

GARDEN NOTES  
KATHLEEN  
21 DOWNEY  
STREET  
KARABAR,  
QUEANBEYAN



23-24  
OCTOBER  
2021

**KATHLEEN** (in SPRING)

Kathleen was my grandmother. My early memory of her is playing in the winding paths through her garden, taking care to not be hit by weeds flying over her shoulder as she potted in the beds.

Why do I garden? This is my place to de-stress and relax at the end of a hard day and a busy week. A place where I experiment and play with landscape ideas and tend to favourite plants. Or sometimes just sit and look. The garden is designed to provide interesting colour and foliage and views that change through the seasons.

I have used Japanese gardening principles to guide my work including:

- Separating the deciduous canopy from the evergreen understory
- Using rocks and pruning to create the effect of miniature landscapes
- Contrasting very formal shapes with more natural features

I am attracted to the romance of the Japanese garden tradition and have experimented applying it to a suburban garden. I love how

Australian plants can fit with these themes and work together or in contrast with exotic plants. Travelling to Japan to visit several gardens in Autumn changed my outlook on what garden design could achieve.

The garden is a place for experimenting with new and unusual plants, optimistically rescuing abandoned or neglected plants, and affectionately caring for favourite specimens.

This winter was cold and wet enough to resemble the Japanese climate so I'm hoping for a good spring show this year with the maples, blossom trees, rhododendrons and azaleas.

**A Walking Guide**

**A.** From the driveway on Downey Street, on the left hand side under the huge Eucalypt is a dry garden of dwarf Oleander and varieties of Dietes. Heading south along the gravel path is a garden area that features deciduous *Magnolia soulangeana*, *M. stellate*, and a new *Podocarpus*, Japanese Plum Pine, Robinia "Lace Lady" and *Pyrus* underplanted with *Kalmia latifolia*, varieties of *Osmanthus*. In summer *Escallonia Iveyii* and *E. rubra* will bring more colour to this garden. The path is bordered with a dwarf *Pomegranite* as a hedge.

**B.** The West Gate one of my first major projects. Over the Gate is "Wedding Day" rose and many of the garden views were set out from here. On the right are stepping stones across a dry river bed with *Corylus avellana 'Contorta'*, and from here you can see the Japanese Maple collection. I've collected about 12 *Acer dissectum*, either rescued from gardens or selected from specialist growers, as well as an old Coral Bark maple, *Acer senkaki* overhead and 10 other maples throughout the garden. These weeping maples change character from year to year as I cut out dead wood or see new shapes to encourage. The white limestone Mountain rock straight ahead is my pride and joy. On both sides of the white paved path is "Moss Garden" with creeping *Thymus* and several dwarf conifers.

**C.** Ahead to the Pond with its island lantern, waterlilies and Japanese iris. The pond deck has had a recent addition of a beautiful, double roofed Pagoda. On the house is a trellis with *Clematis* and an espalier of *Quince*. The Japanese Dogwood *Cornus*

*kousa*, underplanted with red flowered Azaleas is another highlight of the garden along with a sculpted *Michellia yunnanensis*. Under the bridge grows *Polygonatum "Solomons Seal"*. This area also has a stand of clumping Bamboo.

**D.** At the Entry Deck is a lovely and recently completed Stone wall featuring rare Grey Sandstone with fine jointing. Beyond the deck is a potted *Fraxinus exelsior 'Aurea'*.

**E.** Along the stepper path to toward the street front I have combined Australian natives to provide the evergreen framework and privacy, including various *Correas* and *Banksias*, into this I have mixed *Rapheolepis indica*, *Peiris japonica variegatum* and varieties of Pine and Yew to create the formal Japanese feel we wanted. Overhead are *Perotica persica*, *Ginko biloba* and one of our favourite trees, the red trunk *Arbutus canariensis*. On the fence are uncommon flowering vines including Chilean Jasmine (*Mandevilla laxa*) and variegated climbing hydrangea (*Hydrangea anomala var. petiolaris "Miranda"*). I have added a rescue maple and hope it survives.

**F.** The Moss Garden was designed to be viewed when you sit down at the stone seat. On the right is a tiny *Acer "Sumingashi"*.

**G.** Down to the red brick, radiating, circle at the South Gate on Anne Street. After I returned from Japan I started "making space" in the garden to give each plant some room to have its own character. I removed an old arbour and several large shrubs. Keeping just one Wisteria, I built a larger arbour and opened up the space to feature the *Banksia integrifolia* which had already been bonsaied due to lack of space. I experimented with dramatically pruning the *Banksia*, the *Feijoa* and the *Bay tree* and hauled in some more rocks to form a new Zen Garden. Opposite, at the window is a rare *Stachyurus precox* which is holding onto its beautiful pendulous winter flowers, underplanted with *Hellebores*, *Hydrangea* and *Peony*. Just around the corner, looking its brightest in early spring, *Cercis Canadensis "Forest Pansy"*.

**H.** Around the back of the house is a shaded garden with acidic soil. We are rescuing this area from the dog so it's still struggling. This will be our next project. Overhead is a flowering Ash and on the fence is *Clematis armandii*. Toward the garage is a Productive Garden with a few Ballerina Apples, Apricot, Lime, Kumquat and an espaliered Olive. This garden includes my collection of iron stoves and a stone Portuguese olive washing tray.

**I.** The BBQ and Deck area with a sunken spa. The stained glass is salvaged from a heritage salvager in Sydney. This area multi tasks as the work yard for our landscape business and our entertaining area. Another rescued maple *Acer Vitifolium* is tucked away in the corner, with a *Podocarpus laurencii* "Plum Pine" among the rocks. Featured and regularly used are oak tubs and a wicking bed full of herbs and leafy greens.

## Tree List

1. Eucalyptus (E.melliorodora, E.macroryncha?)
2. Eucalyptus ficifolia
3. Olea Europa - Olive
4. Ficus carica 'Black Genoa' - Fig
5. Malus bolero – Ballerina Apple
6. Citrus (C. hystix, C. latifolia, C. australasica)
7. Fraxinus griffithii – flowering Ash
8. Cornus kousa 'rubra' - Dogwood
9. Dicksonia Antarctica – Tree Fern
10. Gleditsia triacanthus 'Ruby Lace'
11. Lagerstroemia indica – Crepe Myrtle varieties
12. Acco sellowiana 'Feijoa'
13. Laurus nobilis 'Bay Tree'
14. Banksia integrifolia
15. Betula pendula "Silver Birch"
16. Acer "Osakazuki"
17. Magnolia grandiflora "Little Gem"
18. Stachyurus precox
19. Cupressus sempiverens "Swains Gold"
20. Faxinus exelsior 'Aurea' - Golden Ash
21. Acer "Crimson Sentry"
22. Acer buergerianum – Trident Maple
23. Ginko biloba
24. Euc.
25. Banskia serrata
26. Perrotica persica
27. Arbutus unedo – Irish Strawberry Tree
28. Acer rubrum – Canadian Maple
29. Pistachia chinensis – Chinese Pistachio
30. Euc
31. Pinus parbiflora – Japanese White Pine
32. Arbutus cannariensis
33. Acer dissectum "EverRed"
34. Acer Palmatum "Senkaki"
35. Acer Palmatum
36. Acer dissectum "Chantilly Lace", "Waterfall", "Orangeola", "Toyama Nishiki", "Inaba Shidare", "Crimson Queen"
37. Magnolia soulangeana
38. Pyrus calleryana "Capital"
39. Magnolia stellata
40. Prunus serrulata – Flowering Cherry
41. Prunus cerasifrea "Crimson Spire"
42. Xanthorea glauca

