

Blue Mountains Rhododendron Society of New South Wales Inc.

Inaugurated April 2nd 1969
JULY/AUGUST 2016
NEWSLETTER

Vol. 42 No. 4

PO Box 238 Blackheath 2785

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING **Saturday 20th AUGUST 2016** **at The Lodge** **2.00pm start**

We welcome all members, especially those who have recently joined us, and visitors, to our 47th Annual General Meeting and election of Committee members for the ensuing 12 months.

Please note that members need to be financial to be able to vote.

**ANNUAL membership RENEWAL fees (for 1st July 2016 to 30th June 2017)
are still only \$11 per person per annum.**

For those members still not financial, a membership renewal form is enclosed.

Election of New Committee

At this AGM a new Management Committee for the Society for 2016-2017 is to be elected. According to the Society's Constitution the Management Committee will consist of the office bearers and up to seven other members. Julia will be retiring from the Presidency as she has served her full term of three years.

The office-bearers to be elected consist of one President, up to two Vice-Presidents, one Honorary Secretary, one Honorary Treasurer, and one Membership Secretary.

Committee members are also elected at this time.

Patrons are confirmed and a Auditor is appointed.

Wayne Hanley has kindly consented to be the Returning Officer at the Meeting.

A nomination form is attached to this newsletter. If further copies are required please contact Julia on 4787 5728. **Nomination forms must be returned to the Secretary by 10.00 am Friday 12th August 2016.**

GUEST SPEAKER:

Matthew French is the Community Development Manager of the RSPCA. He is a very engaging presenter whose talk will focus on the "social work" of the RSPCA. This is an area of their work that not many people know about but is a significant part of their overall strategy. Every animal has a human story and the challenges faced by animal owners flow on to affect the welfare of their animal.....

Come along to hear Matthew tell us how the RSPCA ameliorates these situations.

Afternoon tea will be served after the meeting so that members can mingle and have a chance to talk to the Guest Speaker. **It would be greatly appreciated if you could "bring a plate" please.**

From the President. Julia's Say.....

This winter seems to be chillier than many others.... maybe it's just I'm getting older! The Monday Workers try to do tasks which keep them moving and after the recent high winds and snow there has been quite a bit of tidying up to do. Dick has great plans for the Valley area around "Kovacs Garden" and "Pryor Bridge" which I'm sure he will tell you about. There is a lovely new

bench seat near Pryor Bridge which gives a great view up the Valley. Another seat will be installed near the McCullough Stone Bridge so people can rest and look across the Lake to the Dr. Nick Matheson-Lyons Lookout.

David Hellyer, our plumber, has done a wonderful job in negotiating a sewer connection with Sydney Water. He will commence work on installing pumps in the relined septic tank and laying the sewer line in the ditch along the service road in the Valley to the connection point outside the Wentworth Street gate. This route ensures the least disturbance to our Gardens and will finally give us a connection to the main sewer. While still on the subject of Toilets our DA application for the new accessible toilet block has been accepted and we should be given approval in the next few weeks. It is now too late to complete the building before the busy spring flowering time but I can confidently predict we will have our new block for our 2017 season!!! It's been a very long road to get to this point and my grateful thanks go to Geoff Cannings for all his patience while dealing with Council. Geoff has some other projects to tell you about elsewhere in this newsletter.

The May Seminar Day was well received by those who attended. Quota was pleased to cater for us. I like the fact that, through them, we are redistributing some of our takings to help those less fortunate in our community. We gained some new members! We are beginning to look at organising another Seminar Day early in 2017. You will hear more about this in future newsletters.

I urge all members to try and attend our AGM in August and also **to look at their diaries to see if they can put time aside to help us during the Lodge Open Days, 30th September to 6th November.** We will need volunteers to help set up and pack up each day, to sit at Meet and Greet, to sell Merchandise, and to work in the kitchen. Please ring myself or Anna to let us know when you can help. Contact details on the back of this newsletter. We give you, our members, the chance to volunteer first so you have the pick of the various shifts. We will then fill any gaps in the rosters by asking the members of the various community groups which a number of us belong to!!! Volunteering your help during this time is a great chance to assist your Society.

There are many projects progressing well or coming to completion, so life is busy. More of that in my annual report!

Hope to see you all at the AGM.

Good wishes and stay warm, from Julia

Garden Report

Twelve dwarf Callistemon, 12 Banksia Birthday Candles (a prostrate grower) and 6 Grevillea Gaudi Chaudi (a native to this area which will be a ground cover), some more waratahs, when I can get them, will be planted in the area across the drain behind the White Pearl Rhododendrons in the Valley area.

We will eventually put a path behind the White Pearl.

I have also planted 4 Camellia Reticulata seedlings in the area across from the new silt trap that is under construction and also a Camellia Red Waratah which was donated to us by a member. The Reticulatas are my own hybrids which will all flower this year. If any are particularly good, we will take some cuttings and register them. We have also cleaned out the narrow beds either side of the Pryor Bridge approaches and planted Alpine Phlox there. All of the above have been treated with an anti-transpirant and some growth formula. Quite a lot of work has been done on paths that had washed away as well as repairing and replacing some of the steps, particularly at the bottom of the Centenary Walk.

More weed control has been done in the valley area particularly where the above plantings have been done. This all forms part of the Kovac area. A seat with a plaque recognising the Kovacs has been installed down in the Valley. The top section of the ZigZag has had overhanging ferns trimmed back and when weather permits the rest of the Zig Zag and the lower part of Centenary Walk will be trimmed. It was to be done last Monday.

Last Monday, the workers that turned up in the rain tidied up the tool shed, restocked the fertiliser and discarded anything that was no longer of use.

John Abel has been and had a look at the area to be fenced, he still has his insurance even though he works in the mines. He will come down and clear the line and I will be his off-sider when he starts fencing.

Of course there was lots of doddering, cleaning up after the winds etc by our ever busy "girls".

Dick Harris



THINK SPRING ... THINK LEURA

Pre-Festival Tours for Garden Clubs

26-30 September 2016

The Leura Gardens Festival is a feature on the calendar for many garden clubs but this year the pre-festival tours, in particular, should hold great appeal for both clubs and plant collectors alike.

This year's pre-festival tours will feature a choice of eight beautiful gardens, five of which are only available during this pre-festival period, and of these, four are new to the festival. These are specialist and rare plant gardens not generally open to the public and one has never before been available to view. Some gardens also have plants for sale and one has books illustrated by the garden owner.

Groups of 10 - 40 people can enjoy a private, escorted tour of four gardens for the cost of only \$20 per person. These tours must be booked in advance by contacting the festival Phone: 0431 095 279 or Email : leuragardensfestival@fastmail.com

PLEASE NOTE: Because the 29th and 30th are already fully booked Julia has booked a tour space for Wednesday 28th. She has booked 10 spaces but can increase this number. **If you want to see 4 of the available gardens then please ring her on 4787 5728.** We will miss the specialist Alpine Garden which is only open on the Monday and Tuesday. Payment is due early September so Julia will pay and you can pay her!

As I (Editor) write I am told the Monday still has several group spaces, Tuesday 1 group space, Wednesday 2 group spaces. Individuals can join groups if there is a vacant place.

Project Report

by Geoff Cannings

When it rained recently, I did a walk-around and found a few problem areas. I discussed these with Dick Harris and we decided on a few solutions. Most of these involve some work but not many dollars. These problems come under "Projects" which are noted below.

Steps at bottom of Centenary Walk.

Water running down here was causing erosion of the path and exposing roots and rocks.

We have dug an off-shoot to direct water down to the drain on the Service Road, built up the path and sloped it to the right. One old step has been replaced and the last three steps have been tilted to direct water away before it reaches the path below.

Steps from Species Valley.

Again, water rushing down the path above, causing erosion and washing mud into the water course below the dam.

We dug an off-shoot so that water will drain into the nearby channel and sloped the path accordingly. This was inspected during the light rain since and was working very well.

Stone Bridge

Mud and water has been accumulating at the approach to, and onto this bridge.

Mud about 75mm deep has been removed from here and a channel dug to direct water into the lake. There was a drain hole from the lowest point on the bridge to carry water away but this had been completely blocked and has now been cleared.

In front of newly planted waratahs.

Maybe a path behind the tall Rhododendrons may give a better viewing of these new plantings and maybe a post and rail fence to discourage people from crossing the creek. (Committee to discuss). When we get a load of ironstone for the wall in the Kovac Garden and if the rubble in the load is walnut sized or larger, we could use it to line the bed of the creek along this section to improve the appearance.

Recruitment Project.

The brochures asking new residents to consider joining the Society and/or volunteering to help on Mondays, have been given to the three Estate Agents in Blackheath.

A PAGE OF FILLERS, Hope you enjoy them!

Some Garden woes!

“Annuals” mean disappointment once a year.
Your lawn is always slightly bigger than your desire to mow it.
Whichever garden tool you want is always at the back of the shed.
The only way to ensure rain, is to give the garden a good soaking.
Weeds grow at precisely the rate you pull them out.
Autumn follows summer, winter follows autumn, drought follows planting.
The only way to guarantee some colour all year round is to buy a garden gnome.
When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it is a valuable plant!!!
Anon.



AUSTRALIA'S OWN RHODODENDRON

VOLUNTEERS from Judy Johnston
Volunteers are just ordinary people with extraordinary **Hearts**.

They offer the gift of time to teach, to listen, to help, to inspire, to build, to grow, to learn.

They expect no pay, yet the **value** of their work knows no limit.

They've known the **unexpected joy** of a simple hug.

They've planted tiny **seeds of love** in countless lives.

Volunteers are just ordinary people **who reach out** and take a hand and together **make a difference** that lasts a **lifetime**.

Rhododendron lochiaie

Names: Australian or Native Rhododendron

Description: Australian Rhododendron is a small shrub growing to one metre tall. The glossy leaves are elliptical and grow up to 10 cm long and 5 cm wide, and are thick and stiff. It has very attractive clusters of reddish pink bell-shaped flowers that grow to 5 cm long. The fruit is a capsule up to 4 cm long. This plant is a very ornamental species and is grown in cultivation. Rhododendron lochiaie is a "Vireya" Rhododendron (a tropical subgenus of Rhododendron native to south east Asia and Australia).

Height: 1m

Spread: 1m

Habitat: Tropical mountain top rainforests where it grows as an epiphyte in rainforest trees or grows on rocks or boulders as a lithophyte.

Distribution: Rhododendron lochiaie is found in north eastern Queensland.

Classification:

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Erica's

Family: Ericaceae

Genus: Rhododendron

Species: loch



Guidelines for Voting at the Annual General Meeting.

Only financial members can vote, nominate or be nominated for a position on the Management Committee.

1. If only one member is nominated for an executive position (or up to seven members for the committee positions), then that member (or members) is/are considered elected and no vote is taken, providing that their nomination(s) was/were received by the Secretary by the advertised closing date.

2. *If more members are nominated than there are advertised positions, and their nomination forms were received by the advertised closing date, a secret ballot will be taken by those members attending the AGM. The member (or members) with the most votes will be declared duly elected to the particular committee position.*

3. *If a position has NO nominations, the Chairperson can ask for nominations at the meeting ("from the floor"). If more than one person is named and seconded, a vote will be taken as in 3.*

4. *If a position is NOT filled at the AGM it is called a "casual vacancy" and may be filled at a later date with a person appointed by the Management Committee.*

The Management Committee consists of: President, up to 2 Vice-Presidents, Treasurer/Public Officer, Secretary, Membership Secretary, up to 7 Committee members.

The committee positions of Garden Supervisor, Newsletter Editor, Publicity Officer(s), and Webmaster will be confirmed at the first Management Committee meeting in September.

There are other positions such as Archivist, Librarian, Engraver, Meeting Hostess, Purchasing Officer, Merchandising Organiser, First Aid Officer etc which sit outside the Management Committee but report regularly to that body.

If you wish to nominate a member for a position on the management committee please cut out the form below, fill it in and post it to the address shown on the form by **10:00 am on Friday 12th August 2016.**

Blue Mountains Rhododendron Society of NSW Inc.

NOMINATION FORM Term 2016-2017

I wish to nominate

.....
(name of person to be nominated)!

for the position of

.....
(Name the office/position)

Signed.....
(Signature of nominator)

SECONDER
I wish to second this nomination

Signed.....
(Signature of person seconding nomination)

ACCEPTANCE

I accept the above nomination

Signed.....
(Signature of nominated person)!

**Nominations are to be return to the Secretary,
P.O. Box 238 Blackheath, no later than 10am
Friday 12th August 2016**

Management Committee 2014 - 2015

President
Julia Hanley
4787 5728

Vice President
Deb Wells
4787 6724

Garden Supervisor
Dick Harris

Secretary
Anna Martin
0439 062 256

Treasurer
Val Moorehead
4787 8267

Membership Secretary
Bill Webster
4787 6082

Committee Members: Geoff Cannings, David Cook, Sonia Levitt, Judy Johnston, Di Twose

Meeting Hostess: Joan Hailstone

Editor: Sonia Levitt

Website: www.rhodogarden.org.a

If you have any articles or news for the newsletter, please send to Sonia at salevitt13@bigpond.com. Thank-you



THE BLUE MOUNTAINS RHODODENDRON SOCIETY OF NSW INC.

PO BOX 238, BLACKHEATH NSW 27895