

LEE ADAMS GARDEN

Welcome to our garden. It's not grand but it's an example of what can be achieved on an average sized block in suburbia on a fairly tight budget. Interconnecting garden "rooms" create some very special outdoor living spaces, a haven for birds, wildlife and humans.

Built in 1956 by my grandparents (Oliver and Margaret Laidler), the yard was basically a huge veggie patch with chooks roaming freely. Because of their efforts, the soil was rich and productive and we've continued to top up planting areas with soil from our large compost heap. The only remaining element from the era is our clothesline made by Pop.

My husband Jeff and I were fairly clueless when we started our landscaping over 40 years ago and I have used our garden for experimentation, continually changing as our lifestyle and the house has changed and my knowledge and confidence has increased. The variety of materials available was minimal, thus the horrid pink pavers!

The planting "scheme" is a mishmash of plants that have been grown mainly from cuttings and seedlings - Japanese maples (*Acer palmatum*), native frangipani (*hymenosporum flavum*), English box (*buxus sempervirens*), olea, citrus, salvia and succulents. The standard holly trees in the back corner were growing in the path at the front of the house - probably from bird droppings from the original tree in the front garden.

Learning from my garden, how plants grow in our very harsh climate has influenced what I use in my client's gardens. Our climate is more extreme than most and gardens have to be able to survive ten-year droughts, heavy winter frosts and very high temperatures.

Having little sunlight at the rear of the property, due to a dense canopy of now mature trees, planting has spread to the nature strip - much to the delight of neighbours and passers-by. The stone water bowl featured in this area was hand made by a very special client. On the nature strip drifts of grasses are punctuated with clipped native shrubs, lavender, rosemary, phlomis and leonotis, keeping bees happy enough to have made a bird box in the large olive their home. We've also had a boobook owl residing in the weeping lilly pilly in the driveway.

The house and garden have undergone many renovations over the years to cater for our family and an exciting journey into my design business. I now have a home office (the dining table) with a visually arresting outlook onto a water feature and greenery, a sculpture/art gallery for [Wired for Living](#), established with Barry McLoughlan, and a beautiful backdrop for pieces we've made by hand featuring throughout the garden.

We hope you enjoy our space.

Lee Adams Garden is located on the lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung 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