

GARDEN NOTES

THE ENCHANTED GARDEN

4 PAULL PL, KAMBAH



HISTORY

The garden is in a cul de sac and has a block size of 715m². The house was built for government housing and first leased on 15/10/78. I have lived here since 1996.

The back yard had previously had a lined swimming pool. Much of the subsoil dug out for the pool was used to line the back and side garden making the area higher than the neighbouring blocks. Six photinias had been planted across the back fence two photinias and three variegated trees had been planted on the side. Photinias also lined the driveway at the front. The ground was then covered with black plastic and wood chip mulch. The swimming pool area had been filled in and grassed over.

As the back photinias were into the power lines they were cut down, the front reduced to hedge height. A new right hand side fence had been put in with the shrubs cut and pushed aside. There was a weeping elm, viburnum, albizia, lilac and a grape vine. I dug out one end of the swimming pool area to make a pond. It was filled with rubbish –pool liner, metal posts, paint tins, rocks and plastic bags full of rubbish. The topsoil I added to the other end.

I dismantled the barbeque and used the bricks and rocks to edge the garden and the rubber lining of the pond. I had a pergola extension to the garage and the kiln and glaze sheds added.

The front side garden had six cotoneasters along the side, roses at the front wall, a variegated tree, lilac, sasanqua camellia at the letter box and the street tree deep in woodchip mulch. I removed cotoneasters and planted out mostly natives, deciduous trees, iris and bulbs and replanted the roses.

Water has always been a problem. The street tree roots had clogged the storm water pipe. It was cheaper to purchase five 1,000L tanks than fix the pipe. When the rotting pergola was replaced in 2013 a 2.500L tank was added. Washing water and shower water are diverted to the garden. It is hand hosed. Pipes were put in around the street tree to keep it deeper watered.

Fertilizing has been through a covering of horse manure from the Youth Haven twice a year. It is also used to make up potting mix. The clean out of the pond annually is added to the

garden. Two worm farms are used for kitchen scraps. Nests made from larger branches are composts for leaves etc. Prunings are chipped and spread as mulch.

By the time I retired in 2012 many of the natives were past their prime. The garden sculptures and pieces were seconds. After renovating the inside of the house, at last I had time to get to the garden and make pieces that I wanted for the garden. Most of the garden has been from tube stock and bits and pieces from friends. I have a lot of natives, wattle, grevillia, bottle brush, hakea, myoporum, correa etc and groundcovers. I also have a variety of bulbs and deciduous trees, prunus, forest pansy and crab apple for shade in summer and sun in winter and shrubs camellia and peonies. I hate throwing things out so generally pot up extras for the local school fete or to give to friends.

Problems have been the clay soil, not being able to build up the back garden, the matted roots of the street tree and the depth of the wood mulch. The elm beetle almost killed the tree in 2012 so I am now treating it with biannual injections of confidor. Saw flies on the bottlebrushes and this year on other plants.

In November 2017 the street tree, a gum, was struck by lightning, and then gradually died. Then the cockies began stripping bark from the tree, a daily barrow load, getting to the borers underneath. I used the bark as mulch for the front lawn area and paths.

FEATURES

I have been a professional potter since 1983 and pottery and mosaics feature in the garden. When the six metres of treated pine edging between the pergola and kiln shed was rotting, I covered it with bricks, chicken wire, sand and cement and mosaicked over it using left over pieces from the kitchen renovations, excess pottery pieces, glass beads and tiles from the Green Shed. In the front garden I created a twelve metre length wall to edge the garden. Next was the letterbox. The front wall was so effective for run off I turned to the back. With thick pavers and the present white rocks, I made a fifteen metre long edge to the back garden, mosaic on the pavers and in between the rocks and extended the mosaic to the garden seat.

GARDEN OWNER

I love working in the garden. I feel that every leaf regrown and recycled helps cut the carbon dioxide and add to the oxygen levels for the planet. The garden is constantly evolving and challenging. I do everything in the garden by myself.

I hope you enjoy your visit to the garden and get lots of ideas for your own garden.

Leonie Lucey