

BEELARONG COMMUNITY FARM

To encourage, educate, share and nurture interest in sustainable living by creating a vibrant community farm within an urban environment.



AUTUMN NEWSLETTER MARCH 2018



Chris Courtney and Bec Fletcher serve some tasty snags at the Bunnings sausage stand.

BBQ crew really sizzles

America has its hotdogs and Germans love bratwurst in a roll. Here in Australia, it is hard to go past the humble sausage sizzle.

This year, the Beelarong crew has been busy over the hotplate at Bunnings Cannon Hill. Volunteers fronted up on Australia Day and Sunday, March 25, when we put an amazing 33 trays of sausages on the BBQ. That is almost 800 snags sold to happy customers. And Beelarong is also manning the

Cannon Hill stall on the first Tuesday of each month. There is another weekend date confirmed for November 2018. All of this means revenue for projects at the farm. More than \$7000 has been raised this financial year. As well as the sausage sizzle, Beelarong ladies have been making and selling their preserves at Bunnings Cannon Hill. A recent Sunday stall saw sales of \$775. That means a growing number of people are finding out about our famous rosella jam.

WE OPEN WEDNESDAYS

9am - 12 noon. Join volunteers who work together in the community garden every Wednesday and share the harvest at the end of the morning. We break for morning tea at 10am.

The shed is now open on Saturdays 8am - 11am and also on Sunday afternoon from 2pm to 5pm

OUR PEOPLE

President : Richard Holden;
Treasurer: Lorraine Holden;
Secretary: David Costello; Committee: Paula Kennedy, Jane Reid

TASKS

Education, farm phone: Jean Burke; Workshop Garden: Paula Kennedy; Worm Farms: Pat McGrath; Fruit fly traps: Jocelyn Abrahams; Tractor: John O'Donnell; Herb Spiral: Susan Weedon-Fick; Plumbing: Bob McConachie; Website-Facebook: Celine Friche; Solar panels: James Taylor; Morning tea: Pat McGrath, Jean Burke, Helen Paynter; Food Forest: Kath Dunning; Newsletters, composting, rat baiting: David Costello; Jam making, boundary garden: Dorothea Schafer; Seeds: Bernice Hardie, Paula Kennedy; Allotments: Kath Dunning; Mowing and trimming: Chris Courtney, Barry Muller; Passionfruit: Leona Olling; Citrus, sausage sizzle organiser: Lorraine Holden; Chooks: Anthony Saber

Busy bees get the work done

**By Richard Holden
Beelarong President**

Although the last month has seen a huge amount of rain I am pleased to say that it has also been an incredibly active time for people at the farm.

The Saturday working bee response and effort was outstanding, we managed to complete all the major clean up jobs from our list.

- Filling the six meter skip with all the old sleepers and logs from behind the compost bins and topping it up with a huge pile of weeds from vacant plots.
- Taking delivery of eight meters of garden soil for the new workshop beds.
- Cutting and placing the railway sleepers for the new members plots.
- Emptying the BCC compost bins into the large bays.
- Relocating the BCC compost bins away from the morning tea area and onto the concrete slab.
- Erecting new composting information signage at the front of the Farm. Clearing out and re-



Susan Weedon-Fick loves taking part in a working bee.

establishing the garden around the fig tree.

- Extensive weeding across most areas of the Farm.
- Delivery of a second skip for the remaining weeding.

A big thank you to everyone who contributed

The team running the BCC GOLD Program workshops have excelled themselves with extra classes needing to be booked through to July and somehow in the midst of all this

activity the ladies have managed to make up almost 200 jars of jams and pickles.

This is tremendous support for the Sunday sausage sizzle at Bunnings and is a major contributor to our finances.

And lastly we are now promoting extra workshops on Saturday/Sunday to attract interest from young families looking for weekend activities. Please check Facebook for details. What a month at Beelarong!

Top honours for our ladies



Beelarong members and friends at the Griffith Awards (l-r) Bernice Hardie, Richard Holden, Di Ferguson, Marion Forrest, Lorraine Holden, Julio Correa, Nigel Wallis, Steven Wallis, Jean Burke, David Costello

The sterling services of Beelarong identities Jean Burke and Marion Forrest were recognised recently at the 2018 Griffith Australia Day Awards.

These wonderful ladies received their awards from Terri Butler, the Federal Member for Griffith, in front of a packed and very enthusiastic crowd at Souths Leagues Club in West End on January 28.

Jean was one of 20 eminent people to be lauded this year for their contribution to local organisations

and the community. Marion was part of the 2017 Awards List but missed out on receiving her gong last year because she was out of the country.

The adventurous septuagenarian spent January last year in the United States where she attended the inauguration of President Donald Trump and Women's March in Washington on January 21 which drew up to 500,000 people.

Jean, who was accompanied to the awards by her sons, Nigel and Steven

Wallis, has been a dynamo around Beelarong, serving as Management Committee secretary and co-ordinating the farm's involvement in the Morning-side Festival. As the Education Officer, she has run and organised many workshops under the Brisbane City Council's GOLD (Growing Old and Living Dangerously) and GOLD 'n' Kids programs.

Corrine McMillan, the new State Member for Mansfield was the MC for this year's awards. She said

Top honours for our ladies

that Jean's cheerful nature and commitment to the farm had an immediate impact on the workers there and it seemed only natural that she would quickly come to occupy a leadership position.

“Jean has significantly improved the farm's outreach with bulletins, newsletters and workshops, as well as leading Beelarong's participation in the Morningside Festival,” she added

“On top of this, Jean brings a healthy dose of humour to everything she does.”

After the event, Jean and Marion said they had been delighted to be part of the 2018 ceremony. Both said they had loved the performances by the River City Clippers, a male harmony choir which gave stirring renditions of favourites including *I am Australian* and *I Still Call Australia Home*.

Marion is a genuine Beelarong pioneer who served as the first farm treasurer and was part of the team that transformed the place from a weedy horse paddock into the thriving community garden we enjoy today. She is a genuine green thumb with a vast wealth of gardening knowledge



Griffith MP Terri Butler with Jean Burke (top) and Marion Forrest.





Lillian, Mary, Kate and Meisha with working bee co-ordinator Kathryn Beard. Below: Mary and Kate.

Enactus students pitch in

The weather was hot and steamy but that did not stop the Griffith University Enactus Group from getting stuck in to a bunch of sweaty jobs at Beelarong on Saturday, March 17. They helped farm workers to move soil and sleepers and build new bays of compost. And they pulled out a massive pile of weeds that have grown like fury in the recent wet weather.

Enactus organiser Conor Gould says the students enjoyed the hard physical work and were in good spirits despite the energy sapping conditions. Enactus is part of the

Griffith Honours College, which helps high-achieving undergraduate students reach their potential. Members take part in community initiatives and travel overseas to places like Cambodia and the Philippines to work on aid projects. Each year, Enactus students from around the country travel to a National Conference to present their projects to business and academic judges.

Conor, who is a software student with an interest in social entrepreneurship, says the students have also worked with the Rosies charity which helps homeless people.



Enactus students pitch in



Enactus students Nick (2nd from left) and Heath with James Taylor and Richard Holden. Below left: Julia hard at work. Below right: David Costello and Bob McConachie take a break from building compost piles



Fun workshops for all ages



The happy cob workshop bakers included these three cheerful ladies plus Robyn, Jean and Costa (below).

By Jean Burke

We have added some new workshops to the Events Calendar at Beelalong this year, including *Kimchi Making*; *Balinese Cooking* and *Making your own Thai Curry Paste*.

These have proved to be very popular, so much so that we have had to run a second workshop in each case to deal with the waiting list. We will be running them again in the second half of the year.

However, we still have a wonderful turnout for our tried-and-tested workshops and here are a couple of shots taken recently at our Cob Oven Cooking workshop. We cooked lemonade scones and damper in the cob oven. While they were baking, we made lemon butter to slather over the top. All agreed it was a delicious combination. Just a few crumbs were left for the washer-up.



We are running two workshops during the Easter school holidays as part of the GOLD 'n' KIDS program for seniors with children from the age of four years. These events are always lots of fun. Bookings are essential: email education@beelalong.org.au (preferred way of booking) or mobile 0401 168 657. Fee \$5.

Monday 9th April: Egg Carton Greenhouse 9:30am - 11:30am for Kids and Seniors. You will also decorate a terracotta pot to take home with you.

Thursday 12th April: Terrific Terrariums 9:30am - 11:30am for Kids and Seniors. Create your own mini terrarium using new and recycled materials to take home with you.

Dianne's life of adventure

By David Costello

DIANNE Lloyd says Wednesday mornings at Beelarong are really the "centre" of her week. She gives much to the place especially through her lovely watercolour greeting cards which capture the subtropical splendour of the farm and surrounding suburbs.

And Beelarong gives her plenty in return. Dianne treasures the friends she has made, new artistic challenges and the space to keep gardening.

Like many farm members, Dianne is a lifelong green thumb who now lives in an apartment. She and her husband Bob gave up their 1.5 acre garden at Pullenvale in 2011 when they moved to Bulimba to be close to their three children and their families.

"I loved creating my native garden at Pullenvale from plants obtained from the Moggill Catchment Group, where I became a member," Dianne says.

"We had to rely on our car for transport and we knew that one day we would have to downsize. Our younger daughter lives in Hawthorn and when visiting her I saw new apartments going up



Artist and gardener: Dianne Lloyd is a valued Beelarong identity.

close to Oxford St, Bulimba and thought we should investigate. We liked what we saw and sold up and moved there. I didn't know how I would cope without a garden so was very pleased to find Beelarong on the internet.

"It's given me the opportunity to make new

friends, indulge my love of gardening and art by continuing to create greetings cards and to work with Di Ferguson on decorating some of our outbuildings."

The sunflower mural on the hayshed is perhaps the best example of their work. On top of that, Dianne helps to conduct

Dianne's life of adventure



Growing up in wartime: Dianne with her parents Fred and Gladys Davies in 1940.

workshops where adults and kids make terrariums and prints with fabrics, leaves and bark from the farm.

It is not surprising that Dianne continues to lead a full and very active life. She says Bob Lloyd is a man who likes a challenge and that when she married him in 1960, she knew life would be something of an adventure.

And what a journey it has been. Bob, as a high school maths and science teacher, could look for positions around the world. Those jobs took the Lloyds from their native England to Italy, South Africa and Vanuatu. In Australia, they lived in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Darwin

and Murwillumbah before settling in Queensland.

Dianne's story begins just before World War II when she was born at Swindon, in the British county of Wiltshire, to very young parents.

“My father was called up into the Royal Navy and I hardly saw him for the next few years,” she says. “We lived through air raids but we were lucky. I well remember the day that he came back home safely to my mother, my sister and me.”

As a bright student at Swindon Commonweal Grammar School, Dianne's favourite subjects were art and biology. She met Bob in 1957 when they were both study-

ing at Teachers Training College in Dudley, Worcestershire.

Bob had been looking for jobs overseas and when he married Dianne in late 1960, the newlyweds headed straight to Rome where they both taught at St. George's English School.

By 1962, they were back on English soil. Bob was teaching science at a technical school in Nuneaton, Warwickshire, when daughter Corinne was born. The following year, the family relocated to Elham, near Canterbury in Kent where Bob had taken a sales position with Oxford University Press. Daughter Nicola was born there in 1964.

Dianne's life of adventure

Their next move took them right off the beaten track. In 1965, Bob spotted a job advertised in *The Times Educational Supplement*, for a maths and science teacher in Vila, New Hebrides.

Dianne was bemused. She thought he was proposing a shift to the Hebrides, a wild and windswept island chain off the coast of Scotland.

“He added that it was in the southwest Pacific and I was all for it,” she says.

“He got the job and we flew out at the beginning of 1966 with our two small daughters. We flew over the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans stopping briefly in Bermuda, then the Bahamas, Acapulco in Mexico and Fiji before arriving in the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu).

“I was blown away by my first sightings of the tropical plants in those places – bougainvillea, hibiscus, frangipani. I had never seen anything so beautiful.”

After two years, the family moved back to England but found it hard to settle and when another science teaching job was advertised in Durban, South Africa, Bob jumped at it

South Africa turned out to be a mixed bag, Dianne says. Their son Richard was born there in 1970 and the family enjoyed a lovely home and the social life.

But growing civil unrest worried Bob and the family looked at the possibility of moving to Australia. After getting the green light from the Australian Consulate in



English rose: Dianne in 1958

Durban, the Lloyds emigrated Down Under for the princely sum of 10 rand each.

“The authorities looked after us well and after brief spells in Sydney and Melbourne, Bob found a job in Adelaide where my sister and her family were already living and we settled in the Adelaide Hills,” Dianne says.

“We stayed there until 1983 (surviving the Ash Wednesday bush fire). Both my parents and my husband’s mother had joined all of us in Australia by that time and I had re-trained (under Gough Whitlam’s free tertiary education scheme) from primary teaching to teaching fashion (dress design, pattern drafting and sewing) to adults.”

The next move was to Darwin where Dianne taught home economics at a high school. She also studied Indonesian and gained her Bachelor of Education and a Graduate Diploma in Applied Linguistics at Darwin University. Bob became ill and had to give up his sales position in the electrical industry, switching to teaching science in the Northern Territory Correspondence School (now the NT College of Distance Education).

“He got a position for me there too and we thoroughly enjoyed preparing lessons for and visiting, kids who lived out on remote properties,” Dianne says.

“I well remember being taken up on a helicopter joy ride by one parent showing me how they mustered cattle.”

Dianne's life of adventure

In 1995, the Lloyds retired from teaching and moved to Fernvale, near Murwillumbah in northern NSW, where they ran angora goats on a 25 acre property. It was here that Dianne began using her drawing and painting skills to create greeting cards.

“I was volunteering at the tourist centre in Murwillumbah which is such a beautiful area at the base of Mount Warning,” she says

“I was horrified at the standard of postcards and other similar items for sale to tourists and thought, ‘I could do better than this’.

“I started to create water colours and sketches of local views and sell them to tourist outlets around town.”

Bob and Dianne also sold fleeces from their goats but this came to an abrupt end when a pack of wild dogs killed the entire herd.

“This really took our heart out of it all,” she says.

It was time to move again and Brisbane, where the three children had settled, was the logical place.

By 2003, they were living in Pullenvale and Dianne was



Dianne helps kids with their creations at a Beelarong workshop

sketching local scenes for the Moggill Catchment Group.

Visitors to Beelarong can buy Dianne's greeting cards on Wednesday mornings.

She does a wonderful job of capturing the exotic tin and timber character of the local area, especially the vivid purple and scarlet hues of flowering jacarandas and poincia-

na trees in spring. Card sales have contributed a steady income to Beelarong's coffers

“I very rarely miss coming to Beelarong on a Wednesday,” Dianne says.

“Gardeners are always nice people and I really enjoy it here. And it is always nice to go home with some fresh produce.”

Planting guide key to garden success

By David Costello

One often hears of people who complain of having “brown thumbs”. They say that whatever they plant shrivels and dies. It’s just fate. They were born that way.

Well, sorry, but the “brown thumb” idea is rubbish. All that separates failed gardeners from successful ones is a bit of basic knowledge. Get a few things right and anyone can garden.

What is the secret? It starts with the soil. Dig in plenty of compost and some organic fertiliser to add nutrients, beneficial microbes and structure. Use quality seeds and seedlings and read direc-



Healthy vegies: you just need to follow some basic rules.

tions on spacing of plants and rows. Make sure your plants have enough light. Vegies won’t grow well in the shade. Mulch to prevent the soil from drying out. Don’t over water.

And most importantly, follow your local planting guide. I have seen some people trying to grow winter vegies like cabbages and broad beans in summer. That is just futile.

The people at Brisbane

Organic Growers Inc (BOGI) publish a Queensland Planting Guide that is worth seeking out.

This is their advice on what you should plant in April in the sub-tropics (that includes Brisbane and surrounds): Asian vegies, beetroot, broccoli, cabbage, capsicums, carrots, cauliflower, chillis, French beans, garlic, onions, leeks, lettuces, peas, potatoes, sweet potatoes, silver beet, spinach and tomatoes

Things NOT to plant in April include: zucchini, sweet corn, squash, snake beans, pumpkins, rhubarb, rosellas, melons, ginger, eggplants, broad beans (wait until May), chokos and asparagus.



Now that’s a real sweet potato

There was much hilarity at Beelarong recently when Jean Burke (pictured) was digging in her garden and found something that was seriously large. That is an understatement. The sweet potato she grew was simply enormous, colossal, gargantuan, even stupendous. The monster weighed

5.1kg. Was it good eating? Well no, it was a bit hard and woody. But Jean says the joy of growing and harvesting was the greatest thrill for her. The monster was grown from tubers she received from Anthony Sabor. Now it is up to other ambitious gardeners to beat her record.