

Uki Garden Club

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



Spring is definitely in the air, even though we are only mid-way through August. Wattles are blooming, birds are singing louder and magpies are swooping! Although our winter has been a mild one this year, it is always good to sense the different lights and sounds of early Spring in our gardens.

August was to be the month of our Annual General Meeting for 2020 (as we had a bus trip planned for July when it is usually held). With COVID restrictions being ramped up recently, gatherings of our members in the near future again seem to be unlikely. Once more, the number of people meeting at a residence or in an open space has been cut back to a maximum of 20 in NSW. With our committee of 8 in attendance, we could only allow another 12 members to be at a meeting – not a great situation, I am sure you agree! Thank you to those of you who have kindly offered your homes/gardens for a gathering – if and when allowed. We will certainly keep you in mind.

At this stage we as a committee have decided that we will try to hold our AGM by the end of this calendar year. We are hopeful that by November we may be able to gather for a Christmas get-together and hold the AGM there. It usually only takes about 5 minutes, so this is the plan at this stage...watch this space for further updates. Fortunately, all of the current committee members have agreed to maintain their positions for the extra few months. Due to her recent illness Nellmary has decided to step down and has handed over her role of assistant treasurer to Tim Hunt.

This is also the time of year for renewing memberships so please attend to this if you wish to continue receiving our monthly newsletters. The forms were sent out with last month's newsletter. Fran has been doing a great job of continuing this production in very trying times. Please remember to send her any news, pictures, stories or even jokes, so she can include these in the monthly publication. Many of you have already contributed, especially earlier in the year, but these very-much-needed snippets have been dwindling a little lately.



On my walks about town, I have been snapping a few photos of plants that are showing off at the moment. And the wattles and bottlebrush have been spectacular and have all taken my fancy this week.



Enjoy this month's read and get out in the garden before the hot summer days come and force us inside!

Take care and happy gardening. Gillian

Two Interesting Japanese Vegetables – Sue Holzknecht

1. Nozawana : *Brassica rapa* L. var. *hakabura*) is a

Japanese Brassica whose leaves are often pickled. It is of the same species as the common turnip and a Japanese variety of mustard leaf. Its leaves are approximately 60–90cm long. In Japan, it is grown for the long leaves rather than for the root, which is quite small. The pickled leaves are a specialty of the *onsen* (Japanese bath housees) in Nozawa , a winter ski resort in Nagano, Northern Japan.

“Nozawana, the only way to get pickled in Nozawa!”

History says that sometime between 1751 and 1764 *Nozawana* was taken from Kyoto the old capital by a master of the Buddhist temple in Nozawa Onsen. It was cultivated there and thus the name *Nozawana* became famous across Japan (*na* means vegetable). (Adapted from: <https://www.nozawaholidays.com/news/nozawana-perfect-pickle-nozawa-onsen/>)



Recipe For Pickled Nozawana Leaves

Serves: 4-5 people

Main Ingredients

- 1 kg *Nozawana** (including stems)
- 200ml soy sauce
- 20g salted kombu (variety of seaweed)
- 100ml Japanese rice wine vinegar
- 100ml mirin
- 100g sugar
- 4 chilli peppers (or to taste)

Note: *Nozawana* leaves may be substituted with bitter greens such as turnip, radish or daikon leaves, mustard, or kale.

Instructions

1. Cut *Nozawana* into 4cm long pieces.
2. Place cut vegetable into plastic ziplock bags and mix with other ingredients. Remove air from the bag by rubbing out any air pockets until plastic clings tightly to the packed vegetables. Alternatively, you can place vegetables in a glass pot/jar and put a heavy bowl on top of the greens to keep them down and immersed in the pickling ingredients.
3. Place plastic sealed bag in a bucket. Place heavy items on bag to prevent vegetables from floating. The pickled vegetables can be served after 24 hrs. Leave to pickle up to 2 weeks for more flavour.
4. Always use clean, dry utensils when taking the pickles out to serve to avoid contamination. Store pickles in refrigerator after you start consuming them or after you open the jar.

2. DAIKON (literally 'big root'): *Raphanus sativus* var.

longipinnatus, also known by many other names, is a mild-flavoured winter radish usually characterized by fast-growing leaves and a long, white napiform root.

Recipe For Pickled Daikon Root

Ingredients

- 1 kg Daikon Radish
- 50 g salt (not iodised table salt)
- 54 ml rice wine vinegar
- 9 ml mirin
- 100 g sugar
- 15 g bonito flakes (optional)

Instructions

1. Wash the daikon radish and slice it about 15cm long and 5mm thickness.
2. Sprinkle salt over the sliced daikon and toss the pieces to evenly coat daikon with salt.
3. Leave it for 6-7 hours.
4. Combine the rice vinegar, mirin, and sugar in a small saucepan. Bring it to boil over medium heat. When all the sugar has dissolved, turn the heat off and let it cool down.
5. After 6-7 hours, drain and squeeze out the excess water from the sliced daikon pieces (do not wash them).
6. Lay the daikon into a large glass container and sprinkle with a little bit of bonito flake and vinegar mixture. Repeat the process until all the ingredients are used.
7. Seal the bottle with some cling wrap and a lid.
8. Then keep it in the fridge, for about a week.



Cultivation of Nozawana and Daikon

Both *Nozawana* and *Daikon* are grown from seed and are best grown in winter. Sow seeds direct into well-tilled soil, several weeks before you would expect a frost. The roots grow slowly, and mature through the colder months.

Daikon leaves can also be cooked or pickled and eaten. If you let *Daikon* grow too long and too big, the roots can become stringy. The roots should be ready to pick in 40-70 days. Leave a couple in the ground to go to seed and harvest seeds for replanting. The seeds keep for a long time if kept dry and cool.

Nozawana are grown in the same way as *Daikon*. Harvest *Nozawana* leaves continuously from the plant. If it goes to seed, keep seeds and sow again for next season.

Dave Hancox has grown *Nozawana* from Japanese seeds we gave him. We have a few seedlings, and some seeds left. They are not readily available in Australia. Mine came from a Japanese friend, who grows it successfully in Canberra.

Thanks Sue!



The Spread of COVID-19
Is Based On Two Factors:

1. How Dense The Population is
2. How Dense The Population is

When this virus thing is over with... I still want some of you to stay away from me.

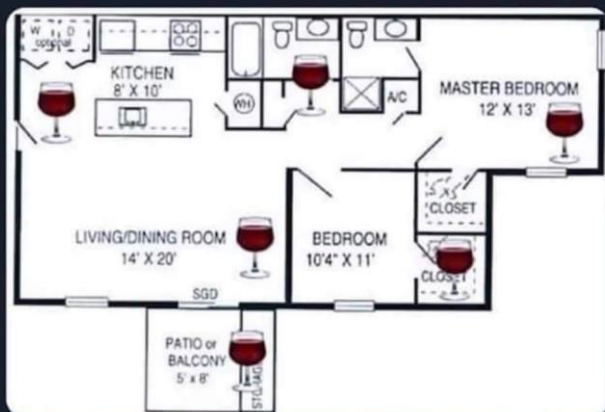
Did a BIG load of pajamas so I would have enough clean work clothes for this week.

People start coughing and worry they have the coronavirus, I cough and just pray I don't pee myself...

- If a pig loses its voice, is it disgruntled?
- When cheese gets its picture taken, what does it say?
- Why isn't the number 11 pronounced onety one?
- If love is blind, why is lingerie so popular?
- Why are a wise man and a wise guy opposites?
- Why if you send something by road it is called a shipment, and when you send it by sea it is called cargo?
- Do infants enjoy infancy as much as adults enjoy adultery?
- If lawyers are disbarred and clergymen defrocked, doesn't it follow that electricians can be delighted, musicians denoted, cowboys deranged, models deposed, tree surgeons debarked and dry cleaners depressed?

(With thanks to Bonnie Buzolic for sharing these imponderables)

Planning your next wine tour made easy



It may take a village to raise a child, but I swear it's going to take a whole vineyard to homeschool one.



Hollow-Dependent Fauna

In Australia, 303 native wildlife species rely on tree hollows to nest, breed, shelter and feed. This includes 31% of native mammals and 15% of native birds. In the Tweed, this includes owls (i.e., Powerful Owl, Sooty Owl, Barking Owl); cockatoos (i.e., Glossy Blackcockatoo, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Yellow-tailed Black cockatoo), and possums (i.e., Brush-tailed Possum, Sugar Glider, Squirrel Glider; Greater Glider, Yellow-bellied Glider) depend on tree hollows for sheltering and nesting. Gliders can use up to 19 different hollows throughout the year. Without this habitat these species would not survive. R: A Powerful Owl chick in a tree hollow. Photo: Akos Lumnitzer

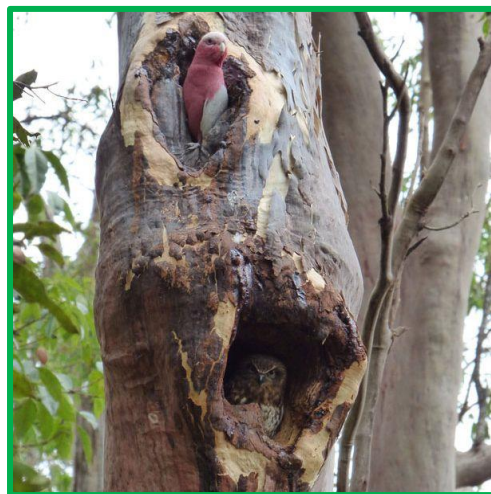


Each animal species has its own requirements in terms of hollow size, location (branch or trunk), tree species and surrounding vegetation, which affects how a hollow is used. Hollows may vary in size, both in cavity opening diameter and cavity depth and volume, from small openings of 2 – 6 cm to very large with entrance diameters of 18 – 30 cm or more. Such diversity caters for the wide range of animal species which utilise tree hollows from small insectivorous bats weighing less than 10 grams to large forest owls.



A Sugar Glider (left). Photo: HabiTec and a Greater Glider (right) Photo: Josh Bowell

Hollows are mostly found in old eucalypt trees, often taking upwards of 150 years to develop natural hollows. Hollows can occur in tree branches as well as the tree trunks and can include fire scars in the butts of trees and fissures or cracks. One old growth tree can contain numerous hollows and provide habitat for many species. Some hollows are used by multiple species in one year, each taking turns to use the hollow according to the season, cleaning it out and getting it ready when it is their turn.



Changing of the guard - in September 2013 a Galah and Southern Boobook took up residence in this gum tree in Brisbane (left); two years later it was occupied by Rainbow Lorikeets and Sulphur Crested Cockatoos (right). Photos: by Peter Metzdorf Land for Wildlife.

(This article appeared in the Grassroots Gazette – and has been kindly reproduced with permission from Tweed Landcare

Inc <http://tweedlandcare.org.au/>.)





Fennel, pumpkin & eggplant tagine with chickpeas – Jenny Kidd

I found this on the SBS Food website and it is delicious. In this Moroccan tagine recipe the vegetables are the hero. First roasted to intensify the flavours, then cooked in the tagine; however, if you don't have a tagine a heavy-bottomed saucepan will do. This dish serves 4.

Ingredients

- 1.2kg pumpkin, peeled and cut into pieces 5 cm x 3 cm
- 3 small fennel bulbs, each cut into 8 pieces
- 2 eggplants, not too large, cut into pieces 5 cm x 3 cm
- ½–¾ cup olive oil (don't try to economise on this, you may need even more)
- dash Tabasco sauce
- sea salt and freshly ground black or white pepper
- 950 ml vegetable stock
- 1 fat pinch saffron threads
- 8 French shallots, left whole or cut in half depending on size
- 8 garlic cloves, 6 peeled but left whole, the rest finely chopped
- 2 Tbsp ground cumin
- 2 Tbsp sweet paprika
- ½ long red chilli, finely chopped
- 200gm chickpeas soaked overnight and boiled till tender, or you can also use one can of chickpeas
- 1 handful parsley
- 1 handful coriander



Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C.
2. Baste the pumpkin, fennel and eggplant generously in olive oil, season with Tabasco, salt and pepper. The eggplant and pumpkin can go in the same tray, but ideally the fennel should go in separately as it may take a little longer. Roast in the oven for 20-25 minutes or until tender, golden and slightly charred all over.
3. Meanwhile, bring stock to the boil in a saucepan. Combine 250 ml of hot stock with the saffron and set aside. Heat the rest of the olive oil in a large saucepan. Sauté the shallots on quite a high heat for about 10 minutes, moving the pan about to prevent burning, till they are transparent and a rich gold. Then add the whole garlic cloves and sauté again, adding a little stock to prevent them from burning.
4. Add the cumin and paprika, stirring all the time and another ladle of stock. The spices should start to form a paste. Keep stirring while adding the stock a little at a time, the sauce will become thicker and richer as it absorbs the spices.
5. Transfer to a tagine or heavy based saucepan.
6. Set on a heat diffuser placed on a gentle heat and carefully transfer the roasted vegetables, layering them with the firmer fennel on the bottom, then the pumpkin and finally the eggplant.
7. Reheat the saffron stock, pour over and gently stir through the chickpeas. It's quite OK for some of the pumpkin and eggplant to break up a little.
8. Cook gently like this for about 10-15 minutes, adjusting the heat, increasing it if the liquid seems at all watery, or decreasing it if seems too thick. You can also add a little more stock to keep the whole thing moving - neither too dry nor too wet is the way and keep basting the vegetables with the sauce.
9. Season with salt and pepper. Chop the parsley and coriander and add just before serving.

Serve with chermoula and fried flour tortillas or roast lamb. Enjoy!



The UGC Seed Box has been quite sad and lonely in recent times, feeling unloved and unwanted.

The offer for members to receive up to three packets of seeds, mailed out and at no cost, got an instant response at first but very quickly petered out—I received 13 requests with a 14th now waiting to be mailed out, and then ... ?!

But wait, **SPRING** is around the corner!!

Costa reminded us in the new series of *Gardening Australia* that now is the time to think about spring vegetables and getting your garden ready for planting and even getting some seeds into the ground. For example, he said, while many people plant their broad beans in autumn; NOW is also an excellent time to plant them to benefit from increasing soil warmth and higher ambient temperatures.

In the April and May newsletters all UGC members received the list of the range of seeds available from the seed box. Every now and then a member sends in new seeds; for example, parsnip seeds from Dot Francis: thank you Dot!



The offer to mail out up to three packets of seeds to individual UGC members still stands so I look forward to hearing further from members.

How to get your hands on some free seeds:

- ⊗ Please email me to order your packets of seeds - hartmutholzknicht215@gmail.com
- ⊗ In your email please indicate your name, full postal address and please list up to 5 preferences in order of priority in case your first or second or third choices are not available.
- ⊗ I will send them to you in the mail.
- ⊗ If you have excess seeds please send or deliver them to me for redistribution to club members. Please email me to arrange.

Keep your spirits up, think about what you would like to plant in your garden and let us all look forward to the time when we can meet again!

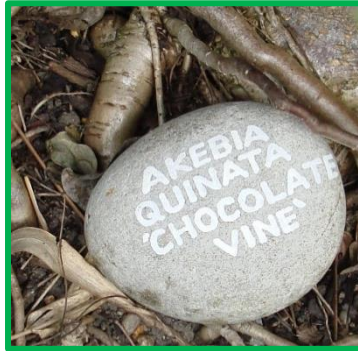
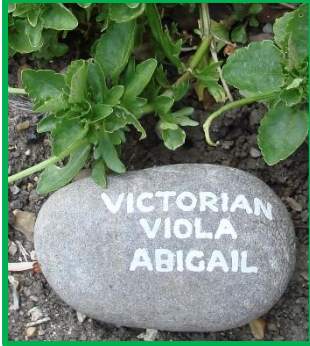
Hartmut Holzknecht





During COVID lock down times I've been busy.

As my wife Pauline (Fran's sister) isn't too good with plant names I came up with the idea of using stones and writing the plant names on them and putting them under plants in the garden. Below are some examples:



Our garden design man, Alfie, took one look at the Dermot stones and became quite animated. He reckoned a load of his customers would like hand-written stones for their gardens. He could collect them and take them round to the customers on his next visit to them.

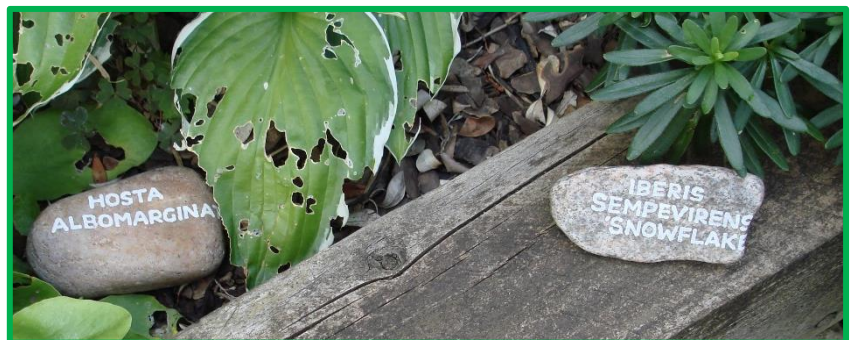
Alfie is no one-man-band...oh no, he's got minions to do the heavy work and a few vans with men inside them (and women: Tanya usually comes to us from Alfie when the window boxes need updating). So, he seems quite serious so maybe I should take it more seriously as well and start ordering the Deluxe Brilliant White paint before there's a shortage.

After discussions with Richard (my neighbour and UK correspondent for Cat Hill Allotments) I'm thinking of branching out from just gardening stones, maybe into souvenirs from holidays when people like to bring back stones but then forget where they came from. What about large stones with threatening messages on that are guaranteed to go through windows for naughty people that don't pay their bills? Much better than a piece of paper around a brick, don't you think?

I don't know what to charge for these stones nor do I have a name for this venture – and this is where you lot come in.

Below are some possible names for this wonderful venture – and I would value your collective thoughts – please email Fran to ugcnews@gmail.com with the names you like best.

1. SPEECH BUBBLES
2. SPEECH PEBBLES
3. GET STONED
4. ZONE STONES
5. WRITE STONES
6. STONE CRAZY
7. STONE TAGS
8. ROCK GARDEN
9. STONE LABELS
10. UP THE GARDEN PATH
11. NAME WRITE



Look forward to hearing the results. Bye for now

Dermot Gallagher

August Job File – Julia Hancock

- ☺ Cut off strawberry runners before they set roots in the ground to prevent the new plantlets taking up all the mother plant's energy required to produce fruit. Replant plantlets nearby.
- ☺ Prepare good beds for French beans, squash, zucchini, cucumber and pumpkin.
- ☺ Divide grasses such as *Miscanthus* (pic at right), *Pennisetum* and *Festuca* once they show signs of coming into growth. However, in frost-prone areas leave this task till after the frosts have finished. Water well once the clumps have been replanted.
- ☺ Don't let your paths become overgrown with foliage—it makes them slippery and dangerous.
- ☺ Plant some chillis! If you don't like the taste of them enjoy them as ornamentals—there are some wonderfully decorative varieties and they are sun loving and drought tolerant.
- ☺ If you didn't do so in the autumn, now is the time to prune back leggy geraniums. Cut them down to the lowest new shoot and completely remove any woody and unproductive stems. Remove dead leaves from inside the plant as they may have been infected with rust last summer.
- ☺ Gardenias often have one or two yellowish leaves but if yours amount to more than just a smattering maybe it's time to feed them with iron. An application of iron sulphate or iron chelates can work wonders with an ailing plant.
- ☺ If you've got unwanted cherry tomatoes springing up all over the place, pull them out and make an insecticide tea out of them. Simply steep the leaves in boiling water to make a temporary but completely organic insect spray.
- ☺ Feed cymbidium orchids and camellias with their appropriate fertilizers. Check that your orchids will be in a shady place once the summer sun hits.
- ☺ It's better to sow a short row of lettuces, Chinese vegetables, shallots and radishes every couple of weeks than to sow the whole packet at once. Succession planting avoids the problem of gluts and means you always have succulent young veggies for the kitchen.



☺ Attention blueberry growers! The time to prune your bushes is when all the leaves have fallen off (any time now). During the first two years of growth, trim back long shoots to encourage bushy growth. From the third year onwards aim to produce a vase-shaped bush with an open centre, to let the sun and air circulate. Remove branches that are diseased or touching the ground. Stems that fruited last season should be cut back to a low, healthy bud. In spring, once the new leaves have formed, place netting over the bushes so the birds don't get the fruit before you do.

- ☺ Growing tomatoes in straw bales works really well and lessens the chance that they'll be infected by viruses in your soil. Once wet they are easy to keep moist, and providing the plant is installed in a good pocket of rich, composty soil and supplemented with Dynamic Lifter, it will take off. A weekly feed of weakly diluted Maxicrop or Seasol will also keep the bale moist and fertile. Impale a stake into the bale when planting up to provide support for the tomato.
- ☺ Nasturtiums are wonderful companions to all kinds of veggies and flowers and grow in sun or semi-shade. The downside is that they flower best on very poor soil whereas other flowers and veggies like rich, fertile and compost-enriched soil. However, wherever they have self-seeded, they are likely to succeed.



Missing our Swap Table?

Are you missing our regular UGC Swap Table?

One suggestion is to visit the Burringbar Produce Swap, organised by Jen Bergschön, in the shelter in Masterson Park, Burringbar, on the last Saturday of the month from 9.00 am to about 11.00 am. Bring something to swap and take something from the table. There are usually lots of different vegetables, herbs, fruit, plants, cuttings, seedlings, flowers, sometimes pickles and jams, for exchange. And after swapping your produce, go and buy a coffee or chai at “Elwood” and take it into the Park to enjoy, keeping a safe distance of course.

Keep an eye on Jen’s Facebook page, *Burringbar Produce Swap*, for interesting articles and announcements about the monthly produce swap.

Jen also has a little organic produce stall outside her house on Tweed Valley Way with great salad vegetables, herbs, fruit and some plants for sale. Look for the blue and white striped umbrella. The next swap day will be on Saturday 29 August, 9.00 am to about 11.00 am.

Further down the same street, on the corner, is another produce stall, organised by local identity Flanno and his family. He has great bananas, sweet potatoes, avocados, sometimes chokos and other fruit.

There are only ever a handful of people there, all safely distancing and sanitising!



Thanks Sue – this looks like a great idea!

Don's Delightful Dombeya

Also known as the hydrangea tree, pink ball, Mexican rose or African Mallow, this member of the Sterculiaceae family hails from Africa and Madagascar. It is a spectacular evergreen tree or large shrub suitable for tropical and subtropical regions. Fast growing and low maintenance, Dombeyas are ideal specimens for the home garden. The showy heads of pink flowers form large clusters that hang from the canopy like large Chinese lanterns. The type grown by the Capners is *D. cacuminum* which is regarded as one of the most outstanding flowering trees in the world. It has pinky-red flowers in late winter/early spring, but Dombeyas also flower in orange, cream, pink and red in various sizes and configurations and some are fragrant. They are drought and frost-tender. Propagation is from seed or semi-hardwood cuttings taken in late spring.



How about Heliconias?



Heliconias are native primarily to the American tropics, Central Mexico to South America including the Caribbean. They grow best in the humid, moist midland tropics and our local Tweed area seems to be perfect for them too.

Heliconias need 50% sun and protection from frost and winds. Fertilise September and January. Mulch well before winter and cut spent stems once a year at ground level. Spots sometimes occur on hybrids, so the stems can be cut down after flowering and disposed of in a garbage bin or burnt. Divide a mature plant when new shoots are produced from the underground rhizome from September to January in cooler climates.

Some Heliconias can be grown from seed but these are difficult to harvest. Because Heliconias and gingers are dormant in winter, only water in the morning during this period. If plants are in pots be careful not to over-water during winter as the rhizome will rot.

Ornamental Gingers are easy to grow and include two groups:

1. COSTAS - Spiral gingers (which include my favourite – Lobster claw pictured above)
2. ZINGIBER - Beehive gingers (pictured at right)

Gingers are disease-free and easily propagated by layer. Simply cut spent stems once a year, lay them on the ground and cover with soil or mulch.

Borers can attack the perfumed whites and yellows (*Hedychium coronarium*), shell and cardamom (*Alpinea*) varieties. Easiest way to deal with them is to cut off the affected stems and dispose of them in a bin.

With thanks to Linda Maxwell, Heliconia grower and former UGC member.



The F Word



That's F for frost, by the way.

Don't be in too much of a hurry to prune back frost-burnt trees, shrubs and perennials. The dead foliage will act as a blanket to protect the plant from subsequent frosts...and everyone says there will be more frosts. Betty Brims, long-time resident of Uki, says the valley has been known to have frosts as late as November. Crikey!

There is a product called Envy that can be sprayed on delicate favourites to protect them from frostbite, so if you're really worried check that out.



Membership Renewals Still Due

It is still that time of year when we ask you to renew your membership to the Uki Garden Club. Subscriptions are due and can be paid up until the end of September without missing out on your newsletter.

Our membership fees remain unchanged from the \$20 per person or couple for 12 months.

If your details have not changed:

1. Pay by EFT/direct debit with text **Mem** (short for membership) - your **surname** (otherwise we won't know it is from you); OR
2. If you prefer to pay by cheque please send it to our PO Box No. 580, Murwillumbah 2484.

Our Club bank deposit details are as follows:

Bank:	Southern Cross Credit Union	BSB	722-744
Account name:	Uki Garden Club Inc	Account No	100017935

If your details have changed:

1. Complete the form attached in the last newsletter, scan and send it to ugcnews@gmail.com and complete EFT/direct debit as above; OR
2. Complete the form and send it with your payment to our PO Box –details also as above.

That's all Folks for This Month...

We really want to hear from you – please please please send us your hints, tips, recipes, bragging photos to ugcnews@gmail.com

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

Last Word

In the past few months, Lewis Miller and the team have been secretly creating what they call "Flower Flash", a flower arrangement in Manhattan trash cans and street corners. "Flower Flash" aims to honour the medical staff and other first responders, to bring joy to New Yorkers who commute on a daily basis, and let in the spring during the pandemic.

Thanks to Sheila Stephenson for sharing this article.

