

Wentworthville Community Garden
Secretary's Report
2013 Annual General Meeting

During 2013 we have continued to achieve recognition for the Garden on many different levels within the local and wider community.

Membership has grown steadily during the year.

- Welcome to all our new members and hope you will re-join in April next year.
- There has been an increase in membership to 102 members during 2013 with all individual gardens now allocated.

Open Day was again a great success. The event itself serves many purposes. Open Day allows us to showcase the Garden to the wider community as well raising funds to ensure our financial sustainability. It provides a valuable opportunity to work co-operatively as a team on a large project. Thank you to all the members who helped in anyway to make Open Day a success. Special thanks to Liz for all her support and hard work with the organisation for Open Day.

We have continued to foster our **community partnerships** with a diverse group of organisations.

- **Holroyd City Council (HCC) is our major community partner** and it has continued to provide valuable support to the Garden. The Committee has offered mentoring support to the Merrylands Community Garden Committee when it is established. During 2013 HCC has provided us with funds to purchase some of the sleepers for the new garden edges that have been installed by the BoysTown youth work crew. The Garden contributed approximately \$6 000.00 to this project. HCC informed residents through the News section of their website of the contribution from BoysTown and also promoted this year's Open Day.
- **BoysTown** supported the Garden in 2013 by nominating it as the community group to benefit from their donation from the Holroyd City Council Mayoral Charity Golf Day. They provided a paid youth work crew to remove the old garden edges and replace them with new sleepers. This project provided paid work opportunities for a group of unemployed youth.
- **Our Lady Queen of Peace Craft Fairs** have also provided us with awareness and fund raising opportunities as well as ways to support other local community events. Thanks to all the members who helped with those stalls.
- **Community Greening** continues to assist us with donations for and promotion of Open Day. We support them by hosting visits by community groups who are interested in setting up community gardens.
- **The Community Migrant Resource Centre** continue to be group members of the Garden and this provides gardening and social opportunities for senior members of the local Chinese community.

- The **Out Of School Hours Service** (OOSH) of Holroyd City Council are also group members who regularly bring groups of school-aged children in their care to the Garden on Wednesday afternoon.
- We have maintained contacts with the **local media**, especially the Parramatta Sun who consistently support us by running articles about our achievements.
- Our most recent community Partner has been **Transition Parramatta**. We hosted one of their Cooking Connect Workshops that was a joint project of the University of Western Sydney.

This year the Garden received several awards in recognition of the great work we do.

- A third consecutive **Easter Show** win in the Community Garden section started the year. Preparations are underway for the planning of the 2014 exhibit! Let us know if you have any suggestions or any produce in your garden that you would like considered for the display.
- We took out the **Keep Australia Beautiful Sustainable Cities 2013 - Sustainable Garden Award**. This award recognised the sustainability of our Garden in the areas of environmental, education, financial and social sustainability.
- **Merrylands RSL Community Garden Awards** (formerly HCC Annual Garden Awards) was our next achievement with a win in the Schools and Community Garden Award section. To our surprise we also won the overall Grand Champion Award too.

The Newsletter continues to be the best way to inform members of the Garden news and achievements. A special thanks to Brad for his ongoing support to produce the Newsletter and maintain the Garden website.

During the last year the Committee has had to make many decisions to ensure the ongoing development and harmonious running of the Garden. I thank them for their dedication, thoughtfulness and care that they display when we are required to make decisions that affect its members and the Garden as a whole.

Thanks to everyone who has helped to make our Garden a great community space in Wentworthville.