

GARDEN NOTES
EMILY'S COTTAGE
82 ELLENDON STREET
BUNGENDORE NSW



HISTORY

I moved to this home in Bungendore 15 years ago. I think I really bought it because of the fireplaces in the old, 1880 constructed cottage and for the fact that it snowed on the day I came out to inspect the property. I suppose that should have been my first clue as to how heavy the frosts can be out this way.

Lots of changes have happened in this garden over time. The raised vegetable beds that my father helped me build at the back of the property were one of the first additions. The vegetable garden does fairly well here but can struggle a little with the large pussy willow on the northern boundary robbing it of some sun and water. This tree is slowly deteriorating but the bees adore its blossom in the spring so I forgive it its foibles. Eventually I'll get control of the wisteria and stop it from pulling the carport into the pea beds.

The front garden started to change when I removed the chain-link fence and the photinia hedge on the southern boundary something over 10 years ago. I replaced it with fruiting and ornamental trees with garden beds underneath. I even snuck a mulberry tree into the corner assuming I'd have moved on to the next life by the time it was a large and messy menace. Brick paths and edges were laid, with the help of friends and family, to add more definition to the garden and lawn. I'm sure there is some grass amongst the weeds but I think eventually I'll allow it to transition into a meadow daisy lawn anyway.

A new and busy puppy has been a serious challenge to this small garden in 2020. Protective wire fences have detracted somewhat from my spring garden but have been a necessity. Please forgive the patchy lawn and the racing tracks. You might notice they match those you will see at 72 Ellendon Street. Callie is to blame here too.

The garden is probably at its peak in late winter and early spring with the mass hellebore plantings giving way to the spring bulbs and the blossom trees. The hellebores have certainly been a saving grace on the shady northern fence line. I tend to add new plants each year to build up the numbers over time.

The final massive change in the garden happened in the winter of 2019 when the four huge Himalayan cypress trees were removed from the southern side of the back yard. This task was

enormous but I managed to mill a lot of the timber and it is drying now for use later this year. You can also see the beginnings of a rustic garden fence made from the branches starting to be built under the kitchen window. Removing the trees was heartbreaking in one way but it breathed life back into my back yard and filled it with light and air. As things settled over that first growing season I managed to plant my first 'bee meadow'. It was filled with opium poppies, cosmos, strawflowers and many other flowers. We shall see what comes up again this year.

I hope that my little garden inspires others with small garden spaces to discover that we can enjoy a productive and ornamental garden in a smaller space.

FEATURES

Productive trees: apples, quince, cherry, pears, plumcot, peach, Japanese plums, peacharine, mulberry, hazelnuts, black walnut, sugar plums

Ornamental trees: Eastern redbud or Forest pansy (*Cercis Canadensis*), Judas tree (*Cercis siliquastrum*), pussy willow (*Salix*), Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), Contorted filbert (*Corylus avellana* 'Contorta') also birch, ornamental pears, plums, cherries and malus

GARDEN OWNERS

Emily Nicoll (and Calliope Mae, the one year old border collie and designer of racing tracks)