



**Merry Christmas to you all from the Staff at  
Easy Care Gardening Inc.**



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2013**

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## Annual General Meeting 2013

**Easy Care Gardening Inc.** AGM was held in September followed by a 25th year celebration lunch. The meeting was well attended and many stayed to enjoy the wonderful lunch that Tony (the Chef) and his Staff from Meals on Wheels provided, along with a super 25 year anniversary cake (photo on left).

Frank Windeyer, ECG President welcomed everyone and presented his report, followed by Yvonne Dewar, Manager. Guests included Anne Shires, founding member, and Cr Robert Browne from Hornsby Council.

Extracts from the President's report: 'I regard it as a privilege to serve as President, and particularly in this 25th year of operation of Easy Care Gardening. My first year of President has been busier than Brian Self (Past President) suggested to me it would be, but I have enjoyed it all, including the challenges it has thrown up. To everyone involved, the staff, committee members, office volunteers and particularly gardening volunteers, thank you all for your help and hard work. We should all feel proud to be part of a great organisation as we celebrate 25 years of service to the community.'

Yvonne Dewar spoke about the organisational changes; staff coordinators will be more visible in the field, and the re-assigning of areas so that volunteers are assigned to teams working closer to their own homes.

Anne Shires spoke about the early days when there were just two gardeners volunteering three days a week, and that they only worked up to two hours per garden. Back then there were 25 clients. Anne also told some amusing stories of surviving in the early years.

Cr Robert Browne from Hornsby Council congratulated ECG on their 25 years, an organisation he is well aware of as he hears from the Hornsby residents of the highly appreciated service provided to the community. On behalf of Hornsby Shire he offered a big thank you and 'more power to you all'.

**President and Manager** handed out Certificates of Appreciation for volunteers' service to ECG. These included certificates for three years, five years, 10 years, 15 years, 20 years and 25 years of volunteering.

*Photo on left, left to right, Yvonne Dewar, Manager, Anne Shires, Founder, Frank Windeyer, President.*



**WISHING ALL OUR WONDERFUL VOLUNTEERS AND OUR CLIENTS A  
VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS.**

**SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS AND ALL THOSE THAT  
CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEWSLETTER, FROM THE EDITOR**



## Around the Pathways - Two Special People



**Marjorie Caws at the  
ECG office**



**M**arjorie Caws, a Hornsby Saturday Team Leader, came across a small advertisement in a volunteer leaflet whilst visiting Rast Bros Nursery at Turramurra (owned by Peter Whitehead, since closed). Marjorie, who has been a volunteer with ECG for 20 years, joined in 1993 when the office was at St Ives and a much smaller organisation. Back in those days the Team Leaders had to organise their own teams, ringing around from a list of volunteers hoping to get enough willing people to come along and work. Sometimes only one or two others would join Marjorie but that didn't stop Marjorie and Margot Biggs (one of the original volunteers who has since retired and moved north) getting out and about, gardening for those in need.

Marjorie recalls, "I remember one widowed gentleman in a wheelchair whom we used to visit, he lived alone and loved his garden. Whenever the team went along to do his garden he would join us on the grass for a 'morning tea picnic', the highlight of his day and perhaps his week. We would bring along cakes and biscuits, home made of course, and Margot would bring along a thermos of hot water for our tea. Then there's another client who makes wonderful mince pies each Christmas for the volunteers. I've always been interested in gardening, any spare time I get I am in the garden. I have done a gardening/horticulture course at Bonds Nursery about 10 - 12 years ago, compliments of ECG, which was very helpful and enjoyable." Marjorie is in full time employment as a scientist in Haematology at the Royal North Shore Hospital and has been there for 27 years. As she does shift work which often means working on weekends, she is unable to join some of the Saturday teams' gardening appointments. You've got to give it to her, holding down a full time job and still finding the time to volunteer and help those in need is commendable! "It is a complete contrast to working in a science laboratory, inside all day to being outside in the fresh air gardening, which I enjoy so much. ECG has many rewards, meeting lovely people and developing close friendships with both clients and volunteers. The clients are always so grateful for the work we do and you can't help feeling happy that we have helped to make their lives a little easier. When you see the client's lovely smile after doing their garden you get a 'feel good'. I have gained many long friendships over the years with clients and volunteers and it has been very rewarding, and I hope to continue for many more years to come."



**Lee Dickson at the  
Shanghai Botanical  
Gardens**

**L**ee Dickson, one of our Tuesday Team Leaders, has all the attributes - a quiet achiever, patient and always willing to help out - that makes her very good at her job, and also gives her a lot of pleasure. Lee has been a volunteer with ECG for eight years and joined the organisation because after she retired she was looking for "some sort of volunteer work that included my love of gardening". After reading an advert in the *'Bush Tele'*, and having spare time since leaving work, Lee decided to join ECG and gardens on a regular basis. "Once the children left home, I became interested in gardening and went to Eden Gardens and completed three certificate courses in gardening," she said. "I really enjoyed it and now have a good knowledge of the principles of gardening, love shrubs and flowers, know their names, but not the botanical names, while trees are another story - know only a few of them."

Lee has an excellent background for an ECG volunteer as she worked for an advertising agency as a media reconciler and a production coster. Lee also had the distinction of working in the same agency as Bryce Courtenay, the South African-born writer before he wrote his first book. "I worked there for 20 years until my daughter had her first baby, and then I left to look after my grand-daughter. The gardening I do for ECG keeps me fit. I meet new people and I really enjoy meeting up with my team of great workers to do work in our clients' gardens. You never know what you will be doing until you see the clients and discuss their wishes. I really get a kick out of seeing the garden neat and tidy after we have finished. The clients really appreciate our work and enjoy us coming to their homes." Another reward/benefit of gardening, is that Lee has also formed a friendship with one of the volunteers as they go to the same gardening club, and have the same interests. "I keep doing the gardening for ECG as it gives me plenty of exercise, good contact with people and a feeling that I am helping someone who needs help."



### Thank you for Donation

**E**asy Care Gardening Inc is delighted to thank Aberdeen Charitable Foundation for their generous donation of funds to buy two new lawn mowers and a line trimmer. This substantial donation will assist the lawn mowing team to service an increased number of clients.

## New Volunteers



Volunteers are not paid - not because they are worthless but because they are priceless!



Martin Cooke	Morgan Shilson-Josling	Jean Elborn
Jason Harb	Rachael Lord	Jeremy Judkowski
Adelaide Waller	Kelly Hollow	Mansoor Jahanifar
Dong Yu (Lucy) Liu	Michael Gow	Gholam Rajabi
Parisa Masoudi	Anthea Savage	Amer Shaheen
Yvonne Chan	Chayne (Debby) He	Lubna Shaheen
Elliot Chew	Oliver Wessels	Misun Yu
Jacqueline Drysdale	Sun Rui	Wen Jun Wang
Wen Tao (Patrick) Liao	David McMahon	Robert St Claire
Clara Morchio	Li Lit Wah (JC) Li Uong Shing	<i>Corporate</i>
Daisy Smith	Lai Lai (Nuella) Lao	Bahai Community of Ryde
Christopher Levy	Liming (Alice) Chen	Optus

### **Eden Gardens, Summer Gardening** – Belinda Thackeray, Education Manager at Eden Gardens

**L**ong hot summers can be an extreme time for plants - take a few simple steps to get the most of your garden!

Healthy soil is the key to strong healthy plants that are more able to resist disease and survive attack from many pests. Improve structure and water holding capacity of garden soil by periodically adding organic matter like compost, manure and soil conditioner. For best results in pots use a quality potting mix like Eden Premium Mix.

Warm summer winds can quickly dry out gardens and pots. Applying a 5-10cm layer of mulch like bark, sugar cane or pebbles over the soil surface can look great and help to conserve soil moisture, which means you have to water less often. It also keeps soil and plant roots cool and can help to suppress the growth of pesky weeds.

All plants need to be watered regularly until established. Plants take up water via their roots, so it's usually best to apply water directly to the soil not the foliage. Use water crystals and soil wetters to assist with soil water penetration and retention. Remember gardens and pots need to be watered more often during warm weather.

**I**nvoke your friends and family to become a Volunteer - just a few hours each week makes a difference in so many ways. Personal fitness, great exercise and being out doors in the open air. By helping others you are helping yourself, you will feel great, forget all your worries and enjoy the company of others. This is a great way to share your knowledge, learn new tricks of the trade, meet interesting people and help our community to stay in their homes.

**S**TOP PRESS - As a way of saying 'Thanks' to all the wonderful Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai volunteers, Ku-ring-gai Hornsby Volunteer Service is again having a free supper and movie night on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2014, at Hornsby Event Cinemas in Westfield Plaza Hornsby. Volunteers are welcome to bring a friend. If you are interested in attending please RSVP the ECG office on 9983-1644

## **Easy Care Gardening Volunteer Garden Awards 2013**

**Peter Whitehead  
Appreciation  
Award**

Easy Care Gardening sends warmest wishes and congratulations to:

**Sarah Haddrick**

This award is for outstanding service to volunteering.

**Eden Gardens**  
301 Lane Cove Road, Nth  
Ryde. Ph: 9491 9900



July : David Sumner  
August: Douglas Jamieson  
September: John Coady

**Hargraves Nurseryland**  
630 Old Northern Road,  
Dural. Ph: 9651 1833



July: NFP  
August: Michael Bull  
September: Sue Beatty

**Parkers Nursery**  
45 Tennyson Avenue,  
Turramurra. Ph: 9487 3888



July: NFP  
August: NFP  
September: Joanna Brown

## Easy Care Gardening - Gardens and Celebrations



100 year old client Mr Harlow enjoys celebration cake with the ECG volunteer gardening team

Easy Care Gardening's first visit to a garden at Killara, where the volunteers worked like little beavers to clear the overgrown areas and mulch. Two photos below show before and after, with the team and clients surveying the great job they did on the day.



Two teams got together to tackle a garden in the St Ives area for the first time and had a great time, followed by lunch in the St Ives Showground. One of the team member's sons from Perth was in Sydney for a visit, and joined the team on the day. Photo showing the teams enjoying their lunch.



ECG client, Mrs Sindel, rang the office to invite the gardeners to visit her garden when it was at its peak. One of the volunteers who had worked on Mrs Sindel's garden jumped at the opportunity and took the client up on the offer. What a thrill it was to 'see such a spectacular bloom of plants', (see photo on left) and found it very interesting that they never water the front gardens - good advertisement for mass plantings and mulching!

### 'ICE' - Message from the Ambulance Service



We all carry our mobile phones with names & numbers stored in the memory. If we were to be involved in an accident or were taken ill, the people attending us would have our mobile phone but wouldn't know who to call. Yes, there are hundreds of numbers stored but which one is the contact person in case of an emergency? Hence this 'ICE' (In Case of Emergency) Campaign.

The concept of 'ICE' is catching on quickly. It is a method of contact during emergency situations. As mobile phones are carried by the majority of the population, all you need to do is store the number of a contact person or persons who should be contacted during emergency under the entry 'ICE'. The idea was thought up by a paramedic who found that when he went to the scenes of accidents there were always mobile phones with patients but they didn't know which number to call. He therefore thought that it would be a good idea if there was a nationally recognized name for this purpose. In an emergency situation, Emergency Service personnel and hospital staff would be able to quickly contact the right person by simply dialling the number you have stored as 'ICE'. It really could save your life, or put a loved one's mind at rest. For more than one contact name simply enter ICE1, ICE2 and so on.

Please pass this around to as many people as possible, as this can help in an emergency. Hope it will never happen, but is always good to be prepared.

Herb Scissors - Volunteer Trevor Brown sent this photo of a wonderful invention he was given on Fathers Day,



### Mulch, Mulch and even more Mulch - Jo McGahey

This Summer, if we believe all the forecasts, is going to be a stinker. So I have only one word for everyone and it is MULCH, MULCH AND EVEN MORE MULCH. You can use all sorts of mulching to keep your garden moist and save precious water. Best of all, try your very own home grown compost. Mushroom compost or sugar cane, are both available in bulk from nurseries. Alternatively use wood chips; ECG always supplies a nitrogen rich fertilizer when mulching clients' gardens. Happy mulching everyone!

### Gnome news corner - Rhododendron Gardens



A number of volunteers took a day trip to the rhododendron gardens in Blackheath on the very Thursday that the recent bush fires started, thankfully returning safely after having a great time visiting the gardens.





**E**njoy these photos of the various rhododendrons in the gardens at Blackheath. Amongst the rhododendrons are the beautiful white gums trees, wisteria, waratahs (NSW emblem) and millions of noisy cicadas.

**B**lackheath Park is also another highlight, with enormous rhododendron trees, photo showing office volunteers with one of the Easy Care Gardening Coordinators taking time out in the park.

