



ABOVE. The front entrance archway planted with Pierre de Ronsard roses bought from Flemington racecourse.

involvement in MIFGS and Garden Design Fest and many other activities. She forged links with other horticultural industry groups and businesses in Victoria.

Bev was an inspirational person who saw hardship as a challenge rather than a problem.”

Beverley and I met while we were both studying at Ryde Horticultural College in Sydney. Our first encounters were tentative rather than friendly - I didn't quite know what to make of her, nor she of me. Having previously completed a Horticulture Certificate, she knew her plants and plant care inside out. Hands-on involvement in renovation of her houses and gardens had given her formidable construction knowledge. And she talked loudly and quickly all the time; I couldn't get a word in edgewise. Not exactly being lost for words myself, I found competing for air space ever so slightly challenging and often resorted to telling her to shut up and listen. That's when I first experienced her generosity of spirit. Far from being offended by my

rudeness, she'd laugh, zip her lip and wait for the next pause.

I soon learned that B was also generous in other ways. She was always happy to share her knowledge when I had plant, design and construction quandaries, both when we were students and later when we started our own businesses. She loved to share her home and garden with visitors and would always cook up a storm for us. Then there were the plants; cuttings, pots and hanging baskets of unusual and beautiful plants regularly found their way to my garden. I've recently re-potted two magnificent Stanhopea orchids – aka Bulls' Balls - that will always travel with me and of course remind me of Beverley.

The first of B's Australian gardens was made in a bushland environment in Forestville, near Sydney. Set on a steeply sloping block dominated by sandstone outcrops and original indigenous trees, the contemporary house sat on the crest of the block. The site was exposed, the soil was impoverished decomposed sandstone that would not hold water and 'steep' just didn't begin to describe the driveway.

B made the most of a difficult location, planting hardy, drought tolerant indigenous and exotic plant species along the steep drive. Dry climate plants in this exposed area gave way to Australian rainforest shrubs and orchids which grew happily with camellias and hydrangeas in the shady undercroft of

the house approach.

Timber decks around the house provided entertaining and seating areas and access to the garden. On warm, wind-free days the northern front deck, which looked out towards Garigal National Park, was a wonderful place to lunch in dappled shade cast by a venerable eucalypt.

The rear courtyard, protected and shady, was home to Beverley's collection of rare bamboos, palms and orchids. Stepped decks led down to a wonderful pond, where flowing water was mirrored by gently waving *Hakonechloa macra* 'Aureola' - Japanese Temple Grass. This pond gave pain as well as pleasure – it sprang leaks, had crazy pH fluctuations and pump problems – in short, it behaved like a typical water feature.

In 2003 Beverley moved to Melbourne to a house and garden which were the antithesis of her Sydney experience; an old timber cottage on a flat block of land with heavy grey alkaline clay soil.