




Gisborne
Eastwoodhill
National Arboretum of New Zealand

NEWSLETTER

Spring/Summer 2015

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Diary dates

29 September 2015

Eastwoodhill Trust Board AGM.

11 October 2015

Gisborne Camellia society.

12-16 October 2015

Wintec students' Arboriculture practical.

8-9 November 2015

Friends of Eastwoodhill fundraiser –
Garden Tea Party.

28 April–1 May 2016

IDS (International Dendrology Society)
New Zealand AGM in Gisborne.

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OPENING HOURS: Weekdays 9am–5pm
Sat and Sun 9am–4.30pm

EASTWOODHILL TRUST BOARD

Peter Jackman (Chair)

John Clarke

Marcus Williams

Jane Williams

Pru Roberts (Friends of Eastwoodhill Chair)

Patrick Willock

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The visitors' centre

The visitors' centre is a striking Lockwood building, built in 2002. Black and white photos of Douglas Cook's first house surrounded by bare, barren eroding landscapes line the peaked ceiling. Visitors, who visit from all around the world, are fixated by these photos – they can hardly believe the vision and the transformation of the 104-year-old park.

The visitors' centre, our meet and greet place, has bountiful information with an extensive range of gifts for purchase, there is something for everyone.

Amongst some of our wonderful gardening items for sale, are the ever popular Niwashi Japanese tools with a reputation here as the best tool ever – in fact, a weeds worst enemy. We also sell the Seedling brand of products – educational, fun, ideal gifts for children.

The men love the Silky Saw garden products, whereas the women want everything! Light snacks, cold drinks, ice-cream and ice blocks, and a coffee machine are also available.

CHAIR'S REPORT



A dry autumn and early winter has been a bonus for the development of the new Eastwoodhill Cathedral project.

Now the earthworks are finished and the grass and trees planted, you get a sense of the scale of the Cathedral, the design of which is based on Westminster Abbey and planted out at the same scale. I

would like to thank the committee that has overseen this project and also the Eastwoodhill staff. Dan, Maurice and James have put in many hours tidying up the area, sowing the new grass, and planting the trees, in addition to their normal duties within the arboretum.

Eastland Community Trust, Gisborne District Council, J N Williams Memorial Trust and the Friends of Eastwoodhill provided the grants that allowed the project to proceed. The Eastwoodhill Trust Board is very grateful to them for their generous contributions.

All the projects Eastwoodhill undertakes are funded from outside Eastwoodhill. The Board is in the process of setting up the 'American Friends of Eastwoodhill', to allow our friends in the USA to contribute to Eastwoodhill's future projects and help with the Endowment Fund.

The Endowment Fund provides additional income to that received from admissions, events, accommodation, shop sales etc., and allows us to maintain the arboretum and present it to the public. I ask those of you who may consider making a bequest or donation to Eastwoodhill to consider the Endowment fund, as any amount added to the fund provides income on an ongoing basis.

Please come and enjoy the arboretum this spring.

Peter Jackman

CHAIRMAN

Curator's report

Hi everybody,

Well, the previous seasons have rocketed by so quickly – it's astonishing how fast time goes when you are head down and bum up!

The whole year to date has been one fluid learning curve and, as Ben Lyte mentioned in a previous newsletter, it does take at least a year (and I wouldn't mind betting that it will take a great deal longer!) to get your head around the enormous amount of botanical and administrative information. But I'm really enjoying the challenge. We're ploughing onwards and upwards into the unknown with a smile, because our national arboretum is a treasure bursting to be viewed by the whole world.

Since arriving at Eastwoodhill, Monique and I have met many special people all of whom possess a huge passion for the Arboretum. Their time, effort and skills are given selflessly and voluntarily, sometimes for as long as decades. It's all born from their desire to create the most wonderful place for visitors to appreciate, admire and enjoy. From this network of helpers, substantial amounts of collective knowledge are regularly communicated to one another and consequently result in the most positive, constructive, logical outcomes.

Five years in, we are on track with Eastwoodhill's 100-year masterplan, developed by American landscape architects NBW. What has been achieved over such a short space of time is incredible! The extended team, including Thomas Woltz and Breck Gastinger from NBW and Tina Dyer from Park Central, have all been involved in developing and fulfilling the two significant recent projects – the Cathedral and children's playground. The plantings in the Cathedral have been gradually carried out this winter and will continue over the following year, while the playground has been up and running since the end of 2014 with tremendous success. Both children and adults love it, with shrieks of pleasure a constant cadence emanating out of the trees.

Praise must also go to the mammoth efforts and abilities of Kerry Teutenberg, without whom I doubt whether we could have achieved the perfect raised cross-shaped ground design for the Cathedral. There is now a noticeable topographic configuration with excellent drainage for the trees and this will create an ambiance like no other tree cathedral in the world. The soft soil certainly made it easy digging holes for the young trees, which were generously gifted by Appletons Tree Nursery and NZ Forestry Ltd. We also greatly appreciate the grants from our funders ECT, NZCT, ECCT, GDC, Tennyson Charitable Trust, JN Williams Memorial Trust, The Lion Foundation, J&T Hickey Trust, Les Renner Charitable Trust, and the Friends of Eastwoodhill – all of whom have supported the construction and development of our projects. Thanks to their kind support, the Gisborne community and visitors to the area are much



richer. We have a few more exciting projects planned, so watch this space.

In addition to our large projects, we have continued to complete smaller projects such as reforming tracks and drains for the Jeep route. Maurice, James and the PDs have worked tirelessly on these jobs to make Eastwoodhill a safer and more enjoyable place.

A warm welcome to Georgia McConnachie who joined our team this year as our industrious, energetic cleaner. She always has a smile on her face and heaps of stories!

There is so much to write about! I must make mention of the really nice time I've had conversing with the volunteers who work in the garden once or twice a week. We all love plants and it is great to share amenity horticulture techniques, information and plant material.

Several of us have been collecting seeds and cuttings through the autumn and winter, some of which will be grown here while others have been sent to Appletons Tree Nursery. Our garden is chock-a-block full of pots of cuttings and seeds waiting to be moved to the shade house when we get time. EIT (Leigh Jones) and the Native Garden Nursery (Lana Hope) in Gisborne have both offered to grow some cuttings for us, as we don't have mist propagation yet, which is generous of them. Greenleaf Nursery has donated some apple (mm106) and cherry (Colt) rootstock, so we can do some grafting here. Other plantsmen around New Zealand have grafted, or will graft, rare plants for us as well.

The Gisborne Camellia Society has kindly donated three Camellias, one of which has been difficult to locate (*Camellia reticulata* 'Gael's Dream'). Pat Flockhart acquired one from Lennard's Camellia Nursery, which has now formally closed but they still have the odd treasure there if you enquire. These have been planted in the Kuri Garden, part of the Homestead Garden.

As a plantsman what excites me the most is to be able to acquire, grow and share any plant, no matter how rare or common, easy or difficult, they may be.

Dan Haliday

CURATOR

PLANT OF THE SEASON

Ixia rapunculoides

Ixia rapunculoides is not a tree or a shrub, as you will have perhaps noticed. I am deviating from the usual Eastwoodhill tree and shrub topics as I love all genera of plants, and get excited about discussing any plant no matter how rare or common.

This small plant is new to me, although many readers may already have them thriving in their gardens.

Ixias are not true bulbs, which consist of compressed leaves like an onion. Rather they are corms, like Gladioli and Crocus which are actually compressed, flattened stems.

This one had me stumped for a few days as it is a mauve-blue shade, of delicate structure. It started flowering in late July unlike most of its near relatives, which flower in late spring/early summer. To me, it is more like a small species of Dierama (Fisherman's Wand), but the colour is atypical.

I searched through all my bulb books and consulted Google, but alas no photo jumped out at me as the correct plant. However, while visiting Bev Bridge recently, I asked if I could search through a couple of the South African Bulb books I remembered she had when we visited ten years ago. After a couple of minutes scanning the pages, there it was – *Ixia rapunculoides*. Yes, conquered another one!

The upright grey/green slightly ribbed leaves grow to around 30cm and the naked flower stems extend above another 20cm.



Ixias in general are easy to grow in any well drained soil that receives full sun for most of the day. They can tolerate medium frosts. Flower colours range from shades of yellow, orange and pink, through to white, blue and green. They multiply fairly quickly but, if you are impatient and want to spread them at a more rapid rate, dig them up when they are dormant (mid-summer) and divide the corms into smaller cormels. They can be stored dry until planting time in autumn.

The exception to this is the green flowered *Ixia viridiflora* which requires a dusting of fungicide and perfect drainage. I only grow it in pots and store the corms in paper bags in a dry airy position during the dormant season.

Dan Haliday

CURATOR

Footnote: What I should have done is just ask Marg Savage, a long-time volunteer gardener, what the bulb (corm) was – she knew it straight off the top of her head!

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The evolution of EASTWOODHILL

Eastwoodhill Tree Cathedral

During the past twelve months the Cathedral project has progressed from design to reality. The ground works are complete, grass is sown and the majority of the trees are planted. The subcommittee charged with bringing this exciting project to fruition has been meeting on a regular basis during the past year.

The design work by American landscape architects Nelson, Byrd and Woltz (NBW) was completed in 2014 through funding from ECT and the Eastwoodhill Friends fundraising activities. The Gisborne District Council also provided a grant covering the survey costs and the clearing of unwanted trees and weeds. Importantly, this grant indicated the Gisborne Council's support of this project.

Once the levels and alignment were established, Kerry Teutenberg and his team started the massive task of creating the cross-shaped raised platform – 170m long and 70m wide – the dimensions of Westminster Abbey. Raising the level of the site ensures it is very well drained. This is essential to encourage the even growth of the trees that will form the shape of the Cathedral, and ensures that the Cathedral can be used for ceremonies or functions at any time of year.

The ground work was completed by the end of February and the grass seed sown just before Cyclone Pam hit the Gisborne region. While rainfall during the cyclone was less than expected, it was just what was needed to germinate and test the drainage. We would like to acknowledge the assistance given by Mark McLean, a neighbouring farmer and a member of the Friends of Eastwoodhill. Mark assisted us with various jobs in the important initial stages of the project. Funding to cover the major ground work was provided by the J N Williams Memorial Trust and ECT, and we are most grateful for this support.

The planning committee devoted much time to discussing the most suitable trees to plant. We eventually settled on *Sequoia sempervirens* or coastal redwoods to form the aisle and cross. Outside these will be a line of *Tilia platyphyllos* or large-leafed limes. The two small chapels on either side, beyond the cross, will be outlined with *Ginkgo biloba*. The sanctuary at the North end, which is a continuation of the main aisle, will be flanked with *Metasequoia* or dawn redwood with a selection of deciduous trees featuring striking Autumn colour. All the trees have been generously donated, and we would like to thank Appletons Tree Nursery for the *Tilia*, and NZ Redwoods for the redwoods.

A ceremony was held on Arbour Day to bless the Cathedral site. Many of the different religious organisations were



present and each took the opportunity to add their own blessing upon the site.

This large project has put extra pressure on the Eastwoodhill staff with curator Dan Haliday arriving just as work started in the New Year. Both Maurice and James have also been heavily involved. Everyone has gone out of their way to assist on this project, and their enthusiasm for the Cathedral will ensure its success.

I would also like to acknowledge the Cathedral sub-committee – Board members Marcus Williams and Prue Roberts, Curator Dan Haliday, Lee Newman, Paul Pollock and Rodney Faulkner.

Rodney Faulkner

Playground Viewing Platform

The amazing new Eastwoodhill playground is still awaiting the construction of the viewing platform, which will link the Visitors' Centre with the playground. We hope it will be underway by late September.

The building consent is currently being processed and, once issued, Currie Construction will commence the build. This has been a long frustrating process with many checks along the way, but all vital to ensure we build a safe and long lasting platform and finally complete what is already a very popular addition to the park.

We are grateful to ECT, which has agreed to redirect funding to allow the platform to proceed. And we look forward to publicly acknowledging them and our other playground funders at an end of year function.

John Clarke

New garden advisor XANTHE WHITE

With over 20 years experience in landscape and garden design, well-known landscape designer Xanthe White is delighted to be working with Eastwoodhill as its new garden advisor.

Xanthe has a wealth of knowledge. Her immense experience has led to frequent appearances on both radio and television. She also writes regular columns for NZ Listener, NZ Gardener and Taste.

“When I was approached by Eastwoodhill, I was absolutely honoured to be included in the preservation of the history, and the national and international significance of working with Eastwoodhill. The conservation of that rich horticultural history is hugely important,” says Xanthe.

Based in Auckland, Xanthe has regular contact with the Eastwoodhill team and has toured the arboretum, where she was struck by both its vastness and beauty. On a guided tour with curator, Dan Haliday, Xanthe was stunned by the history associated with the arboretum and even saw trees that she'd never seen before – which she says was an absolute highlight.

“The elements of the gardens, and the true beauty of seeing a garden of that age and at that stage of development was such a pleasure. It really emphasised that the garden is a constantly changing, growing and evolving thing.”

With the history of Eastwoodhill being forefront in her mind, Xanthe says she will take a very respectful approach to any developments or additions to the arboretum.



“I'd like to enhance the connectivity of Eastwoodhill. The journey should lead visitors through the park and encourage them to venture further into the arboretum to experience those really magical moments beneath the trees. Most importantly, I want to work with Eastwoodhill on the gardens with the utmost respect to the current plantings and the rich history that's already in place. I want to build upon the layers of the story that are already there and develop those, rather than introducing too many new elements.”

Working with the Eastwoodhill team and Board, Xanthe hopes to help continue the legacy of Eastwoodhill, and ensure it continues to be an attractive and inspiring place for those who love and understand trees.

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VOLUNTEERS and friends

Fundraising initiatives

The Friends of Eastwoodhill recently held a successful fundraising event to raise much-needed funds for the ongoing Cathedral project. The 'Wot to Wear and Not to Wear' was a great success and raised \$5000.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this event, it would not have been possible without the generous support of local businesses and the community.

The next Friends fundraising event is a beautiful garden tea party. This will be held in Rodney and Sarah Faulkner's superb garden in early November. Plant stalls, craft stalls and music will abound. The Tasty Leaf Café will be running all day serving morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.



Farewell Libby

The Friends of Eastwoodhill proudly paid tribute to Libby Streeter at their recent AGM, awarding her with Honorary Life Membership in recognition of the more than thirty years she has volunteered at arboretum.

Libby retired from the garden last year and there is no part of the garden that Libby has not worked in. Her much-loved laughter has always indicated the pleasure she got from wherever there was a job to be done – be it toiling and weeding, tidying up or tying up delphiniums.

Chief designer and past organiser of out of town events, Libby still creates her fabulous floral arrangements for Eastwoodhill at functions and events. A brilliant hostess and chef for group visits, everyone from students to international tourists have enjoyed Libby's unique and friendly hospitality.

Libby continues to be a big part of the Eastwoodhill's Tasty Leaf Caterers, an excellent fundraising initiative that she helped establish and organised for many years. Famous for shortbread, rice salad and the Eastwoodhill carrot cake, Libby has made many wonderful treats for the tables and lunch boxes of our visitors. And, no matter how many boxed lunches were required for a visiting group, the standard was always high and her well known phrase "spread to the edge of the bread" rang out in the preparation.

Eastwoodhill thanks Libby for her massive contribution of over three decades of volunteering and for her dedication to the development, preservation and presentation of our national arboretum.



An experience FOR EVERY SEASON



Spring

Eastwoodhill Arboretum is home to over 3500 varieties of trees and spring is the perfect time to see the park bursting back to life after its winter hibernation. Bright spring flowers



Summer

The bright colours of spring eventually give way to warmer temperatures and the softer hues of summer greens. A peaceful leafiness descends upon the arboretum creating a wonderful atmosphere for relaxing picnics and



Autumn

Eastwoodhill Arboretum in autumn is nothing short of spectacular and it's easy to see why this season is our most popular with visitors. From mid-March the hundreds of maples, liquidambars and red and scarlet oaks provide a



Winter

Winter at Eastwoodhill Arboretum will entice visitors outdoors to explore a breath-taking landscape filled with surprises and subtle gems. Textures, patterns and forms so often overlooked come to the fore. Piles of leaves litter the ground, much to the amusement of children and the crisp, cool air is infused with the scent of several flowering plants.

EDUCATION and Membership

Reflecting over the last eight months at Eastwoodhill, the changing days have become a pleasant history and constant learning curve for me as the education and membership coordinator. It's a pleasure to be continually meeting new, interesting, inspirational and passionate people from babies to wise old owls – from all walks of life.

Living on site, Dan and I have the good fortune of being able to walk among Eastwoodhill's rare collection of trees and plants after work hours in all weather – snow, rain, balmy heat or sunshine. To our delight we are constantly discovering botanical gems.

I am a forager by nature and, on my regular daily walks with Major our Beagle, I spend time collecting feathers, seeds, pods, leaves and cones. During mornings and evenings I watch the flight path of bees, birds and insects alike. It's great just to observe them going about their daily business.

On one of these walks, I recently discovered an old bottle that was hidden under a rotting stump, ferns happily thriving inside. This bottle was possibly one of the infamous bottles hidden around the arboretum by Eastwoodhill founder, Douglas Cook. He would often leave these for his poetical friends to find so they could enjoy

a tippie. This may be wishful thinking on my part, but I will investigate further!

Kohanga Reo, playgroups, playcentres, class groups, schools, YMCA programmes, and Ministry of Social Development funded organisations all arrive at the arboretum with enthusiasm, wonderment and laughter. They habitually bring their picnic lunches to eat at the outdoor tables under the trees.

I was moved by one particular Kohanga Reo group. Their awesome respect for the trees, plant life and birds was admirable. They taught the children about Tane Mahuta, and to be kind to all trees and the environment. While they sat in a circle on mats next to the wall on the Homestead lawn, the kaumatua fired up a BBQ, cooked kai, offered prayers of thanks and then they all ate together.

The Eastwoodhill ANZAC Day Extravaganza was a delight, and my very supportive family came from Napier and offered their talents. My brother in law Calvin Robinson sang a song he'd written as a tribute for his father and uncle who had served in World War Two, a very moving moment. Our stall was burgeoning with natural collectibles and gatherings, consisting of dried flowers, feathers, and cones, and my sister and I had made 100 small grape vine wreaths which were ready to be decorated. The stall became a hive of activity. Young and old got their creative juices flowing and made the most amazing wreaths – some were tiaras, others were ornamental. Talented bands and buskers played music throughout the day and artisan stalls sold their wares. A fabulous family day out!

Eastwoodhill's membership continues to grow. It currently stands at 1268 including current and non-current members. Please remember membership fees and donations go towards the most important maintenance and development of our national treasure.

Monique Haliday

EDUCATION AND MEMBERSHIP CO-ORDINATOR



Rere School play group.

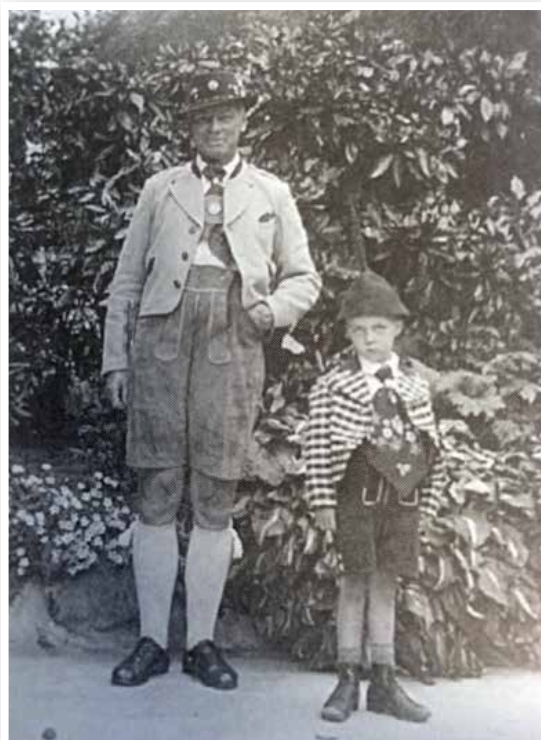
HISTORICAL FOCUS

stories from the archives

David Reynolds visited Gisborne earlier this year, to see the arboretum and look at books given to Eastwoodhill by Bill Giles's estate. Meeting someone who knew Douglas Cook and who helped with original planting is always a wonderful experience.

I first met Douglas Cook in about 1936. He was in Vancouver Island, making his way back to New Zealand from Canada. He was meeting up with Bill Giles, who had a nursery in the area and had worked on the early developments of Butchart Gardens. Douglas also met with Mr Layritz who had a nursery on the Saanich Peninsula and was related by marriage to Bill Giles. Giles and Layritz shared a nursery outstation on the mainland, up the Fraser River Valley at Lytton. A major aspect of their business in the previous years had been producing stock for the booming fruit industry in the Okanagan. Their time together was obviously spent in more than discussion of tree species and arboretum layout because in 1939, just on the outbreak of war, Bill Giles and I were both in Gisborne.

There is a strong family association between the Cooks and the Giles going back as far as 1890. In 1938, Bill had decided to move to New Zealand. He had attractive job offers from Eastwoodhill and Mr Davis of Duncan and Davis in New Plymouth. Because of the family connection, Giles accepted the Eastwoodhill position and moved to Gisborne. However, it became obvious that Douglas Cook was unable to keep his financial part of the agreement. Bill chose to remain in Gisborne and find other employment, but he continued to help Douglas whenever he could while working with the Parks and Reserves section of the Gisborne Borough Council, and later when he was recruited into the Army. Bill's workmate Roy Andrews, superintendent of Parks and Reserves, was also an avid supporter of Eastwoodhill and spent time at the arboretum planting and planning. He also made Council resources available to store and rehabilitate any plant material that was not ready for planting or had suffered during the journey.



David Reynolds

Douglas and Sholto Cook in Austrian outfits, souvenirs of the 1936 overseas trip. (Photo Sholto Douglas Cook)

I came out from England in 1939 with my mother and, until 1946, we frequently visited Eastwoodhill with Bill Giles. To begin with my jobs were often carrying material to the worksites, but later on I was entrusted with some of the planting. The worksites always seemed to be well beyond the homestead and only accessible by foot! I spent a great deal of time with 'Mr Cook' talking about anything and everything. I certainly appreciated our time together and it was been an enduring good memory since leaving Gisborne in 1947.

In 1949 or 1950 Douglas was keenly involved in promoting Pukeiti as a rhododendron reserve. I recollect Douglas refusing to sign a final agreement until Bill Giles had inspected and approved the proposed area. Myself, Bill and three others went to the proposed site the next week to inspect, discuss and collect soil samples. The agreement was obviously all approved as we all know the outcome!

From 1947 on I was away from Gisborne except for occasional short trips home to see Mum until she moved to Christchurch in 1962. While Bill was still in the Army they had bought several acres on Williamson's Road at Okitu and established a home and a nursery. (It was the only the third building over the Okitu bridge then – not like today!). Bill Giles had done some landscaping work for Bill Williams and conceived that it would be a good idea to bring him and Douglas together and so the relationship that was to

be so fortunate for Eastwoodhill later on was started. They were two very different people and Mum initially had to work overtime to keep the conversation going! It was subsequent to one of those meetings that I saw my friend 'Cookie' for the last time. I think it must have been 1953 or 1954.

I finally brought Bill Giles' horticultural books to Eastwoodhill in 1961. I was delighted to revisit those old tomes again recently and remember my friends.

Membership

Have a blast at Eastwoodhill this year by becoming a member. Membership fees and donations are essential to help us maintain and develop our national treasure so we can enjoy it now and in the future.

Why become a member at Eastwoodhill?

- Unlimited entry for 12 months
- 10% discount in the Eastwoodhill shop
- Members' children are free
- The knowledge you are helping protect a national treasure
- Information about what is happening at Eastwoodhill
- Newsletters – both email and printed
- You can help in the park or in the Visitor Centre

Single annual membership is \$45

Dual annual membership is \$80

For those who wish to contribute a little more, there are two corporate options.

Annual gold corporate membership \$495

(This is made up of a \$45 membership fee and a \$450 donation)

Annual silver corporate membership \$195

(This is made up of a \$25 membership fee and a \$170 donation)

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Memberships

Eastwoodhill Arboretum

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The membership year runs from July 1 to June 30, so mark it in your calendar and make sure you get the most out of your membership.