

GGGYO 2021 ALMANAC

This Is The Year That Was

Love in a Time of Climate Change

I don't love you as if you were rare earth metals,
conflict diamonds, or reserves of crude oil that cause
war. I love you as one loves the most vulnerable
species: urgently, between the habitat and its loss.

I love you as one loves the last seed saved
within a vault, gestating the heritage of our roots,
and thanks to your body, the taste that ripens
from its fruit still lives sweetly on my tongue.

I love you without knowing how or when this world
will end. I love you organically, without pesticides.
I love you like this because we'll only survive

in the nitrogen rich compost of our embrace,
so close that your emissions of carbon are mine,
so close that your sea rises with my heat.

Craig Santos Perez

"The precepts of the Honourable Harvest: to take only what is given;
to use it well; to be grateful for the gift; and to reciprocate the gift."

Robin Wall Kimmerer, 'Braiding Sweetgrass'

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Welcome

If this year was a movie it'd be called "2020 2 (even though it's 2021)". Probably a bit long for a title, but if we just called it "2020 2", you'd confuse people if you said it out loud.

Well, as we predicted last year, 2021 wasn't a whole lot different to 2020.



It was sort of like a more settled version – whereas 2020 was full of new (er, unprecedented...) challenges, in 2021 we had the benefit of experience and it all went a lot more smoothly – I guess this time things were preceded.

In this year's Almanac I'd really liked to have given space to the admirable exploits of some of our team outside 'official' GGGYO things. In particular, Chris' Cactus Adventure, Nolda's APY Adventures, Pat's Wetlands Work, Annie's tireless work on trees, and Pauline's – well, where do I start?

Their stories say something about *us*, the sort of people who make up GGGYO. While on one level these activities have nothing to do with GGGYO, on another they have everything to do with GGGYO.

What they are is completely consistent and congruent with our values and world view. That individual members get involved in these sort of things, that when they tell the rest of us about them nobody thinks it's a digression and we should get back on track, that we all support/approve, says something about GGGYO as well. The boundary line is grey and fuzzy; I reckon I could've found a way to include these and nobody would bat an eyelid. In the end, the deciding factor wasn't philosophical, it was pragmatic – I ran out of time!

Looking at the bigger picture: The hallmark of human beings is our adaptability. We can adjust and adapt to *any* conditions. Some people still talk about "getting back to normal" though. They haven't figured it out yet. There's no going back, any more than we can go back to 1950 (if you'd want to). What we'll do is go *forward* to normal.

Of course that assumes that the current is an aberration, a bump in the road between the two 'normals'. That's certainly possible – but it's not guaranteed. Climate Change is going to change (and is changing) our world, quite possibly in ways we don't predict (as well as ways we do). Who knows, it might give rise to new life forms. It may produce a world in which new viruses, new pandemics, are the norm. (Mind you, COVID may have already

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achieved that. I don't think it's done with its mutations yet. The Greek alphabet has lots of letters to go.)

Whatever happens, in 2022 we'll go on caring and making our small difference. Because it matters; it all matters.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Russ". The signature is stylized with a large, looped initial 'R' and a cursive 'uss'.

PS. Thank you to Dr Craig Perez for his permission to include his excellent poem.

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 particularly, we have been very engaged with the topic of tree canopy.

2021 was the ninth 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>

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, Russell Talbot, Abby Ward-Takarabe, 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.

26/1 – Australia Day Awards

In late December 2020, we were honoured and delighted to be told we had been "successfully nominated for an Australia Day Award", and invited to a ceremony to receive it:

The City of Unley is hosting an Australia Day Citizenship Ceremony on our Village Green which will include an Awards Presentation.

The formal ceremony, including award presentations, will run for approximately one hour. Following this, the Village Green will be open to the public for an event with a free sausage sizzle, live music, and other entertainment which we hope you will stay and enjoy.

So on January 26, we duly rocked up, receiving our honour from the Mayor, Michael Hewitson, on behalf of the City of Unley, "in recognition of our contribution to the community".



The whole thing was great. We were extremely warmly welcomed and (unexpectedly) fussed over from the moment we arrived. But even better was the ceremony itself. It was surprisingly moving. People becoming citizens – there was so much joy and pride in the room; I hadn't realised how much it meant to them. I even liked the little faux pas, like the

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playing of the anthem and no-one sure if they were meant to sing (these days we're so used to it being sung to us).

The ceremony was conducted in a huge open-ended marquee on the 'Village Green' behind the Council chambers. As well the ceremony for new citizens, they presented two Awards:

1. for the 'Unley Citizen of the year' - an indigenous guy, who gave a brilliant speech, and
2. ...Us! GGGYO! For "Active Citizenship".

Mayor Hewitson gave us a very generous speech, about local people giving to the community, making a difference and asking for nothing. Which is true, but it was kinda humbling, almost embarrassing, having someone say it about us. Like we know we're noticed, but we don't think about it. It's nice having people say nice things about us, but I'd rather not be there when they do!

Peter spoke well in reply, thanking the Council for their support and acknowledging the support of Kat Ryan and Matthew Ives in particular. Then, for some reason, which Peter didn't bother to explain, he and the Mayor broke into a dance number on stage. It was all very groovy but a little unexpected...



14/2 – WORKSHOP: "Pruning for Fruit"

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

First of the 2021 free Workshop Series

Pruning for Fruit



Vigorous lime tree but no fruit, Peter's place

2.30 pm on Sunday 14th February 2021
at Morrie Harrell Reserve, Ramage Street Unley
(or Unley Community Centre
18 Arthur Street Unley if inclement weather).

Register at patwundersitz@gmail.com

Workshop details

How do you prune fruit trees to maximise the amount and quality of the fruit that you produce?

Our presenter is Alan Halsted. 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.

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

Future Workshops: We have a very interesting program for 2021: Growing for Gut Health (28 March), Native Food Plants (16 May), Tree canopy: natives and exotics (27 June), Managing weeds (8 August), All about Citrus (19 September) and Wicking raised beds (7 November).

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.



Fruiting plum tree, needs a haircut: Peter's place

Sustainable Communities SA – Unley groups

Report:

Total attendees -60

Presenter: Alan Halsted

Whoever-it-is-that-listens-to-us duly delivered on our request for perfect weather for this outdoor Workshop (well, almost – it was perfect in the morning, and in the afternoon it was perfect if you were moving or under a bit of shade, but it was perhaps just a bit too hot standing stationary in the sun).

This was a terrific, well-appreciated workshop. Alan's virtually impossible not to like. Also, he knows what he's talking about, he's unfailingly interested in people's questions and keen to share what he knows, and he does so like a conversation not a lecture. Hard to go wrong with that combination.



Some notes:

- Most important thing – work out the pruning technique you like, then stick to it. Alan thinks it's more important that you keep doing the same thing, than '*A is better than B*'.
- Lemons are heavy feeders – don't skimp on water and fertiliser.
- Lemons can be pruned so as to produce fruit all year round.
 - The major fruiting sites on a citrus tree tend to occur on the outer reaches of the canopy. If you give the tree an all-over haircut, you will remove all of the fruiting sites. Lemons only fruit on branches at least a year old, so you'll be lemon-less for over a year.
 - Instead Alan prunes throughout the year, and selectively, so that there are always fruiting branches while pruned ones rejuvenate.
 - This regular pruning ensures that the tree maintains its vigour, continually producing lots of fresh growth and fruiting sites.
- Fig trees – can cut off anything, almost anytime. Can prune them back to a short stump, and you'll get new branches, and fruit, within a year!
- Quinces – **tough**. One of the few things that isn't bothered at all by Adelaide's afternoon heat.



Comment from Annie:

"The thing I took away on Sunday was the fact that citrus trees need all their foliage to protect them from our afternoon sun in the summer – the leaves burn easily. That was very helpful to me and hopefully might remain in my head!!

So vase shape for other fruit trees, but not citrus. (Though I think the vase shape idea might be changing too coz of our summers.)"

19/3 – Raised Beds: Church St Highgate

Well, in the end we didn't do a lot with regards to this one. Still, that's no reason not to take the credit for it, so it's in the Almanac.

I think the best way to record and report this is to simply lay out the email trail.

Lead-up – genesis

We were put in touch with Jenni Sleight, of Church Street Highgate, after she contacted the Council about installing Raised Beds on her verge. This is Peter's summary email back to the group:

On 1/02/2021 2:31 pm, Peter Croft wrote:

Pat, Annie, Jan and I met Jenni Sleight at 22 Church Street Highgate today. Jenni wants to put three beds on her verge planted with herbs mainly (plus some cherry tomatoes?). She wants to build up the community feel in her street and has good connections with those in the adjacent houses and across the road.

She is a very keen gardener and has constructed wicking beds in wine barrels at the back of her house (mainly planted to herbs and greens) and has a number of other wicking beds at her Mount Torrens property (including an old bath, an old fridge etc).

Her plan is for three wicking beds on the verge: one three metres in length and the other two at two metres in length. All to be 650mm high and 900 mm wide. They will be located almost adjacent to the existing footpath, leaving ample room for exit from parked cars, avoiding infrastructure and providing for rubbish bins to be located on the kerb. The footpath is very reasonable in width and the beds will cause no restrictions at all for foot traffic.

We discussed design and cost of the wicking beds. Design to involve a liner (as usual) plus slotted ag. pipe (as usual) plus gravel/scoria, drainage pipe, then geotextile, soil and plants (and mulch). We will pay for the cost of the beds (around \$1200-\$1500?) and Jenni will source the balance. We will help with advice and help with signage.

We talked about the erection of the beds being a community event and said that the soil arrival is always a crowd pleaser.

Concern was raised about the source of the steel for the beds. I've checked with Dingo Tanks who said that "We only use Australian Made Steel." He uses tank steel (which avoids rusting) and can make them in coloured steel too (Aquaplate).

Next steps:

- Peter to get quote from Dingo Tanks and forward to Jenni
- Jenni to fill in Council form and seek approval to locate the beds on the verge.
- If all OK, then order and set a date.

Lead-up – subsequent

On 23 Feb 2021, at 9:28 am, Jenni Sleigh wrote:

Hi Peter,

I had been waiting for the formal approval letter as noted below but it looks like we are ready to go.

I have confirmed with council that they can be 600 mm high (not the 500 mm height I was initially planning). Could I confirm we are ordering 3 Dingo tanks.

1 x 600 high x 900 wide x 3000 long

2 x 600 high x 900 wide x 2000 long.

All in galvanised metal.

The tanks can have a threaded outlet without the ball valve (the \$30 option) as they will have an upright pipe off the 20 mm external thread outlet to the height of the wicking base.

Thanks again for all your assistance in organising the tanks.

Warm regards,

Jenni

On 23 Feb 2021, at 17:22, Peter Croft wrote:

Jenni

Good to hear that you have approval.

I'm ready to order the three raised beds as in your email below and wanted to confirm that you would like them at 600 not 500 high as per your email.

I understand from our onsite conversation that you will organise the remaining items: the bed liner, slotted ag. pipe/scoria, geotex, soil, the upright pipe and plants. From our discussion, you also indicated that you had made a number of wicking beds before, so may not need help on design. Let me know if my recollection is incorrect.

Before I place the order, we should settle on an installation date and time. Then work back from there for a delivery date. We talked about a possible weekend time - however, as there will be several cubic metres of soil, ensuring that this can be delivered on the day may be important.

I'm not sure what installation day you had in mind, but I have listed some suggested dates and times, based on the raised beds taking three to four weeks to make and deliver, and the idea that neighbours might be invited to see and help (?): any afternoon in the week of March 29th or the following week (at say 4pm?) noting that Easter is on 2-5 April. Let me know re which of these or other dates might work and I will check with our group too.

We would like to help where we can on the day and take some photos if that's ok.

Regards, Peter Croft

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On 24 Feb 2021, at 07:45, Jenni Sleigh wrote:

Hi Peter,

I confirm the 600 mmm height.

I have sourced the remaining materials (already in my garage!) and will get the gravel & soil on the day. I will use the same design as the other beds which are all working well.

I would prefer a Friday not the weekend as it would be easier to get the gravel & soil. I am planning to get this locally from Hollards as we have a trailer. Could we aim for Friday March 19th as the installation day? I know Dingo said up to 3 to 4 weeks but I imagine it is not a large order to place & fill in 3 weeks. Ideally the delivery earlier that week as I am planning to paint a protective bitumen base on the underside of the tank to protect it before installation.

I have mentioned it to the neighbours but will also catch up with them when we have an installation date.

I am very happy to have everyone come & help & take photos.

Thanks, Jenni

Lead-up – decides to do it herself

On 24/02/2021 1:31 pm, Peter Croft wrote:

Jenni Church has decided to pay for the raised beds herself and has already purchased the ag. pipe etc. but would appreciate some seedlings. We can still be a part of the installation in a limited way but it will be managed by Jenni. I have attached the two most recent emails:

On 24 Feb 2021, at 11:37 am, Jenni Sleigh wrote:

Hi Peter,

As I mentioned over the phone, I think I would prefer to put in hardwood sleeper wicking beds on the verge. They are less susceptible to heat & maybe more robust.

I can source these from Bunnings. I am happy to pay for the components but maybe the Grow Grow Grow Your Own group may be able to help with some herbs? I am doing one bed with native herbs (which I will source from McLaren Vale nursery that I go to) & have been potting up some cuttings but would love to have some more from the group if that is possible? Then the money you were going to spend could be spent on more courses 😊

I am off to work now but happy to discuss more by email.

Thanks, Jenni

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On 24 Feb 2021, at 13:10, Peter Croft wrote:

Jenni

Thanks for your email and the discussion today. I am sure that we can arrange for a variety of seedlings to be there.

Regards, Peter Croft

What can we do?

On 16 Mar 2021, at 07:39, Jenni Sleigh wrote:

Hi Peter,

I have been building the wicking bed slowly over the last 2 weeks. I am planning to do the liner and gravel today and will take photos. It looks like Friday 19th will still be great for a planting morning. I was thinking of 10am and I am happy to provide a morning tea. If any of the Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own team can come then that would be fantastic!

See you then, Jenni

On 16 Mar 2021, at 09:39, Jenni Sleigh wrote:

Hi Peter,

Seedlings would be great! I am thinking of mostly herbs at this time of year.

I will send a picture of progress 😊

Jenni

On the day – Annie

On 19/03/2021 2:42 pm, Anne Wharton wrote:

Hi Peter et al

Below is what I just sent to Jenni. A couple of things of note:

- worm farms in the middle of the beds - pieces of plastic pipe with holes drilled in them
- a layer of coir in the base of the soil layer which helps the water to wick up
- the timber beds are well and truly stabilised with steel corners and steel rods through the middle of the sides
- Jenni used gravel in the base

She's certainly an expert in wicking beds!

Cheers, Annie

----- Forwarded Message -----

To: Jenni Sleigh

Hi Jenni

Thanks so much for inviting us this morning to the planting - the easiest and most pleasurable part of the whole process! It was a real pleasure to be part of it and your wicking beds are amazing! If we were having a competition, they would be up there with the best of them! I love the swap and share shelves and hope they foster more community on your street.

Cheers, Annie
(for Grow Grow Grow Your Own)

From Jenni Sleigh: Wicking Bed Construction

From: Jenni Sleigh

Subject: Photos of the wicking bed construction at Church St

Date: 30 March 2021 at 9:20:40 am

Hi Peter & Annie,

I finally remembered to take some photos of the completed beds and the ones under construction. I have included a description of the process with the construction ones & I am happy for you to share them with anyone else who is planning to make a wicking bed.

Again, thank you for your support.

Wicking bed construction:



1. Wicking bed frames were made of sustainable hardwood with metal corner supports (bought from Bunnings). They were then lined with pond liner.



2. The pond liner had a U shaped piece of slotted agricultural pipe placed in the base to act as a water reservoir. This was covered with 20 mmm gravel.



3. A piece of PVC down pipe was placed in the corner with the bottom end placed inside the slotted ag pipe to act as the water inlet/ filling pipe. This was held in place by the gravel.



4. The gravel was covered with water that helped ensure the base was level. The gravel was then covered with recycled shade-cloth to act as a barrier between the gravel and the soil (used instead of geotextile as I already had it).



5. The barrier layer was covered with coir (coconut husks) to help water retention in the soil and to help the wicking action.



6. This was then covered with garden loam with compost. Each bed also had 10 kg of composted chicken manure (Dynamic Lifter) mixed in. A worm tower was placed in the centre. This is a piece of PVC pipe with multiple 6 mm holes drilled around the circumference at the base to let the worms migrate out into the bed. The tower is filled with vegetable scraps from the top & the red wriggler composting worms then eat the scraps. I spray painted the white PVC silver for appearances only!

7. The soil is watered in. The overflow pipe at the end ensures the water level is just above the barrier layer so the soil does not get waterlogged.



Overflow pipe

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8. The beds were planted out with herbs and edible flowers - thanks Annie!



9. The beds were mulched and the signs attached.



We have already put in community share shelves for people to share their extra produce, which are being well used!



28/3 – WORKSHOP: "Growing for Gut Health"

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Second of the 2021 free Workshop Series

Growing for Gut Health



Grace: milk kefir grains

**2.30 pm on Sunday 28th March
at Unley Community Centre
18 Arthur Street Unley.**

Register at patwundersitz@gmail.com

Workshop details

The topic of Gut Health has received a lot of coverage in the past few years: lots of books on the topic, plenty in the media and speakers at Writers Week.

This workshop looks at what we grow from a different angle, not just how we use the harvest from our gardens but also what we can grow in our kitchens to improve our gut health. The human gut is your internal garden and this miraculous ecosystem needs the same care and attention as our outdoor garden in order to flourish. We will show you how to grow live cultures in the kitchen to make fermented drinks like ginger & turmeric beer, beetroot kvass and milk kefir, as well as ferment fruit in honey, with recipes available.

Our workshop will be led by Grace who is a Functional Nutrition Consultant with a special interest in gut health. Grace has been presenting workshops on cooking, preserving, fermentation and home cheese making for 30 years. She started preserving as a child with her mother and her market-gardening grandparents and went on to work in restaurants and the cheese industry. Grace is well-known to our group as a regular presenter.

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

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

Future Workshops: Are you coming to our next workshop? The topic will be Native Food Plants. As always, we are interested to hear about topics of interest to you.

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.



Grace's turmeric roots

Report:

Total attendees – 45 (Full house)

Beautiful day. I know people all around the world think *their* autumn is special – but Adelaide's really is! It is a privilege to live here.

This was a fantastic workshop from Grace. Accomplished chef, cheesemaker, excellent presenter and **so** knowledgeable – she really knows her stuff – Grace is just so impressive. She got asked a couple of questions that were a level above what she was talking about; the equivalent of technical questions from an obviously informed questioner. She answered seamlessly and satisfied both the questioner and us – I didn't quite understand what they were talking about, but felt like I almost did. But it was apparent that this didn't stretch Grace at all; we were still talking pretty basic/simple stuff (for her at least).

Grace took us on a tour of our gut and the way that lifestyle, food and environment affect it. Our immune system starts in our gut and there is constant communication between our brain and our gut affecting everything we do and feel.

She likened the management of our gut to growing a garden: one needs healthy soil, weeding, seeding and feeding.

- Healthy soil for a gut means management of sleep, stress, exercise and relationships.
- Weeding is all about eliminating plastics, pesticides and preservatives from our food. An interesting point about not using vegetable oils if possible but ghee and other less processed fats.
- Seeding: means eating whole natural foods - preferably seasonal and local (see ewg.org for the clean 15 and dirty dozen foods). Variety is a key. Plus probiotic supplements made from whole foods.
- Feeding: especially fermented foods, alliums, fermented drinks and tonics plus prebiotic foods.

Grace then took us through the process of making kefir, ginger fizz and beetroot kvass. Recipes then emailed to us. After her session, Grace was surrounded by workshop participants with lots of questions, tastings and distribution of kefir starters.

Gut health: Why is it important?

Think of it like a rainforest – an ecosystem, all interrelated. So (Garden metaphor):

1. Build healthy soil
 - Have eating 'window' of 12 hours. Don't eat outside of this window.
 - good sleep
 - exercise/movement
2. Weeding. What can we weed out?
 - Toxins
 - Chemicals
 - Plastic
 - Processed & refined foods

- avoid preservative – purpose is to extend shelf life. It stops/slows food rotting. i.e. breaking down. The consequence of that is that it's harder to digest
- Excess. Be especially conscious of sugar.

3. Feeding

- Principles to guide you: Whole, Natural, Variety & Diversity.
 - Buy things *without* an Ingredient List – wholefoods have just one ingredient.
- Develop 'Good Habits'.
 - eg. with vegetables: eat lots of colours



Russ' takeaways (please excuse the pun):

- Eat in a 12 hour window
- Processed foods – your gut doesn't 'know' what to do with them. Especially vegetable oils: not their natural state, highly processed to become this, and therefore very unfamiliar to your gut.
- Rule of thumb: the more processed (i.e. changed) the less digestible (i.e. your body has to work hard to digest it – make it usable). Puts your body under stress. Some highly processed things are almost indigestible.



Before the workshop Abby was talking to Grace. Abby shared her story about the time she made a fermented ginger drink not unlike Grace's "Ginger Fizz". Having made it, Abby thought it'd be a good idea to drink the whole bottle before giving her yoga class. In Abby's words:

I drank a full cup (maybe 250ml) but I think the issue was that I'd let it ferment too long. It didn't taste bad so I thought it must be fine. Fermented stuff lasts for.... well, forever... I thought! 😬 Wrong! It was both ends and it wasn't pretty about an hour or so later. Help! I ended up having to cancel the class!

It was a good point for people new to it though. Remember to introduce these products incrementally and see how your body responds. You can definitely have too much of a good thing!

I spoke to Grace about how a lot of the commercial kombucha these days seem like they have been carbonated because they are bubbly rather than fizzy. Like the bubble size is too big for the natural fermentation process. She agreed and said that there are a lot on the market like that but there are also a few really good ones.

At the end of the workshop, Grace offered people sample tastes of the things she'd made, including the ginger fizz. Abby reported "it looked nice, but I still couldn't quite bring myself to try it"(!)

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It's all in the hand gestures



A little bit of this... a little bit of that...



12/4 – Raised Beds: Clarence Pk Community Ctr

We met with Janine Fong from Unley Council (our contact for the Clifton Street beds last year), Joanne DiCiocco, Coordinator at Clarence Park Centre and the Coordinator of the Child Care Centre located at 72-74 East Terrace, Black Forest in February 2021 to look at a proposal for two raised garden wicking beds. Janine is working with the Child Care Centre on a masterplan for the site and the two beds will be one part of the overall plan.

After discussion we settled on two beds, each 500mm high, 700mm wide and 1800mm long, in a galvanised (silver) finish, with taps set at 180 mm off the ground, to be installed on 12th April 2021.

The location for the beds appeared to be lightly to moderately shaded: the Centre has lots of trees! However, we decided it should still work for leafy greens etc. The main practical issue was getting the soil delivered close to the beds. Our usual approach of getting the truck to deliver most of the soil directly into the beds was not practicable so we needed a bit of wheelbarrowing.

We had originally hoped that the installation could be viewed by children at the Centre – however, safety considerations meant that this wasn't a good idea.

Photos



Nolda's bike when she arrived. She brought with her shovel, rake, ag pipe, geotex, plastic liner etc. You can't really see the load she was carrying because it's obscured by some baby equipment she picked up en route...

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own – Almanac 2021





The "Phenomenal Pat" collection

Pat, at 80. It might look impressive – but there's a secret to it. "I don't fill the wheelbarrow right up" she confided...



14/4 – Workshop 'Extra': Unley Youth

On 14 April, following an enquiry from Unley Council's 'Community Development Project Officer – Youth', Laura De Bono, as part of a program called " Living Green Youth Challenge", we ran a workshop called " Growing your own Vegetables".



Working with Laura, we came up this brief. The workshop would be

- two hours long
- free for young people, with all materials (pots, soil, seeds, herbs, tools) provided,
- practical and hands-on,
- and at the end of the session, they'd go home with their own-planted pot of herbs/seedlings.

And the topic/subject matter would be:

- Learn about choosing what to plant, when and how.
 - Seeds versus seedlings, soil, fertiliser, pots versus 'in the ground', and seasonal choices.

Report.

17 registered but in the end only 8 (but interested) attendees.

The youth workshop was presented to a small group of teenagers who were very attentive. An interested parent and younger brother stayed too.

The presentation was designed to open up to them the world and fun of growing edible plants, and they were given ideas of what to grow, and what was needed to do so. The

session was all about getting started with growing vegetables: the why and how, with a big practical component to assemble and plant out a wicking bed pot.

After a short talk and slideshow, the participants began to make a wicking pot, aided by the GGGYO-ers. Nolda got materials to make wicking pots. We considered preparing them beforehand, to save time, but decided instead do everything on the day from scratch – learning how to make and re-use is part of what we wanted to impart. This was an inspired decision. Making the wicking pots was the highlight of the session, and we all really enjoyed it.

Participants were given many simple tips and encouragement, and were very receptive to this. They left with a very healthy perennial spinach plant in their pots, and some bean and pea seeds, and lots of interest in nurturing their plants to the food stage.

It was a great group effort from Chris, Anne, Annie, Pat, Nolda, Jan and Peter. Well done.

Chris's Handout Notes

1) Reasons for growing your own

- Taste, freshness, peak nutritional value
- Availability - herbs, fresh lettuce, something to add to your dinner tonight, on your doorstep
- Good for the planet – less waste, less transport to supermarkets, no packaging. Commercial growers use more fertilisers and pesticides to guarantee good crops, because they depend on good yields to guarantee their income.
- Good for you to spend time outside tending to your plants – beneficial for your wellbeing, good exercise, connects you with nature. Also good for you nutritionally, to have such flavourful, fresh food.
- It's very rewarding! There is a lot of joy to be had from watching seeds sprout, feeling the pride of seeing something you planted grow, enjoying the smell of leaves as you brush past, seeing bees and butterflies visit and pollinate your plants, the achievement of picking something you grew and can now enjoy, the pleasure in sharing if there is excess – all great things

2) How do you grow your own? What do plants need?

- Sunlight
- Good soil, potting mix for containers, compost to provide organisms
- Regular attention – water, feeding, removal of weeds, pests
- A variety of plants, including some flowers, to attract pollinators

3) Ideas for what to grow

- **What to plant**
 - To get started, just find a sunny spot to place your container and choose a few different veggies that you like to eat, or get adventurous, and try something new.
 - Herbs and leafy greens are a good starting point.

- **Seasonal choices:**
 - Herbs. Try some parsley, basil, coriander (try a slow bolting variety), rosemary, marjoram and thyme. Mint as well, but contain it as it can take over!
 - Asian greens, lettuce, rocket, tatsoi, spring onions, spinach, carrots, broad beans, leek, onions, radish, turnips and swedes, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower.
- **Tip:** Interplant your vegetables with your flowers, it uses the available space. As a bonus, flowers also bring lots of pollinators to your veggies.

4) How do I do it?

Seeds vs seedlings

- Growing from seed direct to soil is best for some plants ie peas, carrots, parsnips, as the roots don't like to be disturbed once they start germinating. Also beans, cucumbers, melons (summer)
- Growing seeds into a seedling that can be moved means that you can start germinating earlier, get a head start. Slow growing seeds may not have time to reach maturity in the season.
 - when the soil is warm enough, eg. broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower,
 - or in the summer, or before it gets too hot, eg. tomatoes, capsicums, eggplant, cucumber.
- Seeds can be started in an egg-carton, then separated and placed into ground when large enough.

5) Wicking pot – picture/diagram handout sheet

Watertight pot, water reservoir, water inlet and outlet, material filled with water, barrier layer, soil

6) Time to get your hands dirty!

Hands on Planting (30-45 mins) break into 3 groups

7) Where do I go from here? Pots vs. in-the-ground

Pots:

Tips:

- Start with good soil, will have less problems with weeds
- Use pots as large as you can manage, give larger plants room to grow.

Advantages:

- You can move it if sunlight is a problem, or to a more protected spot
- You can control the environment, can control spread of an invasive plant like mints

Disadvantages:

- Dry out easily, lack of water, plants can't spread out into the surrounding soil reaching for more water
- Pot may get too hot, become less able to absorb water - roots "cook". So may need protection in summer
- Lower yield for crops which are better in the ground eg. larger vegetables, fruit trees

In the ground:

- Choose a spot with plenty of sunlight, about 6 hours/day is ideal
- Prepare the soil first, compost
- Will get better yield for some crops eg. tomatoes, potatoes
- May need temporary shading during hot summers
- Consider wicking beds for summer

More information

Ideas for resources when you want to expand

- [TEMPERATE ZONE - GARDENING AUSTRALIA \(abc.net.au\)](http://abc.net.au) What to grow in the Adelaide area month by month
- [Vegetables | Sustainable Gardening Australia \(sgaonline.org.au\)](http://sgaonline.org.au) Sustainable Gardening Australia has many links to helpful advice about growing
- [Edible gardens in pots | Sustainable Gardening Australia \(sgaonline.org.au\)](http://sgaonline.org.au)
- <https://www.sgaonline.org.au/april-in-your-patch/> (Temperate Zones)
- [Building wicking beds | Sustainable Gardening Australia \(sgaonline.org.au\)](http://sgaonline.org.au)
- [Building a Wicking Bed - Fact Sheets - Gardening Australia - GARDENING AUSTRALIA \(abc.net.au\)](http://abc.net.au)

3/5 – Field Trip: Neutrog

We made two 'field trips' this year. The first of them was to Neutrog, in Kanmantoo. We've long admired their products – organic, ethical and they *work* - brilliantly. Now, having visited, we unreservedly admire the company as well.

We were hosted, and made very welcome, by Paul Dipuglia and Angus Irwin. Paul is a 'Customer Services Manager' (which he self-deprecatingly told us meant "salesman") and Angus is the founder and owner. Paul talked to us first, then Angus took us for a tour in his 'Popemobile'.



The Popemobile



Angus and Paul



Angus admiring vats of WhoFlungDung. As you do.



Inside the Popemobile

In terms of the history of Neutrog, the following link covers what we were told, but in more detail:

<https://neutrog.com.au/history-development/>

Some comments and impressions:

Abby (to Angus): "You must go to bed thinking about microbes!"

Angus' statement, made almost like an apology, for why things weren't quite tidy/finished – "so much shit around here" – said quite seriously when he led us into yet another less-than-pristine / half-dressed room; I had to smile at the unconscious humour that indeed we were **surrounded** by tonnes of chicken shit.

Russ:

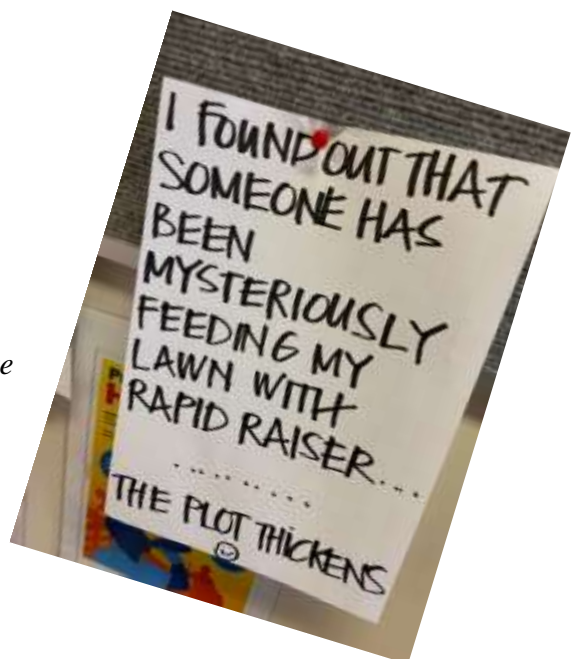
- I was very impressed by their commitment to innovation and their continuous R&D
- All employees call Angus "Angus", and interact with him as if he was a peer employee, not the owner. It's all natural and matter-of-fact, no big deal. It was inspiring. This is a company I'd have liked to work for.
- A revelation to me was the *resistance* to the use of organic products. Lots of people **want** chemicals. Paul mentioned this in a matter-of-fact way as he was telling us about their markets. I'd had no idea that people wouldn't *want* organics; thought everyone would choose otherwise only if (they thought) they had to – typically because of cost (i.e. "I'd have organic if I could but it's too expensive so I've had to compromise"). Nup – some people are fixed and entrenched in old/'traditional' ways – what their fathers did. In fact, cost is pretty much equivalent.

Peter:

- I didn't expect it to be so **big**!
- less smelly than I had expected,
- much more scientifically-based than I had expected (the lab and their experimentations were very interesting),
- lots more innovation than I would have guessed,
- the genuine passion in the business (it didn't feel as though Angus Irwin thought thirty years ago "Oh, here's a way to become a millionaire easily" - it's hard work.
- I thought that their contribution to the broader community was outstanding.
- I thought that their marketing approach was interesting: build a network of advocates rather than spend money on expensive advertising. It certainly motivated me to be an advocate. The fact that 30 larger containers of bulk product were heading off that day to Vietnam! That's really impressive. It's the real deal.



In the kitchen. Cute





With our showbags!

23/5 – WORKSHOP: "Native Food Plants"

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Third of the 2021 free Workshop Series

Native Food Plants



**2.30 pm on Sunday 23rd May
at Unley Community Centre
18 Arthur Street Unley.**

Register at patwundersitz@gmail.com

Workshop details

This workshop looks at the native food plants that are readily available to gardeners in South Australia, both local natives and species from interstate. You'll find out how to grow them and where to source plants.

Our presenters are Leanne Williams and Jenny Deans, both horticulturists with interests in teaching and learning about uses of local native plants and helping people grow these to enjoy at home.

We will have a pop-up sale of a few native food plants at the workshop and maybe a taste of a couple of foods. Cash only.

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 initiatives.

Sustainable Communities SA – Unley groups

Report.

Total attendees - 52

A hot day (for late May anyway). Lovely on the bike.

A well-attended session and lots of interest. Jenny Deans and Leanne Williams took us through a long list of food and cultural plants which can be grown in SA. Then a tasting for everyone (separate patty pans so COVID-safe), a sale of plants and answering lots of questions.

It was quite an informed audience. Often our audience supplied information to the presenters! While the workshop information was necessarily at a 'level'; after it concluded many in the audience pounced on the opportunity to ask detailed/specific questions one-on-one.

The taster plates at the end were enthusiastically sampled and with much interest.

Anne Wilson had prepared packets of free seeds and the swaps table was very busy with Ashley.

Quote by Jenny Deans: "I love a group of people weeding – it makes me happy!"

BTW, ~~Happy Birthday!~~ to Abby today.





27/6 – WORKSHOP: "Living with Trees"

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Fourth of the 2021 free Workshop Series

Trees: choosing them and living with them

Jeremy Miller on tree canopy and exotic/native tree choices



Autumn in Parkside. Photo by Peter Croft

**2.30 pm on Sunday 27th June
at Unley Community Centre
18 Arthur Street Unley.**

Register at patwundersitz@gmail.com

Workshop details

Trees make a community which is great to live in. But there are many questions about living with trees. What species to choose: native or exotic? What would suit my soil or my block? What about low-maintenance trees? What about tree spread and tree roots? What about soil health for my trees? How can I protect my trees from sun damage? What trees will best help me to cope with hot summers?

This workshop is aimed at helping you answer your questions about trees. If you have any specific questions that you want to send in beforehand, please email them to pat.wundersitz@gmail.com.

Our workshop will be led by Jeremy Miller who works in the local government sector coordinating climate change adaptation. His main professional focus is the application of strategic policy and applied practice to retrofit the urban environment for future climate change. He has a particular interest in urban ecology, energy efficiency and reducing household vulnerability by mitigating the effects of extreme heat conditions. Jeremy also holds a Masters in Urban and Regional Planning and is a long term advocate for everyday bicycle transport.

If you have any excess produce to share, bring that too! We have an active sharing table.

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

Future Workshops: Are you coming to our next workshops? 8th August will be on Weeds. Citrus is the focus of 19th September and Raised garden wicking beds on 7th November. As always, we are interested to hear about topics of interest to you.

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.



Pauline's babaco tree

Sustainable Communities SA – Unley groups

Report.

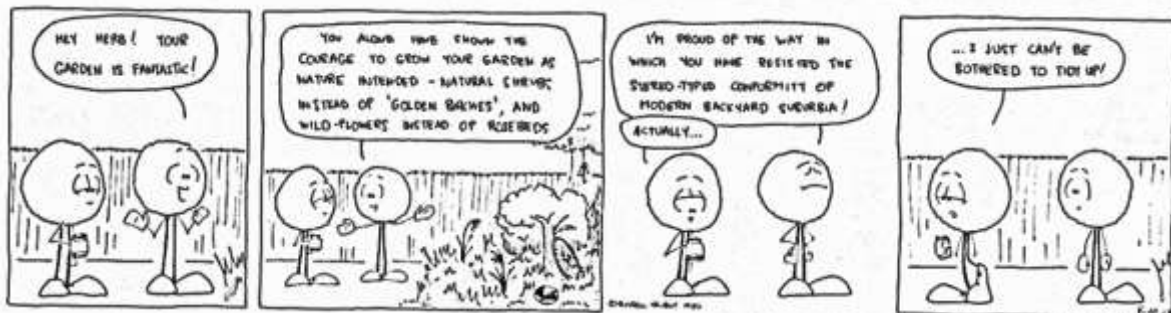
Total attendees - 32

A miserable, cold and wintry day kept numbers down. Which was a real shame because Jeremy's presentation was one of the year's highlights.

This was an extremely entertaining session, thoroughly engaging the audience. As well as knowing his stuff, Jeremy was energetic, lively and funny. There was excellent back-and-forth and frequent laughter. At least half of the thoroughly engaged attendees made a contribution - questions/comment/suggestions. *"Vot do ve do vith Plane Tree litter? It iss indestructible!!"*

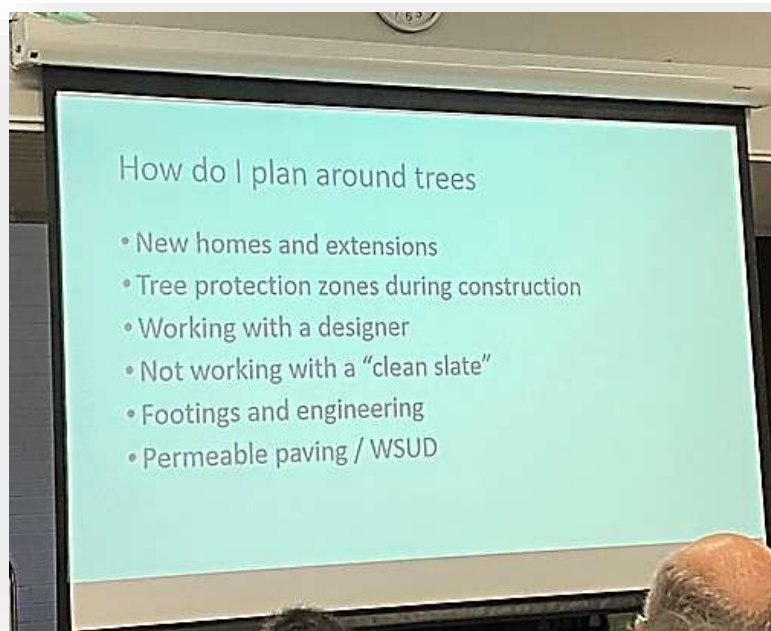


Back when dinosaurs walked the earth I used to draw/write a comic strip called "Fuzzballs". Jeremy describing his personal garden and his approach to it reminded me of this one:



Some highlights:

- the charm of a “messy” garden. Nature doesn’t do straight lines.
- the way in which a garden can be looked at as one plant shielding another and that, in turn, keeping the sun off another and so on.
- his passionate argument against what is all too often the developer's blueprint – 'clearfelling' (a.k.a. 'starting with a clean slate' – i.e. clear whole site). This is what's easiest for the developer, not what's best. It requires no thought or effort. And we, Adelaide, the world, lose established flora, thermal mass, character (the list goes on), replacing it with desert, fledgling plants – or worse: concrete. Jeremy asserted that Adelaide is heading towards "nine months of summer"; the *last* thing we want to do is remove heat soaks. He advocated for working with a designer – work with/around existing vegetation
- his suggested list of resources (see below).
- Nolda’s practical comments about where to water trees: drip-line as a focus.
 - water trees at the dripzone fringe of canopy), not around trunk
 - After dry spell, when rain forecast, dig soil at this dripzone, around tree, so rain soaks in instead of just runs off.



Recommended Resources

These resources are all available for free online.

- Plant Selector +
Hasn't been updated for a while, but an excellent place to start
<http://plantselector.botanicgardens.sa.gov.au/home.aspx>
- Which plant where
<https://www.whichplantwhere.com.au/>
- Food Forest
<https://www.foodforest.com.au/fact-sheets/fruit-and-nut-trees>
- Rare Fruit Society
<https://rarefruit-sa.org.au/>
- Joe's Connected Garden
(see slide)
- SGA (Sustainable Gardening Australia)
<https://www.sgaonline.org.au/>
- Sophie's Patch
<https://sophiespatch.com.au>
- Gardening Australia
<https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/>

Also, look up "Urban Heat & Tree Map" (online)

8/8 – WORKSHOP: "Weeds"

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Fifth of the 2021 free Workshop Series

Presented by Jenny Deans

Weeds



Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oxalis_pes-caprae

**2.30 pm on Sunday 8th August
at Unley Community Centre
18 Arthur Street Unley.**

Register at patwundersitz@gmail.com

Workshop details

It's the time of the year for weeds. Are they everywhere in your garden? This workshop looks at what makes a weed a weed, and some of the ways that we can manage them and even use them in the garden.

Our presenter is Jenny Deans, horticulturist, land-carer and backyard vegetable grower, experienced in dealing with weeds. Jenny has been a frequent and popular presenter at our workshops.

Future Workshops: Are you coming to our next workshops? Citrus is the focus of 19th September and Raised garden wicking beds on 7th November. As always, we are interested to hear about topics of interest to you.

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.

<i>Sustainable Communities SA – Unley groups</i>

Report.

Attendees- 38

Jenny Deans took us through the murky world of weeds today.

There was so much to cover: weedy evergreen trees (eg *pinus radiata*), deciduous trees, natives (especially some wattles), succulents, climbers (eg asparagus fern), ground-covers (eg wandering dew), landscaping plants, cottage plants (eg violets), ornamental grasses (eg pampas), daisies, hedge plants (eg oleander), indoor plants, bulb and herbs.



Jenny defended the "importance" of weeds. Her definition of a weed combined "A weed is a plant which has no right place" and "A weed is a plant that I don't want, is hard to get rid of and want to get out". But her ultimate definition of a "weed" is "something harmful to our environment".

Removing them is a judgement call. Not B&W. For example, they may be providing habitat (eg. ladybirds). They may be providing protection as well as habitat (eg. blackberries, for native animals against feral predators. They may be providing a host for a parasitic plant like a quandong. To remove them may damage the 'good' plant(s). Etc.

She spent some time suggesting that we need to think about how a weed spreads and how we plan to manage the weed site after it has been weeded. "It's all about finding the balance."

A couple of tips:

- Use a 'homi' (curved implement) and grape knife,
- The key to effective and practical weeding is: Weed often.

And "A Big Tip(!)": Weeding Trousers.
(pants with built-in knee pads)



Lots of questions. We could have easily continued for another hour.



8/21 – Raised Beds: Montessori

On 21/8/21 (which is almost a palindrome! Sorry, got a bit excited there...) at 9.30am, we *finally* installed, at the Montessori School in Oxford Street Unley, three large Raised Beds – our largest installation yet. "Finally" because this project was a long time in the making,

We started discussions with Adam James from the Montessori school way back in 2019. We had chats about a concept, then waited while the School thought further. Then about the time that they decided that they wanted to proceed, COVID struck. With the uncertainty, the project was put on hold.

During one of the gaps in shutdowns we built the Clifton Street beds. Adam came to watch and it reaffirmed for him his desire. With the relative stability of 2021, we were able to settle on a date to put the installation in and COVID was kind enough to let us do it.

Much careful thought went into the design of the installation, and planning the installation (a feat of logistics equivalent to herding kittens). The final configuration was:

- three beds,
 - each 3 metres in length. One at 400 mm high, one at 450 mm high and one at 500 mm high,
 - each with drain/tap fitted,
 - all in eucalyptus green.
- The beds to be wicking beds based on Nolda's design
- Plants to be vegetables principally, plus some flowers. Radish seeds also possible to be planted by the children subsequently.

The best day for installation, for the school, was a Saturday, so they could organise a working bee of parents to do the work. However, delivery of components (beds, soil, sand, slotted ag pipe, geotextile, plastic liner etc) could only happen on a weekday. So delivery was arranged for the morning of the Wednesday beforehand, and Adam was organised to provide a tarpaulin for the Wednesday 18th August for the soil to be dumped onto from the truck, and to safely store the rest.



On the day, Ashley brought a spirit level, Adam provided shovels, wheelbarrows and shovelers, Pat brought seedlings sourced from Di Bickford and everybody helped.

Some photos



Followup

13/8 – Email from Adam James of the Montessori school

Hello Peter and Anne,

Thank you again for helping us with the raised garden beds. The Little Oxford children adore them and have been caring for them diligently.

They have had a wonderful time planting and watering the beds and have enjoyed establishing the farm.

I have attached some pictures which I hope convey their joy and the great care they took when planting.

Kind regards, Adam



1/10 – Message from Adam

Hi Peter, they are really thriving. The children are getting lots of enjoyment from them. I think we are ready to pick the lettuce and spinach. Next project is planting the natives for our bee and butterfly garden...

7/10 – Message from Adam

Hi Peter, I thought you might like to see how we are sharing our produce with the community. Thanks, Adam



28/8 & 4/9 – Workshop 'Extra': Fruit Tree Grafting

1pm Goody Patch

Sally Osterstock

Participants 28/8: 15

Participants 4/9: 13

Due to COVID, this workshop was rescheduled from August 7.

There was so much demand, that Pauline and Sally decided to run another session of it, on September 4.

BTW, Fun Fact: The day before the first one, Pauline reported "Someone cancelled who had never even registered, which was odd!"

Report.

Sally Osterstock gave a talk about grafting, demonstrating cleft and whip and tongue grafts using large cylinders of foam.



Participants could choose apple, pear, cherry or peach rootstock and were able to select scions from many different cultivars. For example, for peach rootstock there was White Anzac, Goldmine nectarine and Elberta; for cherry there was Stella and Lapin; for apple there was Jonathan, Fuji, Gala and Pink Lady; for pear there was Doyenne de Comice, Packham, Winter Nelis and Red Sensation.

Participants often grafted 2 or more scions onto their chosen rootstock. One adventurous person brought tomato rootstock and grafting eggplant scions on to the mother plant.



Notes:

Grafting is 'trendy', but it's not a new thing – in fact it's been going on for thousands of years.

Why graft?

- To get fruit sooner– get fruit from a grafted branch sooner than from a newly planted tree.
- Can get variety in a small space
- guarantee fruit from rootstock
- get fruit from ornamentals
- graft rare fruits, heritage fruits – preserve & conserve heritage
- to be *certain* what you'll get(!)

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Tools:

- Sharp & clean. Sterilise before use
 - 75% metho
 - Eucalyptus or Tea-Tree oil
- Grafting knife
- Secateurs
- Tape (parafilm/florist tape – for bandaging the wound)
- Electrical tape (for covering the bandage tape)
 - only white
 - only lead-free (check label)



Tip:

- Bark can get sunburnt. Bark goes grey and dry, cracks. If it does, tree will eventually die – sunburn never heals. To avoid/protect: paint on acrylic white paint. Same principle as zinc cream on your nose. Apply paint neat. Any acrylic white will do – buy the cheapest.



19/9 – WORKSHOP: "Citrus"

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Sixth of the 2021 free Workshop Series

Presented by Alan Halsted

Citrus



Photo: Ernest Porzi

**2.30 pm on Sunday 19th September
at Unley Community Centre 18 Arthur Street Unley.**

Register at patwundersitz@gmail.com

Workshop details

Citrus trees are in many Adelaide gardens. Lemons, limes, oranges, mandarins and many more. What is the best way to plant, grow, fertilise, harvest and prune them? How should we handle their pests?

Our presenter is Alan Halsted. 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. He regards citrus as a specialty interest.

Future Workshops: Our next workshop is 'Raised garden wicking beds', on 7th November. As always, we are interested to hear about topics of interest to you.

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.

Attendees: 47 (Full house)

On a glorious day, we were once again treated to the wizardry of Alan's High Tech Travelling Light Show: Butcher's paper and this stunning new-fangled 'Whiteboard' thingy.

He complemented that with a Hands-Free mic. Well, that was the theory. In practice he constantly bumped it (i.e. loud noise) and got tangled up when enthusiasm brought out his inner Italian and led his gesticulating hands wildly astray. The audience didn't mind though- it was impossible not to be disarmed by his charmingly sheepish self-deprecating smile.



It was a splendid treatment of Citrus by Alan. Firstly an overview of the main citrus messages then half an hour of vigorous questioning about every aspect of citrus. This continued after the main session

Alan gave thoughtful answers and impressed with his experience. His overview was structured around four planks: planting, fertilising, pruning and pest management (all organic of course).

- Planting:
 - Make a *big* hole, with gypsum at the bottom and compost at the top
 - Free the citrus root bole from all the potting mix it comes in
 - Tease out the roots while soaking it in Seasol and Powerfeed)
- Fertilising:
 - Citrus are "greedy feeders". They signal their nutrition through their leaves – any problems, you'll read them there. Spray **new** leaves (i.e. after the first flush) with a foliar spray. (No point spraying old leaves. Old leaves can't absorb.)
 - A citrus tree is very good at telling you 'how it feels' (i.e. what it needs). Eg.
 - leaves tell you clearly about nutrients (eg. iron deficiency)
 - droop – needs water
 - Alan loves Seamungus, uses it on everything, and you can't overdo it. Really good on citrus. Use it monthly.
 - Fertilise **every** month
- Pruning:
 - Prune lemon trees sparingly but frequently to ensure that light and air get into the tree.
 - Let a tree become a tree before allowing it to fruit
 - Don't let the tree grow more than 1m from the trunk
 - Oranges – prune after fruit
 - Lemons – prune anytime, but...
 - Don't disturb citrus in winter

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- Pests:
 - Gall wasps: cut out just before winter
 - Use Eco-Oil for Scale, and to prevent Citrus Leafminer (*Phyllocnistis citrella*).

Tips

- Citrus *hates* wind
- Citrus likes sun, but not too hot.
- Citrus roots lie very close to the surface, so sprayers are better than drip irrigation.
- Use Adelaide Green waste for mulch by the trailer load.



21/9 – Field Trip: Joe's Connected Garden

Monday 21/9, 10am

6 people – Anne&Graham, me, Annie, Pat, Ashley

Well, proving that Field Trips aren't all about "Where should we have lunch?", today we didn't plan anything.

On the day our anticipated numbers were down – Peter pulled out after hurting his back the day before, and Jan pulled out on the day, as she was unwell. So it ended up being just six of us: Anne&Graham, Russ, Annie, Pat, and Ashley. Bit of a shame, because the people at Joe's CG were eagerly anticipating us, and had put on a morning tea to greet our arrival.



Part of the reason we didn't plan lunch is that we weren't going very far – just another suburb. Or so we thought. I'd forgotten Adelaide was so *long*! It took us over an hour to get there, with minimal traffic!



This was a fabulous experience.

'Joe's Connected Garden' is a community garden of a different kind.

Picture this: five neighbouring suburban properties, linked by gates, plus nine others nearby, sharing space, expertise and knowledge. Employing organic methods and designed on permaculture principles to grow between them over 1000 types of fruit and other productive plants (over 1000 fruit tree varieties overall. 750 in Joe's garden alone!). A group of homes where neighbours are free to venture into each other's yards at any time to help themselves to whatever happens to be in season.

It began modestly, with Joe asking his neighbour Mary if he could grow some fruit trees in her backyard (as his was full!). Shortly after, his rear neighbour Roseanne got interested and involved, and then the ideas started flowing and took off! Joe was inspired by a Permaculture Design course (led by Rosemary Morrow in Tas), and he clearly has a huge amount of knowledge and experience.

We were met and welcomed, then shown around, by Joe (the Legend himself), Roseanne (the almost-Legend) and Andrew (who is very active in the Rare Fruit Society. We learnt that the Rare Fruit Society began life as the "Avocado Society").



There was so much wisdom flying around, so many interesting bits of information, I just wanted to bottle it. I'd brought a notebook, but even under normal conditions it would've been hard to keep up.

Once we started on our tour, it became simply impossible. There were some great snippets, comments, advice, one-liners etc. said, but I'm afraid I couldn't note them. With lots of uneven and slopy ground, narrow winding paths, tripping hazards, as well as the wet weather, I spent most of my time looking down and concentrating very hard on not falling over.

So there's lots I wish I could, but can't, tell you. Instead here are some after-thoughts:

Annie:

"I couldn't believe the number of rare fruit trees they have growing there. I especially liked the jaboticaba tree which is growing in a very large pot on their back veranda. The fruit grow on the stem so it's quite an unusual looking tree. Apparently, they had a wonderful crop but unfortunately the birds got it before they could pick it!

Amazing to see the number of little seedlings and cuttings... such a huge task coordinating all this. Thankfully Joe and his team have a large number of volunteers."

Some of Ashley's bullet-point notes:

- Local Primary School kids: usually each class visits each term(!) Big focus on Special Needs students.
- Surplus produce is shared with local community ("Grow Cart"). **Significant part of lunch for some school kids.**
- North of the River Torrens, gypsum is needed to improve soil quality. Gypsum displaces salt and breaks up clay. We know that of course, - gypsum is regularly used in Unley too. But it's an entirely different magnitude out here. Need enormous amounts, compared to Unley.
- Joe lets thistles grow. The build-up of aphids on thistles attracts predators which will look after the plants later.

Pat:

"I was astounded by the diversity of plants both common and rare. Their fig collection is known outside in the community. What a wonderful repository of species. I had never seen a finger lime growing. Elegant in its spikiness. I wanted to gather up armfuls of the fragrant white blossoms on the citrus. The soil looked good enough to eat, well, what is growing in it certainly is."

Anne:

"We were all was gobsmacked by the sheer amount of propagation under way and the variety of plants. We were all impressed with their combined knowledge, skills, persistence over the years despite setbacks, and their cooperative spirit. But the most valuable thing, which we all agreed on, and took away, was their attitudes and generosity toward their community. The joy and energy they get from interacting and sharing their spaces and knowledge with their own close community energises them to newer and different projects. It was an outstanding example of giving as its own reward."

Russ:

"Watching and listening to Joe, Andrew and Roseanne, I was struck by how bonded the three of them were. The connected garden, the ambition of connecting people and communities, sharing and mutual regard and support, at play – realised. Not just an idea/goal/thought, but made real."

They made a point that they'd learned to grow things here that were thought couldn't be grown here. Their discovery, the key, was to grow them from seed. The plant then gets the opportunity to 'acclimatise' - to evolve and adapt to the new conditions. Important point.

The conversation darted and digressed and somehow that led to a discussion about climate change, heirloom varieties, and strength in diversity. Modern techniques have honed varieties, narrowed their genes (and tolerances), constantly 'improved' them based on efficiency - in a given growing-environment, make them as productive as possible - not just cropping, things like disease resistance, shelf life etc. Maximise the dollar return.

This has led to fewer and fewer varieties on supermarket shelves, and hence being farmed. Trouble is, efficiency requires honing - the opposite of broadness, diversity, tolerance - no point being able to tolerate a condition if that condition never arises. But with climate change, we simply have no idea what conditions will be in future, and probably from now on the norm will be that conditions constantly change. To cope with that we need plants which are 'inefficient' - not geared to a particular environment; 'honed' plants in an unexpected environment will fail/struggle.

The heirlooms, their diversity, will be important. They will have properties that haven't previously been appreciated - because the conditions where they matter have been engineered out of occurring. If conditions can't be controlled, participants need some flexibility/inefficiency.



Wandering around these connected backyards, it's clear that with some thought and effort, you really can grow just about anything. The highlight though is simply seeing first-hand the sense of community these neighbours have created and enjoy. We need more of this in our suburbs – like-minded people coming together to create a perpetual open pantry of local produce all can enjoy.



This link is to an episode of the ABC's *Gardening Australia*. Seven minutes, it'll give you a great overview:

<https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/community-connections/11590902>

When too many photos is barely enough...

Now you get to play 'Match the caption with the photo!' (Hint: they're sort of in order)

1. Joe has a magnificent quandong on his verge.
2. Joe's propagation project runs to the thousands. This is just a very small proportion...
3. Joe, at a small greenhouse used for tropical propagation. The rest of the propagations project is 'brought up tough', outdoors, but in carefully-selected areas with benign microclimates
4. Some of the group, standing in 'living mulch' – nasturtiums cover the soil.
5. Rosanne's strawberry plants ready for sale
6. One of Joe's prize thistles. A natural pest management method, these are used as decoy plants. Note the aphids (green) and those attacked by predators (brown).
7. The local grow cart, on Rosanne's veranda
8. Lost in Profusion...
9. Rosanne's strawberries (Rosanne in the red jacket)
10. Crossing over the large pond in Joe's backyard
11. Propagation of hardwood cuttings using a heatpad
12. Across the street at Jess and Jessie's garden – the espalier fruit tree maze
13. Andrew with Russ and Annie.

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30/9 – Raised Bed: Urrbrae

Today was restoration day for a raised garden bed that we installed almost 7 years ago. The original 'steward' – the property owner – had moved on, but the new property owner was very keen to take the responsibility on and get it thriving again. He asked for help in restoring it, and moving it from the southern side of the tree to the northern side to allow more light.

No problem, happy to help. Nolda organised the geotex (special mention for her sewing: turning several pieces of geotex of different colours into a perfect fit), Ashley volunteered to do the levelling; and Peter arranged soil, builder's sand, pea straw and delivery.

Unfortunately, on the day, though we'd anticipated otherwise, the (young and fit!) owner of the property couldn't be there, which left Ashley, Nolda and Peter to do the work – the heavy lifting whereas the plan was to 'only' organise and supervise. As Pat said "Well done the workers!!!!, but it really is not the deal for three people to have to do all the organising and the work". Especially as, as Pat put it, "we are of an age..."

So this may be the last raised verge garden bed we do. That was the feeling afterwards.

But – well done the workers!!!



30/10 – Workshop 'Extra': Subtropical Grafting

Subtropical Fruit Tree Growing and Grafting Workshop



**Saturday 30th October 1-3.30 pm
at Goody Patch - corner of Sussex St and Essex St Goodwood.**

Register at catland@optusnet.com.au

Experienced grafter Sally Osterstock from the Rare Fruit Society will demonstrate how to grow and graft subtropical fruit trees such as avocado, mango and white sapote. These techniques can be applied to other subtropicals such as custard apple and citrus.

Rootstock and scions: Avocado and sapote rootstock will be available for grafting. Cost is \$7-\$15 depending on size. You are welcome to bring your own potted avocado or white sapote seedling to work on. Each scion will cost \$1.

Grafting knife: You will need a grafting knife. If you don't have one you can purchase a good quality one from Sally. Right handed knives are \$20, left handed ones are \$45. Please contact Sally on 0438512389 or email her at sally.osterstock@gmail.com by Saturday 17th October if you wish to purchase a grafting knife.

Other materials such as plastic bags, labels, paper bags and markers will be supplied. If you plan to buy scions to do more grafting at home, please bring a small esky or cooler to transport scions in good condition.

This workshop is an initiative of Grow Grow Grow Your Own and The Goody Patch and is funded by a generous grant from Unley Council.

Please contact Pauline Muir <catland@optusnet.com.au> if you have any queries.

Note: please observe COVID guidance - including mask-wearing, and hand sanitising.

Report.

Participants: 14

Due to demand we held yet another grafting workshop, on 30th October; this time demonstrating how to graft subtropical fruit trees.

This is a more sophisticated way of grafting. Participants chose to graft on to either an avocado or a white sapote. Several attendees brought avocado treelings they had grown from seed to work on.



Participants, all masked up

These techniques can be applied to other subtropical fruit trees like citrus, custard apple, mango and black sapote.

This was a very successful workshop. Everyone launched in to graft an avocado or a white sapote and went away with carefully bandaged little fruit trees. Feedback was good. Several people mentioned to Pauline how much they enjoyed it and how impressed they were with Sally's knowledge.

The only problem was not enough helpers and Pauline and Sally ended up exhausted. "Still," commented Pauline philosophically, "it was a perfect day for it."



So, in summary, there were three grafting workshops. The first two focussed on grafting apples, pears, peaches, nectarines and cherries. The third, this one, was a 'subtropical' workshop for grafting avocados, citrus, custard apples, white sapote and mango.

However some people attended both types of workshop and nearly everyone had a go. Several participants subsequently – and excitedly! – let us know their grafts were successful.

Thank you to Sally and to the Goody Patch for their ongoing partnership.



Grafted fruit trees (with white bandages) – grafts of pear and peach Pauline did in her own garden.

7/11 – WORKSHOP: "Raised Garden Wicking Beds"

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Seventh of the 2021 free Workshop Series

Presented by Karen Montgomery

Raised Garden Wicking Beds



Wicking bed schematic Karen Montgomery

**2.30 pm on Sunday 7th November
at Unley Community Centre
18 Arthur Street Unley.**

Register at patwundersitz@gmail.com

Workshop details

We are all looking for ways to produce the maximum of produce using the minimum of space and water. This workshop focusses on raised garden beds using wicking beds to minimise water use.

Our presenter is Karen Montgomery of Kspace Gardening Consultancy Service who holds qualifications in Horticulture, (including garden design), Conservation Land Management, Training & Assessing and is the President of the Horticulture Media Association SA. Karen holds a Peter Bennett Award for sustainable living practices. Karen is a resident of the cool Adelaide Hills, where she tends her 1 acre garden shaded by large trees, includes a 35m² veggie garden, orchard, berry garden, bee hive & chicken run which she shares with her family & 3 dogs, along with the possums, koalas and kookaburras, just to name a few permanent visitors.

Karen presented on this topic in 2020 to a capacity audience. COVID restrictions prevented us from running it again in 2020, so this workshop is for those who unfortunately missed out last time and those who want more information on how to go about it.

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 initiatives.

Sustainable Communities SA – Unley groups

Report.

Total attendees: 43

Well, I found myself wondering if this workshop was jinxed. Last year it was cancelled with a couple of days notice due to a COVID lockdown, so we rescheduled it for this year.

This time it was technology problems. All the cords were plugged in, Karen's Powerpoint presentation was up on Annie's PC (after Annie had had to make a rushed trip home to get hers after Karen strangely didn't bring one), but it wasn't projecting on the screen. Peter asked me to help, having mistaken me for somebody who might actually have some idea. Flattered by the compliment I stood around looking serious for a while, then gave up and sat down.

Unfazed, Karen said she'd go 'old school', and armed with pens and a whiteboard proceeded to do just that. A few minutes in though, one of the audience perceived there was a problem, and asked if she could help. Five minutes of fiddling or dark arts or whatever and suddenly...!

She casually slipped back to her seat.

"Can we keep her?" I asked Peter.

*

Karen gave a terrific workshop today, ostensibly on raised garden wicking beds, but covering other topics as they arose.

Karen is a big believer in compost and mentioned its water-holding properties frequently.

Her raised garden bed design was similar to the model that GGGYO has used in verge garden beds: liner, ag. pipe, gravel (rather than washed builders sand), geotex, overflow pipe, fill pipe with cap, soil and compost. She emphasised the importance of heights: reservoir height 10 cm or not much more and soil height of 30 - 40 cm max in order to get the optimum conditions.



She also discussed worm-feeding: using pipes into soil and capped and using tiger worms (the thin red ones used by fisherman - not earthworms) to consume the food scraps. Important to make ensure that the overall environment is dark, moist and cool for the worms.

Afterwards, Anne Wilson ran the seed table and Annie Brownsworth brought some delightful posies for us. A nice ending to the workshop season.

BTW, interesting observation from Jan: there appeared to be more younger people here today than usual.

Pool Room

Subject: Unsubscribe from emails

Good morning Anne

Could you unsubscribe me from emails please? Unfortunately I am no longer able to attend because of other commitments.

I have attended a number of your events over quite a lengthy period now and enjoyed getting to know members of the group and learning about what the speaker has been talking about. You have provided that old fashioned community connection and it has been lovely.

Have a great day.

Merydith

From: Grace

Date: 28 March 2021 at 17:40:55 ACDT

Hi Peter,

I really enjoyed today, so thank you all for what you do to make these lovely days possible.

Cheers, Grace

On 31/03/2021 6:59 am, Pat Wundersitz wrote:

Having sent out recipes, I am receiving so much positive feedback. Pat

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kathleen McGeever

Subject: Re: Gut health recipes

Date: 30 March 2021 at 8:19:45 pm ACDT

To: Pat Wundersitz

Thank you, Pat, I really enjoyed Grace's talk and felt very blessed to get some of her kefir grains.

Many thanks for forwarding the recipes. I also got some shelling pea seeds and silver beet seeds and some wonderful gardening advice from Anne after the talk.

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I am very new to gardening so I am so happy to have come across a community group such as yours that offers help and advice and wonderful talks and free seeds. Thank you!

Kathleen McGeever

.....

From: Pat Wundersitz

Date: 15 April 2021 at 09:27:45 ACST

Subject: Fwd: Youth workshop today at Fullarton Park

Hi Pat

Great to see the action with the youth....

Great work to you all & thank you for sending through the pics

Good growing to everyone involved

Cheers, Diana Bickford

On 14 Apr 2021, at 12:46 pm, Pat Wundersitz wrote:

Di, Here is the wicking pot workshop from today. Your plants are beautiful. I will return the trays on Sunday. Pat

.....

Note the reference to our Grow group:

Begin forwarded message:

From: roger_son

Subject: Pruning a young quince tree

Date: 19 July 2020 at 5:08:33 pm ACST

Hi Peter

I wonder if anyone in our 'Grow' group can help. We have a 2 year old quince tree. As you can see from the attached photo, it's very leggy. Last year was its first full summer. All the foliage went to the top. Can anyone of our experienced growers advise on how it should be pruned properly?

Cheers, Roger

.....

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On 15 Aug 2021, at 3:37 pm, Peter Croft wrote:

Hi

A suggestion for a session next year from Nel: mulch. Include compost too?

Hope that you are enjoying this gorgeous sunlight

Peter

Begin forwarded message:

From: nelm47

Subject: GGGYO

Date: 14 August 2021 at 12:55:13 pm ACST

Hi Peter

Just letting you know that Jenny's workshop on Weeds was helpful, entertaining and educative. She is such an enthusiastic presenter. Please thank her from me.

About next year workshops - I would like to know more about mulch. What type, where, why, when, how thick, which one not to get, most economic one as far as price as well as durability.

Maybe such a workshop has been held already but a repeat might be helpful again.

Thank you, Nel

On 15 Aug 2021, at 9:00 pm, Abby wrote:

What delightful weather we have had! Spring is around the corner - yes, time to mulch more!

I didn't mean for that to sound like a potential sales pitch for exactly this time next year (provided the fluctuations of the climate change don't swing too much in 12 months) when the workshop happens. 😊

I think mulch and compost would be 2 separate topics.

On 16/08/2021 6:26 am, Pauline MUIR wrote:

Yes, mulch as a topic in itself - issues about what kind to put down around fruit trees, veg beds, depth of mulch for watering and cooling the ground, how it breaks down and consequences. And maybe what to buy if you want to make your own mulch.

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This year we've been trimming and pruning, collecting the neighbours' prunings as well. Andrew munches it in our super Bosch mulcher. I put down cardboard and old newspapers and cover with mulch. There is huge savings in cost of removal and dumping prunings, as well as using less petrol for removal or having mulch delivered. As well I've noticed fewer weeds so less work.

Yesterday Tom Giles came round - he and Ella and family are going to Melbourne for a year in 2022. Ella has a job at the Royal Melbourne to specialise in neurological disorders in children. I was really looking forward to them giving a talk, but there is always 2023.

The August 28th fruit tree grafting workshop is full. The second on Sept 4th is half full, but I'm still waiting to hear from some people and have a waiting list of 5 or 6. I would consider putting it on Eventbrite next year if we do it. The way people answer or not answer their emails is so frustrating. One person, we'll call her Jane. She wanted to enrol in the August 28th workshop. I wrote back and offered her a place in the Sept workshop. She wrote back to say she wasn't sure if Molly could put up with her (Jane) doing a workshop on her birthday. I wrote back to ask who is Molly - dog, person or parrot? Did she want two places, there has been no answer for 5 days now. Unbelievably inconsiderate.

Beautiful weather. I made it to the rehab pool yesterday for the first time in a month due to bad cold and bung knee. Really turned a corner. My apricot is in flower and can't wait for everything to wake up. Had a strange thought yesterday. Do you think trees should have birthdays? Every year you could measure them like measuring a child's height annually and give them a present - fertiliser, a book might be offensive, but an audiobook or taped music perhaps.

More sun coming

best
Pauline

On 16 Aug 2021, at 2:32 pm, Russ Talbot wrote:

What a great letter - thank you Pauline! Your first paragraph is almost a workshop in itself! Cheers, Russ

.....

On 31/08/2021 2:04 pm, Pauline MUIR wrote:

I had some great feedback from Barb Lane about the grafting workshop. And there have been other requests for a subtropical workshop, I guess that would be about Oct or Nov.

Thank you for organising the workshop. At tea time every night I try to think of three things to be grateful for so gratitude to Pauline and super Sally was top of my list on Saturday.

How lovely.

Pauline

Noted

Peter, in his introduction, at 2nd ('Gut Health') workshop:

As usual Peter lamented / apologised for, not being able to have an afternoon tea. And the cake that goes with it. Poor Peter. COVID has really hit him hard...

Zoom meeting

Ashley joined via phone; calling Pat and she put the phone next to her PC. But we could barely hear him. She tried several positions, but without improvement. Then realisation dawned – "Oh" she said, "should I put him on speakerphone? *Now, how do I do that? ...* "

APPENDICES

For space and efficiency reasons, these aren't reproduced here, but these are all PDFs and available to anyone who wants them. Just ask Russ.

From the "Growing for Gut Health" workshop, on 28/3:

Grace's Gut Recipes.pdf

From the "Native Food Plants" workshop, on 23/5:

Bush Food Plants for the Adelaide Area.pdf

Bush Tucker Foods for Adelaide Area.pdf

From the "Fruit Tree Grafting" 'extra' workshop, on 4/9:

Collecting scions for grafting fruit trees.pdf

Simple Grafting Overview 1.pdf

Simple Grafting Overview 2.pdf



"A garden is a thing of beauty and a job forever"

Anonymous