



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening

Open Gardens South Australia

Welcomes you to

Rosenthal Gully

Saturday 31st October & Sunday 1st November, 2026

Welcome to Rosenthal Gully.

This area of Bridgewater was owned by John Dunn in the 1860's and Charles Rosenthal was the local blacksmith who lived nearby.

'The Rosenthal family provided accommodation for travellers... in the early 20th century... the Rosenthal's operated tea rooms from the original cottage....' on Wembley Avenue. (Stirling District Heritage Study 1985)

We bought this 1400 square m block of land in 1977. The land was a V-shaped gully that started at street level and ended in the creek at the southern end of the garden. The land had some pine trees and large stringy barks with an understory of blackberries and broom bush. Dozens of truckloads of 'fill' were delivered to create a level space for the house.

On the completion of the house, landscaping began. The north facing front garden is well protected from the prevailing south wind. Dozens of roses bloom from November along with several species of day lilies, penstemons and assorted ground covers.

Rosenthal Road becomes a picture in autumn as the liquidambars and birches begin to turn. Our garden begins to stir underground through the winter months and comes alive in spring. The hibernating roses seem to float on a sea of blue as dozens of bluebells (wood hyacinths) emerge along with stands of blue Dutch irises and other assorted bulbs. Pink and purple ajuga create a carpet of colour along the paths. The acid loving azaleas, camellias and stunning 40 year old magnolia (*Magnolia x soulangeana*) come to life in vivid colour.

The 'gully' becomes apparent at the rear of the house. Major landscaping has taken 40 years to complete, most of which was designed and built by Laurie. The tennis court dominates the area but retaining walls, terraced garden beds and decks have softened the view. The borrowed distant landscape of older trees creates an evergreen backdrop to our gully.

The steep slope to the tennis court was impossible to garden. In 2016 steps were cut into the slope and we built the decks, created terraced beds and planted out natives and assorted shrubs. The rose arch begins the descent to a cosy amphitheatre.

The Carey gully dry stone retaining wall that follows the central path, was built in the early 2000's. The garden behind this wall is one of the few areas of the original ground.

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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Much of the property has been cut and filled with some very average soil. I fertilise regularly and supplement the soil with my compost and assorted mulch.

The eastern side features tree ferns and shade loving plants. A path meanders through this cool section and down towards the tea house.

The tea garden is shady all day, so I've planted epimediums, vancouverias, hostas, New Zealand rock lilies and fuchsias. The small rock walls were created solely from the sandstones dug out to do my planting. Nearby are fairy gardens and a fairy house in a tree. This is a magical spot for children.

Dotted throughout the garden are pottery birds and large and small mosaics that add splashes of colour amid the many shades of green. I have recently become a weaver using fibre from my garden.

We're still experimenting with wicking beds and I'm practising the art of bonsai.

This is an all seasons cottage garden with an eclectic mix of bulbs, native plants and countless perennials. Fuchsias, sedum, dahlias and Japanese windflowers attract bees and honeyeaters in summer and early autumn. Bergenias and hellebores add winter colour. From June to September this garden looks after itself. From spring through to autumn, I would spend a couple of days a week pottering about and enjoying the beauty and serenity of this place.

We have enjoyed this journey of 50 years, working together and sharing this place with numerous birds and some local koalas.

Enjoy

Bron and Laurie