



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening

Open Gardens South Australia

Welcomes you to

THE LONG GARDEN

Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 April, 2017 1 Baust Crescent, Coromandel Valley

When we moved into the house over 45 years ago the garden was essentially a blank canvas with some lawns, a silver elm and a Canary Island Palm. Over the next five years the land on either side of the house block was added to the garden. It was covered in wild fennel with three cornered garlic and blackberries along the river. These provided us with a cheap and productive exercise regime over several years.

The overall style of the garden is eclectic but there is an acknowledgement of Edna Walling with a built backbone of low walls and garden edging clothed with plants in garden 'rooms' but without her skill in plant placement, form and texture. There is also a strong element of happy accident. It is critical to mention that a bore was sunk in 2004, before the water restrictions, which were brought in as the drought progressed, allowing us to maintain the existing garden and to plant new areas.

Of necessity, because of the lack of shade, combined with a passion for trees and a desire to see them at maturity these were the first things planted, in fact, over planted. Over the years some died. With some this was welcome as we realised our mistakes but with some not. There is still a Copper Beech at the bottom of the shade house while a Tricolour Beech died in the 90's and a Purple Beech, toward the end of the 10 year drought, as the climate progressively became more difficult. At the beginning we could grow a few of the hardiest of the rhododendrons only to lose them some years later in some of the fiercer summers. With the recent summers being relatively mild we have been lured into planting a White Pearl. It has scorched on a recent hot summer day but will hopefully survive in the changing microclimate as the garden has evolved. Next we concentrated on the garden beds planting shrubs particularly camellias and with more time in retirement a more detailed approach was possible with plants such as perennials.

In the late 1970's the rustic shade house was built which screened the house from an old plum orchard by the river. A Rough Tree Fern has found its way through the shade house roof and its canopy now sits well above it. The plums progressively died out leaving something of a wilderness. In the last five years or so this has become a lawned area surrounded by brick edged garden beds. There is a pavement labyrinth in the lawn planted with black mondo grass, as the focal point, with a statue of Hermes at its centre. This lawn is dominated by two large gums, E. Grandis and E. Blakelyi, the latter being adjacent to the shade house. Again, more recently, a Eupatorium walk has been started along the river upstream from the labyrinth lawn. Along the river in this area, as you walk upstream, to the now undeveloped area behind the court starting at the labyrinth lawn, there is a Bunya Bunya pine, an lochroma, some Crack Willows, a Yew, a stand of Poplars, several Leighton Cyresses intermingled with a Bald Cypress and a blue C. cashmeriana. Further along is a Chinese Elm, a large Desert Ash and an, as yet, small but rare Oil Nut Tree (native). The area between the court and river, previously extensively planted with native shrubs, has stands of Sydney Blue Gums and Allocasuarina stricta, an Allocasuarina torulosa (Rose Sheoak) and a Casuarina cunninghamii (River Sheoak). As you walk up the lawn slope from the river flat towards the house, on the right there is a Persian Witchhazel, a Tulip Tree and a very large London Plane. To the left is a Bald Cypress beside the shade house and a persimmon (Diospyros kaki 'Titibut'). The Bald Cypress sends up 'knees' which can be seen in the surrounding lawn. They are regularly shaved off by the mower but some small ones can be seen between the grape vine and the patio. If you look to the right past the glass sitting room there is a mature Gingko.

In the 1980's a small apple orchard was planted on the southern side of the house underplanted with Erigeron. The orchard is surrounded by a Rosemary hedge which is suffering from the very wet period last spring and summer. Also in the 1980's a Black Hamburg grape was planted over the patio adjacent to the

Open Gardens South Australia Inc: 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.

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orchard. For years we had good crops of apples and grapes but now struggle to get much at all, even with netting, as the bird population in the area increased, particularly blackbirds and lorikeets, the latter making a dazzling show at times.

Between the shade house and the orchard is an old driveway. As you walk down it from the house, on the left are Japanese Anenomes, Dietes, Alstromerias, ferns and Crinums shaded by an Azara microphylla and an Acer buergerianum with an old camellia by the shed. Behind the camellia, perhaps best seen from the lower side, is a handsome and hardy large shrub, Royena lucida with shiny leaves. It was once used for hedges but has fallen out of favour. Towards the end of this path, on looking to the left, is a view across the extensive shrub bed to the labyrinth in the riverside lawn. To the right of this path, past the orchard, is a large Philadelphus mexicanus which along with a Port Wine Magnolia on the other side of the court perfumes the house in spring. Later, in summer, a replanted Night Scented Jessamine behind the Philadelphus floods the whole garden with its scent.

There have been rough beds surrounding the tennis court on the slope up to the street, from the late 1980's, which have been progressively edged and more intensively planted. The line of trees dividing the court from the house consists of a mixture of pittosporums and Irish Strawberries and above the court is a group of Scribbly Gums which did not come with the moth larvae which make the attractive scribbles on the bark. On the street boundary are two large E. viminalis (Manna or Ribbon Gums) which are preferred by koalas which we hear frequently and occasionally see.

The southern boundary from the Bunya Bunya by the river up to the street is demarcated initially by a line of Algerian Oaks and further up by Leighton Green Cypresses.

Above the orchard and parking area is another Algerian Oak which shades the latter. Above this again are shrub beds with a Magnolia grandiflora 'Exmouth Variety' a little further up the slope behind the oak. Between the parking area and the house are a Cork Oak shading the balustraded steps down from the parking area next to a large Pin Oak. Between these and the house is a raised bed containing a corton steel sculpture entitled Sea Grass surrounded by a 'sea' of Liriope. This is faced by a fountain on a wing wall from the house.

Adjacent, a short path under a Chinese Pistachio leads to a lawn in front of the house dominated by a Dawn Redwood and surrounded by garden beds. The beds on the high side, of necessity, have plants which can tolerate dry shade. In this bed near the Canary Island Palm, where the soil is completely replaced by a mat of roots, we are trying some plants in pots.

A path above this slope leads across the garden back to the area above the court. The garden area up the slope across the top of the property has thinner soil and is altogether a different gardening environment to the riverside flat. The varied gardening environments have presented an enjoyable challenge over the years.

Open Gardens South Australia is aiming to significantly reduce its impact on the environment and we hope you support us in this endeavour. Please return your garden notes as you leave so they can be reused and recycled.

The gardens that open for us are chosen to reflect a great diversity of styles and may even challenge the conventional view of what constitutes a garden. While aspects of a garden may not be to your taste, we urge you to celebrate this diversity. Please remember you are visiting a private home and show respect and sensitivity for the owners who have so generously shared their garden with you. Thank you.