

## BLOOD, SWEAT AND ...

25 & 26 SEPTEMBER 2021  
Ashley Street, Stuart Park

Welcome to my paradise. We moved here in 1986, my first home purchase and most probably, my last! The property had been vacant for 6 months, so there was lots to do, not only renovating the house but the garden needed lots of attention too. The skeleton of a rainforest was evident on the back yard but needed heaps of work, and the front was mainly coconut and carpentaria palms.

Being members of NT Palm and Cycad Society, we ended up planting some special palms and cycads. My favourite palms would be *Keriodoxa elegans* and *Pelagodoxa henryana* in the back yard and *Carpoxydon macrospermum* in the front garden. Beware! Some of the palm trees have very nasty spikes!

My passion for desert roses started in 2009 when I brought a seed pod back from a visit to Broome. I think from memory I had 100% germination. You will notice that my collection needs lots more attention than they've been receiving.

While still working and now on my own, the gardens became very neglected over time. Overgrown with vines, climbing ferns and weeds and, worst of all, coffee bush. On retiring in 2015 the time had come for a complete garden makeover, which continues to this day. With the help of a great friend we have reclaimed most of the rainforest and cleaned up areas that were impenetrable. And then, realising time was running short for this Open Garden, I've had the help of Gerry and his boys from Longgrass Mowing, who I highly recommend.

Oh – the pool you ask? The pool had a bad leak when running, so the solution is – don't run it! It is finally in the process of being converted into a water lily habitat and will hopefully unclude edible water plants. If you have any suggestions, please let me know.

The gardens evolved greatly over the years until Cyclone Marcus wreaked havoc in 2018 with the loss of many palms and some trees, including a very large native nutmeg. Since then the clearing of debris and rebuilding the rainforest effect has been happening relentlessly. The addition of cordylines, calatheas, caladiums, heliconias and gingers has added much-needed colour to an otherwise green palate. This is still a work in progress and always will be.

So folks, that's it from BLOOD, SWEAT AND ...

...CHEERS AND BEERS!



OPEN GARDENS  
NORTHERN TERRITORY