



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening  
**Open Gardens South Australia**  
Welcomes you to  
**Marchrismick**

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2023 33 Stirling Street, Milang



MARCHRISMICK



Welcome to Marchrismick. We bought the property (named by the previous owner honouring his three grandsons, Mark, Chris and Mick) in 1997. This decision was made on a whim rather than with careful consideration. In hindsight, would we have bought a property with non-wetting, sandy soil? With a climate where the annual rainfall is 400ml? I don't think so!

However, we did. So here we are.

What did we start with? An old derelict stone cottage, built circa 1900, on 1.25 acres. At that time the only vegetation was a couple of well-established pepper trees, a couple of radiata pine trees, a very worn out wormwood hedge, masses of asparagus ferns and lots of bamboo grass.

Realising that water usage will be an ongoing concern, we decided to develop 1/2 an acre as a bush block, meaning that any plantings would be watered for 2 years and thereafter they would have to make do with the annual rainfall. This bush block also provides us with firewood, provided we are economical with our use. The remaining 3/4 acre is the garden that surrounds our house.

With a couple of exceptions, our garden hasn't been developed according to a plan. There are two features in our garden that were intentional and planned: a dozen olive trees and 6 quince trees which we have trained to create an arched walkway. This idea was borrowed from the avenue of pleached trees at Carrick Hill.

While there are plants we have purchased for a specific purchase, such as citrus, the majority of our garden has been developed by some sort of serendipity. Plants given to us by others, cuttings taken from others' gardens, affordable plants at fetes etc. So rather than developing a garden design and then sourcing plants to achieve the desired effect, our garden has been developed by getting a plant and then finding a place for it, then hoping it works out ok. We realised early on that the harsh growing conditions meant that our garden would need more than plants to create interest, hence with many visits to the tip and donations of old timbers etc gratefully received, we've built various "structures" to add interest and to allow water harvesting when it does rain.

We love our garden, but if we are to be completely honest, it takes up a lot of our time and when summer arrives, we always have a sense of dread of heat waves and the endless watering. We continue to try to find ways to simplify things and despite years of adding worm castings, compost, lucerne hay, animal manure we feel we still haven't conquered our sandy, non-wetting soils.

As well as having an enjoyable time here, we want you to leave with a sense of what is possible to create in spite of the difficulties.

John & Roberta



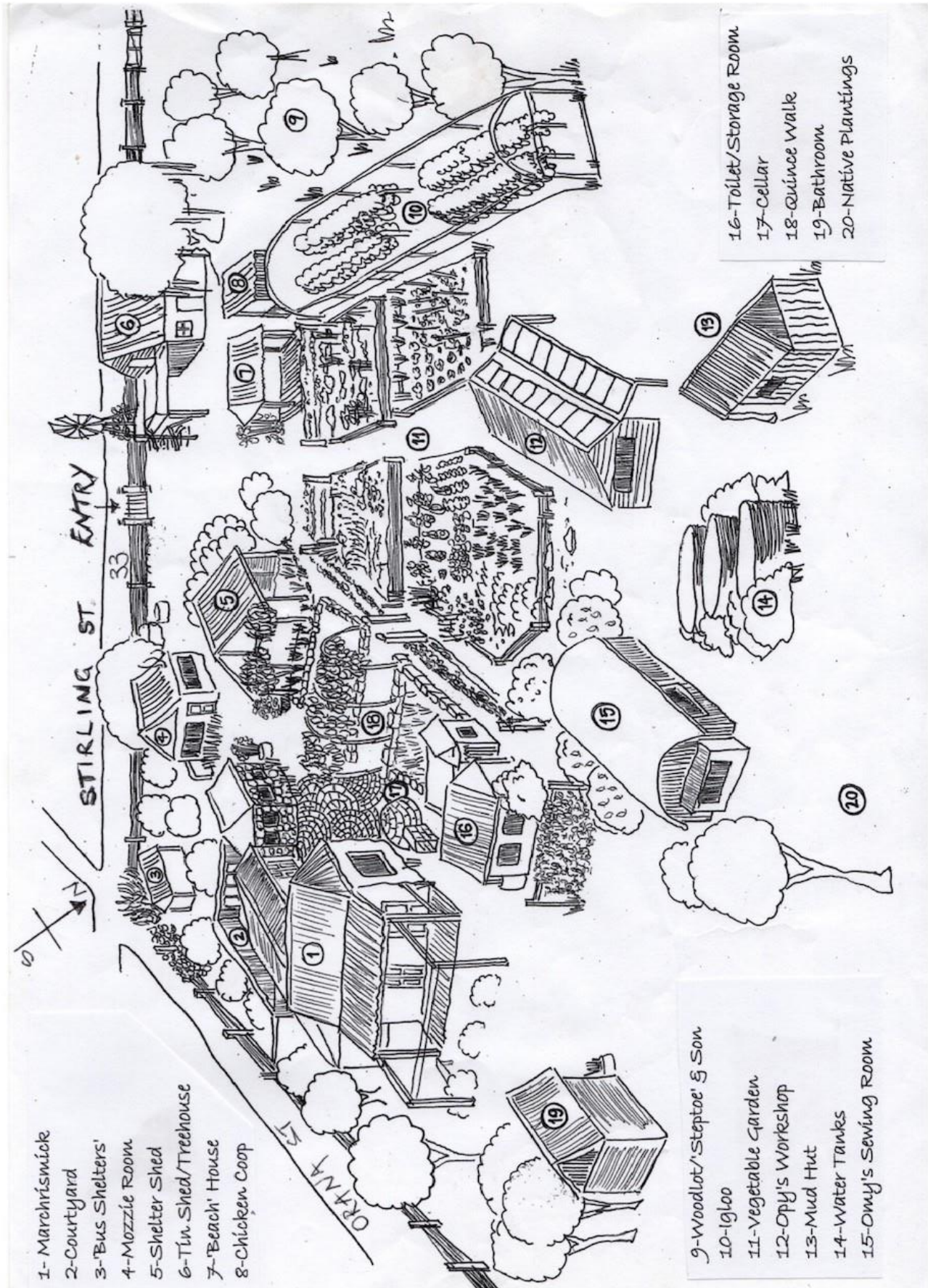
The Clayton Bay Nursery & Environment Group will be selling native plants.



**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/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/opengardensa>



- 1- Marchiswick
- 2-Courtyard
- 3-Bus Shelters'
- 4-Mozzie Room
- 5-Shelter Shed
- 6-Tin Shed/Treehouse
- 7-'Beach' House
- 8-Chicken Coop

- 9-Woodlot/'Steptoe' & Son
- 10-Igloo
- 11-Vegetable Garden
- 12-Opy's Workshop
- 13-Mud Hut
- 14-Water Tanks
- 15-Omy's Sewing Room

- 16-Toilet/Storage Room
- 17-Cellar
- 18-Quince Walk
- 19-Bathroom
- 20-Native Plantings

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.