



HORTICULTURAL THERAPY SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Photo courtesy of Alzheimer's Australia S.A. Photography Group

NEWSLETTER – WINTER 2010

PRESIDENT'S PATCH

The past 12 months have been particularly exciting for HTSA with our involvement in a number of initiatives. In late February 2009 we commenced our second Horticultural Therapy Short Course with 13 participants. The course was well received and the evaluation confirmed that expectations were met completely.

The success of our courses is very much due to the commitment and professionalism of our guest lecturers and site guides, all of whom offered their time in order to support the directions of HTSA. There are too many people to name in an article but to all of you HTSA offer's sincere thanks and gratitude.

We must however acknowledge the ongoing support and collaboration from Urrbrae TAFE, and look forward to continuing to grow this mutually beneficial relationship. HTSA also exhibited at a number of EXPO's during the year and we will continue to do so in 2010, but only with the volunteer support from our membership.

As per our previous years HTSA continued with its regular monthly membership meetings. We also initiated for the first time a series of winter workshops and a more extensive calendar of events. The management committee reviewed this process and have developed a more member friendly process for 2010.

Our year culminated with the HT 2 day Symposium and I may just quote some of the evaluation comments:

"It offered an inspiration that I have been missing of late"

"Didn't realise there were people who were so passionate about using gardening for therapy."

"All presenters immensely passionate about what they do."

"It was great to have such a range of sharing stories. Very beneficial to hear the hard journeys and that it was worth it in the end. This has inspired us."

I think this really captures the essence of those involved in HTSA. We are very passionate about what we do and we have inspired people. The challenge will be to continue this into 2010 and beyond.

Again many people were involved in the HT Symposium, but I must give special mention to Cheryl Lloyd who coordinated the days so splendidly.

Until winter!

Oo Roo

Lui DiVenuto
President HTSA

MEMBER SURVEY

Let us know how HTSA can better meet the needs of our members. Please take a few short minutes to answer this online survey. Click on link below.

[HTSA Member Survey 2010](http://survey.peoplelogic.com.au/survey.php?sid=1215&name=htsa-survey)

or

<http://survey.peoplelogic.com.au/survey.php?sid=1215&name=htsa-survey>

HTSA EVENTS

- **Horticultural Therapy 2010 Conference**
Dates: 28-30th Oct 2010
Where: Melbourne
More Info: www.htav.org.au
- **Green Roof Australia Conference**
Dates: 20-23rd Oct 2010
Where: Adelaide Zoo
More Info: www.icebergevents.com/greenroofsconference2010
- **HTSA Short Course**
Keep your ears open. The course will be happening in the Spring.
Dates to be confirmed.
- **The Gathering Place Community Garden Market**
Dates: 4th Saturday of each month from 9am-1pm. The next is 24th July.
Where: The HEALS Centre, 5 Clifton St, BlairAthol.
Plants - seeds - bric-a-brac - craft items all for sale.

CONNECT ME

HTSA through its connection with PLA has an online discussion group set up for the sharing of HT information amongst members.

To access, members can send their questions, events, info on HT programs and gardens, and any other information they would like to share with other members to the email address horttherapy@parks-leisure.com.au

The email will then be sent out to all members.

If you wish to reply to the email for all to members to read 'Reply All' this will ensure your email goes to the sender and to all other members.

Happy Sharing!

DEAR JOHN

Dear John,

It's that time of year again when the sour sobs start sticking their heads up in the garden. Can you suggest a way to do away with these nasties?

I do not want to use sprays.

My neighbour suggested, pulling them out and putting in my compost bin.

Is this a good idea to do?

Regards

Sobbing Mad of Plympton

Have your horticulture questions answered by our resident plant guru John Zwar

Dear Sobbing Mad,

Yes, it's sour sob time again; they are popping up almost everywhere with cooler weather and autumn rain. Native to winter rainfall areas of South Africa they have become invasive weeds in most Mediterranean climate areas of the world and they thrive in southern South Australia.

Sour sobs, *Oxalis pes caprae* is a perennial bulbous weed, dormant in summer with numerous tiny bulbs sprouting in autumn. They grow through winter and flower in late winter and spring before dying off by early summer. Leaves are used for flavouring stews in South Africa but they have no known other uses. There are no known effective biological controls. Sour sobs do not produce seeds, but reproduce prolifically by producing huge numbers of minute bulbs which are difficult to see in soil. They are easily spread by cultivation. Worldwide they are difficult to control and persistence seems to be the only answer.

If the problem area is not large and if you have the time and patience, hand weeding and removing every plant and any bulbs seen, and repeating every few weeks through the growing season will help, but this will have to be ongoing as they will be back next year. After some years though, eradication may be achieved, but of course if present in nearby areas they can recolonise a cleared area.

Many people have had success with weeding out sour sob, then spreading layers of newspaper, say 10 pages or more thick over the ground, wetting this down (if not rainy) and covering with a thick layer (at least 10 cm) of mulch or old manure. This may need to be repeated each autumn or winter and any plants which appear through joins in paper or around the edges should be removed. This method reduces sour sob infestations significantly and over years may even eradicate them from an area.

Any sour sobs and bulbs pulled up should not be composted as it is almost certain some tiny bulbs will survive the process and when compost is spread the weeds will be spread also. A better alternative is to have a plastic bin with lid and place all sour sobs and other weeds removed; even invasive perennial weeds in it, and fill with water. Put the lid on and leave it for weeks, even a few months in cold weather. The "weed tea" produced is a bit stinky when the lid is removed, but makes excellent liquid fertiliser – simply water it around plants needing a boost! The submersion and rotting in the bin of water kills even perennial weeds – in a few weeks in summer, and maybe in a few months in winter.

If relying on hand weeding alone the best time to do this is at the start of flowering as this will weaken bulbs more than at other times. For those wanting to use a herbicide, glyphosate sprayed at flowering time also can give reasonable results.

As stated, this extremely persistent weed will need ongoing efforts but can be eradicated after some years with perseverance.

JOHN ZWAR

KEEPING THE GARDENING BUG ALIVE

3RS – RADISHES, ROTARY HOES & RHUBARB

By Matt Moody 3Rs Coordinator

The 3Rs is a community based activity program covering the Eastern region designed for

- People over 65
 - People over 65 with low level memory loss
 - And younger people with an acquired brain injury
- All of whom are socially isolated and looking to reconnect with the community.

The 3Rs program is auspiced by the City of Burnside but works in collaboration with the councils of Campbelltown, Norwood, Payneham & St Peters, Prospect, Walkerville, Adelaide and Unley. Workers and services are provided through Domiciliary Care, Helping Hand, ACH, Maxima, City of Norwood, Payneham & St Peters and Community Bridging Services.

Recently two of the 3Rs Groups (Thursday Men's and Unley) have begun a pilot project using the community garden located at the rear of the Eastwood Community Centre in Burnside. The community garden has purpose built raised beds to make accessing the garden area much easier.

With guidance provided by Glenda Williams (horticultural therapist) the groups have discussed their personal experiences and backgrounds in gardening, what equipment they would need to start their garden project, what preparations the garden beds would require and most importantly—what are they going to grow!! Suggestions have ranged from herbs, to lettuces, to chillies and even mini cauliflowers are on the horizon.

The groups have made successful trips to local hardware stores to purchase the gardening essentials and have just completed the tasks of weeding their garden beds and composting the soil to make sure their seedlings have the greatest chances for success.

Feedback from the groups after the first month of the community gardening has been very positive and with planting imminent the Campbelltown Group and Monday Ladies Group have also joined the fray.

Going forward, each group will spend one session a month at Eastwood ensuring their garden beds are watered and maintained with the view to eventually taking home the fruits of their labour.

The 3Rs would like to thank Alison Byrne from the Eastwood Community Centre for her support and Glenda Williams for her advice. Looking forward to the first harvest.

For more information on the 3Rs program phone Matt Moody or Ann Pietsch on 8366 4107 or 8366 4144

MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FLOWER & GARDEN SHOW

By Roz Hamilton

This year I was very fortunate to attend the Melbourne International Flower Show.

I was not disappointed and was well worth visiting.

Held in the Carlton Gardens and Exhibition Building which were highlights in themselves, both areas were filled with interesting floral and gardening displays.

As a passionate gardener and facilitator of horticultural therapeutic practices in my work place, there were many ideas that filled my head to take home with me.

The day had a festive spirit and like minded people wandered at leisure, resting and soaking up the atmosphere or gleaning knowledge from the many gardening identities providing expert information.

I was very interested to find that Steve Wells (an Adelaidean, now living in Melbourne and who has achieved so much with horticultural therapy practices at the Royal Talbot Hospital), had been invited to design a garden and achieved a silver medal for his design.

I caught up with Steve who of course was delighted at his success and as the photos will reveal the amazing talent of this man.

I was disappointed, because in comparison with all the other entrants I felt what he achieved deserved 'gold'.

The design was strong and the use of colour, rusticity and sensory plants certainly provided a garden ambience where one could be immersed in tranquility and relaxation.

Do visit the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show - it is well worth the experience.



COMMUNITY FOODIES

About Paula Winen – HTSA Board Member

There are many strategies that Community Foodies use in the community to promote key messages like 'Eat More Fruit and Vegetables'. One includes participating in edible gardens. Paula Winen, one of our members, is a Community Foodie from the Port Adelaide/Parks Foodies program who has contributed significantly to this strategy over the past two years and has encouraged children and parents to get more fruit and vegetables in their day.

Paula has extensive garden design skills and knowledge and is passionate about community gardening. Paula undertook the Foodies training in 2007 and as a Community Foodie has been involved in a range of activities and events. Most recently Paula has played an instrumental role in setting up a kitchen garden at Seaton Community Children's Centre in the western suburbs.

Over the past 12 months Paula has worked together with the Centre's Director to successfully gain funding to initiate the project. With the support of other agencies such as the City of Charles Sturt and Port Adelaide Primary Health Care Service, Paula has worked together with the Centre's staff, children and parents to design a garden that everyone is excited about being part of.

The construction of the garden is currently taking place with the assistance, hard work and dedication of the Centre's staff, parents and children. A working group has been formed to take charge of the project to ensure it continues to thrive and grow into the future.

HTSA was lucky enough to visit Seaton Community Children's Centre for its February meeting. Paula took us on a very interesting garden tour.



GUMERACHA SOLDIERS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL SENSORY GARDEN

By Mia Lester

Currently under construction in the Adelaide Hills, is a brand new sensory garden at the Gumeracha Soldiers Memorial Hospital's 'Glenview Hostel'.

Approaching the last year of a Diploma of Garden Design, a site needed to be chosen for Mia's Final Project.

The Brief: Challenging with 'multiple layers'.

Mia had always dreamt of working within aged care and special needs to improve their quality of life, before realising of course that this field already had a title; 'Horticultural Therapy', and thought what better place than a hospital or care facility. Being born and raised in the Hills, this would be her chance to give something back and so she approached The Gumeracha Soldiers Memorial Hospital.

Glenview Hostel is a facility with residents ranging from low care who are cognitive and need minimal help to be independent, through to high care who are totally dependent. A high percentage of the residents are cognitive impaired with various stages of Dementia. Most are walker, wheelchair or bed bound. These factors alone were challenge enough, let alone when combined with the difficult space

The garden within Glenview Hostel was the most challenging site at the Hospital and would either make or break her! The shape, size and aspect were difficulties in themselves. A deck for the Palliative Care Unit had recently been built over the pre-existing garden and was responsible for transforming the garden into a narrow L-shape that was now half fully shaded and the other, fully exposed.

This was the only area that the residents, relatives and staff of Glenview had to retreat to and there were many negative factors preventing it from functioning well and being used to its fullest potential. Being atop a hill with a valley to the West, strong winds often whipped through. A tap, located right beside the entrance, prevented the door from being left open. No permanent seating existed, except for some plastic chairs, meaning furniture needed to be brought from inside quite often. The deck, all though separate, looked into the garden and was very much a part of the space.

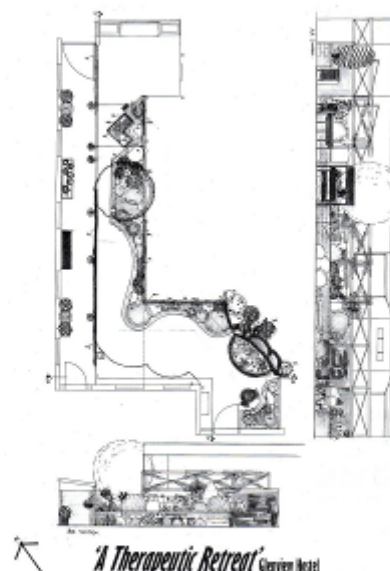
After 9 months of hard work, the design was complete. It would be a garden for reminiscing and escaping and comprise of multiple triggers for every sense. It would be a habitat garden with birds and butterflies and cater for people of all cognitive levels. Rubber soft-fall flooring reduces the danger of falls and raised beds and retractable hanging baskets allow for optimum resident involvement.

Funding had been approved within 12 months and the sensory garden is now four months into construction. The water feature is complete and functioning, with beds and retaining walls pegged out and waiting to begin.

To see and learn more about this garden, come to HTSA's October Workshop on 'Designing for Dementia' where Mia Lester, Designer and Project Manager, will be discussing the garden and its design in much more detail.



Before



During

INFORM ME

THE GATHERING PLACE

By Paula Winen

The Gathering Place at Blair Athol is a community garden set up to promote physical, emotional and mental health and wellbeing. It is based at the rear of The HEALS Centre, an allied health and community centre run by Prospect Road Uniting Church.

The garden is a communal space for people to learn, share and develop gardening knowledge and is currently open each Wednesday, starting with a shared lunch and followed by gardening in the afternoon. Workshops are also being planned for this year and we are working towards completing several new projects in 2010, such as a new propagating area, a revamp of the composting system and various art projects. We are also always keen to hear from new members or interested groups who may wish to participate in garden activities.

This community project is improving the quality of life for a number of local people who often do not have the opportunities to garden in their own backyards.

For further information, contact The HEALS Centre, Ph: 8359 6074 or Email: info@heals.org.au



A DIFFERENT JOURNEY

By Diane Tate

Having always built gardens, propagated seeds, composted, cooked from my garden and painted or drawn parts of my gardens, I was also a bit obsessive about the fibres.

I've cooked up lemon grass and yucca, making beautiful paper and dyed handmade cloth paper with walnuts and other natural dyes. I've printed from skeletal leaves and collaged with all kinds of garden fibres, something I use a lot as an activity supervisor.

But I'm a novice with fibres and textiles in the world of basketry, a world that I would encourage anyone to explore, find their own method and take it back to their workplace or just create beautiful unique gifts. Last year I finally found the time to do a very reasonably priced workshop with Sandy Elvard at WEA. Sandy is a fibre artist and one of the most exciting tutors you would ever meet, just can't give you enough information in the time it takes everyone to create two delightful baskets out of material that would otherwise be composted. Sandy also works closely with indigenous groups.

From there I joined Basketry South Australia Inc. and met a group of talented and creative women, who embrace challenges that require innovation and lots of experience and hard work to produce all kinds of woven birds and animals as in their exhibition Warp on the Wild Side at Urrbrae during the Fringe. They are also a very sharing group, offering to show new members how to do things better when they can see you are struggling. Basketry SA has workshops to teach basketry basics but is also linked in with other organisations, like Craftsouth for workshops like Eritrean Basket Weaving in case you happen to be a quick learner.

Basket weaving is practiced worldwide. It enables people with little or no money to create beautiful and utilitarian objects. It is an environmental practise and it is a skill traditionally practised by both men and women for different cultural purposes. I was told this morning by someone that their grandmother used to weave little cumbungi baskets to keep the ricotta in on their farm when she was a child.

It is often difficult to find areas within crafts that different cultures, genders and people with great stresses on their lives can share the experience and make the object their own. It can also be so simple, just threading banana leaves between a few bits of fibre that anyone could do it. Apart from the beauty and creativity, it costs nothing and when you are trying to run programs and offer varied opportunities this can make all the difference.

Basketry South Australia Inc. meets on the 2nd Wednesday and 4th Sunday of each month at 196 South Road, Mile End.

**EMAIL HTSA YOUR NEWSLETTER
ARTICLES AND EVENTS.
SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE
horticultural.therapy.sa@gmail.com**