Ellerslie Garden Tours
Don’t forget to include a tour with your Ellerslie Experience! 26 February - 2 March 2014

Preparing the garden in this wild and windy summer season is no small feat for garden owners, especially those who open their gardens (and in many cases, homes) for the CHS Ellerslie Garden Tours Programme. Jo Free whose garden Silverwood features in the 'Country Gardens West of the City' tour comments, "A variety of hedging is essential in our large garden for shelter and is also provides good structure. Trimming and shaping gives a sharpness to the design. Pruning and deadheading the perennials will give me a second flush of flowers. This all creates a freshness in the garden."

Freda Hunter, who opens her house and garden in the 'Room to Room, Ohoka & Rangiora' tour notes how important it is to have supports in place for this windy season. "Many plants can be damaged by winds, especially dahlias and roses so preparing shelter and support before the winds strike is imperative. Monitoring the garden for moisture levels and watering to keep plants growing is also necessary. Creating new colour schemes and adding accessories gives a new look to rooms inside and outside the house."

Like many gardeners Freda loves to harvest vegetables from the kitchen garden. Beetroot and zucchinis have been exceptional this year - do share any new recipes by emailing info@chsgardens.co.nz!

We do hope you will be inspired join one of the Ellerslie Garden Tours and enjoy a day out with like minded people. Most tours provide morning tea and some have lunch and afternoon tea. An experienced guide will host each tour. All tours depart from the coach stop near Canterbury Museum, Rolleston Ave. Tickets available from the CHS Office or online www.chsgardens.co.nz

From the President - A Garden is born

Welcome to another year. May it be better than any other. The week before Christmas, the CHS installed the Alhambra Garden on the corner of New Regent and Armagh Streets. After weeks of frustration and design changes, a small group, Tony, Neville, Bob, Denis, Andy, Peter, Dave and myself began the humungous task of turning a waste space into a garden. On Friday, the third morning, our numbers were down to 5, with 4.5 cubic meters of bark to spread and what felt like several hundred plants to place. By 10am we all needed a coffee. Around then a group of 7 very handsome young men in immaculate coloured suits stopped to talk. Jokingly I asked if they could help us. Off came their jackets, up rolled their sleeves and they spent the next couple of hours helping. Cousins from England, they had only landed here four hours ago and were delighted to do something to help the City. Without their help, the garden would not have been finished. Heartfelt thanks to them and to our team for their time and energy. Elizabeth
Plant of the Month
Blueberry ‘Swirl’ Exclusive for CHS Members

Blueberries are considered a wonder food and are a fantastic addition to the garden, whether grown as a specimen plant in a container, or as a low hedge. New for 2014 and exclusive to Oderings is Blueberry ‘Swirl’. This delicious treat is a busy ‘rabbit eye’ type and is perfect for home gardens throughout the country. ‘Swirl’ is self-fertile, but cross-pollination of two different varieties with improved fruit quality and higher yields. Heavy cropping and disease resistant, it is very tasty in muffins, pies, desserts, smoothies - or simply eaten straight from the bush. ‘Swirl’ is not available until mid to late February and is only being released to CHS Members and Ellerslie ticket holders. To pre-order please email: pamela@oderings.co.nz

Top Tasks February
Michael Coulter

Flower Garden - Support Dahlias and Chrysanthemums and other taller growing plants before they get too tall and stems become crooked. Remove spent flowers to encourage continuous flowering of annuals and perennials. Look for rust and black spot on roses and mildew on other plants and take preventative measures to stop the spread of diseases. Keep up the water on the plants to avoid stress and look out for spider mite and spray as needed. Water pip fruit trees to help fruit to develop and harvest for leaf curl using a copper spray. Summer prune grapes, apples, pears and stone fruit after it is harvested. Spray stone fruit after harvest for leaf curl using a copper spray. Water pip fruit trees to help fruit to develop and look out for spider mite and spray as needed.

Plot to Pot

Strawberry Tarts with Mascarpone Cream

Ingredients
- 1 packet of pie pastry
- 1 punnet of strawberries
- 250gm mascarpone
- 100ml very cold cream
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 20 gm brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons of icing sugar

Preheat the oven to 170C. Cut the pastry to fit one large pie or 4 individual dishes and line the dishes having at least 1 cm sides. Prick the pastry with a fork and cook blind for about 20 minutes just until the pastry is pale gold. Leave to cool. Add the vanilla to the mascarpone. Mix in the brown sugar with a fork until it is well blended. Whip the cream and fold gently into the mascarpone mixture. Just before serving put the cream mixture into the cases, arrange the strawberries on the top and dust with icing sugar. Garnish with fresh mint.

NB You may want to halve large strawberries.

All About Gardening

7pm - 9pm Tue 4 February
9.45am - 11.45am Wed 5 February

Guest Circle
A member of the Begonia Circle tells how they get these glorious blooms

Love our Garden City
What not to miss in this month’s 25th anniversary of the Festival of Flowers

Parks and Gardens of England
Thomas Looij, garden designer and well known and respected former club and board member of CHS, takes us to Kew, Wakehurst and Sheffield

CHS Centre, South Hagley Park
Members: $5 non-members: $10

Tea, coffee and refreshments included

Top 5 Perennials

1. Hosta varieties
2. Campanula Persicifolia and Mystic Bells
3. Heuchera Marmalade and Green Spice
4. Geranium Reiter and Phaeum
5. Ligularia Britt Marie Crawford

As voted by CHS Members who attended Chelsea Chop Look & Learn day tour, November 2013

Treetops Lake Mahinapa
Experience life with the birds high in the ancient Rimu and Kamahi tree canopy.