

Thriving through **connection** in the community since 1988

The latest news and announcements from Easy Care Gardening



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Karin Yu

6th November 1945 – 20th April 2024

It was with great sadness that we heard of the passing of Karin Yu. Karin had been a volunteer of Easy Care Gardening since 7th March 2006 and had gardened as recently as March this year. Over her 17 years with Easy Care Gardening, Karin gave 967 hours of her valuable time. She was passionate about gardening and the environment and enjoyed her role as a gardening volunteer. Her family shared with us that volunteering with Easy Care gardening added to her own quality

of life. While in a client's garden, Karin could switch off from the cares of the world, as she worked to help others.



As well as gardening, Karin was involved in other activities of Easy Care Gardening (ECG). She was part of a select group of volunteers who, under the direction of a previous manager, came into the office to help with ad hoc projects, as the need arose. These sessions were productive and relaxed and were a vehicle for team building and informal feedback. In years gone by Karin also helped with plant propagation in the ECG Nursery and with promotional events in the wider community. She was an enthusiastic participant in many of our social and volunteer recognition events, often arriving early to help with set-up. In addition, Karin took a strong interest in how the organisation was run by attending information sessions, Volunteer Annual Meetings and Annual General Meetings. Karin was also keen to improve her skills and knowledge and regularly attended training sessions offered by ECG.

Some years ago, Karin suggested that Easy Care Gardening should provide first aid training for volunteers. She was concerned about the welfare of her fellow volunteers, should they be injured or become unwell while in a garden. In 2022 Easy Care Gardening sponsored Karin to complete first-aid training, along with eight other volunteers. We will continue to follow this initiative, as long as funding is available.

We honor the memory of Karin Yu and gratefully acknowledge the myriad ways she contributed to the work of Easy Care Gardening. Our condolences to Karin's family and friends, and her fellow volunteers.

Written by Coralie Jensen
Volunteer Manager

What's On



Discover the history of your house at Ku-ring-gai Library by booking in for a one-on-one tutorial with our Local History Librarian. You will be introduced to resources in the library's collection to help trace the history of your house, including how to access historical property records and search the library catalogue for local history materials. More information [here](#).

Eryldene Open Friday - Garden tour

Take a garden tour with one of our volunteers followed by a delicious morning tea on the verandah while soaking in the serenity of this beautiful, historic garden. More information [here](#).



Chair Yoga is an uplifting, modified form of traditional yoga suitable for people with limited mobility, lack of flexibility, a problem with joints or recovering from injury or illness. More information [here](#).

An Introduction to bushcare training by Hunters Hill Council is a course that will take place on Sunday 26 May from 9am to 12pm with Jim Casimir at the Lane Cove Council Depot in Lloyd Rees Drive, Lane Cove West. More information [here](#).



Lifeline are in need of volunteers to work with them to assist older members of our community. By providing social and practical support, we can help members of our community remain connected and active, reduce feelings of loneliness or isolation, and improve wellbeing. More Information [here](#)

National Reconciliation Week - Aboriginal History Talk & Bushfood Tasting. Ryde Council presents a free event as part of Reconciliation Week. Learn about Aboriginal history and a bushfood tasting with Koori Kinnections. More information [here](#).



Welcome Swapneel Pardiwalla

Swapneel (Neel) started in April as ECG's Operations Manager. This newly created role was put in place to assist the organisation with the management and leadership of delivering valued and quality services to clients, managing partnerships with key stakeholders and meeting ECG's objectives and Aged Care standards.



From 2012 Neel has worked with people in roles for-purpose. His experience is diverse, having worked within Aged Care and the Disability sector. Neel also has a Master's degree and an Advanced Diploma in Business Management.

Neel was originally born and raised in India and now calls Australia home with his family. Neel isn't a self-proclaimed gardener but spends some weekends working in the garden with a veggie patch and succulent nursery around the house. Welcome Neel!



Tip of the Month

As the days get colder, and shorter, it's inevitable we find ourselves spending more time inside. Winter also brings with it the desire to get toasty, which can also mean an increase in energy usage. These

handy tips will help keep you cosy and comfortable, minus the hefty power bills.



Heat the hub

This one might seem obvious, but only heating the rooms you're using can have a big impact. If the family is spending most of the day in the living room, make sure the heating is off in the other rooms and ensure the doors are shut – this will trap in the heat.

Savour the sunshine

On sunny days, take advantage of the winter rays by opening your curtains and letting the sunshine warm your indoor spaces. As the sun dips in the afternoon, keep the cool at bay by shutting your curtains and use draught stoppers to keep cool air from creeping in. Door seals, draught-proofing strips and door snakes can reduce your heating costs by up to 25%.

Cosy up with a heated throw

Investing in an electric throw is cheaper to run than heaters and can save you around \$150 compared to other types of heating.

T.E.A.M in FOCUS



Some wake up on a Monday morning with a slight feeling of dejection that the weekend is over, but not the Monday Morning team focused in Area 1.

There are eight members in the team with Ian Norman leading the charge. Half of the team have had a volunteer tenure spanning almost two decades, working mainly in the Ryde, Hunters Hill and Gladesville.

Ian Stuart has been volunteering for over 16 years and says he volunteers for the same reasons that most people will give up their time for a worthy cause. “Our reasons for doing it are much the same as for every other team - fresh air, companionship and camaraderie, making a difference to a garden and seeing the joy on the face of the clients.” Over morning tea they sit down and catch up with the clients and learn about their lives and history in the home they are working in.



Seated L-R: Mrs Margaret Luckey (Client), Kathy O'Sullivan, Lisbeth Allen, Ian Norman.
Standing L-R: Ian Stuart, Mary Quinion

Ian recalls one of the most interesting clients the Monday team were tasked with was an elderly Russian lady with a large front garden in Ryde. A mature Canary Island palm with vicious spikes was a challenge that required extreme care when being pruned. During the time the team worked there, the client celebrated her 100th birthday. “Over morning tea in her heavily decorated and furnished dining room, she told us about her family who escaped at the time of the Russian revolution. It was a privilege to hear her story.”

“Life is much easier nowadays that we have battery-powered hedge trimmers and leaf blowers!”

Ian Stuart, volunteer of 16 years

One barrier to volunteering is a common misconception that volunteering with Easy Care Gardening (ECG) is about having the relevant gardening skills or being fit to do the work, but in reality, “It’s as demanding as you want it to be.” Ian gravitates towards doing the heavy pruning and trimming while others focus on weeding and mulching. “Life is much easier nowadays that we have battery-powered hedge trimmers and leaf blowers!” A point that Ian rightfully highlights is a continued need for more power tools to equip the volunteers for a more efficient gardening shift.

Another fun-fact from this Monday team is the “love that has bloomed”. Team leader Ian Norman met his now wife Lisbeth thanks to ECG.

From stories of the Russian Revolution to love blossoming amongst team members, you never know what you’re going to get when you volunteer with Easy Care Gardening!

Support Us



Easy Care Gardening is a not-for-profit organisation that relies on volunteers to ensure its work in the community can continue. **If you can spare 3 hours of your day to volunteer**, click [here](#) for more information.



Whilst we do receive funding from the Commonwealth Government, it is not sufficient to cover all of our administrative costs and the purchase of new tools and equipment. Your donation today will help countless elderly residents keep living longer in their own home. **Donate now** to Easy Care Gardening using a credit card or PayPal, [click here](#) to make a secure payment. For other ways to donate click [here](#). Donations of AUD\$2 or more are tax deductible.

Recipe Corner

One-pot Italian chicken, by Alison Adams ,Taste Magazine

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 20g unsalted Butter
- 4 small RSPCA-approved chicken breasts fillets
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 80g (1/2 cup) sun-dried tomatoes, sliced
- 80ml (1/3 cup) white wine
- 250ml (1 cup) thickened cream
- 125ml (1/2 cup) chicken stock
- 60g pkt baby spinach
- 1 cup fresh basil leaves, torn
- Crusty bread, to serve



Image: www.taste.com.au

Heat the 1 tbsp olive oil and 20g unsalted butter in a large non-stick frying pan over high heat until butter is foamy. Season the chicken breasts fillets and add to the pan.

Reduce heat to medium-high. Cook the chicken for 5 minutes each side to until just cooked through. Transfer to a plate. Cover with foil to keep warm.

Place the 2 finely chopped garlic cloves in the pan. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute or until aromatic. Add the 80g (1/2 cup) sun-dried tomatoes and stir to coat. Add the 80ml (1/3 cup) white wine and cook for 1 minute or until reduced. Add the 250ml (1 cup) thickened cream and 125ml (1/2 cup) chicken stock.

Return the chicken to the pan and simmer for 5 minutes or until liquid is reduced. Stir through the 60g pkt baby spinach until wilted. Season and sprinkle with the 1 cup fresh torn basil leaves, torn.

Serve with crusty bread.



We want to hear from you! Send us your recipes, tips and tricks to be featured in the newsletter. Write to us at info@easycaregardening.org.au or Phone (02) 9983 1644