



NEWSLETTER FOR JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2017

President's report

Mother Nature has thrown a lot of challenges at the Canberra Region, least of which has been the twisting winds and bush fires in the last couple of weeks. It hasn't been the strength of the wind that has been so damaging to so many trees but the almost tornado force of the winds in different directions at the same time. The loss due to bush fires most often relates to the value of dwellings should they be tragically lost, but what value can you place on a garden that may have been established in some cases more than 100 years.

Open Gardens Canberra is currently planning additional **member only** events including garden tours of Embassies in Canberra. Security, logistics and insurance requires that we limit participation to members. As the annual membership has been \$25.00 a year since inception in 2015 and will continue to at least 2018, we believe this is a very reasonable cost which supports and strengthens Open Gardens Canberra as an organisation.

We are a community, volunteer and not-for-profit organisation. The annual membership fee supports members and the community in the following ways:

- garden owners receive funding to support opening their gardens to the public for most of a weekend;
- Open Gardens Canberra will support a scholarship for a horticulture student in 2017-2019;
- Open Gardens Canberra participate in community events such as CAP Expo and National Trust events;
- insurance coverage is provided to all members and visitors to open gardens; and
- publicity and promotion costs are supported – this includes our new website under development which will include an expanded range of gardening related information so that we can effectively promote the activities and events of interest to garden lovers in Canberra and environs;
- Open Gardens Canberra are pursuing new partnerships such as with the ACT Government on sustainable water management in the garden (see item below).

For these reasons, we encourage you to become a member, renew your membership and encourage your friends and family to become members.

A fresh, new, interactive web site will soon be launched with help from Canberra Web Design; this resulted from a number of quotes being received and discussion about potential content and outcomes. This will help put a new exciting face to a great future for Open Gardens Canberra.

Autumn Open Gardens

As foreshadowed in the previous newsletter, we have secured some delightful gardens for the autumn season with five private gardens and one community garden at Charnwood. The following are save the date details. We will also be advertising on our new website (see below); our usual publicity channels and by flyer which will be emailed to all members.

In March and April, Open Gardens Canberra will host the following Open Gardens days with daily opening hours from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm.

4 and 5 March - The Naturalists' Garden at 28 Marrakai Street, Hawker

This large, rambling, native garden on a spectacular north facing block is adjacent to the Pinnacle Nature Reserve. Winding paths lead the visitor through open areas for outdoor living designed around a salt water pool. Exotic plantings of perennials, herbs, fruit trees, vegetables and roses have all been incorporated to assist with the biodiversity of the garden and attract native fauna.

4 and 5 March - Isobel's Garden at 18 Dutton Street, Dickson

This garden, developed from 1980-1981, crosses two adjacent house blocks with varied native shrubbery across the front and productive gardens at the rear of each block. Native birds abound in the varied habitat. The owner, a botanist, has special interests and knowledge of native flora and fauna. The back gardens comprise prepared beds with a wide variety of vegetables, herbs and fruit. The owner preserves some of the vegetables/fruit including by electro drying. Sustainability features include composting systems and 24,000 litre rainwater storage and reticulation systems.

4 and 5 March - Charnwood Community Garden (adjacent to Sports Way off Lhotsky Street, Charnwood)

The Charnwood Community Garden was established by the Canberra Organic Growers Society (COGS) in the late 1980s and comprises 45 individual plots. Membership is diverse with many cultural backgrounds represented across a wide age range.

The garden is located next to Sports Way, off Lhotsky Street Charnwood. For information about membership and expressing interest in a vacant plot, please email:

Charnwood_convenor@cogs.asn.au. COGs website is: www.cogs.asn.au

18 and 19 March Ysadora – 7 Cochrane Street Theodore

A small garden developed on a challenging steep slope but full of interest for gardeners, children and those interested in sustainability.

29 and 30 April - The Children's Garden at 50 Lindrum Crescent, Holt

Emma's Garden is dominated by large deciduous trees, front and back, providing the framework for a productive garden containing many fruit and berry plants, vegetables and herbs. The front and back gardens are partly shaded by large deciduous trees. The garden contains more sunny sections where there are many fruiting plants and there is a fenced vegetable garden. The backyard is family and children friendly. There are rain water tanks with extensive dripper systems. Garden has composting and poultry. The garden is adjacent to a public Green Space. Emma has also planted, and maintains, the fronting strip of the Green Space. John who lives across the road at no 41 Lindrum Street, also invites visitors to view his front garden of roses.

29 and 30 April Woowoolahra - 6 London Bridge Road at Burra

A classic garden. Beautifully constructed rock walls divide rooms in a mature garden where lovely old trees embrace lawns and frame valley views. Cypress woodland opens to a dam abundant with bird life and water lilies. Features include a forty metre rose arbour and berry garden enclosed with espaliered fruit trees.

Open Gardens - Volunteers Needed

Open Gardens Canberra will require a number of volunteers for the various open garden events being hosted. We would very much welcome some time from our members to help with the front table. Sally will coordinate the volunteers but in the first instance, if you are available for two to three hours on one of the days listed above, please email secretaryopengardenscanberra@gmail.com nominating the day and time you can provide some assistance along with your contact details (both email and mobile phone). Sally will be in touch to confirm.

Member only event

Open Gardens Walk at Warrigal Queanbeyan - Karawee Gardens - Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 March 2017

Open Gardens Canberra is pleased to announce that we are working with Warrigal Queanbeyan to hold two guided garden walks for current and new members. The gardens of Warrigal Queanbeyan will be opened as part of our autumn program for the weekend of Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 March 2017, from 10.30 am till about 12.30.

Warrigal Queanbeyan is a Retirement Village and Aged Care Facility, accessed from Canberra Avenue, George Street and Campbell Street.

The eastern one third of the 5 acre site is to be re-developed in late 2017 for high-care aged housing. This is an opportunity to open all the gardens to interested members before sections of the gardens disappear. This is also an opportunity to inspect Warrigal's plans to redevelop, including new landscaping.

There is a diversity of garden styles and range of plant material in the individual private gardens in the Village. The larger landscape framework has some of its origins in the late 1800's. An attraction is the State Heritage listed Manse, constructed in 1886. There are also significant management issues such as the 10 year Tree Plan.

This is a free event for members but donations may be made to the Warrigal Queanbeyan Residents Group for facility improvements.

Please note: this is a **member's only event** due to insurance and logistical issues and given the need to limit numbers to 20 for each walk. For both walks, you will need to register your attendance by contacting Tom Baker on 0415 839017 or allbaker@bigpond.net.au.

Following a confirmation email, please meet in the large, off-road carpark, which is accessed from George Street by the laneway next to the bowling greens. Go to the gate with balloons.

Membership News – from Ian Davenport

Membership of Open Gardens Canberra has continued to increase since 1 September 2016. This is excellent as it shows you, the members, are supporting the Open Gardens Canberra organisation and also the owners who open their gardens for the enjoyment of all.

We have around **170** members from last year who have not yet renewed so we encourage you to visit the gardens being opened and renew while you are there. No need to complete a form, just bring your membership card, pay our volunteers your membership fee and receive from them a receipt and a coloured dot to validate your membership card. Alternatively you may pay by Bank Transfer and your status will be updated.

Our membership database is only as good as the information you supply to us so if you change your postal address, phone number or email address please let us know promptly either via our generic email contact - secretaryopengardenscanberra@gmail.com or complete a Change of Details Form at an open garden.

As a bonus, if your application is received after 1 April 2017, your membership will continue to 31 August 2018. This does not apply to renewals.

A New Website for Open Gardens Canberra

The committee has decided to forge a new IT direction and has commissioned a new website for Open Gardens Canberra by Canberra Web Design based at Mitchell. We hope the new website will be operational by the end of February or early March 2017 and will provide an update in the

February/March newsletter. Once it is operational, all members will be sent a link to the site which is expected to retain most of its current web address.

The new website will present information in a timely and visually attractive manner with links to further information – overall, our aim is that it will be informative and relevant with information easily accessible. It will incorporate a calendar of events (with links to gardens notes); an archive of previous activities; event and newsletter registration; and information about other gardening related activities (eg the Open Garden calendars of other regions; community plants sales; etc). There will also be optional social media elements such as facebook and twitter although the Committee has not decided whether these will be used.

For further information about Open Garden Canberra events

Our publicity tools are:

City News -their website has an Open Gardens section (when relevant) and they send a photographer out to forthcoming gardens, so it always worth picking up their latest copy or looking it up online: www.citynews.com.au

Listen to ABC 666 Saturday mornings gardening show for interviews with the Open Garden owners. Saturdays 8.30-10.00 am.

Listen to the Garden Gurus on 2CC (1206) for interviews with the Open Garden owners. Weekends 7-9 am.

Our new publicity contact (thanks to our Vice President Chris Lord) is Graham Ross of Sydney broadcaster 2GB and he has kindly agreed to advertise Open Garden Canberra events for those Sydneysiders interested in garden activities in Canberra.

Recipe for lovely zucchini fritters

Perfect for late summer when the vegie patch is full of zucchinis - supplied by Jane and adapted from Feast: grow, cook, and eat. edited by Gabrielle Chan

2 cups plain flour; 1 cup milk; 3 eggs beaten; 2 well-packed cups grated Zucchini; 1 onion chopped or grated; 100g grated parmesan cheese; 2 Tablespoons chopped parsley; 2 Tablespoons olive oil; and salt and pepper to taste.

Mix flour, eggs and milk together in a bowl until smooth. Then stir through zucchini, onion, cheese and parsley and season to taste with salt and pepper. Heat one tablespoon of olive oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Place tablespoons of the batter into the frying pan and flatten gently with a spatula. Flip the fritters when the centre looks cooked, after about 2 minutes. Cook both sides until brown. Set aside and continue with the rest of the batter. Makes about 28 fritters. Serve with tzatziki dip or yogurt with chopped mint.

Member Contributions

We welcome contributions from members on garden-related activities, tips and recipes. For these and all enquiries, please send your email to secretaryopengardenscanberra@gmail.com

Next Newsletter

The next newsletter will be February/March and emailed to you at the end of February.