



Spring Newsletter 2022



Crabapple Blossom.

Spring at last! Spring is a season of renewal, and we are delighted to unveil our wonderful program of spring open gardens, which we trust will bring you gardening inspiration and enjoyment. We sincerely thank the garden owners who generously share their sanctuaries and have worked so hard to prepare their gardens for visitors. Our spring program presents 31 beautiful gardens, so we hope you can visit gardens often and share the experience with family and friends – it's a great day out!

Please enjoy our Spring Newsletter.

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Early Spring Open Gardens

September 03 - 04
Avondale, Rhyndale 1st Open

September 18, SUNDAY ONLY
Al Ru Farm, One Tree Hill

September 24 - 25
Dunedin, Strathalbyn
The Gasworks, Strathalbyn

October 01 – 02 – 03
Avondale, Rhyndale 2nd Open

October 01 – 02
Anna's Garden, Clarence
Gardens
Rosenthal Gully, Bridgewater

October 08 - 09
TickleTank, Mt Barker
Clair de Lune, Watervale
Skilly House Garden,
Watervale

October 15 - 16
Martindale, Strathalbyn
Nina's Garden, Strathalbyn

October 16, SUNDAY ONLY
Dominican Peace & Sophia
Gardens, Cumberland Park

See the full program at:
<http://opengardensa.org.au/>

Open Gardens SA Annual General Meeting



Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on 20 June 2022, and commenced at 6pm, at the SA Country Women's Association House, 30 Dequetteville Terrace, Kent Town.

Order of Business

- Minutes from AGM 2021.
- Consideration of the Accounts.
- Report from Chair of the Committee.
- Election of committee members.

Election of Committee Members

The election of Open Gardens SA (OGSA) committee members takes place at the AGM. The Committee comprises a minimum of 10 people and a maximum of 18 people. A committee member must be a current paid up member of OGSA Inc. Retiring committee members are eligible to stand for re-election without nomination.

Committee member Jane Knowler had previously advised of her decision to not continue on the committee, and the Chairperson thanked and acknowledged Jane's contribution to OGSA in her absence. As there were no new nominations, and the other committee members had indicated their intention to stand for re-election, a vote to elect members was not required.

Election of New Committee Officials

At the OGSA Committee meeting following the AGM, also held on the 20 June 2022, the election of Officials took place. The appointed Officials for the next twelve months are as follows:

Chairperson: David Hancock.

Deputy Chairperson: Alison Jones.

Finance Officer: Rob Andrewartha.

Public Officer: Rob Andrewartha.

Secretary: Lyn Edwards.



Open Gardens SA Entry Fee

Please note the new pricing for the garden entry fee – the first increase in seven years. General entry to each garden is **\$10** per adult, with a discounted fee of **\$8** per adult for Open Gardens SA Members and for those with a Commonwealth Government Pensioner Concession Card or Health Care Card (but not a Seniors Card). Under 18 receive free entry. We encourage visitors to bring cash as EFTPOS facilities may not always be available. The gardens will open under Covid guidelines as may exist at the time of opening.



A Tree Less Often Seen - *Rhododendron arboreum*

Article and photographs by Trevor Nottle.

Rhododendron arboreum is a slow growing tree that inhabits the foothills of the Himalaya in Nepal and Kashmir. It is quite common there and grows in such numbers that it makes forests. Its popularity



as firewood makes it vulnerable to over-harvesting but so far it seems to be surviving. Its stature can vary markedly depending on the elevation at which it grows, how long the snow cover lasts and its exposure to fierce winds blasting down from the high mountains and the Tibetan plateau beyond.

It is all rather unlike our garden in Crafers but we have a plant of it here where it has been slowly building into a tree-like form over the last 40 years or so. It is only in the last few years that it has developed a tree-like form with definite leading growth that is heading skyward. Before that it was regarded as a pleasing flowering shrub.

Looking back through old garden diaries I find that a young plant was purchased from Arnold Teese, a well-known plantsman who began his career in Australia as gardener to the Ansell family when they began to develop their property 'PIRREANDA' at Olinda in the Dandenong Ranges, Victoria. The notes do not record whether Arnold has begun his 'YAMINA Rare Plants Nursery' at the time of purchase. At the time the local Rhododendron Society of SA was led by Dr Chris Laurie who gardened at 'PANMURE' on Sturt Valley Road, who was a very keen plantsman and Chair of the Board of the Adelaide Botanic Gardens. It was he who energised local interest in growing Rhododendrons in private and public gardens. Under his aegis propagation and importation of plants from Victoria, Tasmania and New South Wales was undertaken on a large scale. I am sure he would have encouraged me, as a junior member of the society and newcomer to gardening in the Hills, to get this plant.



Our plant is now higher than the ridge-line of our house and its flowering this Winter has been prodigious. It grows sheltered from the midday sun by an adjacent *Acer pentaphyllum* but the site is still quite sunny as the maple casts only dappled shade. The soil is neither deep nor loamy; instead being shallow and filled with white quartz rocks and ironstone nodules. It seems happy enough so just maybe the soil, such as it is, near enough approximates the steep sided, rocky hills of the Himalaya?

The flowers appear in late Winter and are held in clusters at the ends of the branches. A bright cheery red typifies the waxy, campanulate flowers but other forms are known. I once grew a selected form named 'GLOXINIOIDES' which was a very pale pink, fading to white, covered with very fine dark red spots. Sadly, it expired some years ago from phytophthora infection.

The *Rhodo. arboreum* that I grow is said to be *R. arboreum* x 'ELIZABETH' but on checking in preparation for this contribution to the OGSA newsletter I have been unable to verify this name. I do think it was named after HM The Queen soon after she ascended the throne. The Ansell's must have thought it good enough to import for their garden and I am grateful for the opportunity to grow it. I know of no other plants of the tree rhododendron in the district.

Author's note: *The nomenclature of Rhododendrons is like many other genera subject to revisions and changes. Keeping up with it requires references that are difficult to obtain or access. However, in the case of Rhododendron arboreum x 'ELIZABETH' it has been possible to trace the name back to the 1960's. 'ELIZABETH' is itself a hybrid of Rhododendron forrestii repens x Rhodogriersonianum. This plant is noted as a small, spreading shrub so the cross of this with Rhododendron arboreum has resulted in the tree form being dominant in this case.*



OGSA Spring 2022 Garden photographs



Avondale, Rhynie



Al Ru Farm, One Tree Hill



Dunedin, Strathalbyn



The Gasworks, Strathalbyn



Anna's Garden, Clarence Gardens



Rosenthal Gully, Bridgewater



Wellswood Cottage, Aldgate



TickleTank, Mt Barker



Clair de Lune, Watervale



Woakwine, Magarey



Skilly House Garden, Watervale



Martindale, Strathalbyn



The Glades, Aldgate



Nina's Garden, Strathalbyn



The Dominican Peace & Sophia Gardens, Cumberland Park



Kinclaven, Crafers

Garden Diversity

The gardens that open for Open Gardens SA are chosen to reflect a great diversity of styles and may even challenge the conventional view of what constitutes a garden. While aspects of a garden may not be to your taste, we urge you to celebrate this diversity.

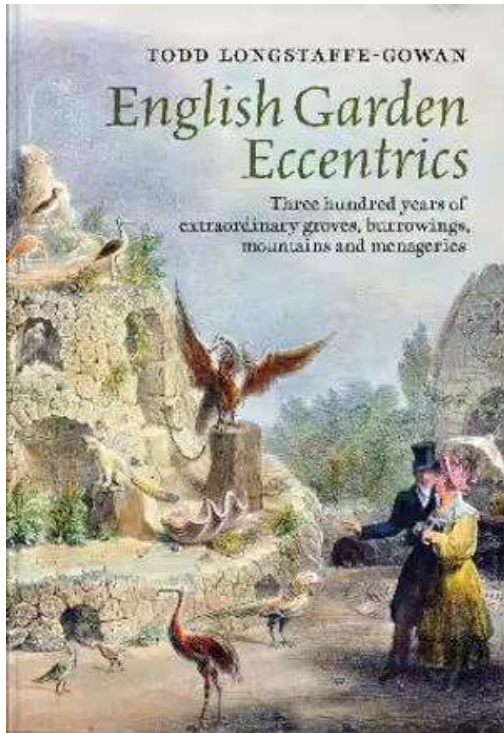
Please remember you are visiting a private home and show respect and sensitivity for the owners who have so generously shared their garden with you.

Thank you.

Book Review - ENGLISH GARDEN ECCENTRICS

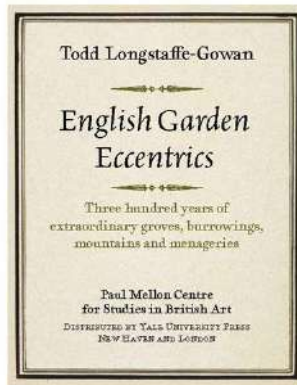
by Tom Longstaff-Gowan, PMG Yale University Press, 2021

Review By Trevor Nottle.



Readers may well remember a few eccentric gardens from their own childhood; the Shell House at Robe, The Olde Curiosity Shoppe in Bendigo, the curious array of whirligigs, tin flags, rockwork and sprinkler heads that represented the River Murray on its journey to the sea which stood outside a cottage on Wakefield Street. There were others too, naïve constructions of cement, broken crockery, giant crab claws, bits of broken coloured glass, shells, the heads, arms, legs and

torsos of old dolls and other recycled materials that bore personal memories and meaning into the future. Is it not rather sad that such imagination and artistry, however raw and mostly ephemeral is no longer seen as a valid means of self-expression?



English gardens have also had their champions of self-expression by means of rockeries, sculptures, temples, caves, mazes and grottoes. Those in Tom Longstaff-Gowan's new book, *ENGLISH GARDEN ECCENTRICS* recall a rather grand history of the use of gardens to celebrate diverse thoughts, political enmities and just plain silliness and idle fantasies.

For the full story of the Hellfire Club, Sir Francis Dashwood, and the gardens at West Wycombe Park, go no further than this book: all will be revealed in full scandalous detail. Or, if a tale less risqué is desired look to the fantastic gardens of Friar Park made by Sir

Frank Crisp, until recently the home of Beatle George Harrison and his wife Patty. And if a completely potty character is wished for go no further that the case of Dr John Samuel Phené and his 'Senseless and Bewildering Accumulation of Incongruous Things.'

Highly recommended diversionary reading for when those tired of being urged to re-wild their gardens, or to prepare for survival by planting a window-box filled with alfalfa and mung beans, get really stressed by the seriousness of it all.



Follow OGSA on Facebook and Instagram



OGSA Recommends....

We recommend you always check our website for garden opening details. The website is an up-to-date, reliable and informative site which lists each open garden with a description of the garden, address (including a map), photographs, the availability of refreshments etc. The official Garden Notes written by the garden owner are also provided which you can read in advance or print and take a copy with you for your garden visit. Importantly, our website will always list any late additions or cancellations to our garden opening program.

<http://opengardensa.org.au/>

Open Gardens SA 2022 Spring Calendar

Entry Fee \$10 per Adult, Limited Concessions available, Under 18 free.

PLEASE NOTE: It is important to confirm garden openings by checking our webpage.

September 2022

03 - 04

Avondale 1, 146 Avondale Road, Rhynie

18 - Sunday ONLY

Al-Ru Farm, 1016 One Tree Hill Road, One Tree Hill (Plant Fair and open garden)

24 - 25

Dunedin, 16 Fairfield Drive, Strathalbyn

The Gasworks, 12-14 South Terrace, Strathalbyn

October 2022

01 – 02 – 03 (October Long Weekend)

Avondale 2, 146 Avondale Road, Rhynie

01 – 02

Anna's Garden, 46 Gladys Street, Clarence Gardens

Rosenthal Gully, 2 Rosenthal Road, Bridgewater

08 – 09

TickleTank, 24 Hill Street, Mt Barker

Clair de Lune, 217 Skillogalee Creek Road, Watervale

Skilly House Garden, 294 Skillogalee Creek Road, Watervale

Clair de Lune & The Skilly House Garden open jointly: \$15 for both.

15 – 16

Martindale, 1059 Paris Creek Road, Strathalbyn

Nina's Garden, 6B Old Bull Creek Road, Strathalbyn

16 – Sunday ONLY

Dominican Peace & Sophia Gardens, Little Street, Cumberland Park

Spring Calendar continued next page.



Garden on the Bay, Pt Lincoln



Seaview, Crafers West



Evesham, Crafers



St Marys Vineyard, Maaoupe (near Penola)



Hilltop, Stirling



Ashgrove Iris Garden, Gumeracha

Open Gardens SA

2022 Spring Calendar – *Continued.*

Entry Fee \$10 per Adult, Limited Concessions available, Under 18 free.

October 2022 *Continued*

21 – 22 (Friday and Saturday)

Garden on the Bay, 160 Proper Bay Road, Port Lincoln

22 – 23

Seaview, 32 Waverley Ridge Road, Crafers West

Evesham, 27 Waverley Ridge Road, Crafers

St Marys Vineyard, 563 V & A Lane, Maaoupe (near Penola)

29 – 30

Hilltop, 9-11 Old Carey Gully Road, Stirling

Ashgrove Iris Garden, 53-55 Albert Street (cnr Randell Terrace), Gumeracha

Alto Cinco, 5 High Street, Kersbrook

Fiddlestix, 58 Holly Rise, Coffin Bay

November 2022

05 – 06

Drouin, 12 Mossop Court, Littlehampton

Gladys's Garden, 36 Avenue Road, Highgate

12 – 13

The Knoll, 6 The Knoll Crescent, Coromandel Valley

The Glen, 35 Wilson Lane, Glencoe (near Mt Gambier)

Roy & Fiona's Mylor Country Garden, 100 Aldgate Valley Road, Mylor

19 – 20

Fenchurch, 22 Fenchurch Road, Aldgate

Wellswood Cottage, 19 Devonshire Road, Aldgate

Woakwine, 509 Beachport Penola Road, Magarey

26 – 27 November

The Glades, 5 Linwood Avenue, Aldgate

Kinclaven, 56 Waverley Ridge Road, Crafers



Drouin, Littlehampton



Gladys's Garden, Highgate



The Knoll, Coromandel Valley



The Glen, Glencoe (near Mt Gambier)



Roy & Fiona's Mylor Country Garden, Mylor



Fenchurch, Aldgate



Alto Cinco, Kersbrook



Fiddlestix, Coffin Bay



Congratulations Trevor Nottle!

Australia's gardening media gathered in Nambour on the Queensland Sunshine Coast on the 9th July 2022 to celebrate its awards of excellence and to present two honour awards. The awards, known as The Laurels, were presented at a tropical themed cocktail party held in conjunction with Queensland Garden Expo at the Nambour Showgrounds.

The Horticultural Media Association Australia (HMAA) is the national body representing gardening media in Australia. It covers journalists, writers, authors, bloggers, radio broadcasters and TV presenters. As well, the association recognises excellence with an award presentation held every second year. In the alternate year, awards are made for photography.

Full details of the 2022 award recipients are available on the HMAA website.

Gold Laurel

The Gold Laurel is the top honour award made to its members by HMAA in recognition of many years of exceptional work within the horticultural media. This year the Gold Laurel was presented to Trevor Nottle from South Australia for his body of work across many facets of the media including as an author of more than 16 books covering plants and garden history, articles contributed to both popular and learned journals, speaking engagements around the world and the maintenance of an active social media profile. Trevor is also President of the South Australian branch of HMAA. Trevor Nottle is an outstanding and worthy recipient of the Gold Laurel.



Trevor has also been a Committee member for Open Gardens SA, and is a regular contributor to our quarterly Newsletter.

Congratulations Trevor on a prestigious and well-deserved award!



Theatre in the Garden – *The Scarlet Pimpernel*! A revolution of romance, danger and laughs.

This January, Open Gardens SA and Blue Sky Theatre present the literary classic, *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, in three South Australian gardens. Armed with only his wits and cunning, one man recklessly defies the Parisian authorities to rescue aristocrats from the deadly

guillotine during the French Revolution. Our dashing hero hides in plain sight by pretending to be the biggest fool in London. But a ruthless French agent is sworn to discover his identity and stop him at any cost.



The Scarlet Pimpernel will be staged at gardens in Victor Harbor, The Cedars in Hahndorf and Wittunga Botanic Garden in Blackwood between January 13th and 28th 2023.

As performances are outdoors, there's plenty of room to enjoy a picnic washed down with a drink from the bar. It'll be another colourful and energetic experience under the stars.

Tickets are \$35 and on sale from October 1st, 2022, at blueskytheatre.com.au



Where to see wildflowers in South Australia

Article shared from:

<https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/goodliving/posts/2016/09/wildflowers>

Wildflowers are now blooming across the state, in national parks, reserves, and by roadsides. The outback and the Flinders Ranges have a well-deserved reputation for the most stunning displays. But if you live in metropolitan Adelaide and don't have time to make a long trip, you can still find plenty of these little gems in the Adelaide Hills – especially tiny but beautiful native orchids. Some species are already in flower, while others will be at their best in coming weeks. Here are some to look out for in South Australia's national parks:

Flinders and Outback.

Spring is a spectacular time in [Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges](#) and [Ikara-Flinders Ranges](#) national parks, with wattles, native hopbush, mintbush and Sturt desert peas enhancing the amazing landscape. At [Witjira National Park](#), poached-egg daisies and parakylia are spread across the dunes. Look along creek lines for purple verbines and Darling lilies, and on the gibber plains for daisies, lantern bushes and Swainson peas.



Photo: Thorn Wattle.

In [Innaminka Regional Reserve](#), native geraniums, eremophila and daisies are starting to flower, especially along the creek lines.

[Mount Remarkable National Park](#) in the Southern Flinders is

only a few hours from Adelaide, and spots like Alligator Gorge will be full of wildflowers as spring progresses. Some to look out for are the chocolate lily, with its violet flowers and distinctive chocolate scent, early Nancy and native leek, and orchids such as the scented sun orchid, pink fingers, spider orchid and daddy longlegs.

Adelaide Hills.

[Belair National Park](#), [Cleland](#), [Morialta](#) and [Blackhill](#) conservation parks, and [Sturt Gorge](#) and [Shepherds Hill](#) recreation parks are all teeming with wildflowers.

The Cleland Link Trail from Crafers to Mount Lofty Summit is close to the city and ideal to visit, especially for those without cars. A bus from the city takes less than half an hour and you can walk up to Mount Lofty Summit or into [Cleland Wildlife Park](#), enjoying wildflowers such as twiggy bearded heath, shrub violet and orchids like greenhoods, sun orchids and donkey orchids along the way. Look for the trailhead signs on the northern side of the freeway off-ramp, near the bus interchange.

Please don't be tempted to go into the bush or parks to pick wildflowers or collect plants. In many areas, wildflowers are protected species and you can be fined for picking them.

Photo: Spotted donkey orchid.



Morialta has a beautiful show of native orchids, including greenhood, mosquito and helmet orchids, and sun orchids will start flowering soon. They are visible from the [Three Falls Hike walking trail](#), which takes you past the park's three waterfalls.

Clare Valley

[Spring Gully Conservation Park](#) near Clare is also full of colour, with a gorgeous array of orchids, including spotted donkey orchids, shell orchids and blue fairies, and many other wildflowers such as billybuttons, with their yellow puffball flowers, woodland creamy candles, red parrot-peas and early Nancy.



Photo: Billybutton

Want to grow native flowering plants in your home garden? The [State Flora nurseries](#) at Belair National Park and Murray Bridge can help with a wide range of native plants, including trees, shrubs, groundcovers and bulbs.

This story was originally published in September 2016.

Spring flowering bulbs

Edited Information sourced from the internet. Photographs by Di Michalk.



One of the many pleasures in a garden is a wonderful display of spring flowering bulbs – and there are many to select from, and they are easy to grow!

If you have space in your garden, many bulbs can be allowed to naturalise, creating a fabulous display. A great example of this is the garden Avondale, at Rhynie (near Clare), with many thousands of bulbs. This stunning garden opens twice for Open Gardens SA with the first open on the 3rd and 4th September this year, followed by the second open on the October long weekend.

For the best results, the time to plant your spring flowering bulbs is between April to May – mid to late Autumn. As a general rule, most bulbs are planted twice as deep as the bulb is tall and roughly the same distance apart. The pointed end of the bulb should be upwards, with Anemone and Ranunculi bulbs being the only exceptions – the pointy end for these is planted facing downwards in the soil.



Most Spring flowering bulbs do best in a freely draining soil. You can always mound up the garden beds to improve drainage if this is an issue in your garden.

Many bulbs do very well in pots, particularly useful for tiny bulbs (tiny spring crocus or *Iris reticulata* are a good example) which could otherwise be “lost” in the garden.

Keep the bulbs away from the outer edges of the pot which can get very hot. Water regularly to keep soil slightly moist. Plant the bulbs in the garden the following year as most won't flower consecutive years in pots.

Planting in pots also allows you to bring the pots indoors for brief periods to enjoy the flowers – many bulbs have good perfume.



Most bulbs grow best in full sun to light shade and most spring bulbs like their soil kept moist as they actively grow and reasonably dry when dormant.

A general rule of thumb is to top dress all bulbs in Autumn and water in. Use a specialty bulb fertiliser or a general fertiliser. Many bulbs grow better if a second dressing is applied straight after flowering as this is when the bulb is taking in and storing nutrients for next year's flowers. After flowering, it's important that you continue watering and feeding the leaves since they are generating the energy the bulb requires to produce next year's flowers. Don't be tempted to remove the foliage until it has completely died down.

Many bulbs can be left in the ground from one year to the next – this helps them to naturalise for a grand display. If you do need to dig the bulbs and store over their dormant period, first loosen the soil with a garden fork, being careful not to spear the bulbs, and gently lift up the bulbs. Allow the bulbs to dry somewhere cool (not in full sun). Once dry, clean excess dirt and remove any old flower stalks. Try to leave the bulbs 'skin' intact as this helps protect the bulbs. Store the bulbs somewhere cool (less than 25°C), dry and airy until you replant the following Autumn.

Tulip bulbs are the only bulbs which require 4-8 weeks in the crisper of the fridge before planting. Do not freeze them!



(Tulip photo at left.)

An easy way to remember is to put your tulip bulbs in the fridge around April fool's day, then plant your bulbs around Mother's day.

Bulbs to plant in sunny positions:

The bulbs below thrive being planted in sunny spots in a cool to temperate climate and they

also tolerate shade for a couple of hours each day. In warmer climates they tolerate greater levels of shade:



Anemones (photo at left)

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Alliums | Hyacinths |
| Brodiaea | Ranunculi |
| Dutch Iris | Daffodils |
| Lachenalias | Freesias |
| Ixias | Spring Star |
| Flowers | Sparaxis |
| Species Gladioli | Grape |
| Hyacinths (photo below) | |

Bulbs to plant in shady positions:

These bulbs tolerate 2 – 3 hours of full sun each day or filtered light all day:



- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| Anemones | Lachenalias |
| Dutch Crocus (photo at left) | |
| Daffodils | Bluebells |
| Cuban Lilies | Hyacinths |
| Grape Hyacinths | Tulips |

Bulbs to plant in rockeries:

These smaller bulbs are ideal:

- | | | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| Blue bells | Dutch Iris | Daffodils | Rock Tulips |
| Rain Lilies | Babiana | Lachenalias | Cuban Liles |

Grape Hyacinths Spring Star Flowers.

Bulbs for naturalising:

These bulbs can be left to flower happily by themselves.



Anemones (photo above)

- | | |
|-------------|-----------|
| Blue bells | Daffodils |
| Dutch Iris | Freesias |
| Sparaxis | Watsonias |
| Lachenalias | Grape |
| Hyacinths | Ixias |



Spring Star Flowers



Dutch Iris





Delightful Crabapple Blossom.

Open Gardens South Australia is a not-for-profit organisation
opening private gardens to the public.

The purpose of Open Gardens SA is to educate and promote the enjoyment, knowledge
and benefits of gardens and gardening in South Australia and to build strong public
support for the development of gardens.

Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening.

Our mailing address is:

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Editors: Di Michalk and Trevor Nottle.

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