

Presidents Report

Paterson Allyn Garden Group

Tuesday 19th April, 2022

It is almost 11 years to the day since Penny Kater and I called our first garden meeting in Gresford. It was a moment in my life that changed the way I lived forever. I basically gave up housework and became a fulltime gardener. Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined the joy of each day....weeding digging and planting. However, the most joy came from the building of friendships through PAGG. Being with like minded gardeners I think is possibly the greatest pleasure anyone could have. We have always managed to meet in a garden somewhere and I we have only missed one meeting through inclement weather. We steadily grew in numbers over the years to 120 before Covid. We dropped back to around 80 during the shutdown and now we are slowly building up again. The ideal number I believe is around 100 members.

The past year has again been difficult due to Covid with 3 zoom meetings. We started the year on a bright note at the Penang Botanical gardens near Gosford. We then gathered at Shirley Newman's beautiful Cooranbong garden, followed by a magnificent wander around Kevin and Frances Dunns tree studded property not far from Shirley's home. In May we visited Penny Kater's expansive garden where we chatted about potting natives and pruning figs. In June we were fortunate to wander Judith and Lloyd Grant's garden in Gresford , then followed a series of Zoom meetings until November. We did have a wonderful zoom chat with Roz Norvill and Will Raines who grow expansive quantities of avocados near Dungog. We visited Jill Nyquist in East Maitland and our Christmas party was an outstanding success at Melanie Collingwood-Boots. She graciously let us purchase some of her outstanding Tar-10 products....perfect for gifts and our own pantries. This year Mandy and Rod Blomfield invited us to wander their park in March! Spectacular trees surround their home as do many unforgettable sculptures.

The month of April, 2022 included our AGM and a celebration of 10 years of affiliation with Garden Clubs Australia. We were fortunate to gather at 'Duninald', Paterson. Julia and Chris Wokes have lived on this magnificent property for 16 years and have restored it to its former glory. I simply cannot think of a more perfect garden and arboretum to wander on such an important occasion.

I am proud to be part of a group who has given a sizeable donation to Dungog Palliative Care for the purchase of an Inogen G4 portable Oxygen pack. \$2500 was presented to them last July, and recently we handed over another \$1900. We still have another \$600.00 to donate to honour our commitment.

It is with so much sadness that I am stepping down as President after 11 years. The journey with Penny and our committees over the years has been so happy. We have had during the past 12 months a wonderful team making sure that each meeting runs smoothly and my heartfelt thanks go out to Liz Jones, Chris Walker, Lisa Connors, Penny Kater, Barbara Burnett, Jenny Creal, Robert Smith, Captain Steve Crockett, Pip Wilson and Cas Addison. Cas is stepping down and I thank her sincerely for her valued support over the years.

I look forward to being a part of PAGG for many years to come. Thank you to all our members for making PAGG the success story it is today.

Janie Chandler

President , Paterson Allyn Garden Group.