



Winter Newsletter 2023



Beautiful Camellia flowers at Stangate House and Garden, Aldgate, Adelaide Hills.

It's Winter – chilly and wet days can be challenging when there are jobs which need attention in the garden. There is a view that there is no such thing as inappropriate gardening weather – just an inappropriate choice of gardening attire, but if it's raining and cold, indoor jobs might be a better choice! Open Gardens SA doesn't usually open gardens during winter, however we use this time to plan and organise our spring program of open gardens. Winter also is the time to hold our Annual General Meeting and organise our information get-together for the owners of the gardens opening for the next season. We hope you enjoy our Winter Newsletter.

Inside this Issue:

- Open Gardens SA Annual General Meeting
- SA Landscape Festival 2023 – another successful event!
- Early spring program of Open Gardens
- Book Review: Why are there no new gardening books?
- Community Gardens Funding Grants 2023
- Blue Sky Theatre - back with a new indoor show for winter
- Australian Native Plant Gardens
- Plant Profile – Hellebore
- Gardening Volunteers

Selection of Spring
Open Gardens - A
full list will be
available on our
Website soon!

September 02 - 03, 2022
Avondale – Rhynie (1st
Opening)

September 24 (Sunday Only)
Marybank Farm – Rostrevor

September 30 - October 01 &
02 (October Long Weekend,
3 days)
Avondale – Rhynie (2nd
Opening)

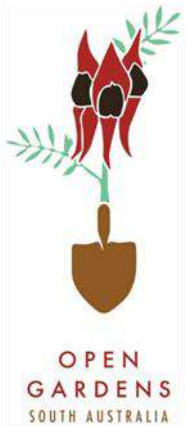
October 07 - 08
Clair de Lune - Watervale
Skilly House Garden –
Watervale
TickleTank – Mt Barker
Orcombe Farm - Lyndoch

October 14 - 15
The Bower - Belair
Churston – Croydon
St Marys Vineyard - Penola

**See details of the program on
our website soon:**

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

Open Gardens SA Annual General Meeting



Notice has been given that the Annual General Meeting of Open Gardens South Australia Inc (OGSA) will be held on:

Date: Tuesday 11 July, 2023.
Time: Commencing at 6pm.
Venue: SA Country Women's Association House, 30 Dequetteville Terrace, Kent Town.

Order of Business

- Minutes from AGM 2022.
- Consideration of the Accounts.
- Report from Chair of the Committee.
- Election of committee members.

Election of Committee Members

- The election of committee members will take place at the AGM on 11 July 2023.
- 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.
- Any other member who wishes to stand for election must be nominated by a current member of OGSA before May 26, 2023. Both the nominee and the proposer must sign the nomination form and send it by email to the Secretary. *This information was sent by email to OGSA Members prior to the nomination deadline.*

OGSA Members are welcome to attend the AGM. Please RSVP by June 30, to the Admin Officer at: office@opengardensa.org.au. Please note there will be no guest speaker this year.



Open Gardens SA – Photographs of some of the gardens opening this coming Spring!



Marybank Farm – Rostrevor



Clair de Lune - Watervale



Avondale - Rhynie



Skilly House Garden – Watervale



Tickle Tank – Mt Barker



Churston – Croydon

SA Landscape Festival 2023



The second SA Landscape Festival was held over the weekend of the 15 and 16 April 2023. Brought to you by **Open Gardens SA** and **Master Landscapers of SA** this festival was dedicated to presenting our state's best landscaped gardens, each created for their owners by design professionals.

All proceeds from the festival were donated to the **SA**

Country Women's Association (SACWA), our charity partner for this event. We were delighted hand over a sum of **\$28,137.92** to the SACWA at a Donation Presentation on the 17 May 2023. The SACWA also served tea, coffee, and freshly baked scones at three of the gardens over the festival weekend, providing them with the opportunity to raise additional funds.



Ten stunning South Australian professionally designed gardens opened their gates to welcome visitors, offering a rare chance for the public to learn from garden landscape designers and pick up tips on creating their own perfect back yards. From contemporary courtyards and entertaining areas, to attractive, easy-to-maintain family friendly backyards, there were ideas for every size and style of garden. The gardens were located across Adelaide and the Hills including Brighton South and West Beach, from Medindie to Leabrook and in the Adelaide Hills, at Bridgewater, Oakbank, Hahndorf and Stirling.



The Festival was very successful with an estimated **6,500 visitations** with many people visiting multiple gardens. Visitors were able to ask questions and receive valuable advice from the garden designers and / or their representatives

explaining their design ideas, offering guidance and information. Not only did the South Australian public support this event, but we also had a number of interstate visitors who thoroughly enjoyed the festival experience.



The feedback received from visitors was wonderful with comments such as:

“Just liked to say a big thank you! Hubby and I have had a wonderful time exploring all the gardens this weekend. So many amazing gardens, plants and ideas. Thank you to all those who worked behind the scenes & the CWA ladies.”

“It's been a wonderful weekend visiting all of these gardens to admire and appreciate the great work that the landscapers do to showcase their expertise.”

“What wonderful gardens and their gardener's, such vision and dedication and accomplishment....how very satisfying it is too. Well done to them all.”

“Garden envy big time - simply stunning Open Gardens SA.”

We thank the garden owners, the designers, and the public for their incredible support. Another wonderful event and we are delighted with the result!





We invited Nicki King, from *Nicki King Landscape Design*, one of the garden designers participating in the festival with her garden design at Oakbank in the Adelaide Hills, to share her experience....

“How thrilled I was to be a part of the 2023 SA Landscape Festival and showcase one of my garden designs to the public. It was truly an incredible event where I had the opportunity to meet and connect with like-minded plant

lovers, industry professionals, and curious visitors.

The festival provided a wonderful platform for me to showcase my garden design, which has been one of my favourites due to its planting and habitat creation. The theme of my garden was centred around sustainability, creating habitat and the use of native plants, which I believe are essential for the health of our ecosystem. It was a challenging task, but with the trust, hard work and enthusiasm of an amazing client, the end result was a stunning garden that demonstrated how beautiful and practical sustainable gardening can be.

Throughout the festival, I had the pleasure of talking to visitors who were genuinely interested in the design of the garden, the choice of plants, and the techniques used to create it. The conversations were meaningful and inspiring, and it was wonderful to see so many people excited and motivated to make a positive impact on the environment and have a go at creating their own beautiful garden.



But what made the experience even more enjoyable was the opportunity to connect with other like-minded individuals. The festival brought together a diverse group of professionals and enthusiasts, all passionate about sustainable gardening, and it was a delight to share our experiences and learn from one another.

As we laughed and shared stories, I realised that this festival was not just about showcasing our designs and exchanging ideas, but also about building a community of people who share the same values and beliefs. I was completely blown away by the dedication of the volunteers who came together to create, coordinate, and run this wonderful event and the owners of the sensational gardens who kindly opened their homes to the public.

In conclusion, the 2023 SA Landscape Festival was an unforgettable experience for me. It was an opportunity to showcase my work, share my passion with others, and connect with a

community of plant lovers who are dedicated to creating a sustainable future. I am grateful for the experience, and I look forward to participating in the festival again in 2025!”



A few more SA Landscape Festival Photos!



OGSA Recommends...

We recommend you always check our website to confirm garden opening details prior to visiting. 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/>

During the Winter months Open Gardens SA takes a break from opening gardens to the public – the Committee spends much of this time planning for the Spring program and we have a very exciting and busy spring 2023 program of open gardens. Enjoy a glimpse of our anticipated early spring gardens.

Subject to change so please always refer to Open Gardens SA website for the most up to date details -

<https://www.opengardensa.org.au/current-season>

The full garden details will available on the OGSA website prior to the commencement of the spring program.

OGSA 2023 Selection of Early Spring Calendar

Entry Fee \$10 per Adult, Limited Concessions available, Under 18 free. We encourage visitors to bring cash as EFTPOS facilities may not always be available.

SEPTEMBER 2023

02 - 03 September & again on 30 September, 01 and 02 October
Avondale – Rhynie. An informal country garden transformed each spring when thousands of beautiful bulbs burst into flower adding a patch of living colour to the green countryside. The bulbs were first planted decades ago by the mother of the current owner and have been encouraged to multiply and naturalise over the years. Requiring no summer water and perfectly suited to the local climatic conditions they have thrived and now each spring their foliage and flowers fill the garden and spill over into the adjoining paddock.

Size: 2 acres.

24 September (Sunday Only)

Marybank Farm – Rostrevor. Marybank Farm sits on the hills face with views through massive old red gums to Adelaide. Both the picturesque Georgian style house built in 1842 and the very old garden are Heritage Listed. A large lawn and traditional garden beds surround the house with meandering informal walks leading through another 5 acres. A long straight path planted on one side with roses and perennials leads to the vineyard and from a seat at the end, there are stunning views back to the house with the imposing form of Black Hill in the background.

Size: 6 acres.



Avondale – Rhynie (Photo by A Poddar)



Marybank Farm – Rostrevor



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Book Review - Why are there no new gardening books?

By Trevor Nottle (Image courtesy SA Gardens & Outdoor Living 2015)



Have you noticed how few new gardening books there are for sale this Winter? When our Editor asked me if I could supply a book review for this issue of OGSA's newsletter I put my mind to the request and fairly quickly drew the conclusion that there are no books worthy of being

reviewed this year - yet.

I hear your protests and disavowals. I ask myself am I being too harsh, too fussy or too snobbish? No. And I conclude that this Winter is, indeed, very bleak for those gardeners who were planning on doing some reading when the weather is too cold and wet to be outdoors working in the mud and slush. Everyone who is a reading gardener knows there are only a handful of bookshops in Adelaide that carries a fair range of new books about horticulture – Dillon's on The Parade at Norwood, Imprints on Hindley Street in the city, Matilda's on the main street of Stirling, Mostly Books at Mitcham Shopping Centre, Dymock's on Rundle Mall and that's about the sum of them. There are several excellent antiquarian and second-hand book dealers too, but it is the paucity of new books that troubles me.

First allow me to say that there are enough books available for those who are making a beginning as a gardener but how many such books does a person need after they have acquired the basic skills. In my estimation these publications are split roughly 50:50 between authors based in the UK and others based in Australia, and from time to time a few books by American writers appear too. Personalities and influencers from the media of all three nations will be prominent because many publishers do cross-over deals with writers and international multi-media companies. The quality and value of the information generated by these commercial enterprises can be very variable since there is an army of ghost-writers, marketers, promoters and other non-gardeners employed to translate popular books from the conditions and culture of one country to those of another. Sometimes even the titles and illustrations are changed for reasons that forever remain a mystery.

I may be a fussy reader but I am definitely not too fussy. I enjoy reading a very diverse range of gardening books and, indeed, search them out. I will not read books that scream *ON TREND* from their dust wrappers. What is the point in seeking to re-wild my garden after I've spent the last 50 years trying to maintain a balance

between growth and control? Do I want to have wombats rootling around among my daffodils? No. Most definitely, No.

Nor would I endeavour to attract kangaroos and wallabies to my garden because they lived here-abouts 187 years ago.

To find new gardening books to read, and add to my collection of some 4,000 volumes I use a number of journals that regularly publish reviews and lists of new books: GARDENS ILLUSTRATED, HORTUS, THE PLANT REVIEW, COUNTRY LIFE, THE MEDITERRANEAN GARDEN, WORLD OF INTERIORS, THE GUARDIAN, PACIFIC HORTICULTURE, and NEW YORK TIMES which I find have experienced and reliable reviewers whose approach is eclectic and educated.



Occasionally publishers favour me with copies of their new publications for review. So to find nothing to review is a remarkable state of affairs that takes me back to my original question, "Why are

there no new gardening books?”

Thinking over my experiences as a garden writer in 2023, I think a new manner of media format may be emerging that will exert a powerful influence on the future of gardening and how horticultural knowledge will be transmitted to future readers. Through recent rapid advances in Information Technology I find myself engaged in learning new techniques that enable global interactive communication and the presentation of supportive visual information. A new phenomenon, ZOOM, can be linked to global web networks and simultaneous transmission by satellite to deliver a ‘webinar’ – a seminar that operates with individual participants and small groups who are all interested in some particular subject or theme. A programme manager is the key manager of the event using a control console to produce a programme that takes a handful of experts who make individual contributions each from their own perspective and then conducts a Q&A session between the experts and a broader audience before closing the programme according to a pre-set schedule. Usually pre-recorded segments are incorporated into the programme and the methodology also allows all aspects of each show to be presented after the fact on-line at a time to suit the viewer.



Community Gardens – Funding Grants 2023

Do you have a community garden project that needs funding or would like to establish a community garden but don’t have funds? Open Gardens SA (OGSA) would like to hear your ideas!



Due to the great support by the gardening community of South Australia, OGSA has some funds available which we would like return to our community.

Up to three grants of \$3000 will be made available to help support community garden projects. If you have a project in mind, let us know about it and how \$3000 would make a difference.

We do not specify a set Application Form as we don’t wish to constrain your applications into “ticking boxes” to comply with a Form – we simply want you to describe your project and how your group would appropriately utilise funds if your application is successful. And the application needs to be for a specific project – for example funds to be utilised for a new irrigation system, wicking beds, purchase of appropriate gardening equipment etc. It will assist your application if you are able to provide estimated

costings or quotes for proposed project works. The community garden must also be accessible for the public.

Applications close on Monday July 31st 2023.

Send your application to lynedwards@internode.on.net or

PO Box 1184, Stirling SA 5152.



We look forward to hearing from you.



Image from Northern Gardener



Blue Sky Theatre – *Dealer's Choice*.

Open Gardens SA is very privileged to have an ongoing collaboration with *Blue Sky Theatre* in presenting Theatre in the Garden performed in a delightful garden setting each Summer. This collaboration is greatly valued and appreciated by Open Gardens SA and is a wonderful inclusion in our annual program of activities! We thought our readers would be interested in the Winter performance from the talented *Blue Sky Theatre* cast and crew.



Life's not about the cards you're dealt but how you play the hand.

Blue Sky Theatre presents ***Dealer's Choice*** by **Patrick Marber** from July 28 to August 5, 2023.

Set around a poker table, Patrick Marber's award-winning comedy features an all-male cast playing emotionally inadequate fathers, sons and friends.

Every Sunday, they lose their wages in a high-stakes card game. They're a bunch of losers. Literally.

Tonight an outsider threatens to disturb their ritual and show them that life's not about the cards you're dealt but how you play the hand.

Directed by award-winning Nick Fagan, the outstanding local cast includes Jackson Barnard, Brendan Cooney, Michael Eustice, Brant Eustice, Adam Tuominen and Leighton Vogt.

Blue Sky Theatre garden productions are a popular summer favourite. Now their winter shows are also gathering regular audiences. Indoors.

Strictly limited season:

- Friday July 28 at 7.30pm
- Saturday July 29 at 4.00pm
- Sunday July 30 at 4.00pm
- Thursday August 3 at 7.30pm
- Friday August 4 at 7.30pm
- Saturday August 5 at 4.00pm

Domain Theatre, Marion Cultural Centre, 287 Diagonal Road, Oaklands Park.

Weekend performances at 4 o'clock are ideal for winter, providing an opportunity for dinner after the show.

Dealer's Choice is staged for a limited season from **July 28** to **August 5** at the **Domain Theatre, Marion Cultural Centre**, 287 Diagonal Road, Oaklands Park.

Tickets are \$35. Ticket enquiries on ph. 8375 6855, boxoffice@marion.sa.gov.au and blueskytheatre.com.au

Presented by arrangement with ORiGiN™ Theatrical on behalf of Samuel French Ltd- A Concord Theatricals Company.

The Marion Cultural Centre is a five-minute drive from Adelaide's picturesque coastline and only twenty minutes from the CBD. Parking is available in the Westfield Marion and Bunnings car parks.



Open Gardens SA Seasonal Program

The full listing of our spring open gardens with all the details and beautiful photographs will be available on our website in late winter:

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

Our aim is to promote the enjoyment, knowledge, and benefits of gardens and gardening in the South Australian community, and to build strong public support for the development of gardens across the state.



Winter Solstice 2023

The winter solstice, also called the hibernal solstice, occurs when either of Earth's poles reaches its maximum tilt away from the Sun. This happens twice yearly, once in each hemisphere.

Also called: Midwinter; the Shortest Day; the Longest Night.

The Winter Solstice 2023 in the Southern Hemisphere will be at 12:27 AM on Thursday, 22 June. (*Central Australia Time*).

The Winter Solstice astronomically marks the beginning of lengthening days and shortening nights.

Australian Native Plant Gardens

Australia's geographic isolation has resulted in it being home to an extremely unique range of flowering plants, trees and shrubs.



Hardy, drought-resistant and stunningly sculptural, Australian native garden designs are worth considering for your garden – or even just a portion of your backyard! Did you know that there are over 800 different species of Wattle alone, and some 700 Eucalyptus – large and small - with three smaller varieties suitable for some home gardens. And an

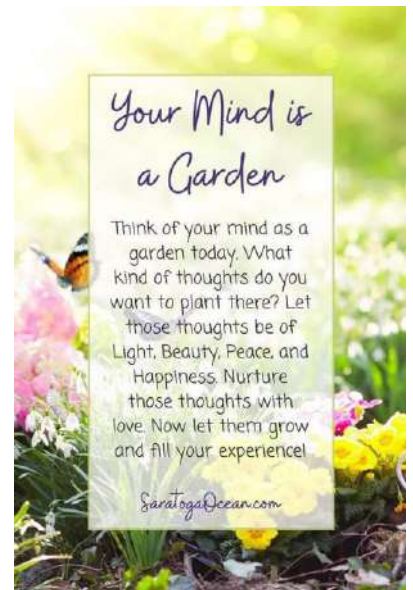
amazing variety of ground covers, small and medium shrubs and so much more. Native gardens can attract fauna back into your garden and build thriving ecosystems.

Winter is a good time to consider visiting The Australian Native Garden at the Adelaide Botanic Garden, which showcases innovative and artistic ways of using native plants on a domestic scale. These include examples of native plants used for hedging, structural planting, screening vegetation, as specimen plants, formal and informal garden beds, in pots, and as copses of trees. The design works with existing site conditions, utilising existing features of the site such as the heritage stone wall and a variety of different sun and shade conditions. All plants are either locally indigenous to the Adelaide plains, native to other parts of Australia or Australian cultivars or hybrids.



The State Flora website offers excellent information on planning an Australian Native garden: <https://www.stateflora.sa.gov.au/the-australian-garden/planning>

Enjoy A Little Quote or Two!



YOU KNOW YOU'RE A GARDENER IF:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 You consider well aged feces a thoughtful gift. | 6 You sometimes forget your to-do list because the plants need staring at. |
| 2 When you see someone trimming trees, you wonder if you could use a cutting of that. | 7 You think store bought tomatoes are disgusting. |
| 3 You have taken bags of leaves (i.e., other people's trash) off the street to use as mulch. | 8 A sale at the nursery is more exciting than a sale at the department store. |
| 4 You have saved pits or seeds from fruit you liked, in your purse or pocket, to sprout at home. If they sprouted, you were momentarily intoxicated with your godlike ability to create life. | 9 When you meet someone who likes to garden, you feel an immediate and unbreakable bond with them. You also wonder whether their harvests are better than yours. |
| 5 You hoard yogurt containers, plastic bottles and egg cartons. What They're useful in the garden! | 10 You would not be reading this if it were not about GARDENING!
Laras_Gardes |



Plant Profile: *Hellebore*

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. Photos Di Michalk.

Commonly known as **hellebores**, the Eurasian genus *Helleborus* consists of approximately 20 species of herbaceous or evergreen perennial flowering plants in the family Ranunculaceae, within which it gave its name to the tribe of Helleboreae. Despite names such as "winter rose", "Christmas rose" and "Lenten rose", hellebores are not closely related to the rose family (Rosaceae). Many hellebore species are poisonous. The genus was established by Carl Linnaeus in volume one of his *Species Plantarum* in 1753.

Description



The flowers have five petal-like sepals surrounding a ring of small, cup-like nectaries which are actually petals modified to hold nectar. The sepals do not fall as petals would, but remain on the plant, sometimes for many months. Recent research in Spain suggests that the persistence of the sepals contributes to the development of the seeds.

Hellebore hybrids

Hybridising (deliberate and accidental) between *H. orientalis* and several other closely related species and subspecies has vastly improved the colour-range of the flowers, which now extends from slate grey, near-black, deep purple and plum, through rich red and pinks to yellow, white and green. The outer surface of the sepals is often green-tinged, and as the flower ages it usually becomes greener inside and out; individual flowers often remain on the plant for a month or more. The inner surface of each sepal may be marked with veins, or dotted or blotched with pink, red or purple. "Picotee" flowers, whose pale-coloured sepals have narrow margins of a darker colour, are much sought-after, as are those with dark nectaries which contrast with the outer sepals.



Recent breeding programmes have also created double-flowered and anemone-centred plants. Ironically, doing this is actually reversing the evolutionary process in which hellebores' true petals had been modified into nectaries; it is usually these nectaries which become the extra petals in double, semi-double and anemone-centred flowers.

Double-flowered hellebores provide a very interesting variation to the standard hellebore. They are generally easy to maintain and share the same planting conditions as the standard hellebore.

Semi-double flowers have one or two extra rows of petals; doubles have more. Their inner petals are generally very like the outer ones in colour and patterning. They are often of a similar length and shape, though they may be slightly shorter and narrower, and some are attractively waved or ruffled. By contrast, anemone-centred flowers have, cupped within the five normal outer petals, a ring of much shorter, more curved extra petals (sometimes trumpet-shaped, intermediate in appearance between petals and nectaries), which may be a different colour from the outer petals. These short, extra petals (sometimes known as "petaloids") drop off after the flower has been pollinated, leaving an apparently single flower, whereas doubles and semi-doubles tend to retain their extra petals after pollination.



All helleborus plants are toxic, and all parts of the helleborus plant are toxic.

Hellebore poisoning is rare, but it does occur. Hellebore plants are usually left alone by animals because the leaves of the plant produce poisonous alkaloids, making them distasteful to animals. The poisonous alkaloids have been known to sometimes bother gardeners with sensitive skin. It was used in the First Sacred War at the start of the sixth century BC to poison the water supply of the city of Kirrha.

Poisonings occur through ingestion or handling. Hellebore plants should not be ingested as poisoning cases are most severe when the plants are eaten. This is especially true when hellebores are eaten in large quantities. Symptoms of ingestion include: burning of the mouth and throat, salivation, vomiting, abdominal cramping, diarrhea, nervous symptoms, and possibly depression. Consuming large quantities of hellebore plants can be fatal. Toxic cardiac glycosides occur in the roots. High levels of ranunculin and protoanemonin, especially in the leaves and sap, also contribute to symptoms after ingestion.

Dermatitis may also occur from handling the hellebore plants without protection. This is typically caused by the ranunculin and protoanemonin found on the outside of the plant, including the leaves, stem, flower, and sap. The poison on the outside of the plant causes irritation and burning sensations on the skin. When collecting seeds from hellebore plants, it is recommended to wait



for the pods to dry and shake them out into a container or onto the ground to collect. Attempts to remove the seeds by hand exposes skin to the potent toxins in the sap of the hellebore, which can increase the damage done to the skin. Small or minimal exposure to the toxins should only cause a mild irritation to the skin, and the affliction should only last for a few minutes. If the burning persists or intensifies, it is recommended to wash the affected areas thoroughly to remove the toxins and see a doctor.

Left - 19th century illustration of *Helleborus niger*.



Gardening Volunteers

Volunteering to assist in a garden is a great way to spend some spare time. There are many opportunities to get involved and the gardens can range from National Trust properties, community gardens, aged residential facilities, parks and gardens managed by local Councils, Botanical Gardens, disability support services etc. The benefits include:

- Meet like-minded people who love gardens.
- Learn new skills – particularly if you are new to gardening.
- Healthy outdoor activity, enjoy the fresh air and sunshine.
- Spend time in a beautiful garden and be part of the experience in looking after the garden.
- Make new friends.

Visit the GoVolunteer website to find Garden Maintenance volunteering opportunities in South Australia:

<https://govolunteer.com.au/volunteering/in-south-australia-sa?interest=12>

GoVolunteer is an initiative of Volunteering Australia.



Volunteers gardening at Stangate House and Garden in the Adelaide Hills.



SA Landscape Festival – cheque presentation to the SA Country Women’s Association.

Open Gardens South Australia is a not for profit organisation opening private gardens to the general 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:

Open Gardens SA Inc
PO Box 1184, STIRLING SA 5152

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

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/opengardensa/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/opengardensa/?hl=en>

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