

TAROONA NEIGHBOURHOOD GARDEN

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

30 MARCH 2022

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This is my first report as President, having been elected at the last AGM.

Firstly, I would like to thank the members of our Management Committee who give generously of their time and expertise, and without whom the garden would not be the special place that it is. In particular I want to acknowledge our outgoing President, Margaret James, for her years of dedication and work. Margaret has agreed to remain on the committee and her knowledge of all things TNG are valued.

There have been a number of highlights during the year that I would like to acknowledge. Don't forget though that our monthly member's news contain all the detail of life in the garden and I would like to thank our tireless Secretary, Deidre Brown, for her work in putting the news together.

We held a special working bee in September to acknowledge the tireless work of David Stephen in setting up the garden. With David's agreement we designed a sign commemorating David's work and this is now on permanent display inside the top entrance gate. David has moved to the northern suburbs to live with his son, however Deirdre sends a month-appropriate page from one of his historic calendars for inclusion in the Taroom News.

Early in the year the children at Taroom Primary School held a "Tree Dress Day" to raise money for the local environment. They gave part of the money (\$150) to our garden as a generous and unsolicited gift. The children said that they would like the money to be used to purchase a tree that the community could enjoy. The committee invited students from TPS to visit the garden to discuss what they would like the money used for.

The children expressed a desire for a walnut tree. As walnuts have the potential to grow into large trees, we approached Kingborough Council to seek permission to plant the tree in the grassy space between the Tennis Club and the garden. Council were supportive of the student's and our proposal, and the rest is history.

As an interesting aside, while we were discussing the walnut tree with Council officers, we were informed that we did not have any formal agreement with Council by way of a lease or licence. Council prepared an agreement which we have duly signed that provides us with a five year licence with options for extensions for the grand sum of \$1.00 plus GST per annum, commencing in August 2021.

Perhaps the most exciting news we received during the year was our success in receiving two large grants through our local Federal MP, Andrew Wilkie. The first was the 2021 Volunteer Grants, a program that provides grants for organisations and community groups to use to support their volunteer programs. Each Federal electorate had a total of \$132,450 with a minimum of \$1000 and a maximum of \$5000 available per organisation. Andrew supported our application and we received \$2900 which is being used for the care and maintenance of the fruit trees in the garden and the purchase of tools and equipment required for successful fruit tree maintenance.

The second was a grant through the Stronger Communities Program, which provides funding for small capital projects in local communities. Each Federal electorate has total funding of up to \$150,000 and a maximum of 20 projects were funded in each electorate. Again Andrew supported our application and it has been approved. We will receive \$5323 for the repair, replacement and maintenance of our garden beds.

We are extremely grateful to Andrew Wilkie for his support and to Lizzie Drew in Andrew's office who has been wonderfully supportive in assisting us with the application processes.

Kingborough Council have also supported our garden bed project and we are most grateful to Council for a grant of \$1000 to assist in this work.

Following the outstanding success with our Seeds of Hope project last year, we decided to stage a Grow Your Own Food Festival in October. The festival was opened by Kingborough Mayor, Paula Wreidt and again was a great event. This year's success was due, in no small part, to the organisational skills and commitment of Judy and Chris Keen. Thank you both for the time and energy you put in to the achievement.

The hours of time and dedication that Judy and Chris, and their helpers, put into festival was impacted sadly by the theft of 8 trays of advanced seedlings from our locked greenhouse. We are all aware of occasional minor thefts of produce and equipment but this was on a much larger scale. We also lost a whole lemon tree that was dug up and removed. It is hope that at least it went to a caring home. We would ask our members and friends to keep an eye out and let committee members know of any suspicious activity.

It would be most remiss to not record a huge vote of thanks to our members who do the unsung work in the garden. These include the garden bed repair, replacement and maintenance team; the mowing and edge trimming teams; the composting teams; the fruit tree maintainers; those who put out the garbage bins and the folk who look after all those repair tasks that keep the garden operating. Without all of you we would not have such a special place.

But we can always do with more help with tasks in the garden unrelated to individual plots. In particular we would welcome all the help we can get in the great twitch control campaign, especially around the perimeter beds. It would be

great if each time a member visited the garden, a short 15-20 minutes was spent pulling twitch and laying down mulch, we would hopefully be able to keep the weed under control. And of course please remember to put the twitch in the green bins and not in the compost.

Michael Lynch
President