

Gardeners get down and dirty



Warrnambool Community Garden Convenor Geoff Rollinson has been one of the driving forces behind the transformation of the old quarry.

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urning old quarries into beautiful places and spaces is something of a Warrnambool speciality: the late Sir Fletcher Jones did just that with Pleasant Hill outside his Raglan Parade factory.

About a kilometre up the hill from his masterpiece is another, equally impressive transformation of a former council quarry into the Warrnambool Community Garden and Hub.

Instead of taking things from the land, the Warrnambool Community Garden has spent the past six years putting life back into it.

The 2 acre site on the corner of Grieve St and Grafton Rd is a shining example of organic and permaculture gardening, with

the site divided into areas of raised vegetable beds, more than 50 fruit and nut trees, a herb garden, bush tucker area, communal garden and 56 individual garden beds, all of which appear to be thriving.



A piece of paradise – the community garden right in the heart of Warrnambool.

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[/dropcap]he individual plots are planted and maintained by group members who are assigned a patch of dirt for their own enjoyment. When Bluestone visited last week, the spring crops were booming, with beans, snap peas, rhubarb, spring onions, several varieties of lettuce and thick clumps of silverbeet among the delicious produce.

Incredibly, there was barely a weed to be seen.

“We have a flag system,” explained Convenor **Geoff Rollinson**.

“That means that if your plot is looking a bit neglected, a

flag goes up on it...but we have never had a flag. It is the thought of being flagged that is the deterrent," he said, laughing.



Where it all began...the Grieves St site before its transformation into an environmental hub.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #8F9F59;"] T
[/dropcap]he garden is home to several employment scheme projects and works in closely with other like-minded environmental groups around the area, who can also make use of the Hub: a retro-fitted portable classroom that showcases energy efficient building.

This weekend (October 12-13 from 10am), the garden is hosting its annual Dirty Weekend full of gardening and sustainable living-related activities, including composting, permaculture techniques, learning about edible weeds and indigenous foods, cooking with 'ugly' vegetables and various stalls, exhibits and competitions. A dry stone wall building workshop will also be held with expert David Long (\$88 – bookings 0429 928 511).

[box type="bio"] For more information on the garden, or how to become involved, visit its website [here](#).[/box]



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