

RSM COPY

R E P O R T

FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF GROUNDS AND GARDENS AT  
'FORTUNA'

FOR THE ARMY SURVEY REGIMENT, RASC, 'FORTUNA', CHUM STREET, BENDIGO

Compiled by:

Karl Liffman and Gardening Apprentices, Horticulture Department,  
Loddon Campaspe College of TAFE, Bendigo.

Ian Huxley, Hilltop Nursery, Guildford.

## ABOUT THE PRINCIPAL AUTHORS OF THIS REPORT

**Ian Huxley** has had a substantial background in horticulture spanning twenty years.

He has gained experience in traditional gardening approaches through the development of several of his own gardens throughout the Central Goldfields area as well as the establishment of "Atherstone" - a significant traditional style garden at Harcourt.

Ian spent several years in Northern NSW working in sub-tropical rain forests and gaining experience in the propagation of rain forest species. He has travelled extensively throughout the British Isles studying historic gardens.

Since his return from overseas he has devoted much of his time to establishing his own garden nursery and rose farm at Guildford, as well as part-time teaching horticultural subjects.

Ian has lectured on landscape and garden design. He has a well founded knowledge of historic gardens, their maintenance and restoration, utilising appropriate species and devotes much of his time to consulting in this specialised area.

**Karl Liffman** is currently employed by the Loddon Campaspe College of TAFE, Bendigo, where he is responsible for the Horticulture Department and teaching trade gardening students.

Before being employed as a teacher Karl worked for local government parks and gardens departments in metropolitan Melbourne in various capacities, but mainly as a foreman. He also has worked in private

plant nurseries and as a gardener.

He also has been employed developing trade and post-trade TAFE horticultural courses.

Karl has had some experience in writing, having written horticultural course reference notes, texts on turf management and articles for publication.

## C O N T E N T S

PREFACE

INTRODUCTION

THE PRESENT SITUATION

RECOMMENDATIONS

APPENDIX 1 REPRESENTATIONS OF CERTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

APPENDIX 2 PLANTING LISTS

## P R E F A C E

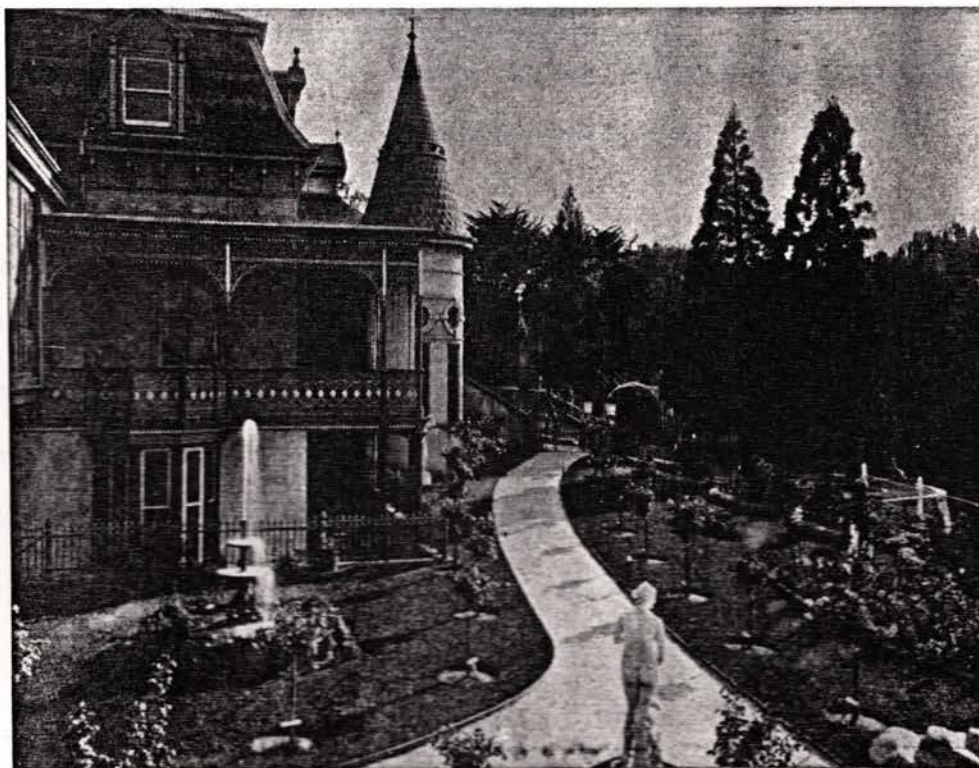
This report would not be complete without a description of the historic significance of 'Fortuna' and its grounds. To this end an extract from Watts, Historic Gardens of Victoria: A Reconnaissance, A Report from the National Trust (Victoria), Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1983, is set out below.

"Fortuna's garden was created by the 'Quartz King', George Lansell, between the 1870s and his death in 1906. It is located on the site of the fabulously rich 180 Mine, and developed gradually as parts of the property became redundant for goldmining. A single-storey villa stood alongside the mine when Lansell bought it in the early 1870s, but this was incorporated into a mansion that grew to thirty rooms. Attached is a particularly fine conservatory with etched-glass walls.

One of the garden's unusual features is an Italian water garden, complete with fountains, statue, niches and Roman column. Many of these items were imported from Italy - an example of the extravagant eclecticism made possible by gold. The present lake, roughly triangular and once the largest of six on the property, was originally a settling pond used in the mining operation.

The total area of the property is now 6.7 hectares, though it is believed to have been greater at one time. There are many old trees at Fortuna. A double row of fourteen tall palms lines one side of the lake, with a dozen or so poplars behind them. Pepper trees and Norfolk Island pines abound, the latter lining half of another side of the lake. One or more specimens each of pine, cypress, eucalypt, redwood, fig, oak, pyramid tree, weeping willow, bunya bunya, camellia and pittosporum are dotted about the grounds. Part of the garden has now

been built over but George Lansell's surviving trees and shrubs, and many others planted since 1942, are being cared for by its owners since that date, the Department of Defence, whose Army Survey Regiment is now located at Fortuna."



An early view of the villa terrace, eastern end.

## INTRODUCTION

This report has been compiled by horticulturalists. This being the case, it is possible that certain recommendations will not necessarily be shared by those with formal training in landscape design or architecture. Therefore recommendations in this report should be 'digested' accordingly, since for instance, traditionally horticulturalists tend to generally use 'variety' as a principle in garden design more than landscape architects.

This report is concerned only with those areas of grounds and gardens seen by visitors visiting 'Fortuna.' Such areas include the main drive, car parks, the garden at the front of the villa and grounds viewed from the front of the villa around the lake.

It is hoped that this report will be of significant value to the Army in further developing and maintaining Fortuna's grounds and gardens. This magnificent property is of great significance. Responsible custodianship of it will certainly be of great value to the Army in its future public relations.