



# NEWSLETTER

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The past year has been another interesting and action packed one for the Strathalbyn Garden Club.

We have been entertained by an interesting range of speakers thanks to the diligence and organisational skills of Ruth Franck. Topics covered this year included Local Flora presented by Ben Simon, Carnivorous Plants with John Yates, Greg Ruckert shared his enthusiasm for Aroids and in January we had the pleasure of a return visit by John Zwar showing slides of his visit to the different botanic gardens in Melbourne. In the second half of last year we had Talin-ga Grove Olives, Philip Duguid from Sunningdale Farm, Gill Gibson from the Protea World and Neil Brougham speaking about the Ferris MacDonald Conservation Park. Each guest spoke passionately about their subject and it highlights how diverse the range of interests can be in gardening, how much there is to learn and how lucky we are in our area to have the range of talented people willing to share their knowledge.

The Club has been fortunate to have members willing to help the committee each meeting with running the raffle, sellers and donations tables as well as selling the raffle tickets, organising morning tea and arranging and running our bloom competitions. Their help is invaluable and we thank them for their diligence. Where would we be without Janet and Don Jones looking after the entry table with the sign in book and our name tags? Thankyou both especially to Janet who prepares the name tags and renews them each year. Janet is also instrumental in organising the member profiles which appear in our newsletter which is edited by Norma

and printed and stapled each month by Jackie and Frank Chapman.

Our Treasurer does an excellent job keeping the finances organised which can be a difficult task especially when, due to lack of interest, we have had to refund money for cancelled trips and the cancelled summer Neutrog order. We do our best to spread the activities which involve payments through the year but because we are a busy club there are no quiet months for the Treasurer. I am sure all our members appreciate Mary Golden's work as Treasurer and thank her sincerely.

In the past there have been two day trips each year and an extended trip every two years. We don't seem to have found the right destination for the longer trip so there has not been one for a while despite Maria Maxwell devoting a lot of time and effort in planning the cancelled trip to the Arid Lands Botanic Gardens. Our day trip to the Adelaide Botanic Gardens was well attended and most enjoyable and we look forward to the August trip to Neutrog, Monarto and State Flora in Murray Bridge.

We are delighted that we have been able to establish a partnership with Neutrog which gives Club members the opportunity to purchase their products at very favourable prices.

Membership of the club has remained stable at around 150 with natural attrition allowing space for new members to join. Most meetings have around eighty members in attendance which is a comfortable number to have in the hall. The purchase of the top quality lapel microphone has improved the audibility of guest speakers and as our skill at adjusting the settings improve so will the sound

quality.

We appreciate being able to

use the St Andrews Church Hall and are grateful that our request for window blinds to replace the cumbersome and dangerous wooden panels was agreed to and that the power points in the kitchen were repaired.

Strathalbyn has long been recognised as a tourist destination and some of our gardens have been host to The Perennial Poppies Garden Club from Queensland, The Mildura Garden Club, The Cottage Garden Club and the Guides from the Adelaide Botanic Gardens. More bus loads of garden enthusiasts are expected in the future. We greatly appreciate the effort required to prepare the gardens for visitors and it is gratifying when members volunteer their time either at working bees or to offer moral support and catering help on the day of the visits.

The future for the Club looks bright as we plan trips, speakers, bloom competitions, open gardens and practical skills sessions but none of this would be possible without our dedicated and skilled committee members who make it all happen. At this AGM we thank and farewell from the committee Selina Kemmis and Joy Bourne who have been willing workers. Fortunately Joy will continue to manage the Club website. Chris Bourne, although not a committee member, has also provided invaluable support and we thank him..

I consider it a privilege to have been elected President for the past two years and I value the challenges faced and the friendships made.

*Norma Keily*

# STRATHALBYN GARDEN CLUB PROGRAM

MEETING DATE	SPEAKER	TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION
June 28th	Annual General Meeting	Vince Davey Neutrog <b>SUBS DUE</b>
July 26th	Prof. Chris Daniels	Backyard Biodiversity
July 26th	Last Day to Pay for the Trip	Last day to pay for Neutrog
August 16th	COACH TRIP	Neutrog, Monarto & State Flora
August 22nd	Neutrog Pick Up	5 Ashbourne Road 10am—1.00pm
August 23rd	Phillipa Lamphee	Geraniums and Pelargoniums
September 7th	Judging for Strath Show	Spring Garden Competition
September 27th	Judy Cross	Angas Plains Wines
October 25th	Troy McKenzie	The Potted Garden
October 25th	BLOOM COMPETITION	
November 22nd	Christmas Lunch	Details to come.

## STRATHALBYN GARDEN CLUB DAY TRIP

Details are: WHEN                      Friday 16th August 2013

WHO                                      57 seats available to Garden Club members and their partners and friends

HOW MUCH                              Approximately \$40 which includes the cost of Zoo entry

PROGRAM                                Depart Strathalbyn 8.30am

Visit Neutrog at Kanmantoo to see how their products are made

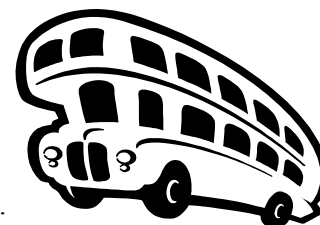
Visit Monarto Zoo for a guided bus tour

Visit State Flora at Murray Bridge

Arrive back at Strathalbyn by 5.00pm

Lunch is either BYO or purchase at the Monarto Zoo.

Full payment due at the July meeting.



## GARDEN CLUBS OF AUSTRALIA

Our club is affiliated to the Garden Clubs of Australia Inc and their website: [www.gardenclubs.org.au](http://www.gardenclubs.org.au) contains a wealth of information about other Garden Clubs with their contact details, Diary Dates for activities around Australia which is a great resource for travelling gardeners as it lists many of the local garden shows and garden festivals. There is a page with garden tips and ideas with links to youtube videos and garden blogs.

### July Diary Dates for Travellers

July-Sept National Gallery of Vic. Monet's Garden - Public Programs. See **website** for details.

6-7 Illawarra Orchid District Society Winter Show at Warilla Senior Citizens Hall, Benaud Cres, Warilla, NSW. Sat 10am-4pm, Sun 10am-3:30pm.

6-7 Illawarra Gevillea Park, Bulli, NSW. Open. See <http://www.grevilleapark.org/> for details

13-14 Illawarra Gevillea Park, Bulli, NSW. Open.

13-14 NSW Camellia Research Society's 44th Annual Camellia Show at Ravenswood School for Girls hall, Henry St, Gordon, NSW. Open 1.30pm to 4.30pm on Sat, 10am to 4pm Sun. Entry \$7, afternoon tea and lunch are available, plants for sale.

September 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> 2013

Garden Clubs of Australia National Convention hosted by the Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens. Visits to the attractions of Ballarat and its districts including the beautiful, historic Ballarat Botanical Gardens.

# PROFESSOR DON BURSILL WATER FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The Garden Club was honoured to have the Chief Scientist for South Australia, Professor Don Bursill, as our guest speaker for the May meeting.

Professor Bursill explained that 60% of the State's water supply comes from the average annual rainfall while the top up from the Murray River can range between 20% and 95% depending on the rainfall. Our State has nine reservoirs of which only one cannot be topped up from the Murray River.

The new desalination plant can deliver 100 gegalitres per annum while 40% of waste water is recycled for non potable use and 20 gegalitres of stormwater is captured. During the recent drought years household water use dropped to 128 gegalitres and since restrictions were lifted use has only risen to 135 gegalitres whereas before the drought it was 200 gegalitres.

The provision of sanitation and clean, secure water increases human lifespan by 12 years and historically is the most important reason for improvement in public health.

Climate change and drought places pressure on water but any water can be turned into safe drinking water if filtered through enough money! Eighty percent of failure in water purification is due to human error and the predilection of authorities to pursue new technologies in water treatment could be due to their enthusiastic promotion by vested interests.

South Australia currently uses approximately 1200 gegalitres of water each year for human needs, agriculture, business, recreation, household use and industry.

South Australia draws less than 1% of the flow of the River Murray and the majority of that is used for irrigation and of that 35% is used for growing grass for stock which is equivalent to irrigating just 7000 hectares of pasture.

The Murray Darling Basin is a one million sq km water catchment area stretching over parts of South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, the ACT and Queensland. The Basin is home to 11 per cent of Australia's population and 20 major rivers including the Darling, the Murray and the Murrumbidgee. A large area of the Basin is flat, although it also contains some of Australia's highest mountains. Rain and melted snow from these areas feed water to the Murray and Darling rivers. Fifty percent of the water is taken by NSW while SA only takes 7% of which 800 gig litres evaporates from the lower lakes, 600 gegalitres are used for irrigation and 150 gegalitres for urban use.

A resolution to the vexed issue of fair shares to the water is difficult while NSW still uses flood irrigation and in Victoria one company holds water licenses equivalent to 2 times the average flow of water to SA and while water use is over allocated. However representation by politicians from SA resulted in a change of views by Minister Burke such that the amount of water to be returned to the river has been increased to 3200 gegalitres per annum. Although it is estimated that the river needs 4000 gegalitres to maintain a healthy flow.



# N.B.

## NEUTROG SALES

A copy of our official order form can be picked up from the Treasurer's table. Orders and correct money must be submitted in an envelope as we will not be processing the information at the meetings.

Pick up will be on Thursday 22nd August  
10am—1pm from Helen and Rob Fairweathers'  
at 5 Ashbourne Road.

## GOT A PROBLEM

If you have a problem, something to share, need a cutting or seeds or scion wood 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](mailto:strathalbyngardenclub@gmail.com) or  
phone 85366276.

## CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

If you have been on holidays and have visited interesting gardens and don't mind putting pen to paper why not write a short article for our newsletter?

Photos of interesting gardens, birds, plants or wildlife (not the grand children) are also welcome. Send them to Norma.

## 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.

## ANOTHER FESTIVAL

### 'THE BODY IN THE GARDEN'

It's well known that readers love crime novels and readers love books about gardening – and many readers like both. The Body in the Garden combines these two genres in a free festival to be held on the weekend of 25<sup>th</sup> – 27th October 2013 in the leafy Botanic Garden. International, national and South Australian crime and garden writers have accepted invitations to the festival including the highly acclaimed Swedish crime writer **Hakan Nesser**.

**Toby Musgrave**, one of the UK's leading authorities in garden history and design, has also agreed to be a guest of the festival, as has crime writer **Ann Cleeves**. Australian writers who have accepted invitations include **Gabrielle Lord**, **Paul Bangay** and the Melbourne duo, **Fabian Capomollo** and **Mat Pember** of The Little Vegie Patch Company.



# HOW TO SAVE A TREE

On a recent short holiday to Tanunda we took the opportunity to visit the **Barossa Bushgardens**, a Regional Native Flora centre established in 2001. Located just out of Nuriootpa on Penrice Road it covers 7 hectares and includes a Barossa species garden, Eremophila Display garden, the CFS Fire-wise garden, a Sensory Garden and the Old Gum Tree tree restoration project.

The Old Gum tree is estimated to be between three hundred and four hundred years old and was in a very poor state of health when the garden was first started. In an effort to improve its health and save the tree the area beneath its canopy which previously was cleared ground was fenced and the leaf litter and bark was allowed to accumulate while understorey indigenous shrubs and ground covers were planted to increase the biodiversity and encourage birds, insects and microbial activity. The appearance and health of the tree has improved dramatically over the ensuing years.

The garden is managed by volunteers who harvest seeds from the seed orchard and propagate them for sale to raise funds to support the garden.

The garden is a testament to the enthusiasm and skill of the volunteers who work there and it is well worth a visit.

We also visited **Willowsporn** which had been one of the gardens in Open Gardens Australia last year. This garden sits around a heritage listed farmhouse and its out buildings amongst vineyards. Although in winter mode with a fine flush of soursobs there was plenty to admire including a fine array of sculptures created by the "Rusty Reprobates" a group of men with welders who meet twice a year to turn their collection of rusty farm cast offs into garden features.

Some of the old farm buildings have been repurposed for use as potting sheds, fern house, chook shed and a well appointed entertaining area.

The garden features a lovely old peppercorn tree as well as centuries old stately gums while the surrounding



vines yellowing into their winter dormancy draws the eye out into the borrowed landscape.

The fruit trees and well tended vegetable garden were worthy of inspection and everywhere in the extensive garden there was a clever use of reclaimed farm equipment a testament to the ingenuity and vision of the garden owners.

A final stop on our short holiday was to **Gully Gardens** on Gawler Park Road in Angaston where locally grown fruit is dried without the use of preservatives in traditional Barossa ways. The range of delicious dried fruit based confectionery and preserves produced and sold in the farm shop is mouth wateringly tempting with many of the products available for sampling. Outside the farm shop the garden features miniature peach trees among the roses and other ornamental plants.

*Norma Keily*



## **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.