

# Blue Mountains Rhododendron Society of New South Wales Inc.

Inaugurated April 2<sup>nd</sup> 1969

November/December 2012

## NEWSLETTER

Vol. 38 No. 6

PO Box 238, Blackheath, 2785.

### Christmas Luncheon Saturday 15 December 2012 at The Lodge Time – 12:00 noon

Please bring a plate (e.g. salad, dessert, etc) OR a \$10 donation.  
Drinks (fruit punch, wine, tea or coffee) will be provided.

Please phone Judy – 4787 7298, or Alan – 4787 6983,  
re food donations by December 11<sup>th</sup>.

There will be no normal meeting following the luncheon,  
but a number of items need to be brought  
to your attention – see following box.

On behalf of the Management Committee – a Merry Christmas to all!

#### December 'Meeting'

On the recommendation of the management committee, it is proposed that **Terri Hamilton** be endorsed as a Patron of the Society. All members who attend the Christmas Luncheon will be given the opportunity to speak to the motion.

In addition, **Joan Hailstone** will bring us up to date on the results of the Open Days, and **Judy Johnston** will provide more information on the proposed GCA Seminar to be held in The Lodge.

#### Raffle Results

The winners of the Open Days raffles:-

Drawn at The Lodge on Monday 5<sup>th</sup>  
November:

Hamper – A. Dooley

Quilt – W. Bowman of Lithgow

Plants – drawn on 21<sup>st</sup> October – Yvonne Bates

#### 2013 Calendars

These calendars, produced once again by **David Cook**, proved to be a highlight before, during, and after the Open Days, with many favourable comments being made both about the quality of the 60 photos of the Gardens and individual flowers, and the price.

Of the production run of 1500 calendars, less than 250 remain to be sold, and these can be obtained at the Christmas Lunch on the 15<sup>th</sup> December (\$8 each), or by ringing or writing to the Secretary or any of the management committee to have the calendars posted to you (\$8 plus \$2 postage). They will make an excellent small Christmas gift, and there is still time to post them overseas if required.

**Note** – other items 'left over' from the Open Days will also be available for sale at the lunch.

### *From the President – Judy's Jottings*

A big thank you to all volunteers who helped make this year's Spring opening so successful.

Many visitors who return after a long absence are quite surprised to see how well our Gardens are looking, others who return each year have complimented us on the marvellous display achieved this year.

The expectation of tea and scones is part of the overall package, however the kitchen volunteers are stretched to provide this service. **Val Moorhead** ably juggled with the roster throughout this opening, but more willing workers are needed, even for half a day per week, to be able to cope with this demand in future years.

On Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October, with 15 cm of snow covering Blackheath, the Gardens were closed for essential maintenance (but no-one could get to the Gardens by car anyway), reopening during Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> to a picturesque snowy landscape.

Low attendance at our 21<sup>st</sup> October Jazz Day will cause us to reconsider this very pleasant afternoon of music. The plant raffle drawn on the Jazz Day was won by local Yvonne Bates who is always a supported of the Society. This generous prize of plants was donated by Dick Harris.

The lovely quilt, won by W. Bowman of Lithgow, was made and donated by member **Enid Paddon-Row**, and the basket of 'goodies', donated by member **Marion Freidman**, was won by A. Dooley.

Our 2013 calendar has been a huge success again this Spring, and to **David Cook** who 'brought it to life' we extend our warm appreciation and thanks. Note – a number of calendars have been supplied to Weber's Mount Boyce Nursery and are on sale there for \$8 each, and in addition there will still be some available at the Lodge at our December lunch.

To **Brenda Lush** we owe a great debt of gratitude for the time consuming task of counting all monies taken during the open season.

To those who stoically manned the information booth, congratulations on a job well done, both informing and welcoming visitors and encouraging the gold coins (and many notes) to drop into the donation box.

Christmas is looming, and our meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> December is a time to meet and celebrate – so come to the Lodge and we'll party together.

**A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!**

*Judy Johnston - President*

### *Garden Report – November 2012*

The early part of Spring was spent tidying up, including removing the last of the branches that Lester Ives had taken down. Then came the snow and we had to start all over again, removing branches that were down, pruning back damaged Rhodos and many natives that had been damaged, and removing further branches that Lester took out of trees that were in danger of falling on paths, etc. Lester also chipped a large heap of branches, and there remains another heap to be chipped.

May I thank all of the volunteers who have worked tirelessly to have the Gardens looking good for the Open Days, and also those who relieved Alan on the 'meet & greet' and plant sales. I was going to relieve Alan for some time each week, but with Pat's ongoing leg problem I couldn't, and I am sure the volunteers stepped in to cover for me.

The Jazz Day was a great day, but it is very disappointing to get such a small roll-up – take out the volunteers and their friends and we would have had hardly anyone there.

It is fast approaching Fertiliser Time, and this will probably start in mid-November. We also need to cut back hard the Azaleas in 'Mum & Dad's' garden.

I also want to plant out the Kalmias that Batlow Nursery gave us, and delegate someone to water them regularly.

*Dick Harris – Garden Supervisor*

### *Vale – Peggy Ashton*

Members of the Society will be saddened to hear of the death of long-time member Peggy Ashton on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> November, at the age of 86. Peggy had been in failing health for some time, but had still been able to volunteer her time selling raffle tickets during the early part of the Open Days this year, before moving to Bodington for her last few weeks. Her family have asked if a memorial service for Peggy could be held in the Lodge, probably on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> December.

## *“Gardening in the Blue Mountains” Seminars*

*April 12, 13, 14, 2013*

The combined Blue Mountains Gardens Clubs are to hold five (identical) half-day Seminars in the Mountains on the above dates, as their primary contribution to the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of the crossing of the Blue Mountains by Blaxland, Lawson & Wentworth in 1813.

The seminars are to be held at:-

◆ **Kurrajong Heights** – Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April (6:30 pm-10:30 pm), managed by Kurrajong Heights, Bilpin & Macquarie Towns Garden Clubs

◆ **Springwood** – Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April (8:30 am-12:30 pm), managed by Lower Blue Mountains Garden Club

◆ **Wentworth Falls** – Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April (2:30 pm-6:00 pm), managed by Wentworth Falls, Central Blue Mountains & Leura Home Garden Clubs

◆ **Blackheath** – Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April (8:30 am-12:30 pm), managed by Blackheath and District Horticultural Society & Blue Mountains Rhododendron Society

◆ **Lithgow** – Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April (2:30 pm-6:00 pm), managed by Lithgow and District Garden Club and Oberon Garden Club.

The high profile speakers at each of the seminars, and their subjects, are:-

◆ **Bundeluk**, of the Darug people – ‘“Storyteller” – Bushtucker and traditional indigenous plants, pre 1813 and today’

◆ **Professor Dr Ian Jack**, President, Royal Australian Historical Society – ‘Historical development of the Blue Mountains and its early gardens’

◆ **Alison Halliday**, co-author of the best-selling publication “A Passion for Place – Gardens of the Blue Mountains” – ‘Bells Line of Road gardens’

◆ **Angus Stewart**, noted native plant breeder and presenter of ABC TV’s *Gardening Australia* – ‘Our Blue Mountains of Today’

◆ **Jerry Coleby-Williams**, Director – Seed Savers Foundation, and another prominent presenter of ABC TV’s *Gardening Australia* – ‘Into the Future – Challenges and Opportunities’.

The moderator will be **Jennifer Stackhouse**, for many years the editor of the *Gardening Australia Magazine*.

The concessional cost for the seminars for Garden Club members (including members of the Society) is just \$8.00, but an extra donation to cover the possible deficit, due to the costs of holding the seminars, would be appreciated. The speakers and moderator have put themselves out and are receiving a reduced fee for appearing – to ensure the seminars are a success.

The Blackheath seminar will be held in The Lodge in the Gardens, with attendance limited to 70 people. The Springwood, Wentworth Falls and Lithgow venues are much bigger, with members of the public also invited to attend. At the moment, members of the Katoomba Garden Club are expected to join with the Horticultural Society and us on the Sunday morning. Even though there may be a quota system in place, it would be advisable to register with the Treasurer your interest in attending, and pay ASAP (before the end of January) to ensure a place at this unique and outstanding gardening event.

### *New Members*

We warmly welcome the following new members:

<b>Anna Martin,</b>	Blackheath,
<b>Bernadette Schneider,</b>	Blackheath,
<b>Kevin Brown,</b>	Blacktown,
<b>Julie O’Keeffe,</b>	Blackheath,
<b>Peter Fairchild,</b>	Enmore,
<b>Robin Shute,</b>	Blackheath,
<b>Anto Sartor,</b>	Blackheath,
<b>Garth Wyver,</b>	Blackheath,

and invite them to join in all the Society’s activities.

### *Some Kudos*

Overheard during the Open Days from one of the visitors: “These gardens would have to be in the top 10 in the world of all those we have seen.”

And about the website, in an email to the Secretary: “During the time I was looking through your website (at work), several people, attracted by the stunning photos, asked what I was looking at and made a note to visit when next they’re in the mountains. I’ll be sure to remind them too, as I’m a great fan.”

### *September General Meeting*

The following is a brief summary of the last General Meeting, held at the Lodge on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> September.

President Judy Johnston welcomed the 19 members and 3 visitors, including today's speaker, Juliette Palmer-Frederick, to today's meeting and displayed the advertising material prepared for the Open Days and the 2013 calendars. 12 apologies were received and noted in the Attendance Book.

The Garden Report referred to the fixing of all leaks in the watering system, and general tidying up for Spring. This included removing dead wood from any Rhodos that required it, and removing widow makers and trimming dangerous branches above the Bob Baker Walk. A large fallen eucalypt has been cut and let fall into the swamp, which should eventually grow and cover the branches, etc., as it was too wet and difficult to remove them. Natives that were blocking the view from the lookout near the Lodge have been cleared and pruned, while still leaving a good cover of natives. We are investigating the possibility of extending the lookout a few metres out to really improve the view into the valley.

General Business included the first mention of the proposed Seminars to be held in April next year. (See page 3 for more details.)

Our Guest Speaker, Juliette Palmer-Frederick, told us the story of the ghost of the 'Woman in Black', said to be Caroline Collits, the wife of William Collits, who died in 1842. Caroline, the daughter of the infamous William James, who had supposedly helped his wife to commit suicide a few years previously, married William in November 1840. Caroline was murdered by her brother-in-law, John Walsh, near Soldier's Perch on the Victoria Pass on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1842. Walsh was tried for the murder, convicted and sentenced to death in March and hanged in

Bathurst in May 1842. Caroline may have been buried in Collits' graveyard at Collits Inn, but no headstone has been found.

There was said to be a 100 year curse put on that part of the road, with the ghost being seen quite often. Henry Lawson even wrote a poem "The Ghost at the Second Bridge" in 1889.

Juliette said that there had been no sign of the ghost after 1942.

### *'Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow'*

It seems that pictures of our 15 cms of snow in October were seen around the world. Some of our visitors, from France and New Zealand, said they had seen the pictures on TV in their home countries, and Brenda's cousin in Manchester said the pictures had also be shown in England.

One fact was proved during the snowfall – Rhododendrons and Azaleas don't mind a bit of snow, but some of the Australian natives can't handle it, as evidenced by the number of gum tree 'widow makers' left hanging above the paths when branches have broken under the weight of 15 cms of snow on them. It appears we lost only 2 rhododendrons in the valley, and only because they were split in two by something else dropping on them from a great height.

**David Cook** now has access to enough snow photos for the next half dozen calendars. It was surprising how many enterprising people, both members and non-members, managed to get to the Gardens on the 12<sup>th</sup> October to take their 'once in 40 years or so' photos. One photo I have seen of the lake with about 95% of it frozen over was truly spectacular.

Our thanks go to **Tony Jaques**, the publicity officer for the Rhododendron Festival Committee, who has kindly donated to the Society a magnificent photo of part of the Gardens under snow. This photo, now hanging on the wall of the Lodge near the Library, received many favourable comments from visitors during the Open Days.

***Visitors to Campbell Rhododendron Gardens  
– 2012 Open Days***

The 'Home Towns' of some of the visitors to the Gardens during the Open Days included:

**Blue Mountains** Bilpin, Blackheath, Blaxland, Bullaburra, East Kurrajong, Faulconbridge, Grose Wold, Hazelbrook, Katoomba, Kurrajong, Lawson, Leura, Little Hartley, Medlow Bath, Mount Victoria, Shipley, Springwood, Valley Heights, Wentworth Falls, Winmalee, Woodford

**Sydney** Alexandria, Alford's Point, Allambie Heights, Annandale, Arncliffe, Ashfield, Auburn, Avalon, Balmain, Bangor, Baulkham Hills, Belmore, Belrose, Beverly Hills, Blacktown, Bondi Junction, Bronte, Burns Bay, Cabarita, Camden, Cammeray, Campbelltown, Canterbury, Caringbah, Carlingford, Castle Cove, Castlecrag, Castle Hill, Centennial Park, Chatswood, Cheltenham, Cherrybrook, Clovelly, Coogee, Corrimal, Cremorne, Cronulla, Crows Nest, Curl Curl, Darlinghurst, Dolls Point, Drummoyne, Dural, Earlwood, Eastwood, Edgecliff, Emu Plains, Engadine, Epping, Ermington, Erskineville, Forestville, Frenchs Forest, Glebe, Glenmore Park, Greenacre, Greenwich, Haberfield, Heathcote, Hornsby, Hornsby Heights, Hunters Hill, Hurstville, Illawong, Kellyville, Killara, Kingsford, Kingsgrove, Kirribilli, Lane Cove, La Pouse, Leichhardt, Lidcombe, Liverpool, Loftus, Manly, Marrickville, Mascot, Menai, Minchinbury, Mona Vale, Mosman, Mt Colah, Narellan, Newport, Normanhurst, North Curl Curl, Oatley, Paddington, Padstow, Parramatta, Pennant Hills, Penrith, Pyrmont, Randwick, Rose Bay, Roseville, Rouse Hill, Ryde, St Ives, Stanhope Gardens, Stanmore, Strathfield, Surry Hills, Sutherland, Taren Point, Thornleigh, Ultimo, Waitara, Warrawee, Wentworthville, West Pennant Hills, West Pymble, West Ryde, Windsor, Woronora, Yowie Bay, Zetland

**NSW** Austinmer, Avoca Beach, Bar Beach, Bathurst, Belmont North, Berry, Black Hill, Blayney, Booker Bay, Bulli, Camden, Chittaway Point, Coffs Harbour, Cooranbong, Corrimal, Croudace Bay, Dorrigo, Dubbo, Eleebana, Figtree, Gosford, Goulburn, Green Point, Hardys Bay, Jerrabomberra, Kiama, Lake Haven, Lisarow, Lithgow, Maitland, Manilla, Matcham, Milton, Mount Elliot, Narara, Newcastle, Nowra, Oberon, Orange, Ourimbah, Point Clare,

Port Macquarie, Saratoga, Shellharbour, Tamworth, Tascott, Tenterfield, Terrigal, Toukley, Tweed Heads, Umina, Unanderra, Valentine, Wallsend, Wamberal, Wombeyan, Woy Woy

**Interstate** ACT – Belconnen, Farrer, Forde, Forrest, Gungahlin, Kambah, Lyneham, Spence, Watson, Woden, Yarralumla

**Northern Territory** – Darwin

**Queensland** – Airlie Beach, Albany Creek, Beenleigh, Blackbutt, Brisbane, Bundaberg, Cairns, Clayfield, Ferny Grove, Hervey Bay, Indooroopilly, Kawana Waters, Laidley, Mackay, Molendinar, Salisbury, Stanthorpe, Townsville, Woolloongabba

**South Australia** – Adelaide, Athelstone, Clare Valley, Gawler, Kensington Park, Kidman Park, Norwood, Peterborough, Unley

**Tasmania** – Hobart

**Victoria** – Berwick, Bittern, Box Hill, Castlemaine, Geelong, Glen Waverley, Hampton, Horsham, Longford, North Balwyn, Pakenham, Portland, South Bank, Streatham, Warragul, Warrnambool

**Western Australia** – Bremer Bay, Bunbury, Kallaroo, Mandurah, Ocean Reef, Perth, Stirling

**Overseas** **Brazil, Canada** (Toronto), **China** (Shanghai), **Denmark** (Faborg), **England** ((Cambridgeshire – Huntingdon), (Cheshire – Wilmslow), (Cumberland – Keswick), (Derbyshire – Curbar), (Devon – Plymouth, Totnes), (Dorset – Poole), Essex, (Hampshire – Southampton), (Kent – Maidstone), (Lancashire – Cleveleys, Liverpool, Southport), London, (Northamptonshire – Northampton), (Northumberland – Newcastle), Staffordshire, (Sussex – Brighton), (Warwickshire – Birmingham), (Yorkshire – North Riding, Whitby)),

**Finland, France, Germany** (Bremen),

**Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Korea, Malaysia,**

**Nepal, Netherlands** (Amsterdam),

**New Zealand** (Blenheim, Christchurch, Wellington), **Northern Ireland** (Cork),

**Philippines, Poland,**

**Scotland** (Ross and Cromarty – Conon Bridge),

**Singapore, South Africa** (Cape Town),

**Switzerland** (Berne), **Tibet,**

**USA** (Alaska, (California – San Francisco), Georgia, (Idaho – Boise), (Massachusetts – Boston), (Oregon – Portland), (Oklahoma – Oklahoma City), Pennsylvania, Wisconsin),

**Wales** (Cardiff, Glamorganshire, Swansea)

**Management Committee 2012 – 2013**

***President***

Judy Johnston  
4787 7298

***Vice President***

Jeannette Adrian  
4787 7904

***Vice President***

*and Garden Supervisor*  
Dick Harris

***Secretary***

Alan Lush  
4787 6983

***Treasurer***

Joan Hailstone  
4787 5859

***Membership Secretary***

Marion Freidman  
4787 8416

***Committee Members*** Beryl Black, Geoff Cannings, David Cook, Julia Hanley,  
Sonia Levitt, Val Moorhead, Diane Twose

***Meeting Hostess*** Bette Brown

***Editor/Webmaster*** Alan Lush

***website*** – [www.rhodogarden.org.au](http://www.rhodogarden.org.au)

**BLUE MOUNTAINS RHODODENDRON SOCIETY OF NSW INC  
PO BOX 238, BLACKHEATH NSW 2785**

