

Garden blends beauty, peace

What was once an overgrown ugly "jungle" of vines and vegetation has been transformed into a lovely, quiet retreat for Krista Wingerter in midtown Birmingham.

This talented lady received an honorable mention for the interior of her house from Metropolitan Home magazine, so it's not surprising she has this lovely small European style garden.

Just last year Allison Jones designed the garden, then Wingerter and a friend built up the beds on the three sides of the yard, bordered them with railroad ties, shopped for plants and put them in the ground. A stockade fence and the side of the garage provide a suitable backdrop and enclosed the entire area for privacy. The two friends also laid two brick patios — the larger one in a hexagon shape, surrounded on three sides by plantings.

As I entered the garden I passed under an arbor with pink and white roses growing up one side and variegated ivy growing up the other. When they meet, the effect will be lovely.

The many unusual shrubs, trees and perennials used, both tall and low, harmonize beautifully with one another and with the accessories such as a sun dial, thatch bird house, water fountain and Japanese lantern.

An autumn blooming clematis, covered with small white star-shaped flowers, gently drapes over and around the water fountain on which three cherubs stand. A weeping cherry, three small spruce and a stand of birch harmonize with an old, very tall lilac in a corner.

Mums, viburnum, climbing hydrangea, a dog-

wood tree, rose of Sharon, several hollies and potentilla shrub frame the back area, while three hemlocks soften what might otherwise be a "hard" corner.

A second brick fan-shaped patio spreading out into the grass in that corner provides another seating area. What a nice idea to have two spots from which to sit and view the garden.

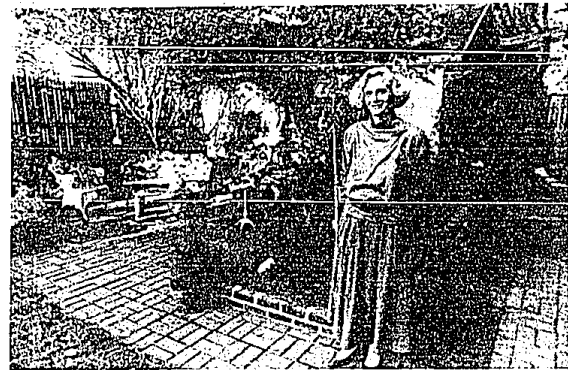
Across the yard a Japanese lilac tree is surrounded by a number of rhododendrums. A bed of ivy surrounds a large tree and grows up the trunk, and an old twig chair leaning against the tree adds a whimsical touch.

Three tree roses, a piece shaped into a topiary and other plants are in pots which Wingerter can move around as the mood strikes. This year white and pinks were the colors used, and next year she may try an all white and silver garden reminiscent of V. Sackville-West, whom she admires. The thoughtful use of plants that stay green all year long keep the garden "alive" during the winter, an important feature to this homeowner.

The furniture on the larger patio, a copy of an old English set, is painted gray, it does say "alt down and rest a spell." Soft outdoor lighting has been installed and tiny white lights in the three hemlocks provide a bright, yet restful look.

Wingerter said she likes to sit in this outdoor extension of her home and listen to Mozart, with the fountain sound in the background, and feel very peaceful.

Although the garden seems perfect, the owner said she thinks there is much to learn about color and what blooms when.



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

With the help of designer Allison Jones, Krista Wingerter of Birmingham transformed an overgrown garden into a quiet retreat.

down to earth



Marty Figley

A small deck outside sliding glass doors off the dining room provides easy access to the garden. Future plans call for a wrought iron railing to be installed so that it resembles a balcony. Boxwood is growing around the deck with a standard coto-naster to the side.

The love of growing things is evident in this special city garden.



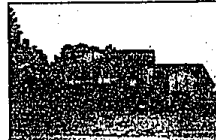
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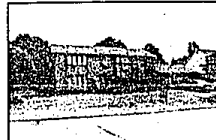
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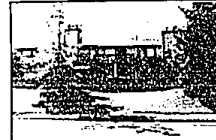
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