



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening

Open Gardens South Australia

Welcomes you to

Rob's Rescue and Replant Garden

Saturday 13th & Sunday 14th June, 2026

Rob & Carolyn welcome Open Gardens patrons to enjoy our one-acre front yard created over the past 14 years. Rob's garden is a living display of transforming a barren yard with no top soil and an abundance of shale rock and clay with little or no shade, into a leafy paradise with cool rooms and quiet sanctuaries using many gifted, salvaged and recycled trees and plants.

When the house was purchased in 2008, the main tree in the front area of the yard, was and still is, a very large gum (nick-named Big Fred) near the letterbox. There were also ash trees planted many years ago which are now incorporated into the garden; all other trees and plants within the garden have been transplanted.

The Vintage Red Phone box from Pt Adelaide marks the entry location to the old house which faced west and was beyond renovation. The family decided to stay on the block and live in a caravan and shed during the demolition and re-build. Positioning the house footprint further back on the block, allowed the aspect of the new home to be changed to north-south, thus creating a one-acre front yard blank canvas.

Getting out of the builders' way during the development process, Rob concentrated on the back yard, referred to as "Down the Dell". From the glimpses you can see of the rear yard, it is not yet on display and continues to be a work in progress. Pest Woody Weed wild olives were prolific, with six semi-trailer loads being removed in the first season, along with highly flammable pine trees. The sloping hill-side face was terraced for fire-breaks and improved access, and is being revegetated with a mix of natives from Trees for Life and recycled ornamentals.

Within the planning design of the new home, watering this extremely large area was always going to be a primary consideration; thus 200,000L of water is collected from the roof and stored in tanks down the dell and is used to irrigate many areas around the yard. All house water is treated via the Ri treat system and is also used on the property.

Rob's early Kubota tractor had various mechanical breakdowns due to over-work and was upgraded to a skid-steer, excavator and truck; a *retirement business* was born out of necessity, providing access to the tonnes of clean earth filling and top-soil needed to prepare the ground. Rapidly expanding residential development across Adelaide enabled access to hundreds of established gardens. Back then, nearly all gardens were chipped or chopped and thrown out - a sharp eye, a quick sale or take it before it goes to the dump negotiation occurred and this led to the acquisition of magnificent established trees and plants. Never intending to on-sell the trees, Rob trenched, removed, transported or hired a low-loader and crane to transplant mature trees some around 6 tonnes into the front yard.

Dragon trees and palms, bamboo and aloe's, bottle trees and ferns are now incorporated with natives and garden art to create tranquil rooms and adventure spaces. Wandering garden paths are constructed from recycled materials. Garden walls & the letterbox are made from recycled bricks and feature stone from the original house, combining with the mature trees and garden art, giving a false impression of a long-established garden – it just looks like it has always here.

Rob and Carolyn support The Corner Uniting Church at Warradale, working closely with the community and diverse youth. Volunteers from the Corner are assisting this Open Garden with sausage sizzle, drinks, plants and gift stalls – all proceeds will be donated to their outreach programs to provide safe and inclusive spaces.




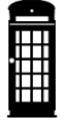


To help navigate our yard, we have created a Rescue Trail. Locate the icons to find additional descriptors at each feature.

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/>

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















Rescue Trail icons start in entry driveway

	Gum tree – eucalyptus (the listening tree) – interactive trunk listening to osmotic transpiration		Vintage Red Roses – only floral remnants from previous owners, stunning perfume. Dried petals on sale.
	Howard Rotovator – 1950s powered rotary hoe cultivator made in Australia to dig orchards, vineyards, gardens & acreage without compacting the soil		Red Vintage Telephone box from Port Adelaide – reminisce a bygone era of telecommunications - great photo opportunity
	Grass Tree – Australian native, slow growing only 2cm per year; rescued from Woodville April 2026		Elephant tusks - also known as sansevieria cylindrical, recent DNA testing identify the genus as Dracaena

Turn left down onto front lawn area

	Symmetrical Dragon Tree – Rob’s favourite tree transplanted from Salisbury. Bifurcates every 10-15 years. Large pair in driveway from Lonsdale approx 100 yr old.		Ponytail Palm (Elephant foot) - endangered species in the wild. Pink flower on front lawn is female. White flower on driveway is male
	Wine Palms, Triangular palm, Date Palms and Traveller Palm		Illawarra Flame tree Hybrid - pink ornamental flowers like natural Christmas bauble-balls
	Cactus garden *caution* sharps Succulent variety incl Dagger, Plicatilis, Bolivian torch & Fire stick		1897 Bullock Wagon – Rob’s first garden ornament from Hopetoun Victoria
	Vintage Metters Yellowtail Windmill – “M” model salvaged from Jamestown. Display only; non-functional. Head weighs 300kg		Abyssinian Banana Palm (False banana) distinctive red spine ornamental in Australian gardens. Primary crop in Ethiopia. Fibres great for weaving

Cross the driveway into the various garden rooms and corridors

	Rough and Australian tree ferns – Cyathea Australis and Cooperi – transplanted from Adelaide hills		Claret Ash Tree - nicknamed the Climbing tree when our kids were young with ropes for hand holds
	1949 Fordson tractor runs on kero & petrol. Rob drove it into position		Tri-colour frangipani – transplant challenge with wide load towing
	Giant Bird of Paradise – black head, blueish purple tongue		Aloe Barberae – architecturally sought focal points grown from cuttings
	Oldhamii Bamboo – clumping Tolerant to class 2 water		Queensland Bottle Tree – rescued from Glenelg North destined for the chipper
	Cycads – dating back to Jurassic period, these are plant dinosaurs		Raptor dinosaur garden art – made by SA artists (family favourite movie)
	Bromeliads – monocot understory plants (pineapple family)		Vintage Wooden Boat – work in progress for a waterfall feature
	Plant stall – continue the Rescue Trail to your home with plants from Rob’s Rescue and Replant garden		Please check out the food, drink, gift and cake stalls by volunteers from The Corner Uniting Church

We acknowledge the Kurna people as the traditional custodians of the Adelaide Plains. We pay respect to their elders past, present and emerging and value their spiritual connection and care of the land.

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.