

BACKYARD BLITZ

Golden Girl



Betty Cuthbert, or the Golden Girl as she came to be known, is an Australian icon. The first Australian to win 3 Gold medals at a single Olympic Games, Betty set 16 world records in 7 years and remains Australia's greatest ever track and field athlete.

Betty is best known for her miraculous win at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics where she won the 400m, running with a dislocated bone in her foot. Betty's greatest challenge has been her battle with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). She has become the face of the disease and has used her profile and network to raise funds for research and education.



Summer Garden



Winter Garden

Design intent

Landscape designers from Patio have created an innovative shelving system for Betty to display and work on her many plants. The limited space in adjoining courtyards inspired Patio to create a vertical garden for ease of maintenance and to introduce colour and privacy. Sleeper shelves, new access gates and a fresh path into the nearby park will make this whole garden more accessible and enjoyable. **Design tip:** In limited spaces consider the vertical approach to gardening by creating layers of planting. The plant selection in this garden adds interest through clever combinations of contrasting foliage, texture and colour.

Adapting this plan to your garden

Make a detailed scale drawing of your backyard (eg 1:100) showing the location of the house and major features, then incorporate the desired elements from our makeover. As your garden will be a different size, you will need to estimate the required amounts of materials.

Note: On your plan show the locations of any services (water pipes, sewerage, power, phone, etc) so you can avoid damaging them during the makeover.

Permits and approvals: We gained access through an adjacent public park to undertake this makeover. Council permission and an access fee were required - it was worth the cost because it helped the job to run smoothly and reduced the amount of materials handling.

Getting started

Betty's collection of potted plants was removed and placed in the shade for the duration of the project. Shadecloth was removed from the existing pergola and garden beds were cleared of mulch.

Garden elements

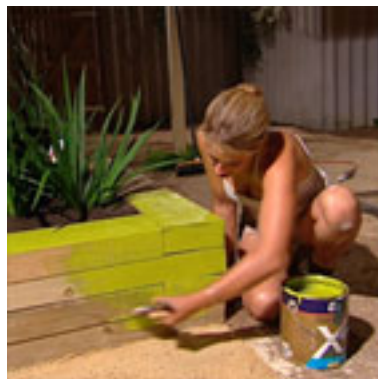
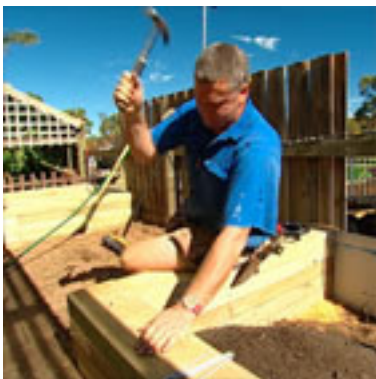


Pathway: Nigel removed some roughly laid bricks and excavated to create subgrade levels for a new pathway into the adjacent park. Compacted roadbase provides a solid base to limestone blocks laid as edging in a sand and cement footing. Crushed limestone mixed with off-white cement in a concrete mixer was spread and compacted to a depth of 100mm. A final layer screeded level with the limestone blocks provides a smooth new path to enable wheelchair access into Betty's favourite park. **Blitz Tipz:** Council approval was required for the construction of this path in a public space.



Gates: Pre-made timber gates constructed with treated pine decking timbers were made to 1000mm wide. Scott created openings in existing fences and installed new treated pine posts (H4, 90x90mm) inground in quick setting concrete to carry the gate. Galvanised hinges support the gate while a galvanised latch enables the gate to be closed and locked. **Blitz Tipz:** Consider which way you swing your gate before fitting it. Obstructions or narrow side passages will influence the best way to swing the gate.

Sleeper beds: Scott created some raised planter beds using treated pine sleepers (2400x200x75mm) stacked horizontally and nailed together with galvanised nails (150mm). A sheet of compressed fibre cement at the rear of the garden bed retains the soil against the existing fence and will prevent it from rotting. Jody filled the new planter boxes with potting mix and painted the outside of the sleepers with 'Green Spirit' from Dulux.



Sleeper shelves: Jamie constructed a set of timber shelves to accommodate both hanging baskets and potted specimens of feature plants. Treated pine sleepers (2400x200x75mm) installed vertically in the ground in rapid setting concrete support a top beam nailed in place, and an arrangement of horizontal shelves at different heights. All shelves were bolted in place with cup head galvanised bolts or coach screws as required. **Blitz Tipz:** Consider the potential for timber to "sag" over long distances. A beam is usually strongest when the deepest face is perpendicular to the surface of the ground.



Hanging baskets: Jody attached an arrangement of hanging baskets to the exterior walls of the house to break up the expanses of blonde brick. Using a hammer drill with a masonry bit, she drilled holes into the brickwork to accommodate small wall plugs and galvanised hooks. Wire baskets were lined with coco peat, potting mix and planted out with shade loving perennials. **Blitz Tipz:** For maximum strength try to position your dynabolt in the centre of the brick.

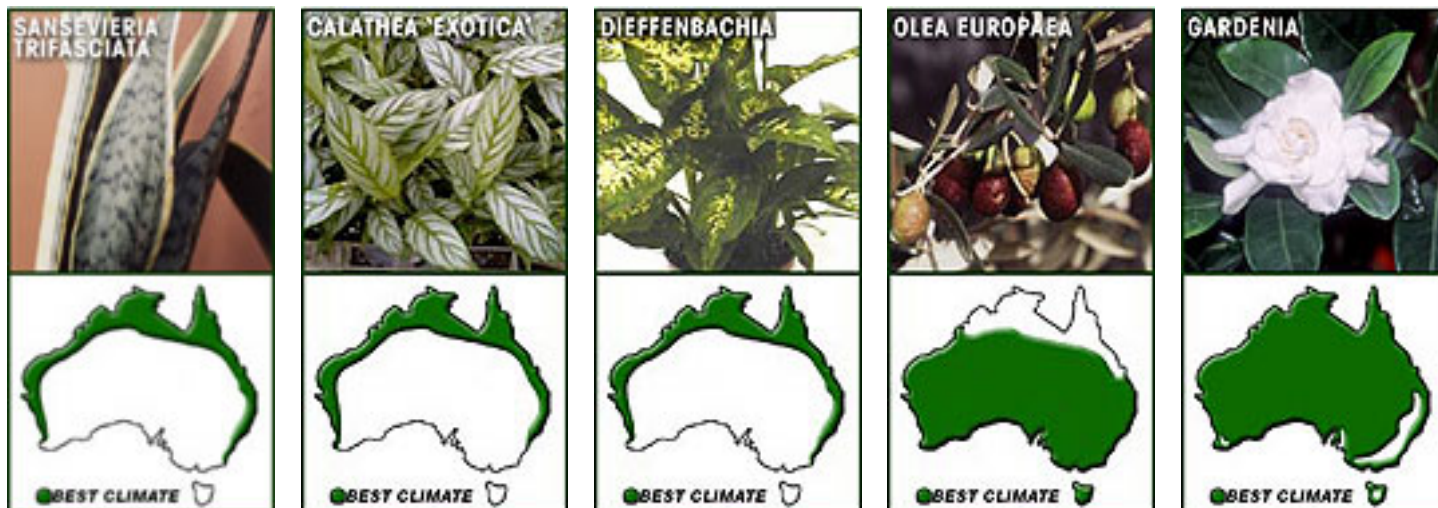
Plants

A broad palette of foliage plants combined with sun-loving, fragrant shrubs will provide interest year round in two very different gardens.

Trees and shrubs: calamondin (*X Citrofortunella microcarpa*), gardenia (*Gardenia augusta* 'Florida' & 'Forever More'), olive (*Olea europaea* 'Mission'), rosemary (*Rosmarinus* 'Tuscan Blue'), sacred bamboo (*Nandina domestica*), salvia (*Salvia* 'Pink Blush')

Perennials, foliage plants and others: African daisy (*Osteospermum fruticosum* 'Purpurea'), anthurium (*Anthurium* 'Red Hot'), Burke's Backyard Thai chilli (*Capsicum annuum*), calathea (*Calathea* 'Exotica'), ctenanthe (*Ctenanthe* 'Grey Star'), dieffenbachia (*Dieffenbachia* 'Excellence'), kangaroo paw (*Anigozanthos* 'Big Red'), philodendron (*Philodendron* 'Congo' & 'Xanadu'), spathiphyllum (*Spathiphyllum* 'Starlight' & 'Viscount Primer'), syngonium (*Syngonium* 'Cherry Illusion', 'Gold Illusion', 'White Butterfly' & *S. aurea* 'White Holly')

Succulents: mother-in-law's tongue (*Sansevieria trifasciata* 'Golden Hahnii' & 'Laurentii')



Cost and availability

We used mature plants in our makeover to create an instant effect for television. As a result, our total cost for plants and materials was \$9712. The use of smaller plants would have reduced the cost to \$8282.

Product details

- Treated pine sleepers are commonly available Australia-wide from about \$25 for a 2400x200x75mm sleeper.
- Galvanised potting benches were supplied by Sage Horticultural in Melbourne. Phone (03) 9553 3777 for more details.
- Dulux Solagard exterior paints were used on the planters and new fences.
- The Pottery Pavilion in Perth supplied pots and the water bowl. Phone (08) 9306 5005.
- Most of the plants we used are readily available at, or can be ordered from, nurseries. Nurseries can also advise on similar varieties suited to your area. You may need to contact specialist nurseries for some plants. Your local nursery should be able to provide you with contacts.
- Most other materials are available from large hardware stores or building or landscape suppliers.
- All tools used are commonly available for hire, including the concrete mixer and the nail gun.

Getaway details



Accommodation:

Heritage Trail Lodge
31 Bussell Hwy
Margaret River
Phone: (08) 9757 9595
Web: www.heritage-trail-lodge.com.au

Voyager Estate Restaurant
Lot 1, Stevens Rd
Margaret River
Phone: (08) 9757 6354
Web: www.voyagerestate.com.au

Margaret River Confluence
Personal Tours for the Discerning
Phone: 0427 548212
Web: www.confluence.com.au



Acknowledgments

Patio Landscape Architects
35 Albany Street
Crows Nest NSW 2065
Phone: (02) 9026 7400
Fax: (02) 9026 7410

1st Floor, 196 Church Street
Richmond, Vic 3121
Phone: (03) 9428 4800
Fax: (03) 9428 4846



Construction by the Backyard Blitz team (all gardens are gifts from Backyard Blitz).

For more Step by Step Constructions click here

