



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening

Open Gardens South Australia Welcomes you to **Kinclaven**

Saturday 22nd & Sunday 23rd November, 2025

Welcome to the gardens of Kinclaven. If you're inclined to follow our suggested itinerary you'll be sure not to miss anything. If you're not, well you are the customer.

You've come in on the north-eastern corner of the gardens. They are divided into four and a half (....a half to accommodate the relatively small swimming pool area) what we've always called levels, although the term level varies between roughly right and an outright lie. The levels run north and south and the house follows level 1, 1 and a half and 2 down the hill.

When we came here in 1996 there was obviously infrastructure and abundant growth of cedars, liquidambars, camellias and rhododendrons close to the house and both growth and infrastructure fell away as one descended to the lower levels. The garden was sort of nice but dull.

Over the intervening years we have striven to create interest with particular emphasis on the lush and exotic. To do that we've used many plants which have a tropical or other warm region look. Surprisingly, many such plants are not tropical; aucuba, fatsia, kentia palms, many ferns; others are tropical or semi tropical but prepared to play the game; various gingers, aspidistra, cyathea, monstera and some philodendrons. We've also relied heavily on cacti and other succulents for their strong exotic forms. And we've had some horrible failures killing off bougainvillea, even the hardiest evergreen hibiscus and some succulents which just get sick of the fog and rain.

You'll see influences of other lands, often the result of overseas travel, real or armchair. Italian, Californian, Moroccan, Southern France, Indian Hill Station and South –East Asian influences are all obvious.

Walking south along Level 1 you can't miss the large oval pond with its tall plume of water and water lilies. If you resist the temptation to walk behind the pond and look down to Level 2 you'll save yourself an Italianate surprise for later. Instead continue southwards past the South-east Asian Garden under the weeping elm. Just beyond the weeping elm don't neglect to walk through the carport to the luxuriant fern courtyard and the kooky conservatory. Back to the driveway and still going south on your left there's a Succulent Garden which replaced an inappropriate lawn/rose bush combination which had no chance against the roots of the large atlas cedar. The free-standing building opposite the succulent garden is a Billiard Room.

Now you can go down the ramp to Level 1A and the swimming pool with its surroundings and continue down the steps at the end of the swimming pool to Level 2.

Those of you who have been here before may remember scary stairs just past the far end of the swimming pool – that area is now quite different. After checking that out you could go north along Level 2 in front of the house.

If you are interested in the history of the house and garden there are old and new photos displayed here on the house wall. Some of them go right back to the original owner/engineer, Charles Austin Horn.

As you go past the café you can't miss the enormous golden cypress which is both friend and foe. Friend because it's been here since the early days of the house – see if you can find it as a tiny tree

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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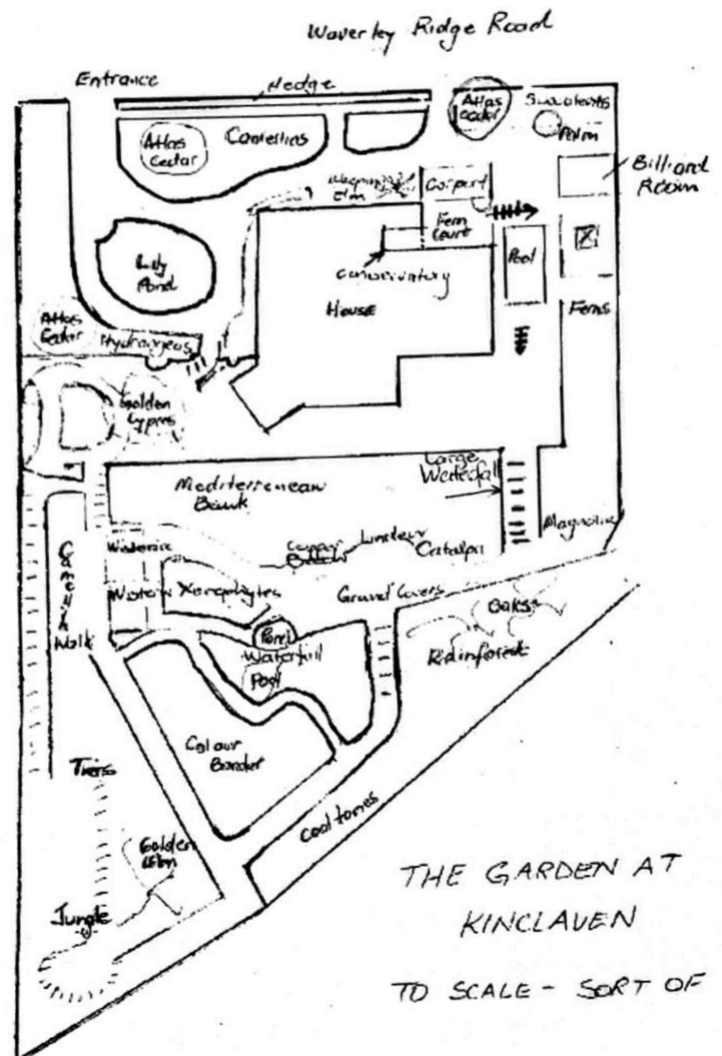
on the photographs; for because like all horizontal cypresses, it regularly drops branches.

The strong landscaping around the cypress was made necessary by its ever increasing shade rendering lawn impossible. So we re-did the area and then the tree dropped half its branches letting the sunlight in anyway. The centuries old water feature with the 2 fish to the right of the golden cypress was built by us in 2014.

Now it's time to go down to Level 3. If you are daunted by the open stone steps you can easily go right at the top and descend via Camellia Walk. It's user-friendly and will discharge you onto Level 4 from where you can comfortably go up to Level 3. Pass under the pergola slowly being pulled apart by wisteria vines and you're in front of the tear-shaped Xerophyte Garden. We created that because the pre-existing lawn could never survive the onslaught of summer. Walking further south the feeling becomes much lush and greener. The large beds of ground cover were created to solve a different lawn problem – lawns don't like shade very much. At the far end, a virtual rainforest complete with large waterfall.

And so to Level 4. Features of Level 4 include:-

1. The long colour border. This was to be a wide English style perennial border; the soft European plants would thrive in the deep rich soil and the benign climate. Nonsense. The soil is poor and shallow (as in most of the garden) and Level 4 is decidedly hot. Over the years tougher plants have been called upon to maintain the colour gradation white, red, orange, yellow then blues and other cool hues.
2. The roses. If you can't find those then gardening probably isn't your thing.
3. The Oriental Garden was created over a couple of years and by hand (ours) since no machine could get in. It has a small solar-powered waterfall.
4. The 29 steps of Camellia Walk.
5. Fallen Log Garden in the north-western corner. A huge dead gum tree from the neighbour's property dropped in miraculously sparing everything (including 2 large cyatheas) except a bit of fence.
6. The very bottom corner of the garden which gives you an excellent view back up through the jungle like growth under the golden elm.



Michael & Margaret Randle