

BACKYARD BLITZ

True Blue Hero



Blitz builds a garden for a good Samaritan who paid a very high price for his act of kindness.

With the help of our friend 2GB giant Ray Hadley, Blitz surprises a local hero live on air, and builds him a stunning garden.

David McArdle, a truck courier, became front page news and an instant hero earlier this year when he was horribly injured while assisting a woman who had a car accident on the M4. As he was trying to put the hazard lights on in her car, David's legs were pinned in the door when her car was hit by another vehicle. Both his legs have been amputated below the knee. David has an incredible attitude and is determined to walk down the aisle in November when he marries his fiancé Jenni.

Design

Our design will give David protection from the hot summer sun and an area to relax with friends surrounded by beautiful plants. The team builds a big shade structure, a new deck, an outdoor entertaining area and games room, and plant a stunning native garden.



Adapting these plans 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 amounts of materials you will require.

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 approval: check with your local council regarding regulations about earthworks and drainage. If you are changing existing levels or installing drainage ensure no water run-off is directed toward neighbouring properties. Any water entering the storm water system must be free from debris and sediment.

Getting started

We cleared the site before we could set out our garden. The excavation had to be precise and accurate.

We had an auger dig a hole in the soil so that we could see the soil profile. Jody could see the soil was very heavy clay which means it is made up of tiny particles, giving it a very fine texture. This has advantages and disadvantages. On the plus side, clay soils are rich in nutrients and they hold water well. However, they are also prone to compaction, waterlogging, and can be sticky when wet and tough when dry. These problems are made worse if a clay soil is cultivated when wet.

To improve the soil we included a very coarse sand (pea sand) to break up the clay to improve drainage and aeration, and added gypsum (claybreaker) before rotary hoeing into the existing soil and adding organic matter.

It is important only to cultivate clay soils when they are 'damp-dry', not when they are wet.

Garden elements

Deck: Scottie set out his posts for the deck and concreted posts in place.

Scottie used very big bearers to span a large distance (for sizes of bearers refer to span tables which are available at hardware and timber suppliers). Main bearers must be bolted in with galvanised bolts. Scottie then fixed standard joists (240mmx45mm) in the normal manner. Scottie then laid 90x19mm floorboards. So then Scottie could stand on the floorboards to continue the roof of the deck.

To add style to the facade of the deck, decorative planters were designed to be set into this facade. Scottie lined these decorative planter boxes with blue board and painted them a deep maroon red. We added low voltage lights and placed Agaves in the planters.

Scottie then screened off the exposed deck structure with decking boards. Because the decking boards had to span a wide distance, Scottie put in studwork of 4 x 2 at 600 centres to hold the boards neatly and to stop them from warping.

Scottie used pink primed H3 LSOP finger jointed pine (as our roof beams) chosen for two reasons: adding strength and providing a much better surface for painting.

Blitz Tipz: If you are putting up heavy beams, nail up a temporary block on each post to sit the beam on while you clamp and bolt the beam in place.

The Solarspan was installed on top of the roof beams (Solarspan can span 5-6 metres without any other support).



Outdoor entertaining room: We constructed a retaining wall from treated pine sleepers and then prepared the concrete slab for our outdoor entertaining area. We used sand to give the level for the concrete slab, followed by a plastic damp barrier and then the reinforcing mesh was laid on chairs. It was formed up with cut down form ply ready for concrete pour. We added black oxide to the concrete to give a charcoal look.

Once the concrete slab was laid Nigel screeded to level it and make it smooth before edging with a special tool to push the stone in and round off the edges so they won't chip. Then he used a bull float to get a skin and let it harden before finishing. There are many different finishes: you can use a steel float or electrical trowel, a wood float to give a good texture, or a broom finish or co finish similar to a wood finish.

The slab was then ready for Bondor to install the Solarspan walls and roof to make the outdoor room/studio. Solarspan was chosen for its insulation and spanning properties.

Paving: We extended a circular paved area out from the concrete slab of the outdoor room/studio. To do this we needed to use a lot of roadbase to build up the level, and Nigel compacted this in layers, i.e. every 150mm until it was rock solid. If you don't compact in layers, the roadbase will eventually settle and the pavers will sink.

Once satisfied that we had a compact sub base, a good quality river or paving sand was laid and screeded taking care to have a slight fall away from the centre to allow water to escape. It was then ready for the granite pavers with a border of cobblestones.

Because it was circular paving, Nigel used a diamond blade on the angle grinder to cut the curve. It was really important to have left the centre marker that was used for the original set out of the circle, so that we could mark the curve with a tape.

Around our paved area we built two curved Hebel walls for seating and bagged with 4:1 sand cement and painted.



Herb garden: Jamie constructed a circular herb and vegetable garden and because it was on a slope, it had to be built up on one side. Jamie used ACQ pine sleepers and we cut these into large brick sizes to more easily create curves. A path was built through the circular garden to provide easy access to the herbs and vegetables.



ACQ Treated Timber: Ammonium copper quaternary (ACQ) is an arsenic and chromium free preservative treatment and is one of the main types of timber preservative treatments protecting against fungal and insect attack. It is used for outdoor applications where below ground borer and rot resistant timber is required. Like other preservative treatments, it is essential to treat cut surfaces.

We laid turf and edged the garden beds with LinkEdge.

Jamie installed a water feature with a self-reticulating low voltage system.



Plants

lilly pilly (*Syzygium 'Cascade'*), bottlebrush (*Callistemon 'Captain Cook'*), (*Callistemon 'King's Park Special'*), (*Callistemon 'Endeavour'*), gymea lily (*Doryanthes excelsa*), Mt Tamboritha grevillea (*Grevillea lanigera* Mt Tamboritha form), leucadendron (*Leucadendron 'Red Devil'*, 'Purple Haze'), bird of paradise (*Strelitzia reginae*), coast rosemary (*Westringia fruticosa*), kangaroo paw (*Anigozanthos 'Bush Pearl'*), lomandra (*Lomandra 'Tanika'*), blue tussock grass (*Poa 'Eskdale'*), dwarf licorice plant (*Helichrysum petiolare* dwarf), common ice plant (*Mesembryanthemum crystallinum*), agave (*Agave attenuata*)



Cost

We used mature plants in this makeover to create an instant effect for television. As a result, our total cost for plants and materials was \$28,941.

The use of smaller plants would have reduced the cost to \$24,932.

Product details

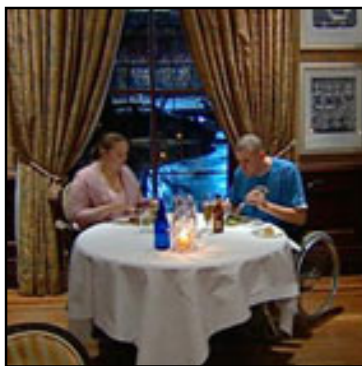
- Most of the plants we used are readily available at, or can be ordered from, nurseries. Nurseries can also advise on similar varieties suited to your area. You may need to contact specialist nurseries for some plants. Your local nursery should be able to provide you with contacts.
- Most other materials are available from large hardware stores or building or landscape suppliers.
- All tools used are commonly available for hire, including the mini loader and the nail gun.
- Beefeater 4B S3000s Stainless steel barbecue (LP version) with roasting hood and gas cylinder supplied by Woodland Home Products, 3-5 Birmingham Avenue, Chester Hill, NSW. Phone: (02) 9724 3322 or visit www.woodlandhp.com
- Granite pavers and black cobblestones from Amber tiles
- Foosball Soccer Table from Foosball Australia, contact www.foosballaustralia.com.au
- Turf from Grech's Turf Supplies 13 Cornwallis Road Windsor NSW 2756 Phone: (02) 4577 3907 or 1800 806 304 Fax: (02) 4577 2089 Website: www.grechsturf.com.au
- LINKedge garden and paving edging. For stockists phone (08) 8347 4447 or visit www.linkplus.com.au
- Bondor supplied Solarspan insulated panels. For information on these panels and other insulated panel systems, visit web: www.solarspan.com.au
- Hands-on Home Landscaping from The Paving Guy by Nigel Ruck. Published by Jamie Durie Publishing, RRP is \$35.00, available through all good book and department stores

Product Details

- 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 mini loader, airless spray gun, concrete saw and the compression nail gun.

Holiday details

Observatory Hotel
Observatory Day Spa
89-113 Kent Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Phone: (02) 9256 2222
Web: www.observatoryhotel.com.au



Skywalk Sydney Tower
Centrepoin podium Level
100 Market Street, Sydney
2000
Bookings & General
Enquiries, phone: (02)
9333 9222
Ticket Online: www.skywalk.com.au



Observatory Day Spa
89-113 Kent Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Phone: (02) 9256 2222
Web: www.observatoryhotel.com.au



Telstra Stadium - Behind
the Scene Tour
For more information &
bookings:
Phone: (02) 8765 2300
Web: www.telstrastadium.com.au



The Supercar Experience
with Mal Rose
Oran Park Raceway
Cobbitty Road,
Narellan NSW 2567
Mobile: 0428 449 414
Email:
mal@thesupercarexperience.com.au
Web: www.thesupercarexperience.com.au



Acknowledgements

We would like to thank
Holden, Bondor, (Beefeater
barbecue) Woodlands Home
Products and Grech turf for

their kind donation to David
McArdle.

Our design by:

Art in Green
97 Buffalo Road
Ryde, NSW 2122
Phone: (02) 9807 2677
Web: www.artingreen.com.au

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

© CTC Productions 15 2006

For more Step by Step Constructions click [here](#)

