



# NEWSLETTER

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October  
2014

### From The President,

We still have a month to go of spring and already we are experiencing extended periods of hot dry weather. The lack of any worthwhile rain since August means that the soil is dry and the tanks not full.

Many gardeners are making the tough decisions about which plants to let go and which ones to save. In my garden the vegetable beds will be left empty so that the available water can be directed to the fruit trees which appear to be bearing reasonable crops. Whether or not the fruit reaches maturity is another matter and it does not do to count on a good harvest until it is in the basket.

The Cavalcade of Gardens and the several open gardens which we have had the pleasure of visiting recently show that gardeners rise to the challenge and are not daunted by unfavourable conditions. It is interesting to observe the different mulches used and the various forms of shade structures employed to diminish the detrimental affects of the hot sun. I foresee many trips around my garden with watering cans topping up the birdbaths and keeping the pots alive.

I am looking forward to the three events planned for the end of the year - the trip to Urrbrae, the Garden party and the end of year Lunch. It has been a busy year and there is a lot for the Club to celebrate so let's do it together at one or all of these events.

Norma Keily

**SUBS ARE NOW  
OVER DUE \$10**

**IF YOUR NAME APPEARS IN YELLOW  
ON THE SIGN IN SHEET YOUR SUBS  
MAY STILL BE OUTSTANDING.**

## ROB FAIRWEATHER TALKS PHOTOGRAPHY

Backed by an impressive bank of cameras Rob began his talk by describing the virtues of a few of the vast range of cameras available. These range from using the camera function in many mobile phones, to the small 'point and shoots' which do not perform as well in low light, to the larger SLR cameras which are good in poor light levels. For the best possible image a tripod will hold the camera still, alternatively make sure when taking a photo the camera is held steady by bracing the arms against the body.

The composition of a photo can be improved by choosing to place your main subject off centre. The classic 'rule of thirds' is the photographer's best weapon in achieving this. Imagine a noughts and crosses grid placed across the frame – place the main subject or feature at one of the points that the lines cross, or along one of the lines.

Bright sunny days are not the best for photographing a garden. Early morning light and overcast conditions are best. If the day is bright take close ups or photograph in the shade.

Include people in photographs of scenery to provide scale and perspective but do not make them central.

Rob continued his talk with a description of a trip taken to Glue Pot Reserve which features a range of vegetation to support a variety of wildlife from reptiles to mammals and birds.

Gluepot Reserve is BirdLife Australia's first publicly funded Reserve. Located in the semi-arid South Australian mallee 1.5 hours drive on well-maintained dirt roads north of Waikerie. The

Reserve is open to visitors year-round and facilities include a visitor information centre, campgrounds, birdhides, driving and walking tracks, and brochures. Visitors need to be self-catering. The 50,000 ha large area of virgin mallee scrub contains no less than 6 nationally endangered bird species and a unique flora and fauna adapted to the harsh conditions and it is one of the few areas in Australia where bird-watchers can relatively easily observe otherwise hard-to-find species.

Some of the 190 species recorded including 6 that are nationally threatened. These include Black-eared Miner, Malleefowl, Red-lored Whistler, Regent Parrot, Scarlet-chested Parrot and Striated Grasswren. A further 17 regionally threatened bird species live there (eg Major Mitchell Cockatoo, Hooded Robin and Redthroat).

Rob kept us transfixed with a progression of photos of birds taken both at Glue Pot and through his kitchen window where he has a tripod and camera permanently installed.



A pair of Royal Spoonbills  
(Not photographed by Rob Fairweather).

# STRATHALBYN GARDEN CLUB PROGRAM

MEETING DATE	SPEAKER/ACTIVITY	TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION
October 24th	Cristobel Sadler	Flowers and gardens in art.
October 24th	Spring Bloom Competition	3 categories - 1 entry per category per member
October 31st	Visit to Urrbrae House and Arboretum	Car pool - meet before 9am at Coleman Tce.
November 24th	Garden Party	Sgorra Bhreac, Marchant Road, Strathalbyn
November 28th	End of Year Lunch	Strathalbyn Bowling Club
December 26th	Boxing Day	No meeting
January 23rd 2015	John Zwar	International Botanic Conference in NZ.
February 27th 2015	Barbara Ward	Water Plants Yarrabee Gardens
March 27th 2015	Rodney Hutchinson	Ants

## COMING EVENTS

### URRBRAE HOUSE AND ARBORETUM

**Friday 31st October 9am - 4pm**

**Cost \$8.00 for the guided tour.**

**Car pool** - meet at Coleman Tce car park to share rides.

**Lunch** - BYO or purchase at the café.

A guided tour of historic Urrbrae House and its lovely garden from 10.30 -12 noon.

Lunch followed by a self guided walk through the arboretum.

This visit follows the talk given by John Zwar at our January 2014 meeting. Information about the house, garden and arboretum appears in the February newsletter. (Available on our website.)

Register to attend with Maria Maxwell.

**Money must be paid by the October meeting.**

### CHRISTMAS

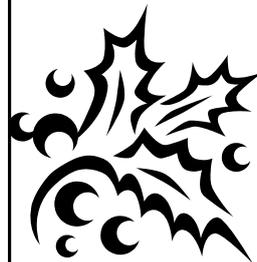
#### LUNCH

Friday November 28th  
11.30 - 2.30.

Strathalbyn Bowling Club

Cost \$25

Money to Mary Golden  
by our October meeting.



### STRENGTH FOR LIFE 50<sup>+</sup>

Great for keeping strong and fit for gardening!

Run by Fleurieu Fitness and Health  
in conjunction with COTA SA

The RSL Hall, High Street Strathalbyn  
Sessions Tuesday, Wednesday Thursday  
9.15am - 10.15am.

Additional classes are being planned.

\$6.00 per session

Each participant must have an initial assessment to design an individual program to suit their specific needs. (Cost \$25)

For more information

Or to book an individual assessment

#### Contact

Paul Holdsworth 8536 2204 or  
email paulh@adam.com.au

*Thank You*

To Virginia Phillips, Ren Tremayne, Rex and Shirley Fountain, Yvette Holdsworth and David and Jenny Thomas for inviting us into your gardens for the 2014 Cavalcade of Gardens.

Your gardens are inspirational and your generosity in sharing them is greatly appreciated by all who visited.

## OPEN GARDENS AUSTRALIA

Most Gardens are open 10 - 4.30 each day.  
Entry is usually \$8 per person, under 18 free.  
More details in the Open Gardens Australia  
Guide and on their website  
[www.opengarden.org.au](http://www.opengarden.org.au)



**With the organisation ceasing to exist after June 2015 this may be the last opportunity to visit many of the gardens listed.**

### OCTOBER 2014

**25 - 26**

**BUCCLEUCH** 28 Burbank Way Mt Barker. 260 glorious roses in a water wise award winning garden.

**CASUARINA** 52 Sheoak Rd Mylor A stunning garden designed by its artist owner filled with dazzling colour, foliage interest and sculptures in a peaceful rural setting.

**ANLABY** 829 Anlaby Road Hamilton (near Kapunda). One of the earliest pastoral gardens in SA celebrating 175 years.

### NOVEMBER

**1 - 2**

**WALDHEIM** 49 Sheoak Rd Crafers. Mature trees in a terraced family garden with productive vegetable garden. Tree house.

**KARKOO** 38 Foxhill Road Mt George. An historic site undergoing restoration using woodland shade plants.

**APPLE TREE COTTAGE** 119a Main South Rd Yankalilla Huge river red gums shade a restored cottage with a 100 year old apple tree.

**8 - 9**

**DENELLA DOWNS** 39 Summit Road Meadows . A drought tolerant award winning garden with lovely trees, rambling roses and stunning views.

**GATE COTTAGE** 66 Leslie Creek Road Mylor. A natural creek setting, a romantic country garden with 500 roses surrounded by perennials and self sown annuals.

**GLYNN GARDEN** 18 Turnbull Drive Worrolong Mt Gambier East. A garden designed with a young family in mind. A large lawn surrounded by a tall Leighton Green cypress hedge.

**JENNINGS GARDEN** 16 Turnbull Drive Worrolong Mt Gambier East. A young garden with 600 roses, beds of daylilies, agapanthus, bearded iris, camellias, azaleas, bulbs and wisteria.

**15 - 16**

**LOCHNESS LODGE** 282 Ironbank Road Ironbank. Superbly planted garden nestled on a hillside among grapevines. Hedging defines garden rooms.

**ETTRICK** 61 Muller Road Mount George. A canopy of crab apples, weeping mulberry, hedging, conifers and young topiary specimens. Garden sculpture for sale.

**RIVERSDALE** 78 Rivers Road Balhannah Beautiful borders wrap around the elegant 1890 stone home. Roses, lilliums, echiums and espaliered quinces, sweeping lawns.

# 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.

Known future apologies can be recorded in the space provided.

## 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.

## BLOOM COMPETITION TODAY

## FREE GARDEN WORKSHOP

Sunday 2nd November

**Companion planting with vegies.**

2.00pm start

**The Leaf Boutique**

27 Callington Road Strathalbyn

Troy McKenzie 8536 8767

**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!

**SHEEP MANURE for Sale**

\$5 / bag (delivered to Strath)

\$4 / bag (collected from farm)

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

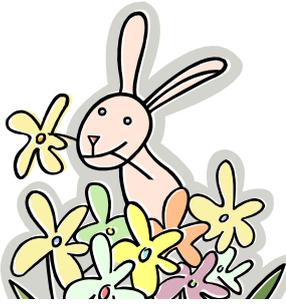
Tania & John Richardson

Woodchester

85375011

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

# SGORRA BHREAC GARDEN



The Property name comes from the motto on the Scottish family crest – “Nicholson of Sgorra Bhreac” – Gaelic translation for “Hill in the Mist”. The house name has been with us all our married life and followed us

diligently wherever we have lived.

Our retirement site was purchased as a 1ha plot of previous farm pasture in 2010. I was determined not to have bare ground when we moved into our new home so the garden plantings commenced in 2010, and the house later in 2012. This is a first for us - to design a garden from a blank canvas, taking into consideration climate change, local rainfall and of course low maintenance in our retirement phase of life. We believe a garden is to be shared and enjoyed with family and friends.

The property boundary was planted first to give a frame work and shelter to the inner garden as Strathalbyn is very windy. An enthusiastic, very knowledgeable and wise Strath gardener (Colin Digance) gave us valuable advice on creating a micro climate aspect in choosing plants to suit the area. Very wise words from one very wise owl and something I have firmly ensconced in my thoughts.

A variety of native plants were in the first instance from tube stock at State Flora for the periphery of the property. Rabbit proofing the fence-line was an important factor in controlling these little monsters. As a member of the Murray Bridge Social Garden Club I developed a project where the club became involved in propagating plants, sowing seeds, experimenting with cuttings from trees and shrubs just to see what we could achieve, all in return for a donation to the club’s coffers. This led to another path of memory plantings where rooms and spaces have been aptly named. Creating a community spirit was a positive result and today members visit regularly to see the progress, enjoy a trip down memory lane, and laughter fills the garden space. The monetary donation resulted in members being able to enjoy subsidised trips away to visit other gardens, a win-win for everyone and a beautiful memory we will carry with us always. What fun we had, not to mention the stories to tell!

Among the natives that border the property we have chosen a large number of Acacia species such as *Pendula*, *Pycnantha*, silver princess, *Denticulata* (sandpaper wattle), *Baileyana* (Cootamundra – prostrate and tree form), *Howittii* and *Paradoxa* to encourage the birds. Hibiscus, crepe myrtles, crab apples, standard and grafted mulberry, pagoda, *grevillia poorinda* mantle, have been added for texture, perfume and colour.

We have planted favourite focus trees such as *Magnolia Grandiflora*, *Gleditsias*, a Bodhi tree, Chinese Tallow,

*Ginkgo Biloba*, *Frangipani*, Cottonwood, *Jacaranda*, *Brachychiton*, Ornamental Pears, *Silky Oak*, *Liquid Amber*, *Plane Trees*, *Claret Ash*, *Spanish Chestnut*, *Corkscrew Willow*, *Prunus Trees*, *Paulowina* or *Powton*, and *Algerian Oak*.

A succulent section is being designed by our youngest son, Angus, and this occupies the island that divides our driveway. Old favourites such as roses, agapanthus and irises are just the beginnings of the flower garden which will evolve over time. The newly developing lawn is a factor in helping to maintain a comfortable temperature within the house during the hot summers.

Walking paths meander throughout the garden and seats in secluded spots are scattered throughout the property. Just watching the blue wrens flitting around Sgorra Bhreac is a joy and for those who struggle walking long distances there are two gophers to lighten the journey.

Both Graeme and I have committed our pledge to “The Paddlers” to continue to offer our garden for functions and raise much needed funds for the benefit of all country cancer patients.

“The Paddlers” are a group of women who are all cancer survivors and their goal is to fundraise for the betterment of services for country cancer patients, which benefits not just the patients having to travel long distances but families as well.

The next project the Paddlers have in mind is to help renovate the Cancer Council Accommodation on Greenhill Road in Adelaide as it is only available to country cancer patients and their families who need to have cancer treatment in Adelaide. It is owned and subsidised by the Cancer council.



Cynthia & Graeme Nicholson

## COME TO A GARDEN PARTY

24th November 2- 4pm

At ‘Sgorra Bhreac’ home of Cynthia Nicholson.

Marchant Road - drive to the end, turn left and keep going!

**Cost \$10** which includes afternoon tea and a tour of the garden.

**Pay at the door.** To assist with catering please register your intention to attend with Jenny Thomas.

Funds raised support the work of “The Paddlers”, cancer survivors who are working to renovate the Cancer Council Accommodation on Greenhill Rd for country patients requiring treatment in Adelaide.

Troy from Leaf Boutique will guide the Garden walk.