

# Greening & Growing together

NEWSLETTER WINTER 2018

## Hello again!

The Community Greening and Youth Community Greening teams recently came back from our annual Rural and Remote Outreach Trip in partnership with the Environment and Zoo's Education Centres Network EZEC. This initiative is designed to support rural and remote schools and communities across NSW.

The 2018 program was delivered in Walgett and Engonnia for community and schools from 9 different schools and 531 participants. There were 33 hands-on workshops that focussed on biodiversity, innovative kitchen gardens, worm farms, recycling and sustainable practices that could easily be implemented in schools or homes.

In this Winter newsletter you will hear from a friendly flower (voiced by Elizabeth Docking) and gardeners from Northcott, Waterloo and Broderick Gillwama Public School, plus a few easy tips to prepare your garden for Spring.

See you around the Garden,

**Phil Pettitt**



- Waterloo Community Gardeners and Bloomberg Volunteers at the quarterly working bee
- helped to tidy up Cook Community Garden.

## Waterloo Gardeners Update

The Waterloo Residents Markets and Gardens Association Incorporated, is the local community garden for Redfern and Waterloo residents we represent 4 gardens and the local markets. We work hard to make sure that all our Gardner Plots will continue to develop and grow for years into the future. We hope the gardens will continue to thrive and they become an important feature of the future redevelopment plan. The aim of the Association is to keep our Gardens safe, and for them to be a happy place to enjoy the beauty of the Gardens.

We're proud to say that since we became incorporated in 2017, we have achieved a huge amount ...and we intend to keep up the great work for our local community.

The working bees for each garden have proven to most enjoyable and extremely successful. The transformation is obvious in the

garden plots and the common areas. Congratulations to everyone involved in the working bees for a job well done. Anna Kovic has been our Gardens Coordinator since 2017. Anna has organized the installation of new Compost Bins, and she is in the process of setting up a Glass House so we can raise plants from seeds. When the seeds have germinated, and they are ready to be transplanted, we intend to give them to each of the gardens members. Regards from all YOUR executives:

**President** - David White

**Vice President** - Lorraine Byrnes

**Secretary** - Mila Seredenko

**Gardens Coordinator** - Anna Kovic

You can contact us via the website, or you can email us directly.

Our email:

**waterloo-association@outlook.com**

Website:

**www.waterloo-association.com**



# Broderick Gillawarna Community Garden

Broderick Gillawarna School promotes a holistic approach to health and wellbeing, by providing an environment that supports and encourages lifestyles conducive to good health. The school adopts and raises awareness of existing health opportunities, consulting with parents on best programs to suit their needs and their demanding roles as carers of children with special needs.

The school also runs a weekly cooking workshop for parents and caregivers providing access to healthy, affordable and nutritional food. This is not only a cooking experience but a social and learning experience. In addition to cooking healthy tasty meals (yes, it is possible to do both), parents/caregivers have participated in the preparation of food for a number of cultural events such as the celebration of International Women's Day, Harmony Day and Mother's Day, these occasions showing the solidarity between students, parents and teachers.

Many other opportunities have been offered including:

## • School Community Garden

What an amazing experience this has been to everybody involved and a number of workshops have been held on-site. Parents have had the opportunity to spend time with their children in the garden, learning about herbs, plants, seasonal plantation and importantly how to plant different types of shrubs and trees. Apart from the regular planting days that are offered with the help of Peter Dawe and Brendan Moore, this has improved opportunities for the students to access learning in the outdoors.

## • Excursions

By popular demand, excursions have now commenced for parents/caregivers allowing parents the

sometimes scarce opportunity for time out for me. Parents left by bus from Broderick Gillawarna, visiting the Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan, participating in an informative tour of the Garden, followed by a delicious lunch. A leisurely morning was spent relaxing in the arms of nature, learning about indigenous plants and sustainability.

## • Wellness

Regular Yoga and Zumba sessions are highly popular, these activities are run by a local service and have been embraced by mums to celebrate friendship, reduce stress, increase levels of fitness and provide support and bonding for one another.

These programs are funded by Broderick Gillawarna and supported by a number of services including South West Sydney Local Health District, the Royal Botanic Garden

Sydney Community Greening team, and local businesses. Parents reported having better connection and engagement with the school, having time for themselves to relax as carers of children with special needs, having time to reflect and relax in a friendly, social environment.

Positive parent feedback includes "I feel really good, relaxed and have time for myself after a very stressful day." Another parent commented that "I love learning other recipes from different cultures and love the Zumba and requested to run it every week". A third parent greatly enjoyed the Australian Botanic Garden tour as a first time visitor and took the recommendation to duplicate the visit. She reported "my child felt great running wild in the open fields and being in touch with nature directly." I am keen to take him again."



• Ethan Reagin's smile says it all gardening with Peter from Youth Community Greening is great!

# Lovin' myself frilly.

I'll admit it. I'm gorgeous. I may have had some loving support on my journey, but you must agree, you can't beat good breeding.

I started out as a seed at Oasis Springwood, where the great staff gave me all I needed for my start in life. My home was in a plug for a few weeks, then I teamed up with 5 other petunia gals in my smart blue punnet. Just when I was feeling quite snug there, this strong truck driver Cody took me on my first ever trip, to Eden Gardens.

It was there I met Elizabeth who seemed quite chuffed to see me. She put me in her van with some smelly tomato seedlings and let me rest awhile at her place. For my next journey I was packed into the Community Greening van and the racket began. Elizabeth belted out Carol King songs for most of that long trip. Get the girl some singing lessons. Please.

Three agonising hours later there was natural light and I'd arrived at my new home - Mission Australia's Benjamin Short Grove in Orange. Paul and Elizabeth started talking about where best to plant me and then I smelt it – HORSE MANURE. Please don't put me near that stinky stuff!

Sure enough that's where I ended up, but thankfully next to the carnations that had a scent that almost masked the manure. The caring carnations explained that Paul wanted us to grow strongly and one day I too would look as lovely as them.

Soon I was blooming double flowers and I started to realise how gorgeous I was. Wendy and Lee kept telling me I was stunning! With every new frilly flower I formed, I became more big-headed. The carnations started calling me "Miss Vanity".

Next thing I had Elizabeth and Nina standing over me and before I knew it my best blooms had been



• Miss Vanity the well-travelled, well fed award winning petunia

snipped and I was in a bucket of water with some other flowers (none quite as beautiful as me of course). Then into the van. Oh no. Not that van. She's not going to sing again is she?

I was on my way to the Orange Show where I was staged on the flower bench to look my stunning best. Women with clip boards came around and started talking about me. They agreed I was pretty darn perfect and put a blue card in front of me.

Next day people started streaming through the pavilion to see me!

Wendy came along and took so many photos. Maybe I'll be on the cover of a garden magazine, or Vanity Fair? In a quiet moment I thought, that Carol King song "You're so vain" that Elizabeth sings so badly was probably written about me!

Footnote:

BSG won 10 prizes at the Show. While the human characters in the story are real, the precious Miss Vanity character is not based on many people known to the author.

Written by Elizabeth Docking

Photo credit Wendy Napier

# Sustainable Outreach 2018

## Poem by Peter Dawe



### Sustainable Outreach 2018

We hit the road and headed North West  
Up the Castlereagh Highway we convoyed along  
With dirt roads putting our vehicles to test.

The Royal Botanic Garden's Community Greening program  
Joined environmental leaders from other areas too  
There were some from Environmental Education Centres,  
OEH, NetWaste, The Observatory and Taronga Zoo.

We all converged on Burren Junction  
And spied our accommodation for the night  
But the 'dongers' were that much more comfortable  
For those who dipped in the hot springs in fading light

We were all treated to a welcoming breakfast  
By Sue, the Principal of the Burren Junction school  
We chatted in anticipation of the day  
Enjoying bacon, eggs and coffee for fuel.

As the neighbouring regional schools arrived  
From Wee Waa, Bullarah and Pilliga  
We set up our workshops in the crisp morning air  
And Wes stood before them as a commanding figure

He welcomed them all to Burren Junction  
And let them know what we had in store  
A buzz began to grow among the students  
About the activities and concepts they would explore

But Phil and Brenden disappeared that morning  
They headed west on the highway called Kamilaroi  
They met with Anthea from EduGrow at Walgett  
And kids from Collarenebri came down to enjoy.

Sophia at Walgett AMS garden  
Showed how she grows produce for Elders in need  
And with the kids they built a worm tower.  
That the community's scraps will help to feed.

Back in Burren Junction it was all systems go  
With 11 groups working through rotations  
The smiles on their faces said it all  
As the activities exceeded their expectations.

Wes and Ange came up from Coonabarabran EEC  
And they discussed pollination and the importance of bees  
And the honey that the kids were sampling  
Brought the local bees swarming from the trees

Sue from NetWaste enlightened the kids on waste issues  
Talked about composting and world of worms  
They got creative with recyclable art  
Which they can display on their own terms.  
The Zoomobile always brings excitement  
And Steph and Catherine didn't let the kids down  
But it's not just about the scales and fur on display  
It's about protecting the environment so they can get around.

After a wonderful dinner with Sue & Pete  
We retired to our dongers to get some rest  
For the next day we were off to Walgett  
And for us 'Bots' there would be a special guest.



# Sustainable Outreach 2018 continued

Our Executive Director Kim Ellis arrived  
No time for pleasantries as there were children in need  
After a few moments observing our workshops  
He was assisting the students planting seed.

Peter came from the Royal Botanic Garden  
Taught about sustainable gardening in this arid land  
Water saving, composting and paper pots.  
And Vegepod donated gardens to suit this grand plan.

Juliet from Red Hill EEC came along  
And she made reusable wrappers with bee's wax  
'If you cannot reuse then refuse'  
Was the message that she packs.

Dave from Wambangalang Environmental Ed Centre  
Took grammar to the great outdoors  
It was time for literacy games in the garden  
So much fun without keeping scores

Elizabeth also from Wambangalang  
Got the students creating power on a bike  
They were generating wonderful works of art  
And seeing how many lights they could strike.

Phil and Brenden had been in Enngonia  
Seeing all their bush tucker was a fantastic surprise  
Quandong, Bush Banana and Bush tomato  
It was a successful social enterprise

We left Walgett and headed south to Coonamble  
Along the outback corrugated road  
And we congregated at the local bowling club  
Enjoying the Snitties and the conversation flowed.

As we sat and recapped and shared  
Our great work and all its glory.  
It was time to introduce to Kim, Shaz and others  
the legendary 'Black Bag Story'.

The next morning we arrived at Coonamble School  
And all the kids were starting to stare  
The school was excited to see us all setting up  
And there was a positive energy in the air.  
We were welcomed by the students in local language  
And welcomed too onto Wailwan lands  
It was memorable to see Brenden's didge performance  
Seeing all the kids do the actions with their hands.

Then it was into the rotations for the last time  
With another school arriving from Quambone  
We were distracted by a wallaby hopping by  
As the groups were formed and seeds sown



Seeds was Elizabeth's workshop from the RBG  
And she explained them in a new light  
They made sunflower oil with a rolling pin  
And used their senses to see, touch and bite.

Andy was there from OEH  
Talking nest boxes and micro-bats  
All his displays were set out on his resource trailer  
Where they made the boxes for habitats

Shaz came all the way from Rumbalara EEC  
With way too many waste messages to mention  
They made bags out of t-shirts to return plastic waste  
And thought deeply about the environment #prevention

Amanda joined us on that last day  
From Siding Spring Observatory.  
Talking about the importance of the stars and space  
And the Sun in all of its glory.

All of the schools and communities received a Vegepod  
To grow produce in a sustainable way  
The plants are protected from the summer heat  
And the water won't evaporate away.

The sustainable message was a great success  
All the students were a joy to engage  
I'm confident that the lessons we taught  
Will stay with them into old age.

For many it was now a long drive home  
To their final destination  
For others there was a night in the Warrumbungles  
For fire-making, stories, music and relaxation.



# Winter Gardening Jobs

- From August start applying manure or blood and bone to all parts of the vegetable garden except beds in which carrots or onions are to be grown.
- Watch for aphids on new growth, buds and flowers. Small native birds and ladybirds control aphids but may not cope with a large influx, so use a non-toxic natural soap or oil spray.
- Check for snails and slugs and make traps or use coffee grounds to deter.
- Look for cabbage moth caterpillars.
- As the weather warms and new growth commences, control weeds by smothering them with layers of newspaper and mulch. Hand-pull annual weeds before they set seed.



- Sweet corn is a cereal and unrelated to other vegetables. It makes a good companion plant for bean crops

## Northcott Gardeners

On Friday 6th April the jinx was finally broken and it *didn't* rain on Garden day! The garden was looking fabulous, thanks to all the hard work put in by Duarte de Abreu, one of our dedicated Garden Volunteers. The umbrellas shading the tables and chairs gave the place a festive air and it was simply great being out in that lovely setting relaxing and having a chat with the neighbours. Just what our garden was designed for!

The Ceramics class enjoyed their day out as well before packing tools away for the formal part of the proceedings. That was when we celebrated the memory of our good friend Coas with Oscar, his partner, planting a lovely Xanthorrhoea.



• Northcott Community enjoy the, food, art classes and relaxed environment provided by the Northcott Community Gardens.

Meanwhile David White and Kelly Hartley had been hard at work in their outdoor kitchen, seen below.

Their efforts were much appreciated by their fellow tenants as we lounged around sipping iced drinks.

**Royal Botanic Garden Sydney and Community Greening are on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Follow us.**



[www.facebook.com/RoyalBotanicGarden/](http://www.facebook.com/RoyalBotanicGarden/)



[@RBGSydney](https://twitter.com/RBGSydney)

Tag your photos #communitygreening

**Community Greening** is a partnership program of the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust and Housing New South Wales. **Youth Community Greening** is made possible with generous financial assistance from the Eden Foundation.



Enquiries: **Phil Pettitt** Community Greening Coordinator **T:** 9231 8399 **M:** 0447 420 173 **E:** philip.pettitt@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au