



# Greening & Growing together

NEWSLETTER WINTER 2016

## Welcome to the team

We are delighted to announce our most recent sponsor — Major’s Mulch. This fantastic supporter is offering 500 bags of compost each year to the Community Greening program, with some of the first bags going to our Waterloo Community Garden.

Major’s Mulch is sustainably produced on the owner’s family farm ‘Major’s Point’ on The Bland near Quandialla in south-western NSW.

The 3,238 hectare farm — with a rotation of cereal, canola and field pea crops in addition to a head of South African meat merino sheep — has been farmed by the same family for three generations.

The company’s premium ‘Complete Compost’ is high in organic nutrients and is sustainably



Elizabeth Docking from Community Greening is pictured above educating Telopea community gardeners in soil improvement and safe lifting.

produced using weather-damaged lucerne hay, sheep manure and wheat stubble (the straw left over

after the wheat is harvested). It’s a fantastic way to keep your soil, worms and plants happy!

## Save the date

Join us on Wednesday 7 December 2016 for our annual Community Greening gathering.

Hosted by the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney in honour of its 200th Birthday, the event will feature a visit to the Garden’s brand new world-class horticultural attraction – The Calyx, to see the inaugural exhibition *Sweet Addiction*, the botanic story of chocolate.

You’ll need to arrange your own transport. We can meet commuters outside St James train station (near the Queen Victoria statue) and



Pictured are prizewinners from the 2015 end-of-year event.

escort you to the Garden — just let us know. Parking passes can also be made available with prior notice.

Come prepared with walking shoes, water and sun protection.

If you would like to come along and are a former or current Community Greening participant, please rsvp by 7 November 2016:

- **Phil Pettitt** 0447 420 173  
philip.pettitt@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au
- **Elizabeth Docking** 0438 670 753  
elizabeth.docking@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au

Numbers are limited so get in early (also let us know your mode of transport). More details will be available in the *Spring* edition of this newsletter.



# Eastlakes Garden renewed

A chance meeting at a colourful Harmony Day event on 21 March has brought about a wonderful new collaboration between two like-minded organisations — generating friendships and life skills in the process.

The event brought our Community Greening staff in contact with Windgap Foundation — a not-for-profit organisation providing

services to people with disabilities in Sydney's eastern suburbs.

While enjoying a perfectly-made coffee courtesy of participants in Windgap Foundation's barista training program, the two organisations hatched a plan to inject new life into nearby Eastlakes Community Garden, which was struggling due to a shortage of volunteers.

A group from Windgap Foundation's 'Transition to Work' program was keen to help! The program assists people with disabilities develop vocational skills and engage in community life.

Up until this time, Eastlakes Community Garden had been primarily the work of local resident Marion and many 'assistant' community members. Due to poor health, however, few locals had been able to keep pace with the level of commitment required. More recently, another local, Italo, had taken on one end of the large garden, where he installed raised garden beds with amazing tomatoes, strawberries, sunflowers and corn.

Now, with the help of 'Growability', much more of this large communal space can be used and maintained.

Marion is enjoying being out in the garden with her new helpers and the 'Growability' team has really taken a liking to being involved in the local Eastlakes community. What a fantastic result!



• Phil Pettitt from Community Greening is pictured with participants in Windgap's 'Transition to Work' program and Marion.

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## Meet Australia's best neighbour

Avid community gardener and popular resident at a Mount Druitt seniors' public housing estate, Sandra Pereira, was recently named Australia's 'most extraordinary neighbour' after being nominated in Neighbour Day's Tell us Your Story campaign.

Attracting thousands of entries, the competition invited people to write a story about an exceptional neighbour, and none impressed the judges more than the entry about great grandmother Sandra who had brought life back to her local community and created a supportive social network.

Sandra has been instrumental in bringing about two very important projects in her large-scale Balleny Place community.

Firstly, she is a driving force behind the 'Young at Heart' community group which meets to discuss important issues and organise events that have helped build a more cohesive, positive and active community.

Secondly, Sandra's vision and determination has been essential in the creation of a fantastic community garden where any member of the community can source produce for their dinner table or just sit and relax.



• Sandra, Australia's best neighbour.

The garden is a focal point for the community and Sandra's dream is now a reality.



# News from Northcott

Northcott Community Garden in Sydney's inner-city suburb of Surry Hills was unveiled in October 2014 and recently the resident gardeners started their own newsletter. Here is their latest submission by Alison George.

'We have to admit to a desperate urge to tell you about the many beautiful plants we have here ... (see the "before" and "after" photos).

'Plus, we want to share news about upcoming developments because we've done the planning and now, thanks to Charmaine Jones at Inner Sydney Voice (quarterly journal), we have the funding to improve things like seating and access.

'At the beginning of this century our community garden site had a high wrought iron fence around it and a locked gate. There were two park benches that are still in place and the lawn was mown regularly but tenants weren't able to sit on those benches and chat. They couldn't stroll across the lawns of this mini park.

'Some of them looked wistfully through the railings as they walked past. They saw the potential even though there was an ugly little brick building that took up pride of place and obviously wasn't going anywhere. There were some trees, a number dead, while others were doing so well that tenants had to cut back branches that were growing through their windows.

'It wasn't all negative, however. One of these trees had flowers that attracted the lorikeets and when they visited its branches were a bouncing, swirling mass of colour. There was also colour in the branches of other trees from time to time. The wind that can howl like a banshee around Northcott delighted in whisking away any cloth items a tenant might leave on a window sill and depositing them well out of reach in an upper



Before



After

branch. And there they seemed to stick. Trees were festooned with brightly coloured tea-towels, bath towels and items of clothing that faded as the years passed.

'Now the community art, herbs and flowers are the main highlights and a credit to the work of the many residents who have contributed.'

# Five ways to wellbeing

The South Western Sydney Local Health District recently launched a Wellbeing Collaboration at Liverpool Hospital to address anxiety, depression and suicide, and promote positive mental health within the region.

The Wellbeing Collaboration was formed to meet priorities set out by the Mental Health Commission of NSW.

The local health district's Director of Population Health Peter Sainsbury said many different groups were doing good work in the area.

'The collaboration aims to bring these groups together and provide a focus for coordinated and strategic action on wellbeing,' said Peter. 'To ensure a holistic approach, the collaboration includes staff from both our mental health and population health teams.'

'Together they will focus on a number of different areas, including high-need populations and communities, and poor physical health in people living with mental illness, their families and carers.'

District Director of Mental Health Dr Claire Jones said: 'The district has also adopted the Five Ways to Wellbeing strategy, which uses five simple messages to promote mental wellbeing across south-west Sydney.'

## The 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' approach encompasses:

1. **Connect:** Talk and listen.  
Be there, feel connected.
2. **Give:** Your time, words, presence.
3. **Be Active:** Do what you can.  
Enjoy what you do.  
Move your mood.



4. **Keep Learning:** Embrace new experiences. See opportunities. Surprise yourself.

5. **Take Notice:** Be mindful, appreciate the little things and savour the moment.

Community Greening works closely with NSW Health to help improve the general wellbeing of communities right across the State.

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## A word on tetanus

Tetanus is not just caused by animal bites and unfortunate encounters with rusty nails.

The bacteria associated with tetanus can also be found in common garden soil so it's important to take precautions to reduce your risk of being infected.

Even a simple cut, scrape or scratch while gardening can expose you to the tetanus bacteria.

Unfortunately a large proportion of gardeners have not kept up with their tetanus booster jabs and many people are not even aware that it is possible to contract tetanus from soil.

Another misconception is that young children are far more at risk. In fact, the risk greatly increases with age, especially once you reach 60 and have not kept up-to-date with your tetanus shots.

### The facts about tetanus

Tetanus can be a potentially fatal disease and in its most common form can cause paralysis. The symptoms are initially a feeling of stiffness in the neck and trouble with swallowing, which is why the condition is often referred to as 'lockjaw'. Symptoms tend to manifest themselves within just over a week of exposure to the bacteria, but can appear in as little as three days or up to three weeks or so later.

### How to avoid tetanus

Immunisation and protective clothing are your two greatest weapons against contracting tetanus.

#### • Have a booster shot every 10 years

The most common form of injection is a combination jab which covers you against both tetanus and diphtheria. The latter can also be caused by a soil-borne bacterium which can infect the

tonsils and throat. Diphtheria is contagious, unlike tetanus which can't be passed from person to person. If you've never had a tetanus shot, or you're not sure of your immunisation status, please see a doctor.

#### • Wear gloves and protective clothing

Always wear gloves, sturdy footwear, eye protection (when possible) and other protective clothing. Even during summer you're far better wearing long light-canvas trousers rather than shorts as an increased protection against getting cut, scratched or scraped.

If you cut yourself in the garden it is important to thoroughly clean and disinfect the wound, and if you start to feel any of the symptoms mentioned above please see a doctor as soon as possible.

# Crack the Code

To Reveal the Answer!

1	2	3	4	5
a	b	c	d	e
6	7	8	9	10
f	g	h	i	j
11	12	13	14	15
k	l	m	n	o
16	17	18	19	20
p	q	r	s	t
21	22	23	24	25
u	v	w	x	y
26				
z				

## Gardening for Good Health Code

7 1 18 4 5 14 9 14 7

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19 20 18 5 14 7 20 8 5 14 19

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25 15 21 18

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10 15 9 14 20 19

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Send your answer in for a chance to win a Prize!! Email, text or Tweet us!



# Winter gardening tips

Winter is a great time to:

- improve soil with compost
- try your hand at starting a 'weed tea' (a liquid fertiliser made from composting weeds under water)
- plant deciduous fruit trees and vines
- keep your eyes peeled for caterpillars and try sprinkling

self-raising flour over cabbage, kale, cauliflower and broccoli to kill caterpillars — it's an easy and inexpensive pest control method popular with organic farmers

- consider dwarfed fruit tree varieties for tight spaces
- sow a green manure crop to improve your soil

- plant or sow plants such as asparagus, artichokes, winter lettuce, parsnip, peas, potatoes, radish, rhubarb, shallots, silver beet, spinach, celery, brussel sprouts, turnips, parsley and carrots.

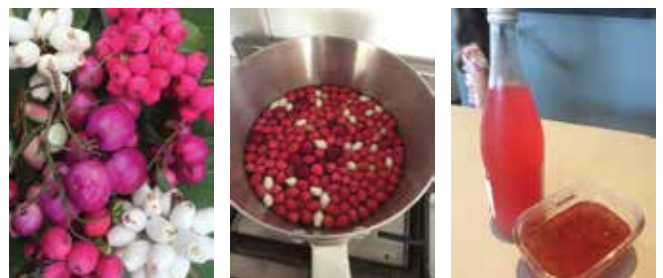
Need help with any of the above? Ask us for a Community Greening workshop.

## Silly lilly pilly cordial and jam

by Youth Community Greening Coordinator Peter Dawe

### Lilly Pilly Cordial

2 cups of lilly pilly fruit  
4 cups water  
1 teaspoon tartaric acid (or 2 of cream of tartar)  
2 cups sugar  
5 lemon myrtle leaves  
juice of a lemon



Boil all the ingredients in a big pot until the colour comes out of the fruit (about five minutes). Strain the liquid and mash pulp through a sieve before returning the resulting liquid back to the boil. Strain it one more time, cool and then it's ready to serve.

For an interesting variation add several nectar-covered grevillea and hold back a bit on the sugar. It's very refreshing!

### Lilly Pilly Jam

The jam is a bit more complex as you have to get the quantities right in order for it to set.

Place the fruit in saucepan, just covered with water. Bring to the boil, then reduce to a simmer and cook for around 30 minutes or until the fruit has lost its colour and the seeds have separated from the pulp. Then add equal amounts of sugar (if two cups of fruit then two cups of sugar). Once the sugar has dissolved, remove the seeds and flesh or you may prefer to leave the flesh in the mix. Add some lemon juice and lemon myrtle leaves to taste — I use half a lemon and about 5 leaves coarsely diced. Simmer the mix for another 30 minutes and the mix should start to thicken and then place in the fridge.

Check out this website: <http://www.littlebitofthyme.com/2013/02/18/lilly-pilly-jelly-in-the-kitchen/>

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



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Supporters



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