



Vera Street Community Garden Inc.

A volunteer-run, permaculture community garden in West Toowong.

Convenor's Report – General Meeting November 2009

Q150 celebrations

As most members know, we received a grant of \$3595 from the Queensland Government to run activities to celebrate Queensland's 150th anniversary. We opted to hold a bush dance, plant a bush tucker garden, and bury a time capsule.

Bush Dance

We held our bush dance on Saturday 10th of October, and were excited to welcome well over one hundred neighbours to the garden to dance the night away. Our band for the night, Bushland Boogie, were excellent despite Maggie's sore throat, and everyone was up and dancing as soon as the first song started. It was great to catch up with neighbours old and new, and gardeners past and present.

There was a small army of helpers, both garden members and keen neighbours, who helped with organisation, set up, cooking, stalls and cleaning up which made the event run so smoothly. Thank you everyone.

Many thanks to the Hon Andrew Fraser MP for Mt Cooth-tha, the Hon Scott Emerson MP for Indooroopilly, and Cr Peter Matic, Councillor for Toowong Ward for printing flyers for the event.

Local businesses who supported the event were Baker's Delight Toowong and Coles Toowong, many thanks to them also.

Most thanks must go to Kelly Greenop who coordinated the event and did most of the work, and her family for being so supportive.

The event raised around \$543 for the garden, which is testament to the hard work of the volunteers and generosity of the Toowong community.

Bush tucker planting

By the time most are reading this, we should have planted the majority of the bush tucker plants. This includes 50 free plants from the BCC, and some from Northey St City Farm. As we are getting into hot summer weather, it's really important that we keep these plants well watered and mulched, and we need to establish a roster to ensure this happens.

Time capsule

The time capsule is not ready yet, so look out for this in the new year.

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Grant application for shed

We received notice from the Gambling fund that, due to the land being school property, our grant submission needs to be submitted through the Academy P & C. The P & C is very happy to put through our proposal, so our application will now go into the next round of grant funding. Thanks to Ruth Brown for her continued persistence with coordinating this application.

Community activities

On the 15th of November, Judy Haines, Jane Bell, Ruth Brown and myself ran a stall at the Recycling Festival, organised by the Cubberla-Witton Catchments network. This was a great opportunity to support our Landcare partnerships and creek regeneration aims. Thanks also to Volker Hilsenstein for loaning his worm farm at short notice.

Thanks also to Li-anne Woo, for creating a great flip book with photos of the garden which we can show to people at community activities.

We were invited to participate in a Family Fun Day at Anzac Park. I cancelled this due to my own ill health, but asked to be invited to participate in a future event.

One of our neighbours has asked if we would like to host a Big Aussie Swap meet as a way to help our community reduce waste. If members are interested in this, we can take it on as an activity in the new year.

Feedback on improving the garden and how we do things

The committee welcomes feedback of all kinds, especially suggestions on ways that we can improve how we operate as a group and how we garden. Most of the feedback we've received over the past few months has involved how we communicate as a group, and the committee is taking a close look at what we can do to improve in this area.

Communication with new members

Over the past couple of months, we've had some communication issues with members, particularly with new members coming down to the garden and not knowing how to link in with other gardeners. Lots of people join the garden to learn about gardening and to garden with others, so it's important that we have a way for new people to become involved and feel welcome.

To try to improve this, we would like to set up a 'buddy system' where new members can tag along with people who are gardening on a regular basis. If you would be willing to help a new member get started, please let me or another committee member know.

We're also working on the membership process, so that people receive a welcome email quickly when they make an enquiry, and are assisted in coming down to the garden.

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Email list

We've had our email list since the garden first started, and now that we have a great website as well, it's time to consider how the email list is used. Do you find it useful, or do you feel you are being bombarded with emails from the garden list? I would be particularly interested in your feedback on this, and the committee will be looking at this in the new year.

Meetings

We've had great feedback that our meetings have become a little too administrative and too long, leaving not enough time for socialising and gardening. Well that won't do! So, the Convenor's report will now be sent before the meeting and committee will deal with the more administrative things before the meeting. This should free up time to talk about gardening- which after all, is why we are all here.

In addition, the committee has enrolled in a free Productive Meeting Techniques Workshop run by BCC for community groups, so look forward to improvements in this area over the next six months.

Season's greetings

Since this will be our last meeting for the year, I would like to wish you all a safe and happy Christmas/ Hannukkah/ Eid ul-Adha/ Diwali and hope you enjoy the summer holidays. We normally take a little break over this time, but will continue to organise watering for the new bush tucker plants.

Best wishes,

Naomi Waldron

Convener

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