

CULRAVEN

“Culraven” was purchased by Prof. Hugh Taylor’s grandparents (the Ringland-Andersons) in 1941. It became the third garden that Edna Walling designed for them but apparently no formal plan for Culraven was generated.

Walling directed and worked on the garden’s layout including working with her colleagues Eric Hammond who built stone walls and gate plinths and Ellis Stones who set out the structure of the garden. Many features of Walling’s design still exist.

Hugh inherited the property in 1998. It was over arched by huge trees that had shaded out the understory. Many trees were removed to allow light so that renovation of the garden could go ahead.

Hugh and his wife, Liz, have worked with Aaron Condon (now head gardener at Coome) and others, to follow Walling’s ideas to restore the garden and then enhance it in ways that we hope Walling and earlier owners would have wished.

The woodland garden of six acres is planted over two and a half acres with exotics along mossy paths that wind to reveal interesting surprises. Other winding paths lead to three orchards (citrus, fruit and the large chestnut).

In spring, blossom may be evident on the fruit trees and the wonderful, ancient flowering cherries are very beautiful. However, much of the blossom is likely to be over by October but many of the rhododendrons and azaleas will be in flower. There are a number of trees of considerable age for a planted garden in the Dandenongs.

A major feature is a most unusual and massive Mexican Hawthorn tree (our Magic Faraway Tree)! A huge linden occupies another section of the garden. There is a row of massive Himalayan cedars.

The front gardens consist of three garden “rooms” each separated by sprawling yews.

The highly skilled Aaron Condon has continued stonework construction including the thriving rockery. We have not participated in Open Gardens previously but are always pleased to share our historic garden in the Dandenongs.

Culraven is located on the lands of the Wurudjeri people. Open Gardens Victoria wishes to acknowledge the Traditional custodians of this land and we pay respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

These notes can be downloaded from the Open Gardens Victoria website:

www.opengardensvictoria.org.au

