



Buda

GARDEN

BUDA IS SITUATED in north central Victoria at Castlemaine, 118km from Melbourne. Its altitude is 300 metres. Summers are hot and dry and winters are typically a mixture of cold and wet or frosty mornings with days of sunshine. Annual rainfall averages 611mm although in 1997 it was only 454mm. Soil has a pH of 6.5 and the alluvial ground consists of generally thin topsoil with gravel and clay as well as 'reefs' of rock.

What charm she has
what wit is hers
and grace in splendid measure:
In her we have a friend
whose friendship
those who own it, treasure:
So gaily she has scoffed
at what the Bible has decreed;
Our earthly span's three score and ten –
She's firmly disagreed.

How good to go
and spend an hour
in converse with our friend:
or wander with her
down the paths
which through her garden wend;
For close to nature she communes
with her Creator there,
And draws the zest for life which she
with others loves to share

Clifford K. Page 1979

LINES WRITTEN FOR MISS HILDA'S NINETY-SIXTH BIRTHDAY

by Peter Cuffley



Perspective

Buda is a house and garden that readily captures the hearts of those who appreciate an essay in human endeavour. Here is the story of two generations of one family covering 118 years of occupation of a much-loved place. Since opening to the public in 1982, it has further evolved so that the continuing saga is of living history, personalities and varied opinions, of hopes realised and unrealised. It began with the vision and tenacity of Ernest Leviny (1818 – 1905), an Hungarian born jeweller, noted for his work as a silversmith. Leviny achieved the important goals of the successful paterfamilias in the 19th century. He was respected in his profession, acquired wealth, fathered a large family and created a home which was a world within a world. A well-built, comfortable house on a suitable scale was an important symbol. Ideally such a place would be complemented by a garden and grounds on an appropriate scale.

It is important to note that while *Buda* became the realisation of the dream of a family 'estate', Ernest Leviny, as early as 1876, was planning a much grander scheme for a six-acre site in Hargreaves Street.¹ Bertha Leviny, mother of ten children and remembered as a warm 'outgoing' person, put an end to her husband's great plan by refusing to move. Ernest had



started on the Hargreaves Street garden and had even built a plaster model of the new house. The change of direction was around 1890 and he turned his attention to enlarging *Buda* and giving its southern elevation an impressive character. In 1890 he purchased six allotments to add to the grounds. After selling the land in Hargreaves Street in 1895, he added lots 8 and 17 to complete the property, as we know it today.

REFERENCE

1. From an interview with Hilda Leviny by Fred Moss and Barbara Whitley. (*Buda Archives*)

(above right) Ernest Leviny 1818–1905. This portrait was taken in Melbourne c. 1880. *Buda Collection*

(below) Delhi Villa c. 1869 showing the beginnings of the cypress hedge. *Buda Collection*



Beginnings

The original holding was purchased in July 1863 from the Reverend James Smith, a Baptist missionary who spent most of his adult life in India. Smith had called the bungalow-styled house *Delhi Villa*, having purchased the four allotments which made up the holding in 1861. The change of name from *Delhi Villa* to *Buda* took place between 1870 and the early 1890s. Perhaps Ernest had planned to call his Hargreaves Street property *Buda*.

It is known that the Rev. James Smith was a keen plantsman, so it is possible that some of the garden was already established when Leviny acquired the property. Photographs taken in 1869 show an extensive garden close to the house, including the beginnings of the cypress hedge which is now a great, though aging, leviathan.

The fence along Urquhart Street, not then formed, was of split timber pickets on split rails. Since the 1890s it has been of sawn pickets with pointed tops. There was no gate on this western side and the main entrance was from Hunter Street. When the new 'front rooms' and the grand entrance were built in the early 1890s, the formal garden to the south of the house became the 'front garden'. It was at this time that the ornamental gate and recessed gateway were constructed to make a suitable 'front' entrance



off Urquhart Street. While there is enough symmetry to warrant calling the 'front border' a formal scheme, most of the garden is informal. There are straight walks running both north-south and east-west, but the only portions which have a symmetrical or axial plan are the 1920s 'formal garden' made from the tennis court and the rose garden established in 1985. Generally the garden beds are of different shapes and sizes and relate to a style known as 'gardenesque' where a broad range of plants are carefully placed to display their individual beauty and character.

(above) Ernest Leviny proudly posing in front of his fully remodelled house. This photograph has been taken prior to the cyclone of 1903, which broke some of the patterned glass in the gallery (it was replaced with clear glass). *Buda Collection*

(below) Bertha Leviny surrounded by her daughters. From left to right: Gertrude, Hilda, Mary, Dorothy and Beatrice Kate. *Buda Collection*





the Leviny family

(above) The Front Garden and Pavilion Garden c. 1910. Palms and cordylines were favoured for their exotic character. The cordylines, cypress hedge and the pines in the background are still dominant elements in the garden.
Buda Collection.

It is believed that Ernest Leviny befriended Ferdinand von Mueller, the director of Melbourne's Botanic Gardens. We know Leviny visited the Gardens on his trips to the city and while he is likely to have been given seeds and plants, there is no evidence of von Mueller actually visiting Castlemaine. There is a delightful story related by Hilda Leviny in the 1970s. She observed that somehow her father managed to get everything he wanted. "One day when he was visiting the Botanical Gardens in Melbourne he saw a plant he didn't recognise. A policeman came along and Father said to the man 'Go and get me a bit of that over there will you?' Very kindly, of course and the policeman did, quite kindly too."²

Ernest Leviny and Bertha Hudson were married in Launceston Tasmania on December 22 1864. Bertha was born in Kent and her family had migrated when she was four. The family lived with 'Uncle Horton' at *Somercotes*, a notable Tasmanian house (1826) in the historic town of Ross. The relationship between *Somercotes* and *Buda* continued well into the twentieth century. Bertha's sister 'Aunt Elizabeth' Riggall of *Somercotes*, visited *Buda* and kept up a correspondence with the Leviny girls. Anna, another of Bertha's sisters, was a gifted pianist and actually lived at *Buda* for a time.

If Ernest Leviny was the driving force behind the design and development of the garden, there must have been influences from the feminine side prior to his death in 1905. Apart from the gardener Walter Cross who worked there from age 16 to age 80, the period from 1905-1981 saw

an ascendancy of women. Bertha died in 1923, Ilma married in 1903 and the two sons left home to make their own way in the world. It is known that the sisters had sections of the garden allotted to them at an early age and two, in particular, Dorothy (1881-1968) and Hilda (1883-1981), were truly passionate about gardening. Dorothy was originally given the Camellia bed to the south of the kitchen and maid's quarters though her notable contributions were the making of the sundial and the fountain as part of her metalcraft. The fountain was for the formal garden she created in the 1920s when the tennis court was no longer in demand. Dorothy was the only one to submit entries to local flower shows and is also recalled swapping garden information and seeds, bulbs, cuttings and plants with interested classmates whilst attending the Castlemaine Technical School.

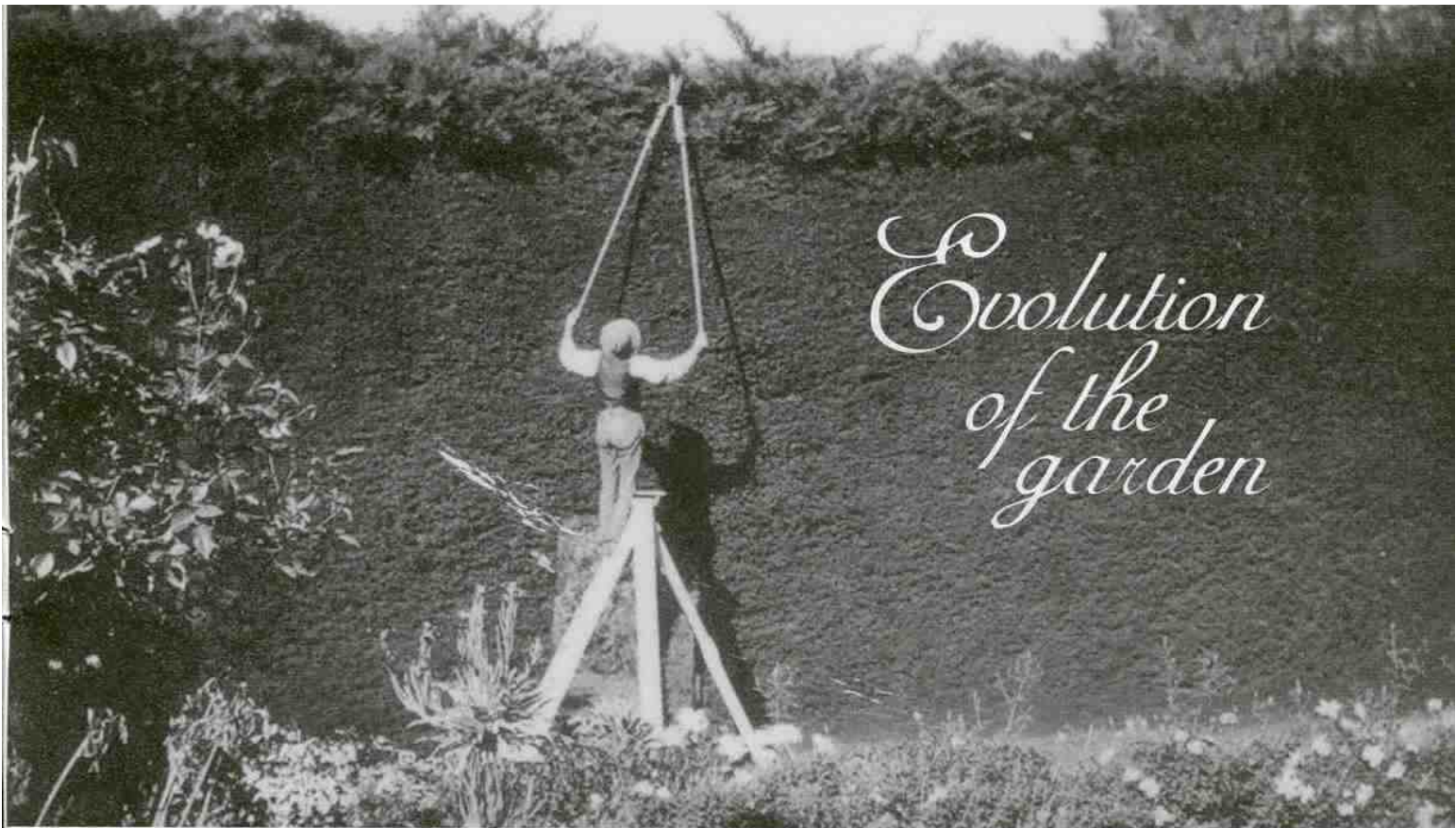
Hilda Leviny valiantly kept on working in the garden right up to her death at age 98. There were gardeners during those twelve years she spent alone, but she worked as hard as any of them. Normally she would never mention her age, but one day she was wheeling a barrow past the gardeners and said, "I'm 92 today!" 'Miss Hilda's Walk' is one part of the garden which has a special association. It is said that the writings of Englishman Beverley Nichols influenced its cottage style planting in the mid twentieth century. Much of *Buda's* garden has a feeling of the old-fashioned cottage style. This comes from the use of hardy perennials, self-seeding annuals and the kinds of bulbs, which happily colonise any available ground. It might be officially described as a 'suburban garden', but in many ways has a relaxed country feeling and is very typical of the goldfields.



REFERENCE

2. from *Buda: A History*, by Deborah Keep. Unpublished manuscript. (Buda Archives)

(far right) Comparisons with early views show how the hedge has grown far beyond its original form.
Peter Cuffley



Evolution of the garden

When people who remembered *Buda* in earlier times were being interviewed in the 1980s, it was mentioned more than once that the garden had changed very little since the 1920s and 30s. A valuable collection of photographs records many parts of the garden well before that time. The areas between the western entrance gate and the tennis court appear in a number of views taken in the period 1890 to 1920. One of the most interesting shots looks across a series of garden beds edged in brick and tile to the formal 'front' of the house and the Urquhart Street entrance. It is interesting to note five palms and two cordylines are clearly evident, as are hollyhocks, the great clipped cypress hedge and two of the pines that dominate the scene today. This photograph which can be dated to circa 1910, tells us a lot about the elements and details that have remained much the same for at least a century. It also illustrates the changes such as the consolidation of a number of beds into larger borders, as well as the more open character of the scene before shrubs and smaller trees have grown to maturity.

Changing fashions are clearly evident through the visual record. For example, palms had more or less fallen from favour in the period after World War II. Except for the very tall specimen close to the garage they had gone by the time the house and garden was first opened to the public in 1982. Two Chinese Fan Palms (*Trachycarpus fortunei*) were reinstated in the positions of earlier ones when the 'front border' was restored and replanted in 1984.

Popular taste changes or goes in cycles and one of the priorities identified by the *Buda* Garden

Advisory Committee in April 1982 in regard to the front border, was the retention of plants 'of a suitable colour' — 'pale blues, pinks, whites etc...' 'Roses of intense colours — orange etc. — should be removed.'³ Brightly coloured plants such as gazanias were removed from the central bed of the formal garden to be replaced by bulbs and herbs. It might be said that here is yet another perception of what constitutes the 'tasteful' period garden. Cacti, agaves, aloes and other succulents have all been recorded in our long established gardens though in many cases they have been pushed aside by changing ideals.

The overall scheme at *Buda* has elements we might describe as softly romantic, but mostly it is a garden of hardy survivors with no strict requirements in colour or foliage. Could it be that the rich colours seen in many of the craft works in the house were related to an acceptance of a wide range of colours in the garden and might this also reflect the Leviny's Hungarian heritage?

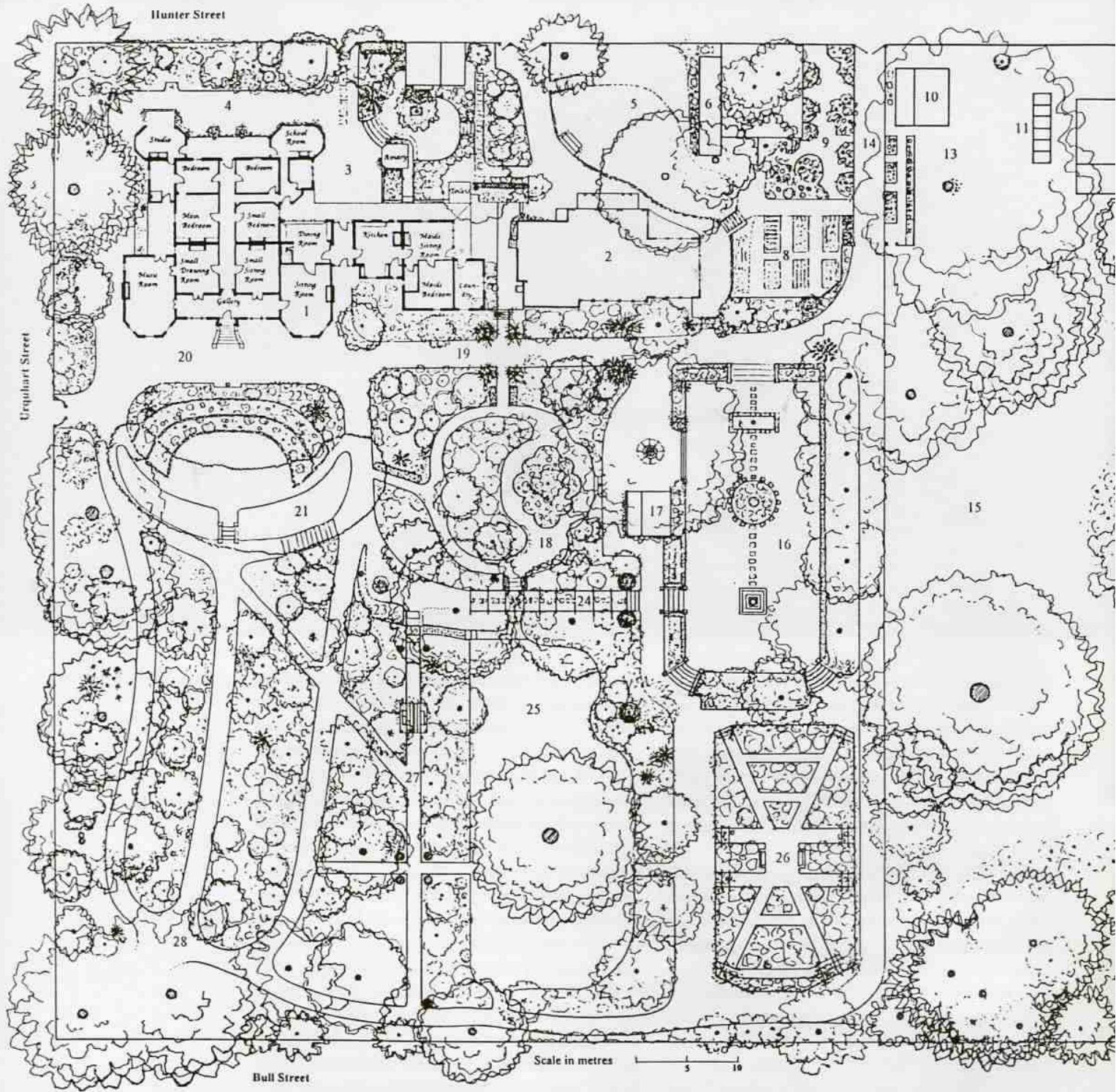


Keeping the hedge in order has long been one of the difficult tasks at *Buda*.
Buda Collection

REFERENCE

- 3 Minutes of the meeting of the *Buda* Garden Advisory Committee, Saturday 3rd April 1982.

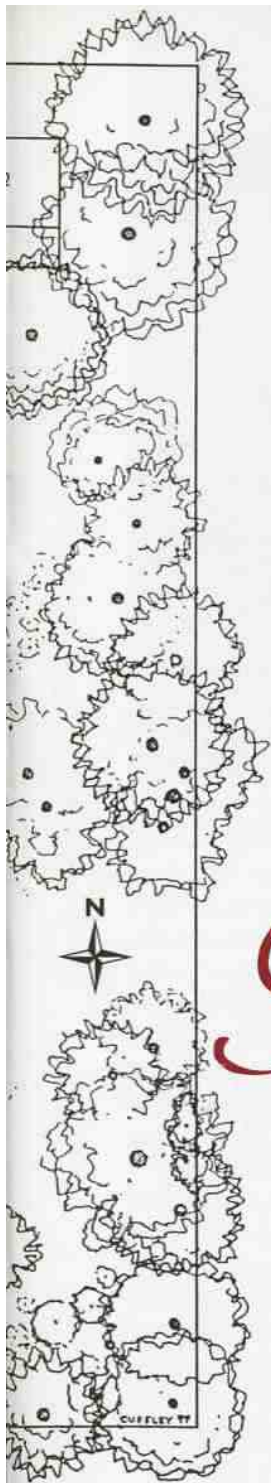
Pavilion and Pavilion Garden c. 1910. Though the palm has gone, the delicately shaped central bed has survived.
Buda Collection



(right) *Thapsia*... is an interesting border plant.
Peter Cuffley

(far right) *Rosa foetida* 'Persiana' is aptly named given its strange 'castor oil' smell. It is exceedingly hardy and is found in many old gardens in the Goldfields.
Peter Cuffley





THE GARDEN AT

Buda

NUMERICAL REFERENCE KEY

1. House
2. Garden Room
3. Courtyard
4. Studio Walk
5. Service Lawn
6. Hen Houses
7. Poultry Run
8. Vegetable Garden
9. Nursery
10. Gardener's Shed
11. Compost Bins
12. Propagating Shed
13. Materials Storage
14. Service Drive
15. Parkland
16. Formal Garden
17. Pavilion
18. Pavilion Garden
19. Main Axis
20. Forecourt
21. Great Cypress Hedge
22. Front Border
23. Lookout
24. Pergola
25. Main Lawn
26. Rose Garden
27. Miss Hilda's Walk
28. 'Circle Walk'



(above) Up to the mid 1980s these steps leading to the 'formal garden' were wooden edged and in a dangerous condition. These original ornamental pillars were copied for the steps in other parts of the formal area.
Helen Page

(left) Verbascums and Holly Hocks in the reconstructed 'Front Border' in the mid 1980s.
Peter Cuffley

(below) Prickly Pear (*Opuntia* spp.) at the Eastern End of the 'East-West Walk'.
Peter Cuffley



Buda Garden

ROSES, TREES & SHRUBS

Roses in the Buda Main Garden

Climbers

American Pillar (1902)
Climbing Crimson Glory
Dorothy Perkins (1902)
Hiawatha (1904)
Lorraine Lee Climbing (1924)
Rosa x fortuneana (1850)
Silver Moon (1910)
"West Chook Shed Rose"

Shrub Roses

Dainty Bess (1925)
Duchesse de Montebello (1829)
Lady Hillingdon (1910)
Ophelia (1912)
Peace (1945)
Perle d'Or (1884)
Rosa foetida "Persiana"
Rose Gajard
Sarah van Fleet (1926)

Perennials from the Buda Garden

Acanthus mollis (Bear's Britches)
Achillea 'Taygetea' (Yarrow)
Achillea millefolium (Yarrow)
Ajuga reptans 'Atropurpurea'
Alica rosea (Hollyhock)
Anemone x hybrida (Japanese Wind Flower)
Anthemis cupaniana
Anthemis tinctoria 'Golden Marguerite'
Aquilegia vulgaris (Columbine)
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi (Aurora Daisy)
Arenaria satensis
Arnica montana
Asarum canadense
Aster multiflorus 'Silver Spray'
Aster hybridus 'Buda's Good Blue Aster'
Azalea japonica
Bergenia crassifolia
Boltonia sp.
Calamintha sp.
Campanula poscharskyana
Campanula rapunculoides
Centranthus ruber (Valerian)
Centaurea plumbaginoides
Cheiranthus sempervirens (Perennial Wallflower)
Chrysanthemum hybrid
Chrysanthemum leucanthemum
Chrysanthemum parthenium
Chrysanthemum parthenium aureum (Exhibition Border)
Chrysanthemum maximum
Compositula mauritanica
Cynara cardunculus
Dianthus 'Mrs Sinkins' 1868
Dianthus sp. (Pink)
Erigeron glaucus
Erigeron karwinskianus (Seaside Daisy)
Euphorbia characias sp. *undulata*
Euphorbia dendroidea
Geranium sanguineum (Bloody Crane's Bill)
Helianthus orientalis hybrids (Winter Rose)
Hesperis matronalis (Dames' Violet)
Iberis sempervirens (Perennial Candytuft)
Lamium galeobdolon 'Variegatum'
Liatris muscari (Lily Turf)
Lychnis coronaria (Rose Campion)
Oenothera sp. (Evening Primrose)
Pennicillaria sempervirens
Petasites fragrans (Winter Heliotrope)
Primula sp. (Cowslip)
Sedum spectabile
Silene orientalis
Silene vulgaris (Granny's Bonnet)
Saxifraga hypnoides (Lamb's Ears)
Verbena bonariensis ("Purple Spire")
Verbena tenera
Veronica spicata
Vincetoxicum (Periwinkle)
Viola labradorica
Viola odorata cultivars
Viola flammula

Bulbs, Corms and Rhizomes

Agapanthus praecox 'Snow Drop'
Agapanthus praecox ssp. *orientalis*
Agapanthus praecox ssp. *orientalis* 'Albidus'
Agapanthus umbellatus
Allium schoenoprasium (chives)
Allium subhirsutum (Milkmaids)
Allium tuberosum (Garlic chives)
Alstroemeria aurea 'Lutea' (Peruvian Lily)
Amaryllis belladonna (Belladonna Lily)

Arum italicum 'Pictum' (Lords and Ladies)
Babiana stricta (Baboon Flower)
Crocus sp.
Dierama pulcherrimum (Fairy's Fishing Rods)
Dietes bicolor
Dietes indioide
Dracontium vulgare (Dragon Lily)
Freesia refracta var. *alba*
Gladiolus communis ssp. *byzantinus*
Hemerocallis fulva 'Kwanio'
Hemerocallis sp. (Day Lily)
Hyacinthoides hispanica (Spanish Bluebell)
Iris (Tall Bearded Iris cultivars)
Iris citrina
Iris ensata (formerly *I. kaempferi*)
Iris foetidissima
Iris scholastica
Iris pseudacorus
Iris sibirica (Siberian Iris)
Iris unguicularis (formerly *I. selysii*) (Winter or Algerian Iris)
Isis sp.
Kniphofia sp. (Yellow Autumn Poker)
Kniphofia sp. (Pokers)
Kniphofia uvaria (Red Hot Poker)
Leucophaea aetivum (Snow Flake)
Leucophaea autumnale
Lilium regale (Regal Lily)
Lilium tigrinum (Tiger Lily)
Minibilia jalapa (Four O'Clock Plant)
Muscari armeniacum (Grape Hyacinth)
Narcissus (Daffodil)
"Alister Clark" and "Eve Murray" Collectors
Narcissus (Jonquil)
"Paper White"
"Bolly's Pearl"
"Silver Chimes"
"Soleil d'Or"
"Straw"
Nerine flexuosa 'Alba'
Nerine sp.
Oxalis bowleri (Four O'Clocks)
Oxalis hirta
Oxalis rosea
Polygonatum x hybridum (Solomon's Seal)
Scilla bifolia (Common Squill)
Scilla peruviana (Peruvian Lily)
Sparganium tricolor (Harlequin Flower)
Tritonia sp.
Tulipa saxatilis (Rock Tulip)
Vallota speciosa (Scarborough Lily)
Watsonia hybrida
Zantedeschia candida (Storm Lily)

Trees and Shrubs in the Buda Garden

Abelia x grandiflora
Acacia decurrens
Acer palmatum
Acer platanoides
Acer pseudoplatanus 'Purpureum'
Agave americana
Anacardium occidentale
Arbutus unedo
Artemisia arborescens
Arundo donax 'Variegata'
Aucuba japonica 'Variegata'
Berberis ? boreana
Berberis thunbergii
Berberis thunbergii 'Atropurpurea'
Brachycton populneus
Buddleia davidii
Buddleia davidii 'Ice'
Buddleia x weyeriana
Buxus sempervirens clipped
Camellia japonica
Cedrus atlantica f. *glauca*
Cedrus deodara
Cercanthera cinnaria
Cercis siliquastrum
Casulpinia gillei
Calycotome spinosa
Carya illinoensis
Chaenactis speciosa
Chamaecyparis obtusa
Cistus sp.
Cistus monspeliensis
Cistus sp.
Citrus limon
Clematis cv.
Colonomena album
Conyline australis
Cornus capitata
Cortaderia selliana
Corylus avellana
Cotinus coggygria
Cotoneaster ? franchetii
Cotoneaster glaucophyllus f. *serotinus*
Cotoneaster horizontalis
Cotoneaster paniculatus
Cotula coccinoides
Cotula monogyna
Cotulae phaeosperma
Cotulae sp.
Cotulae tanacetifolia
Cotulae x lasallei
Cupressus funebris
Cupressus lusitanica
Cupressus macrocarpa (Hedge)
Cupressus macrocarpa 'Horizontalis Aurea'
Cupressus sempervirens
Cydonia oblonga
Cyperus alternifolius
Cytisus palmensis (Syn. *Chamaecytisus palmensis*)
Cytisus scoparius (Noxious Weed)
Daphne odora
Dryopteris habi
Eriobotrya japonica
Eucalyptus botryoides
Eucalyptus cladocalyx
Eucalyptus ficifolia
Eucalyptus europaea
Eucalyptus japonica
Felicia hyssopifolia
Ficus carica
Forsythia ? suspensa
Forsythia ? viridissima
Forsythia sp.
Fraxinus excelsior
Fraxinus excelsior
Fuchsia cv. (pink)
Fuchsia sp.
Garrya elliptica
Geijera parviflora
Genista monspeliensis (Noxious weed)
Hebe ? bulkeana
Hypericum sp.
Ilex aquifolium 'Aurea Marginata'
Jasminum mesnyi
Jasminum nudiflorum
Juglans regia
Juniperus oxycedrus
Kerria japonica (f. 'Pleniflora')
Koeleria paniculata
Kolkwitzia amabilis
Laburnum anagyroides
Lagerstroemia indica
Laurus nobilis
Laurus nobilis clipped
Lavandula angustifolia ssp. *angustifolia*

Lavandula dentata
Lavandula stoechas 'ssp.
Lavandula x allardii
Ligustrum japonicum
Ligustrum vulgare
Liquidambar styraciflua (sucker)
Lonicera fragrantissima
Lonicera japonica
Lonicera sp.
Lophomyrtus obcordata 'Variegata'
Magnolia x soulangeana
Malus panula cv.
Malus sp.
Malus x purpurea
Meibomia germanica
Miscanthus sinensis
Morus nigra
Muehlenbeckia complexa
Nandina domestica
Nerium oleander 'Madonna Grandiflorum'
Nerium oleander 'Mrs E. Rocking'
Nerium oleander 'Punctatum'
Nolana africana
Oleaster phlogopappus
Opuntia sp.
Osmanthus fragrans
Paeonia suffruticosa
Parthenocissus quinquefolia
Parthenocissus tricuspidata 'Veitchii'
Philadelphus ? x vireginatus
Phoradendron tenax 'Variegatum'
Phytolacca serrulata
Pinus canariensis
Pinus euzeylanoides
Prunus ? cerasifera
Prunus ? triloba
Prunus 'Elvini'
Prunus armeniaca
Prunus cerasifera
Prunus cerasifera 'Atropurpurea'
Prunus communis
Prunus cv. (? x hirsuta)
Prunus dulcis
Prunus glandulosa (? 'Roses') 'Sterns')
Prunus persica
Prunus serrulata
Prunus serrulata 'Kanzan'
Prunus sp.
Prunus sp. (cerasifera) clump
Prunus sp. (domestica)
Punica granatum 'Flora Plena'
Pyracantha angustifolia
Pyracantha sp.
Pyrus commutata
Pyrus commutata cv.
Pyrus pathia
Quercus ? bicolor
Quercus robur
Rhododendron cv.
Rhus succedanea
Ribes fusciculatum
Ribes sanguineum
Ribes uva-crispa
Robinia pseudoacacia
Ruscus aculeatus
Salvia greggii
Santalum chinensis
Schinus molle var. *areira*
Sorbus bicolor ssp. *cineraria*
Sorbus aucuparia
Spiraea canoniensis 'Lanceata'
Spiraea prunifolia
Spiraea thunbergii
Symphoricarpos albus
Symphoricarpos orbiculatus
Syringa ? persica
Syringa ? x byacinthiflora
Syringa vulgaris
Syringa vulgaris (white)
Tamarix parviflora
Tanacetum parnassiflorum
Tachycarpus fortunei
Ulmus procera
Viburnum opulus
Viburnum opulus 'Sterile'
Viburnum cinn
Vitis cv.
Vitis sp.
Vitis vinifera cv.
Vitis vinifera cv. (black grape)
Wegelia florida 'Variegata'
Wisteria sinensis

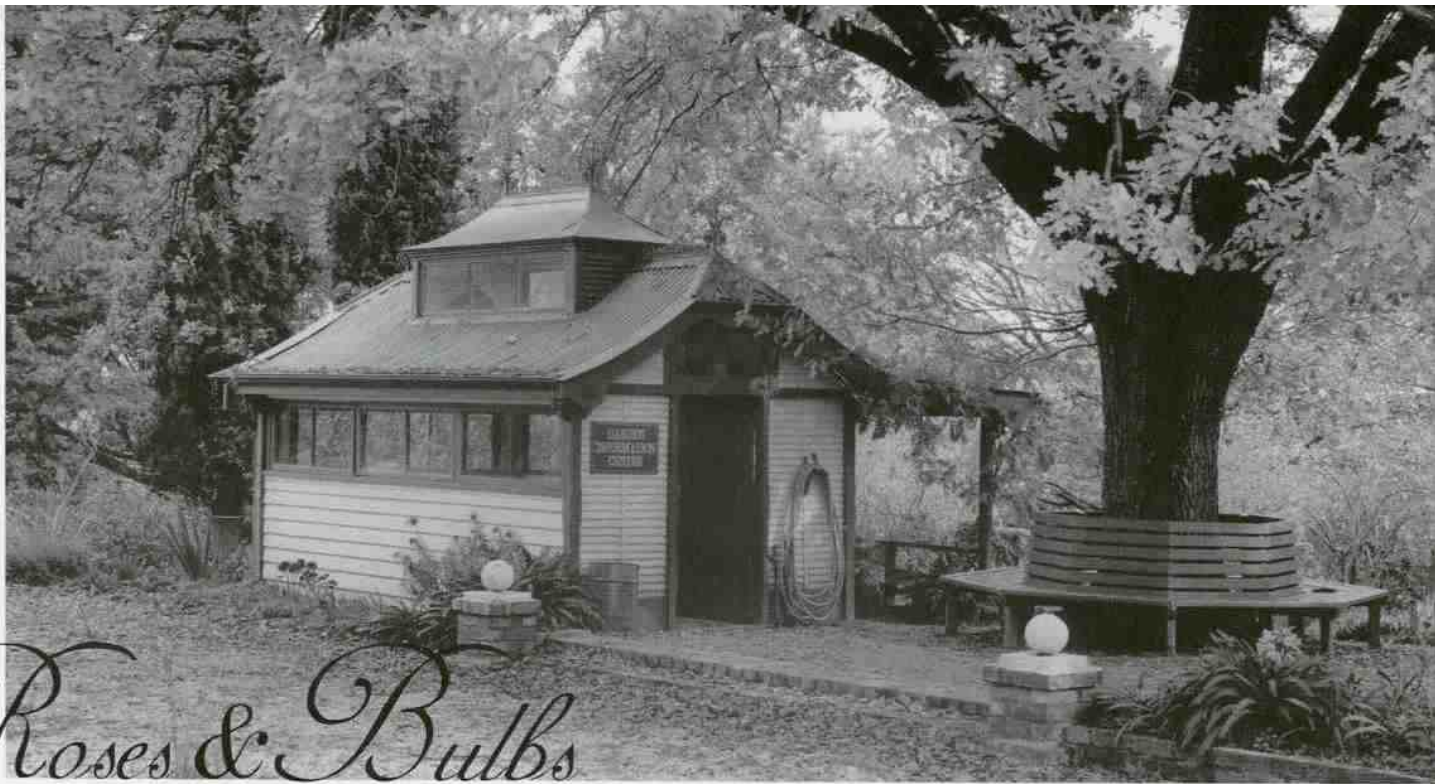
Buda

GARDEN

Buda is open 7 days a week
9am – 5pm
except Christmas Day and Good Friday.

**Friends of Buda
welcome new members.**

Enquiries:
Buda Historic Home & Garden,
42 Hunter Street,
Castlemaine 3450
phone/fax (03) 5472 1032



Roses & Bulbs

There were not that many older roses in the garden by 1982. A few notable examples were *Rosa x fortuneana* over the arch leading from the utility area to the main east-west walk, an old gallica on 'Miss Hilda's Walk', the Autumn Damask 'Quatre Saisons' and the 'Persian Yellow' or 'Castor Oil Rose' (*Rosa foetida* 'Persiana'). More modern roses along with recently imported iris cultivars are known to have been added to the garden in the 1960s and 70s.

Veteran gardener Fred Moss, a friend of the Levins, was a keen collector of plants and gave some of the irises he imported from America to them. It is presumed that species bulbs such as *Gladiolus communis* ssp. *byzantinus* have been in the garden a long time. With striking cerise blooms, these make a bright combination in mid-spring with flag irises, *Centranthus ruber*, *Geranium sanguineum* and the ubiquitous *ixias*. Late winter and early spring is a feast of white, cream yellow and gold as members of the narcissus family have their season of glory.

In the early 1990s, the late Eve Murray presented *Buda* with a collection of daffodils. Many were from her original stock from the Alister Clark collection and others were her own hybrids and are planted in some previously 'empty' ground at the lower end of 'Miss Hilda's Walk'.

The formal rose garden was established in 1985, offering a new area of interest in a part of the grounds which was a block purchased in 1890 by Ernest Leviny and not fully developed. Central Victoria has a notable heritage of old roses and it was felt that this could be represented by a new garden where people could sponsor plants carefully chosen to create a representative display.



Debate

Some debate has arisen since its inception between the view that such additions are an added attraction for visitors, or that they compromise the integrity of an historic property. The 1988 Conservation Analysis by Nigel Lewis and Associates included the formal rose garden in its list of attractions created since 1981 which should be removed as they have 'a particularly adverse impact on the interpretation of the property.'⁴ An even greater step away from the ideal of conserving *Buda* in its pre 1981 state is seen in the 'garden room' or function area. It helps *Buda* survive financially, yet represents a dramatic change in what was once a service area including drying yard and dog run. The old gardener's shed has been relocated to the new plant nursery on the eastern side of the fowl run. Vegetable beds are maintained to preserve some of the character of earlier times and poultry continue to play their part.

(above) In 1985 the pavilion became the garden information centre with a permanent display illustrating the history and restoration of the garden.
Buda Collection

(left) *Muscari armeniacum* those shy friends the Grape Hyacinths.
Peter Cuffley

REFERENCE

- 4 Nigel Lewis and Associates for the Historic Buildings Council, *Buda Conservation Analysis and Policies*, South Yarra, Victoria, August 1988, page 42.

Structures

(right) Box hedges at the entrance to the Pavilion Garden.
Peter Cuffley

(below right) *Rosa x fortuneana* frames the entrance to the 'East-West Walk'.
Peter Cuffley

'Miss Hilda's Walk' leads down to the southern end of garden.
Peter Cuffley

Two of *Buda's* garden structures are considered highly significant; these are the aviary in the courtyard and the pavilion adjoining the formal garden. The aviary was moved across the courtyard many years ago and given a new rendered brick base. It has a happy group of tenants and with its finely detailed design seen against a background of flowers, it provides an important focal point as visitors enter from Hunter Street. The garden pavilion is thought to have been moved a short distance when it was modified to become the tennis pavilion. This occurred about 1899 when the court was constructed. With usage of the tennis court declining after World War I, it was decided that it should become a very simple 'formal garden'.



crossing the main east-west walk, enter the pavilion/ pleasure garden, is a delightful progression. Moving across to the contrasting formal garden then offers a number of openings to other areas. On the south-east corner there are steps which offer a formal rose garden to the right and in front a completely informal 'park' of grass, large shrubs and a variety of trees including wattles, eucalypts and some fine conifers. Alternatively one can move from the pavilion garden to the pergola walk giving three possible directions. To the south is an area of lawn dominated by a large cypress. This area is bordered by garden beds both straight and curved, each containing an interesting array of plants from edging daisies to tree peonies.



(far page top) Looking towards the Pavilion in the mid 1980s. A pair of Pencil Cypresses (*Cupresses sempervirens* 'Stricta') are an important visual element.
Peter Cuffley

(far page middle) This pergola was reconstructed as part of the Commonwealth employment project in the mid 1980s.
Peter Cuffley

From surviving magazines in the *Buda* collection, it can be suggested that the fashionable formal gardens seen in *English Country Life* were a possible influence. Such schemes were favoured in Australia in the early decades of the twentieth century, reflecting the work of English gardeners such as Gertrude Jekyll.

Having developed in stages as land was acquired, the garden has a compartmentalised character. Though not generally screened so completely as to warrant the term 'garden rooms', these distinctive areas nevertheless add greatly to the enjoyment of moving through the whole of the grounds. For example, to walk from the kitchen courtyard, through a rose arch then

Challenges

Included in the work of the first Garden Advisory Panel in 1982 was a recommendation that a tree surgeon be employed to tackle some of the problems that had developed by that time. In 1983 the watering system was improved through the efforts of local service clubs. This overcame some of the difficulties faced in an extensive garden with limited and somewhat deteriorated plumbing. A new water main into the property and an extensive semi-automatic watering system were installed in 1988 using funds provided by Victoria's Open Garden Scheme.

It is important to note however that the *Buda* garden illustrates the typical conditions of the Central Victorian Goldfields. Generally poor soils and long spells of low rainfall have shaped the regional gardening traditions. This fundamental truth is essential to the story of this place. Heavy watering, overemphasis on soil building or any other moves to attain that lush effect seen in cooler districts is carefully avoided. The clear, hot summers bring a shimmering reflection off gravel paths, patterned here and there with dappled shade. Autumn, winter and spring can all be a patchwork of cracking frosts and more temperate weather. Rich autumn colours are one of the highlights of *Buda's* garden.

Part of the 'intactness of constituent elements' given as an important point in the 1988 conservation study, is the marvellous collection of plants introduced into the garden between 1861 and 1981. *Buda* nursery offers visitors the chance to purchase plants grown from the stock in the garden. At first, the nursery was a means to ensure that there were replacements should these be needed. Impressed with the obvious hardiness, 'old fashioned' character or rarity of many of the plants, people were increasingly attracted to the possibility of having them in their own gardens. Garden and nursery manager, Dianne Thomson has developed and extended the nursery so that it has become an important resource for other home gardens, for restoration projects, for new garden designs and even as an interpretive display.



a Significant day

The day of Hilda Leviny's funeral, the 14th of October 1981, was a pivotal moment in the history of *Buda*. It was the end of one era and the beginning of another. The garden bid her a glorious farewell. After a very wet winter, plants were growing at an extraordinary rate. Branches loaded with blooms reached out to touch the coffin as the procession wended its way along the familiar gravel paths. Mozart on the flute wafted through the trees and the two pet dogs were in the care of the Newell sisters. Those in attendance, who had a long association with *Buda*, expressed a view that it was as if the garden had put forth its very best face to say goodbye. Careful evaluation soon found that its underlying condition was less than ideal and in places in serious decline.



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Renewal



The front gate as it was on Thursday 15th October 1981, the day after Hilda Leviny's funeral.
Peter Cuffley

Since that time there have been a series of significant stages in the conservation, renewal and extension of the garden. The first major restoration was funded as a Commonwealth Employment Project in 1984, with Clive Winmill managing the scheme assisted by his wife Margaret. The Winmills, well known for their Badgers Keep Nursery, had been appointed to the Garden Advisory Panel in 1982. Clive's role eventually expanded from Garden Director to overall director in March 1986. *Buda* Historic Home and Garden was incorporated on the 14th of October 1986 and in November, Clive Winmill resigned.

John Gowty, who had worked on both the first and second Commonwealth Employment Projects, became Head Gardener and from February 1989 until his untimely death in 1998, was the Curator/Manager of *Buda*. In March 1990, the *Buda* Garden Management Committee headed by Emeritus Professor J.S. Turner produced a Draft Management Plan to follow on from the Conservation Analysis and Policies of August 1988. A second draft of this document was released in May 1993. Its central concept was to enable management of the garden 'to proceed in an orderly way.....' '.....despite a lack of continuity in staff and resources.'⁵ It was also hoped that it would help reconcile competing interests, aid in the allocating of resources and provide a basis for future plans. Fundamental questions that face those concerned with the management and long-term conservation of the *Buda* garden include the

maintenance of paths, edgings, drainage, fencing and gates, garden structures, irrigation systems, garden furniture and of the garden beds and grounds in general. Weed control, mulching, plant renewal, hedge and shrub trimming along with tree surgery are ever-present concerns.

Overworked staff and enthusiastic volunteers have made an immeasurable contribution to the survival in good condition of this remarkable garden. *Buda* relies firstly on the visiting public, on occasional grants and bequests, and on the continuing generosity of all who give of their time and effort. It remains the property of the Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum leased and managed by *Buda* Historic Home and Garden Incorporated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Material in the archives of *Buda* Historic Home and Garden has been an essential resource in the creation of this booklet. *Buda* was included in the 1983 publication *Historic Gardens of Victoria* by Peter Watts. There have also been magazine and newspaper articles. Deborah Keep and Jenny Carew both produced manuscripts which have yielded valuable information. The 1988 report by Nigel Lewis and Associates is an important reference as are the writings of Clive Winmill. Dianne Thompson, Garden and Nursery Manager at *Buda*, has shared her love and knowledge of the *Buda* garden.

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REFERENCE

- 5 *Buda Historic Home and Garden, Draft Management Plan, Draft 2, May 1993*

(far right) A Bunya Bunya Pine (*Araucaria bidwillii*) dominates this view of the house from Hunter Street.
Peter Cuffley

