Summer Newsletter 2022





David Austin Rose – Teasing Georgia

With the heat of Summer almost upon us, and Christmas just a couple of weeks away, our gardens are looking fabulous thanks, in part, to the good spring rains. It's a great time to relax and enjoy our gardens. Open Gardens SA takes a short break from opening gardens in December – and returns with more gardens in the New Year. Summer 2022 also brings another of our popular *Theatre in the Garden* events - Open Gardens SA and Blue Sky Theatre are presenting outdoor performances of *Present Laughter*, one of Noël Coward's lesser-known comedies. And finally, the Open Gardens SA Committee wish you all a very Happy Christmas.

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Summer Open Gardens

December 2021

Open Gardens SA takes a short break in December and returns in January 2022

January 08 – 09, 2022

Metzger Garden – Stirling This garden will open with its neighbour, with tickets at \$12 for both – no concessions

January 08 - 09

Zeitz Garden – Stirling This garden will open with its neighbour, with tickets at \$12 for both – no concessions

January 07 - 23

Theatre in the Garden, Present Laughter, three locations, Victor Harbor, Hahndorf and Blackwood

February 12 -13

Harvest Garden Festival, various locations

February 26 -27

The Barn Palais – Mt Gambier

See the program on our website:

http://opengardensa.org.au/



Open Gardens SA – Annual General Meeting and Election of Committee



Our Annual General Meeting was held on the 11 October 2021. The Chairperson presented his report at the Meeting.

"In his Chair report last year, the former Chair mentioned that the 2019-2020 season had been cut short because of Covid related restrictions. For the same reason we were prevented from getting the 2020-2021 season underway as planned. We were presented with conflicting advice from the SA Health Advisory Hot Line. The problem was eventually resolved and the pent-up demand shows no sign of abating with generally good numbers of garden visitors within Covid protocols.

SA is supposed to be known as the Festival State. Open Gardens SA is doing its bit!

The Landscape Festival was held in April this year, an event showcasing the work of a leading landscape and garden designers. It was held in collaboration with the Master Landscapers Association and teamed with the charity arm of the SA Country Women's Association.

Buoyed by the success of that venture we are in the process of organising a Harvest Garden Festival in February 2022 to celebrate the productive month and showcase the productive gardens of Adelaide. The charity 'partner' this time is set to be OzHarvest, the food rescue organization which provides emergency food relief for vulnerable people.

I applaud these initiatives ... I just caution that we need to make sure the workload is spread such that we are not risking burn out by a few taking on too much.

One event that has settled into a now traditional role in the OGSA calendar of activities is our collaboration with Blue Sky Theatre. Another successful season in January, this time "One Man, Two Guvnors". Planning ... and costumes! ... are well under way for the 2022 event.

We must pay tribute and give our thanks to retiring committee members, Trevor Nottle and David Hurst. OGSA was privileged to have had the services and wise counsel of these two doyens of the South Australian gardening community.

We welcome new committee members and will finally do so officially in a few minutes.

Indeed, I thank all members of this committee not only for their contribution and efforts to get the job done but perhaps particularly for the good humour and camaraderie involved ... that, I think, is a factor in the success of this community organisation.

It goes without saying that we need to thank and nurture our most important resource ... our garden owners.

Finally, I want to personally thank our Administrative Office, Sonia, for her over and above efforts that have made my job fairly smooth sailing.

Hopefully our success can continue for many years."
David Hancock, Chair, Open Gardens SA Committee.



Election of New Committee Officials

At the following meeting of the OGSA Committee, held on the 8 November 2021, the election of Officials took place. The appointed Officials for the next twelve months are as follows:

Chairperson: David

Hancock.

Deputy Chairperson: Marg

Wilkinson.

Finance Officer: Rob

Andrewartha.

Secretary: Jane Knowler.



Harvest Garden Festival 12 – 13 February 2022



Open Gardens SA proudly presents the Harvest Garden Festival. A weekend to explore and share the knowledge, resources, community spirit and many benefits of productive gardening.

The Harvest Garden Festival is a special event presented and organised by Open Gardens SA. Over the weekend of 12th and 13th February 2022, numerous gardens across Adelaide and the greater Metropolitan area, have been selected to open their gates to the general public. Visitors will be able to view these productive gardens and have the opportunity to talk to the garden owners about their patch, how it was constructed, what they grow and how they grow it. This unique event is all about the education, knowledge and shared experience of growing our own food.

The gardens for this special event have been selected for numerous reasons and each one has different elements and stories that visitors will be able to observe and immerse themselves in. The gardens vary greatly from small to large, old and new, some professionally designed and constructed and also community gardens tended by their passionate members. A significant number of the garden owners and members have decades of experience in productive gardening and have a collective knowledge that visitors will have access to which you simply can't get in a book or on TV. Visitors will be able to investigate which soils work best, the different types of irrigation systems that can be used, the multitude of materials that are available to construct raised beds and what vegetables,



fruits, nuts and herbs grow best in different situations and areas.

The stories and reasons behind these gardens are both incredible and inspirational. Some of our garden owners have built their plot with the hope of eating healthier foods and living a better life whereas others have been exposed to or accidently discovered the multitude of

benefits, both physically and mentally that growing and consuming your own, home grown food will bring.

Finally it brings our hardworking, voluntary committee great pleasure in being able to give the garden loving public of South Australia the opportunity to discover these productive gardens that would not be normally accessible.

In addition to this, the proceeds (net profit) of the festival will be kindly handed over to OzHarvest who deliver thousands of meals every week to people in need.



Founded by Ronni Kahn AO in 2004 after noticing the huge volume of food going to waste, OzHarvest has quickly grown to become Australia's leading food rescue organisation.

Every \$1 donated to OzHarvest ensures 2 meals can be provided to men, women and children in need.

Tickets for the Harvest Garden Festival are \$20 to visit four gardens or \$50 for an all garden weekend pass.

Details of the Garden Harvest Festival are available on our website and tickets are now available to purchase:

https://www.opengardensa.org. au/events

https://harvest.opengardensa.or g.au/



A Rose is found.

By Trevor Nottle

From time to time an old rose is rediscovered. This may not sound so remarkable until a pause in the rush of thoughts is taken that brings one up with a jolt. New roses are introduced every year:



hundreds of them, at least, quite possibly well over a thousand. That many? Yes. Big commercial breeders with distribution networks in most countries where roses can be grown between them introduce hundreds and to this number must be added an almost limitless number bred by small scale breeders and amateurs that are introduced locally without a wide distribution network and quite often without being registered with any organisation.

Referring to dated and old technology, the print media *MODERN ROSES* 7 (1969)¹ offers evidence of the huge number of roses of all kinds that have been recorded by the American Rose Society, the McFarland Company and the International Registration Authority for Roses. *MODERN ROSES* continued as a print publication until modern technology took over partly because the number of registrations had risen to more than 37,000 and that was too unwieldy, and not easily searchable. There are other search engines too, https://www.helpmefind.com/rose/ being particularly useful.

It is hardly surprising, then to learn that very few of all these thousands of roses have survived down to the present. Indeed, quite a few quickly succumb to changes of fashion, disease, difficulty of cultivation and pass out of favour because they have failed the test of time. But by marvellous happenstance a few survive, some for over a century and that is the case of 'Mr Fox's rose' that was discovered in 2021 in the gardens of MARYBANK homestead at Rostreyor on the Hills Face Zone of Adelaide.

Established in 1842 the estate passed through the hands of a few families until it was purchased in 1853 by the Fox family which remains in the hands of descendants the Lloyd's, Billy and Brie (7th generation). Like many of the Colonial settlers the Fox's established olive groves, vineyards and a citrus plantation. Oranges were exported to London packed is barrels of sawdust. Over time demand changed and the farm too. The oranges were pulled out. The olives let go and the vineyard too. Fortified Australian wines fell out of favour in Great Britain and the rows of Grenache and Pedro Ximénez were allowed to die out to conserve the bore-water

supply. The garden as seen today was developed by Dora Fox (1921 - 1995). She built on earlier foundations of a few trees, now regarded as rare in gardens and substantial hedges and walks of Italian Buckthorn (Rhamnus alaternus) interplanted with masses of hardy bulbs and some remnant roses. Dora also planted new roses such as 'EIFFELL TOWER', 'JOHN F KENNEDY', 'MEMORIAM', 'MOUNT SHASTA', 'DUET' and 'FRAGRANT CLOUD'.

The vineyard was replanted in the 1990's by the 5th generation, Sue and Chris Lloyd. The grapes, mostly Shiraz, are either sold to make premium brands like Penfolds St. Henri and Grange or made into the estates own leading brand.



During a recent Open Garden event the garden was visited by a number of old rose enthusiasts who were quickly drawn to a tall, pillar-like rose

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¹ There were at least 12 print editions of *MODERN ROSES* published before the information contained therein went digital.

bush that no one could recognise. Questions were asked, photographs taken and leaves, buds, thorns, flowers were closely observed for clues as to what it could possibly be.

Later several of those present on the open day consulted 19th Century garden books and magazines thumbing the pages to find hand-coloured plates that bore some resemblance to the rose they had seen. The illustrations were scanned and passed around, together with the photographs, to the international community of old rose enthusiasts. That process is still on-going, but first impressions are that the rose in question bears some similarity in colour, form and habit with a Hybrid Perpetual of 1846 'GÉANT DES BATAILLES' (Nérard, int. Guillot Père). This rose was often used by breeders of the day in the hope of passing on its rich, unfading red colour and strong growth.



Well, that is a possibility but that is all it is, an informed guess at best. Illustrations from the era suggest a few other possibilities too, many derived from The Giant. 'STANDARD OF MARGENGO' is one such, as could

be 'DR. MARX', 'BARONNE HALLEZ', or 'COMTE DE MONTALIVET'.

Questions of identification are pursued with varying degrees of enthusiasm among members of a global network of old rose sleuths; some religiously counting the number of petals, others meticulously measuring petal widths and lengths, yet others endeavouring to match petal colours to recognised horticultural colour charts and others still take photographs that record bud shapes, calyx formations, thorn and prickle shapes and densities, and so on for leaves, heps and other botanical clues. Everything is recorded and comparisons made, opinions given and discussed. Some pronounce with dogged determination and a strong sense of authority. Yet others remain more or less inclined to a generalist view of variations induced by soils, climate and cultivation methods. In truth, short of engaging in time travel, no-one can really know the fact of a found roses name. But does it really matter so long as the rose is hardy, resilient and lovely?

I think not.







Garden in Stirling

By Lyn Edwards

I recently visited the Old School Community Garden in Stirling to see how the new steps and handrails, installed with the \$3,000 grant from OGSA, were looking.

The garden is a unique community asset spread over 2 acres of ground that began as a community garden 9 years ago. Dedicated work by volunteers has transformed this space from a derelict, weed and rubbish covered area to a community place that includes fruit and veg, natives, cottage, herb, butterfly and flower gardens, heritage buildings, greenhouse and nature play areas.

The historical Stirling East Primary School was built in 1864 and the 'four roomed teacher's residence' added in 1866. Both the residence and school were enlarged several times, until it was finally replaced by a new school in 1969 (the current Stirling East Primary School).

Out of bounds to the students, the garden surrounding the teacher's cottage was utilised by each teacher in turn, the gardens became a noted feature of the school, being mentioned in media reports and school inspections.

In the last few years the garden has been resurrected and revitalised, but an original stone staircase was dangerously deteriorated and needed re-building.



As you can see from the photo, the steps are now complete and look wonderful. Care has been taken to preserve the rustic look but to improve their safety.

Kathy Newman, from the Old School Community Garden, stands proudly at the top of the stairs.



Open Gardens SA Seasonal Program

The full listing of our open gardens with all the details and beautiful photographs is available on our website: 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.

OGSA grants – More updates from recipients!

Old Mount Gambier Gaol Community Garden

We received a lovely update in relation to a funding grant from the Secretary, Old Mount Gambier Gaol Community Garden, which we would like to share!

"After facing delays due to Council and Heritage procedures and then Covid-19 issues we have finally completed the installation of our Orchard netting.

I have attached some photos of the now completed project. The assistance from the OGSA has been immensely helpful in achieving our goal in improving our orchard productivity.

On behalf of the Old Mount Gambier Goal Community Garden committee please accept our sincere thanks.

Yours Sincerely, David McPherson, Secretary, Old Mount Gambier Gaol Community Garden."





Pangarinda Botanic Garden And here we have a photo of Vic Winnall, Samantha Blight, Sustainability Officer with Coorong District Council, and volunteers in the Pangarinda Botanic Garden.



Committee members Vic Winnall and Lyn Edwards visited in October to inspect the new paths built with our \$3,000 grant (as can be seen in the background). The garden was looking pretty good, but they haven't had the wet winter Adelaide has had and could do with some more rain. Such a pleasure to donate to a garden with such committed and hardworking volunteers!



OGSA Recommends....

We recommend you always check our website to confirm garden opening details prior to visiting. The website is an upto-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/

OGSA 2022 Summer Calendar

Entry Fee \$8 per Adult, Limited Concessions available, Under 18 free.

December 2021 Open Gardens SA takes a short break

Open Gardens SA takes a short break in December and returns in January 2022.

January 2022

08 - 09

Metzger Garden – 35 Garrod Crescent, Stirling.

This garden will open with its neighbour, with tickets at \$12 for both – no concessions.

Zeitz Garden – 37 Garrod Crescent, Stirling.

This garden will open with its neighbour, with tickets at \$12 for both – no concessions.

07 - 23

Theatre in the Garden, Present Laughter, three locations:

Crozier Hill, Victor Harbor on January 7, 8 and 9

The Cedars in **Hahndorf** on January 14, 15 and 16

Wittunga Botanic Garden in **Blackwood** on January 21, 22 and 23 **Book your tickets early as tickets sell out quickly!**

February

12 - 13

Harvest Garden Festival – various locations in Adelaide and the greater metropolitan area. Visit one, visit all – approximately 15 productive gardens opening over one exciting weekend.

26 - 27

The Barn Palais – 747 Glenelg River Road, O.B. Flat (Mt Gambier).

Please Note: For 2022 each garden will only open if deemed safe to do so by SA Health Authorities and will have follow COVID-19 guidelines. Open Gardens SA will arrange a COVID Safe Plan for each garden.



Metzger Garden, Stirling



Zeitz Garden, Stirling



Theatre in the Garden, Present Laughter, three locations, Victor Harbor, Hahndorf & Blackwood



Harvest Garden Festival, various locations in Adelaide and greater metropolitan area



The Barn Palais, Mt Gambier

Theatre in the Garden - Present Laughter



Noël Coward's hidden gem is set to shine under Blue Skies! This January 2022, Open Gardens SA and Blue Sky Theatre are presenting outdoor performances of *Present Laughter*, one of Noël Coward's lesser-known comedies, in three of South Australia's finest gardens.

It tells the story of famous and fabulous superstar Garry Essendine who's preparing for an overseas tour. His life spirals into chaos as lovers and fans swoop on him in rapid succession. The night before he sails, all hell breaks loose in a whirlwind of sex, panic and soulsearching.

According to the director, Dave Simms, *Present Laughter* is a giddy and modern reflection on fame, desire and loneliness. He says people familiar with Coward's comedies are in for a surprise.

"Our production is fast-paced and provocative with several twists," smiles Dave. "We're setting the story on Garry's swish patio where remarkable people in beautiful costumes sweep into the garden wreaking havoc as they go."

Set in pre-war London, the cheeky comedy is packed with Coward's wicked wit. "Garry and his glamorous entourage gossip about everyone, drink too much and sleep around," says Dave. "We're out to prove that 'sex, drugs and rock'n'roll' were around long before the 60s."

Blue Sky Theatre's garden productions are a popular summer favourite starring many regular performers, including Simon Barnett, Ashley Bell, Robert Bell, Rachel Burfield, Joshua Coldwell, Lee Cook, Miriam Keane, Michelle Nightingale, Nicole Rutty, Angela Short and Leighton Vogt.

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

Join Open Gardens SA and Blue Sky Theatre in the garden for Coward's surprisingly modern take on fame, desire and loneliness.

Tickets are \$35 and can be purchased here: https://www.opengardensa.org.au/events or here: https://www.blueskytheatre.com.au/current-production/

Present Laughter is staged from January 7 to 23 at the following gardens:

7, 8 & 9 January 2022 CROZIER HILL near Victor Harbor.

14, 15 & 16 January 2022 THE CEDARS in Hahndorf

21, 22 & 23 January 2022 WITTUNGA BOTANIC GARDEN in Blackwood.

The Gardens open at 4pm, allowing plenty of time to enjoy the garden before the show starts at 6.30pm. Bar available. Bring your own picnic. Click here https://www.opengardensa.org.au/events to visit the website for more information about the Play.

Present Laughter is presented by Blue Sky Theatre
Productions and Open
Gardens SA by arrangement with ORiGiNTM Theatrical on behalf of Samuel French A
Concord Theatricals
Company

This is an approved COVID-SAFE event.

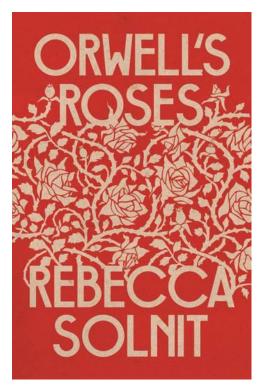
The organisers will be following government COVID-19 restrictions in force at the time of the performances.

Should conditions change they will contact people who have purchased tickets and update the website and social media.

Before attending the event, please read the pre-show email sent the week prior to the show to everyone who has purchased tickets, to keep upto-date with the latest guidelines.

Book Review - ORWELL'S ROSES, by Rebecca Solnit, Penguin, 2021

By Trevor Nottle



This Christmas season it seems there are few interesting gardening books on the market. The majority by far are the usual instruction manuals, the how-to-do-it variety written nowadays by television personalities and of variable quality from very good to plodding. Of the books I'd rate in the interesting category Rebecca Solnit's **ORWELL'S ROSES stands** out as being well up among the best.

The author, from San Francisco, takes a new look at the dystopian/ futurist writer of the late 30's and

through reading his diaries and by visiting his home in the UK reconstructs and presents for the pleasure of her readers his keen interest in growing plants and gardening. In particular, Orwell loved roses and it is they that feature throughout the book. Orwell and his wife lived in a country cottage for 4 years (1936-'40) and it was the author's good fortune to find, on visiting the place to find roses that he had planted still growing there. It was these long lived survivors that inspired the book.

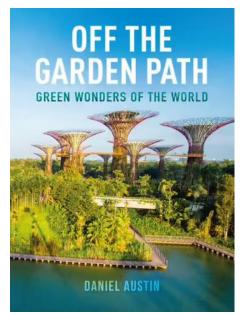
The roses become the vehicle by which Solnit, an essayist and journalist by profession, explores Orwell as a person and an author. It is a very insightful piece of writing, and substantial too at some 320 pages. The garden and the roses are seen as an antidote to the dark and gloomy nature of Orwell's writing. Necessary and an act of optimism gardening Orwell recorded his planting and growing which gave the author, Solnit, a means of looking afresh at Orwell and what motivated him as a writer.

In summary the natural world of trees and plants wins out over the prevailing sense of gloom. To say more would spoil the reader's enjoyment. Suffice it to say that in the aftermath of the last two years of Covid and the restrictions imposed to contain it the book can be recommended as a statement of positivity. Reading it now may well provide the means of countering any negativity should the predicted return of new variants of the Covid virus come about in 2022.



Book Review - OFF THE GARDEN PATH, Green Wonders of the World, by Daniel Austin.

By Trevor Nottle



This is a great book for armchair travellers because it goes to places most of us will never get to. For these places travellers need to be very fit, very healthy, very hardy and resilient. And for travellers intending to visit these places it is very important to have an outstanding sense of adventure whatever the discomforts, delays and diseases.

Fortunately, Dan Austin, his partner - now his wife, and other friends have done it for us and Dan has shared it in a deeply fascinating book. While there are strong links with horticulture and many kinds of gardening the book is

unique in the choice of 'gardens' and challenging in some of the information presented as a result of Dan's intensive research and involvement in the settings he describes and photographs so well.



It would be unfair to readers to give more details since that would give away too much. Best do as I did - plunge in and read for pleasure and vicarious adventure. I enjoyed it immensely and think you might too.

Highly recommended.



Christmas Ornaments: Their Origins, History and Meaning

By Kathryn Marr, extract shared from: https://christmashq.com/

Decorating the Christmas tree is one of the most cherished holiday traditions around the world. Families gather together each year, pull out boxes of beloved Christmas ornaments, and make memories together. Many of these memories form the basis for traditions that are passed down from generation to generation.

But how did ornaments come to play such a large role in our Christmas experiences?



Antique or vintage Christmas ornaments are popular holiday decorations even today.

The History of Christmas
Ornaments

The idea of decorating a tree for

Christmas began in Germany, where they used to add fruits and nuts to trees once the leaves fell off to symbolize the promise of spring to come.

But in 1605, a fir tree was brought inside and adorned with paper roses, candles, nuts, and fruits, which was ground breaking! The idea of decorating a tree indoors took off and spread across Germany.

In the 1800s, German immigrants took the tradition to America, who made their own interpretations. Early ornaments were made out of whatever items that families had available to them – fruit (especially apples), nuts, strings of popcorn and cranberries, paper

streamers, candles, and metal foil. They really came to show off American inventiveness!

Fun fact: Even before Christmas lights were invented people loved the idea of lighting up a tree. Bits of foil were often added to reflect the light in the room and make the tree glisten!

Traditional Ball Ornaments

You know those sets of round plastic ornaments you decorate your tree with? Well, those originated in Germany, too!

Hans Greiner started making glass ball ornaments (called



baubles) during the 1800s, which became the first manufactured Christmas ornaments. In the late 19th century, the enterprising F.W. Woolworth took the idea to America, where he sold more than \$25 million worth per year.

Eventually, manufacturers began using injection molding with plastic materials, which allowed for a variety of other shapes and sizes.

Fun fact: The round shape of the bauble originates from the shape of the original decorating material – fruits and nuts. The Christmas Star

The Christmas star perched on top of trees and hung on branches has religious origins.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, there were three magi (or wise men) who saw an unusual star in the sky and knew that it would lead them to baby Jesus. They followed that star all the way to the stable where Jesus lay in a manger, and brought gifts of gold, incense, and myrrh. The star that we use to decorate our trees today is representative of the original Star of Bethlehem.

Fun fact: Though we sometimes refer to them as "the three kings", the wise men were not actually kings. Instead, they were the equivalent of astrologers, who followed the patterns of the stars and were held in high esteem.



Candy Canes

We use candy canes for everything from Christmas tree decorations to stocking stuffers! Another German Christmas tradition, the candy cane originated around 1670. Designed to help

children sit still during Christmas services, the candy was shaped like a "J" to represent crooks of the shepherds that visited baby Jesus.

Around 1900, the red stripes and peppermint flavouring were added. Christians believe that the red stripes represent the blood that Jesus shed on the cross and the peppermint flavouring represents the hyssop plant that was used for Biblical purification.

Fun fact: The original candy canes had no flavouring or colour and were essentially just "sugar sticks."



Angels

Many people use beautiful, ornate angels to decorate the top of their tree or to hang intermixed with other ornaments. These, too, have religious connotations.

They can represent the angel

that appeared in Bethlehem to announce the birth of Jesus, the angel Gabriel who told Mary she would give birth to Jesus, or even the idea of angels watching over us and protecting us.

Fun Fact: Soon after Christmas trees became popular, parents would decorate trees with streamers, telling their children that the

streamers were pieces of angel hair that had been caught in the branches.

The Christmas Pickle

The Christmas pickle is definitely one of the weirdest Christmas ornament traditions! It emerged in the late 19th century as a game that parents created for their children. They bought a glass pickle ornament, hid it inside the tree, where it blended in with the branches, and asked the children to hunt for it. Whoever found the pickle first got an extra gift!

Fun fact: While this was said to be a German tradition, Germany claimed they never heard of it! It's thought to be the idea of an enterprising salesman who wanted to sell more ornaments.









Best Wishes for a safe and happy Christmas 2021

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:

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

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