

Winter 2013 Newsletter

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A Word from our President

Each month I am amazed as I read the report of the number of Easy Care volunteers who have worked and the number of hours they have put in. The contribution of Easy Care volunteers to the community is marvellous.

I frequently meet people who know of Easy Care Gardening, who are clients who appreciate our efforts, or who are gardening volunteers. Very recently in my work as a lawyer I visited a client of mine in her home. She said she knew my name as she had seen it in an Easy Care newsletter. By now she will have celebrated her 90th birthday. She told me that she has lived in her home for over 50 years. She is now physically unable to maintain her garden and as an Easy Care client she was looking forward to a visit from one of our teams a few days later.

A vision statement of Ku-ring-gai Council refers to Ku-ring-gai as a place promoting local stewardship and community participation through an increasing participation of volunteers. The great thing is that our volunteers, in giving up their time to garden for others less able, are already contributing their fair share to the community, not only in Ku-ring-gai, but well beyond, for the benefit of our clients and doubtless they will continue to do so.

Frank Windeyer

Garden Expo - Easy Care Gardening Festival

Easy Care Gardening celebrated Seniors Week in style with a Gardening Festival. Visiting seniors enjoyed a moving performance by cellist Caroline Hobbs of The Metropolitan Orchestra and a screening of the new Easy Care Gardening promotional DVD, followed by an entertaining talk by Peter Clarke of Ku-ring-gai Council on how to turn your backyard pool into a pond! (See article on page 2) .

Volunteers Julie-ann Short, Lyndell van Noort and Karin Yu, ran a wonderful plant stall which raised \$249. A grant from the State Government helped provide a delicious afternoon tea of sandwiches and scones. A tool maintenance demonstration by volunteer, Bob Mutton, rounded off the afternoon and was received with great interest.

Many thanks to all who helped make this a very special afternoon and we hope to have another garden expo in the near future.



Left to right: Julie-ann Short, Lyndell van Noort and Karin Yu



Caroline Hobbs



Bob Mutton

Events for your diary

13-19 May: National Volunteer Week

15 May Wed 11.00am - 2.00pm: R/HH HACC Volunteer Expo. Venue: Ryde Library, 1 Pope Street, Ryde.

16 May Thurs 10.00am - 1.00pm: H/KRG HACC Volunteer Expo. Venue: Westfield Shopping Centre, Hornsby (outside Kathmandu)

13 June Thurs 10.00am - 2.00pm: Plant and Volunteer information stall, outside ECG garage, Gilroy Lane, Turramurra.

4 Aug Sun 9.30 am - 4.30pm: Moocooboola Festival - ECG Volunteers Information stall. Venue: Boronia Park, Hunters Hill.

12 Sep Thur 10.00am - 2.00pm: Plant and Volunteer information stall, outside ECG Garage, Gilroy Lane, Turramurra.

15 Sep (TBC) Sun 10.00am - 4.00pm: Hornsby Shire Council - The Bushland Shire Festival, Volunteer information stall. Venue: Fagan Park, Galston.

19 Oct Sat 9.00am - 4.30pm: Granny Smith Festival, Volunteer information stall. Venue: Rowe Street, Eastwood.

5 Dec Thurs - International Volunteers Day



EASY CARE GARDENING

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Around the Pathways - Easy Care Gardening Plant Nursery



Are you aware that Easy Care Gardening has their very own Plant Nursery that is open to the public?

The Easy Care Gardening Plant Nursery Team is a small but productive group of volunteers that meet on the second Thursday of each month 9.30am to 11.30am/12noon. We would love to be better known, and for people to come along when we are there to look at our stock and perhaps buy a plant or two! Most of our plants are 'low maintenance' and prices start from as little as \$4.

The money we make is used by ECG, to purchase tools and materials to maintain clients' gardens. Plants available include: hundreds of bromeliads (Neoregelia, Vriesea, Aechmea

varieties and more); succulents (Kalanchoe, Aeonium, Hawthoria, and more); Clivea, Geraniums, Irisine, and so many other wonderful plants. So when you are out and about and interested in buying low maintenance plants, visit the ECG Nursery at 28 Britannia Street, Pennant Hills.

Travelling from Pennant Hills Rd into The Crescent then into Britannia St, go through the roundabout and before reaching Kurrajong St, the entry to the nursery is on the right hand side of the road. Parking is in the street and you enter the nursery via a gate between the Bush Care building and the main truck entrance. Reminder, our Plant Nursery volunteers are there on the second Thursday of each month 9.30am—11.30am.

Look forward to seeing you there!



From Pool to Pond

Would you rather listen to frogs chirping in the evening than the television blaring? Easy Care Gardening found out how to create your own frog habitat and a thriving eco system just outside your back door - by turning your swimming pool into a pond! This is easier than it sounds and with the help of Peter Clarke of WildThings at Ku-ring-gai Council, we soon had all the information at our fingertips.

Once the kids have grown, a swimming pool can turn from a pleasure into a bit of a millstone. Expensive chemicals and pool pumps, plus the burden of constant cleaning can take the fun out of owning a sparkling – though rarely used – pool.

By replacing the water in a salt water pool or leaving a chlorinated pool for a few weeks, adding plants and tadpoles or fish, your pond will soon be well under way. Channeling storm water into the pond and using pond water to irrigate your garden, or adding a fountain, will help aerate the water. On hot days you can still enjoy a dip!

The finished pond will enhance biodiversity, store water for garden irrigation and can easily be converted back to a pool. It can also be used as a biobank – taking care of a species of threatened native fish and can be used to grow edible plants, such as watercress.

WildThings can help you turn your pool into a pond by supplying native fish, aquatic plants and technical advice. Visit www.wildthings.org.au for more information.



Peter Clarke



Profile of a Team Leader - Phil Manton

Phil Manton has been an Easy Care Gardening volunteer and Team Leader since March 2006. He is one of a very rare breed of volunteers who often volunteer two or three days a week for Easy Care Gardening. He is always helpful and willing to pitch in, and well liked by volunteers and clients alike for his easy going, "can do" nature.

In these six and a half years he has visited an extraordinary 1,325 gardens for Easy Care Gardening. Phil is Team Leader on one of his gardening days, which means that he has additional responsibilities including liaising between the volunteers, the client to ensure the client is satisfied with the job and completing paperwork for the office. We appreciate Phil very much.

Thank you Phil



Phil Manton working in a client's garden

New Volunteers

Dongmei Li	Malihe Tabasi	Wal Zani	<i>Corporate</i>
Robert Urbaniak	Tane Hodgson	Salome David	Ernst & Young
Suzanne Bowen	Xiaomiao Li	Salman Lodhi	Sydney Cheil Uniting Church
Kalaranji Maheswaran	Simon Lee	Laura Garling	MathWorks
Sandra Hickey	Kevin Allport	Jutta Filla	National Australia Bank
Richard Harvey	Oliver Zani	Clayton Ho	Ernst & Young
Peter Garrard	Madan Gautam	Yangchao (Scarlett) Tang	Johnson & Johnson
James Dzialowski	Vince Lombardo	Beini (Bella) Yuan	Macquarie Group
Warwick Dawason	Rubing Wen	Brendan Shanahan	Dg mediamind
Darrell Perry			



Australian Native Bee:

The power of the prime pollinator has been revealed, with research showing native bees have determined the colour of Australian flowers.

A word from one of our sponsors

Winter Gardening — Belinda Thackeray, Education Manager at Eden Gardens

Growing your own produce is a healthy, convenient and fantastic way to get the whole family helping in the garden.

Most vegetables can be grown in pots, planters or in the garden, and from either seed or seedling. Growing from seed is the low cost way, while using seedlings will save you about 4-6 weeks of growing time. Choose a full sun position and enrich the soil with organic matter or soil conditioner. In pots use a good quality potting mix like Eden Flexible. Select vegetable varieties that you enjoy eating. To create yummy winter warming soups, why not try growing carrots, parsnips, beetroot, celery, cabbage, onions, leek, broad beans or garlic.

Water new plants with a diluted solution of Seasol seaweed plant tonic to help overcome any transplant shock and to stimulate root growth. Spread a layer of sugar cane mulch and feed plants regularly with a nitrogen-rich liquid fertiliser like Harvest or Powerfeed.

Mushrooms are another fun edible gardening project. Just purchase a kit and follow instructions to set up, using the compost containing fungal spawn. In three-four weeks, you will be rewarded with the start of your fresh mushrooms which should continue to produce over the next few months.

Wanted - Lawn Mowing Volunteers

We are in need of two or three lawn mowing volunteers. If you would like to keep healthy and enjoy a good mow then why not join our small team of lawn mowing volunteers?

On any day from Monday to Friday we would be so grateful for your help. If you or anyone you know would be interested, please contact Bruce Taylor via email at volunteering@easycaregardening.org.au or call the office on 9983 1644 Mondays and talk directly to Bruce.



Great! these long rakes can now be used as back scratchers



Easy Care Gardening Volunteer Garden Awards 2013

Eden Gardens

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



January: **Valerie Flanagan**

February: **Mike Jones**

March: **Kathy O'Sullivan**

Hargraves Nurseryland

630 Old Northern Road, Dural. Ph: 9651 1833



January: **Colleen Tucker**

February: **Jill Carter**

March: **Rae Rosten**

Parkers Nursery

45 Tennyson Avenue, Turramurra. Ph: 9487 3888



January: **Wendy Ralph**

February: **Louise Finckh**

March: **Alistair Dunlop**

Peter Whitehead Appreciation Award

Easy Care Gardening sends warmest wishes and congratulations to:

Bob Mutton

This award is for outstanding service to volunteering.

Words of thanks from our Clients



C&W B - Turramurra: Thanks Easy Care and the team, wonderful people. **HF - Hornsby Hts:** Great Big Thank You to the lovely ECG volunteers. **TA - East Ryde:** Thank you so much for the lovely job the boys and girls from Ernst & Young corporate team have done in my garden. **BH - Ryde:** Thanks for the magnificent team. **GB - Wahroonga:** How grateful I am for the kindness and hard work of all the special 'garden angels'. **EMcG - Turramurra:** Thank you very, very much. You are all Special! **D&MOB - West Ryde:** Thank you to all volunteers, they are our 'garden angels' **D&M O'S - St Ives:** We thank you sincerely for your effort. **MG - Asquith:** The team is worth its weight in gold. **BW - Beecroft:** Thank you so much, a great group of gardeners. **C&RR - Westleigh:** Hardworking and efficient team, they lifted our spirits. **EJ - Turramurra:** I appreciate the service very much. **LD - Berowa:** Our very grateful thanks to the wonderful team. **JB - Nth Ep- ping:** Thank you so much for the amazing job you did on my garden. **AC - Pymble:** On my arrival home from hospital I saw the wonderful work the team had had done on my garden, I am truly very grateful. **I & PA - Nth Ryde:** Thank you so much for being the special people that you are. **VW - Gladesville:** Thank you for all your hard work.

Saturday Team - Celebrates Team Leader's 20 years with ECG

Marjorie Caws, who was gardening at a clients garden recently, was presented with a beautiful leather-bound commemorative Yates Garden Guide and a lovely bouquet of flowers to celebrate her 20 years with Easy Care Gardening. Marjorie has been a Team Leader with the Saturday Team since joining ECG in March 1993, and in those days was required to do everything - book the client, ring the volunteers to organise a team, come into the office for the job sheet and money. The Saturday Team later became two teams, one operating in the Hornsby area and another in the Ryde/Hunters Hill area. Marjorie continues to enjoy her volunteer gardening with the Hornsby group and says she "has met some wonderful people and made many long lasting friendships - young & old!"

The Saturday team all enjoyed a wonderful morning tea with the client who, on request, gave us her recipe for her delicious sponge cake. - *many thanks to our client, back at the office we will be expecting the team to cook us a cake using your recipe.*

Photo on right : Client second from left with Majorie Caws on her right (blue ECG shirt) along with fellow Saturday team members.

Seniors Security Expo

Feel safe, Be safe!

Easy Care Gardening was invited to have a stall at the Seniors Security Expo at Turramurra Uniting Church on Tuesday 19 March. This event was organised by the Ku-ring-gai Police and Community Safety Committee and included stalls by a variety of organisations working with seniors in Ku-ring-gai from the various crime prevention, insurance, security and personal safety industries. The event was well attended and visitors enjoyed talks and demonstrations from Ku-ring-gai Local Area Command, NSW Fire and Rescue Service and a Trauma Nurse from Royal North Shore talking about fall prevention.

Wendy McCready (photo on the right) represented Easy Care Gardening Inc. and spoke to lots of people about the work that we do in the community.

Gnome news corner - become a 'Friend' of Easy Care Gardening

Support us in helping others in the community - When you become a 'FRIEND' you will receive opportunities to meet people with like interests, access to practical gardening workshops, plants at low prices, regular newsletters with practical gardening hints and news (via email or mail).

See last page for details and become a 'Friend' - If you have access to email then you can help us to reduce our carbon footprint by receiving your newsletters by email. Simply email the Editor at editor@easycaregardening.org.au saying that you would like the newsletter sent to your email address. Please include your name and postal address in the body of the email so we can delete you from the mail out **or** contact the ECG office by phone 9983 1644.

Past Newsletters are available on the ECG website: www.easycaregardening.org.au

Smoke Alarm

SABRE program:
The Smoke Alarm and Battery Replacement program assists seniors and people with a disability to install and/or maintain their smoke alarms. Eligible residents should contact their local fire station for assistance.



Wendy McCready at the Expo



Early Flowering - Jo McGahey



If you haven't noticed serious climate change in the last year or so you must be living on another planet. My plants certainly don't seem to know what season it is. I have a large number of self-sown spring flowers appearing in February. While in the bulb department, as early as March, daffodils, freesias and jonquils started coming up in my west-facing garden. No sign of buds yet but they are well up. Now the thing is, will they just sit there and patiently await the Spring? Will they flower mid-Winter? Or even flower at all? A friend who works at our own Botanic Gardens says many plants are behaving in a like manner there. A quick internet search of the National Geographic site makes interesting reading regarding the last three Springs in Northern America. It would be interesting to hear from any ECG volunteers as to what they are noticing.

Client Celebrates 100 years

Most of us would consider it a successful birthday if the number of cards we received exceeded our age. Lilian Hughes of St Ives, is delighted to have managed that on her 100th birthday.

The popular pensioner said she had been spoilt with a variety of celebrations. According to an article in the North Shore Times, "I had all the family here and the bridge club gave me a party with a big cake", she said. "I'm just counting all the cards now. "I've got over a hundred, which is lovely. I'm just trying to work out where to put them."

Easy Care Gardening has been helping Mrs Hughes with her garden for 17 years and staff and volunteers celebrated with her before the big day on 5th March.

Watch out for Scams

Every year scams cost Australians, businesses and the economy millions of dollars, as well as considerable non-financial harm. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has brought out 'The Little Black Book of Scams' which is available online at www.accc.gov.au/littleblackbookofscams. Read all about the 'Scammer' Black list - top 10 scams to avoid - well worth a read.

Scam delivery methods come via 1) 'Online' - email services, social networking, online shopping and online money transfers. 2) 'Over the phone' - phone calls, SMS text messages, smartphones and tablet devices and faxes. 3) 'At your door' - usually involve the scammer promoting goods or services that are not delivered or are of very poor quality. Postal services also continue to be used by scammers to deliver scams including fake **lottery** and **sweepstake** letters, **chain** letters and fake **inheritance** letters.

To stay one step ahead of scammers, visit ACCC's SCAMwatch website - www.scamwatch.gov.au - where you can sign up for free email alerts on new scams targeting consumers and small businesses.

We are a lucky country! - appreciation from a Volunteer

Every so often, Easy Care Gardening is fortunate enough to have visitors from abroad volunteer some of their time with our gardening service. Quite recently, Rui Zhou, a student from China chose to donate some of her time to Easy Care Gardening and became a member of one of our volunteer gardening teams.

Upon completing her studies, Rui is now seeking a job in Australia. She felt compelled to stay in touch with her friends at Easy Care Gardening and chose to share with us some of her fondest memories and experiences working with us. Rui observed that there are both differences and similarities with how Australians and her own culture assist the elderly. She pointed out that in China, the elderly and infirm are encouraged to interact with each other by playing games such as poker and mahjong. However, she was impressed by the fact that here in Australia we encourage all members of society to interact with and assist our elders, rather than just having them rely on each other.

Rui was keen to let us know that her time and experiences here with Easy Care Gardening form a valuable period in her life and she hopes to return to volunteer again some day. Here at Easy Care Gardening we are truly grateful that someone like Rui, who has come so far, would share her time with us and we are glad to hear that her experiences in Australia are some of her fondest.

Rui wishes our clients and fellow volunteers well and hopes to see them again soon.



ECG Volunteer Aleit Woodward holding cake for Mrs Hughes





Be a "FRIEND" of EASY CARE GARDENING Inc. and support us in helping others in the community

When you become a 'FRIEND' you will receive opportunities to meet people with like interests, access to practical gardening workshops, plants at low prices, regular newsletters with practical gardening hints and news (via email or mail).

If you would like to become/continue as a "Friend" of Easy Care Gardening Inc., complete the section below and return this page to **Easy Care Gardening Inc** PO Box 502 Turramurra 2074 .

Remember, if you are already a "Friend" of Community Assist Lawn Mowing, then you are already a "Friend" of Easy Care Gardening.

I enclose my voluntary annual contribution \$10 (due 1st July each year) \$

I have also added my donation to give help in the community (optional) \$

(Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible – Charity No. CFN 10507)

Receipt required? Yes No

Total \$

Name:

Address:

Suburb: Postcode: Date:

Email Address: Tel:

Please send my newsletter to my email address. (Tick the appropriate box) Yes No

Please send me information about making a bequest. (Tick the appropriate box) Yes No

Please note: Friends or those making a bequest do not have any voting rights at the AGM.

When completed return this page to Easy Care Gardening Inc PO Box 502, Turramurra, 2074.

Option for Electronic Payment:

If you choose to use the electronic payment option, it is very important that we know **who is making the electronic payment** (to ensure we record payment of subscriptions correctly and send receipts for donations to the correct addresses).

To enable this tracking, please:

1. Contact the office for your 'reference number ' as this must be included in **your online transaction** along with your surname. If the reference number the office provides you with is 01234 and your name is Smith, enter in the description box on your online transaction **01234Smith** .

2. Log into your bank account online and select the option "Pay Anyone" and complete as follows;

A/c Name: Easy Care Gardening Inc. Bank: Westpac BSB: 032 089 A/c No: 243864 Description: Your reference number and surname (eg 01234Smith)

3. **Send an email** to notify ECG of the payment, including your **reference number, name, address, payment amount and date of payment**. ECG email: ecg2074@easycaregardening.org.au

Easy Care Gardening Inc. Patron: Jennifer Stackhouse BA (Hons) Dip. Hort.

Phone: 02 9983 1644. Fax: 02 9983 1659.

Email: ecg2074@easycaregardening.org.au

Website: www.easycaregardening.org.au ECG Charity No: 10507 ABN: 96 338 250 354

