



GARDEN NOTES

FOREST EDGE

Forest Edge is a cool climate garden of 2.5 acres, with magnificent views of the adjoining Wombat State Forest. The property is at an altitude of almost 600 metres, receives approximately twice the rainfall of Melbourne and is generally about six degrees cooler. Established in 1862, the picturesque, stepped garden has several significant trees including a 160-year-old Irish Strawberry Tree at the front of the property. Its wide canopy shades a garden bed of daphne and pieris planted several years ago by the current owner.

The signature garden tiers were constructed from local stone when the property operated as a tearoom in the 1990s servicing the cast and crew from 'The Man from Snowy River' television series, filmed in Blackwood and nearby Trentham. The current owners renovated and extended the garden 15 years ago, now gently transitioning from more structured garden beds near the house down to a rambling woodland and an open grassy area.

Travelling down the hill to the second level is a well-established 20-year-old Wollemi Pine near the driveway over a large underground gold-mining tunnel. The tunnel, which runs under the road and down the driveway is now blocked and used as water storage for the CFA. This probably explains why the trees do so well here.

The next level gives a perspective of the cottage, which was a separate kitchen for original residence and a rose garden next to the large Blackwood tree. At this time of the year there are also Japanese Windflowers and a range of hydrangea varieties still in flower. The soil type means those in the ground are blue. The metal sculptures by a local artist, statues and interesting heritage objects are featured throughout the garden.

A little further down along the driveway is a Weeping Elm of significant age creating a garden room for the children's adventure play area built recently for the owner's grandchildren. Across the parking area you will witness some very creative design. The builder who completed the house renovations is also a film set builder and used his talents to create a Victorian gold town streetscape, cleverly disguising the property's outbuildings. Part of this is an onsite bookshop which will be open along with tables selling plants and bulbs.

Meandering past a small vegetable garden under a large, old Mountain Ash, you emerge into an open grass area with a constructed creek-bed and pond, running along the path of an old gold mining race. A bridge reveals a Japanese garden featuring acers and prostrate conifers. The garden continues into open woodland, with a boundary of ornamental pears and Bog Gums amongst other ornamentals and natives. The property transitions seamlessly into the borrowed landscape of the Wombat State Forest.

Native birdwatchers will also delight in the abundant birdlife – colourful parrots, rosellas and cockatoos, finches, wrens, kookaburras, magpies and currawongs. You might also see the kangaroos feed in the bottom of the garden at dusk, especially as the weather cools.

Visitors will enjoy intense autumn colours in the picturesque town and surrounds of Blackwood, as well as visit local eateries, the hat shop with antiques and collectables, a general store, nurseries and forest therapy walks.

These notes can be downloaded from the Open Gardens Victoria website
www.opengardensvictoria.org.au

Open Gardens Victoria is a not-for-profit organisation that promotes the benefits of gardens and gardening by assisting garden owners to open their private gardens to the public. Monies raised at the gate are shared between OGV and the garden owner – whose share is often directed to charity.

Surplus OGV funds are allocated to horticultural, educational or community projects.