

GARDEN NOTES

THE ELMS

Welcome to The Elms!

There are many things about spring that bring joy and happiness after the long cold winter, but it is the bursting open of golden daffodils and the new blossoms on the trees that ensure that spring is just around the corner.

The garden has been established over many years, first shaped in the 1980's when the 'bones' of the garden were laid out. The more established trees you see today were part of the original planting. The various gums have grown to their full height and give shade and protection for many birds and other wildlife. The birch trees were also part of the original planting in the garden, but they dislike the hot summer days so haven't flourished as they would in a cooler climate.

The cool and shady 'rainforest' area with the creek and pond is a very refreshing spot to sit and relax on hot days as it is always a few degrees cooler. The tree ferns suffered during the hot season of 2009 along with the camellias and azaleas so I have replaced these with more of the bird nest ferns, the Asplenium family, and some Xanthorrhoea which have done extremely well throughout the garden, especially around the lake. There are a few tropical rainforest plants in there also like Davidson plum, but I am still waiting for them to fruit!

The rose garden was added in the 1990's and provides a magnificent display and source of flowers for the house. There are about 90 rose bushes of many different colours and varieties. I try and use those which have a lovely perfume with good shape and form.

In some places throughout the garden there are drifts of bearded iris that are all white and look outstanding when they are in full bloom.

The 'Meditation Garden' near the house is a very quiet area for reflection and in spring the cherry blossoms add to the peacefulness and calming nature of the area.

The lake has become both the highlight and focus of the garden. Whilst there was always a dam in that position, it wasn't until Phillip Johnson brought his vision that it is now the link that competes the garden. The planting around the lake is varied, but all Australian natives. The Xanthorrhoea are spectacular and the bottle trees give some strength to the planting.

The lake, with its giant stepping stones, are a continual source of fun for the grandchildren and also provide a platform for the many birds that are frequently seen here. The Eastern Coots have young here every year as do the ducks. Watching the antics of the wildlife is quite amusing, especially in spring.



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The garden still brings us much pleasure and my days in the garden are a highlight of my week.

We hope that you enjoy your visit here today and that you will take with you some happy and pleasant memories.

Sharon and George Kepper

The Elms 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**