



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening

Open Gardens South Australia

Welcomes you to **MIDWAY PARK**

Saturday 11th, Sunday 12th & Monday 13th March 2023 2 Angove Court, Rosslyn Park SA

Welcome to **Midway Park!**

The house is approximately 130 years old and is a typical example of a Victorian return-veranda Bluestone Villa. It is on the City of Burnside Local Heritage Register. The exact date it was built is unclear, but records show it was constructed by 1890 when it was known as 'the Lord's House' – so called because it was home for 30 years to the Lord family; Mr John Lord, his wife Matilda and their 7 children. The house and surrounding acres changed hands several times over the subsequent years and was owned for a time by Dr Roger Angove, a prominent Adelaide physician. Dr Angove sold the property to a real estate agent, Bill Henderson, who subsequently finalised a subdivision of the land with the City of Burnside naming the Court in recognition of Dr Angove.

I bought the property in 2005 and about a year later went to a Rare Fruit Society meeting where the late Roger Myer from California talked with enthusiasm about Jujubes. I was immediately hooked and bought several jujube trees and many other varieties of fruit trees followed! Espaliering trees meant I could accommodate more so I decided to construct a 20-metre-long fruit cage on the eastern boundary with 3 rows of trees fully enclosed. Later I doubled the depth to create an extra 3 rows making 6 rows, all enclosed.

At the time we were experiencing drought conditions and water restrictions and I realised that if I was to continue acquiring trees I needed to collect and store water. As well as the cost saving, using rainwater produces healthier plants. To facilitate this, I had a 310,000 litre in-ground concrete water tank constructed in 2009. A 20kW solar system and battery powers a pump for irrigation and the underground storage will generally last for most of the year. The clay soil from the excavation was moved to what was then a tennis court on the northern side of the house, while above the tank loam was brought in and 105 roses planted. The soil above the tank is only 300mm deep and although much has been done to improve the texture and add nutrients the roses have struggled a little in hot weather, possibly because of their relatively shallow root run.

A selection of citrus, guavas and subtropical fruit trees were planted where the tennis court once was, planting holes were dug using an auger. Unfortunately, in the clay soil the action of the auger compacted the soil on the sides of the holes and created 'sumps' which held water and restricted the roots from expanding. I was advised the trees would never grow successfully so we removed and re-potted all of them and grew a green manure crop, 3 truckloads of organic horse manure was forked by hand into the soil. Finally, after waiting a time to allow the added organic matter to break down, the trees were replanted and have never looked back – a huge job, but in the long run, well worth the effort! I have also acquired 2 beehives to assist with pollination and Belgian D'ucelle bantams which control insect pests, weeds and continually contribute their nutrient rich manure. As well, mulch and organic foliar sprays are applied on a regular basis. Amongst the fruit trees is a

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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pond that provides water for the bees – the grill on top is to stop baby chickens who free range under the trees from falling in!

Signs throughout the property provide names and information about a large number of fruit trees. The area behind the house has been retained as lawn but I restrict the watering and am prepared for it to brown off over summer knowing that with the first autumn rains it will quickly green up again.

I have had help and advice from a number of very knowledgeable permaculturists and I thank them and the members of the Rare Fruit Society for their invaluable expertise. Chris Day from Every Day Sustainable Living helps me with maintaining the garden and keeping the trees healthy and productive. His notes on the garden are immediately below. Thanks also to Chris Whitehead for coordinating the Devonshire teas. Added highlights of this weekend are the range of Knowledgeable guest Speakers, Plant Sales, Devonshire Teas, Sausage sizzle, a raffle with great prizes. In addition, Susanna and Tilley of Very useful pots will have interesting pots to sell.

Robert Middleton

Additional Notes from Chris Day

I have had the pleasure to work with Robert Middleton at his 2,758 sqm property in Rosslyn Park over the last seven years. During this time, I have helped care for, propagate, plant (and eat!) many different varieties of rare fruit trees. Starting with the soil, we added a mineral rich compost with gypsum to help break up the clay and provide the trees with much needed minerals and microbes. The effect was seen in a matter of months, with fruit trees such as Avocados, Wampee, coffee, sapotes and star fruits setting and holding fruit. The 20 different varieties of citrus also enjoyed the feed, darkening the leaves and cropping heavily. We make a lot of compost on-site from mulching all the prunings, adding lawn clippings, poultry manure and vegetable leaves from a fruit and veg stores waste stream. Compost is added to the fruit trees in key times. We add compost to the bananas every 3 months, and during the warmer months, get around a bunch or two every few weeks.

The garden is distinguished by an extensive collection of fruit and nut trees, berry bushes and some vegetables. To the north the garden is planted mainly with subtropical fruit and citrus trees, many of them unusual and difficult to grow in SA climatic conditions. To list just a few of nearly 70 different species, there are 7 varieties of bananas, avocados, guavas, chinottos, coffee, red and white dragon fruits, black and white sapotes, jackfruit, custard apples, and 24 different citruses including rarely grown pomelos. There are a number of subtropicals in fruit that you will see on your visit.

In summary, this is a very interesting and inspiring garden showcasing the vast variety of fruit that with a little pampering can be grown in Adelaide's climate.

There will be workshops and tours over the three days, on Permaculture and Edible Gardens, Rare and Subtropical trees in Adelaide, Bee keeping, Chooks, Jujubes, Apples and more. There will also be plants for sale over the weekend.

Chris Day

Every Day Sustainable Living

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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.

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Saturday 11th March 2023 – Speaker timetable: -

- 10:00am Permaculture and Edible Landscapes plus rare fruits by Chris Day. Followed by a tour of the garden.
- 11:30am Bee keeping by Roy Frisby Smith.
- 1:00pm Rose growing in a changing climate by Merv Trimper.
- 2:30pm Attracting Native butterflies to your garden (a visual presentation) by Colin Harris

Sunday 12th March 2023 – Speaker timetable: -

- 10:00am Jujube and rare fruits by Ben Waddelow. Followed by a tour of the garden**.
- 11:30am Choosing and keeping backyard poultry by Adrian Burgess
- 1:00pm Permaculture and Edible Landscapes plus rare fruits by Chris Day. Followed by a tour of the garden.
- 2:30pm Apples in SA from when they were first brought to Australia plus rare fruits by Brenton Kortman, Brenton will have apples for sale.

Monday 13th March 2023 – Speaker timetable: -

- 10:00am Apples in SA from when they were brought into Australia plus rare fruits by Brenton Kortman, Brenton will have apples for sale.
- 11:30am Jujube and rare fruits by Ben Waddelow followed by a tour of the garden**.
- 1:00pm Keeping Bantams as pets and their eggs by Mary Scruby.
- 2:30pm Designing your own landscape by Jamie McIlwain

** Ben will have Jujube plants for sale, depending on the fruit fly situation at the time Ben hopes to also have jujube fruit for tasting and for sale**

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