

MEDIA RELEASE For immediate release - 8 August 2011

Mad Hatter Tea Party brings Enchanted Garden to life at Australian Springtime Flora Festival

Proudly presented by the Central Coast Regional Development Corporation

The Mad Hatter, together with a team of magical creatures, will host a daily tea party for local children as part of the kids' Enchanted Garden, launching at this year's Australian Springtime Flora Festival.

From 8 – 11 September, the new Garden will captivate children with storytelling, pony rides, jumping castles and face painting, culminating with a Mad Hatter tea party at midday on each of the four days.

All aboard! A mini train will circle the gardens each day with happy little passengers on board, while animal lovers will enjoy a pony ride along a scenic trail, dotted with fairies, elves – and perhaps a glimpse of the White Rabbit on his way to the tea party!

Costumed characters will roam the Enchanted Garden, creating balloon twisters and entertaining little ones with impromptu interactive shows and dramatic storytelling.

Local author, Lindy Mitchell, will launch her new children's book, *The Elf that Flew*, during story time at the Enchanted Garden.

"This is a tale about Greenleaf, the Elf who lives happily in the rainforest of Katandra Reserve," said Lindy. "An encounter with flower fairies sets Greenleaf on a quest to fly with the fairies."

"My new book celebrates the importance of being yourself, while inspiring love for our natural environment within young children."

Set on the grounds of Mt. Penang Parklands at Kariong, the Enchanted Garden brings an element of magic to the 25th annual Australian Spring Flora Festival, making it the ultimate day out for the whole family.

Getting there:

Operation hours are 9am to 5pm on Thursday 8 September through to Saturday 10 September, and 9am to 4pm on Sunday 11 September. Mt. Penang Parklands is located at Kariong off the F3 Gosford exit if travelling from Sydney or Newcastle. Parking is complimentary, as is the shuttle services from the Kariong parking area to the Festival. Buses will also depart regularly from Gosford Railway Station.

Free guided tours through Mt. Penang Gardens are included in the admission prices at \$15 for adults, \$13 for seniors, \$4 for children aged 5-16, while under five years is free. Family passes are also available for \$34. Group concessions are also available for groups of twenty or more.

This activity is supported by Central Coast Tourism and the NSW Government through Destination NSW and its Regional Tourism Partnership Funding Program.

For further details on the event including a full exhibitor list see www.florafestival.com.au.

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