



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening

## Open Gardens South Australia

Welcomes you to

# ANNA'S GARDEN

Saturday 2 and Sunday 3, November 46 Gladys Street, Clarence Gardens

### Anna's Garden: A History...

I rented the house before I bought it, so this influenced greatly the design and layout of the garden. I've always loved gardening and so I accumulated quite a few pots from the various rental properties I lived in.

Once I bought and renovated the house, the garden underwent a huge change. Initially, there was an enormous silky oak in the back yard. I noticed that during the '11 Year drought' the roots were surfacing more and more and all of the new growth was on the side nearest to the house. It had to be cut down because it also started leaning towards the house.

I was going to maintain the lawn, but as I'm getting older I decided it was easier to have lots of flowers and veggies instead. Over the years I have dug up all the lawn and clay soil, both back and front and filled the areas with compost from the 8 compost bins I use. I find that by the time I've filled the 8<sup>th</sup> bin, the 1<sup>st</sup> is ready to be emptied. The success of my garden is definitely in the soil. If you don't work the soil, you won't get the results!

I've always loved colour and texture in everything I do – whether it's decorating the house, cooking or gardening. There is a lot of colour in my garden the whole year through, even during winter. My favourite colour is blue and that's pretty obvious in the colour of most pots and flowers. It has both a very calming and vibrant effect.

The 3 main trees – the 2 Robinias and the Ginkgo - in the back garden are divine, especially on a hot day when I drive through the gate. I feel as if the temperature drops by 10 degrees! They are all deciduous, so the plants underneath do get sun during the winter months.

There are 16 fruit trees and most are Mediterranean as my heritage is Greek and I love Greek food. Quinces are a firm favourite and these are used to make quince paste and jelly. The lemons and cumquats are used (with my neighbour's blood oranges) to make marmalade.

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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.

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

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Tangelos, limes and mandarins are grown in large pots to minimize the amount of fruit I harvest. I also preserve the cumquats in brandy and then use the brandy and cumquats in a delicious moist chocolate cake. I prune the fruit trees heavily as I do not want to be climbing ladders to get to the fruit.

I grow most of my own vegetables as I am vegetarian. I do cook up and preserve a lot of what is not used straight away. I make a lot of tomato sauce which is used during the year to make moussaka and pasta/rice dishes. I also cook up a traditional spanakopita that freezes well.

I visited Christopher Lloyd's garden, Great Dixter, when I went to England in 2015 and was stunned at how densely they planted the garden beds. Basically, the plants didn't need any support because they supported each other. This is what I'm trying to achieve with mine.

I like to leave some of the flowers and herbs to self-seed. This includes parsley, coriander, nigella, cosmos, coreopsis, poppies, forget-me-nots, etc.

I like to use pots in the garden beds. Often these are placed on top of areas where there are bulbs. In the process of watering the pot, any fertilizer used will end up in the bulbs. I also like the different 'heights' that pots create in a garden bed.

I found that as the trees grew I had to change some of the plantings. The Robinias do not like their roots being disturbed (suckers form), so I have used pots for these areas.

The pergolas were built to protect the orchids and hydrangeas during the summer, but they are taken out during the winter/spring months in order to give them the sun they require to flower the next season.

There's a lot more I can say about my garden, so please ask me questions on the day.

Thank you so much for visiting and supporting the charity Medecins sans Frontieres.

Anna