



Port Adelaide Sailing Club

Historical & Memorial Garden

S.D. Walter, October 2022 - This project was born of necessity and opportunity.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS PROJECT

- To improve and enhance the eastern aspect of the Port Adelaide Sailing Club, the visual and pedestrian access corridor to Snowden Beach. (Champagne alley)
- Improve and preserve the ground water infrastructure to ensure that stormwater runoff is effectively managed.
- Create a habitat which is in sympathy with the natural environment.
- Preserve some of the industrial history of the area by repurposing otherwise waste material.
- Create a space for all to enjoy where we can sit and share our stories - past - present and future and to provide a place for reflection to respect those that have passed before us, both from within our Club and from the wider community who have, through their efforts, created the environment we enjoy now.
- Enhance awareness of our environment, both of ancient natural significance and of more recent history.

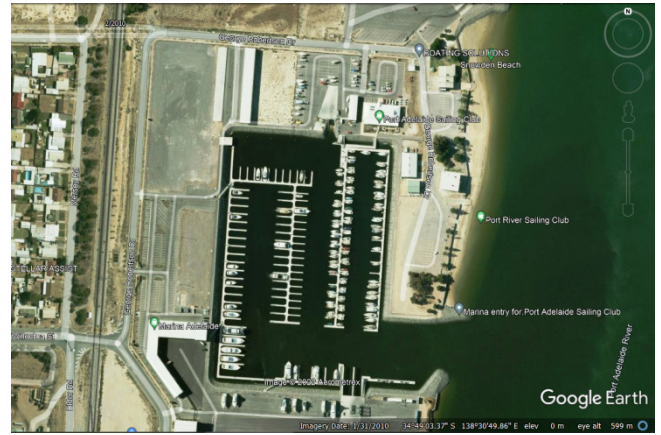
It is intended to achieve this by:

1. Understanding and respecting that this site is one which links our Club to Snowden Beach, the Port River estuary and our adjacent neighbours - the Port River Sailing Club and GTS Dolphin with whom we share the waters.
2. Recognising that this is a site which presents a visual front of our Club to our neighbours and to the general public when viewed from the eastern perspective.
3. Preserving the sight line from the Club's verandah through to the river.
4. Conducting all works with understanding that this area is designated as a soakage pit designed to take the runoff water from our built environment and return it to the natural aquifer.
5. Respecting the ancient natural environment by utilising only indigenous flora which will thrive with little maintenance and to also aid in supporting native fauna. Non-native flora will not be introduced.
6. Utilising and repurposing industrial waste from Snowdon Beach to create a visually appealing communal social area with respect to the heritage of these materials, thus helping clean up and improve our estuarine environment.
7. Conducting all work at a minimal financial cost to our Club in this development or for future maintenance.

HISTORY & DEVELOPMENT OF THE HISTORICAL & MEMORIAL GARDEN

From time immemorial the Yertabulti, Port River, estuary system was a thriving habitat for plants that provided food, utensils and shelter as well as providing essential habitat for native fauna - birds, insects and butterflies etc. (As an aside; you may have noticed that our friendly native resident Magpies thankfully keep our club and yachts relatively free of pigeons and seagulls within their natural territory - something that certain other marinas don't enjoy!).

A huge area of parkland, garden and recreational space was sacrificed in 2006 when the Marina basin was excavated. This was a significant loss of habitat and thus created a barren landscape.



As some small recompense for this loss of habitat the late Dennis Walter, as Chair of the PASC relocation committee, proposed, and it was agreed upon, to establish a native garden.

When our club first moved to our current site in 2007 the garden of native plants was established at the front of our clubrooms. This economical garden was developed as an attractive, low maintenance, feature utilising indigenous plants that were to preserve a small part of the natural dune system of the Port River estuary.

Most members would know that Dennis was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for 'Service to the sailing community of South Australia'. You see the sign when you enter our Club room.

Our Club rooms were posthumously named after him in his honour.

However; few would know that back in 1968 Dennis was also appointed by the South Australian Government as an Honorary Warden, Fauna Conservation Act of South Australia, and Honorary Warden, Aboriginal and Historic Relics Preservation Act of South Australia. He established the Walter Fauna Park at Arkaroola.

His involvement here with the Port Adelaide Sailing Club, the Port River Sailing Club, GTS Dolphin and the STV One & All inspired his conservation efforts for the Yertabulti, Port River, and estuary environment - Thus influencing the inspiration of a wholly native garden to benefit our community and the environment.

His passion for our environ lives on.

Over subsequent years non indigenous invasive plants had been introduced and the original garden became unruly and more labour intensive.

After some heated discussion at general meetings it was decided that rather than restore the garden it was to be replaced with a costly lawn with little benefit to the native environment.

By 2016 the lawn was established and looks nice, but the site of the clubrooms stormwater soakage pit to the east of the lawn had become overgrown with weeds, it was unsightly and untended.



With the help of a few volunteer Club members weeds were cleared and the site was upgraded with no use of concrete foundations for the bollards or mortar in the repurposed refractory bricks of the construction. A new agricultural drain pipe was installed and no plants are to be established here in order to maintain the pit's function and integrity.

A full description of this work and its historical relevance is in previous documents which were disseminated to members in 2020 and 2021. We also hope to produce a video to illustrate the works for this development.

A few plants from the original garden self-seeded naturally and have survived with no further care. Notably; a Knobby Club Rush in the rocks at the head of the gangway and some Flax lily's along the east fence.

Early 2020 saw the start of work in resurrecting these surviving plants along the eastern fence. Unfortunately damage by vandals to the fence and gate saw a lot of this lost in reconstructing the fence.

November saw the major work of installing the bollards, a project funded by the Estuary Care Foundation. Over the past decades many have eyed these to recover them for use as a garden feature.

The Port Environment Centre held a function at our Club to promote the use of indigenous plants and kindly donated several coastal Bitter-bushes - exclusive food for the endangered Blue Butterfly. The garden was expanded to accommodate these and future plantings. These bushes thrived until they unfortunately died in 2021.

Any planting within the Compass Rose Monument itself would compromise the structural integrity of the stormwater system and the aesthetic purpose of this site.

The soakage pit is an integral and essential part of the stormwater management of our site, returning considerable amounts of rainwater run-off from our built environ to the natural aquifer. No plants will be established here.

The newly planted garden has been established at the outer eastern border of this soakage pit. The plants have been carefully selected for their visual and practical appeal and to suit this environ.

To preserve the integrity of this area and so that we learn from the mistakes of the past no non-native plants will be introduced to this garden.

The total financial cost to our Club has been < \$1,500. Other costs were absorbed and freely given by volunteers. Cost - provided from support (ECF) - could be estimated to be in the order of \$7,000. Not counting elbow grease or the value of materials procured. - This is priceless!

This work to date ensures that we have met the objectives of this project for the benefit of all into the future.

*On a personal note; **Thank You very much** to those few fellow Club members who have generously volunteered some of their time and effort to see this project through to fruition. ☺*

In particular to Rob Jacobs, whom without his physical, visionary and (for me) moral support this project would not have been achieved. Now we are just awaiting to see the full fruits of our efforts flourish! - SDW.

THE GARDEN FEATURES & PLANTS

Our eastern entrance and access to Snowden Beach is aptly named “Champagne Alley” in celebration of the comradery of the combined members of the PASC & PRSC whom share a long history.

The centre piece of the area is the 64 point compass rose; red gum railway sleeper bench seating and the four bollards, all built using repurposed industrial waste at no cost to us other than elbow grease and time.

This site was meticulously laid out by celestial observation on the winter solstice.

The compass is to give us direction.

This was a 215 piece 3 dimensional geometric jigsaw (nightmare!) with no picture, only an inspired concept.

Positioned on the centre of the storm water soakage pit it also supports the function for storm water management.

The centre piece feature of the memorial garden to the east is a (*donated*) white dinghy, reminiscent of one of our yacht's tenders, hauled up on a South Australian coastal dune for their crew to enjoy some time ashore.

There is an old anchor placed at its bow (*donated*).

At the SW corner a (*donated*) Pelican sculpture looks on, probably waiting for some bounty from the sea.

Most plants were provided by *Provenance Indigenous Plants* who supply a wide range of trees, shrubs, groundcovers, climbers, grasses and wetland plants.

Provenance also provided the plants for our original garden as well as for many other community spaces

All plants are indigenous to the Adelaide area, having thrived in this region for thousands of years.

The plants are grown in full sun and are raised from locally collected seeds or cuttings, and so are perfectly adapted to our local climate and soils.

Once established, they will require little watering or maintenance.

Their use will help to preserve the natural vegetation of the Adelaide region of which only 6% remains.

This is the list of plants which have been carefully selected to establish our garden;

Reference was made to the Port Environment Centre, The Botanic Gardens of Adelaide,

Provenance Indigenous Plants, Coastal Gardens, a Planting guide (Natural Resources, Government of SA) and Wild Plant Foods of Australia by Tim Low.

As well as aesthetic and culinary appeal they will help provide a beneficial habitat for some of our native fauna.

Coastal Wattle (*Acacia longifolia* var. *sophorae*) - “Green and Gold” shrub, related to our national floral emblem.

The seeds can be roasted and eaten. The “Sprig of Acacia” is also historically known as a symbol of remembrance.

Coast Saltbush (*Atriplex cinerea*) - Tasty silver foliage.

Karkalla (*Carpobrotus rossii*) - Attractive ground cover with purple flowers and tasty foliage and fruit.

Billy Buttons (*Craspedia glauca*) - Attractive low shrub with yellow flowers.

Short Stem Flax Lily (*Dianella brevicaulis*) - Attractive foliage, blue flowers

Black Anther Flax-lily (*Dianella revoluta*) - Attractive foliage, blue flowers

Caution; The blue / black berries of Dianella sp. whilst not really toxic may be harmful. They have been eaten, but don't really taste nice.

The Kudlyo (Black Swan) people of the Kaurna Nation (The Port River Tribe) used the leaves for fibre to weave baskets and utensils.

Ruby Salt-bush (*Enchylaena tomentosa*) - A small - low shrub with delicious attractive red berries.

Sturt's Desert Rose (*Gossypium sturtianum*) - Our “token” rose bush. NT's floral emblem.

Knobby Club Rush (*Isolepis nodosa*) - Attractive foliage, used for fibre to weave.

Muntries (*Kunzea pomifera*) - Attractive ground cover with very tasty fruit.

Also to be added are;

Sturt's desert pea (*Swainsona formosa*) - SA's beautiful floral emblem.

Coastal Bitter Bush (*Adriana quadripartite*) - For our endangered Blue Butterfly.

