

GGGYO 2022 Almanac

This Is The Year That Was



Russ and Pauline, at a propagation workshop at the Goody Patch.

**This year's almanac is dedicated in loving memory
of Russ Talbot, 22.10.1960 - 07.06.2022**

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022



Russ was a founding member, chief photographer, writer and almanac creator. For the record it has taken four group members to pull this edition together even with the benefit of notes and templates from Russ.

Mate you can't be replaced, but we hope you like our efforts.

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About Us

Climate change is happening now. It will fundamentally affect our lives. It will affect the security of our food supplies. It will lead to more extreme weather and hotter summers.

As climate change progresses, there will be an impact on the ability of our existing food systems to produce as much food. By growing more of our own, we build up our food security.

This is the context that informs GGGYO. Our prime, defining goal is to help the community grow more of its own food. A consequential outcome is 'Fostering community'. Growing food locally can build and strengthen community connections – we share experiences, seedlings and excess food.

Building resilience in food and connections between people will also assist the community navigate through current and future pandemics.

We act in support of Unley's "Food Security Strategy"¹. Key points:

- It is projected that in the future many people will not have enough to eat. This is exacerbated by the early impacts of climate change now being felt.
- A priority for personal action is to reduce the level of resources required for our own food. The most effective way is to grow more (and waste less) of our own food.

We also advocate for and strongly support growing trees and extending tree canopy to help the community adapt to climate change. This year, we have continued to be very engaged with the topic of tree canopy.

2022 was the tenth year that our group – drawn from Sustainable Communities SA Unley members – has received a generous grant from Unley Council to encourage the community to grow more of their own food.

We feel greatly encouraged by the community response to our efforts and Unley Council's commitment to funding food-growing projects. Thank you.

¹ Refer "The City of Unley Food Security Strategy",
<https://couopencities.blob.core.windows.net/couwebsitearchive/Council%20and%20Administration/Strategic%20Planning/Corporate%20Strategies/Food-Security-Strategy.pdf>

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Us



Taking advantage of a non-masked photo opportunity

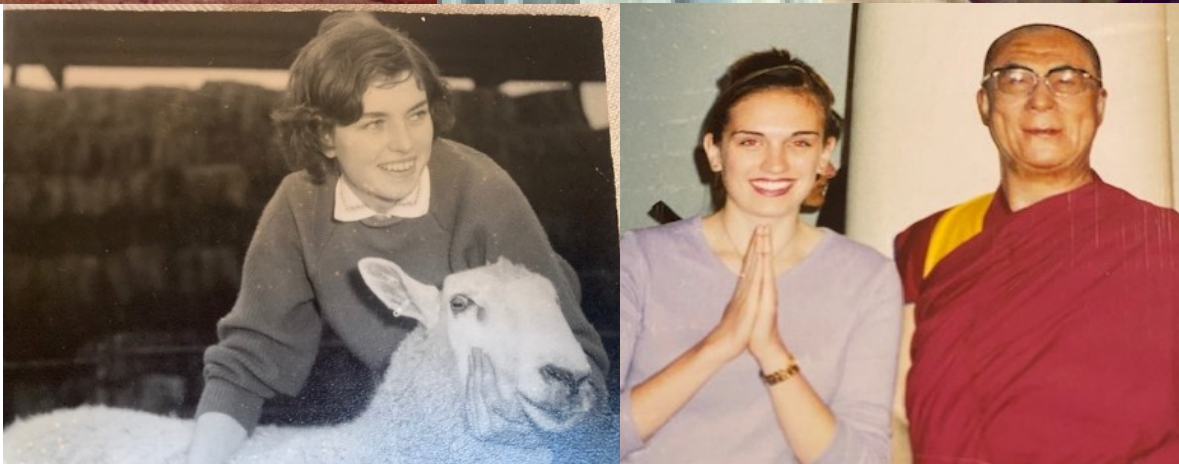
The *Grow Grow Grow Your Own* (GGGYO) group consists of Chris Adams, Nolda Beynon, Ashley Campbell, Peter Croft, Jan McClelland, Pauline Muir, Abby Ward, Anne Wharton, Anne Wilson, and Pat Wundersitz, with the active participation and lots of support from Kat Ryan of Unley Council.

We are actively supported by Sustainable Communities SA, which provides financial, publicity and governance assistance. GGGYO is a member group of Sustainable Communities SA.

We also acknowledge the generous support of Unley Council, Diana Bickford (Bickleigh Farm), and our workshop presenters.

Some of us in our twenties

Russ requested photos of us in our 20s to help spice up the Almanac and keep it fresh. Much joy was shared as these were unearthed during the year. Below is a rare glimpse into personal photo archives and what a fabulous bunch we are!



"Oh yes, and the Dalai Lama drops in whenever he's in town". Russ 10 May 2022*

**Rightly so Abby didn't have the heart to crop out the Dalai Lama even if it was the wax version*

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022
13/2 - Layered Abundance

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

First of the 2022 free Workshop Series

Layered Abundance

Presented by Chris Bryant and John Boland



John and Chris's garden

2.30 pm on Sunday 13th February on Zoom.

**[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/691437339?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/691437339?pwd=N09aTlRlaG9WVWkZxcUNBWVVQZjY2Zz09)
[pwd=N09aTlRlaG9WVWkZxcUNBWVVQZjY2Zz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/691437339?pwd=N09aTlRlaG9WVWkZxcUNBWVVQZjY2Zz09)**

Register at patwundersitz@gmail.com

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Workshop details

Layered Abundance

“How do we grow a third of our food in a suburban garden? We practise integrated planting for abundance, mixing canopy heights to aid solar access, and ensuring that the plants thrive through mutual dependence. Aligned with this principle of co-existence of types and species, we utilise a number of tools and principles to maximise production and benefits, amongst which are:

- Intensive composting systems
- Year round pruning
- Water saving through partial root zone drying
- No dig philosophy
- Seasonal meal planning
- Zero waste mentality
- Fruit, herbs and nut drying
- Provision of excess to neighbours
- Climate control for comfortable living
- Habitat provision.

Above all, the garden is a pleasure to be enjoyed, not a burden to be endured.”

Chris Bryant is a permaculture designer and teacher, as well as a part time research assistant in environmental science. John Boland is Professor of Environmental Mathematics at UniSA.

They love living in an urban farm and also working to save the Monarto mintbush from extinction, based on their private conservation park at Monarto.

Questions and problems

We are always keen to help you grow your own vegetables. Please contact Pat on 0407 608 345 if you have questions or problems. Or email through some photos of the growing problems that you are facing. We will try and help.

Your ideas

Let us know if you have any suggestions on how we can help each other grow more of our own food during this period of safe distancing.

Contact us on peter.croft@mmc.com.au.

Thank you to Unley Council for its generous grant to support these workshops.

Sustainable Communities SA - Unley groups

Report

Terrific workshop from John Boland and Chris Bryant: 41 attendees

A big emphasis on stacking vegetation not neatly spacing it but making sure that the top layers

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of plants protect the lower layers and allow sufficient sun at the right times

Of the wide variety of topics covered the one which attracted most attention was Partial Root Zone Drying: almost all of the 84 productive food plants on their property have a 12 litre bucket partially sunk into the ground at the start of summer with a layer of newspaper then compost then sticks and are watered once or twice a week. Holes in the bucket allow water to drip through slowly.

Interestingly, Chris and John don't place a major emphasis on summer vegetables as they take too much effort. Winter vegetables are the focus. Plus their fruit trees which they prune to low-ish height constantly.

Photos & Notes



What is Layered Abundance?

We grow 1/3 of our food from 84 productive food plants and herb and vegetable garden
They also provide shade, shelter and habitat, while providing sufficient solar access
Throw out conventional ideas of tree spacing – STACKING is our method
Water retention – swales and mulching
All year pruning – much of it chop and drop
No dig – protect worms, microbes, fungus, ants etc.

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Three Layers

Lower – chillies, herbs, amaranth, peach seedling, grasses, tomatillas, spring onions, flowers

Middle – Tall grass, jujube, oriental pears, glory vine, pitanga (Brazilian cherry), shatut, pear, loquat, ginkgo

Upper – quandong, strawberry guava, pistachios, melaleuca, Queensland box (on verge)



Using forest concepts in food production

The brainchild of swiss farmer and scientist Ernst Gotsch, who purchased 480 hectares of degraded farmland in Brazil in 1984.

Swales and water retention are the first step.

Cover crops, and then food trees and understory.

Succession- when something dies, adapt with other plants.

All this creates a dynamic interaction between humans and nature, resulting in an interwoven structure that changes throughout the year.

This results in Layered Abundance, both in space and over time.

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Syntrophic Agriculture

Two nature-inspired processes are central: natural succession and stratification.

Layers of vegetation mean layers of photosynthesis.

The gradual difference in layer distribution – denser at the bottom and sparser in the upper strata – works as a heat sink, a temperature gradient that helps maintain moisture in the soil.

The optimisation of layer occupancy combined with constant soil cover reduces pressure from invasive plants.

It is process-based, as opposed to many conventional or organic practices that are input-based.

Making Compost

2/3 carbon, 1/3 nitrogen (for heat), with layers of soil.

Use large bin to maintain the heat for decomposition

When mature, put on top of the soil, not dug in

Resources from kitchen, leaves, grass clippings, shredded newspaper.

Ventilation

Bring the good air of the garden inside.

Ability to fully ventilate, including cross ventilation, integrates the internal living space with the external. This increases comfort, and air quality.

Geoff Hanmer, architect, made this point on ABC online, referring to COVID. If you've got good ventilation, the chances of you breathing in enough virus particles to infect you is low, and the probability of infection increases with poor ventilation.

He went to add that we have a pandemic of buildings.

We argue that this extends far beyond the virus into comfort and liveability.

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27/3 - Compost

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Second of the 2022 free Workshop Series

Presented by Nat Giffney

Compost



Nat Giffney with cauliflower

**2.30 pm on Sunday 27th March
at Unley Community Centre
18 Arthur Street Unley.
Register at patwundersitz@gmail.com**

Workshop details

This workshop is all about building up your soil health using compost, to maximise your food production.

Nat is an educator and lover of compost, soil health, organic food production, soil microbes and the organics circular economy.

She is passionate about the role soil can play in climate change mitigation and the links between soil health and human health.

She runs workshops on composting, works with students teaching them to grow and harvest organic fruit and vegetables and works directly with organic growers and home gardeners to cultivate microbial ecology for soil, plant and human health.

Questions and problems

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Sustainable Communities SA - Unley groups

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Report

Attendees: 27 (plus GGGYO members)

Nat's workshop on compost was fantastic! I've attended her compost workshop in the past but she had added more information this time. Prior to learning what Nat had to say about compost, I'm embarrassed to say that I was producing a putrid, methane volcano that housed a colony of cockroaches. Now I'm happily spreading my own compost into my veggie beds and enjoying seeing my plants flourish.

Nat is passionate, knowledgeable and super experienced in the world of compost and growing food. She also brought along Bill, her partner who works for Jeffries. He sat in the front row supporting Nat and enjoying her talk which he hasn't been able to participate in for a while.

Nat shared new information particularly about the human microbiome and how our gut health is dependent on the health of the soil. This is an area of interest for me as a health practitioner too. Healthy soil produces healthy plants which in turn contributes to the health of the person eating them. The plants that are fed with compost and live in microorganism rich soil are more robust and less susceptible to disease. Not much different to us really.

Nat shared that she treated a mulberry tree which had leaf curl with compost tea. In the first year the infected leaves were shed after the spray and then new healthy leaves grew back. She did the same in the second year and shared the photos. This is an alternative to using copper which accumulates in the soil and over time degrades the biodiversity of microorganisms present.

Most of the participants in the workshop were motivated to make their own compost to improve the health of their garden soil with a few others wanting to decrease the methane off gassing of degrading food products. This is a positive benefit for all, even if that's not the motivation in the first place.

What revolutionised my compost after Nat's workshop was making sure it's not too wet by adding in more brown matter (carbon) like dried leaves, cardboard, paper and bark chips (aged if possible). This is particularly so if we compost lots of household scraps (nitrogen) which tend to be quite water rich. Making sure that anything added to the compost is chopped, cut or ripped into small pieces is also really important. This makes sense because it increases the surface area that the bacteria and fungi have to work with so it breaks down faster.

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Some things just don't do well in the compost like big tough branches or vines, avocado seeds and skins and 'biodegradable' compost bags which are not all that biodegradable when you look at it closely. The contentious topic of citrus in compost was raised and Nat's of the opinion that citrus is fine to put in the compost so long as you don't half fill the bin with orange peel. And yes, the worms will be fine with it.

There are lots of styles of composting from tumblers to bins on the ground, to open bays. What you choose is really up to how you want to work your waste. Nat is a fan of the bins on the ground. She runs two at a time. While one is ageing (for at least 6 months), she is adding to the other one. Part of keeping the compost odour free is making sure it has enough air. So Nat drills holes in the side of the bins and also turns it with a compost turner (affectionately called the 'twirly whirly') in order to aerate the compost.

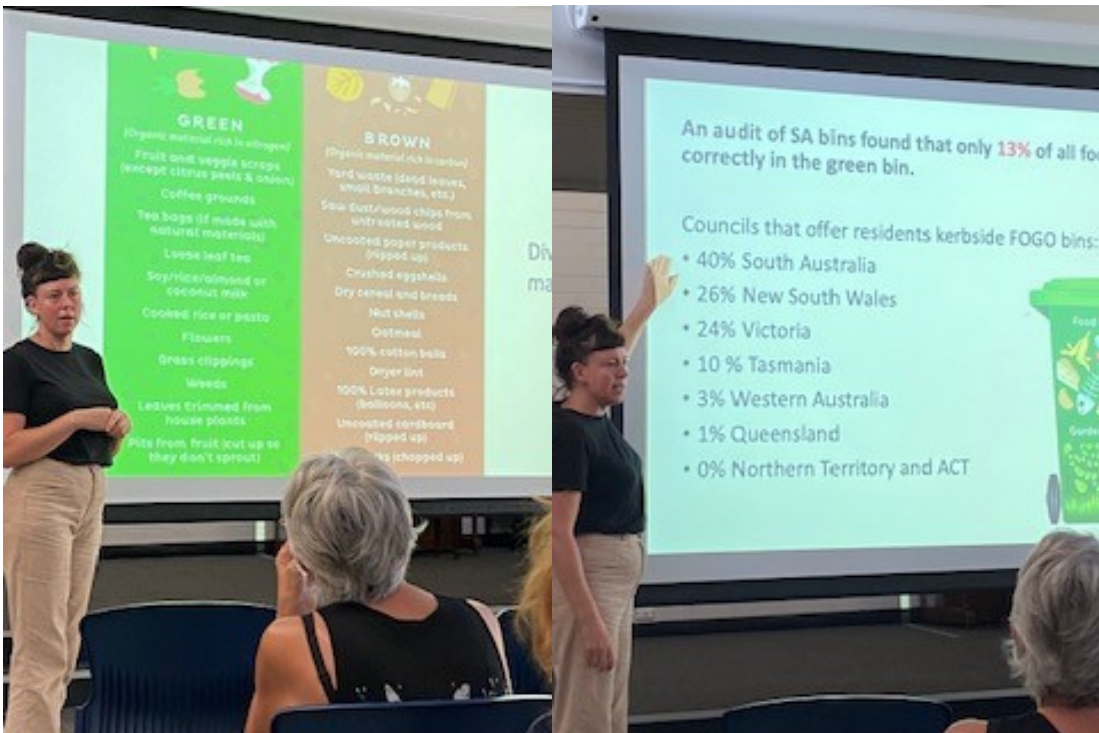
Depending on how much time and effort we want to put into composting, it's worth remembering that in South Australia particularly, we can put anything we don't want in our compost in the green bins. SA leads the country in the collection of food organics in the green organics bin (FOGO), so let's make use of the service. This green organic matter goes to Jefferies. Nat says 'when in doubt, give it to Jefferies.' They have the operation stitched up to be able to handle the degradation of the tough stuff.

We could have sat there until 5pm while Nat fielded questions from the audience, but she kept beautifully to time and was very generous with her answers and accommodating all kinds of ideas and queries.

All in all an empowering session that gave us all inspiration and power to produce healthy soil, which is the foundation for a healthy life. Thanks Nat!

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Photos & Notes



HOME COMPOSTING

Excellent compost is made by creating the conditions for your microbial workforce to thrive.

Small pieces – chop/rip it up!

Chop kitchen and garden scraps up to increase surface area. The more surface area, the quicker microbes and worms can break it down.

Good balance of greens and browns

‘Green’ inputs are things higher in nitrogen and are mostly broken down by bacteria. These include kitchen scraps, fresh garden clippings, hay, manures and coffee grounds.

‘Browns’ are things higher in carbon and are mostly broken down by fungi. These include paper, cardboard, dead leaves, straw, bark and twigs. Always start with a good amount of browns on the bottom of a new compost pile.

A balance of greens and browns does many things for your compost. By feeding both bacteria and fungi, you will create a more beneficial compost full of all the microorganisms your soil and plants need. The brown inputs will generally help balance out the wetness of the green inputs and will also create structure for air flow.

Diversity of foods

The more diversity of inputs, the more diversity of microorganisms in your finished compost. Microbial diversity is one of the most important factors for healthy plants and soil. Adding in a small amount of soil and/or finished compost will help introduce more diversity of microorganisms into your compost.

Sufficient oxygen and water

The microorganisms in your compost need water and oxygen to survive and thrive. If your compost dries out, your microbes will go dormant or die, and nothing will breakdown. Keep your compost moist but not sopping wet. Ideal moisture levels are when you can grab a handful of compost, squeeze hard, and see some drops form between your knuckles but not drip.

Turning your compost and having sufficient ‘browns’, will help keep good amounts of oxygen in your pile. You can get a handy compost turner (like a giant corkscrew) from your garden centre. If your compost smells bad, there is not enough oxygen.

Rest

Good compost takes time to mature. At some point you will need rest your compost and stop adding new things to it. Having at least two compost bins will help with this. Once one bin is full, leave it to rest while you start filling this next one. Once that bin is full, the first bin will be ready to use in your garden.

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Some Observations

- You may choose to drill some air holes in your compost bin to increase oxygen if it doesn't already have some.
- Start with a good amount of browns/carbon rich inputs and create a layer on the bottom to create airflow and structure for your new pile.
- Add in some mature compost from a previous compost pile (if you have some) or some healthy soil or store-bought compost – this will add some good biology and help your compost to hit the ground running.
- Collect diverse 'browns' (carbon rich inputs) and keep next to your compost bin. This will make it easy to add browns each 3me you add kitchen scraps.
- Remember to spread your kitchen scrapes and browns in a layer – don't just dump in a pile in the middle.
- Turn your compost regularly – once a fortnight is good. Your compost will break down quicker as the new inputs are mixed with the mature compost.
- Manage moisture – as you turn your pile, pay attention to the moisture level. Does it look dry? Is it too wet? Feel it. You may need to water it or add some more browns if too wet. Don't let it dry out but also don't drown your microbes.
- Two compost bins are ideal so one can be resting/maturing while the other is being filled.



Nat Giffney

Biological Farming & Gardening

Cultivating microbial ecology for soil, plant and human health.

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15/5 - Soil Health

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Third of the 2022 free Workshop Series

Using Mulch, green manure, fertilisers and water for soil health

Presented by Alan Halsted



Picture Justin Russell: ABC



Picture: Bulleen Art Garden

**2.30 pm on Sunday 15th May
at Unley Community Centre 18 Arthur Street Unley.
Register at patwundersitz@gmail.com**

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Workshop details

It's well into the growing season now. What will help the productivity in our gardens over the next few seasons?

This workshop is about soil health and the way to best use mulch, green manure, fertilizers and water to maximise that potential.

Our presenter is Alan Halsted, well known in our workshops – particularly for his informative Question and Answer sessions. He will also include potted plant health and management into the presentation as this information is so frequently requested.

Alan is a professional organic local gardener with a specialty in home vegetable and fruit gardens. He is passionate about encouraging people to be more connected to their own gardens, not just productively but also aesthetically. Your garden is also your sanctuary! He is involved in community gardens, community markets and a committee member of the Rare Fruit Society of South Australia.

Questions and problems

We are always keen to help you grow your own vegetables. Please contact Pat on 0407 608 345 if you have questions or problems. Or email through some photos of the growing problems that you are facing. We will try and help.

Your ideas

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Contact us on peter.croft@mmc.com.au.

Thank you to Unley Council for its generous grant to support these workshops.

Sustainable Communities SA - Unley groups

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Report

Summary: We missed Russ today and thank Abby for sharing Russ's journey

40+ Today counting us

The point of green manure is to replenish soil after tomatoes and eggplants finished. Got a bag of seeds from Diggers cover with compost and 4-6 weeks dig them back into soil and plant seeds. Water is our friend to keep microbes alive. Water needs to get deep into the soil.

Mustard greens help get rid of nematodes and tomato wilt bug

Not a big fan of drippers as doesn't replicate rain. Recommends a big shower head which mimics rain. Looks at plant carefully to look at what it needs

Leafy greens listed. Buys compost at Adelaide green waste by the trailer load every week. Very effective.

Grows his leafy greens in self watering pots. Been using pots for 15 years plus. Recommend mixing seeds and pick after 4 weeks. The mixture upsets cabbage moth butterfly.

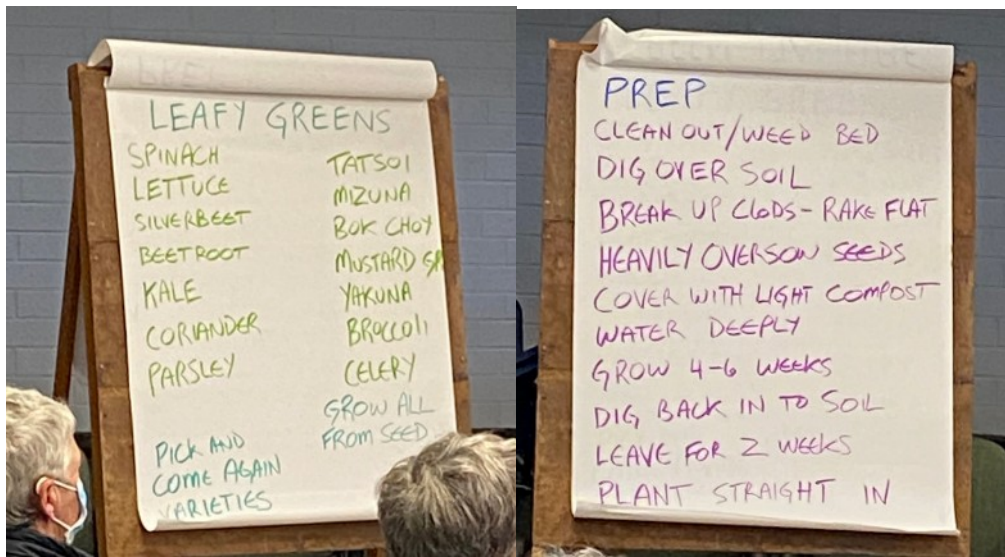
Pauline outlined the design of wicking pots and Pat identified the three winners of pots based on their questions

A great session with many questions for Alan

Zinan Chen – a Ph.D student briefly presented on the topic of auditing green spaces. She recruited two more volunteers to do the auditing.

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Photos



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26/6 - Are other creatures eating your harvest?
Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Fourth of the 2022 free Workshop Series

Are other creatures eating your harvest?
Living with pests in your garden.

*Presented by Chris Day from
Everyday Sustainable Living*



Pauline's garden

**2.30 pm on Sunday 26th June
at Unley Community Centre
18 Arthur Street Unley**

Register at patwundersitz@gmail.com

Workshop details

Are other creatures eating your harvest? How can we live with Pests in our garden? Chris Day will look at ways you can work with nature and get predators to eat your pests where possible. Also look at ways to still get your harvest with rodents, possums and other creatures who also love our food.

Chris Day, from Every Day Sustainable Living and Cockatoo Creek Farm, has been growing food and actively participating in and teaching Permaculture and Sustainable living since early 2000. With a focus on productive edible landscapes in urban, rural and community settings, he designs and installs gardens to suit the individual site and client. He is passionate about the actions we can do together to regenerate community and the environment, for current and future generations.

Questions and problems

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Sustainable Communities SA - Unley groups

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022

Report

Pests attack stressed plants so it is important to look after your soil with plenty of compost and mulch and, if you have clay soil, add gypsum. Weeds tend to aerate the soil and can be cut back if they become invasive.

The other important thing is to create a habitat for beneficial insects by planting lots of flowering herbs and perennials. Letting these plants go to seed will attract even more predators. A bird bath will also attract insect predators and birds: blue wrens eat 500-5000 insects a day! Blackbirds love insects but scratch up the soil. To deter them from this lay down a number of sticks or netting.

Of the beneficial insects some are helpers and others are predators. For example lady bird larvae can eat up to 200 aphids a day while lacewing larvae eat a whole range of bugs – scale, mealie bugs and aphids and can eat up to 1000 pests a day.

Other pests like rough slaters tend to eat decaying material while pill bugs, which roll up into balls, love chewing on seedlings. To deal with this you can overplant, cover seedlings with plastic transparent bottles or grow seedlings before planting. If you're growing seedlings on a table then encase table legs in yoghurt containers to deter snails.

For cabbage white butterfly caterpillars throw exclusion netting over brassicas or use dipel which only kills caterpillars. For brown caterpillars leave just one brassica plant to distract them from other plants..

It's ideal to have chickens and ducks to keep down slugs and snails. Snails love hiding in agapanthus making it a kind of luxury snail hotel. They also like hiding in stacks of pots. Distribute crushed eggshells or coffee grounds around plants because snails don't like them or put copper strips around pots. Snail pellets are high iron which kills snails. One of the best things you can do is go outside at night with a torch to see what's happening. Generally pests are active at night when they can hide from birds.

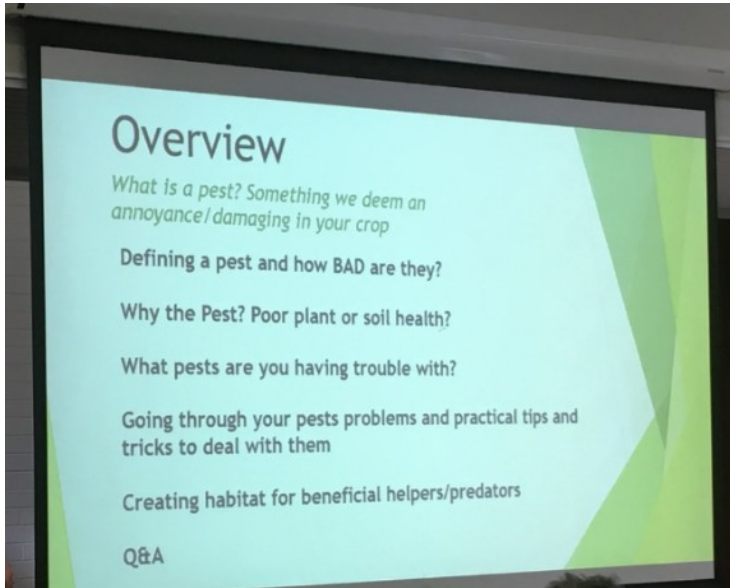
Trap earwigs with small containers filled with oil. They also like crawling into bamboo stakes or hiding in pots filled with scrunched up paper. Millipedes can be trapped in containers with oil or beer. You can avoid millipedes by growing plants in hanging pots. Meanwhile it's better not to mulch strawberries.

Mice seem to be a lot less smart than rats and can be easily caught in traps. Rats should be kept out of your compost bin by installing strong mesh wire underneath so they can't tunnel in to live on the compost. Ratsak is the preferable poison for rats. Newer warfarin based rat poisons have flow on effects when rats are eaten by predatory birds.

Regarding possums you can feed them to keep them away from your fruit. You can put horticultural glue around the base of tree trunks. You can instal spikes along your fences or electrify the fences. Wrap fruit in mesh or plastic or alfoil. Possums don't like unpleasant smells like ammonia, peppermint oil, wormwood, rosemary and other herbs.

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Photos



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14/8 - Herbs, their uses and companion plants

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Fifth of the 2022 free Workshop Series

Presented by Melanie Sanders

**Herbs, their uses (including teas)
and companion plants**



Picture: Esther Sung Epicurious

**2.30 pm on Sunday 14th August
at Unley Community Centre
18 Arthur Street Unley.**

Register at patwundersitz@gmail.com

Workshop details

This workshop is all about herbs and their uses, including their use for teas. We also hope to cover the basics of companion plants.

Melanie is a lover of gardening, learning about plants and sharing with the community. In the last few years, she has moved from a career in health and volunteer coordination in Melbourne and the Cleveland Nursery in Stirling, to close involvement with the Laurels garden in Crafers and Nardoo Landscapes.

She has a depth of practical knowledge about plants and plant combinations in the real world and has worked closely with Jenny Deans - well-known as a presenter to our community.

Questions and problems

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Sustainable Communities SA - Unley groups

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022

Report

Melanie Sanders on Herbs

Attendance 43 people: from 6 months to over 80 years old.

This was Melanie's first workshop for GGGYO and we hope that we can have her back for more workshops.

She covered lots of ground dealing with the growing of herbs, using them in the kitchen, as medicines and other home uses.

Many herbs are easy to grow and have multiple benefits e.g. stinging nettles, dandelions, rosemary, lavender, salt bush, nasturtiums, mint, aloe vera, thyme and sage.

Herbs can attract bees, provide wind breaks, improve the soil, make a good ground cover and be a good companion plant for veggies and fruit trees.

Melanie's enthusiasm, good communication skills and knowledge, visuals, samples and handouts is just what we need to inspire us to plant more herbs and make better use of the ones that we already have.

Ashley Campbell

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Photos



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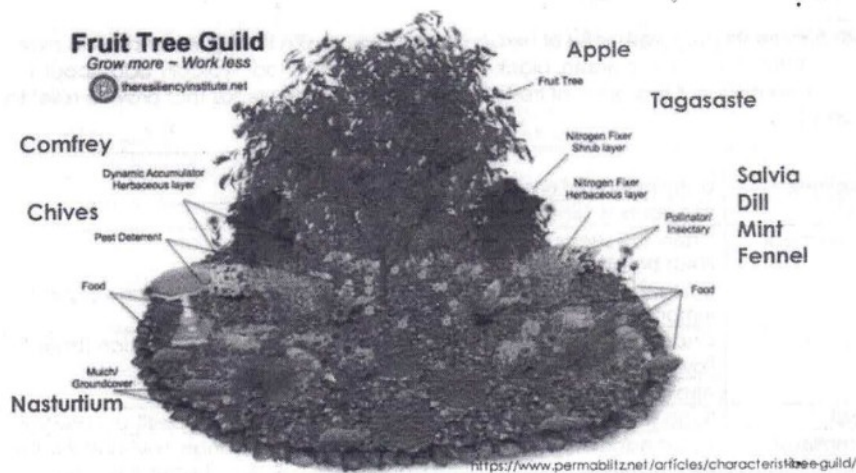


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Herbs are plants that have a use – in the garden, kitchen, medicinal or home. Typically we think of things like parsley and basil, but they can even include trees used for their oil such as eucalyptus or the leaves of myrtle.

Herb Uses in the Garden – companion plants

Insect attracting	Fennel, salvias, borage, parsley, dill, lavender, bee balm, flowers in general
Insect repelling	Wormwood, tansy, pyrethrum, rue
Wind break	Rosemary, salvias, westringia, lavender, salt bush
Nutrient accumulators	
- nitrogen fixing legumes	Legumes, beans, lupins, tagasaste or tree lucerne (<i>Cytisus proliferus</i>), peas Native options: casuarina, acacia, prickly box (<i>Bursaria spinosa</i>) and hop bush (<i>Dodonaea viscosa</i>)
- deep rooted dandelions & comfrey that draw up minerals from deeper in the earth	Comfrey, dandelions, burdock, yarrow,
- mulch makers / ground covers	comfrey, cardoon, chamomile, purslane, oregano, rhubarb, nasturtium or hostas
Cover crops to minimise bare soil between seasons and biofumigant	Clover, nasturtium, mustard
Fruit guild planting: a mix of all of the above	Apple with Comfrey, Currants, Fennel, Mint, Salvia, Dill, Alyssum, Nasturtium, Chives Plum with Daffodil, Yarrow, Comfrey, Nasturtium, Daisies, Valerian, Chamomile, Borage



Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022

Nettle

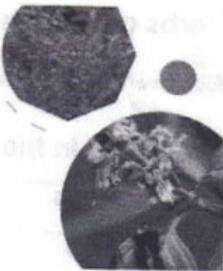
- Full of vitamins & minerals – for us and plants
Fe, Ca, Mg, K, Na and Vit A & C
- Stinging nettles – dock will counteract the pain temporarily
- cooking
- tea
 - stimulate urine production to rid toxins (gout & joint pain)
 - stimulate circulation (counteract anaemia)
- cold-wash for
 - mild burns, bites & stings
 - treat eczema

weed tea for plants (also comfrey, borage, dandelion)



Holy Basil (tulsi)

- Annual – perennial (warm)
- Healing teas, oils and poultices used in traditional Indian Ayurveda medicine
- A diuretic herb used to reduce stress, detoxify, boost immune system and restore balance
- Grown for attractive foliage, flowers, and aroma – bee attractant



Herbal Medicines

There are many ways to prepare herbal medicines that have been used all through the ages and often form the base of modern pharmaceuticals. The method of preparations varies: herbal teas, poultices, creams and lotions, concoctions, tinctures, tonics and syrups to name a few.

Antiseptics	Thyme, lemon juice, sage, lavender
Astringents (bleeding & burns)	Yarrow, aloe vera, calendula
Soothing	Chamomile, valerian, hops, lavender, rose geranium, passionfruit flowers,, lemon balm
Energising	Yarrow, rosemary, ginseng,
Healing	Comfrey, aloe vera, chamomile
Pain relief	Balsam, lavender, feverfew, chilli, aloe vera, lemon balm, clove, cinnamon
Anti-pyretic (fevers)	Meadowsweet, yarrow
Upset stomach	Peppermint, slippery elm bark powder, ginger

CAUTION: While some common remedies are easily found and prepared, this is an indepth field of study and beyond the scope of these notes.

Herbal Teas

Herbal teas can be simply a fresh sprig of herb/s of your choice with boiling water poured over. Steep for 5 minutes. You can use green, black or rooibos as a base too. Typically add about 1 teaspoon of dried herb or 3 teaspoon of fresh herb. There are many blends that provide relief for various ailments.

Stomach	
- travel sickness	Cold infusion of basil leaves
- nausea	Peppermint, lemon balm, ginger
- rich (fatty) meal	Chew the seeds of fennel, dill or aniseed Fresh breath: chew mint leaves Dinner party tea: 1 teaspoon fennel seed, 1 cup dried lemon verbena or lemon grass, 2 teaspoons dred mandarin or orange peel
Sleep and calm	Chamomile, lavender, elderflower, bergamot, hops and linden (lime) flower. Also valerian root decoction but not to be regularly.
Sore throat	Sage (antibacterial), ginger, citrus (lemon verbena or peel) and honey
Citrus yuminess	1 part each chamomile, rose petal, spearmint, orange peel and 2 parts lemon verbeena (and a little cinnamon if you like – better in winter)

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Drying herbs while in season is a great way to have year round access to herbs for fresh tea. Experiment! Work your way up from two to three to multi herb blends. It's all about personal preference.

Two herb blends: sweet marjoram with mint; thyme with hissop; clover with chamomile; sage with lemon balm; fenugreek with mint; sage with lemon verbena

Three herb blends: strawberry and blackberry leaves and woodruff (fruity & woody); hibiscus petals, rose hips and lemon verbena (lemon spice); 3 parts thyme to one part each of rosemary and spearmint (to cure hangovers and nightmares!)

Apple tea: 1 teaspoon each of dried and group rose hips and hibiscus flowers, 1 teaspoon dried chamomile flowers and 4 large fresh apple geranium leaves. Steep in 4 cups of hot water and add a pinch of nutmeg and cinnamon. Add a little honey if you find it too tart.



Cleaning with Herbs



BASIC RECIPE

3-4 cups white vinegar, and

1 ¼ cups mint family herbs (mint, sage, thyme)
or
1 ½ cups citrus peel (lemon, orange, grapefruit)
or
¾ cup dried lavender & ½ cup dried rosemary

Steep for one month in a dark place, shaking occasionally.

Can be mixed with a little washing liquid.

(Herbal Academy website)

Thyme is also a natural disinfectant and antiseptic that can be added fresh to boiling water and mixed with a light, vegetable-based soap and used in a spray bottle.

References

- *Companion Planting in Australia* by Brenda Little
- *Herbs with Hilde Hemmes* and *Herbs and Health with Hilda Hemmes*
- *Grow Your Own Herbal Remedies* by Penny Woodward
- *Hemphill's Herbs their cultivation and usage* by John and Rosemary Hemphill
- *The Herb Book* by Arabella Boxer and Philippa Back
- *The Weed Forager's Handbook* by Adam Grubb and Annie Raser-Rowland

- Herb Society of South Australia <https://www.herbsocietysa.com.au/>
- Country Herbals (Heather) <https://www.countryherbals.com.au/>
- Renaissance Herbs <https://renaissanceherbs.com.au/>
- Hilda Hemmes Herbals <https://herbalsupplies.com.au/>

Notes supplied to the Grow Grow Grow workshop by Melanie Sanders, melsanders73@gmail.com

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022

Nasturtium: Simple to grow and versatile

Origin: South America (naturalised to most parts of the world)

Species: *Tropaeolum majus*

A wonder plant of the Andes, this South American native was brought to Europe in the 18th century and is well known to most gardeners for its bright flowers and interesting flat round leaves. Not to be confused with Nasturtium genus which includes watercress.

What does it need to grow?

- prefers (poor) sandy soils but happy in any well drained soil
- requires full sun or part shade, moderate water
- weedy matted growth but easy to control (ground cover or climbing)
- self seeds by dropping mature seeds
- quite drought tolerant; sensitive to frost
- add wood ash (potassium) to increase seed production/size
- add chicken manure (nitrogen) to increase leaf size

How can it be used?

The flowers, leaves and seeds of the Nasturtium are edible. The plant has many uses in the garden, on the table, in and on our bodies.

In the garden

Nasturtium makes an effective companion plant:

- grow under apple trees to repel codling moth
- grow with cucurbits (squash, pumpkin, zucchini, melon, cucumber, luffa) to protect from beetles and attract butterflies and improve flavour
- grow with cabbage family to protect from beetles, cabbage looper and cabbage worm
- grow near vegetables as a trap crop for aphids and white cabbage butterfly

It also has other uses in the garden:

- grows as a protective ground cover to keep soil moist and reduce weed growth
- bright flowers are a strong bee attractant bringing pollinators to your garden

Woolly aphid spray – simmer 1 cup of nasturtium leaves with 1 cup water for 15 minutes; cool and strain; dilute to equal parts water; spray as required.

On the Table

Use Nasturtiums as you would a green leafy vegetable in salads and cooking or as a peppery spice.

Nasturtium capers – place 1 cup of firm green nasturtium seeds into a suitable jar; bring 1 cup white vinegar, 1 teaspoon of salt and 8 peppercorns to the boil; pour mixture over seed; seal and refrigerate; enjoy after about 3 months.

Stuffed Nasturtium flowers – mix 1 pack of cream cheese with 1 minced garlic clove, 1/2 tablespoon of fresh chives and 1 tablespoon of lemon balm; place 1 teaspoon of mixture in the centre of the flower; pull petals up to cover as much of the mixture as possible; press to stick petals to cheese.

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Nasturtium pesto – blend 4 cups Nasturtium leaves, 2 cups Nasturtium flowers, 1.5 cups olive oil, 1 cup parmesan, 1 cup walnuts and 5 cloves of garlic until consistent; fill into jars; will keep up to 2 weeks in refrigerator.

Nasturtium pepper – dry mature Nasturtium seedpods; break up and place in a pepper mill to use as a substitute for black peppercorn.

Nasturtium and citrus smoothy – blend 1 banana, juice of 6 lemon, 1 orange and 1 mandarin with 5 large nasturtium leaves until smooth; serve immediately

In and on our bodies

Nasturtiums are high in Vitamin C and rich in minerals but also contain other powerful compounds that are important to health:

- Mustard Oil glycosides – antibiotic, anti-inflammatory, peppery flavour
- Isoquercitrin – reduce blood pressure, anti-thrombotic, potential to treat cardiovascular disease
- Cucurbitacin E – antioxidant, prevents the attachment and growth of tumors
- Lutein – reduce age related eye conditions such as macular degeneration and cataracts, yellow colour
- Pelargonidin – orange dye (red and orange petals)

Traditionally Nasturtiums are used in Andean herbal medicine as disinfectant, wound healing, antibiotic, treatment of coughs, colds, flu, sore throat and bronchitis, treatment of scurvy and blood disorders. Stems are traditionally used for a yellow dye.

Internal applications

Nasturtium juice – 1 teaspoon of extract from leaves diluted in one cup of water

Nasturtium tea – steep 2 teaspoons of fresh nasturtium leaves in boiling water for 10 minutes; strain the leaves; maximum 3 one cup servings per day

External applications

Nasturtium poultice (wound healing, antibacterial) – bruise several leaves; place between two layers of gauze and apply to skin; check frequently for any adverse reactions.

Nasturtium compress (antibacterial, antifungal) – prepare Nasturtium tea; soak clean cloth in tea; apply where needed; remove after maximum 10 minutes.

Nasturtium foot soak (antifungal) – steep 2 cups of Nasturtium leaves in 4 cups of boiling water for 15 minutes; dilute with 10 litres of water; soak feet for 20-30 minutes each day in this solution

Nasturtium, nettle and rosemary rinse (stimulate hair growth) – Boil 1 cup of each herb in 2 L of water; cool and strain; massage into scalp then rinse.

CAUTION: Nasturtiums contain very potent compounds. They are safe to consume in moderate portions. Ingesting excessive amounts may lead to vomiting. Speak to your doctor if you wish to use Nasturtium to treat a health issue – any medicine in excess is a poison. Do not consume Nasturtiums if you are pregnant, breast feeding, suffer from kidney complaints, have stomach or intestinal ulcers. Care should be taken in applying Nasturtiums to the skin. Avoid contact with sensitive areas of skin, particularly the skin of children. Limit skin contact to no more than 10 minutes to avoid burns.

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022
25/8 - Growing vegetables

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Sixth of the 2022 free Workshop Series

Growing Vegetables

With Steven Hoepfner



SouthEast Aagnet

**2.30 pm on Sunday 25th September
at Unley Community Centre
18 Arthur Street Unley**

Register at patwundersitz@gmail.com

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022

Workshop details

The cost of vegetables in shops has soared in recent months as weather systems around Australia – particularly the East coast – have affected crops.

The good news is that we can grow vegetables at home. Even the smallest space is a possible garden.

Steven Hoepfner from Wagtail Urban Farm is our presenter. Steven is well known to the Grow Grow Grow Your Own community and has presented on many topics – especially, fruit trees - over the past ten years.

Questions and problems

We are always keen to help you grow your own vegetables. Please contact Pat on 0407 608 345 if you have questions or problems. Or email through some photos of the growing problems that you are facing. We will try and help.

Your ideas

Let us know if you have any suggestions on how we can help each other grow more of our own food during this period of safe distancing.

Contact us on peter.croft@mmc.com.au.

Thank you to Unley Council for its generous grant to support these workshops.

Sustainable Communities SA - Unley groups

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022

Report

Sowing Vegetables Workshop with Steven Hoepfner

Total attendees: 45

After starring in the ABC Gardening Australia show, two days beforehand, Steven was in top form – entertaining, educating and inspiring us with his enthusiasm and knowledge.

Points Steven made included;

- Wood ash (potash) is a good source of potassium for our gardens. Potassium levels are often low but it is needed by healthy plants – fruit trees in particular. If we add potash to compost heaps/bins or put it on sawdust garden paths in small quantities it will not make the soil too alkaline.
- Overwatering reduces soil health. It floods air pockets and reduces much of the biological activity in the soil.
- Watering in transplanted seedlings is very important. The surface of the soil may look wet but check the moisture level at plant root depths.
- Salinity is still an issue with Adelaide water – another reason for cutting back on the use of mains water in autumn/winter/spring.
- At Wagtail Farm, Steven has tested the soil every year since 2013. The annual cost is \$110. The healthy soil allows very close spacing of vegies. This, plus the narrow paths, means most of the soil is shaded by plants in summer.
- Walk only on paths to reduce soil compaction. Plant roots like soft, aerated soil.
- Wagtail Farm (at Mitchell Park) is open to the public on Thursday mornings. It is well worth a visit.

Ashley Campbell.

Photos



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“Don’t you know I’m a Gardening Australia celebrity now?”*

**Probably not what he was thinking. Steven is super humble and as down to earth as ever but this photo was begging for a caption*

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022

WHAT TO PLANT WHEN

Months to sow seeds	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
BROAD BEANS												
BASIL												
BEANS, bush												
BEANS, climbing												
BETROOT												
Broccoli												
BRUSSELS SPROUTS*												
CABBAGE												
CAPSICUM												
CARROT												
CAULIFLOWER												
CELERIAC												
CELERY												
CHEVRIL												
CHILLI												
CHIVES												
CORIANDER												
CORN												
CUCUMBERS												
DILL												
EGGPLANT												
ENDIVE												
FENNEL												
GARLIC												
HARD SQUASH												
KALE												
KOHLRABI												
LEEKS												
LETTUCE												
MACHE												
MELONS												
MINT												
MIZUNA												
MUSTARD RED												
ONIONS, storage												
PAK CHOI												
PARSLEY												
PARSNIP												
PEAS												
POTATOES												
PUMPKINS												
RADICCHIO												
RADISH												
ROCKET												
SALAD ONIONS												
SILVERBEET												
SPINACH												
SPRING ONIONS												
SWEDE												
TATSOI												
TOMATO												
TURNIPS												
ZUCCHINI												

Number of sowings and frequency

- Once (*better suited to hills)
- Twice - Autumn and Spring
- Twice - once each season
- 1 to 2 - 2 months apart
- 2 to 3 - 3 weeks apart
- 2 to 3 - 4 weeks apart
- 2 to 3 - 6 weeks apart
- 2 to 3 - 8 weeks apart
- 2 to 3 - 2 months apart
- Multiple - 2 weeks apart
- Multiple - 2-3 weeks apart
- Multiple - 4 weeks apart
- Multiple - 8 weeks apart
- Multiple - every month
- Multiple - every 6 weeks

Notes:

Plant families like the Solanaceae (tomato, capsicum, eggplant etc.) and the Cucurbitaceae (pumpkin, zucchini, squash, cucumber etc.) may need frost protection early in the season (Aug - Sept).

Sources:

- Diggers - "The Australian Fruit and Vegetable Garden, Zone 10" (warm coastal)
- Peter Bennett - "Organic Gardening" (2006 - 7th ed)
- Norman de Vaus - "Better Vegetable Growing" (1973, based on South Australia Department of Agriculture table for Adelaide Plains)
- Eliot Coleman "Four Season Harvest" (1999)
- Allsun Farm "Growing Annual Vegetables" CD-ROM

Compiled by Nat Wiseman, Village Greens of Willunga Creek.
Brought to you by:

GREEN AOLAIDE

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022
13/11 - Preserving your produce

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Seventh of the 2022 free Workshop Series

Preserving Your Produce

Presented by Beck Stevens



Beck Stevens in her garden

**2.30 pm on Sunday 13th November
at Unley Community Centre
18 Arthur Street Unley**

Register at patwundersitz@gmail.com

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022

Workshop details

Do you ever find yourself with an over-abundance of home grown produce but have run out of creative ideas on how to use it all? Ever wonder how nice it would be to enjoy your produce for the whole year? Preserving using the iconic Australian Fowlers Vacola method may very well be the solution!

Beck Stevens is a health and food educator, horticulturalist and Agricultural Scientist with a passion for building strong, resilient, and sustainable communities that are linked with their food sources and have a sense of environmental stewardship through sustainable and regenerative land management practices. She is a founding member and coordinator of 'Happy Patch Community Garden' and 'The Happy Pantry Community Food Co-operative', both located in Aberfoyle Park.

In this workshop Beck will walk you through exactly what you need to get started preserving your own food, safely; provide you with tips and tricks, and answer all your questions so that you can confidently start your own food preservation journey and enjoy your harvest all year round!

Questions and problems

We are always keen to help you grow your own vegetables. Please contact Pat on 0407 608 345 if you have questions or problems. Or email through some photos of the growing problems that you are facing. We will try and help.

Your ideas

Let us know if you have any suggestions on how we can help each other grow more of our own food during this period of safe distancing.

Contact us on peter.croft@mmc.com.au.

Thank you to Unley Council for its generous grant to support these workshops.

Sustainable Communities SA - Unley groups

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022

Report

A wonderful presentation by an enthusiastic and skilled preserver using the Fowlers Vacola system to an audience of just over 30 following heavy storms through Adelaide over the weekend.

Beck took us through the essential equipment required, where to get it, how much to pay and all of the steps required to get a good result.

There were many points made to ensure success. Several points were mentioned repeatedly:

- Put the rubber seal on the jar before packing it with fruit.
- Pack all fruit slightly under ripe to retain its shape and pack them in firmly
- The pH of the contents of a jar must be less than 4.6 to kill off bacteria. Meyer lemons are not acidic enough. Go with citric acid or Lisbon lemons instead.
- Vegetables must be pickled to avoid mould etc.
- Sally Wise has produced a recipe book for preserves: recommended

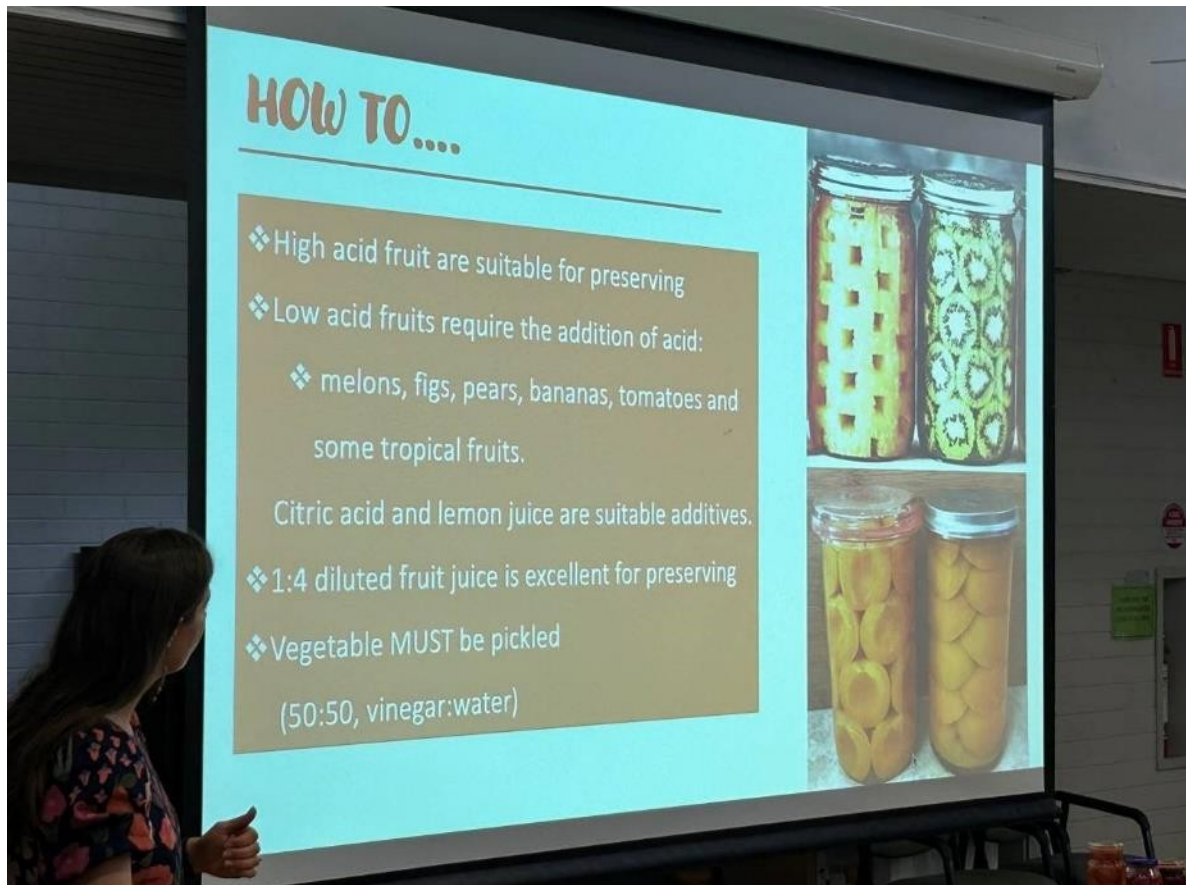
There were many questions from an enthusiastic audience, some of whom had extensive experience in bottling but were seeking answers to lingering questions.

We hope to have Beck back again for another workshop.

Photos




Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022



Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- ❖ Ensure jars are not chipped & are clean and freshly washed
- ❖ Seals are new or in excellent condition
- ❖ Soak seals in warm water for 15 minutes before use. Apply to the jar BEFORE packing
- ❖ Use fruit that is slightly underripe
- ❖ Pack fruit firmly & into a layer of liquid as you go
- ❖ Leave a 12mm headspace at top of jar
- ❖ Pack everything cold
- ❖ Remove trapped air during packing
- ❖ Process all packed bottles WITHIN 2 hours of packing
- ❖ Use stainless steel lids where possible
- ❖ Check clips are in good condition
- ❖ Heat to 92°C and process for recommended time



KEYS TO SUCCESS

- ❖ Allow jars to cool, undisturbed, for 12-18 hours before removing clips
- ❖ Check jar lids regularly during storage
- ❖ Re-process unsealed jars within 24 hours
- ❖ Store in a cool, dark place
- ❖ Use within 2 years



Use fruit that is slightly underripe

Pack fruit firmly & into a layer of liquid as you go

Leave a 12mm headspace at top of jar

Pack everything cold

Remove trapped air during packing

Process all packed bottles WITHIN 2 hours of packing

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Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022



20/11 - Spring Fling Gardening Workshops



Growing Food in your Backyard

Sunday 20 November 2022

Unley Soldiers' Memorial Gardens, Unley

10.30am to 11.30am

Chris Day

Growing Food in Small Gardens

This workshop will show you how to grow food successfully in small spaces - on balconies, patios, in courtyards, on trellises, in pots, raised beds, and wicking beds. Discover the joy of picking, harvesting and eating fresh organic vegetables and fruit that you grow yourself.

12.30pm to 1.30pm

Chris Day

Caring for Fruit Trees

This workshop will help you choose the right location to plant your fruit trees. Discuss different types of fruit trees, where to source, and when to plant. Learn how to prepare the soil, how to plant, when to fertilise, water and prune your fruit trees to give them the best chance of success.

2.30pm to 3.30pm

Jenny Deans

Bringing the Good Bugs into your Garden

This workshop shows that there's more to plant pollinators than honeybees!

Discover the other insect helpers in productive gardens: from pollinators to pest-controllers, these 'good bugs' are out and about in your suburb.

Find out how you can welcome them into your patch to garden alongside you.

Our presenters

Chris Day is from Every Day Sustainable Living and Cockatoo Creek Farm and has been growing food and actively participating in, and teaching, permaculture and sustainable living since early 2000. With a focus on productive edible landscapes in urban, rural and community settings, he designs and installs gardens to suit the individual site and client. Chris is passionate about the actions we can do together to regenerate community and the environment, for current and future generations.

Jenny Deans is a horticulturist, land-carer and backyard vegetable grower, experienced in dealing with weeds, fascinated by native bees and other beneficial insects, and dabbles in garden design with an interest in gardening for habitat. Jenny is a frequent and popular presenter at Unley workshops on growing more food.

THE CITY of
Unley

Presented by the City of Unley, these workshops are made possible through the valuable support and coordination of Grow Grow Grow Your Own.



Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022

Report

GGGYO organised three workshops for the Unley Spring Fling for Unley Council on Sunday 20 November

Originally planned for Soldiers Memorial Gardens but moved to Unley Town Hall when the weather turned stormy

Six stalls inside the Town Hall plus 30 to 40 attendees at each session.

Terrific presentations from Chris Day on Growing Vegetables and Caring for Fruit Trees with many questions from an interested audience. Chris emphasised the importance of designing/ planning the garden with sun and location in mind

Then Jenny Deans who presented on Bringing Good Bugs into your garden. Lots of examples of plants which attract beneficial insects eg alyssum, saltbush and wallaby grass. A smaller group (25) but very well presented with great photos

We shared a table with Sustainable Communities SA who sold lots of Boomerang Bags. We gave out lots of seeds (thanks Anne Wilson), tomato seedlings (thanks Pat and Diana Bickford) and giveaways (wicking pots and fertilisers thanks Pauline).

Other stalls at the day included Unley Council, East West Waste and Barrow and Bench. A good experience

Photos



Chris Day

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own - Almanac 2022



Evidence of the often hidden roles in our group – ever helpful hands for supporting the workshops, awarding the prizes and sometimes forming part of the stage decoration

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Sustainable communities table was popular and kept the team busy.
Note the Mayor patiently waiting his turn.

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Jenny Deans in full speaking flight



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Living with Big Trees videos:

Introduction

We had been hoping to do a small video on Living with Big Trees for some time and seemed to be hitting a few hurdles. Finally we have found a photographer but the project has grown like topsy and is now going to be a bit more comprehensive than first envisaged. We are working together with the Conservation Council SA Trees Group to produce a little video which will highlight why we love trees, why we need them and how people have accommodated or lived with or actively sought to be with big trees in our community. The following stories are from some of the participants in the video series. We thank them for their participation in the project and their writings, which are quite poignant.

Annie Wharton, October 2022

While this particular project wasn't directly funded by the City of Unley, we still wanted to document it in our Almanac of group achievements.

You can now watch all eight short videos on the Sustainable Communities SA YouTube channel available at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyQz4iTFHOn9z_1D2kjA6FQ

Transcripts

The River Redgum

Would you plant a river redgum in your backyard?

Well, we did, in 1991 after buying a house with a recently cleared garden. We planted it as a commitment to the future and to this bit of Kaurna land. Our first son was born a few years after we planted it. Perhaps the two acts were connected? Being a responsible guardian of one of the biggest and grandest of the original Adelaide Plains flora is not dissimilar to the long-term commitment that raising children requires! That shared joy of witnessing enormous change and growth over time, and whilst children eventually move away, the tree just keeps going and growing!

It's been a revelation sharing this family home with a tree that began as a small seedling and is now a significant tree with a circumference of over 3 metres. In a frantic world our red gum has been a constant that has grounded us and reminded us that our lives are short by comparison to those of our great trees. It is thing of wonder, not just to us, but to the whole neighbourhood.

To say it's done well would be an understatement! Its only 31 years old and it's a landmark and an island of both attraction and value to a diverse array of passing wildlife. Red gums have a tiny flower so it's not a haven for the honey eaters but it is a great attractor of the larger birds such as Crows, Magpies, Currawongs, Sulphur Crested Cockatoos, Wattle Birds and Murray Magpies who have nested in it for years.

Its bark is now craggy and habitat for small lizards and many insects. We have a stream of flying foxes that fly over it every evening, suggesting it may be a way point in wherever they are heading. Occasionally a koala turns up and spends a day or two resting in its crown, there is always something going on up there. Sharing our lives with this tree and all the wildlife it attracts has been one of the great joys and the ultimate pay offs of giving up that part of the garden to this original tree. It is a living connection to what once grew across our suburb. A way to remember where we live and who and what lived here for millennia under these trees, across this landscape.

When the big gales blow in from the south-west and the tree roars and sways, I think of the day we planted it and wonder if it might fail. But at 31 it's not even a teenager by definition and it bends and bears the brunt and is still there in the morning. Our neighbours love our red gum in the golden hour, when the western sun lights it up and highlights its mottled boughs and trunk,

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or when it's full of birds screeching in the first light of dawn or the haunting call of boo books high above in the depths of the night.

It's a commitment and we have to convince the odd neighbour of its joys and the benefits of living under a magnificent tree. Its trunk is so huge now that I can't really hug it anymore, just embrace it. As I do, I take pleasure in whispering to it that I will protect it and fight for it as long as I'm alive. It's the least I can do after the pleasure and happiness, as well as the understanding, it has given to us.

Hugh, October 2022

A garden of trees on a tiny block!

Our house and garden are designed as a cohesive unit rather than separate entities. The garden and in particular the trees form a micro-climate and are an integral passive solar-energy feature. Deciduous trees shade the house in summer and allow maximum light during winter, whilst mass plantings of evergreen trees screen the property providing a strong framework.

Three Bradford pear trees, *Prunus bradford*, provide welcome summer shade to our driveway and also to our neighbouring driveway - we are fortunate to have neighbours who also enjoy our trees even when the beautiful autumn leaves fall! Espaliered crab apples, *malus floribunda*, border the entrance pathway provide an immediate welcoming of cool green on a hot day.

It has been estimated that the temperature drops by 10 degrees on entering the garden – a wonderful benefit on a hot summer day and a natural coolant that extends beyond the boundaries of your property. Unseen are additional air purifying and oxygen providing benefits of the trees.

Throughout the garden strategically placed deciduous trees, a Golden honey locus, *Gleditsia tricanthos*, a tall Maidenhair tree, Ginko biloba, and a weeping Japanese Pagoda, *Sophora Japonica*, provide summer canopies over outdoor living spaces and shade to help manage the interior temperature of the house while in winter they shed their foliage allowing available sunlight into the house. A row of *Malus tschonoskii* a narrow upright form of deciduous crab apple provides summer shade to the southern aspect of the property, with beautiful autumn colour and winter light.

A quince tree, *Cydonia oblongo*, stands proudly on the western side of the garden and produces fragrant white flowers in spring turning into large crops of golden quinces each autumn.

Evergreen flowering ash, *Fraxinus griffithi*, and *Magnolia grandiflora* at the front and eastern side of the property frame the boundary, provide a windbreak and screen neighboring properties helping to create a tranquil oasis.

In addition to the environmental benefits of our tree garden it provides sanctuary to reduce everyday stress, promote relaxation and wellbeing, and a haven for many New Holland honey eaters, Red Wattlebirds, Magpie-larks, Parakeets, Finches and the occasional Kookaburra.

Caring for the trees involves providing fertilizer in spring, occasional watering during dry summers and an arborist trim every 3-4 years. We enjoy the beauty of the autumn leaves, the crunch walking on fallen leaves and meditative exercise of raking the leaves. Gutter guard takes care of the leaves that fall on the roof.

Trees are a wonderful asset to our garden, our health and wellbeing, they absorb carbon dioxide, store carbon and release oxygen and act as air purifiers thus contributing to the broader urban environment and all this on just 400 m².

Maggie & John, October 2022

Ian's Tree Story:

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Green areas are the lungs of a city. Having spent some time in Germany I was impressed by the use of trees, in forests, in parks, in streets and in cemeteries. They bring beauty, shade, clean fresh fragrant air, and birds, with their life enhancing calls. We cannot have enough trees.

This all began when cracks appeared in the inner walls of the house. All other causes were eliminated. It was the tree. But 15 years ago, we had bought the house with the tree. We loved the tree. We wake every morning to the sound of birds twittering. It is a marvellous way to start the morning. The tree stays. The question? How to stop the roots getting under the house. The solution was a trench about two metres deep in front of the verandah, filled with concrete and with a thick plastic sheet in front of it.

Result: The trench works. Doors that have jammed for years, open and shut: cracks have stopped growing. The house is safe and the tree is safe and the birds still have a home. The perfect solution.

Ian, October 2022

Annie's Tree Story

I have lived on this piece of land in Unley for a large part of my life – my brother and I grew up with these two magnificent River red gums which were on the property backing onto ours and very close to our back fence. I have a photo taken from my street in about 1940 and the trees were already huge then. Only on 3 or 4 occasions in my lifetime did large branches fall. These beautiful trees offered sanctuary for all kinds of wildlife including kookaburras and mopokes. The gums were appreciated not only by my family but by the wider community, being a strong visual element in the landscape. I believe such trees belong to the community, not just the owners of the land, and should be respected as such. Sadly these two trees are now gone – due to unrestrained residential development, fear, ignorance, bureaucratic ineptitude, and a lack of regulatory mechanisms to protect significant trees on private land.

In my lifetime the trees' home has gone from a vacant block in my childhood, to one where the location of a modest dwelling (1960s) allowed virtually half the block to nurture the trees, and then under infill, has lost the appropriate space for the trees to thrive when a large dwelling encroached on it.

Anne, October 2022

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My Amazing Back Yard Companion

I've lived in suburban Adelaide for the last 25+ years with an amazing companion. A massive gumtree. My companion is massive in that it really belongs in a huge open space with companion trees! We all thrive amid companions. I suspect this backyard was a big space before housing came along and many companion trees were destroyed! I don't know this one's species name. The arborists, who trim it from time to time, cannot define the species however other than a gumtree.

I love the elegance, beauty and strength from this tree. There is much ancient wisdom contained here. This tree was a contributing factor to me when buying my home. I welcome the way the branches host so many birds, insects and other creatures through the seasons. I love watching the gumnuts grow, burst open and then, as if it is snowing, shed and fall to the ground. The shade from the tree is welcome too.

Every 5 or so years I invite arborists in to check on this tree and to give it a trim. I'm amazed at their knowledge and care. It's best that the limbs don't reach over the neighbour's fences just in case it drops a branch. Yes, I must budget for this expense, as I must budget for other things of importance and care about. I'm told I won't have a flourishing garden while this massive companion is there as it takes a lot of water, creates a large amount of shade and drops bark and leaves through the season. I'm 100% OK with that! All managed with a rake and a little help from others. We all shed seasonally one way or another!

Oh, and my back garden is doing very well including raised my vegetable garden. I'm grateful for the oxygen given from this tree. Oxygen, the essential to life, human life.

Trees are our ancestors, our kin. We complement each other. We breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbon, while trees take in carbon dioxide and release oxygen. I understand that one large tree can provide a day's oxygen for up to four people. We cannot live without oxygen.

I am mindful of Thomas Berry, Cultural Historian and Geologist who reminds us, "We are a communion of subjects not a collection of objects."

Jen, October 2022



Remembering Russ

This year, we remember Russ Talbot, one of our founding members.



Funeral Eulogy

The Grow Grow Grow Your Own group were very honoured to be able to speak at his funeral. We all shared some thoughts and Abby crafted it into an eloquent speech. Even more impressively she managed to read it out beautifully with warmth on the day. Legend.

It is worth noting that Ashley also gave an excellent tribute as one of his closest mates but we don't have the transcript. Just know that it was also tops, included great retelling of one of Russ's famous witty quips, hopping on one foot and celebrated many adventures on bikes.

Below are the words Abby shared.

Hello, my name is Abby and I was Russ' yoga teacher for about 18 years. I visited Russ in his home for 1:1 yoga lessons to assist him with his wellbeing. More recently, he introduced me to the Grow Grow Grow Your Own - or the 'Grow Grow' group for short. For which I'm very grateful.

With the financial support of the Unley Council, Grow Grow are a group of dedicated volunteers who are passionate about helping to support and educate people in growing their own food and learning about how we can positively impact the environment from our own back yards. We also have a keen interest in tree preservation and planting.

Today I speak on behalf of our group including; Peter, Pat, Annie, Anne, Kat, Nolda, Chris, Jan, Ashley and myself. I speak today on behalf of everyone's reflections and sentiments about Russell, highlighting the gems he left with all of us, as his legacy.

Grow Grow started in 2012 and as Russ was one of the founding members, it will come as no surprise to you all that Russ came up with the name for Grow Grow - to the tune of Row row row your boat. He was also the editor of our yearly Almanac which was full of information, anecdotes and very funny side notes about the workshops we have facilitated. All of us have been touched by Russ' openness in sharing his journey through the process of cancer. He was to the point, pragmatic yet philosophical, graceful under pressure and realistic about where he was and where he was headed. He knew he was dying and accepted it with dignity. That's not to say that he didn't struggle. To remember the best of Russ is our work but as the complexity of being human goes, we all also know the pain and suffering he had experienced particularly in this last phase of his life. If we don't honour that then we don't honour the manner in which he dealt with it. And those are the qualities that each of us resonate with and admire as outstanding.

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Russ was a wonderful wordsmith. A quality admired by many. The way he wrote would give a perspective that felt close to him yet distant to the whole situation which gave us all a birds eye view of the map laid out before him. I'm quite sure I'm not alone in laughing aloud when reading his emails. If you know Harley (Russ' cat) you will know that his nature is a little rambunctious. There were a number of times during our yoga sessions that Harley would charge in like cat possessed and start wanting to 'play' which invariably involved biting and scratching. Despite Russ' difficulties speaking there was absolute clarity in his yelling at Harley. Unquestionable, loud and clear! This was the case whether it was me being attacked or Russell. It also didn't matter what posture Russ was in, sitting in active poses or lying peacefully in relaxation. From calm to 'whack the cat' in a second...and then back to relaxation as if nothing had happened.

Whilst gathering all the opinions of the Grow Grow group, one of the most appreciated qualities was Russ' sense of humour. Despite all his challenges he was able to transform his observations of the world into something funny that also had a deeper sense of meaning. Telling his story through his emails, gave us all an example of living when faced with a terminal illness and extremely difficult and uncomfortable circumstances. There's no prescription for how we deal with these issues, but Russ' approach allowed us all to have the opportunity to experience all the colours of the rainbow during this time; not the glum or the sugar coated version. But a real, honest, factual, funny, sad and entertaining view from the sidelines.

Russ had a deep appreciation for the natural world. When visiting him in the hospice I asked him if he had a favourite tree because Grow Grow are going to plant a tree in his memory. To which he replied, I'd like a beautiful one, one that people stop to look at. It has been arranged with the Unley Council that a Crab Apple tree with gorgeous blossoms and leaves that change colour, will be planted out the front of the Unley Community Centre where we run our workshops with a plaque inscribed with his name and one of his poems which I will close with today: *When the light is right the Poet Tree glows and shakes itself and an autumn of leaves fly free.*



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Photo memories

There is limited photographic evidence of Russ as he was typically the one behind the camera, but we do have a few gems.



Our last Zoom meeting with Russ, always with some lovely artwork in the background. (Ashley doesn't have a computer so logs in via phone). So clever of Russ to do this!

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Chris

Christmas lunch in the garden



Excursion to the Greenfields Wetlands.

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A lunch given for the verge garden recipients and GGGYO group at Amanda Rossi's, at Myrtle Bank. Amanda and her friend and neighbour, Karen Flynn, are on the right.



Installing a verge bed at Black Forest – Christy Spiers' place. Russ always pitched in.

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Tree Memorial

On 12 September 2022 we gathered to remember Russ and conduct a ceremonial worm juice treatment at his new trees and memorial outside the Unley Community Centre.



*“Many people get a tree planted in their honour.
Only very special people get three trees”*

Ashley Campbell, Sept 2022

After doing so fabulously at the Funeral, Abby has now become the unofficial speech giver for Grow Grow Grow Your Own and was ushered up to lead the dedication at the tree event.

Welcome everyone,

I acknowledge that the land we are on is not ours but shared and that there is a deep relationship between it and the Kaurana people.

Welcome also to Russ who is now on the other side of the thin veil we call life.

It's paradoxical to me that whilst the physical form of the person we love is not here anymore, they can sometimes feel closer.

He's here in the trees and the poetry on his plaque.

He's here in every one of us and how he brought out a side of us all that connects us today.

He's definitely here in the spirit of the cake!

I believe I'm not alone in being here with everyone today in a tone of gratitude for Russ' life, his contribution to each of us individually and to GGGYO.

Also in this environment of gratitude is all of us. Connected through the desire to create a greener more symbiotic world and of course the enjoyment of each other's company.

Thanks to everyone here today for your presence and contributions. A big thank you to Peter who has been instrumental in organising the trees and plaque for Russ. Where would GGGYO be without you.

I thought it appropriate to share a poem which you may be familiar with.

This is one of my favourite poems by Rumi:

Out beyond the ideas of wrong doing and right doing

There is a field, I'll meet you there

When the soul lies down in that grass

The world is too full to talk about

Even the phrase 'each other' doesn't make any sense.

Abby

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Dedication by Abby



Grand reveal of the memorial



Special worm juice treatment

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