



Next meeting:
**Tuesday
4th
June**

ROGI NEWS

The newsletter of the Redlands Organic Growers Inc.

Postal: PO Box 1257, Cleveland Q 4163 Email: redlandorganicgrowers@yahoo.com.au

**Doors open at 6.15
for members so you
can visit the library,
shop or seed bank.**

**Speaker begins at
7.00pm sharp**

**IndigiScapes
17 Runnymede Road,
CAPALABA**

**We encourage you to
stay and chat and enjoy
some refreshments after
the meeting.**

**Please bring something
tasty to share—
preferably home-made.
Also, bring a shopping
bag - in case you
purchase something
from the ROGI shop!**

See you Tuesday ...

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Payments for 2013

**Payments may now be made for
ROGI membership for 2013.**

Remember the value in a
family membership!.

Individual: \$30

Family: \$50

Pensioner: \$20

Pensioner couple: \$30

FREE ENTRY for MEMBERS!

Visitors pay \$5 entry—so it's cheaper
to join at the start of the year.

**Please remember to wear your
name badge to each meeting.**



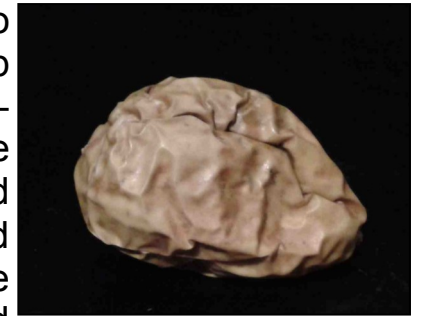
I'm awestruck by the recent wave of participation in recent ROGI activities. We had a great turnout to the seed packing day. The seed bank has enough stock to carry us through till spring and it was all packed in a very enjoyable two hours, thanks to everyone who came – to Helen and Gennaro for organising the seeds and to Angela for loaning us her house, showing us through the gardens and introducing us to her chooks! Next time you drop in to the seed bank – let them know how much we appreciate having fresh seeds to sow.

Despite my awkward introduction last meeting, ROGI's first Garden Buddies received a great wrap. New member Steve Gayner has gone as far as giving us our very first Garden Buddies Corner section in this newsletter. We've received two submissions from two very grateful gardeners, both visited by Gennaro. Steve's calendar has certainly been busy, and I'm hearing that everyone involved has been very pleased with their visits. Check out Buddies' Corner for some tips you might be able to put into practice at your place.

In addition to the usual monthly meetings, it's no secret that ROGI has lifted its public profile. We've attended three big events this year, and co-hosted one big one. Our wonderful committee and other members who stood in to give a hand have handled things willingly and graciously and always with a smile. As enjoyable as they are, these events place an increased load on the shops and the committee members who tend them, to ensure that they're kept stocked for your enjoyment.

In the next year, I'd like to propose some changes to the committee to include some working groups. The details have yet to be decided, but I see the groups being coordinated by the committee members, but meet and go about things without direction of the committee itself. Check my spot next month to find out how you can get involved.

Finally for my spot, a shrivelled passionfruit led me on an interesting path a couple of weeks ago. Jean turned up at the seed packing morning looking for answers, with the said fruit. Gennaro leapt into action, suggesting that it indicated a lack of nutrition. It seems reasonable and likely to me, but it just so happened that I called Bob Cosgrove this particular morning. Bob just happened to be going to a BOGI drop in and chat session. So I took this sad little passionfruit (I grow these too, by the way) along and asked a few more experienced gardeners, certainly more experienced than myself. There were two suggestions:



- Fruit spotted bug – they were fairly certain, somewhere the fruit will have a hard spot where it has been stung.
- Malnutrition - particularly if the first fruit were fine, and the later fruit dropped in quality.

So there you have it: two things you can try if you're getting shrivelled passionfruit and who doesn't prefer nice, full sweet ones?

Terry

Juicy Tips for Juicing By Terry Sullavan

Anyone who knows me well would know that my wife and I wound up our weekend juice business recently. As well as keeping us antisocial for the last seven months, we learned a lot about a good many aspects of running a small catering business. Juicing at markets is a lot of work, but it is an honest business, one that can be as local and organic as one's commitment allows. We've had many good comments about the quality of our juices, and some regular customers returned 3 times in one day!!

I found myself being intensely listened to at a recent ROGI get-together when sharing some of my tips for ripening and keeping fruit and veggie stock. Frank said to me: "I bet there'd be a few folk at ROGI who would be keen to read about that" – and so it shall be!

RIPENING:

Ripening fruit is the key to providing fresh, sweet juices bursting with flavour. Most fruit is ripened naturally by exposing it to direct or indirect sunlight, usually for up to a few days after buying it. This is when the fruit is highest in sugar and juice content.

Oranges: Leave in the sun until the skin becomes soft and thin. This is when oranges are their sweetest, they also last longer when the skin is dried in this fashion, the oils in the skin are highly concentrated and helps keep away moulds.

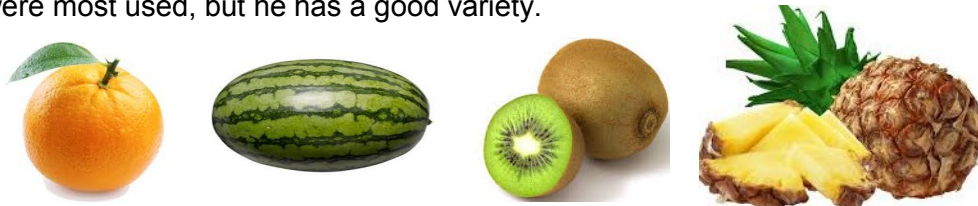
Watermelon is selected by slapping the side of the fruit and noting the sound. A deep, hollow note, as opposed to a dead thud is what you're listening for. I preferred the darker ones with seeds.

Rockmelon & Honeydew: These are ripe when there are numerous small spots on the skin and are soft on the ends. Spot are moulds developing on the skin where the sugars are seeping through.

Pineapple: Ripen in the sun and allow to become golden yellow. Be on the lookout for dark patches on the ends where vinegar flies can enter.

Kiwi Fruit: Don't leave these in direct sunlight! Leave them at room temperature or slightly above.

Apples: I never had to worry about these, I always got them from Angelo at Chandler market and they are always ripe and ready! Pink ladies or grannies were most used, but he has a good variety.



STORAGE:

We always refrigerated our fruit and veg and fresh cold juices on a summer day is the Holy Grail of juicers. Refrigeration is a major challenge in any catering business, and should not be underestimated. As well as chilling, cold storage puts the brakes on ripening, slows moulds and fungus growth and keeps pests and insects away.

There are a couple of other things you can do to keep your fruit and veg longer. The main cause of spoilage is moulds, fungus and bacteria, be they floating all around us or introduced by pests such as vinegar flies.

Try to buy fruit which is not damaged as damaged fruit allows an easy entrance for vinegar flies and spores. If you don't wish to refrigerate then this is important.

Wash your fruit and green vegies with salt and vinegar with a drop of dish soap, and allow drying on the surface of fruit. The solution should be noticeably acid and salty. This discourages the growth of spores on the skin. This is very effective on melons, pineapples, strawberries and oranges. Use the leftover solution on weeds in pavers. Rinse the green vegies and strawberries shortly after washing and rinse the fruit before you cut it. Don't do this with root vegetables.

Exposing fruit to the sun kills mould and fungus. Simply wash and leave it out for a couple of hours, allowing the skin to dry thoroughly. Always store fruit reasonably dry.

Wash root vegies once a week and keep in the dark. That's the way you'd keep them alive in the soil!

Green leafy vegetables including celery: Observe carefully. If it wilts, wash it. If it rots, keep dry it. Again much like growing it!

In short, if you're not sure about storing a fruit or veggie, a good first guess is to keep it in similar conditions to which it was grown. It is surprisingly simple and intuitive, and I hope that these techniques are used and passed on to create juices which remind people how much better the real thing is!

PS, I'm selling the equipment, if anyone is thinking of setting up their own juicing business, get in touch!!

INDIGI DAY OUT 1 - 2 JUNE 2013



ROGI members had such fun at the Redlands Good Gardening Expo, that we're lining up for more at Indigi Day Out.

At the ROGI stall there'll be:

- o Seeds for sale from the seedbank (\$1 for members, \$2 for everyone else),
- o A newspaper-pot-making activity where people can sow a seed and take it home to grow, and some
- o Raffles of wonderfully amazing 'box gardens' (made from foam broccoli boxes) planted and nurtured by several of our green-thumb members.

Frank, our worm man, will be there too, so, if you've ever considered getting some worms and perhaps a worm tower to go with them, visit Frank at his stall.

Do come along and say hello to us on either or both days.

**Saturday and Sunday
1st & 2nd June 10am - 4pm.**

IT'S FREE !

(But you'll need *some* money to buy those things that you just won't be able to resist.)

[Indigi Day Out Program - link
http://www.indigiscapes.com.au/WhatsOn/
Pages/Indigi-Day-Out.aspx](http://www.indigiscapes.com.au/WhatsOn/Pages/Indigi-Day-Out.aspx)

Summary of "Gardening by the Moon"



The moon gardening calendar is based on the age-old observations recording the sun-moon phase with the growth processes on Earth. The Moon's lunar cycle can be divided into 2 basic phases - the WAXING & WANING, with each being divided again to give four phases. So in aligning gardening activities to coincide with these four phases, one creates an ideal system of organising tasks in the garden, and have the added success of better germination rate, more vital plants i.e. resilient under harsh conditions & better quality of produce. This is additional to the good organic practices and the seasonal limits of crops grown which good gardeners already observe.

WAXING [growing] PHASE:

- the new moon "week" i.e. NEW MOON TO FIRST QUARTER & in a FERTILE & SEMI-FERTILE moon sign
- plant leafy annuals—foliage is desired part of plant e.g. asparagus, broccoli, artichokes, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, celery, lettuce, most herbs, spinach
- transplant seedlings and do grafting activities;
- applying foliar or soluble fertilisers; and
- pruning to stimulate reshooting.
- the first quarter "week" i.e. FIRST QUARTER TO FULL MOON & in a FERTILE & SEMI-FERTILE moon sign
- plant fruiting annuals i.e. plants that produce seeds for eating e.g. beans, peas, tomatoes, etc;
- transplant seedlings and complete grafting activities;
- apply foliar or soluble fertilisers; and
- prune to stimulate reshooting.

Some crops grow equally well in both of the waxing weeks. These are: annual flowers, cereal grains and oilseeds, cucumbers, melons, hay, leeks and shallots. and

WANING [decreasing] PHASE - the full moon "week" i.e. FULL MOON TO THIRD QUARTER & IN A FERTILE & SEMI FERTILE moon sign

- The life force of plants returns to its roots, so - plant root crops for better produce e.g. beetroot, carrots, chickory, garlic, ginger, onion, parsnip, potatoes, radish, turnips, etc.
- sow/strike all perennials e.g. berries, bulbs, rhubarb, trees, shrubs, and vines or any plant that grows after a period of dormancy;
- use organic manures;
- prune to retard growth; and

-the last quarter "week" i.e. THIRD QUARTER to NEW MOON

This is the time of low vitality so it is best to:

- cultivate, turn the soil, kill weeds and destroy pests especially in a barren sign for maximum effect [kill];
 - make compost and complete other garden maintenance.
- It is the best time to prune to retard growth.

HARVESTING

Fruits or vegetables which are meant to be eaten immediately, are at their best when gathered at the waxing moon.

Fruits which have a lot of water content e.g. tomatoes have been found to ripen most satisfactorily when harvested just before the full moon, when water content is highest.

The waxing moon phase is associated with harvesting for storage. Over centuries, farmers found that apples, cabbages, potatoes and onions store better if harvested at the waning moon, when water content is decreased.

Other considerations:

The position of Saturn in relationship to the moon has traditionally been considered when planting crops intended to last more than one season. Perennials need to be hardy and long-lasting. A sympathetic Saturn encourages these factors in new plants.

Just as the moon aligns itself with the sun twice a month, it aligns itself with Saturn.

To plant perennials it is best when Saturn and the moon are sextile or trine [so try to avoid planting for long term growing when the moon and Saturn are square, in opposition or in conjunction].

For May, the trines [the easiest time for things to go well] occur on 4th @ 6:18pm & 14th @ 10:15am; while the sextiles [the opportunistic times] occur on 19th @ 8:18am and on 27th @ 5:18pm.

At each exact moon phase i.e. new moon, first quarter, full moon and last quarter; 12 hours both sides of each is not favourable for planting, and are the best times for a rest from gardening activities, should one be so inclined & don't feel guilty.

As the fertile moon signs vary each month according to these four phases it is best to use an astrologer's calendar such as Milton Black's. Every month I come I'll bring the lunar month that will be beginning not long after each meeting.

THE LUNAR GARDENING CALENDAR FOR JUNE-JULY 2013

● = NEW MOON & IN SIGNS ○ = FULL MOON [NB: Allow 12 hours each side of moon phase] ☀ = IN SIGNS
 □ = Sow leaf annuals; □ = Sow fruiting annuals; □ = Sow root crops & perennials; □ = Weed, Prune, Mulch, Fertilise & Pest Control

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>	<u>Sunday</u>
Sunday 9th June ● 18□01' @ 1:57 am; ¾□ @ 7°□20' WAXING →						
10 ☾ @ 2:17 am; Best 2 ½ days to irrigate & transplant leafy annuals & plant perennials	11 + Best 2 ½ days for foliar/ soluble fertilizing & prune for reshooting	12 ☾ @ 2:59 pm	13	14	15 ☾ □ @ 2:27 am	16
17 First ¼ ☾ @ 2:25 am @ 25°43'; ☾ @ 11:20 am	18 Best 4 days for transplanting fruiting annuals; foliar/ soluble fertilizing & prune for reshooting	19 ☾ @ 4:40 pm; Best 2 ½ days to irrigate	20	21 ☀ @ 3:05 pm; ☾ @ 6:32 pm	22	23 ☾ □ @ 6:09 pm; ○ 2□10' @ 9:33 pm; WANING →
24 Best 14 days to prune to retard growth & to use organic fertilizers to NM Best day to plant perennials;	25 ☾ □ @ 5:28 pm; Best 2 days to sew root crops	26 Best 2 days to ○ □ @ 23□06' @ 11:09 pm	27 harvest for storage;; ☾ ∞ 6:33 pm	28 Best.2 days to irrigate & to sew root crops; Best day to plant perennials	29 ☾ √ @ 11:08 pm	30 Best 3 days to harvest for storage;; Last ¼ ☾ @ 2:55 pm @ 8°35'
1 July	2 ☾ √ 7:44 pm	3	4 ☾ □ 7:23 pm	5 Best 2 days to	6 harvest for storage	7 ☾ @ 8:15 am
Monday 8th July ● 16@18' @ 5:15 pm; ¾D @ 3:13 pm						

WHAT WEED IS THAT !

"PROJECT SAVE THE ASPARAGUS" OR "WHAT WEED IS THAT (OR THAT OR THAT)!" By The Desperate Gardener

A Guide for Novice Gardeners / New Members OR A Plea for Help from More Experienced Gardeners

In the midst of all my usual myriad frantic Senior activities, (*put your hand up, Bernie!*) recently I confronted the fact that my one asparagus crown was surrounded by weeds standing almost as tall as it is. Gennaro's garden this is not! In the corner, at the end of the bed, stands salvia from George won as a raffle prize and actually flourishing in these conditions, with the added disadvantage of bamboo growing across the fence in the adjoining neglected corner of our neighbour's yard.

The bed was created by my partner with ? Soil / ? potting mix brought in by a mate and dug over with a tiller. The heap (which I refuse to spread any further in my yard), brought with it a bonus of nutgrass and in time a fringe of monster weeds (the top has been covered with a large plasticized banner weighed down by broken concrete edging). With this last season's rain, the boggy nature of our backyard due to (as we found out) no stormwater drains in the backyard and a consequent backup of water, conditions had not been conducive to gardening, nor had I had enough time to tackle the rapidly growing problem. I determined however that I was not going to lose my precious asparagus crown and would henceforth make the rehabilitation of this area my priority. After all, it could only get worse and worse and worse! Please note the Council has told us they have no jurisdiction over "over land" water flows.

My first decision, made in the teeth of my partner who does **not** espouse organic principles, was that I must do something straight away to stop further weeds coming up after each bout of weeding, not to mention his threatened spraying. Each section I have weeded so far has been newspapered (to exclude light and further germination of weed seeds), and weighed down with every broken brick or piece of rubble I can find, and some sections of rusting weldmesh and discarded fencing. Nearby sit four 60-litre drums of weed tea and one containing some manure tea. Part of the manure tea has gone underneath the paper to help feed the neglected asparagus, part over this newspaper to aid in building up the soil as the newspaper breaks down, with more newspaper over the top of that. The good news is that new thick spears have already appeared - hooray! Underneath my weeds I discovered a very healthy earthworm population and lovely friable, at least, soil

Lesson 1: Don't bring in soil from outside your area. If nothing else, bear in mind the possible spread of fire-ants and the consequent restrictions of movement in force.

Lesson 2: Breaking new ground may result in a crop of weeds you didn't bargain for and will add to your workload.

Lesson 3: Build **up** your soil using raised garden beds or no-dig gardens.



My next task will be to remove, very carefully, the sedge I have spotted in an as yet unweeded section of that bed. Sedge weeds, I discovered in my reading on http://ehow.com/about_6510073_organic-sedge-weed-control.html, have underground bulbs or nuts with three-sided stalks that produce grass-like shoots and quickly germinating flowers, (my Botany in the Bush outings confirmed an astounding number of seeds is produced) and will deplete your soil. There are, I understand, specific ways of removing sedges -

- Groundcover - Planting legumes such as clover and other leafy and strongly growing legume to "overpower" the sedges while simultaneously enriching the soil, as these strong leafy legumes also, "fix nitrogen from the air and help improve soil fertility." Groundcover also helps reduce soil erosion and is preferable to leaving bare earth between crop rows.
- Solarization - wetting the ground where they occur and covering the area with black plastic for some days when it is hot and sunny.
- Removal by hand with a knife after a wet period, taking care to completely remove the bulb or nut.

Heavy mulching.

And this is only the back garden - the front garden is "couch"ed!"

Please if you have any helpful tips for further management of my project, forward them through our Newsletter Editor so we may publish them and I may put them into practice. I am sharing this as I believe we can all learn from each other's experiences. I in turn will publish updates with further pictures."



ROGI - SOIL workshop

Competition

Saturday, 24th August

Who would like to host a ROGI workshop in your back garden?

Linda Brennan will review your soil and advise on ways to improve its structure and pH.

You will also have the opportunity to pick the brains of a horticulturalist in your very own back garden.

You will need to be able to safely host and accommodate around 20 people in your garden.

If you would like to offer your garden please submit:

Name, address and state in 25 words or less why you would want your garden invaded by ROGI.

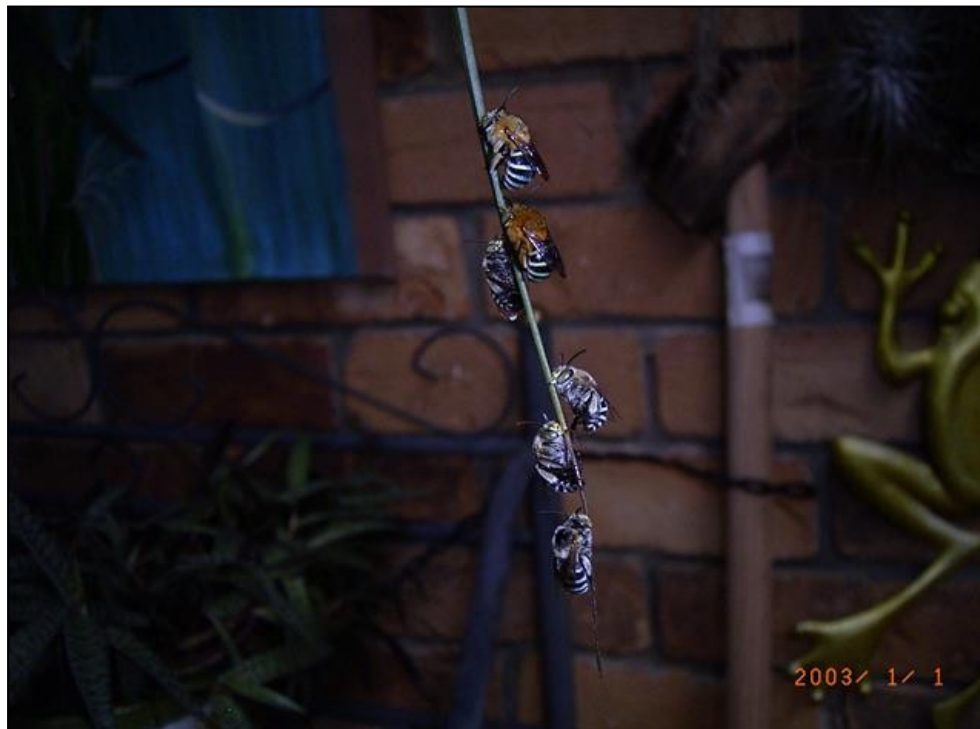
Please submit to Mandy Harrison: hsp@powerup.com.au

Closing Date - 30 June 2013

Blue Banded Native Bees

From George & Judy Allen's Garden

Attached is a picture of our male Blue Banded Native Bees hanging on the tips of a Tillandsia, a genus of Bromeliaceae (their night time roost). They lock on to the leaves with their jaws; prime position is at the end as this is probably farthest from night time predators. They are very good pollinators, due to the vibrations of their buzzing flight. The females spend the night in holes in wood, stone and brick walls with their pupa. They are a solitary bee but as you can see they have some communal instincts. Unfortunately in SE Qld. the males die of in the winter due to their exposed night positions. The females in their protected holes survive. They seem to be particularly attracted to blue flowers, especially "Blue Ginger", but they pollinate nearly all flowers. They can sting but are not aggressive and are fun to watch.



Miso and Tempeh Workshop

There will be a Miso and Tempeh making Workshop held at the Peace Hall, 102 Mc Donald Rd, Windsor, Brisbane on the 20th of July, 2013. Numbers are limited to 15 and this is to be the only one in Brisbane scheduled for this year.

This workshop is very much hands on, and the day will start with making Tempeh from Organic Soy Beans and two types of Miso will also be made on the day as well as looking at how to make your own Soy Sauce. Lunch will be made by the participants by using these fermented soy ingredients to make a superb soy based lunch. On the menu will be Miso soup and hand- made pasta with Tempeh Curry in Coconut Cream amongst other dishes. There will also be a session where we look at the importance of eating only traditionally fermented soy and other issues related to the downside of this contentious bean.

This workshop is truly an avenue for entering into the more complex world of fermentation and personally it's a real turn on for me!

The cost for this workshop is \$95 and this includes morning tea, lunch and a manual.

If you would like to participate, I recommend that you book in soon, as this workshop is limited in numbers due to the active involvement of all the students.

You can book in via my website or email me direct, or if you simply have any queries just get in touch with me.

Kind regards,

Elisabeth Fekonia

info@permacultureproduce.com.au

www.permacultureproduce.com.au

0432 180523

This information has been passed on by Rhonda Binns, who has participated in Elisabeth's sourdough, yoghurt & kefir and cheesemaking workshops. Highly recommend this engaging and knowledgeable lady.

Notice from Library



Books available on loan to members

Please have a look
at the books and DVDs
which are available to take home for
one month

WORTH WATCHING

recommended by Frank Huysing

Reversing Global Warming while Meeting Human
Needs (videos) by Alan Savory

<http://www.nextworldtv.com/page/22649.html>

ROGI Shop

Book Shop

There are still a number of books available at heavily discounted prices, while they last.

When these are gone there will be no more books for sale in what we know as the book shop. There may from time to time be some special 'how to' and small reference books in the products shop.

Products Shop

A new shipment of diatomaceous earth has arrived and will be on sale at the next meeting.

There will, of course, be a range of products available as well. If, however, you find that we are lacking a certain product, talk to us about it and we will see if we can add it to our range.

Frank & Marion

Fairytale Food Safari, **A Wholefood Family Cookbook**



Angela Stafford

Angela Stafford has had a passion for cooking, painting and drawing ever since she can remember. After the release of her first book, *Wild Vegan* (AKA *Wild Morsels*), she studied Kinesiology. A large part of that study involved gaining an even deeper knowledge of nutrition and wholistic health. With this knowledge and a passion for children's health she embarked on the creation of this new book.

www.angelaswildkitchen.com

Book Launch and Food Tasting

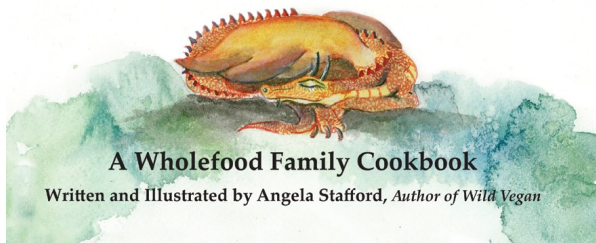
Come along to learn about how to create delicious meals and snacks for the whole family using whole foods.

While you are on the island, why not pick up some fresh, organic produce from the Organic Market. Shuttle service available.

You will discover:

- ◇ Secret ways to get your kids interested in healthy food
- ◇ How to make delicious meals and snacks using nutritious foods your whole family will love
- ◇ Several reasons why you should make chocolate a part of your weekly diet
- ◇ The magic that happens when children fall in love with looking after their bodies.

Hear from Ethan Stafford, age 10



Fairytale Food Safari,

A Wholefood Family Cookbook

Saturday, 8th June, 2013 11.00am-12.30pm

Progress Hall, Macleay Island, near ferry terminal
(after the Macleay Island Organic Market)

RSVP: rsvp@angelaswildkitchen.com

or

0405 277 612 (just in case of date change)

Sample delicious home-cooked food

Buddies' Corner.

Welcome to the first of what we hope will be a regular feature of the newsletter.

We hope it will be more than a just a report on a topic or project. Instead, we are hoping that it will become:

- a source of knowledge for new members to our ROGI community;
- a way of encouraging everyone to share their knowledge,
- a way of hearing about some of the events or activities that occurred since last meeting,
- a way of inspiring us all to tackle some of those daunting gardening projects we keep putting off, a lot more . . .

So if there is a small project you need doing and could do with a little help then try logging your request in Buddies' Corner. If nothing else, you could get some advice on how to tackle the project. If you want to learn about something, then post your request in Buddies' Corner. Let a buddy (new and/or more experienced gardener) help you with the research. Alternatively, join our members in one of their ROGI activities, and have a chat over a cuppa.

This could be a fantastic way of sharing the load, getting a boost of enthusiasm for a project and growing a library of collective knowledge. Any small contribution would help us all. If you are a more experienced organic gardener, and you can help to steer some less experienced gardeners in the right direction, please help us out. A call, email or note to Buddies' Corner will really be appreciated.

So to get the ball rolling . . .

Steve Gayner is a new member and "fessed up" to his lack of knowledge in a number of areas. So behind the scenes we have started to guide Steve through the some basics.

Jill Nixon took Steve under her wing and along with Jean Wyeth visited the Herb Awareness Day on 121th May and, later that day, the home of BOGI member Roman Spur. As you will see, these experiences were just the start of Steve's learning curve. It has been a case of 'one thing leads to another ... and another ... and another ...'

Here is Steve's first attempt in Buddies Corner. Now please remember, if you think you can add to our learning please make a comment so we can make corrections.

Steve Gayner's Learning Curve - Herb Awareness Day, Albion

Well what a day that was, truly an adventure. I spent much of my time buying Salvias to entice some native bees to our property. I later found out, thanks to Gennaro De Rosa, that a Salvia Chia is not only good for attracting bees, it is also a good source of food.

I would like to grow a whole bunch of fruit trees, so I also spent much time with the Forbidden Fruit Nursery stand. They gave me some great tips on how to develop our soil for planting fruit trees.

Another highlight of the day was an entertaining presentation from Annette McFarlane. So I quickly came to the conclusion that I could learn lots in easily digestible portions by attending the events advertised in the ROGI Newsletter.

Sustainable Backyard in New Farm

We met with Roman Spur in his small garden in the city. Wow! Here is a person who is making an adventure out of sustainable living. Not only is he growing all his vegetable needs in his small back yard, he has his innovative DIY hot water system, DIY chook feeders and water system, DIY self watering planters, and his solar cooker. And more. This is one amazing person, and so willing to share his story. I could not resist another visit a few days later.

The huge lesson for me was that we can take a few moments out of a busy schedule, spend a few very sociable hours around a table, exploring ideas, and trying some of his solar oven cooking. He has sent me a couple of his recipes and plans for a solar oven. I will definitely be trying this out. I will pass these on to anybody that is interested.

ROGI Seed Bank and Packaging Day

The next step in my huge learning curve this month was the Seed Packing Day. Having a passion for bio-diversity, I'm a keen advocate of preserving our heirloom, open pollinated plant varieties. With a cup of coffee and a fantastic morning tea and some time to chat, it was more like a social outing. Yes, many hands made light work. We packaged some seed but we also got sound advice on the way. This was a great morning.

As these are held in different locations each time, it's a good chance to explore what has grown well in our local area. Thank you to Angela Stafford for hosting this morning and showing us around her garden. In the next ROGI newsletter I'll write what I have learned about seed collection.

Adopt A Seed - Terry Sullivan discussed the potential for all of us to contribute to preservation of heirloom/heritage seeds. While there are some champions in ROGI actively doing what they can, the problem becomes space. This is a fantastic ROGI program: count me in Terry. I watched a program called the Seed Hunter, and soon understood the perils of putting “all our seeds in one basket”.

It works this way. We choose a seed, get all the advice about propagation, plant care for preserving the purity of the variety, and seed collection etc. Then we share with the rest of ROGI community by bringing seed back; some for distribution and some for storage in the seed bank.

So I am starting with a few rosella plants.

Conclusion – after my first month with ROGI

A huge lesson for me was how much I would learn by getting involved. Then, what I learnt was not just about growing fruit and veggies; it was also about ingenious DIY projects, cooking, recipes, sustainability, as well as the social context.

So from me, a very big thank you to everyone that has helped me through my first month at ROGI.

.....
So if you need some help or you can offer some advice or help another member out then please try Buddies' Corner. Send an email to a buddy like Steve. When you have had a win, please share your story in Buddies' Corner steve.gayner@bigpond.com.au. – you will be amazed at how many other people would be interested.

We would also like to hear from you if you have some tips on seed collection, or if you think Buddies' Corner is worth pursuing. Please email your comments to steve.gayner@bigpond.com.au. They will be really appreciated.



Jean and Steve at Roman's garden—see page 12

Steve after AnnetteMcFarlane's talk at Herb Awareness Day—see page 12



Day at Herb Awareness Show, Albion

Buddies: Jill Nixon, Jean Wyeth and Steve Gayner

Well what a morning. On center stage were the presentations and workshops. One of the highlights of the day was an entertaining presentation from Annette McFarlane.

Some us were off wading through hundreds of Salvias, gathering delightful varieties looking for that right flower to entice some native bees to their property. Others spent time chatting to stall owners getting advice on all sorts of topics like soils preparation, fruit trees appropriate for South East Queensland, local sources of heritage seed and benefits of Aloe Vera, to mention a few. A couple of note worthy stalls were Forbidden Fruits Nursery, Herbfarm and Forget Me Not Heritage Seeds. Thank you for your assistance.

As a new member, one could see how you much you can learn in easily digestible portions by attending the events advertised in the ROGI Newsletter.

ROGI Seed Bank and Packaging Day

Buddies: Angela Stafford (Host), Helen Hart, Terry Sullavan, Gennaro De Rose, Jean Wyeth, Steve Gayner, Irene Browne

The next step in the learning curve for a couple of new members this month was the ROGI Seed Packing Day. Read more about this day on page 12.



Events and Days of Interest

June ROGI Meeting Tuesday, 4th June 2013

Bill McKibben's hugely successful 'Do the Math' tour
Sunday 9 June, 2013 from 6-7:30pm Brisbane City Hall

Indigi Day Out – Sat 1st June & Sun 2nd June

Book Launch—8th June—see page 11

“Let’s Start a Gardening Buddy System” - by Jenny Sando

That topic was put up by Terry at the last meeting. I had mentioned to a couple of people at the meeting that I was ready to “give up” as I could not get veggies to grow well enough to “get a meal” And then, from that suggestion of the Buddy System, Gennaro kindly offered to be my “buddy” What a grand prize. He is one of our Club’s great Gardening Gurus. So he came along to our place. One of the first suggestions was that:



- (1) The vegie garden is basically in the wrong place - “does not get enough sun.” We sort of knew that but that was “the place” where we put it as we needed space to drive cars into the shed etc. and our chosen spot was out of the way. However, we can still grow green leafy veggies in the original spot. I now have some lovely butter lettuce; some spinach is doing well and a cherry tomato (from the Garden Club)
- (2) I had a choko plant in a pot and was advised it will not do well until in the ground.
- (3) Maybe we needed to build another garden in a sunnier position. I could see my husband’s feathers being ruffled. According to him our vegie garden has already cost thousands of dollars without much benefit. However he’s always obliged “to keep the wife happy” and put in stakes, added extra sleepers and tried to make things better.
- (4) Try vertical gardens
- (5) Get a worm farm
- (6) Make up the soil (for the new garden) using the cheapest potting mix, and mix in lots of compost and mulch
- (7) Don’t always try to grow conventional veggies – instead of spinach/silver beet try African or Brazilian spinach which is easier to grow; plant some pigeon pea plants - good crop and grows well

I was then invited to see Gennaro’s garden - The whole backyard is the vegie garden and everything is doing well. He gave me a couple of plants, so I am now waiting for them to “produce”.

So, after some thought we decided to use the space we had in the sun (without making another garden). I had made a garden some time ago or should I say laid some sugar cane mulch down over some very hard soil, put some rocks around it and turned it into “something”, so I thought we could add some things there. To my amazement the “hard” soil seemed to have got “soft” and it looked pretty good. So.....



- ii) The choko plant is now in ground (see picture)
- iii) A trellis has been built along the fence in the sun for “climbing things” - I have incorporated veggies and other plants. I have put in a comfrey plant (Thanks Jill), a Brazilian spinach (won in A Garden Club Raffle), some bulbs (another raffle prize), rosemary plant (from the Gardening Expo). I will keep adding to this garden with more compost etc.
- (iv) We do intend to build a vertical garden in the future
- v) I have the broccoli boxes ready and will be starting the Worm Farm shortly
- vi) The soil has been prepared with potting mix etc and ready for planting other things
- vii) Still working on this point

I now have some confidence back and look forward to picking some of the veggies and bring some to the Garden Club. And if I keep winning things in the raffle I will have a “Raffle Garden”

To any other members I would suggest to “get involved” in the club, ask for advice and listen to the experienced members – they have a lot of knowledge and together make it a great club to belong to.

Thanks again to everybody – Jenny Sando





Newsletter Deadlines

Members have indicated they'd like to receive their newsletters a week prior to the ROGI meeting which is the 1st Tuesday of each month. Therefore, contributions need to be received by 20th June. Please send to Irene : irene.browne@gmail.com

Sustainable Living in a Rental Property (Roman and Jana Spur)

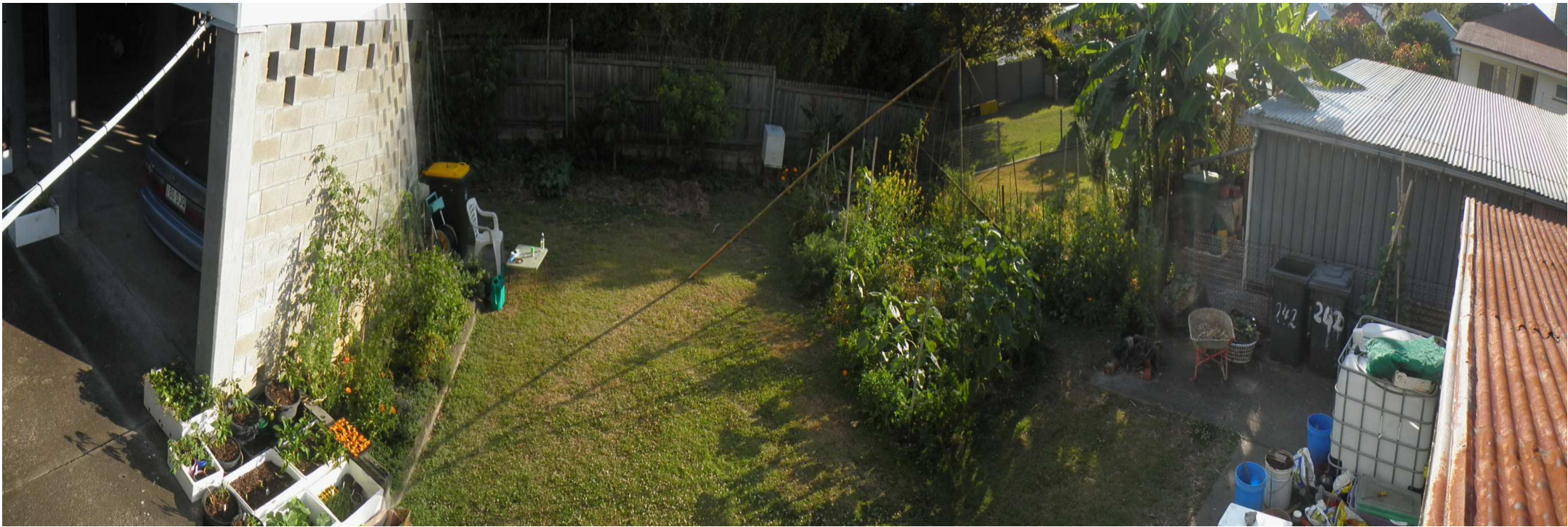
Buddies: Jill Nixon, Jean Wyeth and Steve Gayner

What an exceptional visit this turned out to be. We all met up with Roman and Jana in their small garden in the city. Wow, here are some people making an adventure out of sustainable living. Not only are they growing all their vegetable needs in their own small back yard, but shared their ideas and innovations like their DIY hot water system, DIY chook feeders and water system, DIY self watering planters, and best of all their solar cooker. This is one amazing couple, and so willing to share their story, one of us could not resist another visit a few days later.

The huge lesson for us here was that we can take a few moments out of a busy schedule, spend a few very sociable hours around a table, exploring ideas, and trying some of his solar oven cooking. Roman has sent us a couple of his recipes and plans for a solar oven. This is definitely worth trying out. Please post a request into Buddies Corner if you would like to get copies or learn more about this incredible couple.

Jill Nixon is trying to arrange a ROGI evening with Roman. But in the meantime a copy of Roman and Jana's story is attached.





SUSTAINABLE LIVING IN A RENTAL PROPERTY

Even in a rental property, we can live a sustainable life within a functional community. **Do I have the power to make a change? Where shall I start? How sustainable can I be?**

This is our sustainable living story. We would like to share it with you and hope it provides inspiration, information and answers to some of your questions. Bear in mind that we are still on our journey to better quality of our lives.

OUR BACKGROUND

Hi and welcome from Roman and Jana. We are both from the Czech Republic. Roman's profession is a Sustainable Building Engineer, designing buildings in the most energy-efficient and sustainable way. Jana works in childcare, helping to bring up a new generation of bright and environmentally-conscious children. We both love and are passionate about what we do.

ARRIVAL IN AUSTRALIA

When we arrived in Australia four years ago, we travelled around and quickly found out how vast, beautiful and diverse this country is. After a few months travelling, we arrived in Brisbane and Roman started to work as a sustainable building design engineer, while Jana looked for a rental property.

Our preferences were driven by the functionality and simplicity of a small flat, close proximity to work, opportunity for growing our food and creating a local community. And we found it – a unit in a block of five units with a big backyard in New Farm.

HOUSE

Our simple one bedroom unit has windows on the north and south sides, which provide plenty of daylight and perfect cross-ventilation, so no air-conditioning is required. Good solar access delivers heat during colder days and eaves provide shade during hot periods. Moreover, overlooking greenery and gardens gives us a visual connection with our external environment.

Our energy consumption is very low (2kWh of electricity and about 7kWh (20MJ) of natural gas per day- annually around 3300kWh all together), several times lower than an average Australian household (13400kWh). Purchasing 100% Green Power not only mitigated our carbon emissions, but is easy and convenient to do compared to installing PV on the roof of a rental property, and does not cost a fortune (extra 5c per kWh which is about \$9 per quarter).

We manage to reduce electricity consumption to a minimum by choosing energy-efficient appliances (eg: using a laptop rather than a desktop PC) and turning them off when not in use. For a few days during hot summer, portable fans provide acceptable thermal comfort. Hot water is heated by a natural gas boiler. The old type has an ignition light ON all the time which consumes about a third of our total gas consumption.

So our plan is to install a solar hot water system – the sun provides over 80% of energy needed - and turn the inefficient gas heater off. We expect to reduce our energy consumption down to 300kWh per year, which is only one tenth of an average household) with nearly zero carbon emissions and without sacrificing comfort and convenience

Our vegetable garden comprises of four veggie beds, which was originally a pile of rubbish. Soil conditions progressively improved by adding compost (food scraps from the kitchen, grass clippings, leaves), mushroom compost and sugar cane mulch. We gain plenty of knowledge and advice from Brisbane Organic Growers Inc. (BOGI) which we are members and would strongly recommend to everyone who is generally interested in gardening.

in our garden we grow all sorts of vegetables (tomatoes, capsicums, beans, green veggies and herbs, etc), which provide us with more than we can eat, thus not buying any vegetables, but sharing garden production in our local community. More importantly, gardening is so relaxing if you want clear your mind and bring self-satisfaction. Our front yard is becoming a fruit forest, growing mulberries, bananas, pawpaw, passion-fruit and chokos on the fence. We utilise a concrete yard for growing potatoes in plastic bags, capsicums in foam boxes and fruit trees in pots. We also established a vertical garden where we are growing mainly herbs and strawberries in milk containers placed in the gaps of a block wall. Our water-wise garden rarely uses town water, instead using collected rainwater and grey-water from our washing machine in wheelie bins, and then using plenty of mulch.

As a welcome addition to our garden we have chickens, bees and a worm farm. Chickens bring a lot of fun, especially for kids, eat kitchen scraps and leftovers, while producing great fertilizer for the garden and tasty golden yolk eggs. Hard-working bees are amazing to watch flying in and out, bringing various coloured pollen, providing pollination for our and neighbourhood gardens and also produce amazingly delicious honey. On a small block of land, Brisbane City Council allows people to keep, free of charge, up to six chickens (no roosters) and up to two bee hives, which need to be registered with DPI for a minimum fee. Both chooks and bees are easy to keep – it's not a rocket science! We learned from the beginning and all our girls are doing well. Worms in foam boxes eat food scraps and provide worm wee – a brilliant fertilizer, as well as humus for the garden and pot plants.

CREATING LOCAL COMMUNITY

Our local community comprises of people not only living in our block of units, but also in the local area. Garden veggie and fruit, fresh eggs, homemade bread and cakes are frequently shared and swapped within the community. Also socialising, such as having BBQs in the garden and sharing stories is a brilliant way to socialise and have a fun. We also engage local shops, such as fruit and veggie shops, where we collect scraps for the chickens and composting, the coffee shop where we collect coffee grounds for growing oyster mushrooms, as well as a garden fertiliser. All this waste would otherwise go to landfills and create greenhouse gas emissions. Our fresh eggs and herbs are just a small thanks to very kind shop owners. Whenever we need, we buy stuff from local small shops and farmers at Northey Street Organic Markets, avoiding supermarkets. Bringing a sense of belonging, knowing our neighbours and seeing a spark in their eyes and a smile is a very important aspect of a real local community for us.

LIFESTYLE

Our friends tell us that it's incredible how we are living such a sustainable lifestyle in the city centre. Living a sustainable life doesn't mean only reducing energy consumption, recycling and growing our own food, but more importantly living a conscious life 'here and now', caring about people around us, as well as the Mother Earth. We live in such exiting times, so with positive thinking and imagination, along with an open heart, people can achieve incredible things.

LESSONS LEARNT

Reduce – Reuse – Recycle – Repair – Refuse

Purchasing 100% Green Power is convenient and does not cost a fortune

Growing your own food in a small garden bed, or even in a pot, provides not only tasty veggies and fresh herbs, but also fun, relaxation and self-satisfaction

Everything should have a multiple purpose, eg. Chickens eat food scraps, which produce fertiliser and eggs

Functional local community brings a sense of belonging and connection

If you need advice or help, please ask us, as we are here to help you, if possible.

INTERESTING LINKS

Brisbane Organic Growers Inc. www.bogi.org.au

Northey Street City Farm & Markets www.nscf.org.au

Chickens www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/laws-permits/laws-and-permits-for-residents/animals-and-pets/chickens-andpoultry/index.htm

Bees www.honeybee.com.au/beeinfo/assn.html, http://www.daff.qld.gov.au/27_10965.htm

Green Dean – Permaculture & Urban Farming www.greendean.com.au

Ecological Calculator www.org.au/footprint/calculator

RECOMMENDED

Documentaries; www.topdocumentaryfilms.com & www.youtube.com

Water: The Great Mystery; The Science of Miracles, by Gregg Braden; Vanishing of the Bees; No Impact Man; The Secret Life of Plants; Zeitgeist – Moving forward

Films; Celestine Prophecy; City of Angels; Peaceful Warrior

Books; Anastasia – Vladimir Megre; The Little Soul and the Sun – Neale Donald Walsch

You are welcome to visit our sustainable home.

Email: roman.spur@yahoo.com Mob: 0434 824 870



The next ROGI meeting will be on Tuesday 4th June.

Please arrive after 6.15 so that you can browse the various offerings and chat with other organic gardeners before the meeting starts at 7.00pm.

Enjoy a light supper and a cuppa after the meeting. Please BYO cup and a plate of food to share if you can manage it.

Free entry is one of the benefits of membership.

Guests are most welcome – entry is \$5.

As usual, there will be a raffle of plants brought along by members – a great way to acquire some unusual specimens.

Bayside Amateur Beekeepers Society President Ray Goldsworthy will be our guest speaker.

Ray will speak on bees in the garden, the work they do and how to attract bees into your garden.

This is your opportunity to ask Ray your questions on anything to do with bees.



Bill McKibben's hugely successful 'Do the Math' tour

Sunday 9 June, 2013 from 6-7:30pm Brisbane City Hall

The Australian tour is the first international leg of McKibben's hugely successful Do the Math tour through the USA following publication of his article, Global Warming's Terrifying New Math, in Rolling Stone magazine. The article went viral and inspired renewed vigour in communities fighting global warming across the USA and the world.

Bill McKibben will be presenting his clear-eyed view of the global warming maths and what we can do to subtract from the terrifying total in the first week of June.

For the Brisbane event a Q&A session will be moderated by Liz Minchin, Queensland Editor of The Conversation.

For tickets go to

www.billmckibbenbrisbane.eventbrite.com.au

THE CHANNON—by Frank Huysing

In last month's newsletter there was an add for a free day at Geoff Lawton's Zaytuna Farm where he runs "The Permaculture Research Farm". Marion & I decided that it was a good opportunity for a weekend away, so we quietly slipped out of town Saturday lunch time and stayed at a friend's place at the Currumbin Creek Eco Village. We thought we had it bad with the Possums in control of our shed & yard, down there they have every lovely native critter that you can think of, even huge kangaroos.

Next morning we set out early for The Channon and had a lovely, if uneventful trip to the Farm, thank goodness for Rita (Satnav).

At the gate we were welcomed by a fellow, impersonating Geoff, same build, same hat, same beard and from a distance I would have sworn it was the man. After parking we had a small walk to the house where lo and behold we ran into ROGi friends Bron and Liz. There were about 35 of us all told milling around this wonderful place and the lake right next to the house would be my favourite spot. The house itself is a project that has been growing bigger & bigger over the years and it shows – a room or two here and a room or two there, yet it all works beautifully.

Geoff dragged up a chair and from its lofty height he addressed the crowd, welcomed us all and gave a rough outline of what we were in for. He explained that we would be going around the farm and staying roughly on the same contour, a blessing to me, though we did later go down to see his latest dam at the bottom of the farm, a bit of a challenge to this old coot.

He explained that the house was a mixture of straw bale and bamboo construction covered with cob, and to me it looked very comfortable. There are several dams on the farm; the highest ones are up near the road which forms part of the boundary. These dams catch the runoff from the road and the hill above it. Swales then channel the water to lower dams which are all part of the irrigation system with very little pumping needed.

He also told us that the whole perimeter of the property has 2 electric fences, one on the boundary and another some 3 – 4m inside; this forms something like a hallway around the property. The inner fence has a gate every 100m or so which leads to a paddock. Livestock is herded from one paddock to the next along the hallway every 3 – 4 days. This method gives each paddock about 40 days to recuperate and regrow, and the livestock never get tired of the same view every day.

The first place, some 30 paces from where we stood and next to Chicken Heaven is an area about the size of two suburban allotments covered in shrubs and all sorts of vegetation, is Geoff's latest pride and joy – a Soldier Fly breeder. We are proud of the 800mm X 500mm Soldier Fly breeder set in our yard, but the one at the farm would have to be 6M X 1.5M with a corrugated iron roof and a house roof gutter with a slope to one side, finishing over a dish in the chicken run. The idea of the gutter is that when the larvae are ready to pupate, they will try to get to the ground. They fall into the dish and the chickens are on auto feed.

From there we walked past a huge Bamboo forest to see the machinery that had just about finished some more Swales. From there we went slightly higher and walked along a swale that was about a year old and had been planted with all sorts of useful trees. They were at various stages of growth depending on how long ago they were planted – one name comes to mind "The Ice Cream Bean Tree".

We then inspected an electric wire mesh fenced area of about 30m X 39m with a Chicken Tractor in the centre and a great flock of chickens doing their thing. Our attention was then drawn to the 30 x 30m plots further down the slope, where the chickens had done their thing in the past which were in various stages of growth, depending how long ago the chickens had been there. Geoff explained that the crop growing in the plots that had been growing the longest was only a Green compost crop and would be turned in at the appropriate time to provide the soil with the Organic material needed. The result would then be covered with mulch and planted with Vegetable gardens. To show how lovely and soft the soil was after it had been worked over by the chickens, Geoff grabbed one of the plants, about 1m tall and pulled it out of the ground with the greatest of ease, a bit of a shake and 90% of the soil fell away from the plant showing that the whole root ball had come out – need I say more.

We then marched over what was loosely called the camping ground – it is a place for the volunteers to lay down their heads after a hard day. There was a corrugated structure on 1.2m stumps with tanks underneath. It turned out to be the ablation block for the camping ground, composting toilets, running water, and a rocket mass heater hot water unit complete with safety pressure relieve valve and all the mod cons run on a few sticks of wood a day. The waste water went out via a reed bed water purifier, the reeds provide composting materials and any water left at the end of the cycle goes to the swales and to the plants.

From there we went back up the hill again to the Kitchen Garden. Here we were confronted with about 20 Raised Garden Beds running North–South, each about 40m long with the biggest array of vegies a kitchen could hope for. But as Geoff had explained early in the day, their kitchen serves more than 25,000 meals a year, so one can see why there is a need for such a garden.

Next we went past the house again and down the hill to the lowest part of the property where a new dam had just been dug on a water course, not the biggest on the place but it would hold the average house. Standing on the dam wall and looking behind us there was Terania Creek some 30 odd Metres below us, then Geoff pointed up the hill to a spot some 25 metres above us and told us that was the once in a hundred years flood level.

Back up the hill to the house for a great Veggie Lunch and a lot of chit chat. Thoughts of the day – What a Joy to have seen the man and his farm that he is famous for! How good it is to see for ourselves the great way things can grow as a forest and not in an organised way for tractors to do the work. No chemicals for miles

Across the table at lunch there was a chap with his ten year old son who had been fishing things off his plate and asking his dad what is this. He learned a lot that day & so did I, but then I was not game to ask the questions.Frank



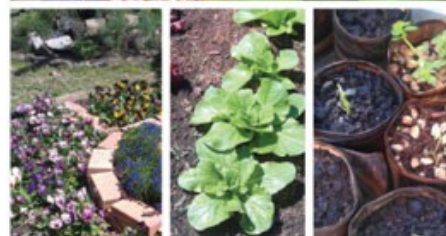
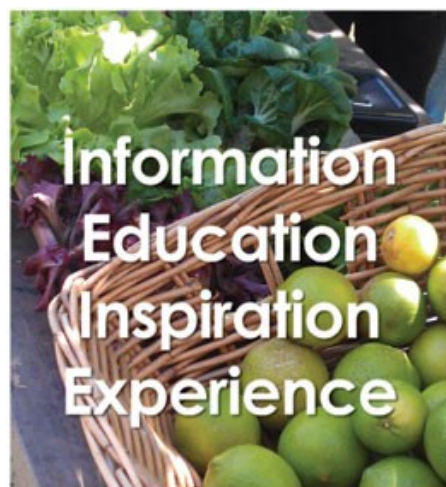
Part of the Kitchen Garden just planted.



The man addressing us next to the new Pigeon loft



The grown up part



Request for Articles

Do you have something to share?

It could be an article about your garden

Something you have learned in relation to gardening or nutrition

A great recipe

A current affair of relevance to ROGI members.....

Please forward me your articles and keep the newsletter interesting:

irene.browne@gmail.com

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