



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening

## Open Gardens South Australia

# Welcomes you to **AVONDALE**

### 146 Avondale Road, between Tarlee & Rhynie

Welcome to the garden at "Avondale". Feel free to walk or drive further along the road at the bottom of the hill. This goes along a creek to a turning circle just before the second cattle grid. You can glimpse the "Avondale" homestead from here and a small cottage part-way up the hill.

Firstly, a little history! "Caim Garadair" is taken from a Celtic prayer. "Caim" - for protection and blessing for all who live or visit here, and "Garadair" - the First Gardener. The home of Kent & Anne Hallett, passed on the way in, was the first built in the area, about 1845, It was headquarters of a large station which stretched from these hills, the North Mt Lofty Ranges, to the Belvedere Range in the east. Later, the area was subdivided, and other homesteads built, including "Avondale", and a home on this hill, little of which is now left - our top underground tank is the original, re-lined when the present home was built in 1972 and there are remains of an old dairy/smoke kitchen to the north.

The Sparaxis bulbs all over the hill were introduced in the 1800s, also the pink Oxalis, starfish Iris and Peruvian Scillas.

When Lucy, my mother, was 18, and potentially a paraplegic after a fall, her father bought her 20 King Alfred daffodils which she replanted as they multiplied - now there are thousands. At least four and a half thousand of the early gold daffodil and Jonquil spent flower heads are removed before the open day. The white "Gabrielles" with lemon frill on the cups, started from a single bulb bought in the 50's, and have multiplied to tens of thousands too. Many have been given away or sold for charity at open days. Approximately 50 different types of daffodils are in the garden, most coming from Tessellar's or Hancock's nurseries - a few new varieties are added each year.

Gradually, the garden has grown - pines, wattles, flowering cherries, almonds, apples and pears planted just after the war, and younger trees and those around the house since 1972. The big lemon scented gum on the front lawn had several splits when it was young, and these were bolted together. The bark has now covered the bolts. The waterfall area was installed in 1992, using stone from the local hills. The long Mintaro slate path and adjacent garden have been in since '96.

The pergola area north of the house is roofed with Winterlight which gives sun in winter and shade in summer. The birches do the same, which suits the orchids and cyclamen well! Lucy planted the cyclamen in about 1990. My grandmother's pink frilly edged cyclamen growing by the south wall of the house was already 13 years old when transplanted into its current

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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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position in about 1980. With cyclamen, the old flower-heads need to be removed each spring after flowering, as they otherwise grow from seed and would soon become too crowded.

Here are a few statistics:

**Area** of the hill fenced off from stock – 25 acres

**Area** of garden is approximately 1 Ha.

**Rainfall** is on average 550mm (22").

**Soil types:** for the main garden, it's a light sandy loam and, for the bulbs down the hill, the soil is heavy black clay which holds the moisture late into spring to allow bulbs to set next year's flowers.

**Soil management:** for the light sandy loam, the mulch used is rotted straw and leaf litter. We feed with organic fertiliser, special fertilisers for roses, camellias and azaleas and liquid for seedlings etc.

**Pests:** living in the country in peaceful surroundings is wonderful, like having occasional visitors like Echidnas, quails and a bittern, seasonal visitors like bee-eaters, wood swallows and resident grey thrushes, but it does have its drawbacks, including rabbits, kangaroos (mainly in summer looking for green feed), possums and parrots which nip off new shoots from the roses. The parrots do look lovely bathing in the pool areas fed by the waterfall! Baby olive trees, bridal creeper and fumitory also have to be eliminated. Daffodils, Jonquils, and Hyacinths can have weeds sprayed before the bulb leaves emerge. Early bulbs like Grape Hyacinths, and Anemones and Freesias need hand weeding.

**Situation:** Being a very sheltered spot facing east, the aspect is ideal for gardening, and being elevated, there is virtually no frost.

Thank you for supporting our Open Garden Day. Half the proceeds will go to the Leprosy Mission. The other half goes to World Vision for famine relief. Many thanks to the friends who have helped throughout the and the friends who have helped this weekend by cooking, potting plants and attending gate and stalls. These days would not have been possible without you. I am blessed to have lived and gardened in this spot over the years and, I trust that you, too, have been blessed today.

*Heather Davey*

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.



*Yes, this will be our final opening - after 24 seasons - unless some keen gardener volunteers ½ day per week for 5 months ( May - September ) then we could manage as long as I keep O.K.!*  
*Anyway, I owe grateful thanks to the many people who have helped in the garden this year - Peter Kosta, Hannah Seminatin, Jo Connelly, Andrew & Linda Davey, Kevin Stevens, Anita Poddar & Peter Hoffman.*

*Also many thanks to many people who have served teas and sold pot plants and manned the gate. Many thanks to Adie Cronin for 8 loaves of bread made into sandwiches Friday night and Saturday morning - for years.*

*Special thanks to Mandy Shepherd for taking photos and organising the printing of Avondale calendars - 40-60 per year.*

*Open Gardens SA (and Open Gardens Australia before them) has been invaluable for helping with road signs, advertising, providing information, insurance and advice etc.*

*And thank you to all those who have visited over the years and helped support Christian Blind Mission, Leprosy Mission and famine Relief. The funds raised to help would be in at least 4 figures - (helped by CBM etc having a multiplying gift appeal each year)*

*So, as well as helping many other people, I hope you have enjoyed your visits*

*Many, many thanks!*

*Heather*