



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening

# Open Gardens South Australia Welcomes you to **Kenton Park**

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2021

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We purchased the 23 acre property in 2009 from the young couple, Chris and Brook Pinchbeck. They had bought it about 10 years before from the Randell family. I am led to believe it was quite run down and in need of restoration. Chris and Brook did all the original hard work and I must credit Brook for her contribution to the garden.

We have taken on the challenge of maintaining and enhancing this property and, for the most part, have enjoyed this challenge. Recent additions to the home of the sunroom and downstairs bathroom and extended overhead balcony makes enjoying the garden possible even while inside. New concrete all around the verandahs was quite a long and arduous job as all the verandah posts had to be removed and acrow propped and then new posts inserted into footings. The following tiling and grouting seemed to take forever. We dug out along the Eastern side of the house and added a courtyard, paved with flagstones off the property ... it was all worth it, we can now concentrate on the garden. The kitchen renovation is on the drawing board as the next major challenge with plans for an Aga stove and a Butler sink. A recent enlargement of the garden on the southwest corner of the garden to enable better access to the rose beds and include the rare Chilean wine Palm or *Jubea Chilensis* or Stiffy as it more commonly known, into the garden, is a work in progress.

The area in front of the house between the gravel and white roses surrounded in low hedges and the large rambling area of daffodils has also undergone a revamp. New lawns planted this spring on an area churned up after the massive 40 metre Cottonwood Tree or White poplar fell in a storm last December knocking down several trees, fences and gates. It's partly still there to remind us of it's domination, now in decline as we have taken at least half the timber away. The canopy when it fell reached the Riverbank (Yes, the creek is actually the River Torrens)

The property is Heritage listed including the lovely circa 1841 two storey barn.

The pioneer William Beavis Randell and his wife Mary Anne came to South Australia from Devon in England in 1837 with their seven children and built first the barn then the house which was completed in 1844. Initially Mary Anne and the younger children lived in a tent on the banks of the River Torrens in the 10 month old settlement of Adelaide. Then a little more comfortably in "Park Cottage" in Hackney, while their home on 1000 acres at Gumeracha was being built. William had come out on a business venture but this didn't eventuate so he joined the South Australian Company formed to open up the State. The eldest son, later nicknamed Captain Randell, was a steamship pioneer on the Murray river building the Paddle steamer from wood felled around the Gumeracha area. WB Randell built a steam driven flour Mill in Gumeracha, the Baptist Church and subdivided the land off from his estate to form the township of Gumeracha. I understand the first meetings of the Baptist Church in SA were held in my kitchen.

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**Open Gardens South Australia Inc:** is a not for profit organisation opening private gardens to the general public. The purpose of Open Gardens SA is to educate and promote the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening in South Australia and to build strong public support for the development of gardens.

Web page: <http://opengardensa.org.au/>

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The garden around the house at Kenton Park was established extensively with hedges and exotic plants from around the world. Many groves of Oak trees were planted. Rumour has it they were from acorns from Sherwood Forest. He stocked the park with songbirds, pheasants and peacocks along with the Devon and Hereford cattle in his farming enterprises.

We love living here and eventually will need some outside help with the garden, but with both of us hands on and retired, for now we are managing.

Quite a few descendants of the Randell family have dropped by over the years recounting how it was many years ago. They are always welcome.

We have had a few weddings of family and friends here in the garden and the barn and think we possibly should investigate further the possibility of a venue or B & B. Or both.

The gardens that open for us are chosen to reflect a great diversity of styles and may even challenge the conventional view of what constitutes a garden. While aspects of a garden may not be to your taste, we urge you to celebrate this diversity. Please remember you are visiting a private home and show respect and sensitivity for the owners who have so generously shared their garden with you. Thank you.