

# *Benalla Festival 2026* **OPEN GARDENS**

**'MONT ALTO' 30 THOMAS ST**

**NEIL AND LOIS SMITH**

Neil and Lois have been in their Thomas Street home 'Mont Alto' for 23 years and in that time their garden has undergone many changes. From what was once an uninspiring space, the garden is now a delightful mix of formal and informal sections with a number of mature trees that anchor the space. In particular an 80-year-old Chinese Elm and two sculpted palm trees are impressive features.

Mass planting of Quercifolia Hydrangeas and informal beds of hellebores, clivias, agapanthus and perennials around the boundaries contrast with formal roses and box hedges on the north side of the garden.

Ornamental elements include an antique garden mirror and chaise lounge which complement the colours and shapes of the garden beds. The garden has changed significantly since 2018 when it was last opened and will provide returning visitors with a new experience.



## **'FLORENCE COURT'** **758 SAMARIA RD**

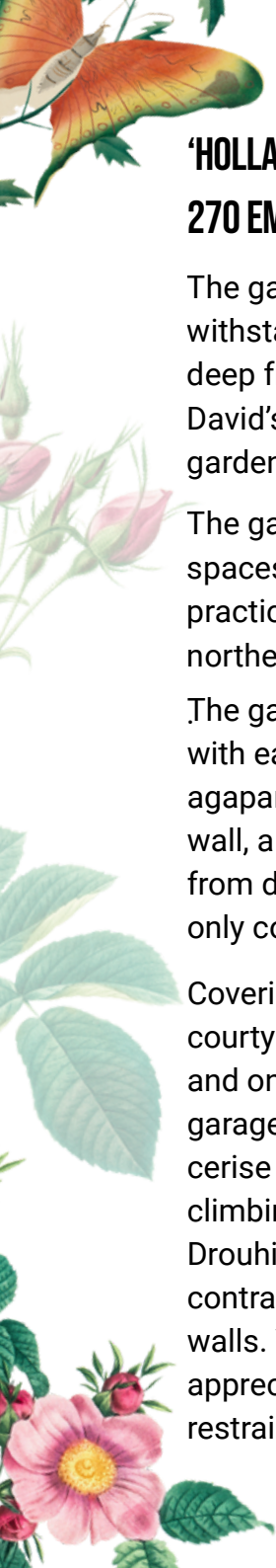
**SARAH AND RICHARD DECRESPIGNEY**

When Sarah and Richard arrived at Florence Court in 1989 the garden had a wonderful outline created by many mature deciduous trees but the rest was rather disorganised. Since then, they have spent many years establishing lawns, creating a classic English border garden, planting extensive daffodil areas and tending to the trees. They have also built an impressive ha-ha wall which allows wonderful views of the Broken River from the back lawn.

The garden includes a grass tennis court, a croquet lawn, a swimming pool and a highly productive vegetable garden filled with many raised beds.

Visitors to the garden will also enjoy a vast range of different plantings at their best in the spring.





## **'HOLLAND PARK'      GEORGINA BURSTON AND DAVID ELFORD**

### **270 EMU BRIDGE ROAD**

The garden of 'Holland Park' has been designed to withstand the extremes of hot dry spells, heavy rains and deep frosts. Its survival is a testament to Georgina and David's tenacity and their vision to create a balanced garden that sits comfortably within the landscape.

The garden incorporates linear areas and balanced spaces to maximise outdoor aspects and provide practical living areas that make allowance for hot days, northerly winds and the setting sun.

The garden is home to a mix of native and non-native plants with each playing a different role. The brilliant blue agapanthus were planted instead of constructing a low stone wall, a recently replanted grevillea hedge protects the house from dust and brings in the birdlife and the kikuyu lawn is not only cool in summer, it provides a wonderful firebreak.

Covering the pergola in the courtyard is a white wisteria and on the wall of the garage the single flush of cerise pink flowers of the climbing rose (Zephirin Drouhin) is spectacular in contrast to the sandstone walls. Visitors will also appreciate the structure and restraint of the garden.



The page is decorated with various floral and butterfly illustrations. In the top left, there is a large orange and black butterfly. In the top right, there are green leaves. On the left side, there are pink roses. On the right side, there are pink and white flowers. The background is white with faint floral patterns.

# THANK YOU

These beautiful gardens have been opened to raise funds for Tomorrow Today, Benalla's independent community foundation. Thank you to the generous garden owners who have opened their gates this spring to support the foundation's work: Dee and John Griffin, Lois and Neil Smith, Richard and Sarah DeCrespigny and, George Burston and David Elford. Thanks also to Kathy Ellis-Ragg who assisted with the organisation of the event.

Thank you to the many local businesses and individuals who have donated goods and services for the raffle: Andrea Alexander, Aqua Door, Benalla Aquatic Centre, Benalla Cinema, Benalla Information Centre, Bill Bo Pop, Caz Turnbull, Carlisle Art, Cinderella Dry Cleaning, Coffee Merchant, Donohue Quality Meats, Free Spirited with Sonia, Hairdressing Lane, Millner-Watson Pharmacy, Mitre 10, Mulberry Lane Styling, Peter Davis Rural, Piccadilly Lane Antiques and Collectibles, Polished Agencies and Galleria, Benalla Post Office, Rambling Rose, Sharps Outdoor Equipment, Sportspower Benalla, Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program, Stolz Furniture and Homewares, Terry White Pharmacy.

## About Tomorrow Today

Tomorrow Today was founded in 2002 and is now leading a 20-plus year initiative to improve the educational and life outcomes of Benalla's children, young people and families. Through more than 20 education support programs, 120 partnerships, and generous annual grant-giving, the foundation helps the whole community to thrive. Thank you for your support.



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about the foundation:

