

7th December 2007

The infrequency of my previous journal entries might seem to suggest that I haven't devoted much time to the garden at all. As much as I spend all my spare time working in the garden, I seem to be only able to put pen to paper or finger to keys in the wintertime. I am hoping that due to a website review, the posting of these journal entries will become a lot more straightforward and regular!

There have been three events that have occurred in the garden since my last journal entry. Firstly, earlier this year whilst I was interstate, Ben, who is used to working with stone, was instructed to construct a 2.4metre high wall using the old firewood to screen the utility yard from the garden – and I have to say he did a great job. Although the basic building principles are the same, the process and finished effect are quite different to drystone wall construction. Ben enjoyed building the wall and, of course, I was delight with the result. We added an arched gate and have planted Clematis montana rubens to scramble over & through the logs. I am looking forward to its first flowering.

I have also added a beautiful stainless steel sundial of modern design, constructed in the UK by John Close Sundials (please find the link to his website on the 'Sculptures' page). I found the whole process of the order, purchase & delivery of the sundial from John both prompt & completely painless. When I received the sundial I was absolutely thrilled with it – as has been everyone who has seen it since. I have set it on an art deco inspired plinth made of reconstituted marble in a travertine finish - as the border grows up around it, the simple form of the plinth accentuates the modern lines and texture of the sundial.

The most recent project was to remove a rather makeshift (and to my mind nasty) set of concrete steps and retaining wall immediately adjacent my office, which also linked with the stairs to the front door of the house. I had always had in my mind to replace this with a radial style set of steps constructed of local ironstone, however due to the configuration of retaining wall & length of steps, I found it hard to visualise the level changes and scale of the steps linking the various areas. One day a couple of months ago, during a quiet week waiting for the builders to complete their work on one of our sites, I took a leap of faith by demolishing the old stairs and retaining wall. This thankfully revealed quite a generous area – perfect for stone flagging, and relatively sunny (quite a feat in my garden), making it ideal for planting pockets of various miniature bulbs and perennials including rare Galanthus, Iris reticulata, Thymus & Anemone nemorosa. Within a week I had my stairs and we were able to commence our landscaping job, Ben taking with him a raft of photos and a strong sense of achievement.

I am looking forward to spring, which is really not far away – this will have been the garden's second gentle year. The garden areas are filling out well, so I look forward to each season with great anticipation. There are only a few major garden projects left to be addressed – my sense of satisfaction with the progress of the garden grows daily.