

Lynn Michelmore - July 2014



Mum and Dad's garden with Wisteria draped all over the tanks, masses of purple flowers - everyone had a Wisteria in those days, this is a great memory.

I grew up at Macclesfield on a dairy farm and Dad always had an extensive vegetable garden - manure, from cows and pigs was plentiful - vegetables were grown in a pig yard on rotation, everything grew well - massive pumpkins and plenty to feed the family, Mum, Dad and three kids.

I married and first lived on Summer Hill out of Strathalbyn and began gardening on a blank canvas, from then I have always made a garden wherever I've lived.

The Mother of four, my kids were allergic to cow's milk, so I bought goats for their milk and then got into breeding, showing and selling them all over Australia.

Of course the goats assisted with the garden pruning and loved every wind fall peach that fell over their fence, sucking off the flesh and spitting out the stones.

I've had a rose garden with 100 Roses, all different types and colours, this was a another farm garden as were my two previous gardens to this one.

My farm gardens were big, with lots of big trees planted away from the house and lots of vegetables planted in the big back yards.

I always planted Grevillias in my farm gardens and found them to be hardy and great for the birds - Honey-eaters and the like.

I always had mains water for my farm gardens, plus rain water too and over the years

have run up some big water bills, of course mostly put down to the stock water...

Now single, I'm living in my 7th garden - my 4th in seven years, but this is my final garden, I'm settled and here to stay.

Each of my previous gardens, 'though some were rentals, has had my attention and care.

Now retired from full time work, with just a part time 'occasional help out' job I breed 'Black Magic' alpacas - breeding black alpacas is quite a challenge and some what difficult, with lots of other interesting colours arriving along the way - it's always a lucky dip, but interesting.

I've found that Alpaca manure is about the best animal manure I have used, it's mild and there are no weeds, but wherever it's spread I have found heaps of earth-worms.

I've always had ducks and chooks and presently I have Cochin and Speckled Sussex chooks - a small flock of roosters roam my front garden and are the colourful welcoming committee for my visitors, I don't think there's a bug left in my garden.

These big boys aerate my garden, I just have to put the mulch back onto my garden beds occasionally.

On my five acre block on the outskirts of Strathalbyn I have some big trees, lots of gums, Broughton Willow Wattles, native shrubs and a few standard Roses, plus Geraniums and Nasturtiums for colour - I love my ferns too.

The Broughton Willow Wattles sucker and grow up from seed, so I am always removing the seedlings and take every care not to work too close underneath and cause suckering.

I have Virgillias - these bright flowering, quick growers are easy to shape, I trim them right from the start to a 'standard' shape and find they last longer - I love their pink flowers.

Sunburst Gleditsia is another favourite, these are easy to trim and keep to a small size and have bright yellow flowers.

I think my five acres are fairly well utilised, with paddocks for my alpacas and a large garden around the house - there is plenty of room for everything.

My garden is made up of trees, which I trim regularly to keep them neat and tidy; native shrubs, Geraniums and Nasturtiums of course for colour - it's all fairly easy care.

Now retired, I'm really looking forward to getting to attend and enjoy every garden club meeting and every garden club outing.