

## **TIME LINE FOR HSOC TRIAL GARDEN AT BRUCE FROM 2010 TO 2016**

### **October 2010**

- The first impression of the site was 'What a mess'. Long grass and weeds covered the area and there were a number of trees at the back of the block. Merylyn Condon was concerned that the area was unsuitable due to effluent pipes across the site. However, as this was the only offer of land from the Bruce CIT, we decided to take on the site. We were informed that the pipes were never in use and not connected to anything.
- A Bruce Sub-committee was formed consisting of Graeme Davis, John Le Mesurier, Merylyn Condon, Sheila Hodgson and Allan Moss.

### **December 2010**

- Heritage fruit trees re-located from CIT garden, Weston.

### **April 2011**

- Concrete slab poured and ready for new shed to store equipment.
- Graeme suggested working bees on last Saturday of each month.

### **May 2011**

- Water and power now available on site. Council approved purchase of a Ranbuilt shed.

### **July 2011**

- Ranbuilt shed erected, with a porch and shade area.
- Working bee: rose arbour and gazebo erected.

### **August 2011**

- Merylyn and Sheila buy hedging plants from Yarralumla Nursery; The Garden, Parkwood; Rodney's, Pialligo; Willow Park, Pialligo; Bunnings, Belconnen.
- Working bee 27 August to plant hedging plants. Veggie soil purchased to fill beds and Neutrog fertilizer put under plants. Plants hand watered for some weeks. Neutrog has become our first sponsor.

### **September 2011**

- Birds or animals attacking plants.
- Allan spoke to Council re installation of automated watering system using the 12-station timer retrieved from Weston garden, and approx. 400 metres of irrigation pipe.
- Working bee September to net all plants from attack, weeding.

### **October 2011**

- Merylyn purchased a truck load of stable sweepings. Irrigation installed.
- Working bee 22 October: weeding and mulching. Spraying of weeds.

### **November 1 and December 2011**

- Working bees - mainly weeding. Allan spraying weeds. Merylyn bagged all the fruit with paper or stocking bags. Unfortunately, the birds saw this as a challenge and pulled the lot off!

### **January 2012**

- Working bee - 90 dahlias planted. Donated shade house erected, weeding beds.

### **March 2012**

- Working bee – Paul Tyerman to draw up a plan for the perennial beds.

## **May 2012**

- Working bee focused on lifting and dividing the dahlias. John Woodfield and Graeme showed interested members how to do both.

## **July 2012**

- Hard landscaping started. The perennial beds take shape. Steel frames to be erected for fruit trees and climbers. Negotiated to have vegetable beds and compost bins erected.
- Climbers arranged on frames. Shade house paved with recycled pavers.
- Landscaping done to date: perennial bed borders and paths, piping for irrigation in each bed, two seating areas yet to be paved. It was noted that the ground in the beds was not draining following heavy recent rain so gypsum will be applied and dug in prior to filling.
- Vegetable beds and compost bins marked out, Brian and Graeme discussed which vegetables could be planted. Brian will keep records for same.
- Merylyn and Sheila to purchase perennials. Soil and stable sweepings to be obtained.

## **September 2012**

- Eleven members turned up in coats to keep out the cold. Had rained heavily the day before. Muddy patches at bottom of garden. Two perennial beds water-logged, need drainage put through under paths.
- Vegetable beds and compost bins finished. Moved stable sweepings into perennial beds and veggie beds.
- Pandorea had frost damage on new shoots, buds forming. Trachelospermum growing well. The two exposed to the wind looking poorly. Shade cloth erected around them to see if it gave them some protection.
- Flowering: *Philotheeca 'Bournda Beauty'*, *Grevillea 'Lady O'*, *G. 'Evelyn's Coronet'*, *Forsythia*.
- Buds: *Michelia 'Lady of the Night'*, *Callistemon 'Eureka'*.

## **October 2012**

- Edgar Riek has offered ten tree peony seedlings for the garden and PGA will provide some trial plants.

## **November 2012**

- Back garden all growing well. Three mauve asters from Pam Swaffield have been planted here. The Pandorea has been pruned off the fence and stray bits woven in along the front. This climber is a fast grower.
- Left side garden next to shed – one jasmine has died down and all the flowers have been toasted by the hot weather.
- *Pittosporum 'Gold Star'* is just about a hedge.
- Front beds. Large Escallonia is now one metre tall and flowering. The smaller ones in front are also flowering and joining together. The curly bushes have been clipped after flowering and are joined.
- Right side garden. *Grevillea 'Lady O'* and the *Pittosporum 'Silver Sheen'* behind are growing well. '*Lady O*' continues to flower.
- The fruit trees. All set fruit but the birds have taken most. This is what happens when trees are not netted. The persimmon has set lots of fruit.
- Dahlias have been planted. Perennial beds ready for planting. Chris Ryan and Brian Hodgson have planted out two of the veggie beds. These will be hand watered every day by Brian.
- Perennials purchased from various sources and plants from PGA for trialling. Planting started in mid-November. Hand watered until irrigation installed.

**December 2012**

- Watering done by hand.

**January 2013**

- Glenn and Brian have connected irrigation to perennial and veggie beds. A shade cover will be erected over one veggie bed. The idea is two beds will grow the same plants, one in sun, the other in shade.

**February 2013**

- Ten folk attended.
- Camellias fed with Kahoonas.
- Veggies being harvested include tomatoes, zucchini, lettuce.

**March 2013**

- Five attended.
- Lavenders, loropetalums and daphnes planted.
- Flowering perennials: Agastache, calibrachoa, helenium, kniphofia, linaria, pelargonium, salvias, tulbaghia.

**May 2013**

- Meeting to discuss future projects for Bruce.
- 78 new plants, sourced from Merylyn, Woodbridge Nursery and PGA, ready for planting.
- Dahlias dug and new bed established further along fence, towards front.

**July 2013**

- New irrigation system installed by Waterland Irrigation, 11 stations now available. Merylyn has contacted Jeff Cooke of Ramm Botanicals and has been offered plants to trial.
- Graeme has planted a variety of strawberries, and seed potatoes have been purchased.

**August 2013**

- Merylyn ordered clematis from Clematis Cottage. A new garden is being created under the gum trees. Ramm Botanical plants arrived and being planted in the new garden.
- Ron Gray has pruned the fruit trees.
- Graeme has sent out requests for seedling dahlias for trialling.

**September 2013**

- Planting of clematis along arbour. Chris Ryan contacted Treloar Roses and they have donated 18 roses for trialling.

**October 2013**

- CIT have lopped the tops off four gum trees as requested by Brian. Stumps to be removed in two years' time.

**November 2013**

- Thirteen new dahlia cultivars have been planted.
- Members invited to visit the garden.

**January 2014**

- Dahlia bed mulched well.
- Most Treloar roses doing well, a wet patch at bottom end of bed.

- Vegetable beds now cropping.

#### **February 2014**

- Six helpers at working bee. Weeding, dead-heading and mulching done. Merylyn replaced several clematis that had died in the hot weather. She will send a report to Ramm Botanicals about the progress of their plants.
- Dahlias growing well, John to test the pH of the bed. Potatoes dug, corn picked.

#### **March 2014**

- Mulch being spread.
- Steven Utick has come along and offered to replace camellias that died during the hot weather. He fertilized the camellias.

#### **April 2014**

- Remaining straw mulch piled into compost bays as it is growing!

#### **May 2014**

- Dahlias dug even though no frost yet.
- Chrysanthemum flowers picked by Sheila and taken along to the general meeting for the table show. Two entries won prizes and one of them won the best on the night.

#### **June 2014**

- Two vegetable beds planted with peas and broad beans.

#### **July 2014**

- More peas planted. Some being nibbled. Both beds' furrows filled with straw. Strawberry bed tidied up.

#### **August 2014**

- Both pea beds fertilized with GoGo Juice. Plants under cover growing faster than those in open.

#### **November 2014**

- Cedric contacted Bunnings, Belconnen re donation of shelving for the shed.

#### **April 2015**

- Dahlias dug even though no frost yet.

#### **May 2015**

- Hedges pruned. Also both varieties of Box.

#### **June 2015**

- Graeme dug New Zealand yams.
- Curry plants removed, very scrappy, a lot of dead wood in them.
- Hedges pruned: *Escallonia fletcheyi*, *Escallonia 'Newport Dwarf'* and *Grevillea 'Bon Accord'*.

#### **July 2015**

- Finished pruning roses and fruit trees not completed at 19 July workshop. Moved two large roses from middle of rose bed to arbour.
- Pruned westringias, pittosporums and clematis.

#### **August 2015**

- The toilet is operational with John W the first user! Ivan Coleric and son have completed the dahlia bed surrounds and toilet slab, and are working to complete enlarging the compost bays.
- Ten cubic metres of soil bought in, rose bed and two other beds filled up as were two veggie beds.
- Five donated clematis were planted along the arbour.
- Potted up strawberry plants for plant stall.
- Graeme purchased various berry plants and he and Margaret Raptis planted them out.
- John W planted the covered bed and the next bed with onions seedlings.
- Other vegetable seed planted – carrots, beetroot and lettuce.

### **September 2015**

- Graeme took cuttings and stools from chrysanthemums for plant stall.
- Beans planted.

### **October 2015**

- Twelve members attended.
- Dahlia bed had been planted with peas, harvested and pea plants dug in.
- Dahlias planted and netting erected to keep out rabbits.
- Camellias and michelias fed and mulched.
- A truck load of stable sweepings acquired, beds mulched with it.

### **December 2015**

- A working bee was held on Wednesday 18 December, six members attended.
- Unfortunately, it rained after an hour or so but some weeding, deadheading of perennials, and replacement of failed dahlia tubers happened before we were forced to find cover and have a cuppa and cake.
- The clematis have flowered well on the arbour and the red hot pokers and kangaroo paws look great. There is good leaf colour on the berberis.

### **March 2016**

- Five attended.
- Propagated several perennials from the garden.
- Tidied up and removed spent vegetables.
- Glenn Sheldrick purchased a drum of non-toxic pine oil weed killer and a sprayer. He has sprayed all weeds around the plot.
- An open day was held for members, we got compliments on the garden.

### **June 2016**

- Ten folk turned up on a chilly morning but the sun soon came out and warmed us all up.
- Graeme dug the New Zealand yams in bed 1. They had a sizzling during the really hot weather and the tops burnt off. Graeme will shade cloth the bed next summer.
- John, June, Chris, Cecelia and Cedric moved plants – two types of Escallonia and one lot of Teucrium that didn't have enough room to grow. They replaced *Grevillea 'Lady O'* and *Grevillea 'Evelyn's Coronet'*, two of each had died.
- Sheila placed out lots of new plant labels – Cedric had sourced 200 of them free.
- Brian and Adrian cleared out and dug veggie beds 4 and 5 and planted bed 4 with lots of lettuce self-sown seedlings from bed 5 and replanted small pieces of herbs from bed 4.
- Glenn extended the watering system for the dahlia bed.

### **July 2016**

- The area around the two maples was re-vamped, topped up with soil, and loropetalums and daphnes moved in. More soil on the area these came from. Fruit tree and rose pruning demonstrations from 1 until 3 in the afternoon. Plants to be sourced from PGA for next month's working bee.

#### **October 2016**

- The next collection of plants from PGA planted out. The whole garden is looking good. A small band of workers attend working bees and some of us visit weekly to keep an eye on things, harvest veggies and berries, and do some deadheading as needed. Peony flowers have been entered into the show and won Champion General Flower!

#### **November 2016**

- The garden is awash with flowers. The clematis have done well as have the Kangaroo paws, dianthus, perennial phlox, alstromerias, statice and roses.
- It makes all the effort worthwhile.

**Sheila Hodgson**