

BACKYARD BLITZ

Mr. Unlucky



Terry Lee is a man who served his country and paid a very high price. A lifetime of illness and post traumatic stress has taken its toll, and today this devoted family man struggles with the most simple things in life. The Blitz team creates a native, bird-attracting garden while Terry and his wife take the first trip into town that they've had in 20 years!

Our design

Peter Bachak of Osmosis Design, considered Terry's needs and designed the garden to incorporate wheelchair access with cascading ramps throughout the garden. Terry liked birds, and so the design emulates a bushland park with boardwalks and plants to attract native birds to the garden as well as provide an aviary for Terry to enjoy. The planting and garden beds represent the bushland with a dry creek bed crossed by ramps providing access for Terry to get to the aviary.



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 backyard of all rubbish. Jody gave the fence a new life by spray painting it a reddish brown colour to act as a contrast for the plants.

Garden elements

We removed old aluminium windows and removed sill bricks to accommodate our deck running flush with the base of the new windows. The process of replacing the window with the new Trend windows took about 4.5 hours. The window has 6mm laminated tinted glass for safety and the frame is powder coated aluminium frame to give a timber look.

Deck: Scottie used a 90x45mm wall plate attached to the house and proceeded to put 90x90mm treated pine posts in ground to support the bearers for the deck and bearers for the beginning of our ramps. Some posts were left proud to accommodate handrails.

Blitz Tip: Any deck 900mm and above from the ground requires a handrail.

Scottie then attached 190x45mm bearers using cuphead galvanised screws. Using 190x45mm allowed us to space posts in ground further apart. Posts were extended out of the ground also to support a roof beam for the installation of Solarspan roofing.

We attached 90x45mm joists at 450mm centres and then laid 90x19mm decking.

Solarspan roofing is easily installed by attaching aluminium extrusion to your timber fascia and as Solarspan can span wide areas, minimal beam support is required. The roofing over the beam is connected using angled aluminium screwed or rivetted in place.

Ramps: Ramps were built in the same manner as the deck with ACQ treated timber posts, bearers and decking. These ramps had a 1 in 14 fall in line with Australian standards. We also put in kick rails of 90x45mm timber screwed to the deck on the side of the ramps to accommodate a wheelchair.

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.



Screen: A simple screen was built using 90x90mm treated pine posts with 90x45mm rails to stabilise the framework and Natureed was then stapled onto the frame.

Water feature: As we had a structure around the water feature, it was not necessary to dig into the ground. We prepared an even flat surface and installed a fibreglass pond.



Aviary: The aviary was sited in the area of the backyard so that birds would get early morning sun. Our basic framework for the aviary (8x2.2m wide) was manufactured from 25mm square galvanised tubing with uprights spaced at 2m centres.

Nigel measured out the base for the aviary as our first process was to cement in bricks for the aviary to be affixed to. This meant digging a trench 450mm wide x 200mm deep and compacting roadbase prior to laying one course of 300x200mm solid bricks mortared in place which then gave us a perfectly level surface to attach the aviary frame.

We then brought in our aviary frame and once positioned we used metaltech screws to join framework. After the framework was bolted together we dynabolted the frame to the brickwork.

The aviary was to be planted with native plants, so we filled the bottom of the aviary to the height of the brickwork with crushed sandstone and as we were planning to irrigate the plants inside the aviary, we made sure there were weep holes built into the brickwork for good drainage.

Nigel then attached our aviary wire and our tip is to buy good Australian made wire. The wire is attached with small tech screws. When joining wire we used aluminium fencing clips.



Nigel painted the wire black so that it disappears into the background.

Blitz Tipz: Two people rolling black paint opposite each other at the same time is the most expedient way of applying paint to the wire.

Solarspan walls and roofing were attached to one end of the aviary to provide weather protection for the birds. We painted our aviary Solarspan wall a complementary colour to our plants.

Aviary perches for finches are ideally 3/8 and 1/2 inch wooden dowel.

Effective nesting can be made with plastic lattice rolled into a cylinder and branches of melaleuca pushed down into and through the lattice.

Blitz Tipz: Be sure to provide shelter for the birds to protect them against the elements.



lilly pilly (*Syzygium* 'Cascade')

Plants

Trees: lemon myrtle (*Backhousia citriodora*), Queensland firewheel tree (*Stenocarpus sinuatus*), weeping lilly pilly (*Waterhousea floribunda*), giant bird of paradise (*Strelitzia nicolai*)

Shrubs: bower wattle (*Acacia cognata* 'Limelight'), austromyrtus (*Austromyrtus* 'Aurora'), giant elephant's ear (*Alocasia X portora*), native ginger (*Alpinia caerulea*), bird's nest fern (*Asplenium australasicum*), cordyline (*Cordyline* 'Rubra'), ctenanthe (*Ctenanthe* 'Grey Star'), cycad (*Cycas revoluta*), Gynea lily (*Doryanthes excelsa*), grevilleas (*Grevillea banksii* var. *forsteri*) (*Grevillea* 'Honey Gem'), (*Grevillea* 'Ned Kelly'), leptospermum (*Leptospermum* 'Cardwell'), callistemon (*Callistemon* 'Captain Cook')

Grasses: swamp lily (*Crinum pedunculatum*), blue flax lily (*Dianella* 'Cassa Blue'), red fountain grass (*Pennisetum* 'Rubrum')*

* *Pennisetum setaceum* is a weed, however we believe this cultivar 'Rubrum' is sterile and doesn't set seed.

Groundcover: poorinda Royal Mantle (*Grevillea* 'Poorinda Royal Mantle')

Water plant: restio (*Baloskion tetraphyllum* formerly sold as *Restio tetraphyllum*)

Aviary plants: lilly pilly (*Syzygium* 'Cascade'), (*Acmena smithii* 'Allyn Magic'), *Austromyrtus* 'Blushing Beauty', *Graptophyllum excelsum*, dwarf paperbark (*Melaleuca linariifolia* 'Purpurea'), bottlebrush (*Callistemon* 'Captain Cook'), *Baeckea virgata* miniature (*Babbingtonia virgata* 'Howies Sweet Midget'), narrow leaf palm lily (*Cordyline stricta*), lomandra (*Lomandra hystrix*)



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 \$31,273. The use of smaller plants would have reduced the cost to \$27,951.

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.
- Bondor supplied Solarspan insulated panels. For information on these panels and other insulated panel systems, visit web: www.solarspan.com.au
- Trend Windows and Doors supplied by Trend. Phone: 13 72 74 or visit web: www.trendwindows.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 web: www.woodlandhp.com
- Fiberglass pond from The Fish Works. Phone: (02) 9986 2000 or visit web: www.thefishworks.com.au
- Aviary wire from pet stores or hardware stores
- Natureed from House of Bamboo, 13 Erith Street, Botany, NSW. Phone: 1300 665 703 or visit web: www.houseofbamboo.com.au
- Furniture from Konteaki 7 Darley Rd, Leichhardt, NSW. Phone (02) 95181 755 or visit web: www.konteaki.com

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Bondor (Solarspan), Trend Windows and Doors and Woodland Home Products (Beefeater) for their kind donation to Terry Lee.

Accommodation:

Sheraton on the Park

161 Elizabeth St Sydney NSW 2000
Phone: (02) 9268 6000
Web: www.sheraton.com/sydney

Dining:

The Rocks Café
99 George Street, The Rocks Sydney
NSW 2000
Phone: (02) 9247 3089

Bavarian Bier Café
Shops 2-5 Manly Wharf, East
Esplanade
Manly NSW 2095
Phone: (02) 9977 8088
Web: www.bavarianbiercafe.com.au

The Restaurant (NSW Art Gallery)
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Art Gallery Road, The Domain
Sydney NSW 2000
Phone: (02) 9225 1819
Web: www.trippaswhite.com.au

Al Porto (Star City Casino)
Star City Casino
Level 3, Lyric Theatre
80 Pyrmont Street, Pyrmont NSW
2009
Phone: 1800 700 700
Web: www.starcity.com.au

Botanica Brasserie
Sheraton on the Park
161 Elizabeth St Sydney NSW 2000
Phone: (02) 9268 6000
Web: www.sheraton.com/sydney

Watson's Bay Hotel
1 Military Road
Watsons Bay 2030 NSW
Phone: (02) 9337 5444

Activities:

Sheraton Health Club
Sheraton on the Park
161 Elizabeth St Sydney NSW 2000
Phone: (02) 9268 6000
Web: www.sheraton.com/sydney

Art Gallery of New South Wales
(Archibald Exhibition 2006)
Art Gallery Road, The Domain
Sydney NSW 2000
Phone: 02 9225 1700
Web: www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au

Dusty - The Original Pop Diva
Lyric Theatre
Star City Casino
80 Pyrmont Street, Pyrmont NSW
2009
Phone: 1800 700 700
Bookings: Ticketmaster 1300 796
330 or www.ticketmaster.com.au
Web: www.dustythemusical.com

Bondi Explorer (bus trip to watsons
bay)
State Transit
Phone: 131 500
Web: www.sydneypass.info



Our design by

Osmosis Design
Phone: (02) 9344 4154
Web: www.osmosisgardens.com.au

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

For more Step by Step Constructions click here

