

GGGYO 2016 Almanac – This Is The Year That Was



ABOUT US.....	3
WORKSHOP 1: Goodwood Community Centre Celebration Day	4
WORKSHOP 2: How did your garden grow this summer? What worked? What didn't?.....	5
Flyer	6
Questionnaire	8
Results.....	8
VERGE GARDEN: Goody Patch.....	9
VERGE GARDEN: Restormal Ave	11
WORKSHOP 3: Getting your soil right and managing pests.....	14
Flyer	15
COMMUNITY GARDEN: Southern Cross Homes:.....	17
WORKSHOP 4: Propagation by Pauline.....	19
WORKSHOPS: Steven & Silvia	21
Flyer	23
WORKSHOP 5: Designing your garden: the productive garden as an ecosystem.....	24
Flyer	25
FIELD TRIP! The Berry Farm	27
WORKSHOP 6: Fruit and Nut Trees: Pruning, planting, growing and harvesting	29
Flyer	30
Feedback/Comments	33
WORKSHOP 7: Gardening on the balcony and in the courtyard	34
Flyer	35
Feedback/Comments	37
WORKSHOP 8: Composting, Worms & Bokashi Bins	38
Flyer	39
WORKSHOP 9: Propagation by Pauline & Anne (2)	41
Dinali's post in the SCSA Blog.....	44

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own – Almanac 2016

COMMUNITY GARDEN: Unley Salvos	46
COMMUNITY GARDEN: 290 Cross Rd, Clarence Pk	49
WORKSHOP 10: Water-wise gardening with Harry Harrison (as part of The Goody Patch Open Day).....	51
Flyer	52
APPENDIX 1: The Productive Garden as an Ecosystem.....	55
APPENDIX 2: Verge-Garden Notes	58
Urrbrae Verge Feedback	58
Verge garden get-together.....	59
Signage.....	61
Karen leaving Urrbrae Ave letter.....	62
APPENDIX 3: "I'd like to thank all the little people..."	63
APPENDIX 4: Oil.....	64
APPENDIX 5: Miscellaneous Feedback	67

ABOUT US

Team Members:

Nolda Beynon
Lizzie Button
Ashley Campbell
Peter Croft
Vince and Vivian Curro
Pauline Muir
Russell Talbot
Anne Wharton
Anne Wilson
Pat Wundersitz

and with the participation and support of Kat Ryan from Unley Council.

We acknowledge the generous assistance of Steven Hoepfner, Diana Bickford (Bickleigh Farm), Mitre 10 Unley, SA Composters and Sustainable Communities SA.

In our inner-Adelaide Council area (City of Unley), the Grow Grow Grow Your Own group has been granted funds in several funding rounds to help the community grow more of its own food. This we do principally through running workshops and installing verge and raised bed gardens.

The group has broadened its connections with Council on many fronts – including its Tree strategy, building community connections, linking with the Active Ageing and Youth strategies of Council, and conservation of pre-European trees.

We have found that Council staff and elected members are interested in engagement with the community and have responded favourably to issues that we have raised. A key element for us has been a commitment to engaging with the people and processes of Council and being prepared to spend time in doing so.

The almanac highlights our key activities during the 2016 year.

WORKSHOP 1: Goodwood Community Centre Celebration Day

Saturday, 27 February 2016 2-3.30pm

Goodwood Community Centre

Attendance: 20 + a dog

Grow Grow Grow Your Own was invited by Goodwood Community Services to run a gardening session as part of the celebrations at the Community Centre on 27 February.



Our focus was on growing in containers. Pauline, Annie, Anne and Pat presented on recommended plants to grow, practical experiences, and the varied types of containers for growing plants and



handed out many samples that they had generously prepared as giveaways. Particular mentions of sweet potato leaves (start with some leaves from the Central Market), tree onions (perennial), the olive leaf herb (requires no water), kangkong (a.k.a. "water spinach"), Lebanese cress in pots and cumquats in pots.

Anne demonstrated lots of ways in which household containers can be reshaped and reused for growing seedlings in all weathers.



An attentive audience of about 20 (plus a Labrador in training) had an interesting and useful time. The dog had a nice sleep.



WORKSHOP 2: How did your garden grow this summer? What worked? What didn't?

Sunday, 6 March 2016 3-5pm

Unley Community Centre.

Attendance: 45

As the Unley Community Centre is booked out on Saturdays this year, we were forced to find an alternative, the options being to change our customary venue or change our customary time. We decided to trial initially the latter, and so scheduled this workshop for a Sunday. This also necessitated a change from our customary time, of 2pm, as the Centre was booked until 2.30pm. So, we were very interested in how this would all go.

Answer: pretty well actually. Despite the workshop coinciding with V8 Supercar race and being accompanied by torrential rain and plenty of lightning, 45 people turned up, which (plus our group) made for over 50 participants.

The focus of the workshop was on what had worked this summer and what hadn't. Vince led the session and put us into groups of 7 or 8 people, with a questionnaire (below) to guide the discussion. The variety of gardens was astounding – from the very large to rental properties with small spaces only. Most gardeners with fruit trees and herbs had had a bumper year. Vegetables, however, were a mixed bag: while self-sown tomatoes grew well, many gardeners struggled with tomato seedlings. Some reported poor results with kale and eggplant, for example, while others had a terrific year. The plenary session led to some clear topics for the coming workshops - including vegetable growing, garden design (including how to use difficult spots), pest control (including rats), container gardening and preserving excess produce. We felt particularly encouraged by the way in which everyone had plenty to say - especially the speakers from each group reporting back to the plenary session. A terrific start to the year.



Flyer

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

First of the 2016 Workshop Series

**How did your garden grow this summer?
What worked? What didn't?**



Pat's sugar pumpkins

3pm on Sunday 6th March
(yes – Sunday: the hall is booked out for Saturdays)
at
Unley Community Centre, 18 Arthur Street Unley

Please register to attend this workshop at
peter.croft@mmc.com.au or on 0401122547.

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own – Almanac 2016

Our first workshop will be on Sunday 6th March at the Unley Community Centre at 3pm. Our focus will be on how your garden went this summer: what worked in your garden and what didn't. If you are like us, the hot days in early summer caused some vegetables to 'bolt'.

If you would like to, please bring along samples of some of the produce that grew well and any problems that you had. If you have any excess produce to share, bring that too!

Thanks to a generous Unley Council grant: **Cost: free.**

2016 workshops and events: we have a lot of events planned for this year, including:

- **Container gardening:** On February 27th 2016, at 2pm, we will be presenting a gardening workshop at the Goodwood Gala Event at the Goodwood Community Centre, Rosa Street, Goodwood. The focus will be on container gardening. All welcome, especially if interested in a future community garden at this Centre.
- **Installation of more verge gardens.** These have been really popular. Now at sites in Unley, Malvern, Everard Park, Myrtle Bank and Fullarton. Three more will be installed on Tuesday 29th March in the morning. It's fun seeing the process. You are most welcome to see what's involved and join us for morning tea afterwards.
- **More workshops.** We will aim to have workshops on the topics that you are interested in. We had wondered if you might be interested in workshops on preserving produce (e.g. drying and pickling), or cooking - turning simple ingredients into delicious meals. Let us know what would be of most use.

Questions and problems: we are always keen to help you to grow your own vegetables. Please contact Pat on 82710052 or 0407608345 if you have questions about growing vegetables.



Russ's Juliet tomatoes

Sustainable Communities SA – Unley groups

Questionnaire

(used to guide the session)

- **What type of garden do you have?** *(large, small, courtyard, raised beds, etc.)*
- **What has been growing successfully? Why do you think it was?** *(amount of produce, time of planting, water, conditions, positioning etc.)*
- **What hasn't been so successful and why?** *(poor quality seed/seedlings, uneven watering, soil, pests/diseases, just bad luck etc.)*
- **Was any of the information provided in our sessions useful?** *(be as critical as you like)*
- **What else could be done to help your gardening experience be more rewarding?** *(all suggestions welcome)*

Any other comments/suggestions?

Results

(compiled by Vince, a list of the things people thought were important)

1. What to plant when.
 - for optimum produce results
2. Organic (non toxic) pest control.
3. Soil improvement
 - fertilisers, compost, additives
 - specific to various plants
4. Composting
 - types of bins (commercial, self built)
 - kitchen scrap bins
 - Bokashi bins
 - worm farms/towers
5. Fruit trees
 - planting various types (stone, citrus, pome)
 - specific care/requirements for above
 - pruning
6. Garden design/planning
 - positioning of plants
 - provision of water
 - preparing soil
 - companion planting
 - attracting "good bugs"
 - vertical gardens
7. Containers
8. Raised beds/ wicking beds
9. Using produce
 - drying
 - preserving
10. Miscellaneous
 - map of verge gardens
 - question/suggestion box at sessions.

VERGE GARDEN: Goody Patch

Saturday, March 19 2016 9am

Goody Patch

Glorious weather. 20 degrees. As energising as the humid heat of recent weeks was enervating.



Today, we weren't the do-ers – well, in theory at least. The gardens were to be installed by the school; we were there to provide expertise and guidance. We still got our hands dirty, of course. Never stand between GGGYO-ers and a pile of luscious dirt.



We allowed 3 hours for this 'work'. That was well judged. It took about an hour to set up the beds, leaving 2 hours for tea and chat. Very civilised.





Ah...

And...



2 days later: the beds planted out



8 weeks later: looking good!

VERGE GARDEN: Restormal Ave

Tuesday, March 29 2016 9am.

14, 14a and 18 Restormal Avenue

By the end of last year we were becoming like a well-oiled machine when it came to installing verges. Today we were a bit too well oiled! We'd arranged for the soil, Rapid Raiser and pea straw to be delivered at 10.45am, leaving us an hour and three quarters to set up the beds. Seemed fair for three beds.

By 9.30am we were twiddling our thumbs. It at least gave us plenty of opportunity to talk with all the neighbours and spectators (including two of our garden workshop participants) who came out to watch, several of whom enjoyed our company so much that they joined us for our traditional post-installation debrief at Pat-A-Cake.



We should've sold tickets

Leading up to this installation, we considered the model of wicking bed we were using; whether it could be improved, even whether we should bother with wicking beds at all. After much discussion we decided to stay with what we'd done previously, but acknowledged that we need to keep the topic of wicking under review and, for a future installation, may look at one garden bed with wicking, and one without.

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Look at me Ma! I can stand up!



Bums



More Bums



Here's one I prepared a little earlier...

Feedback/Comments

From: Helen Wickens
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2016 1:11 PM
To: Anne Wilson
Subject: Garden verge

Hello Anne

I would like to thank you and your group of friends for the wonderful work that was done yesterday in setting up the gardens. I was surprised at the amount of work involved but as there were many willing workers they made it seem easy. They look great and the plants provided by the workers were excellent. I am looking forward to my first picking of vegetables and herbs!

Please convey my thanks to all the workers and my appreciation of their time and effort that was put into the project.

Many thanks

Kindest regards
Helen Wickens

WORKSHOP 3: *Getting your soil right and managing pests*

Sunday, 1 May 2016 3-5pm

Unley Community Centre.

Attendance: 42

Our 1st May workshop focussed on getting right the soil in gardens and managing pests. Four of our group presented: Anne Wilson outlined how to get soils in balance and explained how to check for different types of soil. Anne Wharton described the art of making compost and outlined methods to turn compost and introduce air. Pauline Muir provided a pH testing service for attendees and explained how to make soil acidic for plants such as blueberries. Pat Wundersitz gave a practical guide to managing pests - including boots for snails; honey, oil and water for earwigs, and physical methods such as netting to keep out birds and cabbage moths. There were many questions and these continued into afternoon tea!

Several of our regular attendees brought produce to share: one in particular had grown chilli plants and had plenty to share. Wonderful to see.

The 42 attendees for this session including several children. Terrific feedback from several attendees: it's clear that soil and pests are key topics for all gardeners and this session should be presented again.



At the workshop. Kat's son Oliver showing us what he really thinks of peas

Flyer

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Second of the free 2016 Workshop Series

Getting your soil right and managing pests

Bring soil samples from your garden and examples of your pest problems.



Annie and friend and their compost bin

3pm on Sunday 1st May
(yes – *Sunday*: the hall is booked out for Saturdays) at
Unley Community Centre, 18 Arthur Street Unley.

Please register to attend this workshop at peter.croft@mmc.com.au or
on 0401 122 547.

Workshop details

Our second workshop will be on

Sunday 1st May at the Unley Community Centre at 3pm.

Vegetable and fruit gardeners know that getting the soil right is the key first step in growing food. This workshop will concentrate on

- types of soils, soil health, fertilizers and their usage,
- compost,
- the role of additives (gypsum, trace elements etc),
- soils for wicking boxes and beds,
- setting up acid soil pots for blueberries,
- how to do your own soil testing, and
- pest control – particularly organic pest control.

Our presenters – Anne Wilson, Pat Wundersitz, Anne Wharton and Pauline Muir – have between them extensive practical experience in soils, composting and pest control in their own gardens.

You are welcome to bring soil samples (a cupful will do) for testing and advice, and any examples of pest problems. We will help if we can.

Thanks to a generous Unley Council grant:

Cost: free.

If you have any excess produce to share, bring that too!

2016 workshops: The current plan is for workshops on:

- Garden design/planning including positioning of plants, provision of water, preparing soil, companion planting and attracting good bugs.
- Fruit trees: planting various types of fruit trees, specific care requirements and pruning.
- Container gardening, raised beds, wicking beds and vertical gardens.
- Composting, kitchen scrap bins, bokashi bins and worm farms/towers.

Verge gardens: We recently installed three more verge gardens in Restormal Avenue Fullarton. It's a really interesting and productive streetscape. Have a look at these and others in Unley, Malvern, Everard Park and Myrtle Bank. Let us know if you are interested in the idea of hosting a verge garden in the Unley Council area.

Questions and problems: we are always keen to help you to grow your own vegetables. Please contact Pat on 0407 608 345 if you are experiencing problems and we will try to help.

COMMUNITY GARDEN: Southern Cross Homes:

Friday 6 May, 2pm, for the preliminary work with Concordia students
and

Monday 9 May, 10 am, for the followup work with a group of volunteers.

On May 6th, several Grow Grow members helped Kat Ryan, and four Concordia College students loaded soil from SA Composters into a large raised garden bed at Southern Cross Homes at Fullarton. The aim was to encourage the growing of food at the Centre and to revitalise a neglected area of the site. A number of residents watched proceedings.

On May 9th vegetable seedlings were planted - from Di Bickford's nursery

Thanks to Southern Cross Homes for sausage rolls and lemonade!

May 6th: Concordia College



May 9th: Planting the seedlings



WORKSHOP 4: Propagation by Pauline

Saturday, 14 May 2016 10.30am

The Goody Patch

Attendance: 16

This was such a nice workshop. It had such a lovely, friendly, good-humoured (there was lots of smiling going on) intimate feel to it. The Goody Patch looks better every time I see it, and was looking particularly lovely today. Pauline had skilfully plucked a perfect day – 23°, blue skies, oh-so-gentle-zephyr – from the claws of an impatient winter... Everything went right – well, except for Pauline giving the address as "Sussex St" instead of "Surrey St". But fortunately everyone spotted or ignored the deliberate error and managed to find their way. There were about 16 participants, half from the Goody Patch and half from our mailing list.



Pauline, together with her sidekick Anne Wilson, put this together on a shoestring; it wasn't an 'official' workshop (with extensive advertising and commitment). She prepared give-aways, and took the participants on a tour of her garden, where people could see how to establish layering and air-layering to produce new plants. There were also suckers springing up round the raspberries and curry leaf tree; these can be dug up carefully and potted. This she did twice, due to the numbers, half of the participants each time. While she was away, Anne engaged the other half in practical propagation (and conversation – you know Anne) – they made up pots and propagated merrily using the provided materials.

For the cutting medium we used 80% perlite blended with 20% coir, a recipe recommended by Botanic Garden propagators who grow 60,000 cuttings a year. Participants had the option of dipping cuttings in rooting hormone or honey, and enclosed the pots of cuttings in plastic bags (like premature babies in humidicribs).

Autumn is an ideal time for establishing hardwood and semi-hardwood cuttings, because when plants are 'winding down' for winter, growth hormones move down from the flexible tips to the woodier 'semi-ripe' parts, to put on girth. In explaining this, Pauline patted her stomach and said "Just like me – I slow down in autumn and start putting on girth around my woody parts".

Everyone enjoyed themselves and learnt something too; there were lots of thank-yous and people brought cakes and biscuits to share. Pauline and Anne were delighted by the enthusiasm and energy from "this great bunch of students". Rhonda (of Goody Patch royalty) had had a very intellectual week and found it very relaxing, while one of ours went and joined the community garden because she finds gardening by herself rather lonely. Another 'student' planned to use the techniques to propagate an endangered native plant.

And afterward we finished with tea, cake and biscuits. And more smiles. A lovely morning.

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own – Almanac 2016



WORKSHOPS: Steven & Silvia

Fridays, 13 May, 20 May 2016 6pm

Unley Community Centre.

Attendances: 10, 10

Steven Hoepfner and Silvia Volonta undertook the running of courses for a younger audience on three consecutive Friday nights: 13, 20 and 27 May.

The intention was to see if we could assist people, particularly those who are renting, to grow more of their own food.

The 13th May session focussed on sprouting. 10 people attended plus Pat and Anne from GGGYO to assist. Lots of information, demonstration, and interaction and some terrific get-to-know-you games.

Silvia had prepared four different sprouts and some beautiful dips and mayonnaise for people to sample. Steven gave them little bags of soil and a tray plus seeds to take home to grow microgreens. Silvia also had muslin and seeds for them to take home to do sprouts. They were engaging and engaged, professional, and generous. People tried their delicious dips and kefir drink. Everyone was happy, chatty and had lots of questions.

*The 20th May session focussed on herbs. 6 people attended plus Anne and Peter from GGGYO to assist. Silvia and Steven had collected a wide variety of herbs – **bursting** with freshness - from their urban farm. They asked us to identify the herbs - we had a 60% success rate. Then, each pair took a particular herb, researched its properties and value, using the large collection of books on herbs provided by Steven and Silvia, and made a short presentation to the group.*

Silvia had prepared some delicious snacks based on herbs including a very tasty pesto. We drank two types of herb-infused water: one with lemon balm, lemongrass and mint; and the other (more of a winter drink) based on rosemary, sage and borage. Delicious. Lots of potted herbs for participants to take home.

All of these workshops were inspirational. Participants not only gained knowledge, but were inspired to extend their plant-growing and recognition skills, and add to nutritional and culinary knowledge and abilities in exciting ways, with health-inducing and delicious food and drinks.

*

The 27 May Workshop was postponed, due to Steven skewering his heel with a 'foreign object' and then doing the man-thing of ignoring-it-expecting-it-to-get-better until it got infected and to the point of requiring a significant surgical intervention. Yep...

*

Ashley's Report, Workshop 3:

Reconvened, Friday 5 August 2016 6pm

Unley Community Centre.

Attendance: 11

A wide range of food can be grown in pots – small and large. Steven Hoepfner came well prepared and covered all the fundamental principles for growing fruit and vegies in pots. This included many demonstrations of what is involved; eg. planting cuttings (an old kitchen knife is a good tool for this) and repotting seedlings and larger plants.

As usual, Steven had lots of give-aways for people so we could immediately put into practice the growing tips he passed on.

Four important points that Steven emphasised are:

- *Observe pot-plants often. Look for signs of plants growing in one direction, trying to get more sunshine. Most plants need to be moved to get more or less sunshine as the seasons change.*
- *Labelling plants is an important part of successful gardening.*
- *The quality of commercial potting mixes varies a lot. Sifting to remove large bits of bark etc. is worthwhile.*
- *In hot weather soaking small/medium pot-plants in a bucket of water for a day is a good way of watering. Drippers are good for big pots.*

*

In summary, this was an excellent workshops series, but it deserved to be much better attended. So, how to achieve that is something one we need to work on. Early thoughts are:

- *For future workshops, we should change to a night other than Friday or to a Sunday afternoon.*
- *Advertising – how to best reach the target audience? Perhaps on Facebook or Instagram (most appropriate social media), or a noticeboard at a University, or...?*

Flyer

FREE

GARDENING WORKSHOPS

Growing food in small spaces

Do you live in Unley? Are you between 18 and 30?
Would you like to grow your own food but don't have much space? Come and join us to learn how to grow tasty and nutrient-rich food in your kitchen, porch or backyard.

WHERE
Unley Community Center
18 Arthur St, Unley SA 5061

WHEN
6 PM - 8 PM
Friday 13th May - Sprouts and Microgreens
Friday 20th May - Growing herbs and how to use them
Friday 27th May - Growing veggies in pots

Sustainable Communities SA and Grow Grow Grow Your Own funded by:

Light refreshment provided. Booking essential.
Peter | peter.croft@mmc.com.au | 0401 122 547



WORKSHOP 5: *Designing your garden: the productive garden as an ecosystem*

Sunday, 12 June 2016 3-5pm

Unley Community Centre.

Attendance: About 50

Both Russ and Peter were unable to attend this workshop, so please welcome our Guest Columnist, Ashley (plus a conclusion by Anne Wilson):

It was a sunny day on a long weekend. Would all the people interested in this workshop decide to stay out in their gardens getting some vitamin D or go away for the long weekend? No! Presenter Nadja Osterstock attracted a good sized group keen to learn more, share experiences, connect with others in the group and swap surplus garden produce.

After an acknowledgement that we were meeting in Kaurna country and welcome, Anne Wilson lined up to lead a short Q&A session. A question about yellow citrus leaves led to two zero-cost solutions: a layer of green lawn clippings spread over the ground under the trees and/or good old human urine, to increase nitrogen levels. Another case of solutions 'right under our noses' (and not just metaphorically...).

Nadja started her talk by outlining her background as a counsellor, then studying permaculture and starting a small business helping people design and establish edible gardens. An important part of her work is helping people build confidence – have a go and learn from mistakes (or experiments).

Permaculture (moving towards permanent culture(s) – caring for the earth, caring for people, sharing any surplus) covers many topics and it takes days to do a full course. Nadja did a great job of giving us an introduction and summarised the 12 permaculture design principles which can be used in many situations, especially garden design. Her talk and visuals showed us that clever design and a willingness to try can produce large amounts of food on an average sized suburban block.

Using her mother's garden as an example, Nadja showed what can be achieved by visualisation, imagination, a love of plants, and recognising the importance of accepting that we humans are part of nature, and have roles within it; for example, how we both see ourselves as, and behave as 'apex predators' ultimately determines our environment.



Flyer

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Third of the free 2016 Workshop Series

Designing your garden: The productive garden as an ecosystem



Ben and his carrots

3pm on Sunday 12th June
at
Unley Community Centre, 18 Arthur Street Unley.

Please register to attend this workshop at
peter.croft@mmc.com.au or on 0401 122 547.

Workshop details

Our third workshop will be on

Sunday 12th June at the Unley Community Centre at 3pm.

Vegetable and fruit gardeners are always looking to get the best out of their patch – no matter how small or large. The key is the design of the garden. Our workshop will cover:

- Healthy biodiversity in productive gardens
- Reconnecting with our wild nature
- Applying permaculture principles in a personal way
- Symbiotic relationships between garden elements
- Soil, water, plants, animals - and us

Our presenter is Nadja Osterstock who lives in Warradale, practising urban permaculture. She has undertaken Permaculture training with The Food Forest and Milkwood Permaculture and has designed over 60 edible gardens in Adelaide and surrounds. Her business, Nadja's Garden, also includes a gardening blog, a lively facebook page, regular Mediterranean gardening articles and a market stall with seeds and plants at the Organic Corner Store market in Glenelg North.

You are welcome to bring soil samples (a cupful will do) for testing and advice, and any examples of pest problems. We will help if we can.

Thanks to a generous Unley Council grant:

Cost: free.

If you have any excess produce to share, bring that too!

2016 workshops: The current plan is for further workshops on:

- Fruit trees: planting various types of fruit trees, specific care requirements and pruning.
- Container gardening, raised beds, wicking beds and vertical gardens.
- Composting, kitchen scrap bins, bokashi bins and worm farms/towers.

Verge gardens: We recently installed three more verge gardens in Restormal Avenue Fullarton. It's a really interesting and productive streetscape. Have a look at these and others in Unley, Malvern, Everard Park and Myrtle Bank. Let us know if you are interested in the idea of hosting a verge garden in the Unley Council area.

Questions and problems: we are always keen to help you to grow your own vegetables. Please contact Pat on 0407 608 345 if you are experiencing problems and we will try to help.

Sustainable Communities SA – Unley groups

***** Nadja kindly provided us with a written summary of her presentation.
See Appendix 1, "The Productive Garden as an Ecosystem"***

FIELD TRIP! The Berry Farm

Wednesday, 22 June 2016

Attendance: Anne&Graham, Annie, Pat, Pauline, Nolda&John, Peter, Russ

We've done at least one of these three years in a row now, so I think it should become a tradition. I'm talking about what I've called a "Field Trip", which is what the characters in 'Peanuts' call it – obviously an Americanism, so I'm happy to receive better ideas.

A Field Trip consists of:

- a) As many as possible, and at least a quorum, of us go as a group to visit something relevant and interesting. We travel in a car-pooled convoy.*
- b) Being the civilised people we are, we of course combine said visit with brunch/lunch at a good café, either before or after.*

In the past we've visited the Salisbury Wetlands, Mt Pleasant Natural Resource Centre and the Desal plant. Today we visited the home/farm of Phil Jeffries: The Berry Farm, at Houghton. We fortified ourselves for the expedition beforehand at 'long lost friend café'.

Adelaide turned on one of its classic unwinter winter days for us –blue skies; air so crisp you could cut your finger on it; light so sharp and clear you have to squint; everything sparkling like a diamond. Like a shard of ice. Even more classic – this day came sandwiched between two days of extreme bad weather. A day like this in winter can't be relied upon, but it happens too often to be a fluke – when it does it's appreciated rather than a surprise.

Pauline had organised our visit to the Berry Farm, and although two of the group had some prior knowledge of his growing techniques we really didn't know what to expect. We just knew he had a long experience and family history of growing, and used organic methods, so we wanted some of that knowledge to pass on to our workshops, (and put into practice in our own gardens as well).

Phil met us just inside his property, a long narrow strip of land on the lower side of the main road. We entered along a driveway lined with stone fruits, and the further we progressed the more there was to catch our attention. Phil grows many species of fruits on his small landholding, in very poor, shallow and stony soil. Despite this, his results defy their growing conditions (and expert advice!). He told us how his neighbour, an old Riverland blockie, told him "you can't grow lemons up here". Immediately that became Phil's goal, and of course he succeeded. It took 6 months before his neighbour conceded and asked if he could have a couple(!) Phil has since also been successful with oranges, mandarins and grapefruit. He even grows kiwifruit.

We made our way to the berry section, where he grows... berries (rasp, blue, goose, boysan, logan – you name it, he can grow it) for local and commercial needs. He hand picks his berries carefully to avoid bruising, and prunes them to 10-15 canes/metre after fruiting.

But not only does he grow healthy and fruitful plants in poor, shallow soils. The most amazing thing we learned is that he doesn't water! His secret is in the tanks of brew we passed as we made our way down the drive.

He uses comfrey, native plant mix, lactating-cow manure and pigeon manure - some as single, and some as mixes of two ingredients. These are brewed in tanks for up to six months. The comfrey brew is used as a winter fertiliser for biological feeding, the others in summer. He

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own – Almanac 2016

sell these mixes in concentrated liquid form. Anne Wilson has since used the comfrey mix on her raspberries, and can't quite believe the amazing results. "The plants are strong and green, and covered in fruit. Even some of last year's canes, which I left unpruned just to see what would happen, are fruiting again! I'm now about to use the animal manure mix to feed the fruit. These potions are magic! But I don't think I'll be trying his method of not watering through summer - not just yet, anyway. "



WORKSHOP 6: Fruit and Nut Trees: Pruning, planting, growing and harvesting.

Sunday, 31 July 2016

2pm at Morrie Harrell Reserve,

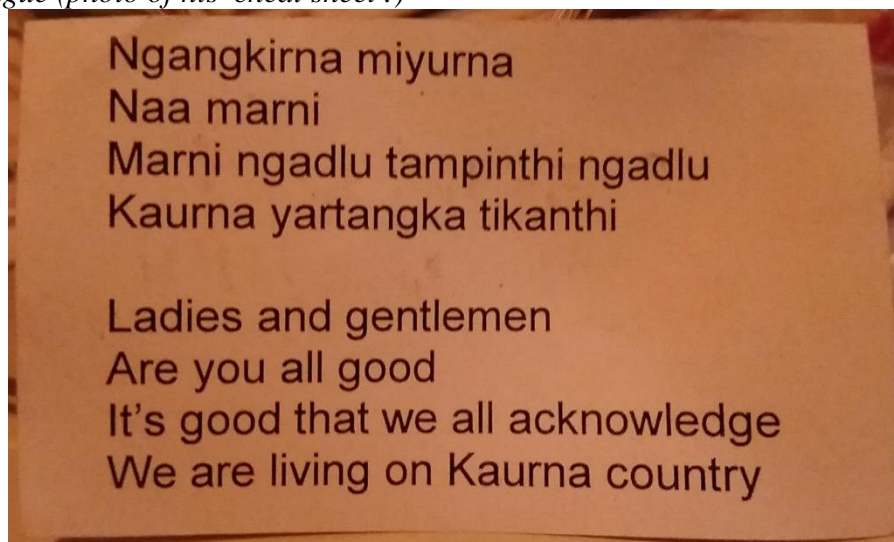
then

3pm at Unley Community Centre

Attendance: 60

Our workshop on fruit trees this year covered pruning, planting, growing and harvesting. Steven Hoepfner again ran the workshop and kept 60 people enthralled throughout.

The workshop was split into two sessions. First off was a practical demonstration in Morrie Harrell Reserve. Steven began the session by charming his audience with a welcome in the Kurna tongue (photo of his 'cheat sheet':)



Gathered around an apple tree, Steven explained the art of pruning in the context of how a tree might be feeling at different stages of its life cycle (young tree versus older tree) and season. Best to prune just after fruiting in summer rather than winter; and best to make the heavy cuts earlier in the life cycle of the tree. He demonstrated on a dwarf apple tree then on two bare-rooted trees and explained carefully each decision that he took.

We then had afternoon tea back at the Unley Community Centre and Steven led a lively Q and A session. A terrific session - and lots of great feedback from participants plus suggestions for further workshops.

Splitting this workshop into two halves worked really well.

Flyer

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Fourth of the free 2016 Workshop Series

**Fruit and Nut Trees:
Pruning, planting, growing and harvesting.**



Sunday 31st July

**2pm at Morrie Harrell Reserve, Ramage Street Unley
then**

3pm at Unley Community Centre, 18 Arthur Street.

Register at peter.croft@mmc.com.au or 0401122547.

Workshop details

Our fourth workshop will be held on Sunday 31st July, in two parts:

At 2pm at Morrie Harrell Reserve, Ramage Street Unley for practical pruning demonstration and tips.

At 3pm, walk around the corner to the Unley Community Centre, 18 Arthur Street, Unley for afternoon tea and advice on selecting, planting, growing and harvesting fruit and nut trees.

The workshop will be conducted by Steven Hoepfner, an experienced Orchardist and local garden developer (<http://www.earthright.com.au>). In the picture overleaf, Steven is pruning to create an espalier fruit tree.

The Unley Council has generously agreed for a fruit tree at the Morrie Harrell Reserve to be pruned by Steven in the workshop.

Thanks to a generous Unley Council grant:

Cost: free.

If you have any excess produce to share, bring that too!

2016 workshops: We have planned further workshops on:

- Container gardening, raised beds, wicking beds and vertical gardens.
- Composting, kitchen scrap bins, bokashi bins and worm farms/towers.

Verge gardens: We recently installed three more verge gardens in Restormal Avenue Fullarton. It's a really interesting and productive streetscape. Have a look at these and others in Unley, Malvern, Everard Park and Myrtle Bank. Let us know if you are interested in the idea of hosting a verge garden in the Unley Council area.

Questions and problems: We are always keen to help you to grow your own vegetables. Please contact Pat on 0407 608 345 if you are experiencing problems and we will try to help.

Sustainable Communities SA – Unley groups



Standing room only



Begin by cleaning/sterilising your tools



Not praying, pruning



Feedback/Comments

From: "Michael King"

A quick note to thank you and your team for the presentation today. I hope to come along again soon.

I'm designing a new vegetable garden and ~15 fruit tree space with chickens etc in Unley so great to get some tips.

Well done to all. Regards , Michael.

*

Muriel McKean ,a primary school teacher of Bordertown, was visiting Adelaide , and found that Sunday 31st July was a free day.

What to do? The Sunday Mail carried a small notice of the pruning workshop in the Morrie Harrell Reserve, given by Steven Hoepfner. So she decided to come along. She was very impressed, made an effort to tell us so, and asked to be included on our mailing list in case she could attend another event.

*

Other feedback today: John Koumi (Unley elected member) said that "(his) wife attended the workshop yesterday and got a lot from it".

WORKSHOP 7: Gardening on the balcony and in the courtyard

Sunday 14th August, 2pm

Living Choice Auditorium, 123 Fisher Street Fullarton.

Attendance: about 60

What a terrific workshop! Bob and Jenny Macintosh - associate members of the group - arranged for us to use the Living Choice Auditorium for a session on gardening for balconies and courtyards. Very well attended: 70 chairs put out and all but a few were filled.

Nolda showed her journey from a 6 acre garden in Sheffield (UK) with vast lawns, orchards and ponds to a smaller garden in Malvern. She showed how the key elements have been translated from the larger to the smaller. Lots of ideas on how to make the transition, including the three-level mobile garden from Ikea.

Anne Wilson then showed a vast range of ideas on how to grow flowers and vegetables in all sorts of containers and on many levels.

Both presentations were illustrated with a splendid photo show and with a display of plants in pots, and all sorts of containers including Pauline's rubber boots.

A vigorous Q and A session afterwards with many questioners getting a sample of rock dust supplied by Mitre10 plus a seedling.

This is one that we will have to do again!

Flyer

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Fifth of the free 2016 Workshop Series

Gardening on the balcony and in the courtyard



2pm on Sunday 14th August

at

Living Choice Auditorium, 123 Fisher Street Fullarton.

Please register to attend this workshop at

peter.croft@mmc.com.au or on 0401 122 547.

Workshop details: Our fifth workshop will be held on:

**Sunday 14th August,
at
Living Choice Auditorium, 123 Fisher Street Fullarton.**

Many gardeners have limited spaces in which to grow food due to lack of sunlight and space. Increasingly, we are living in apartments or courtyard-style properties. This workshop will concentrate on growing food in these spaces.

Our presenters are Nolda Beynon, Anne Wharton, and Anne Wilson who have extensive experience with growing in containers – large and small - as well as in raised garden beds.

Thanks to a generous Unley Council grant:
Cost: free.

If you have any excess produce to share, bring that too!

2016 workshops: The current plan is for further workshops on:

- Propagating from cuttings
- Composting, kitchen scrap bins, bokashi bins and worm farms/towers.

Verge gardens: We recently installed three more verge gardens in Restormal Avenue Fullarton. It's a really interesting and productive streetscape. Have a look at these and others in Unley, Malvern, Everard Park and Myrtle Bank. Let us know if you are interested in the idea of hosting a verge garden in the Unley Council area.

Questions and problems: we are always keen to help you to grow your own vegetables. Please contact Pat on 0407 608 345 if you need help.





(An unskillfully merged composite photo of the venue)



The presenters!

Feedback/Comments

Got great comments from all participants. Summed up by Pat's:

I couldn't agree more with all those sentiments. Three Cheers. I did hear some people saying that it was "pretty well organised. They must have done a few before", as I passed them in the street. And then to have all that very impressive artwork to view after was quite the icing on the cake.

WORKSHOP 8: Composting, Worms & Bokashi Bins

Sunday, 11 September 2016 3-4.30pm

Unley Community Centre.

Attendance: 38

Guest scribe: Ashley Campbell.

'Twas a beautiful sunny spring day.
A day made for habitués.
But at a quarter to
3, very few
people were coming our way.

We were thinking perhaps interested people had instead decided to stay home to work in their gardens. But a few minutes later most of our regulars plus several new faces arrived, the noise level rapidly cranking up as people swapped seedlings, seeds, bulbs etc. and started chatting. Suddenly we had our customary lively gathering with a strong sense of community.

In her usual style Anne Wilson kicked off proceedings, with a short and energetic Q&A session and a reminder about keeping our gardens moist to maintain biological activity in the soil – the key to successful organic gardening.

Alan Shepard spoke next, about composting, worm farms and worm towers. He gave a great summary of composting techniques plus many helpful techniques. Composting is easy if you remember ADAM!

*"A" is for **aeration** of the bin/heap*

*"D" is for **diversity** of the materials used – especially high nitrogen and high carbon containing materials*

*"A" is for **activators/accelerators**. Eg. nettles, comfrey, urine, molasses, some healthy soil, and coffee grounds*

*"M" is for **moisture** so the activators can get to work on the organic materials.*

Composting worms can be housed in a variety of ways; eg. old bath tubs, old fridges (degassed), polystyrene boxes, rigid plastic boxes or worm towers (wide plastic pipes about 900mm long with some small holes drilled in the sides and half buried in the garden).

Monica O'Wheel complete the workshop with an excellent description of the Bokashi process. This is an anaerobic system (absence of air), which produces a very strong juice which is great for gardens if it is diluted 1:100.

Bokashi mix can be made from bran (cheap at fodder stores), molasses and a small amount of a special bacterial juice. Bokashi bins can handle all sorts of food scraps including meat and bones.

All of us, including the 'old hands', learnt something new from these wonderful speakers/teachers. It was one of the most engaged workshops we have had.

Flyer

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Sixth of the free 2016 Workshop Series

**Composting, worms and Bokashi bins:
Turning your food scraps into fertilizer.**



Alan's worm farms

**3pm on Sunday 11th September
at Unley Community Centre, 18 Arthur Street Unley.**

**Please register to attend this workshop at
russted@internode.on.net**

Workshop details: Our sixth workshop will be held on:
Sunday 11th September, at 3pm
at the Unley Community Centre, 18 Arthur Street Unley.

Everyone has food scraps. Our workshop today will feature a number of ways to turn those scraps into fertiliser to enrich your soil and help you grow more food: worm farms, composting and Bokashi fermentation.

Our presenters are Alan Shepard - an expert in composting, soils and worm farms; and Monica O'Wheel - an experienced practitioner in Bokashi fermentation. Alan has years of experience in establishing successful compost systems and worm farms at community, school and organic gardens around Adelaide as well as being in demand for his practical workshops, demonstrations and talks on sustainable gardening related topics. Monica dug her first vegie garden at 26 and has had one ever since even, when renting a small flat, growing vegies in a strip between the driveway and the side of the building, and always with a compost bin attached.

Thanks to a generous Unley Council grant:
Cost: free.

If you have any excess produce to share, bring that too!

Verge gardens: We recently installed three more verge gardens in Restormal Avenue Fullarton. It's a really interesting and productive streetscape. Have a look at these and others in Unley, Malvern, Everard Park and Myrtle Bank. Let us know if you are interested in the idea of hosting a verge garden in the Unley Council area.

Questions and problems: we are always keen to help you to grow your own vegetables. Please contact Pat on 0407 608 345 if you need help.



Monica's worm farm

Sustainable Communities SA – Unley groups

WORKSHOP 9: Propagation by Pauline & Anne (2)

Saturday, 11 September 2016 10.30am

The Goody Patch

Attendance: 9

A replay of the first one, just as lovely. Numbers weren't as high, which was good actually – I reckon 10 or under is about ideal. Possibly affected by the Royal Show, although parking wasn't a problem, and the weather – the forecast was for rain, but as it turned out it was fine and only a little chilly.

As before, Pauline and Anne put this together on a shoestring, with give-aways and the focus on practical interaction: participants getting-their-hands-dirty and Pauline and Anne right beside them answering questions, giving advice and having conversations.

We all know Pauline is the classic scientist gardener. She spends her life in wonder, having her interest constantly piqued. She wants to know how things work. A failure is not a disappointment but rather something interesting you can learn from (as a closet perfectionist – I try to keep it in there where it won't cause too much trouble – I try to learn from that). And she's drawn to anything which sounds interesting (which doesn't rule out much). No surprise that she regularly introduces us to plants with wonderfully interesting and alluring names, like Siberian Cucumber, Giant Tomato Tree, Mexican Racotta Chilli, Pigeon Pea, Ice Cream Bean, Miracle Tree etc etc.

*My favourite tip was 'The Paper Trick': Smear ripe (*very* ripe; i.e. really mushy. Some people even advise letting the tomatoes ferment first) tomatoes into a paper towel. Dry them out, then after the seeds have dried:*

- *cut the paper towel into a size which fits a seedling punnet (or chosen container),*
- *fill the punnet with seed-raising mix or sifted potting mix almost to the top,*
- *place the seed-impregnated paper on top and*
- *cover it with a thin layer of the seed-raising mix - about 2-3mm.*
- *Then water it in, gently.*

Again The Goody Patch lived up to my now-expectation of being more beautiful every time I see it. It's become one of Unley's treasures.



Pauline seeking advice from Russ on the finer points of propagation



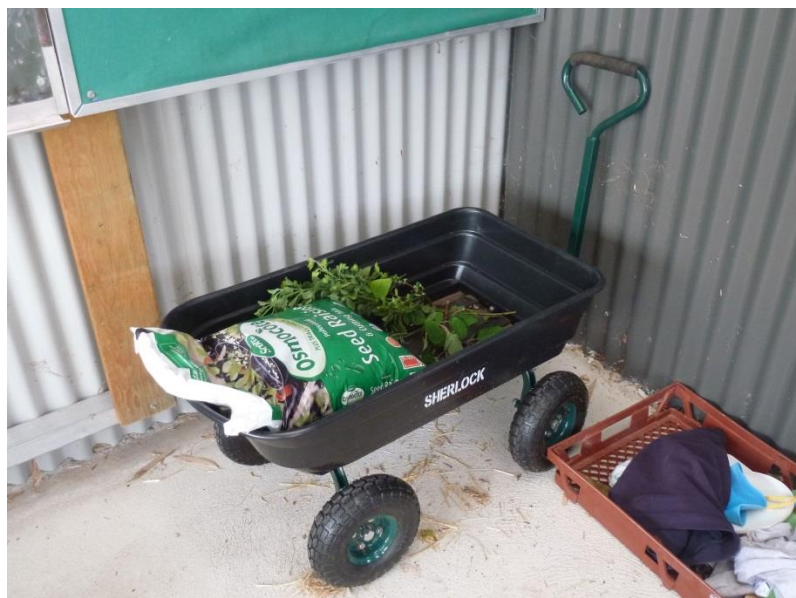
Never get between a group of gardeners given expert advice and a table full of things to use it on



Lizzie breaking into a spontaneous interpretive dance



Photographing the photographer



Pauline's "Magna Carta"

Dinali's post in the SCSA Blog

Growing a sustainable community



Pauline and Anne with another batch of Pauline's seedlings.

The Unley community groups, in particular the Grow Grow Grow Your Own group, of Sustainable Communities SA have been working with their local council on the issue of food security for a while now. The group has been running gardening workshops to increase people's skills in growing their own food and to create a community of skilled food growers in the Unley Council area. As an offshoot Pauline and Anne have been running a series of free propagation and seed raising workshops. Although each workshop takes a lot of time and effort to plan, both Pauline and Anne light up when they talk about them and the buzz they get from the sharing of knowledge with all the participants.

A more sustainable society is one that produces the majority of its food locally. This is clearly not the case in Australia with its largely urban population. Unfortunately a lot of the knowledge and skills needed for successful food production has been declining in the general community over the past few decades. The work that Anne and Pauline and other members of the Grow Grow Grow group are doing is instrumental in re-skilling people in how to grow edible plants. Their vision is to set up and nurture a nucleus of people in each suburb that are confidently growing their own fruit and vegetables. These people can then in turn can teach others these skills.

Growing edible plants is not always as straight forward as gardening programs or glossy food magazines would have us believe. Each species has its own needs and quirks and successfully growing a certain species can involve a lot of experimentation. So being able to meet other growers and share knowledge on plant requirements is an important part of successfully growing a range of plants. Nor are the workshops just talk. A core component is the hands on practice that provides that extra level of learning that cannot be gained from reading a book or watching a TV program. Additionally all participants go home with a starter pack of at least one pot of cuttings and several punnets of seeds.

Pauline and Anne started with a series of workshops at the Goody Patch Community Garden and more recently did one at the Linde Reserve Community Garden and are planning one at the Joinery later in the year. The structure and content of each workshop is different and is often influenced by questions raised by participants of previous workshops. As I sat talking to them Pauline and Anne started discussing ideas to lengthen the sessions, as invariably participants stay chatting longer after the workshop has officially ended, and to include other topics such as seed saving.

Their workshops also have a strong and important emphasis on biodiversity, both in the edible plants grown (there is a strong focus on heirloom varieties which is a passion of Pauline's) and also in co-planting with native plants to attract pollinators and provide habitat for native insects, birds and lizards. Introduced species of flowering plants, such as the daisy family, which attract bees and other pollinators, as well as predatory insects for natural pest control, are also part of the picture. A biodiverse garden is a happy garden for all!

The work Pauline and Anne are doing is just one example of the many volunteers out there quietly and diligently working away to create a more sustainable society. Pauline and Anne find that running workshops stimulates more ideas and possibilities and they know are on the right track when a participant happily declares at the end of a workshop "I can have any plant I want now".

COMMUNITY GARDEN: Unley Salvos

Monday, 17 October

We finally found a way to appropriately spend Unley Rotary Club's donation of \$200 to our cause.

The Salvation Army in Marion Street Unley got mentioned one planning meeting, and the more we investigated the more it became apparent that it was a perfect fit. Pat made the initial approach, and was well received. Anne Wilson and Peter then met with Carlene Woolcock. She was very interested in the proposal to help with growing some food - both in a raised garden bed and in some half wine barrels. Carlene is a former market gardener and school principal.

The Salvation Army complex is quite large - numerous halls, a full-scale kitchen and extends from Marion Street through to Maud Street.

The proposal settled on was:

- *install two green raised garden beds, in the central lane connecting Marion and Maud Streets. One bed: 1800 by 750 wide by 450-500 high. The other: 2050 by 750 wide by 450-500 high. Both will get northern sunlight in mornings and early afternoons. They will be only a few metres from the kitchen and Carlene assured us that the chef will use everything which is grown (or donated).*
- *also fill two (emptied) wine barrels with new soil.*
- *bring some foam vegetable boxes which have been planted with seedlings to show what can be done in a small space.*
- *conduct a short training course in how to plant seedlings.*

It went like clockwork of course.



Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own – Almanac 2016



A few weeks later (as at 2/11):



Email report from Pat, 28/11:

I saw Carlene and Peter Wilcox at the Unley SC today, and apparently "Nick "the Greek", who is very well turned out always, has taken on the job of watering the garden.

Everyone is very proud of same. Tomatoes are growing and spinach quiche will be on the menu on Monday.

Very pleasing.

Pat

COMMUNITY GARDEN: 290 Cross Rd, Clarence Pk

Monday, 17 October

Pauline alerted us to the possibility of a raised garden bed at a block of flats at 290 Cross Road. The occupants are some elderly people, a single mother, Nancy, and her two little boys, several Asian students and the daughter of a friend of Pauline's, Ellen. Ellen, who has some disabilities, wanted to find a way of creating a greater sense of community, and with Nancy had already installed a very small raised garden bed, growing garlic and parsley for sharing.

This was slightly different to projects we'd undertaken previously, but after a bit of research and consideration we were without doubt that it perfectly fitted 'what we're about': people who haven't got a lot, who were keen and motivated, who were wanting to foster community, who were trying to do it themselves and who giving a hand to would make a real difference.

*290 Cross Road is a block of 12 units. One end faces the main road and at the other there is a wide strip of lawn which catches the northern sun. The lawned area is an excellent location. We put in a 3 metre raised garden bed – our longest yet – on the lawn. We had a very pleasant morning setting it up, with Ellen, Nancy, Nancy's little boy Lucas and Jai enthusiastically helping out. Lucas especially, had a wonderful time. *



All the excess soil was shovelled into a pile next to the shed and will be used to fill pots and renew the existing garden.

Jai is studying plant biotech and was particularly interested in the idea of an organic garden. We planted a range of seedlings for a summer harvest: tomatoes, chard, broccoli, lettuce and zucchini. They were keen to add chillies and some Asian vegetables, and hope to attend our workshops.



The loooooooooooooooooong garden bed



Nancy, Pauline, Jai and Ellen



Little Lucas being guided by Jai

WORKSHOP 10: Water-wise gardening with Harry Harrison (as part of The Goody Patch Open Day)

Saturday, 29 October 2016 1.15-2.15 pm

Goody Patch (part of their Open Day)

Attendance: 28 registered, many more listened in

We missed Peter's MCing ability, to keep us focussed and to time. When a lady asked about spots on her avocado tree leaves, Harry immediately replied that he knew little about avocado trees and would have to see it to have any chance of finding an answer. He then spent five minutes talking to her trying to find an answer, which was undoubtedly interesting to them anyway.

Nevertheless, Harry was very entertaining and a goldmine of quotable tips – I regretted not being able to write fast enough to keep up. Here's a few I managed to capture:

1. *Mulch: he uses leaf mulch, but not natives – eucalypt and oils "damages soil biology"*
2. *Clay soil is great for saving water. The very best thing for waterwise gardening is a substructure of clay soil covered in mulch.*
3. *Don't dig in mulch and compost to clay soil– damages soil structure. Dig soil if it's compacted (and then leave it alone), else leave it alone.*
4. *"If you buy compost and you can tell what it's made of – it needs composting."*
5. *He had an interesting perspective on wicking beds. Basically he isn't a fan. In his opinion wicking beds are "good for building up fungal problems and diseases".*
6. *Regarding fertilisers, he said:*
 - *He likes Neutrog – because they're local (as well as organic). He especially likes "Rocket Fuel" and "Gyganic" – Gyganic he considers the best thing for fruit and citrus.*
 - *When using fertiliser, it's about the strength of the plant rather than lushness (see note about nitrogen).*
 - *"Use a quarter of the recommended dose". If you're wondering if you're using too much, a clue is the prevalence of sap-sucking insects (eg. white fly and aphids)*
 - *Animal manures:*
 - *NEVER use fresh; ALWAYS compost*
 - Not only because it's better, but to destroy pathogens – especially chicken manure*
 - *He commented that "if you've got a wicking bed you need worm castings".*
7. *Nitrogen and sap-sucking insects: Nitrogen is the first thing people think about to 'improve' their soil. He strongly put counter-arguments. Nitrogen:*
 - *Requires water. Because of the (new, soft, lush) growth it stimulates*
 - *Encourages sap-sucking insects – they're drawn by the new, soft, lush growth. "If you've got white-fly you're using too much nitrogen"*
8. *Leaf curl: best response is to remove ALL leaves that are affected by leaf-curl. Put the stripped leaves into your Green Bin.*

BTW, note to organisers: putting Come-'n-Try drums for kids next to the speakers' tent – maybe not a really well thought through idea...

Flyer

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Seventh of the free 2016 Workshop Series

**Water-wise gardening
with Harry Harrison
as part of
The Goody Patch Open Day**



The Goody Patch, near front entrance.

1.15pm on Saturday 29th October 2016

**at The Goody Patch, 12 Surrey Street Goodwood, behind
Goodwood Primary School.**

**Please register to attend this workshop at
peter.croft@mmc.com.au or 0401122547.**

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own – Almanac 2016

Harry Harrison, President of the Rare Fruit Society of South Australia, is a well-known presenter of organic gardening courses and horticultural skills in community gardens. His presentation will focus on water-wise gardening – very timely in the lead-up to summer.



The Goody Patch is a unique outdoor community and learning space that is shared by students and teachers from Goodwood Primary School, their families, gardeners and the local community. The Goody Patch values community engagement, diversity and the sharing of knowledge and skills and strong relationships. It promotes environmental sustainability through food production, organic practices and recycling.

Workshop details:

Our seventh workshop will be held on:

Saturday 29th October at 1.15pm, as part of the Annual Goody Patch Open Day at 12 Surrey Street Goodwood.

Thanks to a generous Unley Council grant: **Cost: free.**

If you have any excess produce to share, bring that too!

Verge gardens: We recently installed three more verge gardens in Restormal Avenue Fullarton. It's a really interesting and productive streetscape. Have a look at these and others in Unley, Malvern, Everard Park and Myrtle Bank. Let us know if you are interested in the idea of hosting a verge garden in the Unley Council area.

Questions and problems: we are always keen to help you to grow your own vegetables. Please contact Pat on 0407 608 345 if you need help.



Sustainable Communities SA – Unley groups

Photos



APPENDIX 1: The Productive Garden as an Ecosystem

EDIBLE GARDENS

CONSULTATION, COACHING
& DESIGN - 0410 636 857



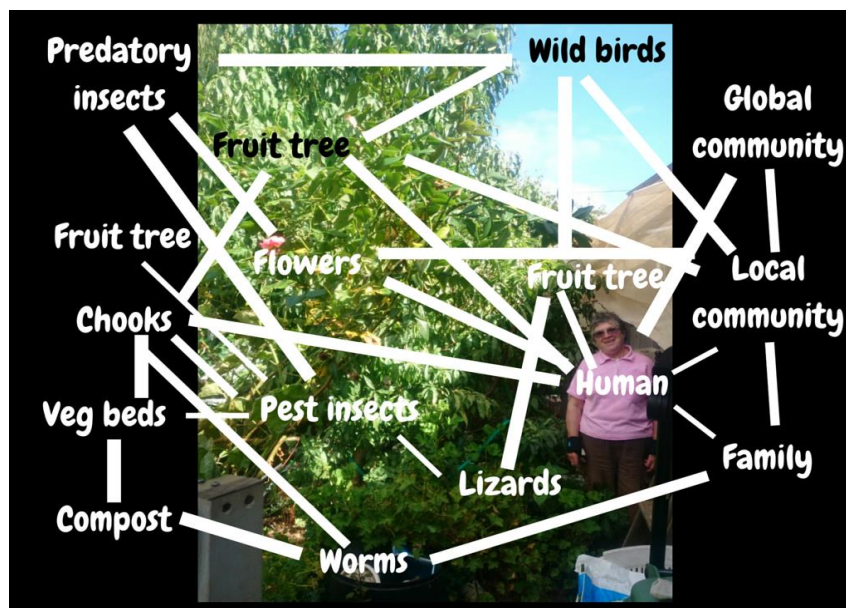
WWW.NADJASGARDEN.COM.AU & FACEBOOK

Summary of presentation to 'Grow Grow Grow Your Own' group, Unley, June 2016

– Nadja Osterstock

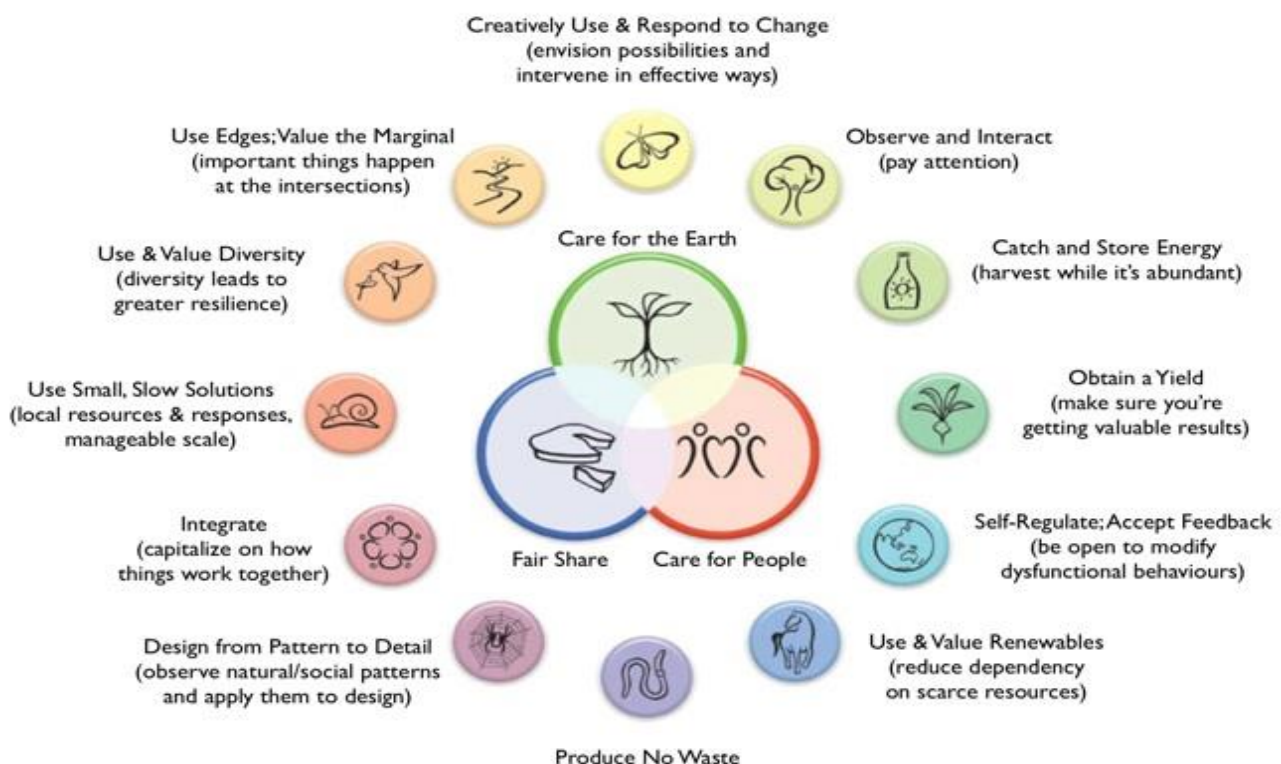
Designing edible gardens starts with a **vision of a healthier place**. Nature would create this, given the opportunity, but we and our carefully maintained built environments often get in the way. However, if we can see the potential for our piece of land to become a healthy ecosystem, and our own role as the vital **apex predators** in this ecosystem, then we and Nature can form a powerful and healing alliance.

- Ideal **human habitat** involves a balance between biodiversity and control.
- **Apex predators** are the top of the food chain in a natural ecosystem.
- Their impact isn't necessarily negative – in fact they redistribute resources for all the other organisms and can keep the system **balanced and thriving**.
- As gardeners and apex predators, we also redistribute resources in our little ecosystem and keep the other elements connected, multiplying and thriving.
- Instead of being like a plague on the planet, just consuming, we can be engaged in **regeneration** right here. Our cities have room for so much biodiversity and productivity!
- The same amount of work required to maintain a lawn and roses could be put into a much more diverse range of plants that could actually feed us – and other creatures.
- Don't just plant a tree – plant a community for the tree.



Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own – Almanac 2016

- My Mum, Sally, is an example of a **gardener as a productive apex predator**.
 - She collects food scraps from her kitchen and from other sources in the local community, feeds them to worms, compost and chooks.
 - Chook manure, compost and worm castings feed plants.
 - Plants feed pest insects which in turn feed predator insects and birds, which fertilise and pollinate the garden.
 - Plants provide Mum’s food and go to other homes amongst her family and local community. In exchange, people give Mum garden resources (pots, cuttings, grafting material, seeds, fruit etc.) or cash, which are used to generate more plants, jam, overseas aid, food and more and more plants.
 - 3 years ago her food forest was just lawn.
 - The diversity, complexity, resilience and productivity of this system keep increasing as long as the apex predator is in place.
- We need to exercise our **connection to Nature** or else we get sick and ‘de-natured’.
- I believe we can all reconnect with the ‘**wild**’ in our own nature (our animal, spiritual, and creative aspects) and through this we can empathise with the ‘wild’ in our environment.
- By identifying what really makes us feel whole and alive and at home in a garden environment, we start to create the possibility. Then we **partner with the natural elements** (sun, rain, wind, soil, plants, animals, seasons etc) to bring it to life.
- Everyone’s ideal garden is unique in its style and functionality.
- **Permaculture** provides useful guidelines to steer our ideas towards sustainability.



- It's an Australian approach to **systems thinking for sustainable living**, founded by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren in the 1970s, now globally applied.
- Based on ethics and principles that are universally relevant. Not just for gardens!
- Adopts and applies strategies, tools and techniques from many traditions.
- Two of the key design tools are **Sectors** and **Zones**
- **Sectors** identify where the various forces impacting on the site come from, to help work out how to respond to them in a useful way.
- **Zones** organise the garden (or other area) into spaces according to the degree of human energy and other inputs required and the amount of time spent there.
- Analysing the **needs** and **yields** of each element in the design enables us to arrange the parts so they can support each other effectively - the basis of an ecosystem.
- **Integrating the elements** - some examples:
 - House roof catches rain, which goes into tank
 - Tank waters chooks & plants
 - Chooks provide manure for compost
 - Compost feeds soil, which feeds trees & vines
 - Vines shade house & cover fences
 - House & fences shelter sensitive plants
 - Plants give fruit, veg, herbs & flowers
 - Flowers bring beneficial insects...etc...
- As a permaculture designer I ask a range of questions to find out about a household's **relationships** with the place, as well as analysing the **site** itself.
- The aim is to work towards a design that is both practical and engaging – where the apex predators can really feel at home and make an ecosystem of it.

FURTHER INFORMATION – click on links:

- Permaculture SA - www.permaculturesa.org.au
- The Food Forest – SA's main Permaculture teaching hub www.foodforest.com.au
- Milkwood Permaculture – based in NSW with many online resources www.milkwood.net
- Pip Magazine – Australia's Permaculture magazine www.pipmagazine.com.au
- Linda Woodrow's permaculture blog: <http://witcheskitchen.com.au/>
- www.suncalc.net - visualise sun paths over your property
- [Organic Corner Store market](http://www.organiccornerstoremarket.com.au) (hosts Nadja's seed and plant stall)
- Nadja's Garden website & gardening blog: www.nadjasgarden.com.au
- [Nadja's Garden](https://www.facebook.com/nadjasgarden) page on facebook

APPENDIX 2: Verge-Garden Notes

Urrbrae Verge Feedback

Date: Mon, 21 Sep 2015 07:39:14 +0930

From: Karen Flynn

Hi Anne,

well we had our little street gathering for the christening of the garden bed yesterday, and it was wonderful success. Amanda will send through some photos, if she hasnt already.

It really was a wonderful opportunity to catch up and share some food and bubbles with neighbours and friends that we dont always make the time to do. It was brilliant!

We had 3 lots of people wander down from the war veterans home which i was really pleased about as i see them walking a lot but dont necessarily get to talk to, so it was good to share stories and get to know each other a little better.

We also sold some produce to raise money for fertilisers and seedlings which everyone seemed to love. (i think i now have regular customers for my marmalade). Amanda provided the most gorgeous selection of herbs and silverbeet for people to purchase, but as my husband said, we are not very good business women as we gave more away than we sold.

We have also encouraged people to use it like their own garden, so a few are providing the herbs that they want to eat, which is fabulous. All working as it should. People also put their hand up to look after the maintainance of the bed any time im away, which is a big relief.. So thank you for providing the opportunity to help make this little street a friendlier more connected community. I hope all the others are having the same success.

We will keep you updated with pics of the bounty.

Cheers, Karen.

Verge garden get-together

Amanda (Urrbrae Avenue) hosted a 'verge garden get-together' at her place, on 22nd May. Unexpectedly, after putting so much work into making it happen, of all people to miss out on the fun, Anne Wilson was unable to attend, due to illness. Nolda also missed, but this was known in advance –she'd told us she couldn't come because she had to go "Trapping endangered wallabies in the APY Lands". BEST. EXCUSE. EVER. !!!



Group photo! Smile everyone!



Attendees being brave about Anne's absence by pretending to be enjoying ourselves and the rather delicious food.

Peter's notes from Get-Together:

Peter asked the verge hosts to say what had worked well, what didn't and what advice they had for us in future.

Responses from John and Maggie, Helen, Helen, Amanda and Annie, plus Nolda's verge garden pictures (representing Nolda in the APY Lands), were:

What worked best

- Herbs
- Eggplants
- Lettuces
- Silver beet
- plus some sweet peas
- All reported neighbours using the produce - especially herbs
- Lots of positive comments from neighbours - only an occasional negative one. Amanda and Karen said that "some neighbours run across in the pyjamas to get something from the verge bed"

What didn't work

- Kale and broccoli - too many pests
- Soil needed a nitrogen top-up

Advice for the future

- Signage will be very useful.
- Thumbs-up, keep going with more verge gardens.
- Another get-together would be good (say end of 2016??)
- Idea of scissors on a piece of string so that people can cut a little of the herbs

Overall, there were lots of comments about the way that the verge gardens acted as a talking point for the community and brought it together.

Signage

Email to Verge Garden-hosts, from Kat:

Hello verge garden hosts,

Look what has arrived!

They are simple but I'm very pleased with them and LOVE that they are all tailored/selected by each host.

Installation – you have two options.

1. I will send one of the depot guys out to install. On the long side of the bed facing into the footpath, top right hand side.
2. I'll deliver with the galvanised bolts and you can choose your own fixture method/placement (I know John & Maggie were considering propping it up within the bed itself).

Let me know which and you will have your signs shortly.

Keep up the great work.

Kind Regards,
Kat



Karen leaving Urrbrae Ave letter

From: [Karen Flynn](#)

Sent: Monday, May 9, 2016 6:25 PM

To: [Anne Wilson](#)

Subject: Re: Thank you

Hi Anne.

Thank you so much for your kind words. Im hoping that whoever buys this property will embrace not only the community garden but the fabulous neighbourhood as well. Its been such a fabulous safe place to live for the last 12 years and a big part of feeling that safety was reaching out to the neighbours and having them embrace this whole house and garden. I hope my new lifes chapter will be as rewarding as this one.

Thanks for everything you've done to help create these little pockets of friendship around Unley.

Thanks again. Karen. Xxx

On 9 May 2016, at 17:15, Anne Wilson wrote:

Hi Karen

We're all very sad to hear that you'll be leaving. You've put so much into your community and have been a guiding light for everyone concerned. For us, as a group, it's just what we'd all hoped for – a true community verge garden.

And you've shown your community that these things can be done both successfully and happily, and have brought your neighbours together. I'm sure they'll always remember you with happiness and gratitude.

We hope to see you before you leave, to thank you for all you've achieved.

Best wishes for your future,

Anne

APPENDIX 3: "I'd like to thank all the little people..."



APPENDIX 4: Oil

I've mentioned how we run like a well-oiled machine. To do so most efficiently, we blend lube jobs with work; skilfully mixing in refreshments with post-work debriefs and pre-work planning meetings, and compatible opportunities such as field trips. While it's beyond what is necessary (Russ' position is "You got me when you said 'cake'. "), here's a few reminders.

Planning Meetings



Tucking into... er... work



Nolda's rose-shaped apple scroll, almost too beautiful to eat. Almost.

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own – Almanac 2016

Post-work debriefs



Any excuse for a party...



Worth repeating (sorry Anne)



Some things require serious contemplation. "Hmm, what shall I eat next?"

APPENDIX 5: Miscellaneous Feedback

Email from Maggie & John (Restormal Ave)

From: [maggie cecchin](#)

Sent: Sunday, January 3, 2016 10:18 AM

Subject: Verge garden

Hi Anne

New Year greetings.

We are harvesting from our verge garden - chillies, zucchini, aubergines abundant basil and tomatoes are ripening. I have attached a couple of images - there are more if you would like (I did not attach now as they make the size of the email too large). There is much interest from neighbours and others passing by and neighbours have shared some of the produce.



FYI - we have found that we needed to add nitrogen fertiliser to the soil. Plants were yellowing and when we checked on SA Composters website it indicated that the soil may need boosting with nitrogen fertiliser eg Charlie Carp. We applied and the plants greened up.

Another point we have been wondering about - the verge gardens do not have a water overflow outlet and we are concerned that when the rain comes the soil may become waterlogged. Has your team researched the need of having a water overflow outlet?

Kind regards, Maggie & John

Email from Tom (Rose Tce Hostel) – 1

From: Rose Terrace
Date: Mon, 29 Feb 2016 09:25:38 +1030
Subject: Re: Reminder notice re our workshop next Sunday 6th March

Hi Anne,

thanks for your email, unfortunately I am at the hostel on weekends, but it's good to know when your meetings are in case sometime I can find the opportunity to come.

We are just in the process of preparing the raised beds you gave us for a winter crop, I've bought a packet of dwarf broad beans for one, and I thought we might put some spinach or silver beet in while it's still a bit warm and get them underway before winter. Anyway I'll see how it goes

cheers, Tom

Gardening Advice

From: Liz & Steve
Date: 4 April 2016 at 18:29:16 ACST
Subject: Re: Gardening advice

Thanks Peter. I gave Pat a call - looks like we all had problems with our toms this year.

Pat will add me to the workshop notification email and I hope to attend these when possible. Appreciate your help in getting me connected.

Liz Gellert

On 31 Mar 2016, at 6:26 PM, Peter Croft wrote:

Pat

I met Liz Gellert at an Active Ageing meeting today. Liz is a former resident of Unley who has returned from living in Oregon for many years. She had some gardening questions and I mentioned your name (and gave her your phone number) as a source of great advice

regards

Peter

Urrbrae Ave Verge email

From: [Amanda Rossi](#)

Sent: Friday, April 8, 2016 8:30 AM

To: [Anne Wilson](#)

Subject: Re: Signage, for your verge gardens

Hi Anne,



Our Urrbrae Avenue garden is currently providing gorgeous basil, parsley, thyme and chilli for the neighbourhood. Take a peek down our street & you are likely to spot someone dashing for a few sprigs around dinner time!

The signs sound wonderful.

Cheers Amanda & Karen

Email from Tom (Rose Tce Hostel) – 2

From: Anne Wharton

Date: 20 May 2016 at 09:34:27 ACST

To: Rose Terrace

Subject: Re: Our next workshop - "Designing Your Garden", 3pm, Sunday 12th June, Unley Community Centre

Hi Tom

Lovely to hear from you. So glad you are following Nadjas Garden blog - her garden sounds amazing. And also that you've managed to get to some of their gatherings. Hope the raised beds are going ok.

Cheers

Anne Wharton

On 19/05/2016 1:16 PM, Rose Terrace wrote:

Hi Anne,

Once again I will be at work on Sunday but thank you for your reminders each month. I have met Nadja a couple of times at the Glenelg North community garden, they have their gatherings on Thursday's and I have occasionally managed to get down there during the week. In addition I follow her blog - Nadjas Garden .

Keep growing

Tom

Email from Alan Shepard (notice the last sentence)

From: Alan Shepard

Subject: Re: Unley workshops Sept 11th

Date: 30 July 2016 at 9:38:44 PM ACST

Hi Peter

As I was requested by Wendy from KESAB to do the presentation at Unley on Sept 11th, I get paid for the talk by them so I dont need to put in an invoice to your group (I just submit one to KESAB).

This is the same as when a school (or community group) in the Unley council area request a speaker through KESAB. It is because KESAB has a contract with the council and it includes the occasional workshop like this.

I would have done the talk gratis anyway for your group.

Cheers Alan