

FROM BUSH TO BOUNTY



A short history of the
COGS Cook Community Garden





FROM BUSH TO BOUNTY:

A short history of the COGS Cook Community Garden

A history of the Cook garden is as much about the growth of the Canberra Organic Growers Society (COGS) as it is about the garden itself. It is a testament to the hard work, enthusiasm and commitment to organic gardening principles of particular individuals who were invested in the benefits of a community-based enterprise. The people critical to the establishment of Cook also had major roles in COGS as office bearers, or as COGS garden developers, and often this was undertaken concurrently with the establishment of the Cook garden and their day jobs. The Cook garden mirrors the growth of COGS and is now a well established feature of the Belconnen landscape, continuing to attract gardeners of all ages and abilities but who share a common interest.

The Foundation Years

At the time of the Cook garden's establishment in 2001, COGS membership was relatively static. Although membership of the Society had increased steadily since its establishment in 1985 (its antecedent organisations were established in 1977) to reach around 300 in the late nineties, there was a view that the only way of attracting a wider membership and ensuring the movement's future was to develop more gardens across Canberra. An approach to the ACT Government by COGS to provide funds to establish a garden in Cook was initially rejected but further negotiations resulted in a grant of \$33,000 to COGS to develop three gardens! In addition to Cook, two other sites were chosen; one in Holder and the other at Kambah. The grant to COGS was provided under the ACT Department of Urban Services' Social Capital Program to expand the community garden initiative from the six already established at Cotter (Curtin), Charnwood, Northside (Mitchell), Oaks Estate, and Tuggeranong. The garden in Theodore had, at this time, closed (although it was later reopened for a short period).

The location for the Cook garden was identified by Keith Colls during a pre-retirement walk. Keith thought the area at the southern end of Bindubi Street would be ideal. Many residents of Aranda and Cook were attracted to these suburbs because of its leafy urban landscape but this had drawbacks for growing fruit and vegetables in open sunny positions. Establishing an allotment garden for these purposes was seen not only as a way to enhance the COGS membership but also a useful resource for residents of the Cook and Aranda suburbs. Before the funding arrangements



As it was, 2001

were finalised, the ACT Government undertook consultation with the community but there was a pocket of resistance from some Cook residents who believed that the community garden would not be an attractive addition to the landscape, seeing potential for it to deteriorate into an urban eyesore and for plants grown in the garden to eventually escape into the surrounding bushland.

In early 2001, despite these reservations, the then President of COGS, Steve Sutton, reported that 'funding has been acquired ... from the government's Social Capital Program for setting up of three new community gardens in Canberra. Over the next six months, things will be pretty hectic in establishing these gardens'. He also noted 'there is a group of people in Queanbeyan putting together a proposal for a garden to be set up there too'. At that stage, for the sites in Cook, Chifley and Kambah, there was only permission given by the Government to use land for Cook, at the south-east corner of horse paddock No 2. The entrance was to be off Bindubi Street. Steve invited 'all people who would like to participate in the Cook garden to a meeting on Sunday 18 February' and 'to contact Keith Colls, who had agreed to lead the project. COGS was aiming to have all three gardens operating by the end of June 2001.

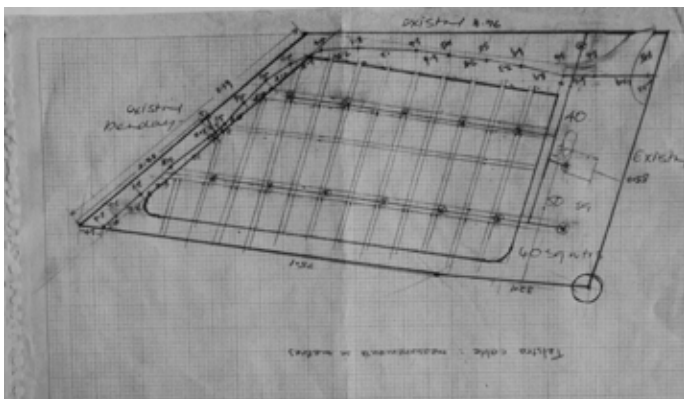
COGS allocated \$10,000 from the grant to Cook with the remainder allocated to Kambah and Holder. Once the funds were awarded, work commenced on the laying out of the gardens. Keith Colls says of this period that 'those involved in establishing this garden

somewhat underestimated the work involved' but that there was no shortage of COGS volunteers. The materials to construct the fences for all three gardens were purchased and stored in Steve Sutton's garage.

The initial work of laying out the boundary was relatively simple as the existing fence line boundaries were used. The internal road was determined by a survey undertaken by Telstra. The exterior fence was built, trenches were dug to lay irrigation pipes to the water main at the boundary and the plots were marked out. The work attracted interest from passers-by and many of the future plot holders were introduced to COGS and the garden in this way. Indeed, anyone who had shown an interest in the development of the garden was invited to assist with its construction and there were many future plot holders who assisted in erecting the wire fence. The only professional assistance provided to the enterprise was from a licensed plumber to connect the water pipes and a draftsman to draw the plans.

The garden covered an area of approximately half a hectare and it was divided into forty-six individual garden plots plus a communal area. Prior to work commencing on the plots, the area had to be cleared of all the bush. The plots were laid out in a grid pattern and varied in size; 30, 40 and 50 sq metres, with a metre between each. In total it took only three days to finalise all the essential hard landscaping. Most of this had proceeded relatively smoothly with the only significant delay coming with the consultations with the then National Capital Authority (NCA) on the colour of the shed. The NCA insisted that the colour blend in with the surroundings so as not to be obvious if viewing the landscape from Black Mountain. The location of the shed was determined by the need to avoid the tree root system extending from the large gums that were to the southern boundary.

The first site map



The forty-six plots were gradually taken up after the garden's establishment although it was not until 2005 that all plots were occupied. Initially, the soil lacked fertility but organic gardening techniques gradually increased the amount of organic matter and biological activity making it more suitable for vegetable growing. Coincidentally, the ACT Government's Urban Services was cleaning out one of its depots and offered a load of semi composted show straw which gardeners eagerly used on their newly cleared plots. Shrubs were initially only planted on the western fence line to provide a windbreak.

These plantings continued around the boundary over the next few years with extensive mulching undertaken. Despite this, many of those original plants died during the millennial drought years.

Graeme Davis joined the garden in November 2002. He had just returned to Canberra after living and working as an economist in New Zealand for ten years and was looking for a site that would accommodate his interest in growing dahlias. A search of the internet revealed Cook and he took up two of the 40 square metre plots. The Cook garden provided him with an opportunity to pursue organic gardening principles for flower production. Although his main hobby is growing and breeding daffodils, his interest in dahlias had been sparked by his grandparents' and parents' efforts but Graeme was motivated by the competition to produce the best. He



has been a regular exhibitor in the Canberra Horticultural Society Flower Shows, the Canberra and Sydney Royal Easter shows, with his blooms (both dahlias and daffodils) consistently receiving top awards and his dahlia expertise is regularly sought after. A walk past Graeme's garden during the summer months is one of the highlights of the Cook garden but the beauty of the flowers mask the twenty years of tending to the health of the soil. Passers-by would have noticed that Graeme does not weed his garden to the extent evident in others as

he has a deliberate 'no dig' strategy to ensure the soil's structure is not unnecessarily disturbed. He has also cultivated the garden to harvest as much water as possible from the Mt Painter run-off and this method has proven to be a successful water conservation strategy. Graeme's visits to Cook are often nocturnal, particularly during the blooming and exhibiting season but he, like many in the garden, is also a regular contributor to the community events and enjoys the engagement with other gardeners.

The infrastructure was developed further in 2003 with the construction of the pergola. The garden's convenor at that time, Keith Colls, reported that the pergola 'magically appeared' thanks to the efforts of Adrienne Fazekas. Adrienne had pre-fabricated the pergola in her garage before transporting it to the garden. Holes for the uprights were dug during a working bee and Adrienne, assisted by Garry Ridgway, finalised the structure. Vines were planted to provide summer shade although their growth was slowed by the later addition of shade cloth. The paving beneath was undertaken four years after this in 2007 providing for 'more comfortable BBQ events'.



The pergola, August 2003

A few years after the pergola was installed, a glasshouse was erected. Donated by Sue and Steve Adams, a concrete slab was poured and the structure erected by Adrienne, Keith and Ilya Popovic. Unfortunately, the glasshouse was later so severely damaged by vandals, who had thrown sleepers through the structure, that the remaining structure was removed.

At this point, the garden was fully operational with Keith Colls reflecting –

The garden is in a very pleasing location with horse paddocks on one side and nature reserve on the other. It is an open sunny spot which is very pleasant on calm autumn and winter

days but on windy spring days it closely resembles a freezing wind tunnel. To minimise the cold wind exposure native shrubs have been planted around the exposed boundaries but it will take some time before they are tall enough to have much effect. The planting of the windbreak is just one of the activities which have been undertaken through working bees. Most working bees are held in the cooler months as it is just too hot during the summer. Besides general maintenance work, working bees have established a communal herb garden, a plot for producing seed for the COGS seed saving group, communal fruit trees and grape vines have been planted and a small pergola has been constructed. These facilities are now available for all plot holders to enjoy.

The final structure erected was the second shed and this was undertaken in 2016 with a grant provided by the ACT Government for this purpose. The shed was built on the site of the glass house and like all of the other structures, the construction crew were Cook gardeners. So, some 15 years after its foundation, the Cook garden had reached its current form.

Janet Popovic joined the garden in August 2002. On the brink of retirement, Janet was encouraged to join the newly established garden by a colleague, Margaret Colls, who told her of the Cook enterprise. Although knowing nothing about COGS and their gardens, Janet was seeking a retirement project and this seemed perfect to grow vegetables. Like many Canberra residents in the established suburbs, Janet's home garden was shaded by large trees and lacked suitable space for vegetable crops. The plot chosen by Janet was in its original state and had not been formally marked out



or the soil developed.

Janet recalls that the ground was like cement and only through a birthday gift from her husband, Ilya, that this could be remedied. Ilya's rotary hoe and years of mulching (calculated to be around 100 bales of lucerne) have proved successful. Another strategy was the use of netting. Janet and Ilya first established the netting about 18 months after the garden was established and believes that this

not only provides a barrier for uninvited guests, but also induces a microclimate that protects the crops and enables high value year long production. Like many Cook gardeners, Janet has had her share of snake encounters and, as a consequence, does not keep any items that can be attractions such as compost bins or black plastic. She suspects that many of the snakes are also attracted by the water course that is in close proximity to her garden, although one pre-net encounter suggests that Janet's potato patch also proved irresistible to one very large brown snake who had formed two perfect brown scaled arches in among the green leafy mounds. In addition to the establishment of her garden, Janet was 'encouraged' by Keith Colls and Adrienne Fezekas to edit the COGS newsletter, *Canberra Organic*, which she undertook for three years from 2003–2006. Janet relinquished the editorship but continued to contribute many articles. Although Janet has expanded her home garden, now using the nature strip to grow herbs and small-scale vegetables, she still enjoys the Cook garden as it provides a haven, a place for quiet contemplation (coupled with vigorous exercise) and a place to continue her long term friendships with fellow gardeners.

The Establishment Years

The Cook garden has become a feature of the inner Belconnen landscape. Many plot holders recount that they first became aware of the garden by travelling up and down busy Bindubi Street. Cook was also discovered by other means including word of mouth, articles in *The Canberra Times*, or through the COGS newsletter. Some were introduced through the open days, an initiative of COGS where several of its gardens were opened simultaneously to encourage community engagement. These days have in recent years not been repeated at Cook because of a prevailing view that they simply provided opportunities for individuals with bad intent to surveil the garden, with episodes of vandalism invariably coinciding with that event.

After its establishment, many plots were quickly taken up and the hard work commenced to turn the former bush paddock into productive gardens. As with all COGS gardens, a convenor was appointed and their task was to allocate plots, introduce new plot holders to the garden and its rules, be a point of communication between COGS and the garden, arrange for the collection of plot fees, manage the program of maintenance including working bees and organise social events. Keith Colls was the first to take on this task, since then there have been seven individuals who have volunteered their time to manage the garden. The convenors have generally been, although not always, assisted by a small garden committee.

The orchard, after planting



Raz Stephens is another long-term Cook gardener, taking up her plot in 2002. Raz was keen to continue with the gardening culture of her homeland, Bosnia. But, there was also a spiritual dimension to gardening in her 'small farm', as it enabled her to connect to her recently deceased mother. Raz initially started with a 30 sq metre plot but took the opportunity to expand into a neighbouring garden. This size plot, in addition to her home garden, enables her to grow most of the food that she needs to feed her and her partner through the year. The fresh fruit and vegetables that she harvests throughout the growing months are complemented by those Raz preserves; again continuing with the practice learnt from her mother and one that is so much part of the European food tradition. Raz has, over the years, learnt how to stretch out the growing season by consecutive planting – potatoes, for example, can be planted two or three times per year to have new potatoes all the way to the end of autumn. In addition to maintaining her productive garden, Raz also took on the role of garden convenor for a couple of years and she is really attuned to the health benefits of gardening and in belonging to a community. But, her advice to new gardeners is, 'what you put in is what you will get out'.

Raz's preserves



The Cook community garden is a place where members of the Canberra community can come to grow food crops and flowers according to organic principles. But, for Cook, as with many other COGS gardens, this shared interest went beyond what was grown on individual plots. Throughout its short history Cook gardeners have generously shared their gardening expertise and produce to benefit the wider community. For example, one plot was devoted to growing crops specifically to save seeds and this was linked with the very active seed sharing activities of COGS. The COGS members' monthly meetings were also occasions to share seeds and seedlings.

The orchard in Spring 2021



Another area of the garden has been devoted to an orchard. Three trees were planted in early winter 2002 shortly after the garden opened – apricot, satsuma plumb and nectarine – and, over time, additional varieties have been added or, occasionally, subtracted. Three very large holes were dug at a working bee in June with plans to plant in July. Adrienne Fazekas recalls the timing of the planting was determined by ‘my chooks being ‘foxed’ so I suddenly went and bought three tress and planted them with a dead chook each’. The orchard now comprises plums, nectarines, apples, the trees have been expertly pruned by Adrienne, and the understory weeded during working bees. It is watered by the irrigation system, annually netted by Peter Weddell, and has produced an abundance of fruit that has been shared among members of the garden.

Early working bee to establish the apple orchard



Shannon Laffan is a relative newcomer to Cook, joining in late 2020. Shannon's plot is large, so she went against the current trend towards wanting a smaller plot. Like many who join community gardens, Shannon had a limited sunny space in her townhouse courtyard garden to grow vegetables and, in addition to her desire to feed her family, she also wanted to connect with a like-minded community. When Shannon joined she was working part-time so had the luxury of time to work her large plot and although she describes herself as an inexperienced vegetable gardener, adopted a 'can do' attitude, gardening through trial and error. When she started working the plot, its size was a little daunting but that feeling eventually gave way to one of satisfaction as she harvested the first summer crop. Like many of her fellow gardeners, Shannon has been learning how to best set out her plot and to deal with the local wildlife – choughs, ducks, rabbits and rats! Despite the challenges she loves the sense of well-being that gardening at Cook brings – being outside, working the soil, listening to all the birdlife, watching the clouds roll by from Mt Painter to Black Mountain – it's her sanctuary and place of calm.



Shannon's son, Miles,
with first raspberry harvest

Horticultural Society
Cook Garden display, 2012

The Canberra Horticultural Society's flower shows were an opportunity for Cook gardeners to exhibit their produce and enter into friendly competition with fellow COGS community gardeners. Over several years, members of the garden displayed their vegetables in the Society's community garden displays but, as the then garden convenor Glynis Kennedy lamented in 2014, '... the Holder garden won first prize once again, but we are determined to beat them one day'.



The Cook gardeners participated in the Australian Open Garden Scheme often under difficult weather conditions. In 2010 Wayde Margetts reported that 'in stark contrast to 2009's two days of 40+ degrees, this year we faced a weekend of almost constant rain. By the end of Sunday, over 100mm had fallen on the garden and the people in the garden. Some enthusiastic vegetable admirers braved the conditions both days and observed our plants growing amongst assorted moats and small ponds'.

The garden has also become known as an important site for the breeding and production of dahlias and in 2014, growers, breeders, exhibitors and judges at the Horticultural Society of Canberra autumn flower show, that incorporated the Australian Open Dahlia championship, were invited into the garden to view Graeme Davis's plot.

Another community oriented initiative has been the relationship with Canberra City Care. In late 2017, Greg Blood approached Canberra City Care in Charnwood to determine how COGS community gardens could assist them to provide low-cost food

Graeme's dahlia garden





The first potato crop

services to those experiencing financial hardship in Belconnen. Canberra City Care had developed their own large vegetable garden and ran a weekly Harvest Stall from January to late March so Greg arranged for the Cook Community Garden to supply excess additional vegetables from members plots to them from January 2018. On a weekly basis, around two tubs of vegetables are supplied during the operation of Canberra City Care's Harvest Stall. But Greg also helped manage the stall to gain an understanding of the needs of clients. Vegetables supplied are primarily tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, squash, potatoes, eggplants, capsicums, pumpkins and silver beet. The nearby Charnwood Community Garden also supplies excess produce.

A year later, Cook Community Garden committee gave approval for a marginal plot to be used for growing additional vegetables for Canberra City Care. Margaret Stock enthusiastically prepared a plot and planted seed potatoes supplied by several members. Approximately 40 kilos of potatoes were harvested that summer. In 2021, the plot is managed by Greg and is generally only planted out for the summer season as nearby eucalypts shade it most of the day in winter. In the summer seasons, the plot has concentrated on high volume crops such as tomatoes, zucchini, squash and capsicums.

Cook Community Garden members have embraced this project led by Greg Blood and it has helped highlight how COGS can connect with local community.

In common with many of the COGS gardens, Cook has encountered difficulties aside from the weather conditions and pests that are most directly associated with food production. Vandalism such as cut fences, the destruction of the glass house, ball bearings shot into the shed, plots and produce trampled and destroyed, stolen produce and tools have all challenged the ideals of the community space. In 2009, the garden convenor John Bennet, reported that the damage caused by vandals to some of the gardens and the watering system had a demoralising impact on fellow gardeners. At that time, he noted that the garden was 'continuing to be a target for what can only be described as malicious damage. Despite our cyclone wire fencing, topped with barbed wire, locked gate and locked shed, intruders are regularly cutting through the fence and embarking on apparently random acts of vandalism'. Issues of water use and the unwillingness of some gardeners to contribute



Cookie

to the ongoing maintenance of communal areas and to take up volunteer management positions are recurring issues. On a lighter note, in 2013 and 2014 the then garden convenor Glynis Kennedy reported that there had been two garden intruders – ‘Cookie’ the free-range hen (so-called by her new owners because of where she had come from) and a kitten. Both had been dumped in the garden but Glynis found good homes for both.

Despite this, however, there is a willingness to foster a sense of harmony always evident during the garden working bees. The continual improvement to the common areas of the garden including mulching the pathways, mowing the grass and the progression of perimeter plantings have all been undertaken in an orderly and friendly manner. Other events, such as the annual meeting, have presented opportunities for social engagement and a chance to meet gardeners beyond those in the neighbouring plots.



Mike Avent, tap manager

Many individuals over the years have volunteered their time to undertake significant maintenance issues, including the 2020 ACT Government funded program to upgrade the water taps. This project was managed by Mike Avent, who was best placed to do so given his *defacto* title of ‘tap maintenance manager’ and earned over many years, but he was assisted by many others willing to dig holes and trenches.

Despite the difficulties presented by the pandemic, 2021 saw two other projects that demonstrated communal well being: one was the extension of the pathways, and the other was refurbishment of the pergola, which was extended and repainted. The first was led by Michele Barson and the second by Mervyn Dorrrough. Both were assisted by a number of current gardeners. Unfortunately the pandemic interrupted the completion of the pergola area, with plans to extend the paving put on hold.

Pergola rescue unit (l to r) –
Mike Vale, Mervyn Dorrrough,
Mike Avent



Mario Serenellini is a Cook garden institution and has been gardening here since 2007. Occupying plots near the entrance to the garden, his face is a welcoming one to many and he is always happy to talk about his verdant garden and provide encouragement to anyone eager to learn from him. Mario, like many at Cook, comes from a long line of vegetable gardeners; growing up in Rome, Mario's grandfather and father cultivated large gardens. For Mario in Rome, gardening was confined to an apartment balcony, so the Cook garden offered him the opportunity to scale up his vegetable production. Initially, he intended to take one plot but he was encouraged by the then convenor, Rasima, to garden in the newly vacated neighbouring plot. Walking past his garden always presents a feast for the eyes, irrespective of the time of year. Viewers are greeted by a forest of fennel, sitting atop the carefully cultivated mounds; the globe artichoke plantation with its sculptural blue-green forms; the perfectly engineered tomato stakes awaiting the coming summer bounty; the garlic standing upright in perfect rows; and, the shiny capsicums. Mario plants to sustain his family for the whole of year, preserving what cannot be consumed fresh and this complements his other food home production, such as the cured meats and wine. Mario has been a great friend of the garden, serving on its committee, always participating in the working bees and, during a time when vandalism was a significant issue, patrolling the perimeter fences to ensure any uninvited intruders did not enter through their carefully chopped wire fence.

Mario's artichoke plantation



Relationship to COGS

The Cook garden would not exist without COGS and the relationship between the garden and its umbrella organisation has been a strong and abiding one throughout its history. The first convenor of the Cook garden, Keith Colls, was President of COGS (and later Vice-President). Adrienne Fazekas, who joined COGS in 1999 and took up a plot at Cook in 2001, was elected Treasurer, serving until 2004, then elected President in 2005, serving until 2008 and then elected as Treasurer for a further three years. Keith and Adrienne were also instrumental in the development of the O'Connor garden, setting out the plots and installing the irrigation along with the then convenor of Cook, Alan Robertson. Other Cook gardeners have been COGS office-bearers, including Alan Robertson, who was COGS Vice-President, Martin Butterfield as President, Michelle West as Treasurer, and Glynis Kennedy has been both Treasurer and Vice-President, and general committee member. Another early Cook plot holder, Janet Popovic, edited the COGS magazine for three years from 2003-2006. Adrienne, Janet and Ilya Popovic also contributed to the COGS Backyard Garden, a demonstration organic growing plot that was located at the xeriscope gardens at the Horticultural School at Weston.

Cook garden working bee,
February 2019



Peter Weddell was Secretary and then President of COGS during a particularly difficult period for the organisation and was also concurrently convenor of the Cook garden; Michele Barson has been a long-term member of the COGS Committee and is now Vice-President and in 2021 Jyl Thompson was elected Secretary. Every convenor of the garden has also been involved COGS, often as general committee members or by attending and contributing to the monthly executive meetings. Others have contributed in less obvious ways; for example, Janet Popovic edited *Organic Gardener* for three years; Glynis Kennedy, in addition to her office-bearing duties also undertook the catering for the COGS 40th anniversary dinner, serving up a spectacular array of organically grown foods and has also been a regular contributor of recipes to the *Organic Gardener* and, Greg Blood has been the COGS librarian. Peter Marstin was COGS auditor from 2002 for several years.

In 2020 and 2021, the importance of COGS to the health and well being of all its community gardeners was amply demonstrated when the pandemic threatened to close access to the gardens. Since its establishment COGS has built a strong and enduring relationship with the ACT Government, and together with the City Farm, were able to successfully argue a case to allow gardeners to access their plots during periods of lockdown in order to maintain a healthy community. Special dispensation was given to COGS member plot holders to access their garden assuming that each would comply with the access conditions, so the gardens have continued to flourish and provide a haven during the lockdown periods.



Janet's plot, 2021





John Tuckwell, pruning

The Cook Gardeners

The garden has, over the years, changed its plot configuration to accommodate the changes in the needs of its gardeners. The garden has extended the number of plots from the original forty-six to fifty-one. In the establishment phase, some gardeners took advantage of plot availability and had multiple adjacent plots and a few of these continue. It is not possible to determine how many people have gardened at Cook and have benefited from garden production since 2001 but it is likely to be in the hundreds. All those who have worked here share a deep and abiding interest in organic gardening. However, how the plots are utilised and what is planted are often influenced by special interests and cultural background. The relative newcomers are now also driving a change in the plot distribution, with smaller plots providing just the right size to manage with the multiple and competing demands on their life.

The Cook garden is nothing without its gardeners. Some have been a constant, arriving on its establishment and have persisted despite the many weather induced challenges, such as prolonged drought and high rainfall. Others are new to the garden and the profiles in this book are a very small sample of the individuals who are part of the Cook community.

Shed construction crew (l to r) –
John Bowdery, Andrew Coombes,
Mike Avent, Peter Weddell



Garden Convenors*

2001	Keith Colls
2002	Keith Colls
2003	Keith Colls
2004	Alan Robertson
2005	Alan Robertson
2006	Rasmira Kecanovic (now Stephens)
2007	Rasmira Kecanovic (now Stephens)
2008	John Bennett
2009	John Bennett
2010	Wayde Margetts
2011	Wayde Margetts
2012	Glynis Kennedy
2013	Glynis Kennedy
2014	Glynis Kennedy
2015	Mike Avent
2016	Mike Avent
2017	Mike Avent
2018	Peter Weddell
2019	Peter Weddell
2020	Peter Weddell
2021	Peter Weddell

* Although Convenors are elected towards the end of the year, this list assumes their office period is for the coming year.



(above) Mario's plot

(below) The resident Chough family enjoys a drink





Acknowledgements

Many people have assisted in the preparation of this short history and I am grateful to them all. They have willingly provided encouragement, time, written notes and photographs. I have been fortunate to interview Keith Colls, Adrienne Fazekas, Glynis Kennedy, Janet and Illya Popovic, Mario Serenelline, Rasima Kecanovic, Greg Blood provided notes and photographs for the section on the Cook Garden involvement with Canberra City Care; Keith, Adrienne, Janet, Peter Weddell have all provided valuable feedback on the drafts. Keith, Glynis, Janet, Peter and Ben Pocius have provided photographs. Richard Gorrell has been a sharp editor. This publication was designed by Matt Mawson.

The current COGS President, Andy Hrast, has also been very supportive of this little project and funds have been provided by COGS to publish the work to a standard consistent with the COGS Newsletter.

Lastly, to all those individuals past and present who have cared for the garden and participated in the many working bees, every Cook gardener has been your beneficiary.

Julie Gorrell

September 2021

Bibliography

Bethaney Turner, Walter Steensby, David Pearson, *From Bare Earth to Bounty: the story of the Canberra Organic Growers Society*, 2013.

Canberra Organic, Vols 2001-2021.

Horticultural Society of Canberra Inc, *Bulletin*, Issue 348, May to July 2014.

Personal communication, Keith Colls, Graeme Davis, Adrienne Fazekas, Janet Popovic, Ilya Popovic, Glynis Kennedy, Mario Serenelline, Rasima Kecanovic, Shannon Laffan, 2021.

Cover photos

(front) Aino Toivonen with red currants
(photo, Janet Popovic)

(back) Aerial view of Cook community garden in 2016
(photo, John Drew)

(opposite page)
Produce from Cook
community garden

