

GARDEN NOTES

MIMOSA

The property was originally established by the Doery family of Canterbury, specifically Mr George Henry Doery, circa 1910 as a private summer residence. During WW1 it is understood that the Doery family volunteered their extensive home and gardens, 'Highton' in Mont Albert Rd, Canterbury, (now part of Camberwell Grammar School) as a convalescing hospital for returned and injured soldiers and relocated to Mimosa where the property and gardens were significantly extended, landscaped and planted for a more permanent residence.

Henrietta Maria Gulliver owned Mimosa before the Doery family and was a florist, horticulturist and landscape designer and a family friend of the Doery's. She was also an Australian artist who specialised in landscape and floral still-life paintings.

Henrietta foundationally influenced the strong landscape design element of the gardens. Henrietta was from a strong family background that specialised in working in nurseries and as florists. She owned a florist shop around the corner from George Doery's business in Flinders Lane. Henrietta gained a respected strong reputation in the industry and designed and created substantial garden states in Cheltenham and Sassafras, both of which were widely admired.

In 1932 Miss Bessie Campbell, daughter of a wealthy Toorak family with extensive steel industry interests, acquired the Mimosa property. Miss Campbell had a great love for the region and had earlier purchased "Gairloch" in 1928, now known as 10 Owens St, Kallista, where she had employed a gardener Mr Shepherd, who lived on site. Miss Campbell seems to have followed the Gairloch design for Mimosa where the garden was laid out in an Edna Walling style. Shrubs consist chiefly of Azalea, Carmellia, Rhododendrons, Hydrangeas, Wisteria, Fuchias, and Christmas Roses (Helleborus) with notable trees such as large Copper Beech, (*Fagus sylvatica*) Acers (grafted ornamental Maples and standard Japanese Maples), Magnolia, Ash, Silver Birch, Sweet Chestnut, Sycamore, purple leaved Ornamental Plum. In addition, a large Paulownia Tomentosa and variegated elm, *Ulmus Minor Variagata*.

It is believed that Ms Campbell also undertook management of the excavation by hand and establishment of the enormous lower 620 sqm sunken lawn, with 4.2 meter high, stone, 40cm thick, retaining wall at the northern end, apparently using the depression years' idle labour from her family's business. The original glass house, still in operation, was also thought to have been built at this time, as well as a network of concrete guttered paths and walking tracks down to the Sassafras creek. The property title seems to have been extended at this time to cover the creek where a pump station was built, pumping water to a water tower at the top western corner of the property to gravity feed the house. Both the remains of the pump station, boundary piping, and the water tower building can still be seen today.

About this time, it is thought that the Nicholas family, who were acquainted with the Doery family, established the neighbouring boundary properties known as Burnham Beeches and Strathalbyn.

Numerous owners since the extensive work of Miss Campbell have sought to preserve and improve the work of previous generations, with remarkable respect to the period design principles.



GARDEN NOTES

John Doery was decorated by King George VI for his generosity to returned soldiers and also as President of the Baptist Union of Victoria, from 1914 to 1917. He was also a Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

More information:

Further pics both on the airbnb site and our website can be found here:

<https://www.mimosaspahouse.com/>

<https://airbnb.com/h/sassafras-romantic-spahouse-retreat>

Also, a recent music video was shot on site and you can view here, showing some of the historical elements (glass house, stone walls, paths etc):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfB9uA9km8k>

Mimosa is located on the lands of the Wurundjeri people. Open Gardens Victoria wish to acknowledge the Traditional custodians and we pay respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

**These notes can be downloaded from the Open Gardens Victoria website:
www.opengardensvictoria.org.au**