Autumn has been a busy tour season. In March we welcomed many visitors participating in the Ellerslie Garden Tours, from around New Zealand and overseas. They were most impressed with the hospitality of the host gardens and the sparkly presentation of the properties.

Following Ellerslie was the Garden Riches & Gourmet Delights Tour in the lower North Island. The herbal workshop was an added attraction with a choice between making your own face cream or a herbal healing cream (for aches & pains). Some of the ingredients included were Calendula, Arnica and Eucalyptus oils which have a wonderful aroma. The Gourmet experience at Ruth Pretty’s was an absolute highlight. A cooking demonstration and a three course lunch were available.

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From the President
Ross Beaumont

What does the future hold for The Society? What are our dreams, our ambitions, our goals? We have a vision to be the premier Catholic horticultural organisation in New Zealand and to promote excellence in horticulture. To achieve this, we must guard against future generations and as such strive to ensure that we get things right for that future. We are going through difficult times but on the way achieve success; our 150 year celebrations including an autumn and spring show, the 2012 Ellerslie Flower Show where we won a Silver Distinction award and introduced the ‘Love Your Garden’ concept. Then there is the recent Garage Sale and the ever popular ‘All About Gardening’. Conclusions and a big thank you to the people involved in those events.

It is said ‘that if nothing changes then nothing changes’ and sometimes change is forced upon us whether we plan it or not.

In the last newsletter we introduced Dr. Michael Gousmett who has spent much of the past four months analysing the financial management of The Society and initiating a review of the constitution. It is with regret that I advise Dr. Gousmett has resigned from his position as Executive Officer. He has however offered to assist the Management Committee in a consultant role if required.

With Helen’s absence due to illness recently and a need to fill that very important role in the office ShirleyRuss kindly offered to assist until Helen returned. We took this opportunity to ask her, and she accepted, to once again step into the role of Interim Manager.

Your governing body, the Management Board, has recently introduced new blood into its ranks; Dave Adams, Athol McCully, Ray King and juicy, minty emerald caterpillars. I haven’t...
Jottings from the Landscape Corner

Rough and Milne Landscape Architects (RMLA) is a local Christchurch based firm that has been actively involved in the recovery since September 2010. While RMLA has continued working with their usual clients (including District and Regional Councils, government departments, institutions, infrastructure providers and a wide range of individual investors), the scope of work has widened to include a higher proportion of larger civic and commercial projects with an emphasis on concepts of temporary, flexible and resilient environments. In a number of cases, RMLA has donated their services to recovery projects such as Re:Start Cashel Mall and the regeneration of Freeville School. They have also participated in competitions such as the 48hr Design Challenge and the Ellerslie Flower Show where earthquake recovery has been a major theme. Several RMLA staff are active members of Greening the Rubble groups and other community based organisations where they share their expertise, interest and support in the recovery and enhancement of their local environments.

RMLA was established in 2010 when Peter Rough Landscape Architects and Tony Milne Landscape Architects merged to become Rough & Milne Landscape Architects Christchurch. As a result, RMLA’s expertise spans a wide spectrum of landscape architecture practice. The team is comprised of seven full time Landscape Architects, one or two student interns in the summer, plus an Urban Designer (who is currently seconded to the Christchurch City Council).

RMLA will be keeping readers up to date with their current projects and with new landscape architecture trends, over the next editions of the CHS newsletter. To sign off: a small quote to help explain just what it is that landscape architects (aim to) do in their work:

The work of the landscape architect
(architect of the landscape)
is to help bring people, their structures, activities, and communities into harmonious relationship with the living earth – with the want to be of the land.

John Omsbee Simonds

Magic Micro Greens

Ray King

On the recent Garden Riches & Gourmet Delights Tour with Freda Hunter we were lucky enough to visit Ruth Pretty at Te Horo just north of Wellington. Apart from a fantastic lunch we were treated to a visit to their herb garden. As the complex has 10 full time chefs and caterers to a great variety of functions they do not try to grow their own vegetables but they do grow all their own herbs and microgreens. Now any of you who keenly watch the various Masterchef shows on TV will have seen these magic little greens being used in all manner of ways.

As I have tried to grow these greens myself with no luck I was very interested in what was happening at Te Horo, fortunately Claire, the gardener there was only too happy to spend time with us explaining how they go about it and how to get started. She also pointed us in the direction of a marvellous book called “How to Grow Microgreens, nature’s own superfood” by New Zealand author, Fiona Hill.

Since returning home I have been experimenting with these microgreens and we have been enjoying some exciting additions to our salads, let alone decorating our dishes with these delicate little leaves.

I have found that cress, rocket and mustard are very easy to grow and rocket in particular tastes so much nicer when it is picked fresh and tiny straight from the container. I am also experimenting with basil, peas, coriander and corn microgreens and can see that in winter these will be a boon to liven up meals. I grow them inside on a sunny windowsill and am quite excited about the possibilities available.

COMING UP IN SEPTEMBER

Spring Flower Show
Sat 22 & Sun 23 September 2012
Canterbury Horticultural Centre

Garden Club News

Local Happenings

Spreydon Garden Club made a round trip to Oxford on a beautiful day visiting three different gardens, including a hundred year old cottage with everything from quirky broken pottery set in paths to patchwork. At their March meeting Stradford had the ranger from the Botanic Gardens as their speaker. The talk included interesting facts about the history of the Gardens, how decisions are made on plantings and many other titbits of information.

Kerri-Anne from Garden City Florists demonstrated a handheld bouquet with cheerful, informative chatter at the February meeting of St Albans Garden Club. Members also enjoyed an afternoon outing to Terra Viva followed by afternoon tea in the café.

Fendalton Garden Club met in February and an outstanding Show Table reflected the dedication and loyalty of the members. A member of the Herb Society entertained and informed the members on the nurture and uses of various herbs. Wairarapa had Maureen Day speak on propagation. Maureen also brought along some specimens to demonstrate her talk.

Darfield would like to suggest that a visit to Planting of Canterbury Native Trust at West Melton is now 18 months old and is well worth a visit. Avonhead had a fun evening with a demonstration on how to make a bouquet using a hydrangea head as the base. There were some wonderful examples and everyone went home with a bouquet.

Rangiora Garden Club had a day out visiting “Chillies and Peppers” in Tram Road followed by a visit to “The Barn on Giles” with lunch in the garden. Iram celebrated 60 years in April but sadly this was their last meeting as the Club is closing due to lack of members. Ikebana International was visited by an Ikebana group from Kurashiki who also took part in the March Japan Festival.

Springton Garden Club visited the delightful gardens of Pip Waters, Marion Crowe and Annette Hurford in Rangiora. In March they explored Sue Jackson’s Garden in Rakaia and the prize winning gardens of Niven & Thelma Murch and Frances & Brian Nelson. In April Ashburton’s Daphne & Jim Allison’s prize winning garden was exquisite.
Autumn riots [of colour] about to break out!
John Clemens Curator, Christchurch Botanic Gardens

All trees lose leaves, even year-round evergreens have their season of greater leaf fall. But in winter-deciduous trees and bushes the loss of leaves is complete in autumn, before new leaf expansion resumes in spring. Winter takes effect early on maples, oaks and elms, creating beautiful riots of red, amber, from as early as March.

A green leaf is green because of the presence of a pigment known as chlorophyll. When they are abundant in the leaf’s cells, as they are during the growing season, the chlorophyll’s green color dominates and masks out the colors of any other pigments that may be present in the leaf. Thus the leaves of summer are characteristically green.

Traditional teachings had us believe that when the green depart, autumn’s ambers and oranges, consuming valuable sugars in the process. We now know that the colors of autumn are really no more than attractive waste products. We now know that the colours of autumn are just an exposed of colourful rubbish. The leaves of some trees go out of their way to make what we see as autumn colours, consuming valuable sugars in the process.

Why do these winter-deciduous plants do this when the leaves will soon be shed from the plant? One explanation is that red pigments or anthocyanins, protect the leaves from sun damage at a crucial stage when the plant is actively preparing to shed. New Zealand scientist Kevin Gould is an expert in this field. He has shown the protective function of leaf anthocyanins in a range of plants, including some of our native plants that have year-round red leaf colourations.

Other explanations for autumn colours abound, including different sunlight protective strategies that do not involve the red anthocyanins, and plant stress. The intensity and timing of leaf colours vary from year to year, but it will be interesting to see if we can detect unusual autumn colours following our earthquakes, especially in areas affected by the stress of liquefaction.

More poetically, autumn colour is a signal to bring the harvest home, lay down stores of food for winter, and keep warm! Our City’s deciduous trees are making their own preparations, each in its own way.

Visit the Gardens (open from 7am to 6.30pm all winter) to see the last of the autumn colours.

Christchurch Botanic Gardens

Loving Winter
From Terra Viva

Winter is a great season – it just gets bad press! Winter rains replenish the water table, winter frosts kill the residual pests, and the frosts bring those brilliant crisp still sunny days. And winter snow on the mountains gives us a picture-postcard-perfect environment, and the snow entices the skiers from Australia for our tourist industry.

And winter in the garden is not at all dull – think of the colours of early winter – the orange-red tones of flowering cherries, liquidambers, viburnums, oak-leaf hydrangeas, fiery red nandinas (especially Gulfstream). And then later on there’s the wonderful red berries on pyracantha (a wonderful evergreen for trimming, espaliering etc). Think of the colours of hellobes, primrose/polys, panies, primulas.

No sooner have we got into the colder months than we get glimpses of the new coming season – new roses arrive in the garden centres, along with rhododendrons, camellias, fruit trees, deciduous trees, and treats like lily bulbs and daphnes. And of course there’s always lots of primrose/polys and panies already in flower to brighten up pots and that’s one of the keys to a good look for winter – just keep your pots in focal points full of colours.

So enjoy working out in the garden on those sunny mid-winter days. Hopefully by the time regular rain arrives we’ll all have got our gardens tidy to avoid stamping round on waterlogged soil which compacts it too much.

Roses are best pruned towards the end of July – if you’re not sure how to prune them just call in and we can give you all the advice you need.

If your blue hydrangeas were more like pink then make sure you apply Hydrangea Blueing Tonic (Aluminium Sulphate) every two weeks over winter – I used it last winter and it worked a treat.

And start to make plans for the spring garden – maybe a change of colour schemes, maybe a make-over of the shrubbery – dreaming and planning are essential for keen gardeners!

New Look Website
We have updated the website and would love your feedback on usability. www.chsgardens.co.nz for news, tips & more

MEMBERSHIP
New subscription rates are a reality for the 2012 / 2013 CHS membership year.

Canterbury Horticultural Society has held the same rates at single $30 and double $40 for several years and the need to address the rates has finally caught up with the CHS. Management have reluctantly introduced an increase for the coming membership year commencing July 1, 2012 to single $40 and double $50.

Membership benefits remain with reduced entry rates to All About Gardening, tours, events that the Society operates.

Management look forward to developing closer links with a range of commercial opportunities to enhance the members benefits, recognising that as gardeners you are a discriminating group of purchasers.

Ramblers 2012
Getting To Know Your City

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Walks take place every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month and start at 9.30am.

More info: www.chsgardens.co.nz/ramblers
Inquiries: CHS Office tel: (03) 366 6937

Peter Worp - Terra Viva Home & Garden
Terra Viva has become an iconic Christchurch destination, combining three of peoples’ favourite pastimes into one attractive complex.

Enjoy the full-of-ideas garden centre, the inspiring homewares & giftwares department, and then relax in the fully-licensed cafe.

www.terraviva.co.nz