



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening

# Open Gardens South Australia

Welcomes you to

## Gale Garden

Sunday, August 30

Members ONLY – Address and Information will be sent to members direct.

My Grandfather, Charles Wakefield, completed building the house in 1904, then planted an 80 acre vineyard along with an almond orchard and 60 pine trees. He married in 1923 and my grandmother started a garden around the house. I lived here as a child and remember the constant struggle to grow plants under those pine trees. We inherited the house in 1988, along with the pines – which were removed soon after moving in! The only pre-1988 tree that remains is the gnarled pepper tree near the small tank. I don't know how old it is, but I can remember it as a child, so that's quite old!

David Baptiste was commissioned to design our garden – a difficult brief since by then we knew that within a few years we would leave to undertake some long term travel. Although the garden is not set out strictly to David's plan it still formed the basic structure. My love of hedging started with his design and has evolved ever since!

There were extensive areas of lawn in the original plan which looked great in winter but were allowed to dry over summer. We removed the lawn areas soon after returning to the house after nine years away. The box hedges at the front of the house originally bordered lawn and we transplanted them to their present position when we replaced the lawn beds with a larger area of gravel. This was mostly successful, but I had to replace a few unsuccessful ones – hence the gaps! The sweep of Bougainvillea at the front of the house replaced one large area of lawn – we felt a bold planting was needed – and once the cold weather is over it looks very healthy with no supplementary water. After some experimentation we settled on covering the paths with quartz sand – easy to change when I have wanted to accommodate a smaller or larger bed.

We have about 130,000 litres of rainwater storage – mostly underground – and although much of the garden is relatively drought tolerant, mains water supplements our supply for the driest months. The plane trees along the drive will start losing their leaves in midsummer without supplementary water. There is an automated watering system to the garden beds near the house and the orchard; the rest is hand watered when it looks sad. Some areas are not given supplementary water at all – the front hedge, all the pepper trees, the natives along the eastern and western fences, the rosemary around the rose garden and the wormwood hedge.

The soil is about 20cm of clay over limestone, so I grow plants that can cope with this – Hardenbergia, Eremophila and some species of Grevillea, Eucalypt and Correa are the most successful natives. These attract many native birds to the garden and sitting on the back veranda watching them is a great pleasure. Six trees shelter nesting boxes, which are used by rosellas, lorikeets and, very occasionally, a southern boobook owl visits its special large box in the gnarled old pepper tree.

The hedges are: bay – surrounding the car park; rosemary (blue lagoon) – around the rose garden and along the path to the square of wormwood; rosemary (common, Tuscan and pink) – around the back Jacaranda and the path behind the bay hedge; box – around the front garden beds; pittosporum – by the shed; Grevillea olivacea – front hedge, and lillypilly – along the eastern fence.

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**Open Gardens South Australia** 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.

Web page: <http://opengardensa.org.au/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/opengardensa>

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The clipped balls are *Rhagodia spinescens* (creeping saltbush – also used for the hedge paralleling the bougainvillea), *Teucrium fruticans*, *Westringia*, *Correa alba*, *Eremophila maculata* and *Grevillea olivacea*. Other favourites are *Abutilon*, *Teucrium heterophyllum*, lavenders, iris, cotinus, salvias, California poppies and roses.

*I love to grow plants from cuttings or divisions from friend's gardens. I am lucky in having many gardening friends who are generous with their plants. The garden continues to evolve as I accumulate more plants – and find more to clip!*

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*Morning/afternoon tea is available in return for a donation to the Fred Hollows Foundation – through the back door, in the kitchen. Thanks to Dierdre Owen and the RSL Women's Auxiliary for providing the food, and my friends for serving.*

*There are some photos and David's original plan on the table in the dining room – please feel free to have a look.*

*Our nine years of travel was a circumnavigation of the world in our yacht Caviar – Rob's book of the adventure is also available – in the dining room.*

<p>Open Gardens South Australia is aiming to significantly reduce its impact on the environment and we hope you support us in this endeavour. Please return your garden notes as you leave so they can be reused and recycled.</p>
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The gardens that open for us are chosen to reflect a great diversity of styles and may even challenge the conventional view of what constitutes a garden. While aspects of a garden may not be to your taste, we urge you to celebrate this diversity. Please remember you are visiting a private home and show respect and sensitivity for the owners who have so generously shared their garden with you. Thank you.