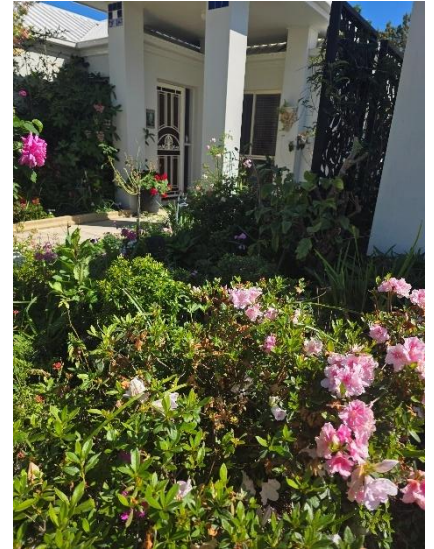


September Home Visit – Two for One



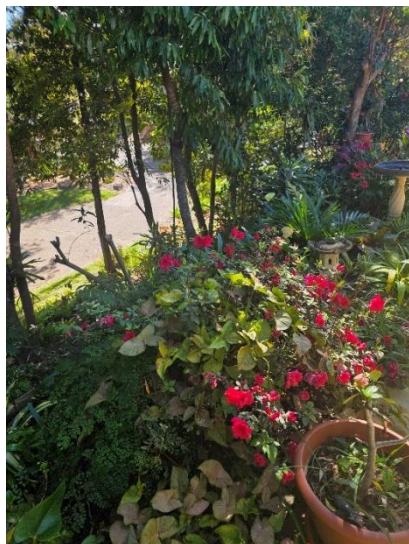
Our home visit of September 12 was a 'two for one' affair as for the first time since 2020 we visited two gardens on the one day. Beryl Tucker and Carmel Illing live two doors apart in one of the best gated communities on the Gold Coast. (In October 2020 it was a garden crawl to 4 gardens for our first face to face contact after the COVID lockdowns. Just 15 people at a time but so good after that terrible time).

First was the garden of Beryl Tucker at Number 41. Beryl's is the quintessential cottage garden. Such gardens are much less about the garden design and physical structures than it is about having a profusion of plants happily occupying whatever space you have available. This theme is established at the very entrance to the house and garden with a mass planting dominated now by an **Azalea**.

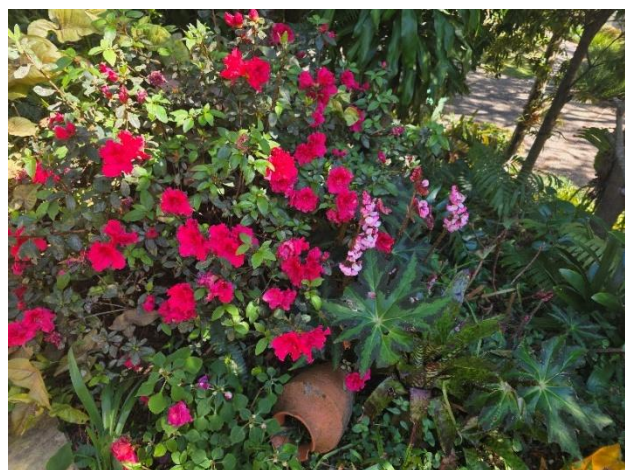


The sheer number of different types of plants in this bed alone is staggering. Yet to bloom poppies mix with, naturally, some **roses** (below left) as well as iris, snapdragons, pansies and so on. Among the more unusual plants was a **Heuchera** 'Black Forest Cake' (at left) whose vibrant red flowers shine above those almost black leaves. These sorts of beds are indeed all about the mix of different types of flowers. In the corner beside the house a **Medinilla** was in bloom. A great variety of **Begonias** with their delicate blooms added interest.

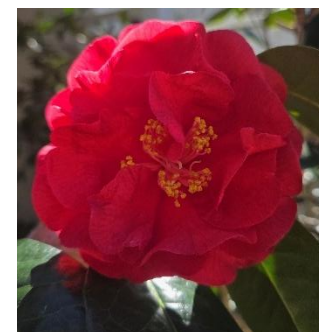




A path to the side of the house leads via a very relaxing outdoor area to a back patio that sits high above a road at the back (at left). Greeting you is one of Beryl's 'old men' recently returned from her son's home. He sits contentedly among more colour – impatiens, more and more begonias, still to flower Hydrangeas, anthuriums, geranium and so many more.



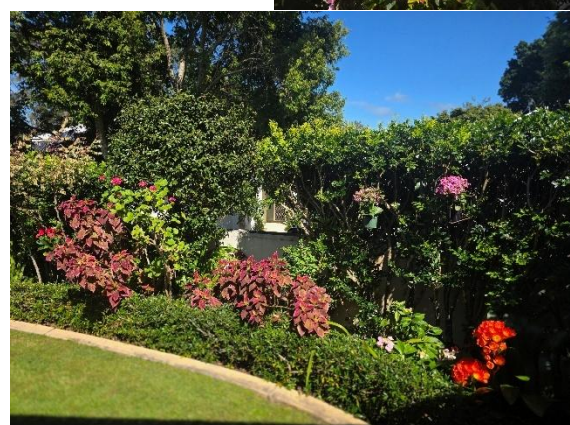
This area includes an in full bloom **Camillea reticulata**. This type of camellia does prefer it a bit colder than we get here on the coast but you would never know that from this example. Beryl's garden very much proves that even with a small block you can create a very good garden full of dozens of different type of plants that complement your home and provide endless hours of joy.



Just down the road, Carmel Illing's garden at Number 44 has virtually no frontage at all. Again, this is a garden full of hundreds of different plants but with a much more formal feel. This is established as soon as you enter a grass area to the side of the house. Bordered by a perennial border of plants including coleus the presence of a large white 'pyramid' adorned with potted colour and a tiered fountain create that formal feel. A rare 'double' **Tibouchina** sits among things like white **alyssum** and **impatiens** among other things.

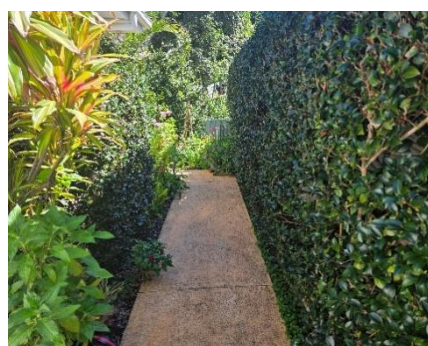


The star here is however a really great 'red' **Clivia** – just one of many ready to bloom very soon.

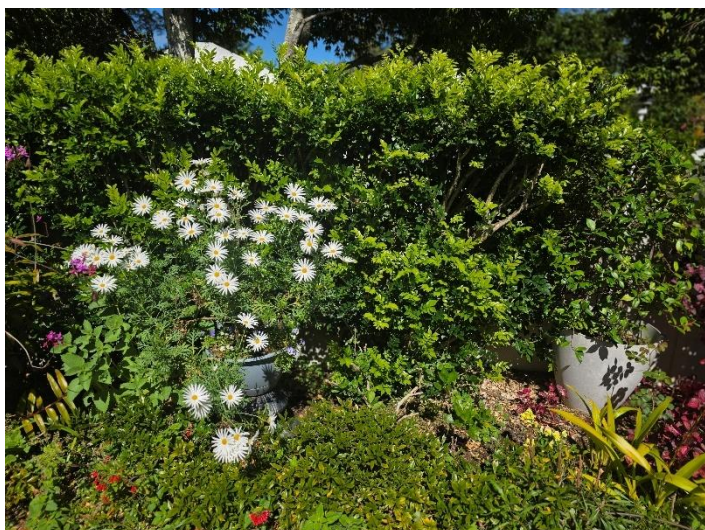




A thin strip on the other side of the house is just as formal with a hedge – enhanced playfully with a couple of strategically placed bunnies.



Nearby a very realistic 'ceramic' cat sits in the outdoor patio as if ready to pounce. Hanging baskets full of shade loving flowering plants and ornate lanterns add to the theme of the garden.



As the photo at left illustrates it is amazing how even with a quite small amount of land Carmel has been able to create a sense of formality usually associated with huge English country house gardens. Add those splashes of colour (especially of white in simple things like the common daisy that match the white furniture) and you get a garden that (like Beryl's) is full of colour.

MANY THANKS to Carmel (at right) and Beryl for hosting us. It was lovely weather. Both our hosts were very generous with their advice, cuttings and with their hospitality so seeing two such contrasting gardens was special.

