

# BACKYARD BLITZ

## Tsunami Volunteer



Yvonne Cassidy has lived in her home for 49 years – since 1956! It was the house that she and her husband Kevin built when they first married and have since raised three children in it. Yvonne has dedicated her life to the Red Cross, racking up over 26 years of voluntary service in numerous roles. She is still out every day as a Red Cross member and continues to be a driving force within her local community.

This garden was created in recognition of Yvonne's enormous commitment to the Red Cross and to provide a spot for her to relax and unwind.

To volunteer or donate to the Red Cross visit [www.redcross.org.au](http://www.redcross.org.au)

### Design intent

Landscape designer John Happ from 3rd Dimension Designs has designed a reflective garden that provides a relaxing zone for Yvonne to start and end her day. Privacy screens and hedging plants create a sense of enclosure while the thatched umbrella provides a destination point for relaxation within the garden.

### Design ideas

Symmetry and balance in a garden can give a sense of order and peace. Formal garden design relies on repetition of form and structure and the use of a limited range of plant materials.



## 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 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 approvals:** We sought and gained council permission to remove two over mature trees as part of the makeover. 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

Two over-mature Callistemon trees were removed as was the old clothesline and concrete pathway. The decaying carport was safely removed and sub grade levels established for the new garden features.

## Garden elements

**African Thatch Gazebo:** This large thatched umbrella provides a talking point in the garden as well as a functional shaded area for relaxation. Based around a centre pole the framework is constructed with trusses, steel supports to clip thatching onto, and a steel rim.

Battens are screwed in place onto timber rafters and support tiles of thatched roofing. The centre pole (H4 treated pine, diameter 150mm) was embedded in a large concrete footing (500x500x500mm) and allowed to set. The Blitz team called in some help from a building site down the road and together the group lifted the top into place and secured it with circular ply bracing.

**Blitz Tipz:** A competent handy person and a friend could easily put together and install this umbrella over a weekend. Just remember that the longer the centre post is left to cure in position, the better.



**Pergola:** Scott removed a dangerous and unsightly carport and built a new one to house Yvonne's Red Cross trailer. The existing galvanised stirrups were used to support treated pine posts (90x90mm). A beam (140x45mm) bolted in place with galvanised cup-head bolts (10mmx150mm) supports rafters (140x45mm) skew nailed to the top of the beam. The other end of the rafters is supported against a wall plate (a beam bolted horizontally to the existing wall) using galvanised joist hangers and clouts. Battens nailed perpendicular across the top of the rafters support a corrugated metal roof fixed with roofing screws with weatherproof washers.

**Blitz Tipz:** Metal sheeting is available in a range of lengths. Build your structure to suit the closest length available or you will have to trim the ends with a set of metal "nibblers".



**Screen:** Nigel created privacy and seclusion in this small backyard with fence height screens to match the colour of the house. Treated pine posts (H4,90x90mm) installed vertically in-ground in quick setting concrete support pine rails (90x45mm) nailed and bolted in place. Fibre cement sheeting (2400x1200x7.5mm) tacked in place with galvanised clouts and painted to match the house provide a visual barrier and backdrop to the new garden. Treated pine decking boards (90x20mm) cover the edges and all clouts to provide a crisp, clean edge to each screen.

**Blitz Tipz:** If privacy screens are to extend beyond existing fence heights then you may need to seek council approval for the structure.

**Stepping stones:** As this makeover was undertaken during pouring rain, a change in the design was required. Instead of paving a pathway to the rear circular paving area, Jamie installed stepping stones on a bed of rapid set concrete. The total distance to be covered was divided by the dimension of the steppers plus the distance between each stepper. Each paver was placed onto a bed of rapid setting concrete and allowed to set level.

**Blitz tipz:** Place steppers a comfortable step apart from each other.

**Paving:** Nigel laid a circular area of paving as both a destination point and an area for relaxation. Roadbase was brought in and compacted to a depth of 120mm. Coarse washed river sand screeded level with a slight slope toward the rear garden bed supports newly laid clay pavers. Grouting sand was swept through the paving joints to lock the job in place while a mortar haunch around the perimeter of the job prevents the bedding sand from washing out.

**Garden beds:** Jody improved the existing clay site soil with the addition of an organic garden mix. The mini-excavator was utilized to dig the new garden beds to a depth of 300mm to make planting easier. An organic mulch was spread to a depth of 75mm to reduce weed growth and retain soil moisture whilst providing an attractive contrast to the plant textures and colours.



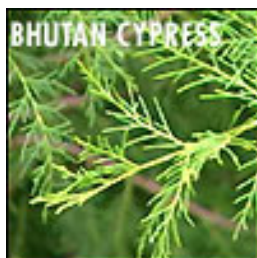
## Plants

A simple selection of screening trees, feature shrubs and colourful perennials will provide year round interest and privacy in this colour filled garden.

**Trees:** Bhutan cypress (*Cupressus torulosa*), Perennials: verbena (*Verbena* 'Pink Passion')

**Shrubs:** cordyline (*Cordyline* 'Red Sensation'), cordyline (*Cordyline stricta*), azalea (*Azalea* 'Shirazz')

**Turf:** Empire zoysia (*Zoysia japonica* 'SS500')



## 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 \$14,797. The use of smaller plants would have reduced the cost to \$12,880.

## Product Details

- African thatch gazebo (umbrella) 3.4metre cost approx. \$2515 + freight, contact (08) 9250 5466; fax (08)9274 2433 or visit [www.africanthatch.com.au](http://www.africanthatch.com.au)
- 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

Crown Promenade  
8 Whiteman Street  
Southbank  
Phone: (03) 9292 6666  
Web: [www.crownpromenade.com.au](http://www.crownpromenade.com.au)

A Midsummer's Night Dream  
Botanic Gardens  
Melbourne

Walter's Wine Bar  
Shop UR1 Southgate,  
Southbank  
Phone: (03) 9690 9211  
Web: [www.walterswinebar.com.au](http://www.walterswinebar.com.au)

## Acknowledgements

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

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