



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening

Open Gardens South Australia

Welcomes you to

Lochness Lodge

Saturday 21st & Sunday 22nd November, 2026

We had been looking for a property in the Adelaide Hills for some time with the hope to one day find land suitable to plant vines to keep us occupied in our retirement. When we found this Irish cottage set on 3.4 acres with its winter creek meandering gently below the house, we knew we had found the perfect place to realise our dream. That was back in 2002. Then, the property had three paddocks tended by an aging flock of sheep and an overgrown apple orchard. A Plane tree, Golden Elm, and Claret Ash, along with stone walls and overgrown Melaleucas, framed the house. We quickly removed the Melaleucas and soon set about planting the vines, which was no easy task because heavy clay soil dominated much of the property. Tonnes of gypsum were required, particularly at the top of the southern boundary, and due to poor access, the only way to distribute this was with continuous trips with a wheelbarrow.

We named the property Lochness Lodge because Jenny hails from Inverness and lived close to Loch Ness. We have followed an English-style garden. In addition to mains water, we built a dam and drilled a bore, so we have plenty of water for irrigation. As the garden has evolved, the rose garden next to the gazebo struggled once the large trees established themselves, casting shade over some plants, resulting in some roses flourishing and others struggling, so they have been replaced with a mixture of daphne, lilac, azalea, winter roses and Japanese maples. Other necessary removals included the Golden Elm, which was hit badly with Elm disease, and the Plane tree, which just got too big to be next to the house.

The vineyard is still being looked after, but despite netting the vines to keep out the birds and kangaroos, they won, so we have now stopped making wine. We did have fun making approximately 12 vintages. We have now moved on to honey production from the two hives you can see at the top of the vineyard, a birthday present for my husband. They have been a great replacement for our winemaking venture. Our desire to be reasonably self-sufficient led us to erect raised beds and a glasshouse. It's very satisfying to pick and eat straight out of the veggie patch, which provides fruit and veg for us and our children and grandchildren.

Manchurian Pear trees line the driveway and at the bottom we have a good selection of fruit trees including lemons, lime, avocados, loquat, mandarin, apple and cherry. Thankfully, snails aren't too much of a problem thanks to our resident ducks, but this year has seen a plague of rabbits, which has been a challenge. September/October is probably our favourite time of year; no regular watering is needed, camellias and azaleas are in full bloom, and the winter creek is still running. Hopefully, in our open garden, the Hydrangeas and Rhododendrons will put on a good show.

One very important addition this year is an intricate fire protection system, which will be demonstrated at 4pm on Sunday. Volunteers from the local CFS will run a sausage sizzle, and the CWA will have a stall with teas and coffees, scones and cakes, and their amazing handmade crafts, the proceeds of which will help women in need. We look forward to sharing our garden with you and hope you enjoy your stay. Please don't hesitate to find one of us if you have any questions.

Paul and Jenny

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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