

## GARDEN NOTES

### "MERRYWAY"

EUREE STREET, REID



#### HISTORY

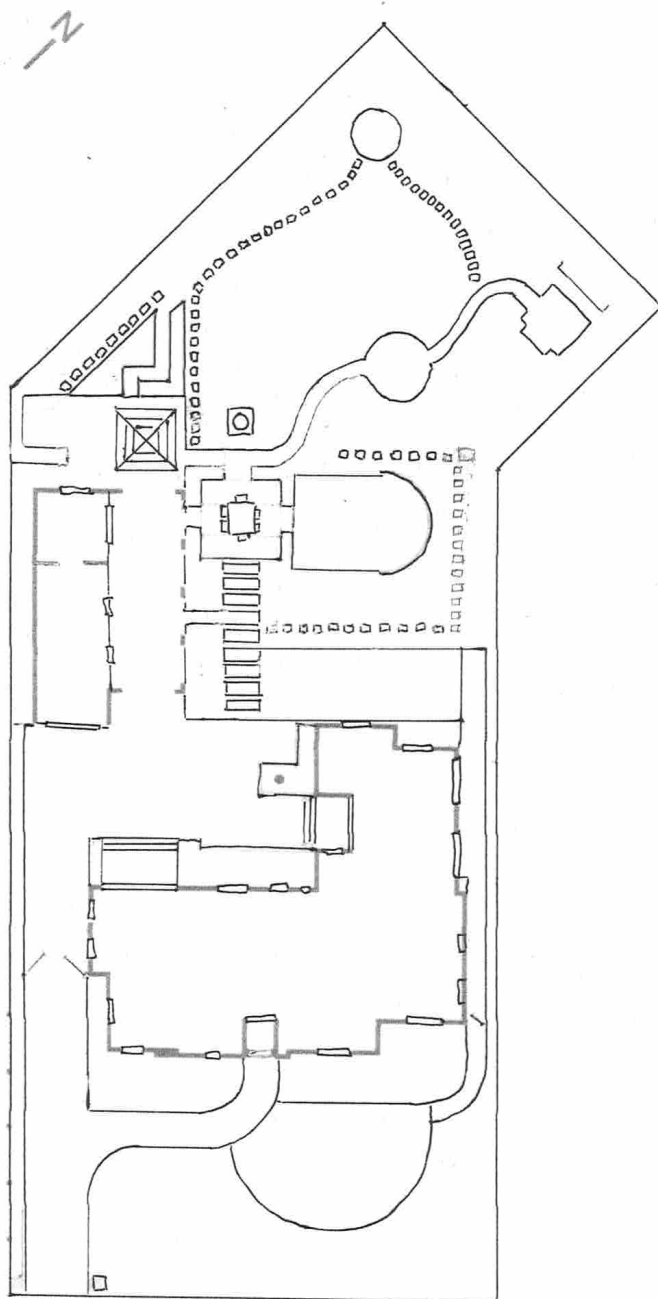
"Merryway" is a 1927 property in Reid. It was purchased by Helen and Paul in December 1998 from the family of the original owners. Renovations began in Autumn 1999 and work on the garden started that Winter. Unwanted growth was cleared, the ground was "ripped" and many loads of topsoil were spread before any planting took place. Narrow "rescued-brick" paths were made beside the fences and the house to allow for air circulation and easy access to pruning.

The block is large at 1440 square metres. The original garden had been loved, but over time the fruit trees became rootstock and the garden had declined. Some of the original plants saved are: a pink Crepe Myrtle and a red Camellia japonica at the front, and a large fig at the back. Helen is the gardener - weeding, clipping, propagating and choosing plants. She grew all the topiaries and the Teucrium hedge from seedlings or cuttings. Paul is her able supporter: a paver, builder, heroic pruner, mower and more. Sadly, water tanks were not permitted in 1999 and drought damaged a lot of the garden. Trees and big shrubs were favoured at the expense of the large lawns and smaller plants. A garden renovation in 2015 drastically reduced the lawn areas, and more trees and shrubs were added. Thankfully, initial good advice was heeded: to prepare the soil well, and to put in a curved hedge at the front. The curve makes it easier to see when backing the car out, plus it flowers in winter, and allows interesting corners to view as you pass by.

#### FEATURES

The block is an odd shape - a rectangle with a bent wedge shape at the rear, and it slopes gently down from the street. The front curved hedge is the red Camellia "Yuletide". It encloses a lawn with leafy borders featuring a variety of maples, Berberis "Little Favourite", Pittosporum "Miss Muffet", Gardenia "Florida", white Iberis (Candytuft), Raphiolepis "Snow Maiden", Spireas, Daphnes, Lonicera 'balls' and bulbs. Interesting plants here include Oak leaf hydrangea (Hydrangea quercifolia), Stachyurus praecox with its dainty yellow tassels, Daphne "Eternal Fragrance" and a white Michelia. A hedge of Osmanthus burkwoodii lines the driveway with Mt Fuji cherries one side and white Crepe Myrtles on the other. The garage and carport are fringed with the evergreen Clematis armandii 'Snowdrift'. Parthenocissus quinquefolia covers the pergola. Hedges feature in the back garden Abelia grandiflora nana and Euonymus "Tom Thumb", with a formal area near the house with Akebia, Viburnum burkwoodii and white Clematis Montana covering the walls. Rose "Graham Thomas" is behind the hedge. Further around, climbing rose "Mme Alfred Carriere" and "Cécile Brunner" intertwine. Other roses in the sun are "Heritage", "Evelyn", "Margaret Merrill". A 'wild' area in the rear has Silver Birches, under which are variety of white flowered plants: hellebores, Japanese windflowers, foxgloves, Lamium - all competing for space. Bluebells pop up in early Spring followed by white flag iris and small white gladioli "The Bride". The enormous fruiting fig tree, nearly 100 years old, in the far corner umbrellas over a paved area. Camellia "Setsugekka" is used to enclose spaces at the rear with Viburnums and Osmanthus "Heaven Sent". Sasanqua Camellias grow down one side of the house, colour grading from white to deep pink. Citrus are: Eureka lemon, two different cumquats, Australian finger lime, Lemonade lemon and a dwarf Lime. A small vegetable garden principally provides herbs with a few vegetables. The fruiting plants: fig, various citrus, rhubarb, olives, quince, red currants, a Loganberry and feijoas. They are used for preserves. The potted bay trees are ornamental as well useful.

## MAP



### DISABLED ACCESS

Most of the garden can be visited from the hard paving. However, stepping stones, mulched areas and grass are unsuitable for disabled access.

### TOILETS

The nearest public toilets are at the Campbell shops, Reid Park, Glebe Park, the Australian War Memorial (Poppy's cafe) and the Canberra Centre.

### GARDEN OWNERS

Helen and Paul Stevens

The plan to the left shows the outline of the garden with the buildings and principal paved areas. The paths around the garden and seating placed to enjoy the seasonal changes. Professionals paved most of those areas. Paul paved the circles, under the fig, along the righthand side of the house, and the various small squares of brick and stepping stones. He also made the pot storage area behind the fig.

The carport is great for large gatherings of family and friends. The car is moved and tables are set up. The pergola seats 6-8 and so is used often.

The area beside the clothesline was used for a trailer, no longer required with the advent of the green bin collection. The side of the garage holds Helen's plant nursery, stores of pipes, garden stakes and more.

The Rosemary and the Rhubarb plants came as stock from Helen's parents and some of the succulents came from Paul's mother's garden. Some plants were gifts, such as the largest *Pyrus*, the White Azaleas and a *Malus ionis plena*. Lots of the salvias came from the First Canberra Garden Club plant stall as well as other small perennials. The *Buxus* balls in pots came bare-rooted from a daughter's renovation in Sydney.

Successful cuttings/seedlings have come from geraniums, marguerite daisies, *Teucrium*, *Lonicera nitida*, red currant, *Buxus*, rosemary, other herbs, *Abelia*, *Euonymus*, *Clematis armardii*, *Viburnum burkwoodii*, *Hellebores*, *Ajuga* and more. Helen uses the simplest 'cut and poke' in good potting mix to grow plants on. She has a moderate success rate.

Quality fertiliser is used seasonally, composted leaves and a watering system keep the plants healthy. A gardener, Tim, now comes about once month to help with pruning the hedges, and a lawn company keeps the turf looking good. Weeding is done on the "remove at least 10 weeds a day" principle that Paul's widowed mother used successfully in her Melbourne garden.