



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening

Open Gardens South Australia

Welcomes you to

St Ann's

Saturday 25th October, 2025

Welcome to St Anns!

It was only in July this year that we moved here having fallen in love with the beautiful old home and its magnificent garden. We are delighted by the changing seasonal colours and many beautiful surprises throughout the garden. Our five daughters Adelaide, Madeliene, Dianna, Georgia and Sophie host teddy bear picnics on the lawn and play hide and seek amongst the hedges.

Fortunately, we have been able to access detailed notes about the garden written by the previous owners, and we have used this information as a basis for this handout.

The first recorded structure on the original 1854 land grant was a stone 'shepherd's cottage' built around 1860. This was extended to become a four bedroomed cottage in the 1870s before the building was extensively transformed in the late Victorian era to become the gracious two-story home you see today. In the early 1900s the building was used as a private school and over the years has been home to several prominent citizens, local doctors and two Members of Parliament.

St Ann's previous owners were keen and knowledgeable gardeners and over their ten years of residency they meticulously recreated the garden following the Renaissance ideals of order, balance and harmony. Established trees and existing shrubs were cherished and incorporated in the new layout and many more choice plants suited to the Hills' microclimate were added. Japanese and English box, viburnum species, photinia, lilly pilly and several other varieties of hedging plants were used to enclose garden rooms, line paths, add definition and contrasting colours and textures of foliage.

The garden around the Orley Avenue entrance features mainly white flowering plants. There are camelias, sweetly scented Magnolia 'Teddy Bear' and Rhododendron 'Fragrantissimum' but the lower growing Helleborus foetidus, also known as the 'stinking hellebore' are anything but pleasantly scented! The very old tree is an Australian blackwood (Acacia sp.) and the large dome is an olive tree that was cut to the ground and reshaped as a sphere.

There are countless trees here and some are thought to be amongst the oldest in the Stirling area. A Lebanese Cedar is believed to be 180 years old and its slightly younger cousin, a blue cedar was planted around 120 years ago. Other species include ornamental chestnuts, many maples, magnolia, hawthorn, dogwood, flowering cherry, cercis, pin oak, liquidambar, poplar, ash and oak and they provide shade and shelter for the understory of spring bulbs and shade loving plants.

On the top lawned terrace, a pair of original Victorian Coalbrookdale cast iron seats featuring a nasturtium design are positioned to provide views of the house. From here, a stairway and central path lead down to the bottom of the garden and a gate that was likely to have been the pedestrian access to the nearby railway station. To the left when looking down the steps is the sunnier more formal side of the garden, and a series of terraces, each walled with hedges and each with its own distinguishing character.

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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Steps lead to a Japanese-inspired area where an old water tank converted to a pond is planted with water iris and a couple of young trees are in the early stages of being transformed into sculptural cloud-pruned forms. A privet hedge clipped into a wave shape divides this level and on the lower side of the next terrace, a tall photinia hedge is the backdrop for classical statues representing the four seasons. The next level down is a gravelled area also enclosed with photinia hedges with layers of viburnum and Japanese box hedging adding contrast. The minimalist planting here creates a Zen-like space perfect for quiet contemplation. The lowest terrace is lawned and here several roses and sun loving plants take advantage of the more open aspect.

The area to the other (western) side of the path is a less structured and has a lovely woodland ambience. Rhododendrons, azaleas, camellias are mass planted throughout the garden but here under the canopies of the many tall trees they are joined by hydrangeas, tree ferns, hellebores and other shade lovers. Paths wind up the slope and back to the house and the upper lawn terrace. Bordering the path leading to the house is an elaborate parterre of crisscrossing Japanese box hedging with a line of the naturally pyramid shaped *Picea glauca* 'Albertina conica' as a feature.

Devonshire teas will be served on the upper balcony which offers views out over the garden. Access is via the stairs adjacent to the parterre garden on the western side of the house. Our volunteers will be very happy to carry refreshments to the seating on the ground floor verandah for anyone with mobility issues.

We realise the garden here is quite special and we love to share it with others so as well as opening with Open Gardens SA we will have a musical event here in the weeks to come as a fundraiser for the National Trust.

We are very grateful to the previous owners for establishing St Ann's superb garden and we look forward to watching it change over the seasons.

We hope you enjoy our garden!

Stephanie and Marcus Bastiaan.