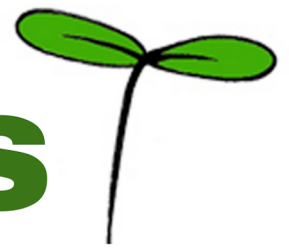


NOGS News

VOL1: MIDWINTER 2023



NEW NOGS LOGO SAYS IT ALL

NOGS has a distinctive new logo designed by Steve Bolton.

Steve, a keen gardener and NOGS committee member, says creating a crisp and relevant logo in this brand-saturated age involves “either pure inspiration or really hard slog”.

“The logo is simply a new shoot. It’s simple, but conveniently fits across the top of the text like an umbrella.”

The logo will be used on the official NOGS website, in emails and newsletters, in funding applications and in official communications with various agencies.

I spend a lot of time lying on the couch when I’m designing logos, just trying to figure out what it is I need to say. Then comes the sketching and note-taking part.”

Steve says the new shoot design says what we do, which is growing things, and the text which tells people what we are. “A good logo needs to do these two things”.



Steve Bolton working on the new shoot NOGS logo.

“For NOGS we needed a logo that lets people know who we are and what we do. We’re not a bank or a real estate agent and we’re not selling life insurance. But, on the other hand we’re serious about what we’re doing, and we want people we’re dealing with to know we are a dependable partner.”

“Steve says well-recognised logos often have opposing approaches. Some use the direct call to action approach with the visual language of retail advertising such as the red and denim jeans blue of Just Jeans. Others like the Apple logo with a bite out of it can be seen as “a subliminal tipping of the hat to some sort of enlightenment or secret knowledge.” Apple makes us “think about their product by giving us a puzzle to work on.”

Kerry's Corner

Kia ora tatou, nau mai, haere mai. Welcome to the first quarterly NOGS newsletter. It aims to inform you about garden-related matters as we move into a new phase as an incorporated society and look to extend the community of gardeners. The newsletter is a committee initiative and thanks to Steve for design and layout and Judy for the copy and photos. We hope you find it informative and readable. Please be in touch if you have any ideas about what you would like to see in the next newsletter. We’re on the lookout for newsworthy and informative content and stories. The newsletter will be posted progressively on our official Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/NgataringaOrganicGarden/>

For the NOGS logo Steve has used a typeface called Hobo. “It’s not particularly exotic but it does certain things very well. It’s clear and easy to read, even when small, so it conveys information well. It’s informal without being goofy and is conventionally structured enough to convey information without calling attention to itself.”

Steve has had art and design experience growing up in a print and advertising family. He was a typographer and point of sale and packaging designer who also writes books and draws cartoons for different magazines. Steve, who reads Braille, enjoys teaching and is about to start teaching art or drawing more specifically at the Devonport Community House. “Teaching people more about drawing is very rewarding. There are no rules in art and you can do whatever you want.”

NOGS NGATARINGA ORGANIC
GARDEN SOCIETY INC

The new official NOGS logo.



INSPIRATIONAL CAFÉ OWNER JOSIE SHI XU IS A NOGS GOOD SORT.

Josie's food scraps collected daily from the Narrow Neck Café provide our 14 chickens with their daily rations.

The silkies and "Brownie" are a NOG institution tended by Graham and additional helpers, who are NOGS members, when he is away. Egg sales at a time when eggs are the new gold provide a continuing small contribution towards our operating costs.

But the provision of food scraps for NOG chickens is only a small part of Josie's extra-ordinary community spirit.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic she has prepared more than 1000 community meals for a local foodbank and for volunteers who are helping provide food to vulnerable families, older people and those in need. "The meals are healthy, nutritious and freezer friendly," says Josie. The meals are prepared from re-purposed food supplies salvaged from the odd kitchen mistake, or from bulk buying surplus or from food donations from locals.

Recently a Devonport women dropped in 10 large pumpkins. "We had a pumpkin marathon in the kitchen- chicken and pumpkin bake, pumpkin quiche, pumpkin cannelloni...."

In addition to the community meals Josie has baked and glazed 13 hams for the food bank's Christmas dinner over the past two years. Daily leftover muffins and food is left in a bin for free collection.

Known for its legendary pies, the Narrow Neck Café is also the kid's favourite. If youngsters collect a bucket of rubbish from Narrow Neck Beach they receive a free ice cream scoop.



Josie Xu of Narrow Neck Café

"The beauty of owning your own business is that we can use common sense instead of our hands being tied by rules."

The café has high sustainability principles and everything used as far as possible in the kitchen and front of house is either bio-plastic or paper. Free drinks for veterans and currently serving personnel on Anzac Day, heavily discounted coffees for emergency fire and first responders has made Josie firms friends on the Shore. She also provides free coffees for working bees on the Rotary Pump Track. Her philosophy is that the café is "an extension of home. This is the hospitality I would show you at home."

CAN YOU HELP?

Josie says the sign advertising free ice cream scoops for kids who collect a bucket of rubbish from the beach has been destroyed in recent floods. She needs a sturdy piece of sign friendly wood or substitute that can be painted. Contact her on **0210767416**.

GARDEN SNIPPETS

- Eighteen new rat traps have been placed inside NOG and nine outside the perimeter making 27 in total. In the first two weeks or so two rats and thirteen mice have been caught, according to Nigel Hopkins, a NOG plot custodian who volunteers for Restoring Takarunga Hauraki, aiming for a pest-free peninsula. Thanks to Nigel and to Richard Tocker who looks after the traps outside the garden for their work.
- Good news on the donations front. An application made to Bunnings with help from NOG committee member Josie Maskell for the kitchen refurbishment materials has received a positive response. Josie is waiting to hear from Bunnings just what the donation in kind, such as building supplies, will consist of. The kitchen refurbishment project anticipates repairing the floor, walls and kitchen cabinetry.
- And more good news. Treasurer Michael Cheyne reports that some members have been generous with additional money as a donation over and above their \$50 subscription fee. This will help us with annual costs and the refurbishment projects, so thank you.
- NOG members with expertise and experience they can share with the rest of us are encouraged to run a Sunday afternoon workshop. NOGS committee member Annemarie Thomas is compiling a workshop programme if there is enough interest from members. Kathy Lambert of the fabulous marmalade fame has offered to run a workshop on preserving. It is hoped that topics such as composting, maintaining good soil, seeding, and successful propagating, might be others, but we are open to any idea.

"WE'D LOVE YOUR PROPOSALS"

says Annemarie who can be contacted at annemarie@hengus.co.nz.



Nigel Hopkins

NOG IS...



CHOCKA WITH CHOKOS.

Whether it is the big “wet” or climate change warmth there seem to be more of them this year than ever.

They are hanging from the vines surrounding the garden, climbing overhanging trees, pecked at by the chickens and placed out the front gate for passerbys to enjoy. The redoubtable Yates Garden Guide, often a mistress of under-statement, says that “plants are very vigorous and if allowed to run freely will cover many square metres.”

Members of the cucurbitaceae or gourd family, chokos are rich in folate, magnesium and potassium and possibly came to New Zealand via Chinese market gardeners.

They are also something that you either love or not as they are bland tasting, a fusion of cucumber and potato. They are great fillers or additives in soups (especially pumpkin and red lentil), rich and hearty stews, and stir fries. NOG member **Lyndsay Rendall** recommends grated choko in a winter salad. Here's her recipe:

Mix together 1 cup of mayonnaise

(I use Best foods brand) with 2 tablespoons of white wine vinegar.

Broccoli head cut into small florets

(if from the garden and it has “got away” slice up, using the yellow flowers)

1 choko, peeled, quartered and grated.

1 red onion finely chopped

Small cup of dried cranberries

Half a cup of roasted pine nuts

Half a cup of roasted pumpkin seeds

Zest of a lemon.

Salt and ground pepper.

Combine all ingredients and chill for an hour or more.

TIP:

She says it is an adaptable recipe and raw cauliflower could be used, toasted peanuts could replace the expensive pine nuts, and raisins used instead of cranberries.

Enjoy!



Ngataringa Organic Garden: A Brief History

The site of Ngataringa Organic Garden sits on the northern end of Devonport near Ngataringa Bay. In 1899 the land was part of the gasworks property, though aerial photos show that the storage tanks sat just south of the garden land. Memorial Drive was planted in 1952 alongside and running north of the site along Lake Road. In 1964 a tip was established to the west of the site.

There is an early connection between the tip and the gardens through recycling and composting operations. In 1977 Richard Tong started a recycling scheme at the tip, which according to the Flagstaff was the first of its kind in New Zealand. Two years later in 1979 Tong's operation launched the first large-scale composting operation in the country. Tong told the Flagstaff in 2014 that the Framework gardens grew out of the composting scheme, as it was the source of organic material for all of the raised beds that made gardening on the site possible.

THE FRAMEWORK GARDENS

The gardens arose from the work of the Framework Trust. Established in 1984, the Framework Trust is a charitable organisation that helps people with mental illness learn new skills and build their confidence through horticultural work. It had sites in Kingsland and Milford, and had a partnership with Kelmarna Gardens in Herne Bay. It was working on site at Ngataringa Park before their garden at Ngataringa was officially established.

Volunteers from the Framework Trust practiced their landscaping at Ngataringa park, planting trees and shrubs and making paths. They established the path between Victoria Road and "Ducks Crossing," the crossing of Lake Road at the North end of the park. Ngataringa Park was officially opened on 27 February 1994, featuring locally renowned speakers such as zoologist John Morton and a youth rock concert. The ceremony was held on day two of the 1994 Devonport Food and Wine Festival, and parents were encouraged to drop their young people off at the concert on their way to the event.

With a \$15,000 grant provided from proceeds of the Devonport Food and Wine Festival that year, the Framework Trust acquired a lease from the Devonport Community Board for three acres land at Ngataringa Park. They constructed a number of raised beds and established a nursery on site. One goal for the gardens was to raise plants to revegetate Ngataringa Park.

The plants raised by the Framework Trust were likely also used in the landscaping for the Ngataringa Park maze, which was established shortly after the park was opened. Designed by landscape architect Heather Ann McConachy, the maze was inspired by Celtic and Māori design and used local materials like shells, local bricks, and scoria.

The Trust carried out their mission at the Ngataringa site for many years, operating organic gardens, a plant nursery, and landscape contracting. A palm nursery operated in the northern part of the site. Linda Christianson, the manager of the time, explained the approach: "If you have a mental illness it knocks the socks off of you. People come here to learn new skills and can work here until they feel confident in their skills and abilities to be able to move on somewhere else."

The Framework Trust always ran the site with organic methods. In 1994 there were a team of up to 15 working on site raising a range of seasonal vegetables. The Trust practice was to save and sow their own seeds, as well as sending them to a seed bank. They worked across their sites to develop biological solutions to pest and disease issues, such as a predator for the white butterfly and biodynamic preparations. Geoff Reed, the coordinator at the time reported that the gardens supplied a number of restaurants and a wholesale distributor.



Borough of Devonport 1899 Map courtesy Auckland Libraries Kura Collections



1940

THE FRAMEWORK TRUST BOWS OUT

Funding issues for the Framework Trust meant that the organisation was spread too thinly across their multiple sites and projects. In winter 2012, they decided to leave its Devonport site after twenty years. This alarmed members of the community, who formed a Facebook page – “Save Framework Garden Devonport.” A working group was established composed of Christine and Michele Lennan, representatives of the Devonport Community Garden, and Devonport Transition Town (DTT). DTT member Cameron Smith presented a business plan to representatives of the Framework Trust and the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board.

The original plan involved continuing with mental health services, and staff gardeners, and amounted to an annual cost of around \$110,000. The goal of the working group was to bring all local community gardens together under the Devonport Community Garden at Takaararo/Mt Cambria Reserve. This included the two sites as well as a planned edible forest at Fraser Reserve in Belmont and an old herb garden in Devonport village. While the Local Board did not have funding for the project, it was eligible for various contestable grants.

BIRTH OF THE NGATARINGA ORGANIC GARDEN

The new group continued to campaign for funding to continue with mental health services, but in the meantime they worked to transition from the old Framework garden to a new entity – the Ngataringa Organic Garden. Many of the volunteers and clients from the Framework days stayed on. An open day held in April 2013, at the zenith of a successful first season. Cameron Smith told the Flagstaff that the site operated off small donations and sales of worm tea, vegetable seedlings, veggies and pot plants. As is the case now, these were sold from a stand outside with an honesty box to collect the proceeds. Opening hours in 2013 were Wednesdays and Sundays from 10-2.

BUILDINGS ON THE SITE

Originally, the Trust had planned to build a new building from rammed-earth bricks, but this does not appear to have been realised. In 1998 the Trust received resource consent to build a greenhouse structure on the site. It had been declined in 1996 due to visual effects from its proposed site at the Northern end of the property.

It is unknown how the kitchen building came to be on site. Two past employees of the Framework Trust who had worked at the site recalled the buildings were there for as long as they could remember, though they did definitely supply the kitchen with a fridge and cooker. It's possible that the kitchen building pre-dates the Framework operation.

Aerial photographs from 1980 and 1987 show a cluster of buildings in the vicinity of the gardens. They appear to be associated with the tip, which by 1974 had started to run a recycling scheme and by 1979 was running a composting operation. The kitchen building might have originally been a lunchroom for the people working at the tip.

In 1996 the Framework Trust took possession of an old house at a new reserve in Milford, but they told the North Shore Times that they had no place for it on the North Shore. They had been using it at its Milford site as a drop-in centre for recovering psychiatric patients. They traded \$5,000 worth of native and exotic plants to landscape the new reserve. It is unclear where the Trust moved the house to, possibly their old Kingsland site or Kelmarna Gardens. While there is no evidence to suggest this acquisition is related to the Devonport site, it demonstrates another possible way the buildings could have been established.

Other buildings on site include:

Tool Shed
Pergola
Pizza Oven

SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

In the Framework Trust days the garden also ran educational events for schools and the community, covering subjects such as organic growing practices, recycling and endangered wildlife. They also invited visitors to see rare poultry which were part of a national breeding programme.

The NOG planting calendar has been punctuated by many social events over the years. There have been regular meetups, including a group luncheon every Sunday for many years. In 2015 NOG held a garden festival to celebrate the spring equinox.

The gardens have often been used as a living classroom, hosting school groups and workshops for people of all ages. The Flagstaff reported on “Herb Fairy Academy” a series of workshops by Eva Scherer in the summer of 2017, focused on teaching kids about the benefits of various herbs like lemon balm and stevia.

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14 April 1994 Page 11 “Framework Gardens”

20 October 2005 Unlocking a secret: Devonport gardens

3 August 2012 Campaigning hard to save community garden

5 April 2013 Ngataringa Organic Garden Open Day

4 April 2014 “Getting back on top of recycling”

2 October 2015. Ngataringa garden festival heralds the arrival of spring

Personal Communication

Beverley Pollard, current employee of Ember, successor to the Framework Trust. Worked for the Framework Trust since 2006. Emails in October 2022.

Historic Aerial Photos: <https://retrolens.co.nz/>

THE NOGS SITE OVER THE YEARS



1950



1963



1972



1980 (might portray the kitchen building)



The NOGS site as it appears today.