NEW TOURS
6 December Twilight Xmas Tour

2012 TOURS
17-24 February RHS Festival of Flowers

Ellerslie Garden Tours
7-11 March
17-22 March Wellington, Wairarapa and Waikanae - Garden Riches & Gourmet Delights
April Harvest & Garden Day Tour
July/August Sunshine Coast Getaway
September Wellington Wearable Arts
9-10 October Tempting Tasmania
16-23 October Chatham Experience
24 October Geraldine Day Tour
November North Auckland

To register your interest in the above tours email tours@chsgardens.co.nz or phone (03) 366 6937.

Thank you for your support for the tours over the past year. Compliments of the season. Freda Hunter

FESTIVAL OF FLOWERS

CHS Garden Tours
February 2012
Great Gardens - Ohinetahi & Otahua
Half-day tour
South of the City - Broadfields, Rolleston
Full-day tour
more information: www.chsgardens.co.nz

WEST COAST TOUR REPORT

Memories

Although atrocious weather conditions greeted the White Heron tour group in Wairau, spirits could not be dampened! A quick shuffle of the programme due to river flooding meant we started the tour with the stunning Fox and Franz Josef Glaciers where we were delighted to see the green orchid in flower. By day two the river had returned to normal levels and we made our way via jet boat and boardwalk to the only breeding place of the White Heron (Konuku) in New Zealand. The seclusion and peacefulness of the area made viewing the nesting birds a wonder to behold.

Our trip included a visit to Helen Love’s beautiful “Seafort” garden atop the hill in Hokitika and to Denise and Robin Illingsworth’s “Ribblesdale” in Oxford.

Both gardens featured rhododendrons (and weren’t they glorious) and other spring gems. It was a pleasure to visit these two beautiful gardens. The owners are passionate gardeners and wonderful hostesses too.

Laden with plants, whiteheat and happy memories we returned to Christchurch. Thank you Freda for another wonderful tour!

Don’t forget!

CHRISTMAS TOUR

Thursday 8 December 5.30 – 8.30pm
Gardens, Wits, Nibbles & Santa Prizes

A fun, festive event enjoying hospitality and refreshments in three private gardens.
$48 members ($1,625 non-members)

Itinerary available now

Thank you to Reg Williams for his contribution.

ARTICLES ON THE WEB TODAY

Visit the website to read the latest contributions from experts and members. This quarter you can see photos from A quick in to the Victorian Tea Party & White Heron Tour as well as lots of great ideas for Christmas.
www.CHSGARDENS.co.nz

FRESH IS BEST

Linda Ducker

After a long winter & spring with only insipid tomatoes available in the shops it is with great anticipation that we welcome the new season’s crop. What a joy it is to go out into the vegetable garden on a summer’s day and pick a warm fresh sun-ripened tomato straight off the vine. The taste is unrivalled and there is no way you could resist having another one.

If you have never grown and picked a fresh tomato off the vine you have never lived! There is no need to go to a travel agent to buy a ticket for Tuscany to have the good life - it is here in Canterbury all around you.

In our climate so much can be grown easily, picked fresh from the garden and be on the table within 30 minutes or less. There is so much to look forward to in each season in the vegetable garden.

Compare a freshly dug new potato cooked within half an hour of digging with one from a supermarket that could be 2 or 3 weeks old. It might look the same but the taste is definitely not. Another pleasure is a fresh stick of celery broken off the plant and wonderful to eat whilst walking round the garden.

The first lettuces picked from your garden have superb taste which is far superior to a shop-bought one that has probably been grown hydroponically and may have never seen any soil. The secret to growing great lettuces is in the time they take to grow – the faster the time, the sweeter the taste.

Another delight of the summer season is the spring onion. They take up very little room and being able to pick and eat them straight away is quite an experience.

There is still plenty of time to take advantage of growing crops for this season. If you buy the plants, plant out into the garden, with a little blood and bone compost mixed into the planting hole. Keep well watered, watch the plants grow then pick and eat when they are young. What could be better?

Writing about these amazing vegetables has made my taste buds go wild. As space is limited you can buy the seeds you would like to grow and there is no way you could resist having another one.

From Garden to Table

A DRIFF A FLOOD OR A GOOD SOAK?

The tap no longer flows with unlimited water to grow green lawns and manicured gardens in Christchurch – our day of water reckoning has arrived. Christchurch water restrictions came into effect on Saturday 8 October, meaning no one is allowed to water outdoors on Mondays and watering our precious gardens can only happen on alternate days – depending on your address.

The infrastructure required to pump water around the city on a peak-demand summer day has been severely damaged by earthquakes, meaning all Christchurch residents need to reduce outdoor water consumption. Mayor Bob Parker says the restrictions are necessary to ensure we can supply Christchurch residents with the indoor water they need as summer approaches.

“I understand that this may feel like another blow following the quakes, but it is a problem that shouldn’t come as a surprise to residents. We are renowned for being the garden city, and while we want to retain this image, particularly in summer, we do have to be clever in how we use water this year,” he says.

Adapting is becoming second nature to Cantabrians. We’ve coped with all the seismic challenges and as the city repairs and prepares for the future, this latest challenge is an opportunity to improve our gardening practices – and to support the City Council in its efforts to protect the long term water supply of the region.

Tips for garden survival this summer

Soak with the hand held hose – take a cup of tea or a glass of wine (depending on the time of day) and ponder the world at large whilst filling.

Divert your rainwater into storage drums. Use the grey water from the washing machine – imagine how lush the garden beside the laundry door could be.

Treat outdoor potted plants to a plunge in a bucket of water. Use the same bucket over and over again to exploit the maximum available water.

Leave a shallow hollow around new seedlings to collect water – this will direct the water to the root zone of the plants.

Recycle any excess in the garden.

Treat outdoor potted plants to a plunge in a bucket of water. Use the same bucket over and over again to exploit the maximum available water.

Lease a shallow hollow around new seedings to collect water – this will direct the water to the root zone of the plants.

Don’t forget when to water! Even numbered properties: Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday. Odd numbered: Wednesday, Friday, Sunday.
OVER THE GARDEN FENCE Alan Jolliffe

Many times I have written these words, Garden Hygiene, as part of gardening activities, but what does it mean? It is really quite simple; it’s a bit like housework in the garden.

Where there is some form of infestation by insects, fungai or bacteria remove infested material, leaves, spent flowers and pruning and dispose of them through the rubbish or if allowed by burning. Only put in the compost if you have a very hot compost heap with temperatures up to 70C. Ensure weeds, which harbour breeding colonies of insects, are removed and replaced with ornamental or edible plants. Clean all garden tools straight after handling infested material to stop infection spreading around the garden.

Do not shift infected soil around the garden or transplant infected plants from one part of the garden to another. If plants are suffering from infestations of pests and diseases the plant should be shifted to a new position better suited to the plant and less suited to the pest or disease but care is suggested and the plant treated to rid the soil.

Give plants a little air by pruning them back and thinning out dense plants. It is in these dense conditions pest and diseases flourish as they find a nice cozy little home to live and multiply in. One example often given is that camellias should be pruned and thinned so that a blackbird can fly through it.

Stop overcrowding of vegetable plants and ornamentals. Experiment with the best distance to plant vegetable plants apart to give the best crop as possible. Keep this up regularly throughout the year. Good garden hygiene is the basis of a healthy garden which in turn leads to lower maintenance and more enjoyment of the garden.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

New Era

With our 150th Celebrations coming to a close and looking at our future events calendar 2012 I have to wonder what new and amazing opportunities will present themselves in the years ahead.

The Society is moving into a new era with the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer whose major role will be to implement strategies and to devise operational systems to ensure the efficient, effective and profitable management of the Society. In anticipation of the new order we have upgraded much of the office equipment including computer hardware and software systems and improved the office layout to make our first point of contact friendlier and more accessible.

The milestone of reaching our 150th year has been the catalyst for taking stock of all areas of the organisation and putting in place systems to ensure a strong and vibrant future. Our vision is to be New Zealand’s largest and most successful horticultural organisation. To achieve this we aim to share the enjoyment of gardening and to promote excellence in gardening and to achieve this we aim to share the enjoyment of gardening and to promote excellence in horticulture at all levels of involvement. We are committed to providing high quality and innovative member programmes, diverse educational activities and successful and entertaining fundraising events. We have embarked already upon our commitment to raising the public profile of the organisation with our colourful participation in the A & P Show completing a year conspicuously well spent.

In 2007 we “went for Gold” at the Ellerslie International Flower Show. We now have the opportunity for a repeat performance in 2012. But that will depend upon the energy and commitment of all of our volunteers. I am confident we can rise again to the occasion and with the guidance of our Board members achieve even greater successes in the years ahead.

As the holiday season approaches, I want to thank everyone who has helped to shape the Society. I value my relationship with you and look forward to working even more closely with you in the year ahead. I wish you a very happy Holiday Season and a New Year filled with good health, peace and prosperity.

Ruth Beaumont, President

ALL ABOUT GARDENING
December 2011 & February 2012

DECEMBER Christmas Spectacular!
Tuesday 6th 7 - 9pm & Wednesday 7th 9.45 - 11.45am

“In the Garden with Michael Coulter” Timely tips, tasks and questions
“Canterbury Philharmonia Orchestra” (Tuesday evening only)

“Mystery Auction” Madcap frivolities and curious bidding for surprise packages. Bring Your Money! (Wednesday morning only)

“Colours for Christmas” NZ House & Gardens Chris Wadson inspires with Christmas themes

ME oh My, Wasn’t that a PARTY! Freda Hunter takes us on a retrospective look at a year of celebrations for our 150th anniversary.

The special Christmas programme is $5 members $9 non-members

FEBRUARY

Tuesday 7th 7 - 9pm & Wednesday 8th 9.45 - 11.45am

“In the Garden with Michael Coulter” Timely tips, tasks and questions

MINI: “Our Ellerslie Garden”
Ellerslie 2012 garden designer Tony Mline gives a sneak preview of the CHS’s entry to this year’s important event.

MAX: “All Things Bright & Beautiful” Rachel Vogan provides an update on plants that are successful in our water restricted summer gardens, and new releases coming soon to garden centres.

All About Gardening is held at the CHS Centre in Hagley Park on the first Tuesday and Wednesday of the month, $3 members, $7 non-members.

Includes morning tea / supper, tea & coffee

EDUCATION PROGRAMME New format for 2012!

For the 2012 year the CHS Education Programme will run as a series of well considered, topical one day events, with invited speakers, educators, enthusiasts and professionals sharing their knowledge and expertise. The programme will be publicised locally and online at: www.chsgardens.co.nz

IB BEAUTIFUL STATIONERY JUST YOUR CUP OF TEA?

Phoenix Trading - a well established UK company - produces a fresh, innovative range of greeting cards, invitations, writing paper, gift wrap and much more.

This high quality, exclusive range of stationery sells at below shop prices. It is not available in stores. To receive a complimentary, obligation-free catalogue, or to book a demonstration, please contact:

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CENTRE NEWS

EFTPOS AVAILABLE
Members can now enjoy the convenience of using EFTPOS for purchases at CHS Centre.
Subs, Tours, Merchandise and Hire fees can also be paid for electronically.

FROM DIRT TO DINNER

Mary Duff, admirer & manipulator of the fruits of the earth.

Liquid Gold

One of my fondest memories is the annual honey extraction event hosted by my paternal Grandfather.

The process started out on the family farm, Dad would collect the hive boxes from the paddock corners and they would sit in the garage until it was time to pack them. There were always a few confused and angry bees that kept my siblings and I a safe distance from the garage.

In the winter we would take the hives into town where my Grandparent’s double garage was magically converted into a small factory complete with a fan heater on full force. All hands were required, even the preschoolers were armed with a teaspoo to carry out chief taste testers duties. I still remember the cracking and popping sound of the honey in the comb as we scooped a generous slice of it. Straight into the mouth it went with the viscous honey flowing over our tongues. We would chew the firm wax that never seemed to loose its sweet memory.

First task was to shave the protective cap from the comb with a heated knife. The combs were then put in a spinning drum and the honey spun out in fine golden threads. Turning the spinner handle was granted to the most responsible grandchild. A job that was shared because even the toughest grandid’s arm always got tired.

The sticky caps were heated in a lathine of stainless steel allowing the honey to flow yet trapping the wax. At the end of the day honey was compiled from all the different collection points into a humeisour silver bowl and we would all go home on a sugar high drinking honey over our tongues. Over the next few months Grandad would methodically churn the harvest and turn it from a glassy golden to a creamy luminescent spread. I have tried many honeys around the world but none of them compare to the beautiful flavour from my childhood.

Mary Duff is a Food Technologist who loves food and gardening. Mary is originally from a beet and cropping turn on the South Canterbury border but for whatever reason it is her trick to the dinner feast.
Queen Victoria, a formidable sovereign, influenced the world of design, fashion, gardening and travel.

Enriched by the Victorian era, during which the Canterbury Horticultural Society was formed, we celebrated the period with 150 friends and members at the Victorian Tea Party afternoon.

Fashion of the era sashayed across the carpark with trailing skirts, wide brimmed hats and mutton leg sleeves and swept into the Victorian themed venue. Victorian posies decorated tables, treasured teapots of the era were for viewing and friends mingled in delight to the sounds of the Villa Maria Quartet.

CHS Board member Ruth Bird presented the language of flowers. Flowers, plants and herbs have been used to communicate feelings and represent human sentiments since ancient times. Literature and culture are filled with references to plants and their hidden meanings. Lilys for purity, roses for love, lavender for devotion, violets for faithfulness, next time you give a bouquet check out the flowers you are using - you may discover a hidden message you didn't intend to send.

David Adams entertained with a poem themed on the Language of Flowers before Gillie Deans spoke about Jane Deans, and what it would have been like living as a Victorian woman in settlers Canterbury. Patricia Proctor’s themed bouquets and clothing took us through the decades from the art nouveau flappers, polka dot fifties, paisley swirls of the seventies and into the future. A pathway of fashion in clothes and flowers showing the changes from Victoriana to 2011.

The parade of ladies with cake stands announced an afternoon tea of delectable mini sandwiches, cup-cakes and slices. A fitting completion to an afternoon of Victoriana, an era of grace and elegance.

Thank-you to everyone involved in this special event and to all our members and friends who dressed for the occasion with wonderful flair.

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEA
Give some-one you love a gift to remember this Christmas.

Membership to the CHS is an affordable and thoughtful gift, perfect for the gardener in the family!

Single Membership $30 Double: $40

For details and to purchase online visit:
www.chsgardens.co.nz/become-a-member

GARDEN CLUB NEWS
Local Happenings

Avonhead have been entertained by Alan Jolliffe and Yumiko Akashi, who delighted all with her Ikebana designs. Since June Cashmere members have visited Kaizuka, Ngai Marsh house and the Ilam Homestead. They've also assembled over sixty potted mini gardens for sending to the badly affected Eastern suburbs for pre-Xmas cheer.

CHS Floral Circle held a very successful cake stall in September. Diamond Harbour-Purau enjoyed a visit from Peter Hooper, a local ornithologist and photographer. Club meetings reconvene indoors in May. Fendalton members arranged posies and floral containers for distribution to residents of local retirement homes. They also held another successful “Bring and Buy”. Their annual Christmas visit to Swan Lake takes place this month.

Governors Bay celebrated their 50th anniversary in October with a tour of three gardens followed by lunch at the Governors Bay Hotel. Ikebana International held their AGM, their new President is Ellen Loader.

Lyttelton members visited David Bell Daffodil Nursery. They also made 33 tussie mussies for the elderly who receive meals from Community House.

Rangiora Garden Club has visited the Alpine House, Daffodil Woodland, Ribblesdale in Oxford and Baedenbrock in Loburn. Springton Garden Club were entertained by Lincoln University Professor, Steve Wratton (a regular contributor to The Press). Their September display table featured stunning miniature arrangements. Stratford held their Spring Luncheon at CHS with members bringing posies from home to be delivered to patients being cared for by community nurses. They also brought photos of themselves as babies!

St Albans held their belated AGM in August followed by an Antiques Road Show with Derek Blacker from Portobello Antiques. In September John Fowler gave an informative talk on vegetables with a fabulous display of dishes to taste. St Martins/Opawa Garden Club visited Broadfield in October and were impressed by owner David Hobbs amazing eye for design and colour.

JUNIOR GARDENERS
An enthusiastic group of children who meet monthly for practical gardening activities and to learn the science of good gardening.

The group has been led by Dave Rawson and Dave Adams, both former school principals, who really enjoy the interaction with club members. As Dave Rawson is departing to Dunedin in the New Year we need a volunteer to replace him. Maybe you could help?

The next meeting is Thursday 16th Feb 2012
Contact CHS if you are interested in helping.
Tel: 366 6937 Email: office@chsgardens.co.nz
CHRISTCHURCH BOTANIC GARDENS

Summer water restrictions

As most of you will be well aware, Christchurch gardeners will be coping with water restrictions this summer. Operations Manager, Jeremy Hawker outlines the Botanic Gardens response to the crisis.

“We are fortunate that the Gardens draws water from its own private well and therefore has no impact on the damaged water supply infrastructure. However, in support of the restrictions we will only water the Armstrong Lawn as the showcase lawn for visitors. We will leave the rest of the lawns to brown off over summer.”

The borders and rose gardens will be watered at night to ensure a second-generation of new growth and to provide the features visitors and residents expect. The Peacock Fountain will be shut down over summer and run intermittently for maintenance. The Council is also using water drawn from the well in the Gardens to water flower tubs located in the city.

Guillaume Jacob (featured left), one of the Garden’s collection curators, has developed a demonstration bed of drought tolerant plants and related mulches. He is highlighting perennials and shrubs that hark from South Africa, Australia and the Mediterranean. He has also planted a selection of native plants and xerophytes — plants that store water like succulents and aloes. A plant list will be available from the Botanic Gardens Information Centre.

FRUIT TREE SPECIALISTS

Country Gardens

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Dwarf Apricots & Peaches
Flowering Cherry Moptops $39.95

478 Marshland Rd, Christchurch
Open 7 Days 8am - 5pm
tel: (03) 385 9008 - eftpos & credit cards
www.countrygardens.co.nz

SUMMERTIME TIPS

From Country Gardens

Summer has arrived in Canterbury along with its fickle weather, putting pressure on plants to perform. To get the best out of them they need regular watering and feeding to meet the requirements for flowering and fruiting. Planting can be continued for summer flowering colour and trees including fruit trees and shrubs with due care.

Fruit trees are either coming into or already producing their fruit crop so remember to check them for pests and diseases and when required spray to keep these under control. Varieties of trees (many with unfamiliar names) are available that are resistant to many common diseases and often more suitable for the home garden or organic type gardening. These high health varieties can be matched in flavour and appearance to those varieties with familiar names (but less desirable due to rigorous spraying requirements), by experienced nursery staff, to give you the taste and look you want with the added bonus of less spraying. Often the flavour is even better!

Summer pruning is a great way to reduce the size of fruit trees and while there are many varieties that are available on dwarf rootstock, others in particular plums, pears and some peach and nectarine varieties are unavailable on a dwarf rootstock that is reliable.

Especially in the first three years, pruning can be done when growth is several centimetres long with the removal of unwanted shoots. Main shoots that are to be kept can be encouraged to grow where required by using weights and ties. Continue to remove or head back new growth throughout summer to promote the desired shape of the tree. Pruning at the same time as thinning is also strongly recommended.

The apple variety “Tropicana” may be of interest to those after something a little different this year. It has crisp sweet white flesh with bright red skin which often bleeds into the flesh giving it a streaky appearance with a refreshing tropical flavour and aroma. The tree has good health giving properties, withstands disease, and requires little or no spraying (available at Country Gardens).