

## GARDEN NOTES

### SONNINGFIELD

Trees, naturalistic plantings consistent with Edna Walling ideas, have a sense of the village feel that Edna Walling created with a glimpse across into her gardens.

- Wildwood, deciduous trees, perennial borders, lovely garden views, meandering paths.
- Established 2012



As a small child, I remember visiting Miss Walling and running around the paths and the borders of Sonning's garden with my friend and her mother in the early 1960's. I presume they were discussing the progress of various plantings.

In 1998 we bought our treasured half an acre subdivided from the woodland area of Edna Walling's original garden "Sonning"; we were then faced with the challenge of building a Heritage Victoria acceptable house within Bickleigh Vale Village. We finally realized our dream and moved into our new home four years after the planning process started.

Sonningfield is crafted in Castlemaine Rock and the timber shingles are Bloodwood. At all stages of construction, preserving the safety of tree canopies and root structures was given the highest priority. We have many significant rare trees within our garden including a *Quercus stellata*, the only known one in Victoria and now one of two trees in the village to be listed as a significant tree by the National Trust.

We continue the challenge of establishing garden beds in heavy shade and root infiltrated soil. Two Edna Walling rockwork projects long since forgotten and covered in dirt and ivy, along with the vast moss lawn, have been restored. The garden structure and planting are an ongoing work in progress.

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We have collections of crab apples (including two specimens of sonningensis), camellias, roses, hellebores and dogwoods. In late winter early spring, the side oak lawn is covered with jonquils and the back wilderness is covered with daffodils and bluebells.

*Coral and Peter Cunningham*

***Sonningfield is located on the lands of the Wurundjeri People. Open Gardens Victoria wishes to acknowledge the Traditional custodians of this land 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](http://www.opengardensvictoria.org.au)

