Spring in the air

The new tour season is ready to go. Wearable Arts Tour to Wellington is about to happen, just before the Rugby World Cup begins. If you have missed out on this popular show and tour I am taking names for the 2012 show. Geraldine, in the heartland of Canterbury, is the destination for our Spring Day Tour. This is planned when spring is at its peak in the gardens we feature. We will visit three very different gardens and meet the owners, also spend time in the unique country village of Geraldine. The White Heron and Nelson Tours have also spend time in the unique country village of Geraldine.

Don’t forget!

NELSON & TAKAKA
5 Day Longer Break 15 - 20 November
$1,195 members $1,295 non members (including itinerary and costs available October)

ELLERSLIE GARDEN TOURS
March 7 -11 2012
A Selection of Country & City Garden Tours

SPRING GARDENS OF GERALDINE
Day Tour 19 October
8.30am - 6.00pm
$75.00 members $90.00 non members
Includes: Garden talk on the love of rhododendrons, morning tea in a spring garden, retail therapy in Geraldine, transport, three gardens and an experienced guide.

HELLEBORUS FOR COLOUR
Beautiful winter foliage

One of the most interesting and popular plants for winter colour is the Helodoxor or Lenten Rose. The most commonly grown variety is Helodoxor orientalis. A native of Greece, Turkey and Soviet Georgia, it’s natural habitat is in scrub and at the edges of woodlands and forests, and a number of variations are often found in the wild.

Hellebores bring a delicate splash of colour when there is not much else in bloom.

Hellebores thrive in lightly shaded spots, where the soil has been thoroughly prepared. Because the roots resent disturbance, prepare soil with plenty of organic material before planting in spring or autumn. Maintain high fertility with an annual dressing of compost or composted manure each autumn and a light spring application of fertilizer. Cut back any leaves damaged by winter weather. New foliage will appear. Deep, frequent watering is necessary in dry weather. If you must divide the plants to build stock, this is best done just after flowering, but otherwise do not disturb them. H. orientalis, in particular, hybridizes and self-seeds quite freely; it is fun to grow seedlings on your own, but only those with the parent plant will germinate readily. Hellebores orientalis (Lenten rose) is easier to grow than H. niger and usually blooms a little later, with small clumps of white, yellow, red and green flowers ranging from white, often speckled with maroon, to pale green, through pink to purple. Growing to 60cm tall, it is a hardy hellebore.

HOUSE GARDENS & HIGH TEA
6 Day Longer Break 17 - 22 March 2012
Highlights: Outstanding Gardens Ruth Pretty High Tea & Cook Shop plus much more much more.
Register your interest now

Favourite flower

When the call went out in April to find the region’s favourite flower, the CHS received hundreds of entries from enthusiastic gardeners. Out of 57 varieties voted for, the Favourite Flower of Canterbury was the Rose! Followed closely by the Daffodil, Pasque Rose and Chrysanthemum. Thank you to all who voted.

Seeding ideas

150th Winter Luncheon Mary Lovell-Smith

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CANTERBURY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
NEWS SEP/OCT/NOV 2011

OVER THE GARDEN FENCE  Alan Jolliffe

Damn. Just as I started writing this we had a 5.3 quake. I had a look at Christchurch Quake Live on Facebook, along with 12000 others, and finally got to Geonet website to see the recordings on the seismographs.

Anyway. I was out walking to get some exercise around a newish neighbourhood recently and one of the things I noticed was the lack of well maintained gardens, poor choice of plants and a general lack of knowledge of gardening. That seems harsh in the Garden City but it is also an opportunity for the CHS to promote gardening to a wider audience in different and inventive ways.

However one house stood out. Not because of a beautifully laid out garden but because it was quite different and innovative. The front garden was made of raised beds and vegetable and edible plants. It was a little oasis in an otherwise sameness of the new street. Every time I go past I have a look to see what is edible. During the summer the strawberries hung over the edge of the raised beds and right now the cabbages, broccoli and silver beet are growing very well.

Why the front garden I wondered? Well simple, the back garden is in the shade and the front garden faces north getting plenty of sunshine and warmth to grow the edible plants very well.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Seeds of Opportunity

With the 150th Celebrations in full swing and plans for a General Review of the CHS well under way and mindful of the future challenges facing us, it is timely to salute the past commitment shown to our organisation by all of our Board Members and supporters. We have all at one time or another spent countless hours either in deliberation or affirmative action on behalf of the Society and we are all indisputably ‘singing from the same songbook’.

One of the less palatable aspects of a recent preliminary review has been the exercise in which Board Members and others active in the Society documented and apportion to the Society its Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. It was easy to define “Strengths” – so many to be proud of. It was more difficult to list and even harder to accept the “Weaknesses” in our cherished Society.

We are grateful to have been led through this part of the review by Rae Finlay. Her valuable personal time has, up till now, been donated in response to the needs of the Society and her own belief that the Society has a future both in the promoting of horticulture and in the rebuilding of Christchurch as “The Garden City”. I encourage all members of the Society to be open and speak frankly in the interests of the future of our organisation. We need to embrace and fully explore any negative issues that emerge and by converting them into the seeds of “Opportunity” move forward together in seeking the best of possible outcomes.

With the Christchurch earthquakes, the sale of the “Bell Property” and the effect of global share market upheavals on our Investment Portfolio, our Society has undergone significant changes of late. However it is with pleasure we welcome the arrival of our new “acting manager”, Shirley Russ. The appointment has seen her slip seamlessly into the role to take up her administrative duties with rare competence and enthusiasm.

I invite you all to attend our Annual General Meeting on the 7th September to consider the issues our Society currently faces, to share in plans to invigorate the Society and to meet with the office bearers who will guide the Society through the next twelve months.

Roxs Beaumont, President

ALL ABOUT GARDENING

September, October & November

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday 6th 7 - 9pm & Wednesday 7th 9.45 - 11.45am

In the Garden Tips, Tasks and Your Questions with Michael Coulter MINI: “Productive Gardens in Small Spaces” Louise Young, Gardener, Curator’s House MAXI: “Caring for and Growing Rhododendrons in Canterbury” Marina Shearer, of Phodo Direct

OCTOBER

Tuesday 4th 7 - 9pm & Wednesday 5th 9.45 - 11.45am

In the Garden Tips, Tasks and Your Questions with Michael Coulter MINI: “The NGIA - what’s that, you say?” Rachel Vogan explains the role of the association, its goals and aims, and how it influences and affects the everyday gardener.

MAXI: “Garden Tourism - alive and growing worldwide” Observations from the Garden Tourism Conference with Alan Jolliffe

NOVEMBER

Tuesday 1st 7 - 9pm and Wednesday 2nd 9.45 - 11.45am

In the Garden Tips, Tasks and Your Questions with Michael Coulter MINI: “CHS 150 Years of Endeavour Promoting Horticulture in Canterbury” Part 2 1940s to the Present, with Neiel Drain MAXI: “A Little more about Our Favourite Flower.” Glenn and Noel Wright, South Pacific Roses

All About Gardening is held at the CHS Centre in Hagley Park S3 members, S7 non-members. Includes morning tea / supper, tea & coffee

IS BEAUTIFUL STATIONERY JUST YOUR CUP OF TEA?

Phoenix Trading produces a fresh, innovative range of greeting cards, invitations, writing paper, gift wrap and much more. This high quality, exclusive range of stationery is available in stores or via the internet. To receive a complimentary, obligation-free catalogue, please send all material via email to: info@chsgardens.co.nz

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

Early to rise catches the worm

I have to confess that I am a terrible worm mother. I chronically over feed my squirming bachelorettes, the rogue wild ones who are always right there under the covers, right at the end of their flat earth society. I figure those ones are the bachelor and bachelorettes exploring the world while they can. The combination of my love and their laziness means that the food scraps give up waiting to be eaten by the worms and have started to convert themselves into compost. To say there is a mild odour is fair. I coincidently and conveniently have a vigorous, strong smelling Vietnamese mint growing right by the worm farm. It provides an olfactory distraction to my delicate nose.

Un normally late one night recently, I thought I would take out the worm food to my darlings. I lifted the lid and set it aside. I gently folded back the cover and started to snipping the scraps. Suddenly there was a rustling and then some scampers coming from behind the worm containers. In the dark I could not see what it was, but it made the unmistakable lolloping sound of a possum making away with a belly full of my babies.

Mary Duff is a Food Technologist who loves food and gardening. She is so dedicated that she picks the aphids off one by one, and finds cleaning the dirt from under her nails to be quite therapeutic.

Mary is originally from a beef and cropping farm on the South Canterbury border so perhaps this explains her dirt to dinner fascination.

FROM DIRT TO DINNER

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HAVE A CONTRIBUTION TO MAKE?
Next edition deadline: Friday 26 October 2012
please send all material via email to: info@chsgardens.co.nz