



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening

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

Saturday 5th & Sunday 6th October, 2024

Welcome to Moorakyne.

Moorakyne, the aboriginal name for the lake nearby, was built by shipping merchant, George Ormerod in 1853, using local limestone. The twelve roomed house features original windows with large, curved stone lintels and a sweeping north facing verandah. There is a three roomed cottage which originally housed the kitchen, laundry and servant's quarters, two coach houses and a small dairy. The house and garden sit on four allotments ie 4096 m²

We completed the bulk of the restoration of the house and cottage in 2019. Thankfully we were able to conserve the windows with the original hand-blown glass. Unightly additions were removed to reveal the original buildings and all plantings moved away from the stone buildings. The restoration is ongoing.

In 2020 I shifted my attention to the garden. There is very little of the original garden left. The Norfolk Island pines planted c1910 eventually dominated the front garden which, as evidenced in a few old photos, had been abundant with flowers and shrubs. There's the remains of a drystone wall and the lake stone edgings were restored. The Norfolk Island pines have been underplanted with Arthropodium, convolvulus and agave. To add formality to the front of the house, I initially planted English box but eventually admitted defeat. I've replaced them with Leptospermum 'Foreshore' which had topiaried well in other parts of the garden. The mixed border at the western wall was planted in 2023 with hardy cottage plants and bulbs.

On the eastern side of the house, we had a paddock with 3 olive trees, a fig tree and a grape vine that hadn't been pruned for many years. And howling gales from every direction. On the upside there was plenty of sunshine and a sloping block crying out for drystone walls. Taking inspiration from the local clifftops, I started with the grass Poa 'Eskdale' and added bird attracting natives and Kniphofias. Statice self seeds freely, and sedums and convolvulus ramble through the grasses. In the spring the iris, Dutch and flag, add deep blues as do the salvia to contrast with the oranges, reds and yellows of the kniphofias, digitalis canariensis and achillea. I love eremophilas as do the birds, especially Nivea with its silvery grey foliage and purple or pink flowers. Eremophila Hygrophana with its purple bells can be pruned hard to a more compact shape.

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/>

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The veggie garden is evolving as I collect old bricks from the site and scavenge old timber from the farm. The steel rings were engineered locally and placed atop a stone outcrop. *Grevillea olivaciae* has been hedged for much needed shelter. This year we added a garden shed using tin that was salvaged from the property. A picking garden has been newly planted.

The pergola is constructed from timber salvaged from the old wharf at the harbour. The topiary balls, *Leptospermum Foreshore* and *Westringia*, as well as the prostrate sheoak 'Cousin It', are growing in rock and gravel. The courtyard behind the house is protected by the outbuildings and cypress *leylandii* hedge. Knobby Club Rush surrounds the old well, along with *eremophilas*, *kniphofia* and topiary *westringia*.

The garden is a few years from maturity, but I hope it doesn't lose its slightly wild naturalistic feel. Thank you for visiting Moorakyne today and supporting the Royal Flying Doctors Service.

Margaret and Donald Ferguson