

BACKYARD BLITZ

Street Blitz

A new Blitz for 2006. We've seen the Blitz team do houses all over Australia, but can they tackle an entire street? Stand by as Backyard Blitz takes on a neighbourhood!



Our inaugural street blitz takes us to the historic town of Echuca, situated on the banks of the Murray River. Roberts Court is a unique Echuca neighbourhood, created with the help of the Victorian government scheme Group Self Build (information below). Participants forgo a cash deposit in exchange for their physical labour and over a year, these people build their homes and those of their neighbours.

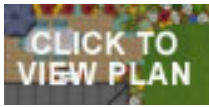
Jude Russell was one such person, who built her own home in 2004. As a single mum, Jude put in double hours than those of the other households, working every weekend and some evenings to complete the 12 homes. Studying and working part time, her dream has been to create a better future for herself and her son.

This is a street where community is king. Not only will we make over one of the street's more deserving residents, but we will bring the whole street together once again to help them put the finishing touches to their Aussie dreams.



Design intent

To provide a comfortable setting for entertaining and for children to play, working with colours of the bush. Feature screens to hide the utility area and to divide the carport from the entertaining area and giving privacy and security from the street.



Adapting this plan to your garden

Make a detailed scale drawing of your backyard (e.g. 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: Check with your local council regarding regulations about tree pruning or removal in the backyard before you start work. Always talk to your neighbours and the council before commencing your project as it could save you thousands of dollars and will help to make the project run smoothly.

Getting started

The site was cleared and a Colorbond fence panel removed to provide access to the backyard.

Garden elements:

Paving: An area alongside the house and adjacent to the carport was excavated and 100mm roadbase was laid and compacted. 50mm paving sand was screeded over this base and Nigel laid large format 500x500mm Riverstone pavers (Dusk) with simple detail bands of an alternate colour (Ash). The edges of the pavers were then haunched to prevent pavers moving and sand being washed out from underneath them.

Screens:

1. Sleeper screens: Treated pine horizontal screens were built of 200x75x2400mm H4 treated pine. The soil was levelled and the first sleeper laid flat. Scottie cut 200x200mm blocks from a sleeper and these were used as separating blocks between each full length sleeper laid. Each block and sleeper was nailed for stability and finally when the screen reached the required height posts were erected and concreted and then bolted to screens at each corner.

2. Decorative fencing screen to divide carport from entertaining area: A simple fence frame consisting of 90x90mm treated pine posts and three 90x45mm treated pine rails was erected and Jamie nailed decorative hardwood timber in three sizes (90mm, 66mm and 42mm) vertically to create an attractive screen. Natural oil was then applied to bring out the colour and protect the timber. A gate was cut out of this screen.



Barbecue bench: A Murrumbidgee River Redgum bench top (which was made from a salvaged fallen tree) was placed on top of a 90x45mm treated pine frame which was then faced with treated pine battens and oiled. A bench top barbecue was measured and an appropriate opening was cut in the bench top for fitting.

Pyramid glass toppings (decorative white gravel) was spread in the utility area and a lawn area installed with room for children to play cricket or football.



Garden: The soil was tilled and an organic soil was mixed through. The garden was edged with an aluminium edging to separate from turf. Turf (Sir Walter) was laid on 80mm of 80/20 mix soil. A removable clothesline was installed in the middle of the turf area.



Street planting: Grass verges were scraped of weeds to 50mm. Jody marked the position for trees to be planted, allowing a 750mm garden bed either side of the tree. This was tilled for further underplanting and organic matter was incorporated into this planting area. Turf underlay was then levelled and turf laid and watered in.



Planting

Trees: Manchurian Pear (*Pyrus ussuriensis*)

Shrubs and perennials: astelia (*Astelia 'Silver Spear'*), bush morning glory (*Convolvulus cneorum*), cordyline (*Cordyline 'Burgundy Star'*), Greenstead magnificent (*Cupressus macrocarpa 'Greenstead magnificent'*), euphorbia (*Euphorbia x martinii*), red hot poker (*Kniphofia uvari*), english lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia* subsp. *angustifolia*), bird of paradise (*Strelitzia reginae*), Pride of Madeira (*Echium candicans*), sticky hop bush (*Dodonaea viscosa 'Purpurea'*), catmint (*Nepeta 'Walker's Blue'*), libertia (*Libertia 'Goldfinger'*), New Zealand flax (*Phormium 'Yellow Wave'*)

Succulents: agave (*Agave attenuata*), , cotyledon (*Cotyledon 'Silver Waves'*), sedum (*Sedum 'Autumn Joy'*),

Turf and grass: blue fescue (*Festuca glauca*), Sir Walter soft-leaf buffalo.

Street planting: lomandra (*Lomandra 'Tanika'*), wild iris (*Diets grandiflora*), ground morning glory (*Convolvulus sabatius*), dianella (*Dianella 'Tasred'*), blue and white daisy bush (*Osteospermum ecklonis*), (*Eucalyptus 'Summer Red'*)

Plant give aways: false sarsaparilla (*Hardenbergia violaceae*), coast rosemary (*Westringia fruticosa*), lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*), New Zealand flax (*Phormium 'Apricot Queen'*), confetti bush (*Coleonema 'Compactum'*), bird of paradise (*Strelitzia reginae*), butterfly bush (*Gaura 'Siskiyou Pink'*), emu bush (*Eremophila 'Gubburra bells'*)



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 \$27,641. The use of smaller plants would have reduced the cost to \$22,607.

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. Our tools came from Echuca Hire, 134 Ogilvie Avenue, Echuca. Phone (03) 5480 1802 or 0419 315 600.
- All timber supplies and information supplied by Midcoast Timber Centres. Web: www.midcoasttimber.com.au
- Murray River redgum bench top from Forest Fantasies, Rustic Red Gum Furniture & Timber. Contact: Phil Chalmers, Port of Echuca, Murray Esplanade, Echuca, Vic. Phone (03) 5482 2341 or 0409 822 341.
- Pavers in colours Dusk and Ash supplied by Riverstone Pty Ltd, 301 Boundary Road, Braeside, Vic. Phone (03) 9587 4446 for your closest distributor or visit www.riverstonepavers.com.au
- 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
- Sir Walter turf supplied by Coolabah Turf Instant Lawn. Phone 1800 055 515 or visit web: www.coolturf.com.au

Acknowledgements

Design by Blue Design Solutions
Level 3, 61 Station Street, Malvern. Vic. 3144
Phone: (03)9500 8804
Web: www.bluedesignsolutions.com.au

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

Special Thanks

The good people of Landcare Australia and the Campaspe Shire lent their invaluable assistance and expertise to our street planting and neighbourhood day, for which we are very grateful:

Landcare Australia; web: www.landcareonline.com
Shire of Campaspe; web: www.campaspe.vic.gov.au

The Geoff Evans Jazz Band
Phone: Reg Packer 0427 329 255
Web: www.echucamoama.com/jazz (click on the link to 'bands')

Blitz Team Activities in Echuca

There are dozens of great sights and things to do in Echuca-Moama. Checkout the Visitor Information website for more information; web: www.echucamoama.com/html/attractions.html

The Blitz team visited:

The Great Aussie Beer Shed, 377 Mary Ann Rd, Echuca; phone (03) 5480 604

The National Holden Museum, 7-11 Warren St, Echuca; phone (03) 5480 2033

Port of Echuca Paddle-steamers, 52 Murray Esplanade, Echuca; phone (03) 5482 4248; web: www.portofechuca.org.au

Sharp's Magic Movie House + Penny Arcade, Bod Store, Murray Esplanade, Echuca; phone (03) 5482 2361; web: www.sharpsmoviehouse.com.au

Group Self Build

Group Self Build is an owner builder program that provides home ownership opportunities to people who are willing to commit their time and energy to building their homes and the homes of others in groups of 12 families.

Group Self Build is managed by the Department of Human Services and sponsored by the Victorian Property Fund. This has been an innovative and successful Government program that has housed over 700 Victorian families in new 3 and 4 bedroom brick veneer homes.

Group Self Build essentially currently only operates in Victoria. For more information about this and other housing initiatives, contact the Housing Department in your State.

VIC: Group Self Build: www.dhs.vic.gov.au - follow menu thru to Office of Housing; phone 1800 134 872

NSW: Web: www.housing.nsw.gov.au; phone (02) 8753 8181

QLD: Web: www.housing.qld.gov.au/initiatives/affordable; phone (07) 3238 3995

SA: Web: www.chcsa.org.au; phone (08) 8362 1022

WA: Web: www.dhw.wa.gov.au; phone (08) 9222 4533

NT: Web: www.territoryhousing.nt.gov.au/dcdsca; phone (08) 8999 8814

ACT: Web: www.dhcs.act.gov.au; phone (02) 6207 1500

TAS: Web: www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/services; phone (03) 6233 4777

Holiday details:

Wrest Point
401 Sandy Bay Road, Sandy Bay, Hobart Tasmania 7005
Phone: (03) 6225 7001
Phone: 1-800 030 611
Web: www.federalresorts.com.au
Email: bookings@federalresorts.com.au

Blackaby's Sea Kayak Tours
Phone: 0418 124 072
Web: www.blackabyseakayaks.com.au
Email: chrisblackaby@bigpond.com.au

Hobart Harbour Jet Boat
Waterman Cove, Sullivans Cove, Hobart Tasmania 7005

Phone: 0404 078 687

Phone/Fax: (03) 6248 8584

Web: www.hobartharbourjet.com.au

Email: info@hobartharbourjet.com.au

Olde Time Portraits

30 Bridge Street, Richmond, Tasmania 7025

Phone: (03) 6260 2630

Web: www.oldetimeportraits.com.au

Hatcher's Orchard Horse Drawn Cart Rides

73 Prossers Road, Richmond Tasmania 7025

Ian Leighton

Mobile: 0432 297 901

Phone: (03) 6260 2622

Fax: (03) 6260 2744

Web: www.hatchersmanor.com.au

Email: info@hatchersmanor.com.au

Acknowledgements

Design by Blue Design Solutions

Level 3, 61 Station Street, Malvern. Vic. 3144|

Phone: (03) 9500 8804

Web: www.bluedesignsolutions.com.au

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

© CTC Productions 1 2006

For more Step by Step Constructions click here

