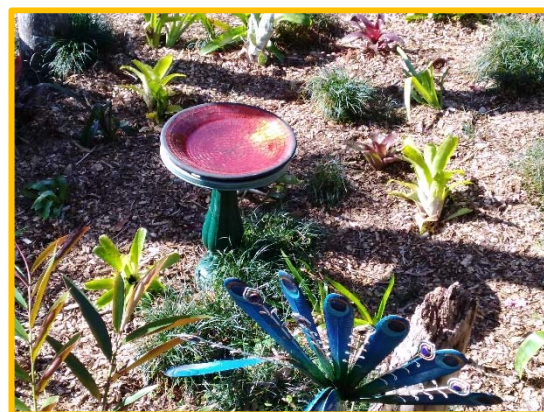
August Gardening Gathering Julia Hancock

What a massive turnout! I lost count after 60, but we all managed to squeeze onto Tim's large deck with just a bit of 'sardinery'.

Despite just a minimal rain event earlier in the week, Tim Hunt's two-acre garden in Burringbar looked



fresh and gorgeous when we visited it on the last day of winter. Tim inherited a lovingly planted property, but it had become somewhat overgrown when he moved in three years ago. He has since spent his time discovering some beautiful trees and shrubs as he has pruned and thinned out the overgrowth. Pride of place is the pool (more on that later) which has been in for two weeks but already looks nicely settled in its position off the deck. Other landscaping includes expanding the orchard and creating pockets of interest around the property.



Membership Renewals Due

For those who haven't renewed their membership, now is the eleventh hour! Fran pointed out that members who have let their memberships lapsed will be removed from the newsletter mailing list. Ouch!

Seed Box

Hartmut has done a sterling job of keeping the seed box packed with interesting plants. He pointed out that the club is the second cheapest place to access seeds – the cheapest being the free seed library at Murwillumbah, Kingscliff and Tweed Head libraries. Donations are always welcome but please make sure your seeds are clearly labelled with the plant's name, date of harvesting, and your name.

Show & Tell

Spring is always a wonderful time to share the beauties we have in our gardens and this month Don had some extra special things to show us. *Magnolia 'Felix'* develops a particularly large and lovely cup-shaped flower; and he brought along a stunning scarlet *Melaleuca fulgens* (dimensions 2m x 1m) which also comes in orange and pink which sadly he has lost. His Queensland tree waratah (*Alloxylon flammeum*) is an absolute show-stopper and the rich red flowers attract birds for the duration of its blooming. But above all Don is known for his grevilleas and we were treated to *G. 'Mitis'* – peachy yellow; *G. flexuosum* – the grafted zigzag grevillea from Perth which, although it doesn't attract birds or bees, is particularly favoured by beetles. *G. 'Sylvia'* flowers for long periods; the orange variety of *G. johnsonii* is beloved by honeyeaters; *G. 'Yamba Sunshine'* has a large egg-yolk-yellow flower; *G. 'Bush Lemons'* (grows to 3m vigorously) has a slightly smaller flower but it is a good strong yellow; *G. 'Lollypops'* has smallish pompom flowers in groups on a bush approximately 2.5m wide at 2m high; *G. 'Peaches and Cream'* whose two-toned flower is irresistible; *G. 'Parakeet'* a dwarf shrub 1m – 1.5m high; and *G. 'Kimberley Gold'* from NT/WA which is rich yellowy-orange. Prune Grevilleas after flowering in October to November. Thank you Don for the visual delights – you've inspired us all to plant more grevilleas.

Q & A

The ever-laden
afternoon tea table

Q: Why are my orchids covered with black spots and what can I do about them? (Betty). A: (Don) Your plants aren't in the correct environment. They are not getting enough air which allows the fungal infection to spread. Repot them, move them into a position that gives light morning sun, water in the morning and repot, trimming off any dead roots and foliage. Cymbidiums and cattleyas should never be kept on the ground – raise them up to approximately 60cm. Betty is using powdered cinnamon as a natural fungicide but Don also recommends copper or sulphur.

Q: What's the best thing to feed my natives? (Pamela).

A. Neutrog Bush Tucker fertilises which can be ordered through Bunnings (Lyn). Also, Pamela's grevillea is dying back. Can it be saved? Prune off the dead bits and it will probably reshoot (Don).

Q: My begonias are all going mouldy, even though they are in different positions throughout the property (Fran). A. Too wet (Don).

Q: Can Slasher (a non-toxic alternative to glyphosate) be used on both hard and soft plants (Fran). A. Yes, it kills everything (Sue).

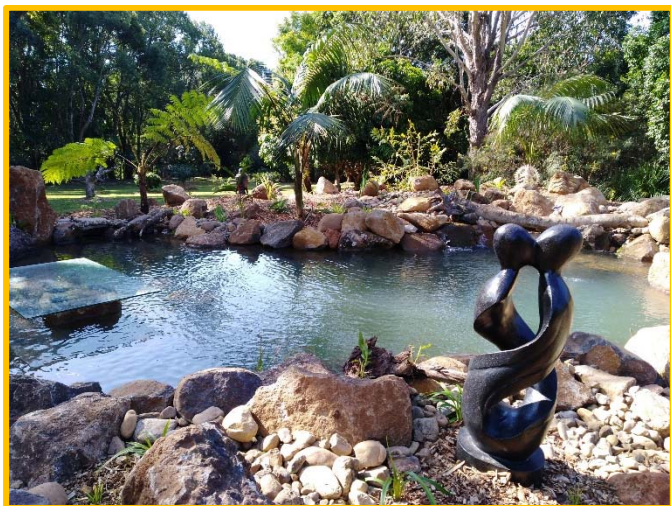
Swap Table

The swap table was loaded with goodies this month. Diana Eriksen also has some spare daylily plants at her Murwillumbah garden if anyone would like to collect them.

Raffle

Bumper crop of prizes this month thanks to generous donations by John Bennett, Lyn Reid, Mark Collison, Richard McKenna and Jenny Wein, as well as those purchased by the club. Thanks to Fran for selling the raffle tickets during Lynn O'Hara's absence.

(R: One of the raffle prizes kindly supplied by Lyn Reid)



Pool Perfection

We were all jealous of Tim's new rock pool, which lends a different dimension to an already impressive garden. Adam from FloGardens described how it was constructed, in just seven days, with lots of hard work and professional knowhow. The essential thing is to keep the water flowing, more like a river or stream than a dam. A wetland component filters out fish waste and decomposing plant matter, creating a stable and balanced environment. Bacteria convert the waste matter into food for new plants to absorb. The more plants one has the better, as they stop the water going green. Also important is plant diversity, especially the use of as many native species as possible. That way, if they escape into the wild during flood events they won't cause problems further downstream.

The same goes for the fish the pond is stocked with – a good selection of native species is vital. Once the flora and fish are established the pond should look after itself, although the pool must have a waterfall or artificial equivalent to aerate the water and keep it moving. Ponds should be constructed in areas which afford semi-shade to minimise outbreaks of algae. Evaporation is around 0.5% to 1.5% depending on the season. Tim's pool is automatically hooked up to a rainwater tank. The design includes shelves, diving rocks and steps; the pool contains 30,000 litres of water; and 40 tons of rock were used in the surrounds. It looks fabulous and thank you Adam for telling us how it came about. During our visit Tim released his first fish, which included four silver perch and some crayfish into the pool. Hooray!

Flo Gardens Discount Offer

Adam from Flo Gardens is kindly offering a 10% discount on consultations to members of the Club.

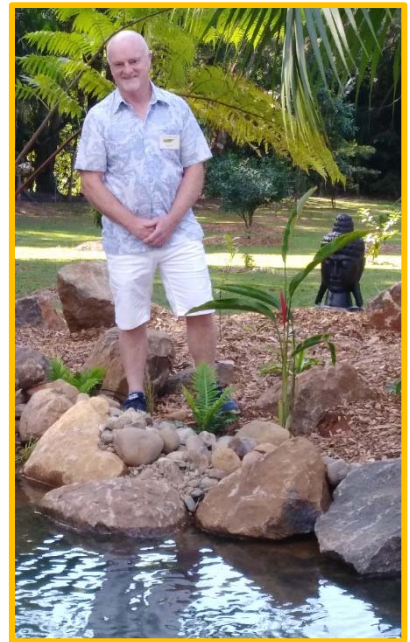
Get in touch either via the website (www.flogardens.com.au) or phone Adam direct on 0421 500 096.

FloGardens, 1/10 Bonanza Drive, Billinudgel.



A beautiful *Hippeastrum papilio* from Tim's garden and the proud host in front of his lovely pool.

(Ed: With thanks to Jackie Balk for the pics.)



Murwillumbah and District Garden Club 42nd Annual Garden Competition – Julia Hancock

The awards for the above annual competition were held on the evening of 2 September and what a night it was. I am happy to say members of the Uki Garden Club cleaned up. Here are their achievements:

- *Reserve Champion for 2019*: John Bennett
- *Home garden under 1000m²*: first prize Marie Luxford and Peter Hall, second prize John Bennett
- *Town or country garden over 1000m²*: second prize Jackie Balk
- *Front garden*: first prize John Bennett
- *Back Garden*: first prize John Bennett, second prize Jackie Balk
- *Bush or shade house*: second prize John Bennett
- *Vegetable and or herb garden, acreage*: first prize Lyn Reid, second prize Jackie Balk
- *Rock, pebble or bark garden*: first prize Lyn Reid
- *School garden third prize*: Cudgen Public School, (Brigitte Pritchard project coordinator)



Several of the prizes went to families with young children and it was good to see so much junior participation. We were all impressed with the slide show of the garden entries. Many of the schools had thriving vegie patches in raised beds. Can't wait to see John Bennett's garden when he hosts the gathering on Saturday 26 October.

Winners are grinners! (L-R: John Bennett, Brigitte Pritchard, Lyn Reid, Jackie Balk, Marie Luxford, Peter Hall)

Meet Your New Committee



(Left to right – Lynn O'Hara, Jenny Kidd, Gillian Woodward, Tim Hunt, Sue Holzknicht, Fran O'Hara, Nellmary McEwen. Absent from picture – Helen Lofts)

Committee members nominated for 2019-20 are:

Position	Person
President	Gillian Woodward
Vice President	Jenny Kidd
Treasurer	Helen Lofts
Assistant Treasurer	Nellmary McEwen
Secretary (& NL editor)	Fran O'Hara
Ordinary Member	Lynn O'Hara
Ordinary Member	Tim Hunt
Ordinary Member	Sue Holzknicht

National Gardening Week 2019

Jenny Kidd was given some brochures by the aforementioned George Hoad about National Gardening Week, an initiative of Garden Clubs of Australia, which runs from 13 to 19 October 2019.

This is intended to provide an opportunity to celebrate gardening and other horticultural pursuits; and encourage enjoyment of the environmental as well as the social and health benefits of gardening.

The focus for 2019 is to encourage schools to participate and nurture a love of gardening in children. Why not throw a garden party, visit a local park, conduct a tree planting ceremony, cook a lovely meal with home-grown produce, or simply relax in the garden to celebrate National Gardening Week, 13-19th October.



On the Road Again – Travellers' Tales

Egapark, Erfurt, Germany – Loretta

During a recent holiday to Central Europe I visited Egapark in the small, beautiful German city of Erfurt. Erfurt's old town is one of the best preserved medieval city centres in Germany but has other attractions to make it an interesting place to visit.

Egapark is a short tram ride from the city centre occupying a sprawling 36 hectares. It is both horticulturally interesting as well as being a leisure park for locals.

During our stroll we were impressed by large bedding displays of annuals including Europe's largest ornamental flower bed. It also contains a Japanese garden, a rose garden, a food garden, a water garden, a large glasshouse of tropical and warm climate plants, and a tropical butterfly house, amongst other things.



(Ed: thanks for sharing these amazing pictures Loretta!)



September Job File

- It's a great time to be putting mulch around your plants as the warmer weather approaches.
- Now is also a good time to fertilise your citrus – remembering to water before and after applying the fertiliser and then mulch well.
- Pests and disease increase with Spring weather so keep a good eye out as new spring shoots are delicious to freshly hatched insects.
- Lawns can do with a bit of attention now too. Aeration may be necessary for compacted soil – use a fork (gardening one silly!!) or an aeration tool.
- When watering do it before 10am or after 4pm; early morning is better for plants susceptible to fungal issues.
- As Don was mentioning at the August meeting – after your orchids have flowered see if they need repotting. See the February 2019 newsletter for what sort of potting mix to use as the one you can buy commercially needs attention in our climate.
- Tomatoes can go in now.
- Sow non-hearting lettuce seeds (pic at right) every few weeks to stretch your harvest.
- Mix blue and yellow flowering plants among the fruiting veggies (eg: tomatoes, capsicum, pumpkins and chillies) to attract pollinators to the garden.
- Fill empty beds with a green manure crop to increase the soil nutrition.
- Cut down lemongrass clumps close to the ground, give them some fertiliser and they will reward you with new growth.
- Think about growing summer annuals for a lovely summer display – some can go straight in and others into trays of seed raising mix – just check the seed packet to see what is best for the seeds you have chosen.
- Take a walk around your neighbourhood to see what is growing around in your area – it's a lovely time of the year to get out and about!



Making Your Own Liquid Soap

Have you ever been given some lovely hand crafted soap only to find it goes very soggy in the shower? Instead of relegating the soap to a back corner of the linen cupboard (which isn't a bad thing to do to keep clothing moths at bay) consider making your own liquid soap from it.

All you have to do is grate the soap using your box grater – large size is good. Pop it into a bowl or jar (with a good sealing lid), pour some warm water over it and give it a good shake. Let it sit overnight and it will kinda solidify into a jelly. (I left mine for a week or so). Then, get your stick blender into it and whizz it up. Finally, just pour it into your liquid soap dispenser and enjoy!

(Ed: I've tried this and it works a treat!)





Membership Renewals Still Due YOUR ABSOLUTE LAST REMINDER

A membership renewal form was attached to the May newsletter. If you haven't already –please complete the form and either bring it to a meeting or scan and email it to ugcnews@gmail.com ASAP.

Renewal fees can be paid either at a meeting via an envelope with your completed form into the Treasurer's Box or by direct deposit to the Club account – details as below:

- BSB: 722-744 (Southern Cross Credit Union)
- Account: 90867 (Uki Garden Club Inc)
- Reference: Surname + renewal

Please remember to put your name on the deposit or envelope so our Treasurer can match your renewal to your name.

This will be your last newsletter if we have not received your renewal by the end of September.

Scribe Required for Food Group Meetings Please

Julia will be away for the next two meetings and is calling for a volunteer to take notes at the garden gathering and the food group. Can you help for either or both? If so, please ring Julia on 02 6672 2506 by 15th September or Gillian after that date on 0457 872 040

Tyalgum Fundraiser

A fundraising barbeque all day in the park at Tyalgum on October 13th has been organised to help the three businesses which were destroyed by fire on 20 August, get back on their feet.

Kirra's Osiris' (Betty and James Robinson's daughter) Jewellery business was one of the unlucky ones but she is determined to reopen with the help of friends and family and the generosity of strangers.

Kirra has launched a crowdfunding page on www.gofundme.com/f/tyalgum-shops-fire-recovery and is looking forward to spreading the word at the barbeque.

Are You Prepared For A Bush Fire?



With the latest bush fire crisis still fresh in our minds – it is never too late to ensure you are prepared in the event of a bush fire.

To find out what you need to do visit:
<https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare>



September Garden Gathering

Saturday 28th September, 2pm start time.
In the garden of Jan Brooks and Axel Neumann
7 Armitage Court, Nunderi
0406 620 628

Directions on how to get there:

There are two ways to get there.

1. Turn off Clothiers Creek Rd into Norths Lane, down the hill, left into Elvadale and right into Armitage Court; or
2. Turn off Eviron Rd into Norths Lane, right into Elvadale, then right into Armitage.

Plenty of parking in either Armitage or Elvadale.

NB: Please don't park on the nature strip in Armitage as the neighbour gets testy if you do park in front of his house.

October Food Group Meeting

Marie Luxford and Peter Hall
17 Dallis Court, Murwillumbah
0401 833 164
Tuesday 8th October starting at 9.30am.

Directions on how to get there:

Coming from Murwillumbah, come past the Art Gallery and take the second left turn into Dallis Crt down steep hill; second driveway to the left at bottom of hill number 17.

Coming from Uki, turn right before Byangum bridge onto Bakers Road, follow through second right turn into Dallis Crt go to bottom of hill second driveway to the left

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

That's all Folks...

Well, that's it for this month. Thanks to all the contributors for another full newsletter.

Keep sending your hints, tips, recipes, travel stories, bragging photos to us at ugcnews@gmail.com

And thanks as always to our printer – Sandra & Alan Guthrie at **Poster Paradise, Murwillumbah**. (NB Sandra's shop has moved to Wollumbin St – in what used to be Murwillumbah Cycle Shop.)



Picture of Lyn Reid's winning garden.