



NEWSLETTER

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2014

From The President,

HELP FOR BUSHFIRE AFFECTED GARDENS.

Another summer is over and we can breathe a sigh of relief that we have survived the many days over 40^o and that we did not suffer the terror and loss created by bushfires. Already the weather is cooler and we have had very welcome heavy falls of rain.

Other areas were not so fortunate and it has been suggested that our Club might consider helping the folk of Eden Valley who have lost their gardens and in some cases their homes in the January bushfires. The idea was prompted by a recent article in the Weekend Herald.

As gardeners we can understand the grief suffered when a garden is destroyed by fire, flood or heatwave. The knowledge that others understand the loss is a great encouragement and to have practical support is a bonus.

The plan is to invite our members to bring donations of suitable plants and seeds to the May 23rd Garden Club meeting. The donations will then be transported to a collection point at the Mt Pleasant Natural Resources Centre from where they will be distributed.

Eden Valley is dryer and cooler than the nearby Barossa with a variety of soil types so plants that are drought tolerant and hardy should be chosen. Plants that are well grown with healthy root systems will be most acceptable and please ensure that they are clearly labelled with as much detail as possible.

Donations of pelletised and liquid fertilisers will also be welcome.

Norma Keily

OVERDUE SUBS

Thank you to the members who have recently paid subs, your receipts can be collected from Mary Golden at the Treasurer's table.

WAITE INSTITUTE AND ARBORETUM AND URRBRAE CAMPUS JOHN ZWAR

Peter Waite 1834 - 1922

Peter Waite was born in Kirkcaldy, Scotland in 1834, the third son of James and Elizabeth. In 1859 Peter decided to join his brothers who had migrated to the Colony of South Australia.



On arrival in Adelaide Peter joined his brother James at 'Pandappa', a pastoral property near Terowie in the north east of South Australia, where he quickly adapted to the harsh conditions. In 1862 he took on the lease of a nearby property, 'Paratoo'. When James Waite was drowned in 1863, while crossing a flooded creek on horseback, Peter took over both stations.

By 1864, Peter had established himself as a pastoralist and property manager, and the 'Paratoo' homestead had been made comfortable. He was now in a position to send for his fiancée, Matilda, who sailed for South Australia on the maiden voyage of the 'City of Adelaide'.

Peter Waite was innovative in his improvement and management of the semi-arid salt bush country. He set up fenced paddocks and designed a metal dropper to support the fences. He sank wells and bores, and experimented with the use of steam traction engines for the excavation of dams. His aim was for each paddock to have as permanent a supply of water as possible with the sheep being rotated between paddocks so that the pasture could be 'spelled'.

By 1874 Peter Waite was a Justice of the Peace and resident magistrate at 'Paratoo'. His career continued to expand rapidly on all fronts - financial, commercial, domestic and social.

While visiting Adelaide in the early 1870s Peter expressed interest in a 54-hectare property at Urrbrae. In the late 1880s a major reconstruction and enlargement of Urrbrae House was undertaken and when completed in 1891 it was one of Adelaide's significant mansions. Urrbrae House was the first home in Adelaide to have electrical light and also a refrigeration system.

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THE STRATHALBYN GARDEN CLUB COMMITTEE

President	Norma Keily	8536 6276
Treasurer	Mary Golden	8536 4267
Secretary	Jenny Thomas	8536 4275
Guest Speakers	Ruth Franck	8536 2020
Trip Co-ordinator	Maria Maxwell	8536 3731
Donation/Sellers Tables	Jackie Chapman	8536 8798
Catering	Margaret Croser	8536 3164
	Ruth Anderson	8536 4963

STRATHALBYN GARDEN CLUB PROGRAM

MEETING DATE	SPEAKER	TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION
February 28th	Cindy Moller (or substitute)	Fleurieu Regional Waste Authority - Recycling
March 28th	Chris Perry	Perrys' Fruit and Nut Nursery
April 23rd	Visit to Sophie Thomson's Garden	Mt Barker
April 25th	NO MEETING due to ANZAC Day	
May 9th	Coach Trip	See advert for details
May 23rd	Bloom Competition	1 entry in each category per member
May 23rd	Vince Davies	Neutrog Update and Q & A
May 23rd	Eden Valley Fire Recovery Support	Bring donations of plants and seeds etc
June 27th	AGM	Consider nominating for the committee
June 27th	Sophie Thomson	"Spring into action"

COMING EVENTS

MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW

MARCH 26TH - 30TH 9AM - 5PM
CARLETON GARDENS MELBOURNE.

ENFIELD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

AUTUMN SHOW
SATURDAY 12TH APRIL 12 - 5
SUNDAY 13TH APRIL 10 - 4
KLEMZIG COMMUNITY HALL, 242 NORTH EAST RD
KLEMZIG

AUSTRALIAN PLANT SOCIETY

AUTUMN NATIVE PLANT SALES
SATURDAY 26TH & SUNDAY 27TH APRIL
10AM—4PM
ADELAIDE SHOWGROUNDS WAYVILLE

BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SA SHOW

MARCH 8TH & 9TH
9AM - 3PM BOTH DAYS
MALTESE CULTURAL CENTRE
6 JEANES RD BEVERLEY.

AUTUMN COACH TRIP

FRIDAY 9TH MAY

\$20 to be paid by March 28th

Depart 9am return 5pm

from the Strathalbyn Railway Station

Visiting:

Windmill Hill recycling Depot Mt Barker

Mt Lofty Botanic Gardens for guided tour

Lunch - Bring your own

Tour 2 private gardens in Crafers -

Trevor Nottle's and the Roach's

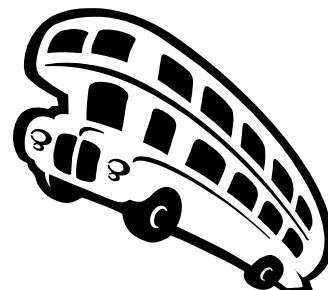
Shop at the Depot Nursery Mt Barker

Register your interest in attending at
the January meeting & pay in full by

March 28th.

Family and friends

Welcome.



SHREDDED ALPACA MANURE BLENDED WITH COFFEE GROUNDS

\$3 per bag

An excellent soil conditioner and
fertiliser.

775 Old Bull Creek Road,
Strathalbyn.

Norma 85366276

OPEN GARDENS AUSTRALIA 2014

The annual Guide is now available at bookshops and news agencies for \$19.95

Most gardens are open 10am—4.30pm both days with an entry fee of \$7 (under 18 free)

March 8 - 9

Imperfections: 1 Ayr St, Pooraka A suburban garden with a tropical feel. Palms, cycads, bamboo, ponytail palms and bottle trees.

March 8 - 10

Frosty Flats: Corner of Mt Torrens & Muellers Rd, Birdwood. Informal garden featuring 650 roses, rustic ornaments and old farm machinery.

March 29 - 30

Tupelo Grove: 104 Bradbury Rd Mylor. Hardy Mediterranean plants and salvias.

JOIN US ON A VISIT TO THE MT BARKER GARDEN OF SOPHIE THOMSON

Wednesday 23rd April 1.30 pm

\$10 entry includes afternoon tea

Car pool if possible as parking is restricted.

Attendance is strictly limited to members and their partners.

Register and pay as soon as possible.

Sophie will also have her garden open with Open Gardens Australia 18th & 19th October 2014 and on that weekend there will be plant sales, refreshments, guest speaker program and more.

SHEEP MANURE for Sale

\$5 / bag (delivered to Strath)

\$4 / bag (collected from farm)

\$20 / collected in trailer, i.e. 6'.4'

Tania & John Richardson

Woodchester

85375011

We're happy to make your garden
happy! Spread the word.

GREG THE WORM MAN 0438 808 066

Kilo packs of composting worms

Vermicast for soil improvement

Worm Farms to order

Worm Wee 3 litre & 20 litre containers

Catch me at the Strathalbyn Garden Club meetings!

N.B.

SIGNING IN

Members are reminded that it is important to sign the Attendance Register on arrival and when picking up your name badge for the meeting so that our record keeping for insurance purposes is accurate.

Apologies can be recorded with an A in the appropriate column.

GOT A PROBLEM?

If you have a problem, something to share, need a cutting or seeds or scion wood for grafting then the newsletter is a good means of communication. Norma edits the newsletter and will gladly find space for your request.

Email strathalbyngardenclub@gmail.com or phone 85366276.

LUCKY DOOR PRIZE

Just a reminder that the lucky winner of the door prize has first pick from the raffle table and this can be taken before the raffle draw so there is ample time to make a choice.

SELLERS TABLE

It was decided at the January Committee meeting that Sellers may give a donation, either in cash or kind, for the privilege of using the **Sellers Table**. The choice and amount is up to their discretion. We encourage members to make use of this service as well as to continue making donations to the **Donations Table**.

GARDENS TO VISIT

We regularly get requests from other Garden Clubs for gardens to visit in Strathalbyn. Usually dates are planned well ahead so there is time to prepare the garden. Visitors are always complimentary and appreciative of the opportunity to view different gardens. It usually proves to be beneficial all round. Our club likes to have three gardens to visit and we charge \$5 a head with the money collected being divided up between the three garden owners. If you would like to volunteer your garden speak to the President.

SUCCESS WITH GRAFTING

An experiment at the start of spring by three of our members which involved grafting apple trees with different types of apples has had an excellent success rate on some trees but not on others. Variables included the style of graft and the method of wrapping the graft. Ask Bridget.

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The Waite contribution to the future of South Australia

In October 1913 Peter Waite wrote to the Premier of South Australia, Hon. A. H. Peake, and the Chancellor of the University of Adelaide, the Rt. Hon. Sir Samuel Way, informing them that he intended presenting the Urrbrae property of 54 hectares to the University. The eastern half was to be used for scientific studies related to agriculture and the western half as a public park. He also intended handing over 45 hectares adjoining Urrbrae to the Government of South Australia for the purpose of establishing an agricultural high school.

In 1915 Peter Waite bought the Claremont Estate of 21 hectares and 45 hectares of the foothill part of the Netherby Estate, both of which adjoined Urrbrae, transferring their ownership to the University of Adelaide. Before his death Peter set aside shares in Elder Smith & Co. Ltd. for the purpose of providing income to the University for the advancement of agricultural education.

Peter and Matilda Waite died in 1922 in their 88th and 86th years respectively. In early 1923 the Urrbrae property was handed over to the University which established the Waite Agricultural Research Institute in 1924 on the site.

Additional generous gifts to the University of Adelaide to support the work of the Waite Agricultural Research Institute were made by the Waite children.

Waite Institute is held in high regard internationally and is home to SARDI and the CSIRO. It is a world leader in wine and grape research and is working on developing wheat, barley, almonds and other crops as well as doing research into hybridising flowering eucalypts to produce reliable plants for landscaping.

The Waite has beautifully landscape grounds incorporating both native and exotic plants.

The Waite Arboretum occupies 30 hectares and contains about 2,200 specimens representing more than 800 species in 200 genera, all growing under natural annual rainfall of 626 mm. Every tree is labelled and mapped. Special collections include eucalypts, pears, banksias and oaks.

Waite Conservation Reserve

The Waite Conservation Reserve in the Adelaide Hills

face area, was dedicated to conservation and the furtherance of scientific knowledge in 1992. Despite intermittent grazing over most of the 20th century the Reserve remains the best surviving example of Grey Box Grassy Woodland. Home to hundreds of species of native plants as well as kangaroos, koalas and echidnas, it is a valuable asset to the University and the people of South Australia. Much work maintaining the Reserve is carried out by dedicated volunteers.

Urrbrae Agricultural High School

The school was founded in 1913 through a bequest from Peter Waite as a school to teach agriculture to boys. In 1972 it enrolled its first two female students, and in 2002 it achieved its first year-level that was equally represented by both genders. The school is designated as a Special Interest School in Agriculture and the Environment, and is the only comprehensive special interest agricultural secondary school in South Australia. Its courses are strongly focused on agriculture, horticulture, viticulture, aquaculture, environmental aspects of the earth, and other environmental subjects. Urrbrae also has a strong science and technology background, with extensive technology workshops, and many related courses available to students; (e.g. environmental technology and automotive technology). It also offers education programs for adults, and houses a TAFE campus.

A large corner of the Urrbrae site has been converted into the Urrbrae Wetland and is a living example of what can be achieved when local and state government and the community work together toward common goals. Although it is man-made wetland, the Urrbrae Wetland has been designed to function as a water retention basin whilst having the benefits of natural wetland characteristics.

With its flood mitigation role it cleanses the storm water by filtering out large debris through the trash racks and reeds, sedges and other native plants that make up the riparian zone, filter out much of the salts and heavy metals. The wetlands store up to 17.7 million litres of water and every year, between 300-400 million litres of storm water will flow through the wetlands. The wetlands have been planted with local plants, providing a home for numerous species of birds, reptiles, amphibians and macro invertebrates. Harvested storm water is used to irrigate the vine yards at Urrbrae Agricultural High School, taking pressure off the Murray River system.

In today's currency the value of the gift to the state of South Australia by the Waite Family would total Billions of dollars.



Jenny Robertson - February 2014



Ah, to write a profile on myself... do I begin with now and work back to the beginning, or start at the 'beginning' and journey to now!!?

Nature, gardens and growing things, have been key themes all the way.

Growing up in country Merbein, in the irrigation area of Mildura/ Sunraysia, along the great Murray River... with my Father and both lots of Grandparents being 'blockies' - ie horticulturalists, which was at that time mostly producing citrus, and a variety of grapes, mostly for dried fruit, now largely taken over for wine grapes. We watched the growth of new trees, vine cuttings etc., seeing vineyards and gardens evolving.

My Father was also a bush lover, so we, my brother, sister and I had an outdoor childhood, very often at the river for evenings, weekends and camping holidays... We could all swim like fish, learnt early to water ski and grew up with a respect for the river, the bush, plants and animals there.

Our house was on a dirt road at the end of town where it ran into vineyards and was opposite a big park with ovals, swimming pools, tennis courts, guide and scout huts, all of which we made good use of through our school years.

Both Grandparents lived within five miles, both had a big garden attached to their fruit block and one especially, was a complete wonderland for imaginative play for children - with tree houses, fairy games and cubbies everywhere!

At irrigation time, many little water channels ran like little rivers all through the garden giving no end of 'water play', leaf boats and mud!

We were also involved in some of the fruit production, after school, catching the bus to the block, where Grandparents lived, to pick 'dip tins' of sultanas at 3d a tin and at other times to crawl inside the orange tree canopy with a big canvas bag round our necks, to pick all the 'low ones'.

Mildura is an area of extreme heat in Summer, frosty mornings in Winter, colourful Autumns and Springs, very sunny days and lots of gardens.

My Mother, also was a great gardener, at each of the four houses they lived in over the years, great displays of poppies, roses and chrysanthemums, while excelling with orchids, flower arranging and all home crafts.

My Father was very interested in wild life and we had the joy at an early age of him coming home with something hidden inside his shirt, to discover a baby rabbit, or wounded magpie, an owl dazzled by headlights, picked up on the

road... or discovering the miracle of a tiny insect, or scale on an orange, seen under a magnifying glass - I thought at one time I might become an entomologist!

I guess I took a lot of this for granted, but gardens and growing things and interest in other places were in my blood!

I spent the last two years of my schooling in Ballarat, followed by two at Ballarat Teachers' College, a new world of seasons, places, including a trip to Heron Island of the Barrier Reef, experiencing the breath taking and unbelievable undersea world, an impact I have never forgotten.

Then to return home each holidays, to be greeted always on my bedside table by great posies of violets, picked with great patience by Nanna, freesias, blue winter iris and daphne, all of which have a special place in my heart.

First year teaching was at Nhill Primary School with a reception class, of wonderful 'fresh off the farm' five year olds, bright eyed, music loving and bursting to learn. What a wonderful first year 'out', a new environment, new people, a farming community with lots of sporting activities and a great series of winter balls with those cream puff and home-made sausage rolls and sponges - country suppers!

Second year teaching was to Merbein South, a three teacher school, again wonderful country families and a continuation of river and sporting activities and venturing further afield, with learning gliding, my first trip to the snow fields and a cruise to Fiji, Tonga and New Zealand.

After the next two happy, busy, years in Mooropna, Shepparton area, I had saved enough to take off with a friend on overseas travels - this lasted three and a half years, with time in England, Europe, U.S., South America and so on..., a wonderful experiencing of environments and people, in a world quite embracing of friendly, naïve young Australians!

The next several years were spent in Sydney, where I began teaching young children with disabilities, a work I truly loved and would continue the next 30 years, including when I arrived to settle in Adelaide in 1976.

In 1985 Frank and I married, lived in Prospect for several years then moved to live in Bridgewater, which I had dreamed of for a long time and stayed 16 years.

Bush trips, camping, gardening and other travel continued wherever we were. I discovered in this time, Biodynamics, which I worked with in my garden and other gardens I was part of.

This also took me to New Zealand to learn more of Biodynamics there and to discover the wonderful world of their different plants and fascinating environment.

Twelve years ago we 'discovered' Clayton Bay and the old lure of the 'river country' resulted in us obtaining a small 'weekender'. There I revel in the 'wilder' side of Clayton, being close to the reserve, the lake, the pelicans and many other water birds who roost and seek shelter in Dunn's Lagoon and provide me with ongoing joy and entertainment, and renew my wonder and appreciation of the natural world.

There has for a long time been a strong ecological sense in Clayton and I have worked with the Foreshore Group, planting, weeding etc, also in the Community Garden and now Clayton Bay Nursery which grows thousands of plants each year, for the local and surrounding areas.

Three years ago we moved to Strathalbyn, a very different living situation, to which I am slowly adjusting, missing the treed and more protective climate of Bridgewater.

Of course I brought plants with me... the azaleas said 'no', the fuchsias say 'help' and I say 'what do I do with this soil??? But all my native plants are really thriving!!

I discovered the Garden Club, a very active, forward thinking and dedicated group of people. I have loved the variety of speakers and that I can go to other members and ask 'what would you suggest about...?'

So I have returned again to a country environment, where I am still graced by plants, places and people and where I am still able to join a Bushcare Group which allows me to visit and work on, with like minded others, some wonderful properties full of native plants, exquisite native orchids, birds and a continuing love and appreciation of plants and the natural world that has been with me through my life.