



# Summer Newsletter 2021



Roses – *La Rosa Romantica*

Open Gardens SA was delighted to be able to open gardens in Spring – the start of the season was delayed as we waited to obtain confirmation that we could safely open gardens as a Defined Public Activity. The response from the public in visiting gardens made all our hard work worthwhile. If you visited a garden – thank you for your support! As we head into Summer the popular Theatre in the Garden returns with *One Man, Two Guvnors* to be staged in gardens at Crozier Hill Victor Harbor, The Cedars in Hahndorf, and the Wittunga Botanic Garden in Blackwood. And finally, the Open Gardens SA Committee wish you all a very Happy Christmas.

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## Summer 2020-21 Open Gardens

### December 2020

Open Gardens SA takes a short break in December and open gardens return in January 2021

### January 2 - 3

Turtle Rock Garden,  
Hayborough (Victor Harbor)

### January 8 – 24

Theatre in the Garden, *One Man, Two Guvnors*, three locations, Victor Harbor, Hahndorf and Blackwood

### January 30 - 31

Beach Backyards (5 gardens),  
Henley Beach

### February 6 -7

Cascade Water Garden,  
Crafers

### February 13 - 14

Joe's Connected Garden,  
Elizabeth Grove

**See the full program on our  
webpage:**

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

## Open Gardens SA – 2020 – what a year!

For Open Gardens SA the approach of Spring usually brings much activity ... final organisation of the program and liaison with Garden Owners ... the season launch and other events.

This Spring was not quite the same! The activity was very much behind the scenes ... trying to establish how we could open gardens to the public safely and within Covid-19 related restrictions.

Some conflicting advice held up the decision making, and we had to cancel four openings at the start of the season. We finally got under way in October and we managed to open 12 gardens before losing another on the weekend of November 20 and 21.

There was clearly some pent-up demand from the garden visiting public with each of our Spring openings attracting good numbers. That response and comments such as the one below has made all the hard work and generosity of our Garden Owners worthwhile.

*“I cannot thank the organisers and the gardeners enough for sharing these beautiful gardens with us. It’s been a wonderful experience and much appreciated by so many visitors. I’ve visited 5 gardens this spring, enjoyed reading the story behind them, meeting owners, wandering the meandering paths, a real joy.”*

Thank you all for your support.

David Hancock, Chair, Open Gardens SA Committee.



## The Frank Ugody Memorial Award - Well Deserved Recognition for Trevor Nottle – a respected OGSA Committee Member



In Trevor’s own words...

*“Went out for dinner last night ..... and look what I came home with.*

*I was invited by Jon Lamb (ABC Radio 891, Garden Talk Back) to accompany him to the Master Landscapers of South Australia annual awards dinner. It was very*

*interesting to see the industry from the inside. I knew they designed and built landscapes and gardens; that is pretty obvious I suppose but what interested me was to learn the scope of their projects. Home gardens and small landscape projects are just the beginning with categories for design and construction ranging in cost from around \$40K to over \$250K; but when you think about it there are other more significant functions carried out by members of the MLSA - public*

*works for construction of roadworks, water and drainage works, real estate developments large and small, school and public playgrounds. It was fascinating for me, as a gardener and plant tragic, to see the great scope of what this industry does. It isn't all about the green stuff; creative design with gabbion walls was impressive in private and public projects; natural adventure playgrounds were also a strong theme for childcare centres, kindergartens, primary schools and parks. Suppliers also showcased their products and last night an outdoor lighting specialist was recognised for the services and products they deliver that adds value to the landscaping industry.*

*All very IMPRESSIVE and excellent for what is a relatively small state and a highly competitive national market for contracts and commissions.*

*Before the awards ceremony was ended I was called to the podium by the MC, Kym Sirius, and after a very long introduction (a CV in truth) I was honoured to be presented with the **Frank Ugody Award** for making a Valued Contribution to the Industry. Wow. How good is that?”*



Congratulations Trevor – well deserved recognition for your contribution and ongoing support for the industry.

## The Frank Ugody Memorial Award

This Industry award is open for nominations from Master Landscapers of SA (MLSA) Members for any person in the Landscape and Garden Maintenance Industry in SA who has been exemplary in the advancement of the Industry over time. The nominee does not have to be a MLSA Member.

The Master Landscapers of SA is the peak association representing the Landscaping Industry in Adelaide and regional South Australia. MLSA is dedicated to promoting professionalism and quality practices throughout the industry. Their members are qualified professionals who can work with clients to improve property value and lifestyle through providing services in Landscape Design, Construction and Maintenance in Adelaide and South Australia.

### *Frank Ugody*

*Source: Australian Garden History Society, extract from Australian garden history, vol. 17, no. 3, November-January, pp. 20-21.*

Ferenc (Frank) Gyorgy Maria Ugody 1925-2005.

Born in Danszentmiklos in Hungary, Frank spent his younger years in the family's 55h estate, 50km from Budapest, which his father had extensively sought to plant. This setting inspired Frank to study at the University of Agriculture in Budapest, but with the invasion by Soviet troops in 1945 the family was dispossessed. Following time in detention centres, prison and concentration camps, he escaped to Austria, and served with the French occupation forces in Innsbruck.

In 1949 Frank migrated to Adelaide and worked for two years at the Port Adelaide woolsheds and at the General Motors Holden plant. In 1952 he commenced a nursery and garden design business called 'Garden Health and Spray Service' at his home in Parkholme. His services encompassed garden design, construction, arboriculture, plant disease assessment and treatment, lawn mowing and renovation, supply of advanced plants, pruning and the supply of garden materials. By 1980 the business had grown into Ugody Landscaping Pty Ltd.

Frank was instrumental in gathering most South Australian landscape businesses together under the 'Garden Designers & Contractors Association', serving as its inaugural state president and as a foundation member. He shifted this organisation into the South Australian Association of Nurserymen serving as its state president in 1977-79 and later winning the Association's Award of Honour. He was a life member of the Royal Australian Institute of Parks & Recreation, a life member of the Arboricultural Association of Australia (now the International Society of Arboriculture, Australian Chapter), and a winner of the Landscaper of the Year award in South Australia.

*Follow OGSA on Facebook  
and Instagram*



## Community Garden Grant Recipient - Clayton Bay Community Garden

In March 2020, the Clayton Bay Community Garden was awarded \$3,000 to upgrade what had once been a garden but had become derelict as interest in it waned. The garden was overgrown with weeds and random plants, the raised beds were rotting and falling apart, as the Clayton Bay soil is sandy and hydrophobic.

In October of 2019, Glenda Dodd, one of 350 residents, organised a steering committee who organised volunteers and got to work. After a huge clean-up effort, they managed to get some veggies planted in some of the beds.

Just one year later, OGSA Committee Members Vic Winnall and Lyn Edwards went down at Glenda's invitation, to see what progress had been made. Despite Covid, a huge amount of work has been done. New raised vegetable beds have been constructed and lots of compost made in bins which they've built. Mulch has been brought in, a watering system rejuvenated, an orchard has been cleaned up and pruned

and a new bee garden constructed and planted up. When OGSA visited, beautiful vegetables and herbs were in abundance and fruit was developing on the trees.

The garden is wholly organically maintained. Another project has been undertaken to increase the local population of Southern Bell frogs. Vic and Lyn saw two of these in their protected frog pond, looking very satisfied after their daily feed of crickets.

Clayton Bay is a small, tight-knit community tucked between the Goolwa Channel and Lake Alexandrina. There is a very active Community Association, which encouraged the development of the garden. Carol Richardson started a Community Nursery some 10 years ago with virtually no funding. It is still going with her as the prime mover in charge. She and active and enthusiastic volunteers raise native seedlings which they sell mostly for public and non-profit organisations' and private landowners' regeneration of native vegetation.

Carol feels that the small size of the community works to their advantage as enthusiasm is infectious and some peer pressure keeps volunteers involved.

The nursery is now self-sustaining and some years ago, took on the project of revegetating what was a completely bare foreshore. 40,000 plants have been established, amongst which a walking trail winds. A beautiful and rich local environment has been created,



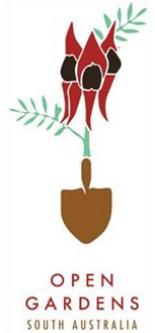
largely through the vision and efforts of one person. "You just need a prime mover and motivator" says Carol, whose creation is testament to the power of one.

Glenda similarly is the force behind the community garden which now, because of her ideas and know how, as well as an abundance of determination, provides produce, projects, exercise, and occupation as well as convivial social contact, for her community.



Vic and Lyn left with delicious lettuce from the garden, thinking that there could be no better place for OGSA funds to be useful, than here.

Charitable  
funds raised  
and donated  
through  
Open  
Gardens SA



Open Gardens SA is a not-for-profit organisation that opens private gardens to the public and generates significant fundraising for good causes each year.

Many Garden owners give their share of proceeds together with funds raised through morning teas, plant sales etc., to many worthwhile charities including the Royal Flying Doctors Service, Ovarian Cancer and the Country Fire Service, to name just a few.

Our own events support conservation projects, horticulture students and community gardens. This year we donated to BlazeAid to assist them with recovery work after the Cuddlee Creek and Kangaroo Island fires.

Since the state-based scheme began, more than 110,000 people have visited open gardens in South Australia, and we should be proud that more than \$730,000 has been donated to worthwhile endeavours over the last five years.



*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/>

OGSA 2021 Summer & Early Autumn Calendar

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

**January 2021**

**2 - 3**

*Turtle Rock Garden*, 4 Granite Grove, Hayborough (Victor Harbor)

**8 - 24**

*Theatre in the Garden, One Man, Two Guvnors*, three locations:

Crozier Hill, **Victor Harbor** on January 8, 9 and 10

The Cedars in **Hahndorf** on January 15, 16, and 17

Wittunga Botanic Garden in **Blackwood** on January 22, 23 and 24

**Book your tickets early as some shows are already sold out!**

**30 - 31**

*Beach Backyards*, 23 Reddie Street, Henley Beach – 5 gardens opening as a group for \$15 entry (No concessions). Purchase the ticket at the first garden and receive directions and map to all 5 gardens.

**February**

**6 - 7**

*The Cascade Water Garden*, 2 Fairview Road Crafers

**13 - 14**

*Joe's Connected Garden*, 6 Argent Street, Elizabeth Grove

**March**

**13 - 14**

*The Little Big Garden*, 8 Fleet Street, Bridgewater

**27 - 28**

*The Post and Rail*, 7 Bill James Court, Compton (Near Mt Gambier)

*Churston*, 94 Day Terrace, West Croydon

**28 (Sunday Only)**

*Beaumont House*, 631 Glynburn Road, Beaumont



*Turtle Rock Garden*,  
Hayborough (Victor Harbor)



*Beach Backyards*, Henley Beach



*Cascade Water Garden*, Crafers



*Joe's Connected Garden*,  
Elizabeth Grove



*The Little Big Garden*,  
Bridgewater



*Churston*, West Croydon

***Please Note: For 2021 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.***

## Theatre in the Garden - *One Man, Two Guvnors*

The highly popular Theatre in the Garden returns this January 2021!



**A laugh-out-loud mix of songs, slapstick and sparkling one-liners.**

This January 2021, Open Gardens SA and Blue Sky Theatre are presenting an outdoor performance of one of the most successful comedy adaptations ever – *One Man, Two Guvnors*.

*Richard Bean's madcap adaptation of Carlo Goldoni's 18th-century comedy, A Servant of Two Masters, is set in Brighton England in 1963.*

*It tells the story of Francis Henshall, a failed skiffle player, who finds himself working for two guvnors. One, Rachel Crabbe, is disguised as her dead gangland twin; the other is a snooty toff, Stanley Stubbers, who not only killed Rachel's brother but is also her secret lover.*

*Neither boss is aware the other is in Brighton, as Francis bounces like a shuttlecock between his two bosses trying to please them both. But how long can he keep them apart?*

Award-winning director Dave Simms is bringing together a live skiffle band to join the Blue Sky Theatre's regular ensemble.

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

*One Man, Two Guvnors* will be staged at gardens in:

Crozier Hill, **Victor Harbor** on January 8, 9 and 10

The Cedars in **Hahndorf** on January 15, 16, and 17

Wittunga Botanic Garden in **Blackwood** on January 22, 23 and 24

***Book your tickets early as some shows are already sold out!***

**COST:** Adults \$35. Gates open at 4pm. All shows start at 6.30pm.

**Tickets are available at:**

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

In line with COVID-19 social distancing guidelines, we have reduced the capacity of our auditorium this year.

We will be allocating your seats in twos. You'll need to book at least two tickets. So you and a friend can sit together but distanced from others.

We've tried to keep it simple and fair, so please:

- Organise your group.
- Then book the number of seats you need.
- You will need to book at least two tickets.

First in, best dressed.

Call Blue Sky Theatre on 0475 309 435 if you need to book an odd number of tickets. They may be able to help if you need five tickets, for example.

Two bosses, two pay days, two meal tickets.

"The play is a laugh-out-loud mix of satire, songs, slapstick and sparkling one-liners, and we're taking on the challenge of staging it in the open air," explains Dave Simms. "It's a fast-paced dive into gangland families during the swinging sixties, gut-bustingly funny with plenty of British verbal and physical humour. I can't wait."



## 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.*

## Managing bushfire risk in gardens in Mediterranean climate regions (Part 2).

By Trevor Nottle

Article continued from our Spring 2020 Newsletter.

### **PRIORITY FOUR**

Planning in the longer term for changes to what you grow in your garden and how these things are organised within a designed space are quite often ignored especially when home-owners are feeling the pressure to get back to normal as soon as possible. In gardening terms this means cleaning up and replanting as soon as possible after being burnt out so they can get on living life as usual. However easy it may be to understand this powerful impetus it can too easily lead to repeating the mistakes made in planting and planning the garden in its previous life. To avoid this unhappy experience consider these matters:

#### Trees and their capacity to burn or deflect fire.

*Conifers* – Pinus, Cupressus, Cedars, Thuja, Juniperus, Taxus - Yew, Sequoia, Metasequoia, Callitris – native pine, Cassuarina – she-oak, Allocassaurina will all burn fiercely, some may regenerate by new side growths or basal growths from ligno-tubers. To some degree the capacity to regenerate depends on the ferocity of the fire. Gardeners reported after the conflagrations in the Adelaide Hills of 1985 that many trees previously thought likely to regrow failed to do so. This was put down to the extreme intensity and high temperatures reached by the fires which literally cooked the vital cambium layer under the bark.

*Ginkgo* – untested.

*Evergreens* - Olive, Pittosporum, Eucalyptus – gum tree, Corymbia – flowering gum tree, Carob – Ceris, Acacia - Wattles, Ficus – fig, Laurus nobilis – bay tree, loquat, Portuguese laurel, Acokanthera longifolia, Pistachio lentiscus - lentisc, Schinus mole - pepper tree, Magnolia grandiflora, Lilly-pilly, Tristania, citrus and evergreen oaks are all liable to burn, some strongly, as they have volatile oils in the leaves, bark and sap. These trees drop dead leaves year round thus

building up a deep layer of dry leaf matter over time which is highly flammable unless raked away and removed regularly.

*Arbutus* – Strawberry Tree, will generally reshoot from low down on the trunk or from the swollen underground stem.

*Hymenosporum flavum* – native frangipani is not fire resistant and most often dies from scorching of the bark and cambium by the extreme radiant heat of a bushfire.

*The Dragons Blood Tree* – *Dracaena draco* is a succulent tree with no fire resistance. The thin bark easily transmits heat thus damaging the vital cambium layer just beneath causing serious damage. Seriously burned trees are unlikely to survive except in a very badly injured state.

*Palms and cycads* - dead leaf fronds and thatch will readily ignite, recovery depends on the intensity of the heat generated and the extent of damage to the growing heart of the plant. Canary Island palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) cotton palms (*Washingtonia filifera*) and Washington palms (*Washingtonia robusta*) must have all dead fronds cut down and removed where possible – some are extremely tall; arborists and professional gardeners have turned this trimming into an art form.

*Tree Yuccas* – *Yucca guatemalensis*, *Yucca brevifolia* – Joshua Tree, *Yucca elata*, *Yucca recurvifolia*, *Yucca rigida*, *Yucca rostrata* and *Yucca gloriosa* all have substantial skirts of dead leaves which will burn famously unless regularly pulled off with a sharp

downward tug, and disposed of in the green bin. Take care to wear stout leather gloves as the leaves have hard, sharp edges.

*Deciduous* – Ash trees, Apples and crab-apples, Maples and Sycamores, Crataegus – Hawthorns, Cherries, pears, Magnolia, stone fruits, almonds, walnuts, pistachio, Cercis, Jujube - Chinese date, Quince, elm, oak, Lagerstromia – crepe myrtle, prunus, Celtis, Honey Locust – Robinia pseudo-acacia, Gleditschia, Bauhinia, Melia azadrach, Koelruteria, pomegranate, Kiwi-fruit, grapes will burn but generally recover, even if only the understock which is shielded from the radiant heat and scorching flames by being underground. Fierce fires can kill the trees outright.

*Aesculus californicus* – California Buck-eye is summer dormant and so leaf-less during the bushfire season as is Adansonia sp. – Australian bottle trees which are unlikely to be seriously damaged by a scrub fire, Brachychiton sp. come into this group too.

*Broad-leaved deciduous oaks*, when mature, have been shown to act as useful deflectors of both fire and radiant heat. There is evidence from Mt Macedon (1983 bushfire) that houses were saved from burning by the close proximity of these trees.

#### Shrubs that burn.

Argyranthemums (Marguerite daisies), lavenders, viburnum - laurestinus, privet, Escallonia, Cotoneaster, Berberis, rosemary, Pride of Madeira – Echium, phlomis, santolina, euphorbias, salvias, lantana, proteas, leucodendrons, artemisias, Bystropogon canariensis - smoke bush, Cotinus cogyria, Lonicera sp. - honeysuckles, oleanders, coprosmas, senecio, cistus, roses including species roses and old-fashioned roses, Duranta erecta - pigeon berry, polygala, Arctostaphylos, Baccharis, Vitex, Santolina, Eriogonum, Atriplex – saltbush, Coleonema - diosma, Ceanothus – California lilac, Rhamnus – Sea Buckthorn and Pyracantha.

Fire is an important part of the life-cycle of many of the plants that come from the Mediterranean climate zones of the world in that burning renews plants by replacing old growth with new seedlings; the fire acting as both the means by which seeds are dispersed and as a trigger for germination, while at the same time removing by burning the fuel over-burden that otherwise prevents regeneration of the landscape. Olivier Filippi explains this relationship between plants and fire in his recent book *Bringing the Mediterranean into Your Garden* (Filbert Press, 2019).

Saltbush, Atriplex nummularia – Old Man Saltbush has proven to be a good fire retardant. Hedges of it surrounding the bowling club at Booleroo Centre in the mid-North saved the clubhouse from the flames.

Ruscus aculeatus and Ruscus hypoglossum – Butcher's Broom, are evergreen, very drought tolerant and fire resistant. They will slowly build into an evergreen ground-cover about 60cm high.

Decorative grasses will all burn strongly, and so are best not planted in gardens in fire prone areas. Their main attraction, having attractive seed heads is removed by trimming up the dead growth before the fire

season starts. Xanthorrhoea – Grass trees, Yaccas, Blackboys will burn but are very fire resistant and will regenerate provided the fires are not too hot.

#### Groundcovers that restrict or slow the spread of fire.

Succulents that form carpets such as Carprobotus, Messembryanthemum, Delosperma, Cotyledons and the red flowered Aptenia cordifolia\*, are quite good at limiting the spread of fire if kept free of self-sown grasses and other annual weeds that dry off and present a fire danger. Density of growth is a consideration as some kinds are sparse rather than thick, so a mixed planting of succulents to increase the density of coverage is recommended.

Evergreen plants that are prostrate work well but need room to provide an effective fire break from advancing grass fires. A band of them roughly 8 metres wide is regarded as a good distance to plan for. Again, maintenance plays a very important role in fire resistance; all dried weeds and dead growth must be removed, as must wind blown plastic and paper rubbish trapped in the growth. Plastic based weed mat is also very flammable as would be old carpets and layers of news-paper or cardboard used as a base for mulch laid on top. Sawdust and wood-chips are highly flammable and should be avoided where possible, even when prostrate evergreens are to be grown over the top. (see mulches note below).

Myoporum parvifolium - creeping Boobyalla, gazania\*, clumping aloes, African daisy

– Arctotis\*, Eremophylla serrata, ivy geranium, Algerian and English ivies\*, Vinca major\*, Vinca minor – large and small periwinkles, Mahonia aquifolium – Oregon grape, Hypericum olympicum are all distributed as groundcovers in Mediterranean style gardens and are satisfactory in varying degrees. Some will scorch in extreme heat and exposed positions, so placement needs careful observation of the proposed site before planting begins.

Be aware that prostrate rosemaries are flammable due to the leaves and stems having a high content of volatile oils.

*\*Some of these are said to have weed potential and on this point debate rages: should we eliminate these from gardens or use them with appropriate care? Do we get used to bare earth in our gardens, or should we be staying green even if we have to use plants previously thought to be risky? Will meeting the challenges of climate change see these plants valued as surviving where nothing else will grow?*

#### Mulches – vegetable, animal or mineral?

By far the best fire-retardant mulches are those that are inert – river pebbles, sand, shell grit, gravel, crushed rock, brick paving, cement paving, slate, stone slabs and (volcanic) scoria. Olivier Fillipi (see above) writes about making garrigue gardens imitating the natural rock strewn landscapes of southern France. A garrigue garden is mulched with gravel and stones. He proposes that after fire the garden will recover by seed regeneration as does the wild landscape. The idea is interesting but would be a challenge to those trying to remodel an Anglo-European garden to be more fire resistant.

Vegetable and animal composts will all burn including pine bark, sawdust, forest mulch and spray on mulches. Very intense fires generate enough heat to incinerate all the organic material in the soil leaving behind white sand or small clay particles.

#### Lawns and their place in fire management.

Well-kept lawns watered and green can considerably slow the rate of spread of ground fires. It has been suggested that a clear lawn of some 8 metres width can be an effective barrier provided it is frequently cleared of dead leaves, bark, twigs and plastic garden tools, garden furniture, paddling pools and toys.

#### Proximity and distance of trees and shrubs

This is always a consideration for home owners when considering bushfire precautions. For most households it will not be a cut and dried decision to eliminate trees and other growth for a set distance from a house or shed but a trade-off between convenience, shade and shelter, and the possible risks they pose should a bushfire eventuate. Just as there are some people who like to live in the bush there are others who do not want to live anywhere near it, and some who like to be near the bush but not in it there are choices and judgements to be made by individuals and families.

### **WHEN ENOUGH IS ENOUGH**

However comprehensively you plan, and however mindfully you chose plants and put them in place there are no guarantees that your

efforts will prevent damage caused by bushfires. Bushfires can be retarded or redirected by greenery in its path; at least that has been the experience of property owners in the past but more recent experience has shaken this handed-down folk wisdom.

With the advent of climate change bushfires appear to have grown more intense, larger in scale, more volatile, more violent and less predictable. In many extreme cases the fires seem to have a life of their own suddenly bursting with unbounded, surging energy that sees treetops in flame hundreds of metres in advance of the fire-front on the ground. This phenomenon is known as a crown fire, or a crowning fire. Nowadays it is often observed that fires can create their own weather. Huge pyro-cumulus clouds rising many kilometres into the sky generate dry electrical storms producing thousands of lightning strikes that start spot fires in widely separated areas. Spot fires caused by widely dispersed hot ashes, embers and live cinders are probably the most unpredictable dangers to gardens, even those generally thought to be well prepared.

The bad fires of late 2019 saw a new phenomenon develop in extreme fires; this was the pyro-cyclonic winds generated by the erratic, violent updrafts of winds caused by the intensity of the flames. The wind blasts were strong enough to flip 8 tonne trucks over onto their roofs, crushing and killing fire crews inside the truck cabins. Little wonder then that fire chiefs withdraw their crews

from forested areas that, under these circumstances, are simply far too dangerous to work in. Often described as ‘super-fires’ or ‘mega-fires’ these events are categorised as extreme and disastrous events that are potentially catastrophic and life threatening.

Caution is necessary here because while meteorologists and fire investigators are building a body of research it is work in progress not yet definitive or accepted as reliable, hence the very contrarian attitudes expressed by politicians, coal industry lobbyists and those broadly categorised as climate change denialists. For lay people, such as most gardeners are, the lack of clarity and the vociferous, combative nature of public discourse just adds another layer of confusion to an already uncertain situation. We gardeners can do what we can do but will it be enough? Can we take comfort from the preventive actions we have already taken, or will our places still burn regardless?

Answering this question is well nigh impossible. Who can say with any exactitude how a fire may develop, wax, wane, roar or whimper and die? Having taken all reasonable precautions what more can be done? The answer to some of that goes to what local and regional governments do in terms of action, provision of fire services, budgeting and law-making, and some of it will go to what extra steps and costs individuals may choose to bear. An underground fire-proof shelter might be constructed but it won’t save the garden. A far-reaching, powerful overhead sprinkler system mounted on rooftops could be installed but that won’t save the garden as its coverage will be directed at wetting down the buildings, walls and gutters. Every tree within 40 metres of the house could be cut down, as is advocated by some and insisted upon by a few, but the loss of shade would be intolerable to most, and no guarantee against the power of a wild-fire. It comes down to a risk assessment that balances inputs – time, energy, money and mental preparedness versus the degrees of possibility that a fire will be catastrophic, extreme, dangerous, controlled or will come in the direction of your place.

That is an assessment that can only be made by you, on the day according to the advice you receive and the knowledge of what precautions you have taken in the months, weeks and days before the fire threatens.

\*\*\* The Victorian chapter of the Australian Plants Society has published a very informative paper on its website that drew on experiences of gardeners in the big bushfires of 2009. Fire Resistant and Retardant Plants by APS-Vic | Jun 23, 2016 |

It provides a very useful perspective on the range of plants that survived in those fires which seem to have been a little less extreme than those of 2019-20 in that pyro-cumulus dry lightning and tornados of flame were not a feature that caused extreme fire storms which did happen in the last bushfires.



## SA Landscape Festival 10 & 11 April 2021

For one weekend only, the Master Landscapers of SA and Open Gardens SA open the gates to some of our state’s most beautiful, professionally designed and built, privately owned gardens.

Visit a couple or see them all and make a weekend of it on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

We are proud to be partnering with the SA Country Women’s Association for this event. All proceeds from the SA Landscape Festival will support their great cause and hard work.

This Landscape Festival showcases the best in garden design from the Master Landscapers of SA. And along with Open Gardens SA, it’s a celebration of gardens, design ideas and problem solving. Over the weekend you will be able to spend time to enjoy the gardens, collect ideas and admire the work of our state’s garden gurus.

Visit the official SA Landscape Festival website for more details and to book your tickets!

<https://salandscapefestival.com.au/>



## Open Gardens SA Community Garden Funding Projects 2020-21 – Applications Invited.

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

Due to the great support from the South Australian gardening community, OGSA has some funds available which we would like return to our community. Three grants of \$3,000 each will be made available to help support community garden projects. If you have a project in mind, let us know about it and how \$3,000 would make a difference. Send us your proposal and our Committee will award grants to the three projects judged most worthy.

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. However, it will assist your application if you are able to provide copies of written quotes for proposed project works.

Applications are now open and close on 1st March 2021. This is a new round of grants and previous applications which were unsuccessful are welcome to apply again and of course, new applications are encouraged!

Send a detailed proposal and tell us why your project should be awarded a grant to: [admin@opengardensa.org.au](mailto:admin@opengardensa.org.au)



## Christmas

~ Anon

Every time a hand  
reaches out  
To help another.... that is  
Christmas

Every time someone  
puts anger aside  
And strives for  
understanding  
That is Christmas

Every time people forget  
their differences  
And realize their love for  
each other  
That is Christmas

May this Christmas bring  
us  
Closer to the spirit of  
human understanding  
Closer to the blessing of  
peace!



## Congratulations Jamie McIlwain!

Jamie McIlwain is another valued member of the Open Gardens SA Management Committee. Jamie is a landscape gardener based in the Adelaide Hills and won the award for best residential landscape maintenance at the Master Landscapers of SA awards in November. Jamie entered the landscape maintenance category for the first time this year, and won with a private garden in Aldgate that his team has spent more than 150 hours a year maintaining.



*Jamie McIlwain,  
pictured in his  
own beautiful  
Aldgate garden.*





*Best Wishes for a safe and happy Christmas 2020*

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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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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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