

September - October 2021

# Cheerio Newsletter

Gardening for Recreation, Occupation and Well-being



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 2 [CEO Report](#)
- 3 [Client Services](#)
- 4 [Nursery News](#)
- 5 [Program News](#)
- 6 [KHG Site Updates](#)
- 8 [Womens Week](#)
- 9 [Grand Spring Plant sale](#)
- 12 [Recipe of the Moment](#)
- 16 [Dates of the Diary](#)





# CEO Report

**Dr Josh Fergeus,**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

Aren't we all so lucky to have our KHG community in times like these? We continue to be confronted by new challenges and I want to thank all of you – our staff, participants, volunteers, families, customers, delivery and funding partners – for the way you have all pulled together to ensure we continue to provide a safe and supportive haven for those who need us.

Looking forward, it's likely that the positive impacts of our organisational restructure will not yet be apparent to many of you, but we are really looking forward to demonstrating our improved service delivery model as restrictions continue to ease. I'm particularly pleased that we have been able to expand our capacity for speech therapy, counselling and core

service provision across both our sites. We also have upcoming places available in Grow On The Go and our hospitality program for those wishing for an increased focus on the development of skills critical to employability. If you haven't yet spoken to our Client Services team about your plans for 2022 please get in touch.

On a personal note I am really looking forward to seeing many of you we haven't been able to see for some time. We won't be rushing back to 'business as usual' as we continue to keep the safety of our participants and staff at the core of our decision-making, but our COVID-safe plan provides a pathway for us to gradually welcome back more members of our community.



# Client Services

**Anita Mitchell**  
**Manager - Client Services**

Business as usual describes every day at KHG as every day is different, throwing up surprises and challenges along the way. While it may not be a clause in our employment contracts, some staff are fond of the phrase “all other duties as required” as we ask them, yet again to do something slightly out of the box. The amazing thing is that when it comes to supporting our participants, no staff member ever refuses – we have a wonderful team of support staff. We welcomed Julia and Jenny to the team recently and, although it may have felt like a slightly tenuous start, they have settled into the routine admirably.

Work in the garden continues at a great pace. Participants have been engaged in preparing spring plants, and seeing trolley loads of plants heading out to someone’s car boot should bring a great sense of pride. Although the annual Spring Fair isn’t proceeding in its usual style, we are still preparing and selling the seedlings as we always do.

Every day there is weeding and watering and feeding to be done, more plants are propagated and potted to fill up the gaps in the hot houses.

As we move quickly towards the end of the year we are all thinking of Christmas and hopefully, holidays of some sort. I would like to remind you all that the last day of our core program is Thursday 23 December and the first day back is Tuesday 4 January 2022. We would ask that you let us know soon if you are planning to take any additional time off from KHG either side of our closure dates. This gives us time to ensure that we have the right support in place for all of our participants.

Thank you to everyone who has advised us of their intentions regarding next year. One of my friendly Client Services team members will contact you soon to confirm plans, so that we can continue to plan our programmes to meet the needs of our community.

Hoping that you all get the opportunity to enjoy some of that beautiful spring sunshine over the next wee while.

# Nursery News

**Lilli Johnston**  
**Lead Trainer - Doncaster**

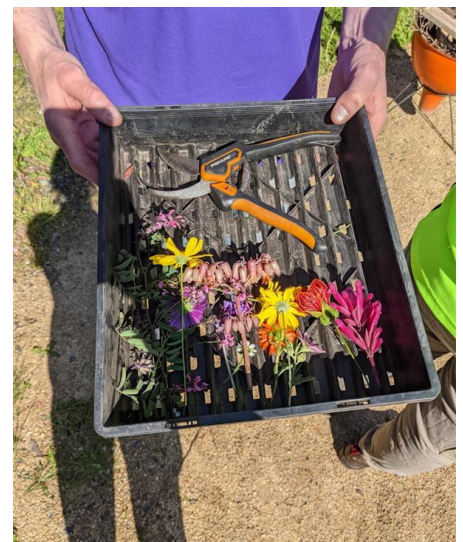
Lots to report on from the gardens and nurseries at KHG- as per usual! The decision was made to hold a spring Sale in lieu of the Spring Fair this year – with the fair not being a viable option under current restrictions (and it wouldn't have looked like its vibrant self with limited numbers anyway). We have made the switch to selling plants through our 'call and collect' system, which has proven to be successful thus far! Participants (and staff) were initially disappointed with the cancellation of the fair, but our spring/summer veg has kept us all very busy (there are tomatoes coming out of our ears!!!) and the warmer days have given everyone a much-needed boost of energy.

After a winter that felt never ending, the first day of spring was a day to celebrate – 23 degrees felt like summer at its peak! To mark this momentous day, we spent the

morning picking flowers from our gardens for flower arranging. We used bowls filled with water to display the stunning array of flowers at hand. This activity was the epitome of therapeutic horticulture – we were touching, smelling, and taking in the plants from our surroundings, and I think the staff enjoyed this as much as...or more than the participants!

There have been lots of creative projects underway – mosaic has been a favourite, as well as colouring in bees posters for our nursery plants, and making "thank-you" cards for our click and collect customers.

This year has been ever-changing for all of us, and yet again, the participants at KHG have embraced all that has come their way and have proven to be some of the most adaptable, resilient and positive people.





Mon working in the nursery

## Program News

**Brenna McIntyre,**  
**Manager - Programs**  
**and clinical services**

Over the last few months we've again had to navigate the delivery of KHG programs and services under Melbourne's ongoing lockdown conditions with all programs being impacted to a greater or lesser extent. However, thanks to the flexibility of our wonderful staff, participants and families we've kept everything ticking along rather nicely.

Many of our very patient garden maintenance customers are watching their grass grow and hoping it won't be too much longer before our Grow on the Go team can get back out in the community to mow and whipper-snip gardens back into shape. In the meantime, the team has been working under the watchful eye of Lucy D, honing their skills in our Doncaster gardens where there is always plenty to do.

And...Grow on the Go is GROWING! We are in the process of expanding the program to meet demand from garden maintenance customers and new participants and we have recently welcomed Max as a new GOTG participant and Tom as a Grow On The Go Trainer!

It has been great to see the flexibility of our clinical services team who have continued delivering most services during the lockdown and who continue to have great success with service delivery online via MS Teams. We are delighted to have recently appointed a new Speech Therapist who will commence in December and we already have two fantastic new Occupational Therapists on board – welcome to Karin and Erin who have jumped in feet first! This means we should soon be able to clear our waitlist for OT clinical services. A number of Social Work and OT tertiary students are also currently on placement at KHG, further enhancing our program delivery. >>

Our volunteer program is still on hold but we are really looking forward to having them back on site soon as well as welcoming some new faces to the KHG Community. Hopefully the wait will soon be over for our loyal volunteers and we can't wait to share the magic of KHG with our new ones!

Our programs for children and teens are both about to start with our Children's Programs Coordinator Fiona. Grow Well (tailored therapy for children with disability

or those who have experienced trauma) has a few places available for children aged 7-14 and the After School program is for older teens and those in later years of secondary school who might like a taster of KHG when trying to decide what they'd like to do post school. If you know anyone who may be interested in Grow Well or our After School program, please contact our friendly client services team [clientservices@kevinheinzegrow.org.au](mailto:clientservices@kevinheinzegrow.org.au)

# Peppertree Place

**Samantha Dunn**  
Chief Operating Officer

Spring has brought many new activities for the team at Peppertree alongside a whole lot of mowing, weeding and pruning in our thriving garden beds! Participants have constructed some awesome planter boxes and planted them up with succulents. They've even tried their hands at the ancient Japanese art of Bonsai!

It wouldn't be spring at KHG without lots and lots of tomato seedlings and it's just the same at Peppertree Place. We've been propagating some tomato varieties onsite and been busy ferrying others between the two sites to keep our call and collect nursery customers happy. We're enjoying these busy spring days at Peppertree despite not being able to share them with the wider community just yet.



Participants potting up at Peppertree Place



Participants with the planter boxes they made

# Romano's garden

## Romano Cellante

Back in 2017-2018, I was very keen to give back to the community and felt the KHG garden therapy philosophy for people with disabilities was an excellent cause, so I decided to get involved as a volunteer. I was fortunate to be tasked the duty to help a great group of kids from Concord school in Bundoora. The visits to KHG involved activities such as preparing garden beds for growing food and teaching them about planting, weeding, mulching, fertilising, harvesting and cooking garden edibles.

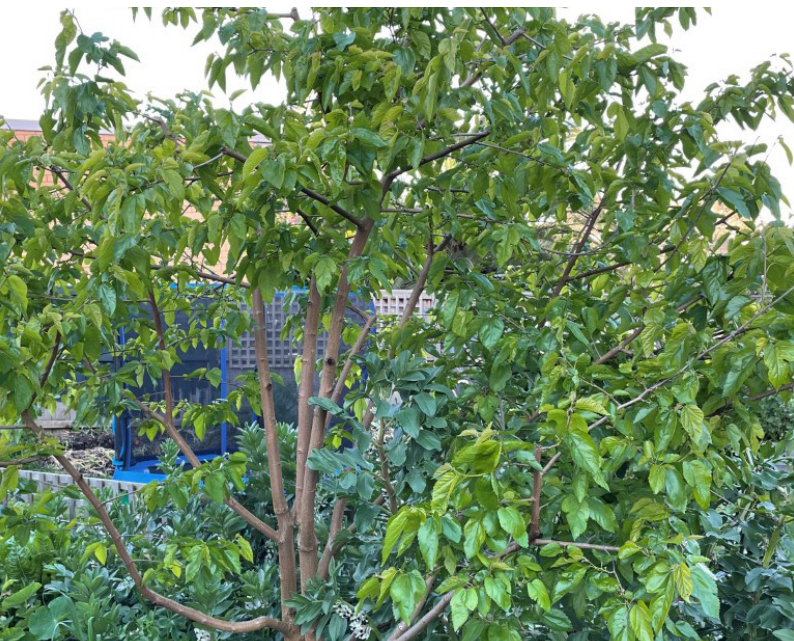
Working alongside passionate KHG staff and educators from the school, it was very obvious why this garden centre 'with a difference' is such a success story. My memory of coming fortnightly to KHG is one I always cherish as it was refreshing, enlightening and also challenging. At the time, I remember being very excited to experiment with my own backyard garden by planting veggies, herbs and eventually fruit trees.

In 2017 I purchased a Josephine de Maline's pear, nectarine, apple and satsuma plum from KHG. To properly kick start a good healthy growing environment for the trees, about 9 months earlier I created some rows of wood chips. This allowed sufficient time for the wood chips to start breaking down and form some excellent humus that the fruit trees would thrive on! I don't need to water the trees as the wood chips have acted like a sponge and hold plenty of moisture.

Last year we had an amazing crop of plums (over 60 kgs). The nectarine was also prolific, yielding around 25 kgs. The apple and pear have only just started producing a handful of fruit. The Mulberry trees I purchased, one black and one white, are my favourite as the leaves create awesome shade and the fruit is magnificent and very prolific! I have really enjoyed sharing these memories with you and look forward to returning soon.



*Cherry Tree fruiting in Romano's garden*



*Fruit trees from KHG thriving in Romano's garden*

# Womens's Week at KHG

In September the KHG Women's Group celebrated Women's Health Week with an afternoon tea and activities organised by KHG staff, Marie and Jacqui.

All week the group shared and discussed the various themes with a focus on making

information accessible for people with disabilities. We loved the lunchtime bingo and trivia which focussed on women's health words! Thanks to our amazing staff who helped shed light on some lesser-discussed but super important topics!



Women's Group enjoying afternoon tea



## Experimenting in the garden

One of our participants Michael has been busy experimenting in the garden! He has been propagating using different rooting gels to see which one produces the best outcome. Michael tried propagating with aloe vera, honey, and regular rooting hormone. Michael discovered that the honey produced the best strike rate for this plant (*Lochroma cyaneum*). Amazing work Michael!



# Grand Spring Plant Sale

The Grand Spring Plant Sale is underway! Participants and staff have been busy potting up spring veg and tomato seedlings and preparing orders for call & collect customers. As a way of thanking customers, and making the orders a little more personalised, Participants have

created colourful paper stars to give to customers who order plants from the sale. Everyone has been loving the activity, choosing bright colours and writing messages. Thank you to everyone who has supported us and purchased plants from the sale so far!



Participants busy decorating stars for call & collect orders



Call & Collect order ready to be collected

## Mosaics at KHG

Participants have been enjoying mosaicing the garden beds around KHG. Here is Matty showing us the wonderful mosaic design he created.





# Tomato Time!

There is nothing more satisfying or delicious than the taste of homegrown tomatoes. Here are our Top Ten Tips for Terrific Toms!



## 1 - Sun

Select a super sunny spot

## 2 - Soil

Well drained, well nourished (add compost or manure) and crop rotate (in a different spot to last season)

## 3 - Spacing

Give them space to reach their potential and help with pest and disease management. Size will vary for each variety so do some research

## 4 - Planting

Unlike most crops, tomatoes benefit from being planted deep (bury bottom leaves for strong root system) Water in with a seaweed fertiliser for extra goodness!

## 5 - Staking

If required, best done at the time of planting

## 6 - Watering

Best time morning, lots of regular deep watering at soil level

## 7 - Mulching

Always a great idea!

## 8 - Feeding

Tomatoes are hungry- sprinkles of sulphate of potash, fortnightly liquid feeding

## 9 - Pots

No garden space, no problem! You can grow tomatoes in pots, the bigger the better!

## 10 - Companions

Tomatoes and basil = perfect match in the garden (and on the plate)

Happy Tomato Gardening!



Julian and his support worker with the tower of pots

## Julian's tower

Pot brushing is a never ending task at KHG. Julian and his support worker made the task a little more interesting, creating a huge stack of pots! The tower they created was so tall it reached the top of the marquee roof!

## Crazy Sock Day

KHG staff and participants all wore crazy socks on a Friday in September to raise money for Cerebral Palsy Education Centre. We loved seeing all the crazy socks! Everyone brought along a gold coin and we raised \$78.75! Great effort everyone.



Matty's crazy socks for crazy sock day

# GB's Recipe of the Moment

## Melanzane Ripiene (Stuffed Eggplant)

Introducing GB's Recipe of the Moment" Some love 'em, some leave 'em but we'll be planting eggplants aplenty this year in the KHG gardens!

Here's a tried and tested recipe from our in-house 'gastronome' Georgia Brown. Simple seasonal ingredients cooked well never disappoints. Keep this southern Italian recipe handy to make use of your late summer harvest.

6 firm eggplants  
150ml olive oil  
2 eggs lightly beaten  
100g breadcrumbs  
200g grated parmesan  
Handfull of parsley, finely chopped  
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
1 onion, finely chopped  
2 x 400g tined whole tomatoes  
Handful of basil leaves, roughly torn, plus extra to serve.

Cut 4 of the eggplants in half and using a metal spoon scrape out the flesh. Cut the flesh into small cubes. With the remaining 2 eggplants; peel them and roughly chop into small cubes. Cut 2 slits lengthways into the skin of the hollowed halves (these slits are necessary so that the eggplants cook well in the sauce).

Place 2 ½ tbs of the olive oil in a non-stick frying pan over high heat. Add the cubed eggplant flesh and cook, stirring occasionally for 10 minutes or until golden and tender. Season to taste with salt and pepper and then remove from the heat and set aside to cool.

Place eggs, breadcrumbs, parmesan, parsley, half the garlic and the cooled eggplant in a bowl. Mix well until combined (it should be the consistency



of pate) and season to taste.

Divide the filling between the eggplant halves, smoothing the top with a knife. Place 1 tbs of oil in a large frying pan over medium heat and when hot, cook the eggplants stuffed side first, for 2 minutes on each side. Do this in batches, adding more oil for each batch. Remove from the pan and set aside.

Add remaining oil to pan and add onion, and cook until soft. Add remaining garlic and cook for a further 2 minutes. Add tomatoes and cook for 20 minutes. Add the basil and season to taste. Add stuffed eggplants, filled side up and cook over a low heat for 35 minutes. Serve immediately scattered with the extra basil. Serve with crusty bread.

# Therapeutic Horticulture Research

KHG is pleased to bring you details about a new study into therapeutic horticulture. The purpose of this research is to contribute a more nuanced and richer understanding of how gardening activities benefit participants, and what makes these activities effective. This research aims to strengthen our understanding of horticultural therapy as an intervention to be used by health practitioners. If you have participated in a therapeutic horticulture, community gardening, or permaculture program and would like to be involved in the study please contact Laura Coburn at [255596@my.acap.edu.au](mailto:255596@my.acap.edu.au)



*Andrew, Ruben, Luke F and Luke B sitting on the new chair*

*Luke B and Luke F fixing the chair*

## Chair Repair

Luke B and his support worker, Luke F have been working together to fix up a broken chair at KHG, giving it a new life for staff and participants to enjoy again.



# Call & Collect Plants at KHG

We have now set up Call & Collect for our nurseries at both Doncaster and Coburg so you can still buy plants during lockdown. Our wonderful team of horticulturalists have selected a range of the best plants on

offer at the moment which can be found on our website. We also have a fantastic range of fruit trees- both popular and rare varieties this year which are also available via call and collect.

## How to buy our plants

### 1. Choose your plants

Check out the nursery section of our website to see our list of fruit tree varieties and other featured plants available right now and our pricelist [kevinheinzegrow.org.au/nursery-cafe/nursery/](http://kevinheinzegrow.org.au/nursery-cafe/nursery/)

(Sit tight on tomatoes and summer veggie seedlings – this year’s stunning varieties will be ready for sale on 1 October 2021)

### 2. Place your Order

Email [plantsales@kevinheinzegrow.org.au](mailto:plantsales@kevinheinzegrow.org.au) to place your order or ask us a question.

Please include:  
your name, phone number, preferred site for pick-up (Doncaster or Coburg)

OR call us on 9848 3695 between 9am – 3pm weekdays. Our team prefer email if you can

### 3. Confirm your order

The KHG Team will contact you by email within 2 business days to confirm your order, organise payment and confirm collection details.

(payment by credit card over the phone 1.5% surcharge or we’ll give you KHG bank a/c details if you prefer direct deposit)

### 4. Collect your plants

Call into KHG for contactless collection of your plants.

### 5. Enjoy

Enjoy your beautiful plants knowing that you’ve shopped ethically and supported a hard-working community organisation which is helping people GROW!

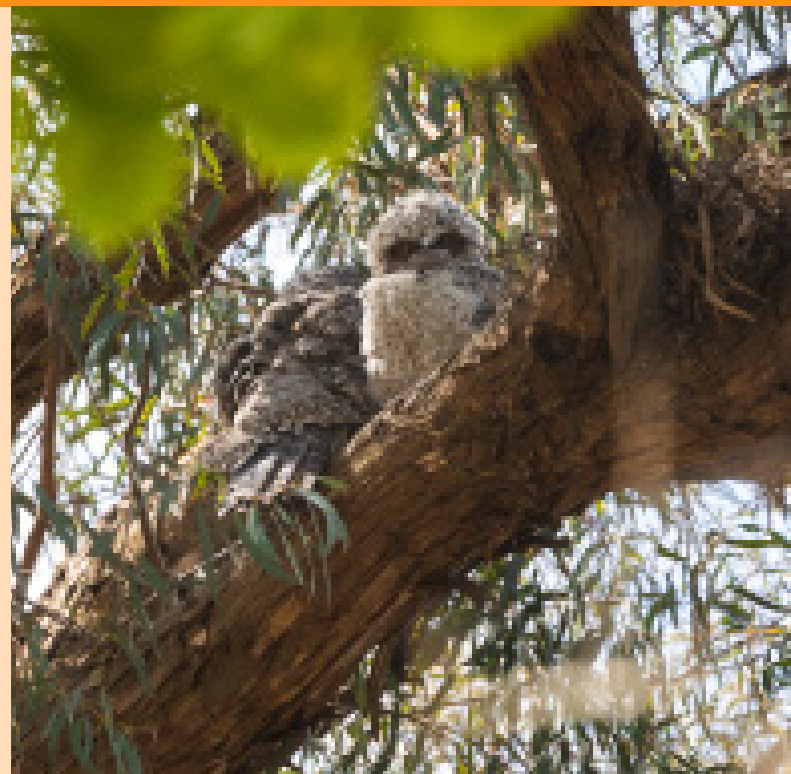


# Ethical Christmas Giving

The Kevin Heinze Grow nurseries are stocked full of a great range of beautiful plants. If you're wondering what to get your friends and family this Christmas, a Kevin Heinze Grow Gift Voucher (of any \$ amount) is a great idea! Not only will your friends and family be able to select beautiful plants for their home and garden, but you will also be supporting Kevin Heinze Grow!

## Tawny Frogmouths

Everyone at the Doncaster site has been getting very excited about the resident Tawny Frogmouths who have just welcomed a gorgeous new addition to their family!



*Tawny Frogmouths at our Doncaster site*



# Welcome and Farewell

We have a two new participants who have joined KHG – welcome to Claire and Lisa! We also welcome to the KHG staff team Jenny, Skye-Lee, Julia, Sonia and Felipe while Bec, Pru, Athar and Nicole G join us for their tertiary placements.

We are sorry to say goodbye to Sarah who has been with us as a support worker for

two years but wish her all the best for her exciting new role. We're also saying farewell and thank you to Heather who leaves us after a stint of volunteering and support work. Nicole B's social work placement is coming to an end so we wish her well for her future career.

## Dates for the Diary



### **KHG Information Evening Online** 7pm Monday 15 November 2021

Please contact Georgia Tracy if you would like to attend to hear about our programs for 2022  
[georgia@kevinheinzegrow.org.au](mailto:georgia@kevinheinzegrow.org.au)


### **Annual General Meeting**


17 November  
5:00-5.30pm  
RSVP to [jacqui@kevinheinzegrow.org.au](mailto:jacqui@kevinheinzegrow.org.au)

### **KHG End of Year Dates**

Last day for KHG Participants  
Thursday 23 December 2021  
First day back - Tuesday 4 January 2022

In times like these it can be challenging to keep up-to-date with changes! We encourage you to follow KHG on Facebook and Instagram for all the latest news and updates from Kevin Heinze Grow.

 @kevinheinzegrow

 @kevinheinzegrow