

Maggie Brockhurst

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In January 1971, my husband David, myself and two small boys aged six and two arrived by plane in Adelaide, via Melbourne, Australia, it was 41 degrees, very hot, considering we had left snow and ice.

We had made a decision to have a look at this country for ourselves as there had been heavy advertising in the UK as to what was on offer for young families.

We had organised accommodation at Christies Beach, which to us looked like a cowboy scene from a film with all the shops having rails outside to which horses could have been tethered, having lived in London, this was a bit of a culture shock.

Three months later we purchased our first home at Port Noarlunga South which was on a huge block, a short walk to the beach, we thought this fantastic.

After two years we decided to move closer to where we both worked and

purchased a home in Old Reynella, and our real experience in making a garden began.

My mother was always a keen gardener and I can still picture her lovely garden.

The garden formed a 'V' shape with a road on both sides with street lights, so my mother would be gardening until after 10pm at night, using the street lighting to see.

Time could not be wasted, this garden had been developed after retirement, and I always wanted a garden like it.

In 1983 whilst out for a drive we saw an open inspection sign in Bull Creek, and went just for a look!!

We purchased the property which was a small house on 13 acres, and from this our journey of interest into native plants began.

We established a garden over the next 18 years mainly by trial and error, using native plants where possible, had enormous fun organizing water (no mains) etc.

We still enjoy driving past there today, as the garden is much the same as we had made it.

In 1998, we purchased 85 acres of hilly grazing land on the Strathalbyn side of Ashbourne, and built a home looking out to the coast, Currency Creek, the river at Goolwa, Hindmarsh Island and beyond.

Having developed this love of native plants, in particular Grevilla, we again set forth, turning a small part of a paddock into a garden around the house.

I suppose we have become lovers of a naturalistic style of garden and really have no desire for too much colour from annual flowers.

Many very pleasant hours have been spent searching for the plants we like, and at the moment trying to outwit the rabbits, possums and bush rats, who seem to like to dine in our garden!

How fortunate we are that our journey to this country has offered us such a rich life, and extended the same to our now adult sons and their families.