



Leaflet

Simply Living Community Garden Newsletter

Contacts

Project Worker:

Janet Hoare
ph 9314 1010
email: hoareaj@bigpond.com

Minister:

Peter Greenwood
ph 0438 883 659
email:
peter.greenwood@
southportuniting.org.au

Web:

www.southportuniting.org.au
(follow the link to the "old"
website, then click on Port
Melbourne then Community
Garden)

Diary Dates

Garden Working Bees

3rd Sunday of month
11 am—12 noon
Sunday 16th November

Kindergarten families garden activities

12-1.15 pm Wednesdays
until end Term 4

Leaflet by email

If you would like to be
added to the "Leaflet"
email list (get it first, in
colour and save paper)
please send a message
to Janet at:
hoareaj@bigpond.com

The Garden is growing—thank you to our community

At last we have a garden and have begun growing some vegetables.

A big thankyou to all the people who gave up many hours of their time and helped to build the garden over the last month or so. Thirty nine people came along to one or more of the five working bees. These included members of the church, neighbours, other local residents, clients of South Port UnitingCare, friends from the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre and two corporate groups, Bovis—Lend Lease and SEEK Employment, who were supported by their employers to spend a day working in the community.

A special thankyou to Wendy and Neil from the Port Phillip EcoCentre for their work designing the garden, developing the work schedule and showing us all how to build the garden (not to mention the many hours they spent measuring, sawing, drilling and putting things together). Thanks also to Ben Wood, our fabulous carpenter.

We can't forget the wonderful people who provided a delicious lunch for the workers every day.

The work isn't quite finished. There will be another weekday working bee during the next week or two to complete the compost bays, install the trellis and a finish off a few other small jobs.

Monthly Working Bees

Now the garden has started we will begin holding a monthly working bee to continue planting, weeding, making compost, etc. Everyone is invited to come along and share their gardening skills and ideas or learn some new ones.

If you are not able to work in the garden you are welcome to come along for a chat and to see how the garden is coming along.

The work will only take an hour and will be followed by a shared lunch. The barbeque will be going and sausages provided. Later on we will be able to pick a salad from the garden but for this month please bring some food to share.

We are also hoping to have a small market stall at the working bees to sell any extra seedlings or herbs or maybe some home-made jams, etc (but not produce from the garden as that is available to everyone). Any money made will be put towards the garden. If you have something to donate to the stall please bring it along.

What's growing

A few vegies have been planted with more to come.

Tomato bed - tomatoes (including cherry and roma), capsicums (mixed), eggplants and lots of chillies (two types—both hot).

Leafy greens & root crops - lettuce and silverbeet (plain and coloured). Radishes, spring onions and leeks to come.

Vines & beans (low bed) has sunflowers, zucchini and some snow peas grown by the kindergarten children. Cucumbers and dwarf beans are to come.

Beans & greens will have climbing beans, mini cabbages and celery as well as the sunflowers already planted.

A rosemary hedge has been planted along the side of the footpath. We also have a few herbs at the end of the hedge and around the base of the raised beds.

More herbs will go in the bed below the compost bays. A few butternut pumpkin seeds have been planted next to that bed so they can spread over the lawn.

When the trellis is installed we will plant a passionfruit vine. We'll also put in a few climbing beans to grow up the trellis while the passionfruit is small.

Some edible flowers and companions will be planted amongst the vegetables to add colour and attract beneficial insects. Some ladybirds have already been seen.
Note: beneficial insects include bees so please take care.

South Port
Uniting Church

Port Melbourne
congregation



The Simply Living Community Garden has been built with support from the City of Port Phillip Community Grants Program



Planting

Thank you to those who have offered various herbs and vegetables for the garden. If you have plants please talk to Janet or come to the working bees so we can work out the best place to plant them.



Some of the volunteers building a raised bed

Kindergarten families

Janet will be at the garden on Wednesdays from 12—1.15pm until the end of Term 4 so children and parents on their way home from the morning session or going to the afternoon session can stop by and join in some gardening activities. At the moment families are planting seeds in peat pots to take home and grow up before bringing back to plant in the garden.

Water

Keeping our garden watered will be one of our main challenges over the summer. We can only use mains water on Tuesday and Saturday between 6am and 8am. Our request for a variation on the watering hours was denied by South East Water. If Stage 4 water restrictions are introduced we won't be able to use mains water at all.

The 2500 litre tank behind the church hall is now full, thanks to last week's rain, but will not last long if we have a long period of hot dry weather.

Sub-surface watering

If you look closely at the garden beds you will see weeper hose has been laid just below the surface. In the next week or two that will be connected to a large water container on the corner of each raised bed. The vegetables have been planted close to the hose so the roots have access to the water as it seeps out. The layer of mulch over the top helps to keep the moisture in the soil.

Bringing water from home

If you can save a few litres of water at home—perhaps when you are waiting for the hot water to come through for a shower—please could you bring that along to the garden and top up the water containers. If everyone brings just a couple of litres a week that will be a great help. If you are visiting the garden during the early morning or late afternoon you can water the plants directly—check the soil to see if it is dry and water at the roots, not the leaves.

Many of the plants wilt during the heat of the day, especially the leafy greens, but they will pick up again when the sun goes off them. Please don't water these plants in the middle of a hot, sunny day as this can damage them.

Organic methods

As far as possible, this will be an organic garden. The mix of plants should mean that we have few insect pests or other diseases. If we have any problems we will look for organic ways of overcoming them. Please do not use any chemicals or fertilisers on the garden unless it has been agreed to at a community working bee.

A very effective way to get rid of aphids and caterpillars is to pull them off and squish them in your fingers (you can wear gloves).

Composting

When the compost bays are finished please start bringing your kitchen scraps. The bays will have slatted fronts and shade cloth-covered lids. Each will be labelled as either working, resting or ready. Please only add scraps to one labelled "Working—food scraps here".

Harvesting from the garden

At the moment the plants are new and it will be a little while before anything can be picked (although the lettuces won't take long to grow). Our policy is that anyone can pick what they need for their personal use for the day. The produce is not for sale or to be sold to anyone else.

We do ask that if you pick from the garden you also contribute to the garden in some way, such as: making a donation (which could be plants, manure, garden stakes, wire mesh, etc), bringing kitchen scraps for composting, watering the garden, helping out at working bees, etc.

Donations

Thank you to everyone who has made a donation during the building of the garden. This includes all the people in the church and community who have grown, or are growing, seedlings and cuttings and our neighbours and friends who have offered chicken and pigeon manure.

Thanks also to the following companies:

Bovis Lend Lease—concrete cutting and use of skip.

Bunnings—vegetable seedlings

Kennards Hire—discount on use of "whacker" for paths

Aussie Disposals—discount on water containers.

Bunnings has also donated some timber which we plan to use when we develop Stage 2 of the garden.

A special thankyou to Gwen Waters who has provided a very generous donation which will be used to keep the Simply Living Garden project going.

Neighbours

Finally, a big thankyou to all our neighbours. Your enthusiasm and interest in the garden has been really encouraging and your watchful eyes over the garden materials and the plants is very much appreciated.



More volunteers putting soil in the finished bed