



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening

## Open Gardens South Australia

# Welcomes you to Clair de Lune

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2023

## The Clair de Lune Story Garden

Our garden is a youthful garden established on a site half-way up what was a completely bald hill, the beginnings of which took place in 2011. We started with the driveway, lining it with Plane trees, the love of which was brought home from European travels. Red bush roses flank the edges, now with fillings of Munstead lavender in between the groupings.

We then started planting up the driveway embankment, created from carvings into the hill to forge the house site and the driveway. We initially used many natives, however now it is more diversified with pokings of this and that, pinched out from all kinds of sites and sources. One of the Xanthorrhoeas, silhouetted near the roses, I grew from seed. I transplanted 'Double Delight' from the last house we owned, along with cuttings of 'Baronne E. de Rothschild' that the previous owner had planted. 'Soeur Emanuelle', gifted by Sofia, is still establishing herself. The white rose is 'Sally Holmes' which is my full name. Friends told me about 'my rose' years ago but I didn't believe them until finally I found the evidence in a definitive rose book. Our youngest son, Alex, gave me the first 'Sally Holmes' and then a local nursery owner who couldn't resist, surprised me with the other. Our daughter, Sophie, a horticulturalist, quickly whips the roses into shape when she visits.

We have always had an insatiable appetite for stone, and prior to our home being built, we knew that we needed a good local source, as we had many projects in mind for both interiors and exteriors, so we went 'ruin hunting' one weekend. We found 'our ruin' at Waterloo, not far from here, and the farmer to match, who thought we were crazy to want a pile of old rocks, to the point of also offering to deliver the stone for us for the grand total sum of \$1000.00!

After our home was mostly completed, we were set to start on the remainder of the garden which has evolved over 5 years.

Our garden hosts a wide variety of plants, a few of which have been cosseted, just because they were badly desired, for example, the two rows of 'Roger Hall' red camelias across the front of the house. The soil profile had to be changed from alkaline to acid and has been a success albeit slower growing.

The Agapanthas were derived from one large clump, and some of the Cliveas were rescued and divided from a very dry position from around the shed which we lived in for 14 years on weekends until moving into our home here permanently. The row of Eremophilas, 'Scaberula', bordering the path in front of the house, are critically endangered in the west of Australia where they are endemic to, so it is nice to know that they are being perpetuated.

The native lawn, 'Nara' has been recently installed, which appealed to our need to try things that are not mainstream. It is endemic to Queensland but will tolerate some frost and recovers well in Spring.

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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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The Dragon Tree, now called Dolly, was found on Gumtree and dug out by my boys, Hamish, Alex and Andy, from a Vietnamese man's small front garden in suburbia where it was wedged in a corner. Frost initially affected Dolly, however she is now looking healthy and has grown significantly. She has a new mate too, Polly, the ponytail plant, again sourced on gumtree from a lovely couple at Henley beach.

The ubiquitous Pepper Tree started out as a self-grown seedling dug up from Maxine's city garden, and my fellow Open Garden friend, Gisela, gifted me the Euphorbia tree as a seedling.

Other plants that have been donated are the self-sown quince, via my Greek friend Andreas, which provides us with a year's worth of quince paste, an apricot, and two grape vines (currants) struck by a friend from cuttings derived from the original vines at the Auburn Court House. We propagated the pomegranate trees from cuttings from the original farm's orchard, which now belongs to the next-door neighbour as a result of the relatively recent division of farmland. The magnificent old pine tree on our land near the neighbour's boundary provides us with perfect firelighters, and swathes of jonquils from the original progeny and garden which I have transplanted into rings around the Plane Trees.

A lone cluster of Buttercups, discovered nearby a moss rock when we first purchased our land, has been recently transplanted into the Anzac Garden, inspired by our deep reverence for our soldiers and all people who have given their lives in service to our country. The sculpture, 'Poppy' was executed by a local artist. Within the rosemary hedging there is a synchronistic friendship garden that was instantly created by the request for plants from friends' gardens as my 60<sup>th</sup> birthday gifts.

The smaller of the two lemon scented gums started out life as a deposited seed by bird into one of my parent's hanging pots in suburbia. Dad had pollarded it for many years but understandably, finally became tired of all the grooming and was going to lay it to rest, however at the eleventh hour was given a reprieve and set free on our land. The other lemon scented gum planted a few years earlier has been caught up to.

But I think my finale plant in the story garden is the tiny Oak seedling which I dug up from the side of Skillogalee Creek Road 14 years ago, and now sit under, with a glass of wine and Andy. The next generation from its acorns are now underway in the northern enclosure of salt bush and mixed plantings, including Chinese elms from my friend Trish's beautiful garden in the stunning highlands of Victoria at Eskdale.

One of the highlights of the upcoming Open Garden will be serving food which will all have at least one element from our large organic fruit and vegetable garden, if not be all derived from it.

We hope you enjoy wandering in our garden and we welcome you on an ongoing basis for coffee, cake and a hammock or seat under a tree to read a book, just sit and dream or whatever your heart desires.

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.