



## We are hard at work whilst most plants rest

### Message from the Chairperson

We are rapidly approaching the Winter Solstice on 21 June and are well into the second quarter of the year.

There have been many exciting happenings in the ORV gardens since the last newsletter:

- The irrigation system has been installed throughout the village. A few teething problems still need to be sorted out, but it will certainly be fully functional in the near future.
- We have planted 38 indigenous trees in the village (10 different species) and it is most encouraging to see all of these trees are thriving. The trees were purchased from Random Harvest Nursery and three workers from the nursery arrived at 7am one morning to plant them, which they accomplished in one day!

Our committee, were delighted to receive in excess of R8 000 in donations from residents towards the cost of these trees. It has also been heartening to see how residents are helping with the watering of these trees.

In addition to cash donations, we have received so many plants, slips, seeds, seedlings etc. from residents – also several sods of grass, rocks, ornamental stones and a birdbath! There are so many positive, enthusiastic people living in the village – through their generosity and the committee's hard work, our village is looking more beautiful by the day. Once Spring approaches, the committee would like to plant some more gardens in the common areas, so residents will soon see more activity in the village. Several residents have submitted plans for gardens which they wish to develop in common areas and we encourage other residents to do the

same, if they are able to. On Saturday the 9th July the garden committee will be organising a musical quiz evening, which will be themed around nature including seasons, weather, insects, birds, colours, trees, flowers etc. Soup, rolls, bread and cheese will be served during the evening. Posters advertising this event will be displayed soon and ticket sales will commence shortly. Please support this function, so that we can once again fund garden projects for our village.

In conclusion, I would like to thank each member of the garden committee – Thersia, Jim, Beryl, Lu, Margie, Sid and Monica – altogether a fabulous team of very hard working and dedicated people.

Please note that the pet portfolio is now handled by Tracy Dalling.

Doreen

### Watering your garden during winter



Water remains a scarce resource and water restrictions are still in place. Please note that watering private gardens is only allowed before 8am and after 4pm. If you have a timer on your irrigation

system, please make sure that you set it up for the new times. Keep in mind that most plants rest during the winter, so they do not need as much water. For this reason, TurfNet will only water the common garden lawns every second week.

If you have a sprinkler system, please make sure that you check the spray

radius of individual nozzles – to avoid watering the paving or roads. Water pressure changes all the time in the complex, therefore it is important to regulate your system to optimally water your garden.

Water consumption remains high in the village and we all need to participate in water saving initiatives.

### The committee

Doreen Dennehy	Unit 41	5243
Tracy-Lee Daling	Admin	5500
Louise (Lu) Penberthy	Unit 163	5389
Margie Lockwood	Unit 133	5451
Beryl Taylor	Unit 161	5388
Jim Taylor	Unit 161	5388
Thersia Tait	Unit 47	5227
Monica Hall	Unit 436	5209
Sidney Roodt	Unit 386	5150

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**Congratulations to the winner of our Easter Hamper: Rita du Toit (unit 340)**



# Vertical Gardening



## Some options to explore



Top left: Sophisticated vertical garden grown in hydroponic pipes. Top Right: A mass of half-moon pots arranged in formal rows. Left: A steel rod pushed through the drainage hole makes for a fun staggered planter.

Most of us had to scale down after retiring. This goes for our homes as well as our gardens. This does not mean that we cannot have a large variety of plants in our gardens. Over the next couple of issues we will look at some creative ways in which to maximise our gardening space. One “quick-fix” to make a larger garden is to go “up” – or as it is commonly known – vertical gardening. We kick off this series with a couple of reasons why this is so popular in small urban gardens world wide.

Traditional in-ground garden beds have very limited potential. However, growing ‘up’ or ‘down’ and ‘stacking’ techniques provide you with various interesting options.

Or as Derek Fell, author *Vertical Gardening: Grow Up, Not Out, for More Vegetables and Flowers in Much Less Space* sums it up: “Vertical gardening is an innovative, effortless, and highly productive growing system that uses bottom-up and top-down supports for a wide variety of plants in both small and large garden spaces.”

- **Maximise Limited Space:** Increase your gardening area.
- **Garden Rooms:** Some structures like arbors, arches or pergolas create the ambience of an outdoor garden ‘room’ and give a sense of height and depth to an otherwise small space.
- **Privacy Screens:** Screen or disguise unwanted views by growing your garden vertically.
- **Accessibility:** Plants are easier to reach which makes fertilising, watering, pruning and harvesting easier.
- **Healthier Plants:** Getting plants up and off the ground improves air circulation which means healthier plants and less pest & disease problems.
- **Visual Appeal:** Improve the beauty of your garden by adding character, variety, structure and colour. A splash of colour at eye level is outdoor art with hanging baskets and window boxes.
- **Grow More Plants:** Expand the number and kind of plants you can grow in your garden. Most vegetables are perfect for a vertical garden.
- **Higher Crop Yields:** Obtain a more productive harvest of food crops by growing up and using particular techniques like espalier. (Next issue)
- **Define a Space:** Create an entrance, backdrop or framework; define boundaries and edges; and provide a sense of enclosure or seclusion.



Top: Slanted gutters against a wall. Water is pumped from the basin to the top row. This is both a garden and water feature.



Left: Any container can be used – as long as there is sufficient drainage and enough space for the roots of the plant. Top: A PVC pipe placed in a planter pot and filled with potting soil is a cheap and almost instant vertical garden. Flowers and vegetables can be grown in this way.



# Plant of the Quarter

## Clivia

Have you ever seen a garden or patio full of Clivia in different colours and not one of them orange?

Local and international breeders are creating new varieties in colours and shapes no one could ever imagine possible ten to fifteen years ago. The colours include bronze brown, dusky rose pink, ivory green, versicolour and the 'old' favourites lemon yellow and light peach.



Clivia breeders are now concentrating on breeding shorter plants with broader leaves, taking up less space and making very attractive small garden and container plants for patios and indoors. The new compact plants with broader leaves look a lot neater than the original plants with their long strappy leaves.

The Japanese and Chinese breeders regard the shape, width and shortness of the leaves more important than the flower shape. Breeders are very competitive and aim to introducing a new species every year. The shapes of the petals are changing too bigger flower heads with more open recurving flowers are produced. The best news for local gardeners and clivia enthusiasts is the beautiful blooms during the often drab winter and with the *C. gardenia* flowering in autumn the flowering time is now further extended.

Interspecific hybrids are the results from crossing large-flowered *C. miniata* with the tubular pendu-



lous species. Results like 'Firefly' and 'Marquise' have larger and flared blooms compared to the *C. caulescens* and *C. nobilis*. Inter-breeding with the new species create new colours, pink and red, and better growth habits such as sun tolerance, interesting flower shapes and an increase in the amount of petals per bloom.



Firefly Clivia

Pastels cover a wide range of colours from cream, lemon yellow, peach, apricot to the most sought after colour pink. The 'Appleblossom' variety with cream, white or yellow flowers tinged with peachy tones are some of the most successful pink tones.

The mother plant originated from the Transkei where natural hybridization in the wild took place to produce the apple blossom effect. An offspring of the green 'Hirao' and the bronze 'Gunston' resulted in the darker pink 'Namib Roos'

The Green-Flowered Clivia 'Hirao' was imported from Japan and developed by Toshio Koike. He started his clivia breeding programme with yellow seeds from South Africa and named his green masterpiece in honour of Dr Hirao a well-known Japanese horticulturist.

The true show stopper clivias are the Versicolour hybrids. These dramatic blooms have different colours on the inside and the outside of the petals. Depending on the original species they will also flower at different times of the year. The inner petals

Namib Roos

are usually lighter while the outer petals are darker and often striped. One of the top selling versicolour clivias is '777' bred by Pikkie Strumpher.

### Tips for clivias:

Clivias prefer light, fertile, slightly acidic and well-composted soil in dappled shade (in the wild they thrive in forests). Mulch well and replenish regularly. Use organic fertilizer like Bounce Back or Terra Nova in July and again in January.

Space the plants 30 to 40 cm apart to allow air circulation. Prevent amaryllis caterpillar by drenching with Kohinor or Confidor in April and October.

Water these tough and waterwise plants once or twice a week during summer (only in the absence of rain), and every second week during winter.

Divide the garden clumps after flowering and replant immediately in a prepared spot. Be gentle with them as they do not like to be disturbed. It will take a few seasons before they will be settled and resume flowering.



777 – a Versicolour Clivia





### Water Heroes

Jan Coetzee (455); Lionel Smith (332); John Main (57); Mike McKenna (408); Lee de Charmoy (409); Jeremy Dennehy (41) and Reg Scott (157) are our garden heroes who water our common gardens.

*Another 38 Indigenous trees were planted in the village with the generous sponsorship of:*

- 122 J Lucas
- 145 N & L Westgate
- 93 P & S Groenewoud
- 90 T Botha
- 95 D Young
- 94 F & S Kruger
- 133 M & M Lockwood
- 88 M van Reenen
- 86 W & C Beukes
- 83 C McAlpine
- 79 S Brown
- 67 F & M Peachey
- 72 M Cochrane
- 156 P Kritzing
- 41 J & D Dennehy
- 96 H Glasspool
- 77 S Le Page
- 78 S Loots
- 89 C Ludlow
- 46 M & V Lohmann
- 57 J & D Main
- 59 D Brits
- 47 J & T Tait
- 116 B & M Bromfield
- 108 G King
- 120 P Leach
- 62 M Dona
- 114 J Hausberger



### *A big thank you to all the helping hands*

Gardening is an expensive hobby... this is the reason why we are so grateful for all the garden goodies (plants, seeds, hard landscaping etc.) that the people listed below donated for the common gardens:

Fanie and Sandy Kruger (unit 94); Ruth & Ken Ward (unit 40); Flo Rowberry (unit 153); Jane Hausberger (unit 114); Rosemary Woolley (unit 129); Margie Hutchison (unit 91); Lu & Mike (unit 44); Maria Mielke (unit 25); Noreen Botoulas (unit 536); Brenda & Clive De Kock (unit 70); Marie (unit 34); Elizabeth & Mike Sole (unit 176); Bruce & Yvonne Magic (unit 21); Brian & Beulah Miskin (unit 159); Mary Ann Crocker (unit 85); Kobus & Martie Booyens (unit 118); Merle Heasman (unit 135); Jeanne & Jan Mostert (unit 190); Lyn & Alan Sharp (unit 37).



# Fennel

## Foeniculum Vulgare

Fennel is a hardy and perennial herb with long, light green, feathery leaves and yellow flowers. The whole plant is used, including leaves, flowers, stems, seeds and the bulb.

It is rich in vitamin B & C, Potassium (excellent for heart health), many trace elements and fibre.

Some of the properties attributed to Fennel in the past appear to have more to do with superstition than science.

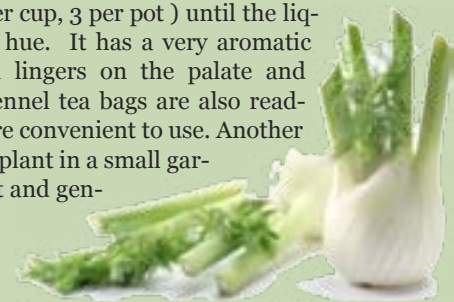
Many of the old herbals say that the herb is an antidote for "all manner of venoms" including snake bite, poisonous plants and mushrooms.

We know it now as an important anti-toxic plant. Marvellous for alcohol poisoning, gout, arthritis; it prevents the build-up of toxic wastes in the body which precedes inflammatory conditions in the joints. Fennel tea is also used for all digestive problems, nausea, colic and flatulence. It has a tonic effect on the smooth muscles of the intestines and strengthens peristalsis.

Fennel is also known for its anti-aging and cancer fighting properties. Another application of fennel is its reputation for decreasing appetite. The seeds were eaten by Roman Soldiers to curb hunger and strengthen their 'resolve'. It is also a wonderful diuretic. Note that excessive fluid retention may be a sign of a more serious problem that should be medically investigated.

Fennel is an amazing herb and vegetable which is used in salads and soups, imparting a delicious aniseed/licorice flavour. The seeds can be used in 'baked goods' as well as teas. The bulb and stems can be roasted or braised, grated raw for a wonderful addition to coleslaw or stewed.

Fennel tea is prepared by using ground or crushed seeds. A pestle and mortar is ideal for preparing them. The seeds are seeped in boiling water ( 1 teaspoon per cup, 3 per pot ) until the liquid has a lovely golden hue. It has a very aromatic licorice flavour which lingers on the palate and freshens the breath. Fennel tea bags are also readily available and are more convenient to use. Another wonderful herb one can plant in a small garden - beautiful to look at and generous with health benefits.



# Feature Garden



## The Sharp Sanctuary

### Unit 37

Alan and Lyn Sharp shared their beautiful garden with us. It is a delight to see every available space was utilised in a clever mix of plants, vegetables and herbs. This lush garden spills over the picket fence for everybody to enjoy. Lyn loves the layout of her garden, which is both a feast for the eyes and easy to maintain. She especially likes the Agapanthus and Tulbaghia plants.



*This garden is filled with surprises like the elegant bird ornaments, a water feature and even a bug-hotel!*



Alan and Lyn said that they had to get rid of a lot of building rubble and poor soil before filling the beds with topsoil and compost.

*“We are very lucky that we have a garden that has full sun to shade areas, because it means that we can plant a variety of plants.”*

They treasure their water feature and logs (pictured left) that came from their previous garden.



*Jessie exploring the new garden.*



# From the Garden Couch



## Helping Papa in the Garden

An old Italian gentleman lived alone in New Jersey. He wanted to

plant his annual tomato garden, but it was very difficult work, as the ground was hard. His only son, Vincent, who used to help him, was in prison. The old man wrote a letter to his son and described his predicament:

“Dear Vincent,

I am feeling pretty sad because it looks like I won't be able to plant my tomato garden this year. I'm just getting too old to be digging up a garden plot. I know if you were here my troubles would be over. I know

you would be happy to dig the plot for me, like in the old days.

Love, Papa”

A few days later he received a letter from his son.

“Dear Papa, don't dig up that garden. That's where the bodies are buried.

Love, Vinnie”

At 4 a.m. The next morning, FBI agents and local police arrived and dug up the entire area without finding any bodies. They apologized to the old man and left. That same day the old man received another letter from his son.

“Dear Papa,

Go ahead and plant the tomatoes now. That's the best I could do under the circumstances.

Love you, Vinnie”

## Gardens for the apartments



The new gardens for the apartment block is taking shape. Most of the plants were donated from residents. The layout was done by Jim and Doreen and the Turfnets gardeners did the planting.



“Every gardener knows that under the cloak of winter lies a miracle.”

Barbara Winkler