

April meeting Tuesday April 11th at 9:30 AM

Vonda Youngman Community Centre Main Street, North Tamborine

Guest Speaker: Kate Wall: History of Cottage gardening and gardening on a budget.

Competition table

A flowering native, An exotic tree or shrub, A flowering bulb or corm, A vegetable / fruit, A tropical flower, An arrangement of perennials, A sasanqua camellia flower

Specimen table

Bring along a specimen; unusual, interesting, beautiful, unknown. Include a question if you like.

Question and answer segment

Get the answers you need to all your gardening questions. Use your experience to help with someone

From the President

2016 has been another successful year for all our enthusiastic and energetic members. Finding myself as president has been a steep learning curve and I have really appreciated all the help from the committee members who have an enormous amount of experience. Fitting everything in has been a challenge but it all seems to come together. It has been a privilege to lead such a fantastic garden club.



March saw Eddie Fenton receive the Ron Miller Award. Our August meeting was held at the Botanic Gardens and we had the official christening of the new BBQ. Members enjoyed seeing all the fantastic work being done by the volunteers at the gardens. I do not know what the club would do without this group of hard workers lead by the manager, Roger Lenehan. Roger spends hours on the tedious planning and reporting that has to be done and is to be congratulated.

Springtime on the Mountain, as always, attracted over 2500 visitors and is such a credit to all involved. This is a huge event to organise and we need all the help we can get so please be generous with offering to help. We need your skill both for the lead up and over the three days.

October saw a fabulous bus trip to Leura in the Blue Mountains. The bench mark has been set very high and the pressure is on to maintain this standard. November was the month for the fashion parade. Our Christmas lunch was at the Tamborine Vineyards and Winery and was catered beautifully. Once again the entertainment was of a very high standard. It was a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon.

To everyone who went above and beyond for this club at meetings, Springtime, the volunteers at the gardens, opening your gardens for field days, supporting the Biggest Morning tea, organising club morning tea, keeping membership up to date, the inimitable Potty Potters, planning wonderful bus trips, maintaining our web page, producing our newsletter, greeting members, raffle table, convening the specimen table, arranging guest speakers, grant writing, library, publicity and promotion - I hope I have not missed anyone, my sincere thanks to you all.

Our committee has been wonderful and worked so well together. To the outgoing members, Immediate Past President Marg Bell, Vice President Terri Taylor and Springtime Convener Margaret Pile, you will all be missed and I cannot express how much you helped me this past year. Hopefully, it will be another enjoyable and productive year the new committee and I am sure they will appreciate any suggestions you have. Thank you all - Di Howard



TAMBORINE MOUNTAIN GARDEN CLUB INC.

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NEWSLETTER

Editor: Bernadette Stacey - bernadette1859@gmail.com 0409 759 838

March 2017

A novice gardener in the vegetable patch—Lyn Rule

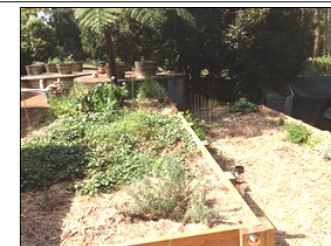
I've always loved the idea of having a vegetable garden filled with perfect rows of lush ripe produce. Before my move to the mountain two years ago, my vegetable growing was more accidental than intentional – like the wonderful tomatoes that overtook my rose garden thanks to my less than perfect composting techniques.

Soil preparation I have received lots of, sometimes conflicting, advice about soil preparation from locals. With diverging opinions I was unsure what to do. I started with local soil and added composted and aged chook poo, composted leaves, rock dust, blood and bone, sulphate of potash and dolomite. I acquired a pH testing kit and noted that the soil was a little acidic so the addition of dolomite has helped make it more neutral. I now add a cocktail of most of the above every time I prepare a garden bed for planting. Crop yields have definitely improved.

Diverse insect population My first plantings in the veggie patch were salvias and lavenders. These pioneers brought in the bees and other beneficial insects. I still have some of those plants in the patch and also allow borage and lettuce to go to seed to provide flowers for the insect population. I have little trouble with snails and slugs and other pests and believe this is due to rich insect and bird population.

Encouraging Worms My first veggie crop in the patch was an accidental one. I was given some tiny sweet potato tubers late in the year and planted them in the heat of summer without the benefit of proper soil preparation. Eventually the hard, compacted ground yielded to these persistent tubers and the tendrils began to spread. By the time the crop was harvested many of the tubers had gone rotten. As luck would have it there was an abundance of healthy worms in the much improved soil plumped to perfection by countless dinners of sweet potato.

Crop Rotation Being an idealist I drew up an excel spreadsheet of the perfect six bed crop rotation cycle and planted accordingly; but the crops refused to follow the instructions. Some beds took two seasons for the crop to mature, others only one, so within 18 months the system was in total disarray. My plan these days is much simpler – don't grow the same crop in the same bed each season. Tomatoes apparently are particularly critical of being grown in the same soil year upon year. The resulting nematodes in the soil need a legume cycle, so peas or beans are a follow-on crop of choice.— continued on page 2



CONTACTS: President – Di Howard 5545 2628 | **Vice President** - Terri Taylor 5545 4564
Secretary - Bernadette Stacey - 5545 0605 | **Treasurer**– Di Fenton 5545 0236 | **Springtime Convener** - Margaret Pile - 5545 0869 | **Patrons** - Mary Wallace, Margaret and Roger Bell

What has not worked I have had little success with capsicums and local growers agree they are difficult here. Broccoli too demonstrated a similar failure to thrive and a tendency to bolt prematurely - both signs of a stressed plant. There has been varying success with aubergines. Tuscan Kale could not withstand the onslaught of munching grubs without lots of pest control. Happily Russian kale seems impervious to all attacks. Tomatoes are a bit hit and miss – I find they get swamped by the wild cherry tomatoes dropped by the birds unless I am quite ruthless in pulling out all volunteer seedlings. Even then the hungry hordes of Bower Birds and King Parrots make short work of any developing tomatoes at an early stage unless all plants are fully netted. This year I have taken a more conciliatory line and allowed one bed to be devoted to wild cherry tomatoes – the harvest shared by ourselves (25%) and the birds (75%).

What has worked Legumes work well, although they require netting until well grown to protect them from the Bower Birds who see a tasty mixed green salad in every row. Salad greens like mustard greens, rocket, all types of lettuce and rainbow chard thrive in all but the hottest months. Shallots both red and green, garlic and golden shallots all do well. Zucchini thrives in summer but a wet summer will see it develop mildew and the developing fruits yellow and drop off. Tropical vegetables such as kangkong (water spinach) thrive when grown in a large container and watered regularly. Asparagus is another vegetable I enjoy – especially the work versus the output ratio. Asparagus is a long lasting vegetable requiring its own bed but lasting for 15 or so years – worth a bit of effort once a year to prepare the crowns for the next crop.

Planting decisions I decide what to plant based on a combination of what I enjoy, what I use lots of, what I prefer fresh and what makes economic sense. Herbs are to me an essential element of the veggie patch. Fresh greens are always growing in my garden. I use a lot of garlic and at \$40+ for organic Australian garlic it makes sense to grow my own. Legumes are another necessity both for their fresh taste when picked just in time for a meal, as well as their ability to fix nitrogen in the soil. I have grown heirloom carrots and other root vegetables but if pressed for space would choose legumes over carrots – simply based on my cooking style!



There is no denying the work that is involved in growing vegetables. But the end results can make a meal as delicious and nutritious as this - spinach and ricotta pancakes topped with basil pesto and avocado and served with garlic roasted tomatoes and French beans – all components except the eggs, flour and ricotta came from my garden! -

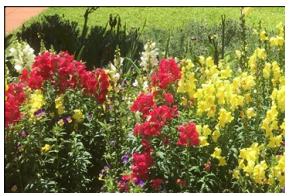
Thanks Lyn for sharing your veggie gardening experience.

Vegies to Plant Now

Carrots, Cabbage, Kale, Onions, Potatoes, Lettuce, Radish, Spinach, Peas

Flowers to Plant Now

Alyssum, Calendula, Delphinium, Pansy, Primula, Stock, Sweet Pea



Club Fees are due. Don't forget to pay your dues by next month. \$25 single and \$40 couple.

Upcoming events—please see the noticeboard for more detail

QCGC A Garden Affair garden show	Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens Auditorium	8 & 9 April
Pattison Rare Plant Garden Open	447 Miles Plating Rd, Rochdale	8—10 April
Wondai Autumn Garden Expo	Sportsground, Bynya Highway, Wondai	15 & 16 April
Floral Art Society Fashion Parade	Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens Auditorium	9.30am 24 April
Viola's Patch Open Garden	280 Beaudesert Beenleigh Rd, Bahrs Scrub	29 & 30 April 10—4.30
Brisbane Plant Collectors Fair	Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens Auditorium	20 & 21 May
Gardening on the Edge	Showgrounds, Maleny	10 & 11 June
Qld Gardening Expo	Nambour Showgrounds	7—9 July
Gold Coast Gardening Expo	Country Paradise Parklands, Nerang	3 Sept
Clivia Show	TAFE Horticultural Pavillion, Lindsay St Toowoomba	15—20 Sept
Toowoomba Geranium Society Show and Sale	Masonic Hall, 58 Neil St	16 & 17 Sept

February garden visit

Our first garden visit for 2017 was at Anne & Kerry Jones's garden in Eagles Close. We had a good turn up of 30+ people to view this magnificent 2 acre garden, starting off up the steep driveway lined with conifers, leading us to lovely formal hedges, and the garden beyond. We were greeted with beautiful music playing under the pergola, where we sat for our morning cuppa, after wandering around the garden. Glenda Sullivan

There will be no March Garden visit.



Diary of a Springtime gardener

The last hot month of summer has been about marking time and waiting for the weather to cool enough to begin autumn planting. The main issue in February was trying to keep the garden alive through the dreadful heatwaves and complete lack of rain. The bergenia has been sun scorched, a plague of crinum grubs have attacked the hippeastrums and a caterpillar infestation destroyed the impatiens. February sure is a tough month for gardening. A good week of rainy days would be much appreciated.

The hardest thing I have had to do so far is decide that my lovely hens must remain confined to barracks for a few months. They have no respect for tender plants and my desire to have a tidy garden. Their run is large enough and I visit them several times a day to catch up on the chicken news.



What we all need right now is a lovely rainy week to replenish our parched gardens. - Bernadette