



above: Everglades Gardens; below: Cherry blossoms in bloom at Everglades Gardens.

biodynamics

sustainable gardening practices

Biodynamics began in Europe around 84 years ago and very quickly spread to USA and the UK. In Australia we have more biodynamic farmers per head of population than any other country in the world.

Recent problems of soil failure and infertile seeds, with huge debts to agribusiness, drove an estimated 60,000 farmers in India to suicide. The introduction of biodynamics there through Peter Proctor of NZ has created a miracle by transforming soil through sustainable "best practice" farming techniques to provide healthy food production, and in turn transforming of village communities to provide jobs and income.

Biodynamics Sydney Inc brings many benefits of biodynamic practices to the suburban public through its backyard advisory service, work on courses with community gardens and research and demonstration plots, and educates and assists generally in conversion work with parks, schools, councils and larger organisations. We are currently negotiating a project with the Royal Botanic Gardens, and a seminar in Leichhardt in October will publicise the biodynamic "missing link" carbon bio-sequestration problem of the Murray-Darling and lower lakes.

You can learn to "grow your own" biodynamically and help reverse global warming at the same time at our short city gardening courses in the city and suburbs.

The word "biodynamics" is starting to be heard in the commercial world also, including such names as Paris Creek biodynamic yoghurts and cheeses, Jurlique and Dr Hauschka skin care products, Kylie Kwong's popular cooking demonstrations and her Surry Hills restaurant – she promotes



and uses organic and biodynamic fresh quality produce – and biodynamic wines have featured in Vintage Cellars' catalogue under 'Red, White...and Green'. Fresh fruit and vegetables are becoming more readily available through local markets and healthfood shops.

Biodynamics also has a role to play in restoring

polluted and degraded soils and waterways using only natural and sustainable processes.

We applaud the National Trust in taking up this worthwhile initiative, and invite you to come to our workshops, lectures and demonstrations on biodynamics, or to buy the inspiring DVD 'One Man, One Cow, One Planet'.

Diane Watkin, Biodynamics Sydney

utilising biodynamic practices at Everglades Gardens, Leura

National Trust property, Everglades Gardens in Leura, has recently introduced biodynamic practices to its gardening. After being approached by the Sydney Biodynamics Group, Everglades has created biodynamic compost heaps, which produce stronger, more potent compost.

This compost increases the amount of organic matter in the soil in the gardens. Australian top soil is generally very thin. By increasing the organic matter quantity in the soil, it increases the water holding capability of the soil. Biodynamically worked soil is said to retain up to 75% more moisture, so we are trialling this practise to assist us with drought-proofing Everglades and also to help us deal with pests and diseases.

Guy McIlrath, Head Gardener, Everglades

obituary

Thea Mary Waddell 1925 – 2008

Thea Mary Waddell who had been a life member for more than 50 years died on 13 July. She was an active member of the Garden Committee from 1966 until the late 1980s. In 1977 she produced, edited and wrote the text of the Trust book 'Hidden Gardens of Sydney' – beautiful gardens which could not be seen from the street. The wonderful photographs were taken by Jutta Malnick. It sold over 7,000 copies – more than many Trust publications – and netted a good profit.

Although not a member of the Women's Committee, Thea kept very much in touch with their activities for many years and her advice was much valued. She was the holder of the copyright, after her death, to the works of Thea Proctor, the

well known painter, to whom she was related, and donated the royalties to the Art Gallery of New South Wales. However she permitted the Committee to use Proctor's design for a cover of the Home Journal, an elegant magazine of the 1920s and 30s, for a Trust Christmas card free of charge. Thea also took a close interest in the Trust's S.H. Ervin Gallery.

Apart from her work for the Trust, Thea actively supported the Art Gallery, The Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Sydney Theatre Company, being involved in volunteer guiding and fund raising. She will be very much missed.

Thomas Waddell