

GARDEN NOTES

EDEN RISE

Eden Rise is a 5-acre rectangular garden slightly raised above sea level situated at the lower end of a large hill. From some parts of the garden there is a view of Westernport Bay, French Island and Phillip Island. The 5-acre piece of land was purchased by the owners, Daphne and Joe, in 2011. At that time, it was vacant land for several horses. It contained two dams, several horse sheds, a hut and a tool shed. There were many fences within the grassy fields to keep the horses secure. There were only three to four trees, the main one being the *Ficus macrophylla* that is now next to the newly established vegetable garden.

With the help of their four children, especially their eldest daughter Claire who majored in botany in her Honours Science degree at the University of Melbourne and then did a Diploma of Horticulture, the area has been converted from a predominantly horse agistment area to a 5-acre garden. Claire has selected most of the beautiful plants that are on the property.

The first thing Joe and Daphne did was to have all of the internal fences removed. Next, they obtained a Land Council Grant for 1000 trees which all had to be indigenous to the area. They planted these trees to create a border 13 metres wide with a path in the middle (The Perimeter Path). Next, they planted an 80-tree orchard that has olives and a range of fruit and nut trees. The perimeter trees have subsequently become a wind break for the orchard.

Early on they took advantage of two large water pipes that bring water from the hill above the garden and had two “creeks” dug to take the water to the two dams, one on the south side for the smaller dam and the other on the north side for the large dam. They then had a circular road constructed that has a connecting road in the centre. Finally, they had a house constructed which was completed in May 2016. That then allowed a large garden bed to be planted which is now called “Heartbreak Hill”. The name reflects the fact that many of the original plants that were planted did not survive due to water issues. The area behind the newly constructed house was planted with plants that reflect the names of members of the whole family. For example, at the start of the linear garden beds there is a Daphne bush on one side and a conifer named Stumpy Joe. The other feature behind the house is a pizza oven that was built by Claire’s husband, Alec, with some finishing touches by Joe.

Other features of the garden now present include; a rabbit-proof vegetable garden with raised beds, a sand pit and a slide, a “secret garden” with a pond with water plants and next to it, a wading pool. Next to the pond is a giant outdoor chess set. This was designed by our neighbour, Karl Russo.

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Just above “secret garden” there is a beautiful sculpture garden. There is a chicken coop with ten chickens and a large snake and fox-proof chicken run. The chickens share their run with the native trees that produce edible fruit and leaves (Australian Native Orchard). There are also two bee hives. There is a large grassy field where children can fly kites, play ball games and run around (it was named the Woolamai Cricket Ground (WCG)). Next to the chicken run is a memorial garden where Daphne’s parents’ ashes are buried. Finally, there is a small vineyard with many grape vines.

The multitude of plants of all sizes, including many flowering Australian bushes such as Kangaroo Paw, Themeda grass, Banksias, Bottlebrushes etc, have attracted a lot of native wildlife, especially birds.

Eden Rise is located on the lands of the Bunurong People. Open Gardens Victoria wish 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

