

February 2026
50th Year of Growth
1976 - 2026



Contact Email: doncastergardenclubinc@gmail.com

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The DGC committee meeting was held on 4 February 2026 at 7.30 pm.

The next DGC meeting will be held on **Wednesday, 11 February 2026**
7.30 pm at the RSL Hall , cnr Doncaster Road and Leeds Street. Doors open at 7.15pm

Our speaker is Pete the Permie (Peter & Sylvia Allen) * Summer Pruning of Fruit Trees

Committee Members 2026

President

Avril Clark

0402 478 302

doncastergardenclubinc@gmail.com

Vice-President & Speaker

Bookings:

Pauline Webb

Treasurer:

Dr Margaret Salter

Secretary:

Virgina Roberts & Connie Chan

secretary@doncastergardenclubaus.com

Fund Raising Co-Ordinator:

Anita Lizza

Newsletter:

Rohini Padey

newseditor@doncastergardenclubaus.com

Ray Brett

Esther Sim

Happy New Year to all our Club members. I do hope you have all had a restful and energising Christmas break.

This year is our 50th birthday which we celebrate on Saturday 3rd October 2026 2.30 pm at the Doncaster RSL Hall. Please make note of this in your diaries now !!

We have a great list of speakers for this year and I am sure there will be something for everyone. We do try to cover all bases as well as we can: do let us know if you have any topic or speaker which you will really like for 2027, please let us know at the meeting or by email.

We will be having some Open gardens this year (committee members) which I encourage you all to attend. If you would like to host your own open garden please let us know. Also along the way we will draw your attention to interesting gardens, plant fairs etc in our area that you can go to. I always find visiting other gardens really

New to the Newsletter this year will be a column called - **From my bookshelf.**

I plan to introduce you to a wide variety of gardening books to stimulate your interest, extend your knowledge and give you good solid workable tips for your garden.

Pauline's column on her Permaculture garden will still be there as well as useful hints and tips.

Anyone is welcome to contribute to the Newsletter – Please address your information to Rohini our Newsletter editor before the end of the month and she can include it in the newsletter.

newseditor@doncastergardenclubaus.com

Happy gardening everyone !

Avril

Hello Gardeners All

The long hot summer is here (BOM prediction): December was dry (rain 15mm) and January drier (4mm). We are all feeling the extreme heatwave which went from mid 30s in December to 40deg on 24th and 44deg on 26th January. If your lawn is like mine (grass and weeds) it is as brown and as crisp as . . . showing much dirt. One can hardly call it soil at present.

It is a disasterous season for vegetable production: the **tomatoes** have only pollinated intermittently ie not on December chilly days nor January's hot days. They do best in sunny 22-28deg. The **cucumbers** have been similar with scarce undersized ones ripening. I have just commenced picking large Lebanese **zucchini** but they too may be erratic. They and the **pumpkin** vines are very slow.

The **climbing beans** have been so scorched some leaves are crisp and the 1st batch of flowers dropped with no pollination in spite of hanging an old sheet to protect them. The 2nd flowering is right in the 40 & 44deg heatwave so I won't be expecting beans!

The **bush beans** seem to have set but are slow to grow with such extreme temperatures.

The NZ Oka (related to the oxalic family but with delicious tuber roots) have had their leafy tops badly sunburnt. They too have a sheet now. The last of a baby carrots crop was picked, sorted, minute ones fermented, biggest ones used and finger sized ones frozen. Fortunately the Skirrit (medieval root crop before carrots but same family) are thriving but a sheet is draped in front. The Yacon (Sth American root crop) are too and uncovered. The Sweet Potato have very little growth and some potatoes have been dug with more nearly ready.

The marigolds and allysum are flowering well, native plants are surviving and I have lost a Gardenia and maybe a Hydreangea. The roses have finished their 2nd flowering and did well until blooms were burnt.

When cooler days come, we will need to water with Seasol, worm wee or bokashi diluted for a boost to stressed plants.



Pauline

Upcoming calendar events:

Upcoming Committee Meeting	04 February	hosted by Avril Clark, 7.30pm at 62 Pine Hill Drive Doncaster East
Upcoming Meeting:	11 February	at the RSL Hall, 7.30pm at cnr Doncaster Road and Leeds Street Doncaster East
The speakers at the next meeting will be Maureen and Paul Lucas who will talk about their visits to the gardens in Australia		
Following Committee Meeting:	04 March	hosted by Avril Clark, 7.30pm at 62 Pine Hill Drive Doncaster East
Following Meeting:	11 March	at the RSL Hall, 7.30pm at cnr Doncaster Road and Leeds Street Doncaster East

An Introduction to our Committee members

President Avril Clark

Earliest memories – picking flowers for a vase in my bedroom. In Scotland it was common to pick stalks of rhubarb and stick them in Mother’s sugar container before eating them!!Have designed and planted three gardens in my life. My greatest love and interest is David Austin and Heritage roses and heirloom vegetables.

Vice President Pauline Webb

After trying gardening in the 1970s-90s with no knowledge and not much success, I commenced reading everything relevant in Manningham Library, annually until the internet provided easy access to my queries. I'm a compulsive food grower, mainly vegetables but herbs, companion flowers and the odd fruit tree included. I now have a Permaculture Design Certificate to satisfy my compulsion to know and grow.

Treasurer: Dr Margaret M Salter

Growing up in tropical Fiji, I experimented in the garden. I remember lopping the top of a perfectly healthy papaya tree (to the horror of my dad) placing a tin can over it to see if it sprouted any branches - and it did !! As an adult, I continue to experiment – growing tropical fruits in moderate Melbourne such as mangoes and cherry guavas. My garden is a happy place and a very therapeutic after a long day in front of the computer.

Fund Raising Co-Ordinator: Anita Luzzza

My earliest memory of being interested in Gardening was when my father gave me an acorn when I was seven years old. Today it has grown into a huge Oak tree. I also loved picking pansies for my teacher and she would put them in a vase in the classroom. I also love having a vegetable and herb garden which my husband looks after. We grow Broccoli, chillies , chicory, parsley , basil etc. We also have flowering bushes and trees.

Secretary - Connie Chan

My interest in gardening is growing food for my family. At the moment, I have green beans, okra and pumpkin in my veggie patch as well as many fruit trees. I have several blue-tongue lizards who have made my garden their home, so it has been more than 10 years since I last saw a snail there. After work, I enjoy being outside, doing gardening to de-stress. James and I know nothing much about gardening, but we do enjoy the monthly club knowledge sharing on sustainable gardening topics, followed by supper.

Secretary - Virginia Roberts

I have always been interested in gardening, following in the footsteps of my parents, grandparents and aunty. I enjoy a pretty garden with azaleas, camellias and hydrangeas but as a result of water restrictions over the years I am planting more drought tolerant natives and appreciate the fact that they might attract more birds into the garden.

My garden would never win a prize in a gardening competition but I enjoy it, especially when I water it in the coolness of a summer morning.

Newsletter Editor - Rohini Padey

Since childhood I have loved growing flowers. When I was young each person in our family had dedicated rose bushes and we would compete to see whose roses had the best blooms. I enjoy planting flowers and have a great display in my garden no matter what the season. I like the speakers presentations as I am get to learn so much about caring for the soil, nuturing the plants and varoius growing techniques.

Kitchen Manager -Reinhard

I had great success with compost teas and I am always looking for tips for how to improve them. Suggestions from Club members are welcome. My aim is it to grow the permaculture way. I decided to put my front lawn to good use and have my vegetables and berries growing in the front yard. Thsi also helps me socialise as people stop by and have a chat as they are walking by.

Ray Brett

I enjoy gardening in the backyard and am growing a few roses. I installed a sprinkler system so watering is not a big job. I have not had much success with tomatoes this year.

Esther Sim

I enjoy gardening and one of the things I like to do most is propogate new plants which I am quite good at. I enjoy the gardening club as I get a lot of information and it gives me a chance to meet some lovely people.

We have the opportunity to vote for the native floral emblem for the City of Melbourne. It is quick and easy using the link below :

<https://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/floral-emblem>

Hurry up and get your votes in - The deadline for voting is Sunday 15 February.

From my Bookshelf February 2026

In this series, which will run throughout the year, I am featuring books in my library which I have found useful in practical ways of setting up gardens, practical growing tips, seasonal advice and the historical development of gardens that we have today and why they are important. I hope to inspire you to seek out more information and knowledge that will assist you in your gardening experience and extend your knowledge and interest

February Book of the month.

Anya Lautenbach - The money saving gardener - Dorling Kindersley, 2024

The money saving garden year Dorling Kindersley, 2024

I first came across Anya on Facebook and Instagram @ [anya_thegarden_fairy](#) and was captivated by her straightforward no nonsense approach to propagating your existing plants to give you more at no cost. Although based in the UK, everything she teaches can be used here and her whole philosophy is 'Buy less, waste less. Her first book The Money Saving Gardener covers everything you need to get started from tools, Pots and containers, understanding plants, types of propagation to a 'Year in the Garden' The book is well illustrated as well.

Her second book 'The Money-Saving Garden Year' is a month by month guide of what to do in an English garden but there are many useful hints and tips that can still be used.

Her third book 'The Money-Saving Gardener Containers' is about to be published in Australia and will cover all sorts of containers, some you can pick up very cheaply and showcase her very artistic plantings

All her books are available at Amazon Au and other book retailers usually for under \$40.



DGC Life Members

Gerda van der Peet
Doug Brewer
Ken Beer
Toni Myers
Gayle McCann

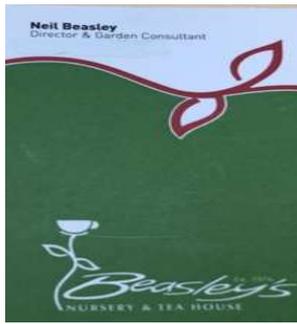
Ted Page
Joanne Driver
Elsie Carter
Bev Turner
Franziska Kung

Doncaster Garden Club Inc. Membership 2026

Annual fees are due every October, those who have not paid for 2026 please do so at your earliest

[Please complete the membership form on the Clubs website:
https://doncastergardenclubaus.com/becomeamember](https://doncastergardenclubaus.com/becomeamember)

Newsletters are emailed every month. For those wishing a hard-copy, please provide a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Club Secretary Connie or Virginia.



The Catalogue can be found online : <https://ryset.com>
The Club receives wholesale prices which means discounts of upto 60-70%



Let them know you are a member of DGC and appreciate how they help us.