

GARDEN NOTES

THE GARDEN COTTAGE

87 SCHLICH ST., YARRALUMLA



12-13 OCTOBER
2019

OVERVIEW

Passersby have called our garden 'very romantic' or 'fairy-tale-like', but to us it is just a place we love to tend early in the morning. We live here with our sons, lots of birds and lizards and a possum family. It's a source of supplies for craft, dying, fibre art, and cooking and is an inspiration for our historical costume, dance and music hobby (and you might encounter some costumed members of our Earthly Delights Historic Dance Academy during your visit). The garden has grown out of our love of history. It originally featured trees and plants (many rare) which were going to be useful to us in some obviously practical or edible way, but as our interests broadened, we have introduced plants just for structure, flowers or interest. Every garden bed is also filled with ground covers, bulbs and perennials offering ongoing yearly interest and gentle fireworks in spring!

HISTORY

When we moved in 22 years ago the house was grey and the garden pretty bare. We renovated and painted up the house and rotary hoed and redesigned the garden. It's a small block so we tried to make the most of every patch. We decided where we wanted seven circular open areas (each featuring a different sort of ornament, seating or gazebo), joined them with paved paths, and made everything else garden. The paved-path-joined open areas were initially grass edged with lavender but as the garden matured we changed them to gravel or timber, edged them with Japanese box, and we added two new casual-path-joined open areas.

CLOCKWISE TOUR

When you arrive on the eastern Musgrave side you will see a Sour Cherry and Chaste Bush by the driveway at the top, a European Linden at the bottom, and between them a long perennial border of Winter Iris, Centranthus ruber, Japanese Anemones and bulbs, punctuated by Englantine, Rugosa, Damask and David Austin roses. You will also see white garden arches, each with a Chocolate Vine (*Akebia quinata*) on one side and a different clematis on the other. Come under the middle of our three arches towards our 'stone-table-front-door-lawn'. On the left is a garden area that features a seat around a Dutch Medlar, a Nashi pear, Quince, Pussy Willow and Lilac, and some newly introduced camellias. Up on the porch, are some raised vegetable garden beds with delicate pottings underneath. In front of the porch is a large pink Camellia (an original planting), two different sorts of dogwood (good for fruit), an Amelanchier, and new camellias.

If you then progress clockwise around the house you will come to the shady southern Schlich St side to the block with its large Irish Strawberry tree and an ornamental cherry (both original plantings). Down by the Schlich St footpath are *Acanthus mollis* in between camellias and Japanese quince. To the left of our paved path, either side of a casual path leading to 'Bush gazebo' covered in *Pandorea jasminoides*, are a Persimmon, Canadian Elderberry, a Persian silk tree, *Mahonia aquifolium*, Mountain Paw Paw (*Asimina trilobal*) and recent underplantings of hydrangeas, rhododendrons, and azaleas. Beyond are Mexican Hawthorn, a common Myrtle

and Crabapples. Plants on the right near the house include a Fig, Snowberry, Amelanchier, Mexican Orange Blossom, and Tea Camellias.

Follow the path around the corner (the gate can be left open), up the back of the house through a clam-shaped arbour bedecked with a Pierre de Ronsard rose, *Clematis armandii* apple blossom and a *Clematis montana rubens*, and walk on between two large raised vegetable garden beds. On the left is a Rowan Tree (from Marysville Victoria), various sorts of English Elderberry, and some Loquats, and against the fence rambling berries. On the right are a red and white Camellias (original plantings—with our compost bins and worm farm underneath), and some Cumquat and Calamondin bushes.

Ahead is our octagonal ground-level deck with monastic fountain in the centre. Around it we are trying to establish another box hedge. On the house side is a Nottingham Medlar, a Mock Orange under the kitchen window, and a Himalayan Musk rose over the back door pergola, and a pair of Magnolia Grandifloras each side of little path into a utility area. On the fence side of the deck, with mixed underplantings, are Loquats, an English Mulberry, and a giant Canadian Balsam Poplar which we grew from seedling for the resin from the spring buds. On the high side of the deck are currants (red and black) and a hazelnut hedge.

Taking the left-most path you come to our tool shed that we once used as a pigeon house (thus the love-heart cut-out) and following the path that runs parallel to the studio you will see Lemon Verbena, a Chestnut seedling next to a 'Emerald Gem', and a thicket of *Daphne odora*. As you pass the Studio side door, you see on the right some Pistachio nut trees, underplanted with Golden Rod and roses, and on the left, more *Daphne* and different *Viburnum opulus*, the sterile (Snowball bush) and the virile (Guelder Rose)

If you can go straight ahead you come to a seating area under an arbour decked with Crepuscule Rose and *Clematis armandii* apple blossom, and in the bed to the right are a plum, a Bay tree and a now very large Pecan nut tree, with lots of underplanted citrus, lilac, roses, and perennials such as Easter daisies. In the beds on the high sunny north side to the left are Pomegranates, Persimmon, Olive, hibiscus, with underplantings including a white groundcover comfrey.

If you go up to the carport sitting area, you find a pergola covered with Himalayan Musk Rose, different sorts of Chinese and Japanese Wisteria, and Kiwi fruit, a narrow bed with standard 'Double delight' roses and a Crabapple, and on a fence covered with Star Jasmin and thornless blackberries. Coming back on the straight path towards the house you will pass between two Sioux variety Crepe Myrtle and end beneath a pergola with the beginnings at last of a grape cover, before pots with a variety of dwarf lemons. Turning left find on the right a corner bed that includes a mandarin and cherry guava.

Through the lilac gate (often overhung with a jasmine, honeysuckle and species *Clematis* climber) you will see an ornamental prunus, various hibiscuses, an old-fashioned Magnolia, Granny Smith apple, *Cornus mas* and *Cornus capitata* and Blueberry Brigitta. As you follow the path back to the 'stone table lawn' you have on your left a Dogwood, Snow and Golden Delicious Apples, and an ornamental-Apricot (original planting).

You've now completed the clockwise tour!

GARDEN OWNERS

John & Aylwen Gardiner-Garden