

Uki Garden Club

Volume 20/01 February 2020 ugcnews@gmail.com P.O. Box 580 Murwillumbah 2484

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

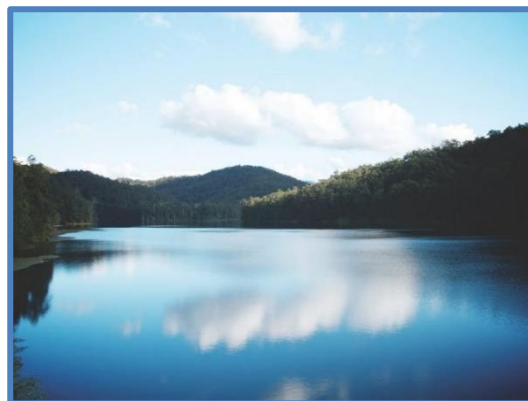
President's Report Gillian Woodward

Happy New Year for 2020 - those hot and humid summer months are certainly with us now!

The wonderful rain our Tweed Valley received recently has certainly greened up our pastures and washed our gardens well and truly clean! Let's hope we receive some good follow-up rain so that the water supply dam can refill to capacity and remove the need for water restrictions.

Welcome to another year of friendship and sharing through our wonderful garden gatherings and food group discussions. We have a new program for you, which includes quite a few guest speakers on a variety of topics. You will find the February - May calendar in this issue of the newsletter

and also on the website of course. June - November dates and venues are yet to be organised but will be published in the May newsletter. Our bus trip this year will be in early August - to the Nerang Botanical Bazaar. It will take the place of our end of July Garden Gathering. At the end of August (29th) we will hold our AGM.



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Financially we are in a strong position, with around \$2000 in our bank account. This is on par with where we are usually at this time of year. Our membership numbers are at an all-time high with 114 memberships representing 148 individuals. One thing I'd like to remind you about is that we have changed our bank account number for Uki Garden Club to the 9 digit number: 100017935. Our Southern Cross Credit Union BSB number remains unchanged, as BSB 722-744. You may need to change the account number if you have it stored on your computer for when you make payments into it for membership or bus trips etc.

Our committee met in January and reviewed our 2019 Christmas parties. We've made a few decisions as a result. They are as follows:

1. The Food Group final meeting for the year (and hence, Christmas Party) in 2020 will be held on the second Tuesday in NOVEMBER ie November 10th. It was felt that December is just too hot to be out in the mid-day sun, even when shaded. (We are not all mad dogs and Englishmen)!
2. We will re-institute the number system for Xmas gifts at our November Garden Gathering/Christmas Party. Each gift brought along will be tagged with a number and each person providing a gift will be given another number. Hence it will be like a lucky dip - when your number is picked out of the hat, you will collect the corresponding numbered Secret Santa gift.

This newsletter is a little briefer than usual as it is just to kick off our new year. I hope you will all read the article on 'Providing Safe Food' at our gatherings. With the ever-increasing heat, we all need to be very diligent about food hygiene. We also need to consider members of our group who have food allergies/intolerances. We do appreciate the effort members go to in providing delicious home-made (and bought) contributions for our morning and afternoon teas as well as lunches (for parties). We just need to be mindful of a few simple guidelines to ensure that no-one suffers any ill - effects.

Thank you all for your wonderful contributions to our great garden club. Keep up the good work and I look forward to seeing you again in this coming year of events.

Happy gardening

Gillian

Wedgetail Raised Bed – An Update

Hartmut Holzknacht

Due to the drought, the high temperatures throughout spring and early summer, and the ravages by scrub turkeys, the plantings in the new raised bed were very slow in establishing themselves and not growing well, despite a Wedgetail staff member volunteering to regularly water the bed.

I asked members David Hancox and Peter Hall to try to establish the reasons for the poor growth. The consensus was that the tree mulch we had spread on top of the bed was likely the main cause – too fresh and so drawing nutrition away from the seedlings. So this mulch was removed, a grassy mulch applied and some parts of the bed were gradually replanted by various individuals. As a result there was a marked improvement in at least some of the plants. The basil and other herbs are doing very well, the insect-attracting flowers are flowering, and some of the other vegetables are coming on. The original tomatoes have all been pulled out and new ones planted.

In two successive UGC newsletters I asked members to register interest in volunteering to visit the garden on a regular basis to check on and maintain the plants and make sure that the bed was regularly watered. However, I was contacted by only two members, insufficient numbers to establish a regular rota for visiting and maintaining the garden.

When Sue and I visited Wedgetail on January 3 this year, I drove up the hill to look over the older raised bed while Sue watered the new garden. While there I met a volunteer (Gary) who said he had netted both the older garden (scrub turkeys had destroyed the Black Russian tomatoes and other food plants there as well) and the new garden. He said Meredith had given him virtual carte blanche to keep the gardens going and safe from predators. It looked like he was doing an excellent job: the older garden had been replanted with more tomatoes, greens and herbs and was growing well. The new garden had new plants, some tomatoes, brassicas, as well as corn and other green leaf and herb species. Basil in particular was growing very well.

Without sufficient numbers of volunteers I think we are unable to offer ongoing maintenance support for this garden. Meredith's appointment of an active volunteer who can be there regularly seems to be the solution and better meets the needs of Wedgetail. When it comes time to plant new vegetables for winter I can organise a team to review, re-mulch, fertilise and plant. I will keep in touch with Meredith about the timing of this, and what she would prefer to be planted.



Regards, Hartmut

(Ed: thanks to Sue for the pics)

Keeping Our Members & Our Food Safe

Helpful Tips – Gillian Woodward

Events held during warm weather present opportunities for foodborne bacteria to thrive. As food heats up in summer temperatures, bacteria multiply rapidly. To protect yourself and friends from foodborne illness during warm-weather months, safe food handling when eating outdoors is critical. Read on for simple food safety guidelines for transporting your food to garden club gatherings, and preparing and serving it safely once you've arrived.

Pack & Transport Food Safely

- ✓ Keep your food safe: from the refrigerator/freezer — all the way to the food table.
- ✓ Keep cold food cold. Place cold food in a cooler with ice or frozen gel packs. Cold food should be stored at 4°C or below to prevent bacterial growth. Leave the food in the cooler on ice until it is serving time
- ✓ Keep coolers closed: Once at the site, limit the number of times the cooler is opened as much as you can. This helps to keep the contents cold longer.
- ✓ Clean your produce. Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water before packing them in the cooler — including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten. Rub firm-skinned fruits and vegetables under running tap water or scrub with a clean vegetable brush while rinsing with running tap water. Dry fruits and vegetables with a clean cloth towel or paper towel.
- ✓ Remember to bring knives and/or servers for your prepared dish. If it is a cake or dessert, either slice it before you leave home, or bring a knife with you and cut it prior to serving. Leave the knife on the plate, so that it can be used to further slice into smaller sections as desired. Also provide a serving utensil.
- ✓ Please do not move used knives/utensils from one dish to another. This is to prevent cross-contamination. Use the utensil provided only with the dish it came with.

Keep Cold Foods Cold & Hot Foods Hot

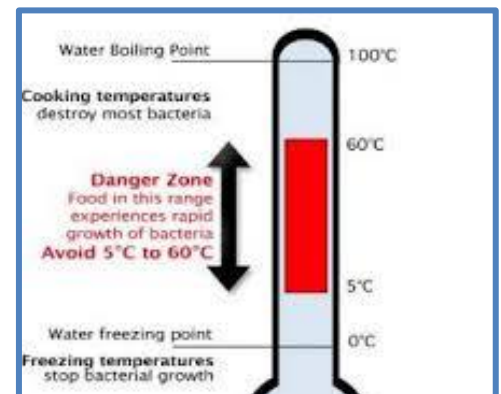
Keeping food at proper temperatures — indoor and out — is critical in preventing the growth of foodborne bacteria. The key is to never let your outdoor food remain in the “Danger Zone” — between 5°C and 60°C — for more than 2 hours, or 1 hour if outdoor temperatures are above 32 °C. This is when bacteria in food can multiply rapidly, and lead to foodborne illness.

Cold Foods

- ✓ Cold perishable food should be kept in the cooler at 4°C or below until serving time.
- ✓ Once you've served it, it should not sit out for longer than 2 hours, or 1 hour if the outdoor temperature is above 32 °C. If it does — discard it.
- ✓ Foods like chicken, salad and desserts can be placed directly on ice/blocks, or in a shallow container set in a deep dish filled with ice. Drain off water as ice melts and replace ice frequently.

Hot Foods

- ✓ Hot food should be kept hot, at or above 60 °C.
- ✓ Wrap it well and leave it in an insulated container until serving.
- ✓ Just as with cold food — these foods should not sit out for more than 2 hours, or 1 hour in temperatures above 30 °C. If food is left out longer, throw it away to be safe.



High Risk Foods

Foods that are ready to eat, foods that don't need any further cooking, and foods that provide a place for bacteria to live, grow and thrive are described as high-risk foods.

Examples of high-risk foods include:

- ☛ cooked meat and fish – casseroles, lasagne, etc
- ☛ smallgoods – ham, salami etc
- ☛ shellfish and all seafood
- ☛ dairy products such as milk, cream and soya milk
- ☛ desserts made from the above eg cheesecake, custard
- ☛ eggs and egg products eg quiche, fritatta
- ☛ cooked rice, rice salads
- ☛ cooked pasta, pasta salad
- ☛ dressed salads, especially those containing cooked meats or proteins (eg chicken, fish, cheese or egg)
- ☛ prepared fruit salad
- ☛ ready-to-eat foods, including sandwiches, rolls and pizza that contain any of the foods above

Preventing Contamination

Within our garden club, we have several members who are unable to eat certain foods due to food intolerances, allergies or personal preferences. For example, we have members with coeliac disease who cannot eat gluten and others with a dairy, wheat or egg allergy. Also of course we have vegetarians and some vegans.

If you provide a food plate that is gluten, dairy, egg-free, vegetarian etc we do have labels for these. Please use them.

It is essential that you provide a knife and serving utensil specifically for your food plate. Otherwise, contamination can occur. It only takes a crumb on a knife to bring on a reaction in some unlucky allergy sufferers.

The one knife/serving utensil must also not be used for both cooked and raw foods – again bacterial contamination can easily occur. This is especially important for meats.

If everyone adheres to these simple guidelines, there should be no risk of food poisoning or allergic reactions from our shared foods at garden gatherings or food group.



We need garden hosts for the Food Group meetings to be held in June, July, September, October and November (which is the Food Group Christmas Party).

If you can help by providing your garden or you know of a garden where we can meet please let Gillian know as we are desperately looking for venues.

On the Road Again – Travellers' Tales

Terrific Tassie with Julia Hancock

Having aborted her road trip to Western Australia because of November's catastrophic fires, Julia went to Tassie instead.

There were cool temperatures and fresh air and an abundance of gorgeous gardens to look at.

Julia has seen fabulous roses growing in most parts of the world, but insists that those in Tassie are by far the best. The Royal Botanic Gardens in Hobart has a wonderful collection in their rose garden, as well as an historic greenhouse and 'Monet' style' lily pond.

A visit to 'The Patch' was mandatory and although Tino Carnevale wasn't there, Julia spoke to several volunteers who work there every Thursday. They love it, which might explain why there is a waiting list to become a volllie there.



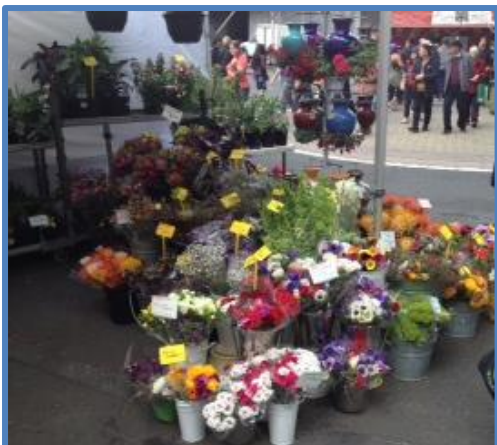
R: A stunning Hobart rose



L: Julia enjoys Tino's Patch at the RTBG



R: Hothouse flowers at Hobart's RTBG



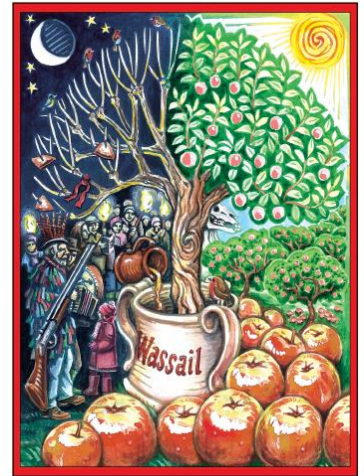
L: Fabulous flowers at Salamanca Market, Hobart

Life at Cat Hill Allotments – Richard Stile

We recently held the Wassailing of Apple Trees at the allotments which was a well-attended community event and great fun for all who came along.

Apple tree wassailing is a ceremony which involves drinking to the health of the apple trees. Wassailing has been associated with Christmas and New Year as far back as the 1400s. Its origins are even earlier. The word 'wassail' originates from the Old English term "waes hael" meaning 'be well'. The assembled crowd would reply "drinc hael" meaning "drink and be healthy". The Lord of the Manor would give food and drink to the peasants in exchange for blessings and goodwill.

*Wassaile the trees that they may beare
You many plum and many a pear
For more or less fruits they will bring
As you do give them wassailing.*



The apple trees were sprinkled with wassail to ensure a good crop. Villagers would gather around apple trees with pots and pans and make a great racket to raise the Sleeping Tree Spirit and to scare off the demons. The biggest and best tree was then selected and cider poured over its roots. Pieces of toast soaked in cider were placed in the forks of its branches. The wassail song was sung or chanted as blessing or charm to bring good apple harvest the coming year. Wassailing was meant to jeep the tree safe from evil spirits until the next year's apples grew.

*Oh apple tree, we wassail thee
And hoping thou wilt beare
For the Lord does know where we my go
To be merry another year*

*To grow well and to beare well
And so merrily let us be
Let every man drink up his glass
And a health to the old apple tree
Brave boys, and a health to the old apple tree*

*Love and joy come to you
And to you your wassail too
And God bless you and send you a happy New Year
And God send you a happy New Year.*

Traditionally the wassail is celebrated on the Twelfth Night, mostly regarded as January 6th or the evening of the 5th but before the introduction of the Gregorian Calendar in 1752 it would have been January 17th – 'Old Twelvey Night'.

(Ed: thanks Richard for the great story and history lesson – sounds like a perfect opportunity to share a glass or 2 of your favourite beverage with friends to me – think I might have to introduce it here – we could wassail our mango trees I reckon!!)

Upcoming Meetings

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

February 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 (where it is nice and cool),
Ingram Place, Murwillumbah. 02 6672 6220

There will be a presentation by 3 of our well-travelled members. Chairs not needed but please bring along your cup, a plate to share and any produce or plants for the swap table. Please note: This meeting is on **SUNDAY** 23rd February.

March Food Group Meeting Tuesday 10th March, 9.30am start time

In the garden of David and Bronwyn Hancox
327 Limpinwood Valley Rd, Limpinwood 0429 845 884

Directions to get there:

The way to Limpinwood can be either via Chillingham, turn left on to Zara rd, continue for approx 6 mins, turn right into Limpinwood valley rd, drive 3.2 klm's. OR

via Tyalgum. coming from Murwillumbah turn right at Tyalgum on to Limpinwood rd, continue 5-6 mins, turn left into Limpinwood Valley rd. Follow instructions as above. Plenty of parking onsite

For this meeting 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 Month...

Only a small one this month, however the March newsletter should be back to its usual fat self.

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

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



Uki Garden Club

Schedule of Meetings February to May 2020

Food Group

MONTH DATE TIME	HOST NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER
February Tuesday 11 th 9:30 am	Phil and Marcella Keegan	48 Binalong Court, Burringbar Burringbar	02 6677 0210 0412 178 381
March Tuesday 10 th 9.30am	David and Bronwyn Hancox	327 Limpinwood Valley Rd Limpinwood	0429 845 884
April Tuesday 14 th 9.30am	Jan and Rex Thomas	23 The Grove Nunderi	02 6672 1336 0412 797 917
May Tuesday 12 th 9.30am	Ian Fox – speaker	98 Greenvale Crt, Burringbar	Gillian - Co-host 0457872040

Garden Gatherings

MONTH DATE TIME	HOST NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER
February Sunday 23rd 2pm	Marilyn and Graeme Gough	Aveo Mountainview Village Community Centre Ingram Place Murwillumbah Guest Speakers – Overseas gardens by 3 UGC members	02 6672 6220
March Saturday 28 th 2pm	Melissa Darnley Speaker – Karen Compost Queen	92 Hunter St., Burringbar	02 6677 0284 0428 528 178
April Saturday 25 th 2pm	Lynn O'Hara	285 Northstar Resort, 1 Coast Rd Hastings Point	0408 053 303
May Saturday 30 th 2pm	Bruce Hungerford	217 Bakers Rd Dunbible	02 6672 4061 0429501754