



NEWSLETTER

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Summer is officially almost over although past experience shows that the hot weather can often last well into April. At least the days are getting shorter and quite often the nights are cool sometimes with a hint of damp from the sea breezes. When the rains eventually arrive it will take quite some time for the soil to regain a depth of moisture so we will still need to water our gardens and the best time to water according to the experts is when it is raining.

Walking around my garden I am delighted to see that the fruit trees are all very healthy as it has been too dry for the recurrence of curl leaf fungus. The pear and cherry slugs have also been absent this year. I have summer pruned all the fruit trees that were poking their branches through the net cover over the orchard and hope that they will not get too sun burnt through the lighter leaf canopy.

In the vegetable garden the sweet corn, tomatoes, cucumbers, Giant of Stuttgart climbing beans and the capsicum have been prolific unlike the pumpkin which have only provided a few fruits for our winter soup. One plant only produced male flowers even though I pinched off the growing tips to produce laterals.

The autumn fruiting Heritage raspberries are just starting to ripen and I feast as I garden so not many reach the kitchen.

Recently I have been enjoying the English TV show "Gardeners World" as it provides such a contrast in plants, techniques and conditions but portrays the same enthusiasm for the pursuit of gardening.

I am excited about our planned trip to the Arid Lands Botanic Gardens in August and in March I have booked a flight to Melbourne to visit the Flower and Garden Show for a day. In the mean time there are Open Gardens to visit and my own garden to prepare for winter.

Happy gardening,

JANUARY GUEST SPEAKER JOHN ZWAR

Highlights from a two day Garden Crawl in Melbourne

In March 2012 John Zwar had the opportunity to spend two days in Melbourne during which he visited the Melbourne Flower and Garden Show, the Royal Botanic Gardens at Cranbourne, the Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens, Williamstown Botanic Garden and the Burnley College Campus of the University of Melbourne School of Land and Environment. Despite a minor technical glitch with his computer software John kept us enthralled with an interesting illustrated talk about the gardens.

The Melbourne Flower and Garden Show is held annually in late March at the World Heritage listed Royal Exhibition Building and Carleton Gardens. The show is one of the best in the world run over five days featuring a hanging basket competition, displays of garden art and sculpture, demonstrations, guest speakers and horticultural delights ranging from bonsai, to vertical gardens, to ideas for small courtyards, cubby houses and garden products.

A display of considerable interest was the Himalayan Project which show cased how mud brick greenhouses could be built at little cost using local materials and labour to expand the growing season and range of crops in cold climates where people live at subsistence level..

The Royal Botanic Garden at Cranbourne specialises in Australian native plants and covers an area of 363 hectares of heathlands, woodlands and wetlands The gardens also provide habitat for native birds, mammals and reptiles, including some rare and endangered species. The final stage of the garden was opened in September 2012. There are viewing platforms from which a bird's eye view of the gardens can be seen and the interpretive signs are very informative.

The Royal Botanic Gardens of Melbourne are well used being one of the world's best examples of landscape gardens. The children's garden is a particularly well used feature of the garden. Other features include the Craft Cottage, Guilfoyles Volcano which is attractively planted with a range of succulents and dryland plants. Many of the original trees have become dangerous as they have aged. There is a 'Friends' Growers Group who have donated over \$1.8 million towards projects in the Gardens.

Williamstown Botanic Gardens opened in 1860 are in the seaside council area of Hobson's Bay and while small are an elegant example of early gardens designed to demonstrate which plants could be cultivated in the area.

Burnley College was and is the premiere horticultural college where gardening greats such as Edna Walling studied. The gardens are extensive with herbaceous borders, an oak lawn, herb garden, grasslands garden and ornamental ponds.

MARCH GUEST SPEAKER: JOHN YATES TALKING ABOUT CARNIVOROUS PLANTS

MARCH MEETING IS ALSO NEUTROG DELIVERY DAY

STRATHALBYN GARDEN CLUB Minutes Friday, 25th January 2013

Meeting commenced: at 10am with a request to switch off mobiles and sign in the attendance register.

Norma announced we now have the new microphone system to put to the test today. New name tags for 2013 have been issued, thanks to Janet Jones.

Welcome: **Visitors:** Susan Sinclare, Barbara Fishpool and N. Kofunic.

New Members Teresa Fitzpatrick

Attendance: 70

Apologies: 17 - our competition today was the BUPA Cycle Challenge

Lucky Door Prize **Winner is** Judith Digance

President's Comments There will be a change to the printed program. March will see John Yates talking about carnivorous plants and Chris Daniels will come in July.

Neutrog pick-up will take place in March.

Minutes: Page 5 of the newsletter **Moved:** J. Jones. **Seconded:** R. Fair-weather. **Carried.**

Business Arising: Nil

Treasurer: Page 5 of the newsletter **Moved:** Mary Golden. **Seconded:** M. Jenkins. **Carried.**

Correspondence In: **Sustainable Garden Workshop** 16th Feb. at Mt. Barker Library. Norma

added that she had attended this event last year and enjoyed it.

Out:: Nil

General Business : The Liliam Show was very good with a great display.

A.O.B. Nil

Raffle: A big selection of plants and produce to choose from.

Morning Tea: Most enjoyable, our thanks go to Margaret.

Guest Speaker John Zwar, who took us on a pictorial journey around the Melbourne Flower Show plus Cranbourne and Williams Town Botanic Gardens,

plus the Burnley Melbourne University Campus garden.

Next Meeting : Friday 22nd February 2013

OPEN GARDENS AUSTRALIA

\$7.00 ENTRY FEE

MOST GARDENS OPEN 10AM—4.30PM

March 2nd - 3rd

Sheringa . Greenhill Rd, Carey Gully. Gentle, artistic garden brimming with ideas for small gardens. Beautifully grouped rare and unusual perennials. Lovely valley views.

March 16th - 17th

Lochness Lodge. 282 Ironbank Rd, Ironbank . Superbly planted garden nestled on a hillside among grape vines. Crepe myrtles, camellias, hydrangeas and ferns. Vegetables and an orchard.

March 23rd - 24th

Tupelo Grove. 104 Bradbury Rd, Mylor. Hardy Mediterranean climate compatible plants especially salvias. Highly productive vegetable garden, fruit and berries.

March 24th

The White House. 27 Cross Rd, Kingswood. Attractive family garden designed for entertaining and featuring a range of thriving Mediterranean plants.

Dragon's Rest Habitat Garden. 11 Watkins Rd Peterborough. Award winning sustainable garden using species tolerant of frost, heat and low rainfall. Diverse range of native species attracting abundant bird life. Forty varieties of canna. Extensive kitchen garden.

HARVESTING THE PEAR CROP

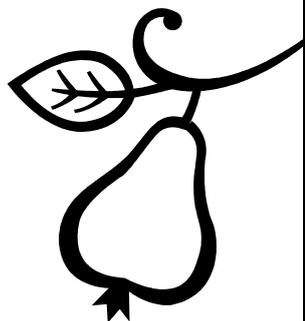
Pears ripen from the inside out so when the outside flesh has become slightly soft and appears to have good eating quality the inside flesh is soft and brown and unpalatable. For good flavour and texture pears must be ripened after harvest. Completing the ripening process indoors reduces the development of stone cells and evens the ripening of interior and exterior flesh.

WHEN TO HARVEST

Harvest pears while they are still quite firm (hard) but the skin colour has lightened and when the fruit stem easily separates from the branch with an upward twist of the fruit. When the first fruit drops from the tree is usually a good indicator.

RIPENING INDOORS

After harvest pears should be refrigerated in the crisper for a week or so then ripen them as needed for eating by placing at room temperature in a paper bag with a ripe banana or an onion. The best test for readiness to eat is when the flesh gives slightly under pressure at the stem end and when the stem can easily be pulled from the fruit.



N.B.

SIGNING IN

Members are reminded that it is important to sign the Attendance Register on arrival at the meeting so that our record keeping for insurance purposes is accurate.

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

NEUTROG SALES

We will be providing Sudden Impact for Roses 20kg bags for \$35 a bag which is a considerable saving as most suppliers stock the 10kg bucket for about \$50.

Pre-payment in full will be accepted at the January and February meetings.

CAN YOU HEAR?

When asking questions from the floor could members please stand and speak clearly so that we can all hear what is being asked.

CAN YOU HELP?

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.

GARDENS WANTED!

From time to time I receive phone calls from Garden Clubs and other groups wanting to know if there are gardens in the Strathalbyn area that they could visit on a planned tour. Usually they are planning a few months in advance so there is plenty of time to tidy and tweak. I would like to have a list of gardens available for each season and as most groups are happy to pay a small amount there will be recompense and perhaps an opportunity to sell plants or produce. If you are interested let Norma know.

MAY WE VISIT YOUR GARDEN?

Some Club members have expressed an interest in visiting the gardens of other members and as the Club is about sharing gardening knowledge and ideas this would be a helpful activity. Perhaps we could arrange Spring and Autumn visiting days for up to ten volunteer gardens on a day that is mutually suitable. Expressions of interest from members willing to be involved should be directed to Norma. A Volunteer to arrange the activity would be very welcome and suggestions on how to run it would also be welcome.

SHREDDED ALPACA MANURE

\$3 per bag - an excellent soil conditioner and fertiliser. 775 Old Bull Creek Road, Strathalbyn.

STRATHALBYN GARDEN CLUB COACH TRIP TO PT AUGUSTA ARID LANDS BOTANIC GARDENS Tuesday 13th August - Thursday 15th August 2013

Travelling with Rufus Bus & Coach in a 26 seat coach

Cost Twin Share per person if all coach seats are filled \$445 + spending money (minimum of 20 required)
Single supplement (private room) add \$160 per person
Accommodation at the Standpipe Motor Inn Port Augusta (4 star rating)

Deposit \$100 due March 22nd 2013

Balance \$345 due July 19th 2013

ITINERARY

Tuesday 13th August 2013

Depart Strathalbyn Railway Station car park	8:00am
Travel to Port Wakefield for morning tea	Supplied
Arrive at Port Pirie for lunch	Own cost
Arrive Port Augusta via Highway One	2:45pm
Dinner at 6:00pm (2 course dinner + tea/coffee)	Supplied

Wednesday 14th August 2013

Breakfast from 7:30am (cooked/continental)	Supplied
Depart Port Augusta 9:00am	

Travel to the Arid Lands Botanic Gardens Garden Tour and Morning Tea included

PM Itinerary to be announced

Dinner 6:00pm (2 courses + tea/coffee)	Supplied
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Thursday 15th August 2013

Breakfast from 7:30am (cooked/continental)	Supplied
Load bags at	8:45am
Depart Port Augusta	9:00am

AM itinerary to be announced

Return to Strathalbyn via Highway one by	4:30pm
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Various options for activities on Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning are being considered with the assistance of John Zwar and his contacts in Port Augusta.

Maria Maxwell is co-ordinating the tour and is happy to answer questions. Our Treasurer Mary Golden will take your deposits and the balance of your payment.

The final cost may be higher when the itinerary is finalised and depending on the number of coach seats filled.



THE LEAF BOUTIQUE

Callington Rd Strathalbyn

FREE WORKSHOP

RSVP 8536 8767

Sunday 24th February 1.00pm

GARDENING WITH POTS

Come and see how to get the best out of your garden
using pots

All pots 15% off

Free Giveaways

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.