

# GREENS~LEAVES

**Dunedin Vegetable Growers Club Newsletter; issued monthly, Vol:7.4 April 2014**

**Next Club meeting ; 7pm, Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April**

**Venue is the St Clair Women's Club, 47 Albert St, St Clair.**

**Invited Speaker ; Jim Bazsika on Espaliering fruit trees.**

*Membership:* Heather Wilson (4764607) [heatherandmike@clear.net.nz](mailto:heatherandmike@clear.net.nz)

*President /Secretary ;* Carol Henderson (454 4625) [hendersonic@xtra.co.nz](mailto:hendersonic@xtra.co.nz)

*Website ;* <http://www.dvgc.co.nz/>

## **The more things change,**

...the more they stay the same :)

At least that is how the saying goes and I'm sure that is how the DVGC is going to continue as we are basically the same team with the addition of committee member Joy Tapp.

I would like to thank Margaret Scott, now our Immediate Past President, for a great 3 years of leadership in which our Club has grown in numbers, stability and scope.

I would also like to thank our committee for their hard work, support and perseverance! This stability has encouraged me to take my turn as President and I promise to do my best with all of your help.

Not that nothing will change though!!

As you all know we have been searching for the perfect venue and now we think we have found one ....but I will reveal that at the April meeting :)

## **March meeting;**

We try to keep the AGM as relaxed as possible and we only managed to miss one thing out which was the financial Examiners Report. Neil Rosenberg had very kindly agreed to perform this service for us and it will be included as a third page in this newsletter. David let us know that it is time to sow onion seed and that he prefers red onions as they are more expensive in the supermarket. He sows the seed thickly and uses the thinnings as spring onions. A friend who had onions going to seed harvested them, sliced them and put them in the dehydrator producing something like onion-flavoured blotting paper!! I thought afterwards that grinding this up would give onion powder which may be more useful! Also time to sow broad beans.

Trevor Nixon is an entertaining speaker and relayed a huge amount of information on growing tomatoes and cucurbits with an emphasis on watering, air circulation and remedies for the many diseases and problems which can occur.

I took four pages of notes while Trevor spoke but the main points were ;

Change soil in greenhouse every year or grow in bags and "plant" the bags into the soil so the roots can spread out.

Do not use fertiliser on young plants.

Don't overwater- the best time to water is in the morning as this won't cool the plants down and avoid water on the leaves as this provides fungal spores entry into the plant. More water required once flowering starts.

Using an upturned plastic bottle whose bottom has been cut off to deliver the water straight to the roots and is also good for courgettes and grapes.

Air circulation is essential. Leave greenhouse doors open day and night when warmer to avoid a large difference in temperature which can cause fruit split and leaf curl. A heatsink of water in black containers can be placed in the greenhouse to prevent low night time temperatures.

Trevor recommends Flurofix to tie tomatoes up as it is soft and bendy....string will cut the stems and cause problems.

Milk powder or gypsum can be used provide calcium.

Trevor believes that blossom-end rot is caused by being too dry at fruit set.

To ripen green tomatoes , pull out plant and hang upside down.

Trevor also described how to graft your own hybrid tomatoes.

Congratulations to Claire Hewson won both votes with her tomatoes and a big thankyou again for all of our supper provider/helpers :)

There was a good turnout at the open garden kindly hosted by Jennifer Evans and I apologise for my non-attendance. I had popped around earlier in the month though and was impressed with just how big and productive the garden is! Thanks to Dennis for organising the thankyou applause and to Jennifer for being such a good host. We are running short of volunteers to have an open garden in the near future so please let me or one of the committee know if you are keen :)

## **Subscriptions for 2014 due now !**

Payments made after March 31st will cost more ; \$15 for Internet newsletter and \$20 for the Printed version.

**Bank Account details...**For those who would like to pay their subs via internet banking the Club bank account number is;

**Westpac 030905 0515906 00**

Please remember to **add your name** when paying by internet as otherwise we cannot send out your newsletter :)

**Gardening by the moon April/May**  
April 3<sup>rd</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> - sow and plant above ground crops

13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> – cultivate only

18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> – sow root crops

20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> – barren period

25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> – sow root crops

27<sup>th</sup> to May 2<sup>nd</sup> – dig and cultivate

May 3<sup>rd</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> – sow and plant above ground crops, don't prune or sow root crops

13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> – cultivate only

18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> – sow root crops

20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> – cultivate, prune and harvest

25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> – sow root crops

27<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> – dig and cultivate, don't sow or plant.

### **Riverton Heritage Food Festival 2014**

This was held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of March and this year was even better than 2013! Jim and Robyn Bazsika also came down and if Jim wasn't in my class ( it is held in the Aparima High School ) then Robyn was!

There were huge displays of different types of apples, potatoes and garlic as well as produce tables and competitions, not to mention the busy cafe selling healthy meals, cakes and Kombucha!!

The Foraging workshop was interesting but I really only found one weed that you can eat that I didn't know about before.

However, the teacher mentioned her giant broccoli so I made sure to get a photo for the newsletter.

The Beneficial Insects workshop was held by Robert Guyton and was full of information and tall tales of what the insects get up to. The best advice was to plant Oats or Rye as a green manure crop to allow the population of hoverflies to increase. Hoverflies eat aphids and the Oats and Rye host tiny aphids which colonise them without harming the crop. Once the Oats and Rye have been dug in the hoverflies go looking for any other aphids in your garden and eat them up! How to set up an Orchard in your back garden held by Robyn Guyton had some of the presentation the Guytons gave to us in the Rugby club hall but Robyn went into more detail of the amount of work she has done to identify the cultivars of apples they found in the old orchards of Southland. Suffice to say an expert from Britain is coming over to Riverton retrieve some of the apple varieties lost to them over the years.

I will have some copies of the Beneficial Insects handouts to share at the meeting.



**The giant broccoli from Riverton! ( my phone for scale)**

The most fun I had though was the Raw Food workshop held by Nicola Brown. I had been to a similar workshop in Dunedin held at Taste Nature so hadn't booked in for it but their helper was sick and I was asked to stand in to wash dishes ..... it was well worth it!! From cucumber crackers to chocolate pudding made from Avocados, not to mention the courgette noodles, we all had a feast and a very enjoyable time. More information on their website ; [www.nibl.co.nz](http://www.nibl.co.nz)

### **April 7th meeting ;**

**Sales/Trading table** – Dennis will let us know what is available on the sales table.

**Planting now/Q&A** – David Neill

**Club Speaker** - David Neill will give a short talk on root vegetables

**Invited Speaker** – Jim Bazsika on Espaliering fruit trees.

### **Competition – 3 carrots**

**Open Garden** – A visit to the Bathgate Park Community garden behind Bathgate Park School, 213 Macandrew Rd. South on Sunday April 13<sup>th</sup> at 2pm.

Our first book review can be seen on our website ; <http://www.dvgc.co.nz/> as well as some new photos from open gardens and Riverton. Recipes will also be a welcome addition to our website and can be e-mailed to me or handed in at the meetings as Margaret Scott is keen on collecting recipes for a booklet :)

Alison Lambert has some great recipes for Autumn here ; <http://www.tasteofmylife.com/category/autumn/>

**Happy gardening :)**

**Carol Henderson**

Newsletter Editor