



Wentworth Falls Garden Club Inc
Affiliated with The Garden Clubs of Australia Inc

14 January 2016: Edition No 289

From the President ...

Happy New Year everyone! Welcome to 2016. We have another year planned full of gardening, guest speakers, trips, garden rambles, new library purchases, plant stall items and all of the things that you enjoy with such gusto. Hopefully you will have a happy Garden Club year but, as always, please come and see me or one of the committee members if you have some suggestions to make it even better.

... Celeste

Our Guest Speaker for today is:
James Adams, Production Manager from Engall's Nursery

James will speak about "All things Citrus". The following information is taken from the Engall's Nursery website: <http://www.engalls.com.au/>.

Engall's Nursery was started in 1946 by William Engall after returning from the war. Originally called "Weona Nursery", the business started in the backyard in Carlingford Road, Epping. Plants were grown on various rental properties in the district and sold through the Carlingford Road site. In those days the plants were grown in the ground. In winter they were dug and sold bare-rooted. Dispatch of orders consisted of soaking the roots in a muddy solution in an old bath tub (the puddle tub), then enclosing in wet and dry straw, wrapping in brown paper and finishing with an intricate web of bailing twine. These packages were then sent via rail all over Australia. Unfortunately, William Engall died at the young age of 49. His wife, Eunice, and son, Robert, continued to run the family nursery. Growing techniques evolved and the citrus trees began being grown in containers. As plastic pots were yet to be invented, the growing containers were old jam and kerosene tins. They had their tops cut out, sharp edges hammered in, holes punched in the base and then they were filled with dirt dug direct from the ground - no fancy potting mixes! The weight of these plants would have been unbelievably heavy. In 1976, Robert married Fay and together they purchased and set up the production nursery at Dural. Sadly, in 1997, Robert, aged 67, passed away, leaving his wife, Fay, and children, Gail and Mark, to continue the family business. Gail continued the legacy at the Carlingford Road site, transforming it into a retail garden centre, while Mark focused on updating the production processes and facilities, and improving the Dural nursery into the impressive four-hectare production nursery that it is today. In 2006 another chapter evolved at Engall's Nursery with Fay retiring and ownership passing to Mark and his wife, Fiona. The hard decision was made to close the Carlingford Road nursery and concentrate on the one site at Dural. This has enabled Engall's Nursery to do what they do best and grow quality plants, securing the nursery so that one day it can be passed onto the fourth generation.

WFGC Visit to Glenmore House (13 November 2015)

Carol Conway

Through beautiful rolling green scenery and in welcome sunshine, we made our way to Glenmore House, near Camden. We were greeted by the owner, Mickey Robertson, at the hayshed and escorted to the old dairy through the orchard of figs, apples, olives and almonds. There was homemade Elderflower cordial there to refresh us before starting our visit.



Elderflower bush



The cordial queue

Mickey and her husband, Larry, bought the property about 27 years ago, a colonial dairy farm that had definitely seen better days. The buildings date from the 1840s and were in great need of attention. The tiny sandstone house was falling apart but the restoration has been done beautifully. The barn, hayshed and dairy have all been restored over time and the stables block is now the swimming pool house. All materials on the site have been reused and other materials needed have been sourced locally.



Front garden



Bean frame



Veg garden

The garden the Robertsons inherited consisted of a cage containing a few fruit trees and a small selection of roses. How that has grown. After being weekenders for a few seasons the Robertsons decided to move permanently when their first daughter was born. There is little water on the site and because of the hot and dry summers Mickey and her husband chose to build a swimming pool instead of a new kitchen. The pool fence was built of slab timbers from the old hut on the property and was the backdrop for their first garden. Mickey was an interior designer in her former life and has incorporated her eye for colour, texture and shape into her choices of plantings for the garden.

A very early priority was to develop a kitchen garden and discover more about using the produce. This became the basis for running a business from her new home – that of having days where visitors could learn about growing and preparing food. Glenmore House is now the site of the Kitchen Garden School where Linda Ross, the horticulturist, talks about the benefits of crop rotation and continuous planting, what to plant and when, while Mickey plans and serves the menu.

The kitchen garden itself is surrounded by espaliered fruit trees and has a selection of citrus too. Traditional crop rotation is used in some of the beds while the other beds are more in the permaculture method of seasonal and companion planting. Seed saving is done each year so the produce is certainly locally sourced. An array of bins has compost “cooking” at various stages and adds to the already magnificent soil, which was formerly the cattle yard. Mickey makes her own liquid fertilizer, comfrey tea, which is made in the old sinks from the dairy.



Comfrey “tea” sinks



Up the garden path!

As the sky showed signs of the approaching storm, our tour continued through the rest of the garden. Gum and weeping pepper trees provided frames for photos as well as shade for the visitors, and two impressive persimmon trees were a feature of the front garden. The most interesting tree was a kapok, planted in the early days of the garden and now quite a good size. The kapok balls are beautiful, like huge lumps of cotton wool. Some had been taken by a bird for a nest by the barn.



Kapok tree



Kapok balls

Back at the dairy we were treated to a delicious lunch consisting of pea and lovage soup, a cold and refreshing starter, followed by sandwiches and a delicious dessert of homemade ice cream with a tang of citrus, Mickey’s own cumquat marmalade.

Thank you Sharon for organizing such an interesting day, and Kevin for your careful driving.

Club Tours and Functions

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| Friday 19 February | Meadows and Dales. We visit two gardens. Cost of \$45 includes morning tea and lunch. Both gardens will have plants for sale. | 8.45am departure |
| Saturday 9 April | The Collector's Plant Fair. Cost of \$40 includes entry and lunch at Norman Lindsay Gallery on the way home. | 7.30am departure |
| 11 February | Picnic and two garden rambles after general meeting. The first ramble is through the garden at the Falls Gallery, Falls Rd. The second ramble is at Dorothy and Lyle Davis' garden. They have invited members to bring a picnic lunch. If members wish, they can enjoy the garden for longer while they eat their packed lunch. | After meeting |

Next Meeting

11 February

Guest speaker

Sarah Ryan, Hillandale Nursery,
Yetholme: **The Perennial Border:
Inspiration, maintenance regime and
how it changes through the seasons.**

Hall set-up

Ronah and Vic Tuite

Morning tea duty

Annabelle Fraser and Bronwyn Hay

Bring a plate

Kerrie Lee, Gai Horrocks and
Barbara Wakefield

Club Information

All members and visitors are asked to sign in upon arrival.

Members are asked to wear their club name badges to all club meetings, tours and functions. To take part in club functions and tours you must be a bona-fide club member.

General Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month, from January to November, at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts Theatre, Adele Ave (cnr Great Western Hwy), Wentworth Falls. Meetings commence at 9.45 am and finish around noon. The Library and Plant Stall are open before the meeting and at morning tea. \$5 entry fee.

Joining fee is \$30. Thereafter annual subscription is \$20.

For Club Welfare matters, contact Lea Nelson:
Ph 4784 1101.

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