



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening

# Open Gardens South Australia

Welcomes you to

## JOHN'S ORGANIC GARDEN

Saturday 3 & Sunday 4 February, 2018     4 Brand Avenue, Victor Harbor

I began work on this garden about 15 years ago, when Lesley and I purchased the property and moved in following my retirement.

My background as a professional horticulturist meant that my design for the garden was never going to be a suburban style. I intended it to be a place where I could try out rare or unusual plants, especially fruit and vegetables, so that I could evaluate new plants for their suitability and cultural requirements in South Australia, especially the South Coast district, and Victor Harbor in particular.

Having said that, I still wanted to create a garden with variety, beauty and different forms and foliage textures, using a mixture of plant shapes, sizes and heights. With this in mind I formulated a list of my needs and wishes for the garden design and layout.

This list is flexible and has been adjusted from time to time, yet still encapsulates the essence of the garden. In my garden

- People should be able to explore without reaching a dead end, or having to double back, so there is one continuous path, in a "U" shape, starting at the house and moving around the garden and arriving back at the house again.
- There must be two vegetable beds, plus containers raised off of the ground for additional vegetable or fruit culture.
- There is to be a collection of potted plants for additional culture of fruit and vegetables, and ornamental plants as needed, or for decoration.
- There is to be a large, caged enclosure to house two European plums and a collection of potted berry fruit and other plants being evaluated. This is necessary to protect the fruit from birds.
- There will be some partial cages, or frames, so that bird netting can be hung around the trees to protect them when fruit is in season.
- When available, dwarf fruit trees will be used to save space and make harvesting and maintenance easier.
- A pond will be included to provide beauty and atmosphere, as well as habitat for insects, water plants, and fish.
- A small selection of tasteful statues will be put into the garden to provide a focus for thought and contemplation, such as the Easter Island statue of a Maui. This statue reminds us that the Earth is a precious and fragile place; the Easter Islanders cut down all their trees to use as rollers to install giant statues to satisfy the vanity of the ruling class. The decimation of their forest caused loss of soil and the collapse of the island's environment resulting in starvation for the people and the collapse of their culture.
- Most importantly, the garden will be all organic – NO chemicals or poisons will be used, and all horticultural practices will be 'natural'.
- Where possible, everything will be recycled; all plant material produced in the garden will be mulched or composted, any timber or branches will be cut up and used for firewood.

JOHN H STEVENS A Dip Ed (Adult)  
January 2018.

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**Open Gardens South Australia Inc:** is a not for profit organisation opening private gardens to the general public. The purpose of Open Gardens SA is to educate and promote the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening in South Australia and to build strong public support for the development of gardens.

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