

ROMA MITCHELL GARDEN

A seedbed of peace and productivity



Named for an iconic inspirational SA leader, honouring her commitment to the provision of equal opportunity for all, gender equality, care for the vulnerable, respect for the indigenous, welcome to other cultures, and social justice.



INNOVATIVE EXAMPLE OF A “PLACE FOR PEOPLE”.

BACKGROUND

In the early 1990's, Adelaide City Council approached Sister Janet Mead, Chair and Founder of the Adelaide Day Centre for homeless Persons Incorporated (ADC) with a request to take on management of the Old Adelaide Goal Garden (one hectare). The land is Crown Land, heritage site, but had suffered ongoing damage from vandals and graffiti for many years. Of particular worry was vandalising of heritage walls and buildings. Sister Janet Mead and her ADC team led a collaborative effort from Adelaide City Council, OARS, the Heritage Branch of DAIS, attracting support and interest from leading SA groups and businesses. The ensuing transformation into a productive, vibrant, self-sustaining, welcoming garden, provided not only the necessary caretaking of the site but also food for the heart of the city in countless ways.

TWENTY YEARS OF ABUNDANCE

- Unique example of an intensive permaculture garden site with historical roots
- Vibrant centre of exciting innovative activities all year round for disadvantaged people
- Heart-warming example of an engaging community offering a vision for a self-sustainable future
- Utilising every aspect of place:

Heritage
History
Architecture
Environmental Sustainability
Permaculture
Self Sufficiency

- One hectare set in the centre of the heritage walls and buildings of the old goal the Powder Magazines and the historic Powder Keeper's Cottage, oldest buildings of Adelaide. Careful management and sensitive caretaking ensures protection from vandalization of this historic site while enabling appropriate utilisation of the space.



A GARDEN OF HEALING



- Dynamic mix of uses including:
 - Innovative intensive organic food production; seed propagation, rain water harvesting, beekeeping and honey production, egg production, fruit and nut trees, 20 different vegetable crops, recycling techniques and composting.
 - Sheltered workshop rehabilitation services
 - Disadvantaged people's lives turned around, inclusivity for cultural groups, respect for Indigenous and cultural learning exchanges
 - Cross cultural activities
 - Multicultural activities
 - Historic and heritage preservation site
- Partnership enterprise incorporating schools, churches, service clubs, nurseries, related business, Adelaide City Council and Heritage Departments
- Green space with intense food production yield providing food for a range of South Australians in diverse social strata.
- Connecting appropriately with Health and Wellbeing services providing learning and collaboration in healthy food and healthy lifestyles as well as plant biodiversity.



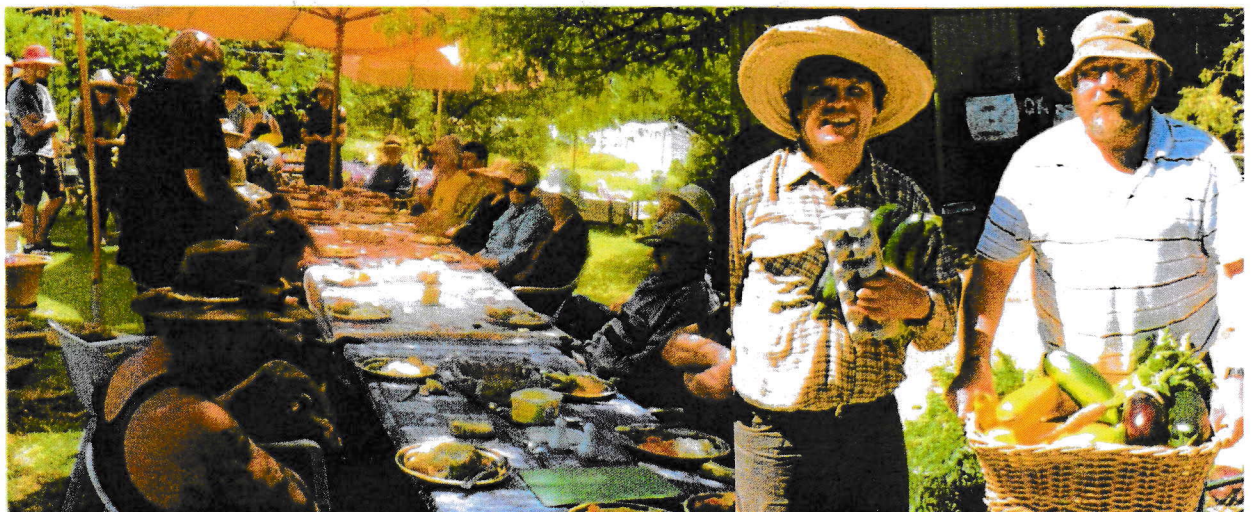
CONNECTION POINT FOR PEOPLE FROM DIVERSE SOCIAL STRATA AND A MODEL FOR REHABILITATION, HEALING AND PREVENTATIVE HEALTH

The Story of John (not his real name)

John was a man who presented frequently at the Royal Adelaide Hospital and was often to be found on the streets of the city. After being welcomed to the garden, John has become a productive gardener and researcher into innovative composting techniques and now provides learning and leadership in animal husbandry to all at the Roma Mitchell Garden.



- Historical and architectural site with learning opportunities
- Volunteer opportunities for a diverse range of people
- Preventative and rehabilitative health services opportunities in partnership with Health SA focusing on people of all social strata recovering from chronic ill-health.



A PRODUCTIVE PLACE FOR PEOPLE

"I am a supporter of the invaluable work of this garden. It was an honour to plant the orange tree in memory of Dame Roma Mitchell, after whom the garden is named." (The Honourable Margaret Nyland, AM)



- Food for low income people: average 20,000 food hampers and 15,000 meals per annum
- Participants in work, volunteer and education programs.
- Security of heritage site
- Sustainable and environmentally sensitive land use
- Contribution to physical and mental health of vulnerable city persons.



CURRENT PROGRAMS

- Learn to garden course
- Permaculture introduction
- Cooking and nutrition for the disabled and disadvantaged
- Cultural exchange activities
- Occupational and diversional therapy for the aged, disabled and/or disadvantaged.



"A marvellous example of a vibrant community effort: a delightful garden, nurtured by a diverse range of individuals, which provides wholesome meals for Adelaide's homeless." (The Hon Catherine Branson QC, former President, Australian Human Rights Commission)

"The Roma Mitchell Garden has a long track record of providing for thousands of people in various ways over these 20 years."
(Barry Jennings, Legal Services Commission)



"An attractive lovely garden with a happy welcoming atmosphere. I love visiting!" (John Hill, former Minister Health, the Arts and the Environment, SA)



"Keep it going! I am honoured to be associated with such a brilliant project. It ticks all the boxes."
(Brian Burdekin, Australia's First Human Rights Commissioner)

"For twenty years I have been associated with the Roma Mitchell Garden. I am proud to be counted as a supporter of this worthwhile and productive enterprise." (Richard Stevens, businessman, of Richard Stevens Hire and Kennards Storage)

