

## WATTLE GLEN: SAM COX GARDEN

Welcome to the garden of landscape designer Sam Cox and Lisa Hatfield.

When this garden last opened in spring, 2016, it was 15 years old and had endured some of the toughest drought years this area has known. It was a period of transition and renewal where many of the original plantings were no longer coping in the changed conditions. Some areas had been replanted, but they were yet to reestablish. Since then, better than average rainfall and a run of mild summers have benefitted the garden immensely. We are so pleased to be opening again, seven years later as the garden has matured and come into its own.

### **Garden History and Design:**

As an enthusiastic 25-year-old, Sam set out to transform what was then a grassy paddock into a bushland haven. The native bush on the block had been previously cleared bar a few lonely red box and yellow gum. However, there was much to work with including a sunny northeast aspect and a view through the valley toward the Kangaroo Ground tower. Inspired by his employer and mentor Gordon Ford, Sam's vision was to create a bush garden, bringing nature up close into the living spaces of the mudbrick house he would also build. The sense of connection between inside and out has continued to evolve over the years with carefully considered transitions between these otherwise separate realms.

The garden adheres to the principles of naturalism. There is a unified sense of place resulting from Sam's application of spatial principles: mass and void, non-defined boundaries, asymmetry and layered and contrasting plantings. His naturalistic rock placement allows the necessary earth shaping, excavation and retaining to follow gentle lines back to natural ground.

The maturity of the garden is apparent in the height of the tree canopy, the density of the understory, in the moss following the grout lines of the paving. Over two decades in the making, Sam's original vision has come together. With a hint of Shangri-la and mystery, it is a bush garden for both explorers and ponderers.

Areas of interest and intrigue include a watercourse and large rock pond, a casuarina forest, an olive grove, a native grassland, the retired shovels, Gordo's iconic "Landy", the big patch, the berry patch, Sam's design office, and take a peek inside the house entrance to view the waterfall.

## GARDEN NOTES

**Please note:**

- There are deep ponds and uneven surfaces in the garden. Please keep children supervised.
- Snakes are active this time of year so please keep to the paths.
- The nearest public toilets are at the Research shops or at Peppers Paddock in Wattle Glen. There is an outdoor toilet on the property that can be used if required.

***Sam Cox Wattle Glen Garden is located on the lands of the Wurundjeri 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](http://www.opengardensvictoria.org.au)**