

## Spring is 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 nearly filled - make your reservation very soon so you do not miss out. The popular **Christmas Twilight Tour** is planned for 15 December. Tickets available October.

The 2012 Tour Programme includes the **Ellerslie Garden Tours** in March; an autumn tour to Wellington, Wairarapa & Waikanae - **Garden Riches & Gourmet Delights** which will visit many special outstanding gardens and attractions; **Tasmania** in spring; and the **Chatham Islands**. Registering your interest in these tours would be appreciated.

### 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.

### Garden Riches & Gourmet Delights Wellington, Wairarapa & Waikanae



*A Tour with a Difference!*

### HOUSE GARDENS & HIGH TEA 6 Day Longer Break 17 - 22 March 2012

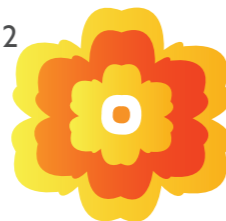
Highlights: Outstanding Gardens  
 Ruth Pretty High Tea & Cook Shop  
 plus much much more.

Register your interest now  
 Itinerary and costs available October

### ELLERSLIE GARDEN TOURS

March 7 - 11 2012

A Selection of  
 Country & City  
 Garden Tours



### HELLEBORUS FOR COLOUR

*Beautiful winter foliage*

One of the most interesting and popular plants for winter colour is the Helleborus or Lenten Rose. The most commonly grown variety is Helleborus orientalis. A native of Greece, Turkey and Soviet Georgia, it's natural habitat is in scrub and at the edges of woods 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 or partly shaded places, 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 well-rotted 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 fresh seeds will germinate readily. Helleborus orientalis (Lenten rose) is easier to grow than H. niger and usually blooms a little later, with small clusters of cup-shaped, nodding flowers ranging from white, often speckled with maroon, to pale green, through pink to purple. Growing to 60cm tall, it is a hardy hellebore.

### Favourite flower



When the call went out in April to find the region's favourite bloom, 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, Paeony Rose and Chrysanthemum. Thank-you to all who voted.

### ARTICLES ON THE WEB TODAY

Visit the website to read the latest contributions from experts and members. This quarter you can read about Canterbury's top ten favourite flowers as well as see photos from the Winter Luncheon.



## Seeding ideas

150th Winter Luncheon Mary Lovell-Smith

Heritage plants need be rescued from around old homesteads under threat of demolition, says the former mayor of Christchurch.

Speaking at the 150th anniversary luncheon of the CHS, guest speaker Gary Moore outlined some of his plans for the saving and rebuilding of the city's gardening scene. Likening his seven-point plan to "the finest environmental book every written", Dr Seuss's The Lorax, Moore challenged the society to adopt his "truffula" seeds, and germinate and spread his ideas throughout the quake-battered city.

"Old apple, pear and other fruit trees could be collected to ensure these heirloom plants do not disappear from our rootstock," he said. "These plants could be shared amongst communities and planted in areas where the crops could be shared."

He referred to the society's past efforts, such as its 1933 campaign with the city council whereby the unemployed were allocated allotments to grow their own food.

**"We must work towards a city having the ability to feed itself," he said. First up, was teaching every child how to grow their own food, "starting with the eastern suburbs."**

He suggested the Society implement a Mum and Dad's Army and an Adopt a Grandchild campaigns.

"Every generation holds a city in trust for those who follow. We must excite our young people to become engaged with horticultural matters," he said, advocating that this be done through the province's artists and musicians. Land could be set aside for community gardens and commons. As in the Society's Seeds for Victory campaign during World War 2, Sister Cities around the world could be approached for seeds, he said.

His proposal that a model garden be set up in Hagley Park, whereby members of the public could "see how to do things in a garden" was met with applause. It is an idea that has long been mooted among Society members but never yet been implemented.

All citizens need to take the horticultural future into their own hands, "we need to take responsibility for our streets and their beautification as our council will be preoccupied with very basic things and we need to lend them a hand.

Harking back to the role the horticultural society played in the building of the city, he stressed the importance of re-establishing its links with the University of Canterbury, Lincoln University and CPIT. "We need debates which promote science in our rebuild," he said.

### CERA AND THE GARDEN CITY

*Rachel Vogan*

The Garden City is my home and it's certainly where my heart is. Canterbury is starting to recover from the devastation of the numerous earthquakes and after shocks that have rattled the city over the past 11 months. We all know its going to be a long slow process. The upside is that we have an opportunity to create an exciting new space and environment that not many get the chance to do. The down side is knowing where to start and getting it right!

The connection shown to those that have been greatly affected by the quakes is tremendous; the willingness to engage and roll up your sleeves to lend a hand is humbling and reassuring. Gardening, plants and parks are aiding in healing of the emotional state of mind of many locals. The sense of reassurance and comfort of seeing the daffodils blooming once again reinforces that fact that things will get back to normal soon, life does go on and what we can do does make a difference.

It's vital that Christchurch retains its world class parks, botanical gardens and landmarks that cement it as the horticultural hub of the country. The city needs to maintain its heritage plantings, collections and diversity and develop new areas that match the wants and needs of today and tomorrow's society.

Being part of the CERA community forum is my opportunity to put forward the requirements and needs of community groups, nursery and landscape industries and environmental organisations that have a connection to gardening in any way shape or form. The focus of the forum is to ensure that the key issues are identified, articulated and recognised and that these are factored into decisions made about the cities future.

**I invite the Canterbury Horticultural Society and anyone from any other associated group to submit and outline what the key important issues are that affect the city and your members.**

Suggestions and ideas about how to deal with gardens, plants and those affected from the red zones, through to the relocation of plants, establishment of new parks, wetlands and sustainable plantings all have a part to play. I believe no one planting theme should dominate, but a blend be chosen to showcase that the vibrancy of a region that continues to grow.

I look forward to doing what I can to ensure the garden industry, city and region blooms once again.



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.

Ross 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 Rhodo 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

\$3 members, \$7 non-members. Includes morning tea / supper, tea & coffee

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Canterbury Orchid Society ORCHID SHOW

10.00am-5.00pm Saturday 1st October  
9.00am-4.00pm Sunday 2nd October

Potting Demonstrations, Sales Tables, Refreshments

Canterbury Horticultural Centre, Hagley Park  
Admission \$5.00 (accomp children under 14yrs free)

FROM DIRT TO DINNER

*Mary Duff, admirer & 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 squirmy friends. Luckily they can control their appetite unlike my beloved first and last goldfish that I over loved also.

My worms are quite lazy, especially in the winter. I like to give them a gentle hurry up by turning the castings and scraps together.

There are always the adventurers, 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 before family ties them down.

The combination of my love and their laziness means that the food scraps give up waiting to be eaten by the worms and have stared to convert themselves into compost. To say there is a mild odour is fair. I coincidentally 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 sprinkling in the scraps. Suddenly there was a rustling and then some scampering 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.*

HAVE A CONTRIBUTION TO MAKE?  
Next edition **deadline:** Friday 28 October 2011  
please send all material via email to: [info@chsgardens.co.nz](mailto:info@chsgardens.co.nz)

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