

Next meeting: Thursday 14 March 2024

ROGI News

ROGI meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday night of the month, with doors opening at 6.15pm. Members can visit the plant table, Seed Bank, library and stalls, or have a chat and something to eat before the meeting. Please be seated by 7pm ready for the proceedings.

Bayside Community Church
Cnr McDonald Rd and Macarthur St
ALEXANDRA HILLS

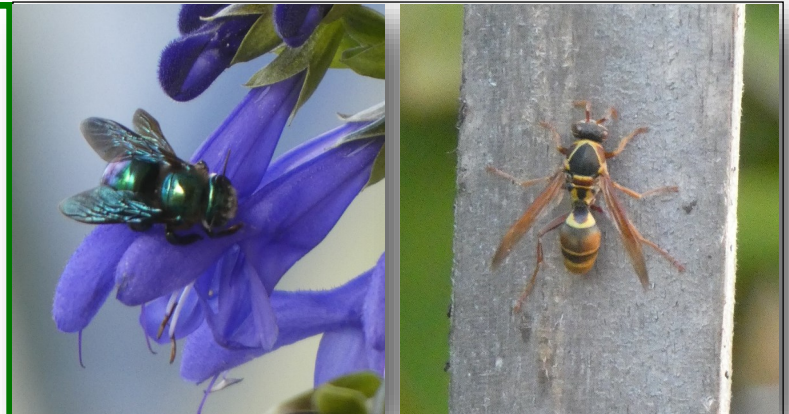
Don't forget:

- Pay your membership dues **(unfinancial members will be charged as if they are visitors)**
- A small plate of finger food to share for supper (hot/cold)
- Return washed seedling pots
- Bring a basket/box/bag for your purchases
- Any questions for Plant Clinic
- A plant for ROGI Rewards
- Free swap/share/giveaway

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ROGI webpage: www.rogi.com.au
ROGI Email: info@rogi.com.au



Pollinators carry pollen from one flower to another, ensuring fruits, vegetables and flowers can grow and thrive. Encourage pollinators such as bees, wasps, butterflies, moths, and hoverflies in your garden by planting flowers, not using pesticides, and creating habitat. More on pages 7-8.



Terry's Tips

Welcome to the first instalment of Terry's Tips! I'd like to thank anyone who has ever stepped in to volunteer for ROGI – a collective of like-minded souls who are keen enough to give freely of their time and knowledge to help other gardeners. Thanks to our vollees, ROGI exists 15 years since first registered in 2009.

A shout out also to Bevan, who stepped in as President last AGM, when the crickets responded to the call for a new committee.

Many of you will know me already as Terry from behind the AV desk at ROGI meetings. I grew up around Wellington Point on red soil, knowing only of the mud it made and nothing at all about the blessing it is. Now, thanks to several volunteer positions with ROGI and Oaklands Street Community Garden, I've found myself treated to home-grown tangelo, soursop, avocados, figs, mulberries and countless fresh fruit and vegies – foods I grew up with, and some encountered in my travels. Unfortunately my own garden doesn't have the soil for which Redlands earned its name.

This is my second crack at the Presidency of ROGI, the first being in 2013 when we met at Indigiscapes 10 years ago. And again, it is a pleasure to step in.

Much of what I've learned in that time is that what I want is not always what my plants want. We humans have a very fixed idea of the world; measure, interpret, postulate, count, time, predict, expect, etc. It has gradually dawned on me that the plants are the stars of this show. And what they need more than anything is in the soil. However, loam wasn't built in a day. My soil has been

built up gradually, mostly with prunings, grass clippings, manures, vermi-compost residues, coffee, and minerals.

I rarely fuss over plants. There are many crops that need that, and plenty to learn and practice on. But there are many more that originate from similar climates which will just be happy. In addition to seasonal European vegies, Asian greens, cassava, bananas are plentiful, pest resistant, and there are so many folks in our community who are only too happy to share recipes.

ROGI is a fantastic way to share this knowledge. It's exactly the reason we have a newsletter, website, and gather among friends new and old. But do take the time to join one of the many initiatives – be it visiting a member's garden, attending a field trip or Seed Savers, the seed bank, library, or helping with the food waste collection.

I look forward to doing what I can to support our group, helping people learn about how to better work with the world around us, and enjoy what goes onto our plates.

Peas, love, and compost
Terry Sullavan, ROGI President

TERRY'S TIP: Free Manure

Manure (horse, cow and food waste to compost) is available for free from DEATH ROW UNCHAINED at 1374 Mount Cotton Road, Burbank. Minimum of 5 x 15kg bags.

Email Tony operations@deathrowunchained.org to find out when you can pick up, or ring Terry on 0408 259 445.

March Meeting

Growing Australian Bush Foods

There are many reasons for growing bush foods, including acknowledging the first nations of our country, obtaining food from plants that are native to our local area, supporting native wildlife, and adding new flavours to our meals. Bush foods are also healthy foods, as they provide healthy starches and fats as well as minerals and antioxidants.

At our March meeting we welcome Dick Copeman, one of the founders of the Northey Street City Farm. Originally a medical doctor, Dick has also worked as a campaigner on food policy, fair trade and sustainability issues. His particular interests are in bush foods, bush regeneration, tree and perennial crops, and permaculture design. Dick has co-written a book with Helen Schwencke, *Inviting Nature to Dinner: The benefits of bringing biodiversity to our backyards*.

We'll also hear from a ROGI member about what is happening in their garden. Bring along your questions for Plant Clinic and we'll see if someone can help.

The usual attractions will be there - Seed Bank, the well-stocked library, some seedlings and plants, plus local honey, home-made jam, wax wraps and more.



All ROGI Members - \$2-00 entry
Visitors welcome - \$5-00 entry
Free tea and coffee.

PLEASE NOTE: We're trialling having supper at the beginning of the night (6.30pm). It would really be appreciated if all attending could contribute to supper by bringing a small plate of finger food to share (hot or cold). The meeting will still start at 7pm sharp.

ROGI Events

ROGI MEETING

Thursday 14 March

FIELD TRIP

Sunday 24 March - 3pm

Our host Doug Hanning will open his amazing property to ROGI for the March field trip. Doug lives on half an acre at Camira, 38 minutes from Capalaba. You can car pool or drive there yourself. The visit starts at 3pm, and Doug will take us on a tour of his property, which consists of veggie gardens and 250 different fruit trees from all over the world. Doug has an Achacha tree, which fruited this year (one of only five gardeners with this tree in SEQ). He also has 30 dragon fruit of many flavours. To see what Doug has growing, go into Instagram and check out his photos at [dougs_urbanfarm](#).

We will have a maximum of 20 people. Please send your details to Toni at tonibowler@hotmail.com (phone 0402 323 704).

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Please send your item/s to the editor and help keep the ROGI Newsletter topical, interesting, local and relevant.

Email newsletter@rogi.com.au

The April newsletter deadline is 28 MARCH 2024

Bunchy Top in Backyard Bananas

Last month we welcomed Samantha Stringer from the Australian Banana Grower's Council to teach us how to detect the world's most serious banana virus - Banana Bunchy Top Virus (BBTV).

Bunchy Top is prevalent in SEQ and Northern NSW, with infections occurring on the Sunshine Coast, Brisbane, Gold Coast, and all the way down to Lismore. If the disease were to move to North Qld it would be catastrophic to Australia's commercial banana industry.

BBTV is spread by the banana aphid (*Pentalonia nigronervosa*), and by the movement of infected planting material. Backyard growers are urged NOT to give away young plants or suckers to friends or neighbours. Banana plants are available at approved nurseries and shops - Timbara Garden Centre in Thornlands have a good variety.

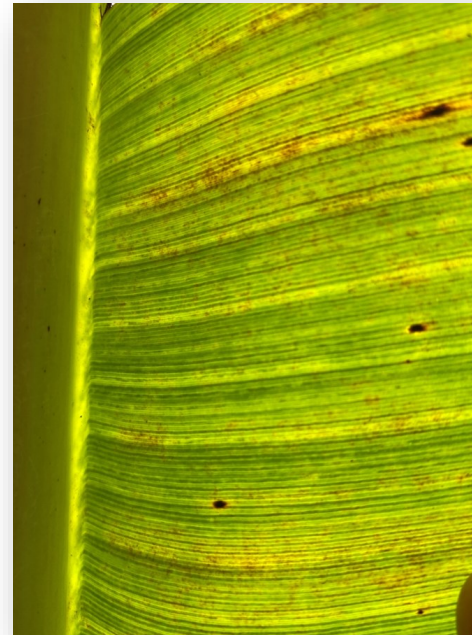
In its early stages, the virus is difficult to see on any banana variety. When the disease is more advanced you will notice:

- Each new leaf becomes shorter.
- Each new leaf stands more upright, giving a bunched leaf appearance.
- The leaf edges roll slightly upwards.
- The leaves are slightly yellow/lighter green.
- The plant growth is stunted (shorter plant).
- No bunch or a deformed bunch.

If you suspect your bananas have the virus, call the Bunchy Top Hotline on **1800 068 371** or go to the Bunchy Top Project Facebook page and click "Send Message". Do not disturb the plants, as you can scatter infected aphids to healthy plants.

If your plant/s have Bunchy Top, they must be destroyed. There are chemical and non-chemical options available for destroying Bunchy Top. A new plant can be planted in the same spot with no risk of contamination.

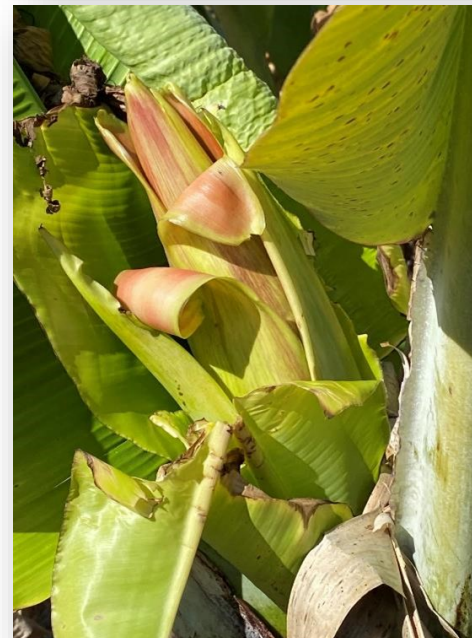
BBTV SYMPTOMS - WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR:



Dot-dash lines and hooks



Mid rib stripes



Choked banana bell



Deformed bunches

Bunchy Top in Backyard Bananas *(continued)*

BBTV SYMPTOMS - WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR:



Yellow/pale leaf margins



Banana aphids



Backyard Bunch Top



Healthy bananas

To grow healthy, disease-free bananas:

- Keep plants de-suckered: 3 stems per clump.
- De-leaf plants: chop dead, yellowing and leaf spot affected leaves off.
- Use lots of organic matter, water thoroughly.
- Use a slow-release fruit fertiliser approximately every 8 weeks.
- Put a bunch cover on your banana bunch once it emerges fully.
- When bunch is ready to harvest, chop fruiting stem down and let the 'follower' become your next fruiting stem.
- Choose stems that have a sword leaf and thick stem close to the main stem.

The following videos are great resources for backyard growers:

Bunchy Top Disease in Backyard Banana Plants

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nS-GwTVM_RE&list=PLRVWrPDFJwZBQVB5sQlyg-NTyjGG7ARK_&index=4

Bunchy Top Tips: Backyard pests and diseases

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ea2ZxUabYMc&list=PLRVWrPDFJwZBQVB5sQlyg-NTyjGG7ARK_&index=2

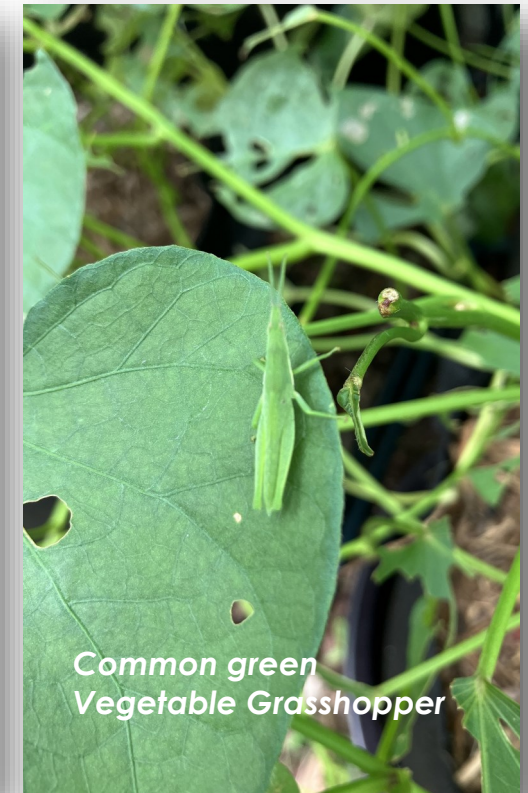
Grasshoppers

By Bianca Dimont

Are you still trying to stay on top of what seems an insurmountable grasshopper population in your garden? Further to Linda Brennan's article last month about Assassin Bugs, this month let's cover grasshoppers, one of the Assassin Bug's favourite foods. Actually, I don't know if it's a favourite, but I have seen a fair number of grasshoppers in the clutches of these bugs meeting an untimely demise, as pictured left. Depending on where you are gathering information, there could be anywhere from 500 to 750 species of grasshoppers in Australia. The most likely type you'll find is the common green Vegetable Grasshopper (*Atractomorpha similis*), found in eastern coastal areas. Other species for our region may be less likely to occur in your food garden as they prefer habitats such as grasses and heathlands. There is even a Slender Gumleaf Grasshopper that prefers eucalypt woodlands.

So, how do we keep grasshopper numbers down in our own patch? Besides assassin bugs, other natural predators of grasshoppers include predatory wasps, praying mantises, lizards and frogs. Making your garden a haven for these helpers is a great way to maintain a lovely natural balance. But what if there are not enough grasshopper predators for the sudden summer onslaught of grasshoppers that have descended upon your garden? We all know how dispiriting it is to find plants looking healthy one day and disseminated the next. Thankfully, unless they've attacked your leafy greens, much of the damage done by grasshoppers is aesthetic. As they prefer to munch on foliage, your fruits are largely left unharmed. Though this does not apply to locusts and giant grasshoppers. And, if you happen to end up with masses of the little insects resulting in significant defoliation, your plants will not perform well. If you are able to let chickens roam around your garden, they can certainly put a dent in the population for you at no effort, as will other birds if your garden is open.

After doing some research, I have tried, and can attest, that hand removal is successful if done very early in the morning and late in the afternoon when they are noticeably slow to jump away from your grasp. If you happen to catch a pair mating, they are even slower, and you get two for one! Insect netting will also keep grasshoppers off plant leaves. ABC's Gardening Australia suggests mixing a cup of molasses into one litre of water and spraying over new foliage. This method is apparently also good for sucking insects and caterpillars. Now that we are in March, another blessing is that grasshoppers are most prevalent in summer, so grasshopper breeding should start to slow down now, if it hasn't already. As for being prepared for December, keeping plants healthy with the usual steps of good composting, regular application of natural fertilisers, and regular watering will assist them in managing a few bitten leaves.



Common green
Vegetable Grasshopper

Growing Plants that Attract Pollinators

By Linda Brennan, Ecobotanica

At our February meetup of Seed Savers, we discussed pollinators, and the important role they fill in our gardens. A pollinator is usually an animal or insect that moves pollen from the male part of a plant (stamen) to the female part of a plant (stigma). In most cases this occurs in flowers, but may also occur in non-flowering plants (e.g. some cycads). Pollination may also occur by wind transfer of pollen. Some interesting pollinator facts include:



These flowers are great to grow year-round to attract pollinators into your food garden:

Cosmos has flat flowers that are pollen-rich and provide protein;

Basil, brassicas, mustard and Asian greens have small cup-shaped flowers that are full of nectar, which is sugar rich and good for Australian bees.

Jerry Coleby-Williams

Not all pollinators eat pollen. Some transfer pollen as they sip nectar (e.g. bees, butterflies).	There are a myriad of Australian native pollinators. Some examples include bee flies, native fig wasps, sandfly wasps, mud wasps, and blue flower wasps.
Sandfly wasp adults sip nectar, but lay their eggs in native bees. The hatching larvae eat the bees.	Mud wasps predate small insects in the garden. Paper wasp adults are pollinators as they eat nectar, but the larvae eat caterpillars, aphids and flies.
65% of flowering plants need help with pollination.	Ants pollinate the tubular flowers of salvia as they seek nectar.
Butterflies are great pollinators. The common crow butterfly sips nectar and pollinates plants, but lays its eggs on plants with milky sap. The caterpillars eat the leaves, then metamorphose into a golden chrysalis before becoming a butterfly two weeks later.	Some insects are tricked into being pollinators. For example, a species of wasp is lured to the Broad Lipped Orchid by a plant pheromone that is quite like a potential insect mate. The orchid converts the wasp in pollen as it searches for the mate.
Snap dragon flowers are pollinated by heavy insects that can force the lower petals open to get inside the flower.	Mature blue flower wasps are nectivorous and act as pollinators. They predate scarab (Christmas) beetles as food for their larvae.
Hoverfly adults eat nectar and pollen, transferring pollen as they visit plants. Their larvae eat small insects, especially aphids.	When you spray for caterpillars with insecticide, it will kill all butterfly larvae.
Mammals (e.g. flying foxes) are nocturnal pollinators.	Flies pollinate avocados and coffee bushes.
Thrips pollinate Australian cycads.	Certain midges pollinate cacao plants.
Pawpaw flowers are pollinated by night-flying moths and by day-flying birds and bees.	

Growing Plants that Attract Pollinators *(continued)*

To attract pollinators that will ensure you get a crop of zucchinis, macadamia, and other fruits and vegies, plant flowers or allow vegies to go to flower and seed. Flowering shrubs in the garden are also a great way to provide food and habitat for pollinator insects, mammals and birds that also pollinate.

Research has revealed that strips of flower plantings in a garden or field will increase crop yields. Buckwheat makes an effective floral strip. Plant buckwheat seeds (buy from the supermarket or health food shop) in February to April and August to October.

Plants to attract pollinators and provide pollinator habitat in the home garden:

Shrubs and trees	Annuals & ground covers	Fruits and Vegies in flower
<i>Grevillea</i>	<i>Hardenbergia</i>	<i>Radish</i>
<i>Small eucalypts</i>	<i>Dianella</i>	<i>Tropical Apple & stone fruit</i>
<i>Elderflower</i> (potentially weedy)	<i>Clover as a grass option</i> (especially cool climates)	<i>Carrots and carrot family</i> (e.g. <i>Queen Anne's lace</i>)
<i>Macadamia</i>	<i>Sunflowers</i>	<i>Cucumber and friends</i>
<i>Banksia</i>	<i>Poppies</i>	<i>Asian greens</i>
<i>Hibiscus</i>	<i>Basils</i>	<i>Citrus</i>
<i>Daisies</i>	<i>Zinnias, cosmos, phlox</i>	<i>Zucchini and pumpkins</i>
<i>Leptospermum</i>	<i>Dahlias, Poppies</i>	<i>Artichokes</i>
<i>Lemon Myrtle, Ivory Curl</i>	<i>Alyssum</i>	<i>Passionfruits</i>
<i>Rosemary</i>	<i>Fennel and Dill</i>	<i>Rocket and coriander</i>
<i>Callistemon</i>	<i>Lavenders</i>	<i>And lots more ...</i>



The common crow butterfly (brown with white markings) is a pollinator often seen in gardens in summer. Its caterpillars eat leaves of plants with milky sap. The chrysalis is golden. The butterfly is a pollinator with an appetite for nectar only. Images: Linda Brennan



Recipes

Pickled Hard Avocado Recipe

By Linda Brennan

When avocados are not quite soft enough to eat, don't throw them out.

1 avocado, cubed
1/2 cup white wine vinegar
1/2 cup water
1 teaspoon salt
2 dessertspoons honey
2 tablespoons red onion/spring onion, sliced finely

- Pack cubed avocado and onion into a jar.
- Bring remaining ingredients to the boil.
- Pour over the avocado in the jar and seal.
- Refrigerate when cool.
- Eat from 8 hours to 2 weeks



Puzzled by a pest?
Not sure if your plant is a weed or a 'goodie'?
Does it have a deficiency or is it a disease?

That's what **PLANT CLINIC** is about. Bring along the insect or plant (as many parts as you can—fruit, leaf, root etc) in a sealed plastic bag and fill in the form. Place the plant parts together with the form on the Plant Sales Table. Someone will have a look and may be able to provide an answer. Any solutions will be given to you on the night and published in the next ROGI newsletter.



Upcoming Events

THE BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND

Saturday 16 March, 8am to 4pm

Sunday 17 March, 8am to 1pm

Admission: \$4-00

Belmont Shooting Complex, 1485 Old Cleveland Road, Belmont

The Bromeliad Society's autumn show will feature bromeliads along with tropical plants, succulents, aroids, hoyas and much more. Go to their website or Facebook page for more info:

bromsqueensland.com.au

facebook.com/BromeliadSocietyOfQueensland/

BETHANIA STREET COMMUNITY GARDEN

Bethania Street, Lota

Propagation for Winter and Spring Harvests

Thursday 21st March, 9:30am - 12:30pm

Learn various methods of propagation, including starting from seed and using existing plants. This workshop will focus mainly on edibles and what to plant now for winter and spring crops, as well as general principles. You will take away some plants to grow at home.

Cost \$6 - Booking essential. Email bethaniabooking@gmail.com

HOW TO RECYCLE YOUR E-WASTE

ROGI members are encouraged to recycle their e-waste (old, end-of-life electrical and electronic equipment) by taking it to one of the following recycling centres:

- ⇒ **Birkdale Recycling and Waste**, 537-609 Old Cleveland Road, East Birkdale
- ⇒ **Redland Bay Recycling and Waste**, 761-789 German Church Road, Redland Bay
- ⇒ **IndigiScapes Recycling Station**, 17 Runnymede Road, Capalaba
- ⇒ **Substation33**, 31 Mary Street, Kingston

Opening hours and a list of items acceptable at these locations can be found on these websites:

https://www.redland.qld.gov.au/info/20190/guidance_on_different_types_of_waste/997/e-waste

<https://www.substation33.com.au/about-substation>

ROGI MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2024

How to renew your membership . . . fast and easy

1. Go online to <https://www.rogi.com.au/renew-membership.php>
2. Fill out the application, press SUBMIT.
3. Go to your online bank to make a transfer to ROGI -
BSB 633000, Account Number 136 137 296
(Use your name as a reference please)
4. Find your 2024 Membership card name tag on the hanger near the sign-in table.

PLEASE NOTE—We now have a ‘square reader’ so that you can make your payment with your credit card (at ROGI meetings).

However, please keep in mind ROGI is charged for this option.

Member Category	Members Renewing for 2024	New member/s joining in...			
		Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct 23-Dec 24
Single	\$35	\$35	\$27.50	\$20.00	\$42.50
Family*	\$55	\$55	\$42.50	\$30.00	\$67.50
Pensioner Single**	\$25	\$25	\$20.00	\$15.00	\$30.00
Pensioner Couple**	\$35	\$35	\$27.50	\$20.00	\$42.50

* **Family** - two adults residing at the same address and their children under 18 years of age.

** Please provide evidence of **pensioner** status to claim discount.

BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL COMPOST REBATE PROGRAM

If you are fortunate enough to live in Brisbane, you can apply for a rebate for composting equipment (\$100) or food waste recycling equipment (\$200).

Eligible **composting equipment** (one per household):

- compost bin or tumbler
- compost aerator or drill
- worm farm or tower
- in-ground composter or worm farm
- bokashi composting system
- compost monitoring device (e.g. temperature probe, compost sensor)
- pet waste composting system

Eligible **food waste recycling equipment** (one per household):

- food waste dehydrator system
- in-sink food disposal system

Go to:

<https://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/clean-and-green/green-home-and-community/sustainable-gardening/compost-and-food-waste-recycling/compost-rebate-program>

ROGI MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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The views expressed in ROGI News and at ROGI meetings are those of the Editor and submitters and guest speakers, not necessarily those of Redland Organic Growers Inc.

Email: info@rogi.com.au **Webpage:** www.rogi.com.au
www.facebook.com/groups/redland.organic.growers

Other gardening groups using organic methods:

Brisbane Organic Growers Inc (BOGI)—

1st Thursday every month (except Jan),
 Albion Peace Hall, 102 McDonald Rd, Windsor,
 6.30 for 7.30pm. 3357 3171 <http://bogi.org.au>

Qld Herb Society—1st Tuesday every month,

Albion Peace Hall. 7.30pm. 54268299
<http://www.qldherbsociety.org.au/qhs>

Oaklands Street Community Garden—Wednesday
 and Friday 9-noon, Sunday 2-5pm. Oaklands Street,
 Alexandra Hills. 0408 259 445

VALE GARRY BROMHAM

Sophie Bromham has informed us that her husband Garry passed away on 26 February. Garry had been dealing with kidney problems most of his life. He had undergone a failed kidney transplant, and subsequently, many operations. He needed thrice-weekly dialysis sessions which were weakening his heart, and he knew that his lifespan was limited because of this. He was undergoing a non-invasive procedure involving a replacement heart valve: this was not successful and he died while still under anaesthetic. He was 79.

Garry and his wife Sophie joined ROGI about ten years ago. They were enthusiastic members and came along to every event they possibly could – garden visits, field trips, fairs and expos. When the time came, they purposely chose a retirement community that had the option to do gardening.



Garry had been an accountant and lawyer, and was a very welcome addition to the ROGI committee as treasurer for three years. I personally found his calm, considered, orderly, sensible and wise approach very helpful during my terms as president. He always had a to-do list, which was usually ticked off that day, or at least the next. His sense of humour provided light relief from the serious business of balancing the books.

ROGI members who remember Garry and Sophie may wish to attend his memorial service later this month. Please contact Sophie for details.

By Jill Nixon