

# Blue Mountains Rhododendron Society of New South Wales Inc

Inaugurated April 2nd 1969

## MAY / JUNE 2017 NEWSLETTER

Vol. 43 No. 3

PO Box 238 Blackheath

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**GENERAL MEETING**  
**Saturday 17th June 2017**  
**The Lodge**  
**2:00pm Start**

**Afternoon Tea will be served after the Meeting. Please bring a plate to share.  
We welcome all members, especially those who have recently joined us.**

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### **Deb's Dodderings**

Alan is away having (I'm sure) a wonderful time at this year's Chelsea Flower Show and we can look forward to his presentation at our June meeting.

The wonderful autumn weather has produced the perfect temperatures for a magnificent display of leaves. Not only has Blackheath village been packed with camera-carrying tourists but so have our Gardens. Our Maple Walk has really attracted attention - as the state of the toilets has affirmed. A HUGE thank you to the workers who tackle the toilets each week!

Speaking of 'toilets', the new block is well under way and your committee is planning a grand opening with various committee members vying for 'first flush rights'.

On the first weekend of May, 6 Rhododendrons were planted to the left of the lookout in honour of Georgie Jeffries who was one of the Society's founding members and its oldest member. Georgie's daughter Jenny Rothwell along with friends and family attended and after the planting, they joined several Committee Members for a morning tea. This planting of Rhododendrons links the Lookout with the

Guides Trefoil Group of which Georgie was also a member.

The re-wiring of the Lodge is booked and will happen in the next few weeks, and new fly screens have been fitted to the windows. These will contribute to more comfortable (and fly-free) open days.

The fantastic RG video can now be seen on the Blue Mountains website.

Happy mulching, Deb Wells - V.P.

### **GUEST SPEAKER - Alan Lush** **England - Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow**

Alan has been a very active member of the Rhododendron Society for many years. He was Secretary and Newsletter Editor of the Society for 7 years and is currently President. Alan is an avid gardener and has been a member of the Horticultural Society which broadened his interest in gardens and in Rhododendrons. At our June meeting, he will tell us about his recent trip to The United Kingdom. Amongst his images he will include photos of Gardens and Chelsea Flower Show. Come and hear Alan's thoughts about the UK. It will be a fascinating talk.

## GARDEN REPORT MAY 2017

Rhododendrons were planted on Saturday 6th May to the left of the Lookout. We have also planted 3 Kalmia and 5 Mollis in the area near the sewer tank and pumps and also some Mollis on the left of the path to the old toilet block. Some more stone work has been done on the drain into the ponds near the Pryor bridge.

The grass sown in the valley area is progressing well. The first area sown is good. The second area may need some spot sowing in the spring and some top dressing to level out a few hollows.

A handrail was taken down on the Zig Zag path to allow access to plant the Georgie Jefferies Rhododendrons. The rail and rusted bolts holding the original rail have been replaced. Georgie's family paid for the rhododendrons as well as giving the Society a donation of \$100.

Prior to planting, the area was tidied up and the weeds sprayed. The timber deck overlooking the area was oiled.

Considerable time was taken to rake out small rocks from the soil, and rocks dumped in the valley by our contractor Tony Crawford. These rocks were placed on the lower edge of the fire trail under the power lines to divert water from eroding the area damaged by Endeavour Energy contractors. I received a letter from Endeavour stating they would look into the problem caused by their contractors - no further correspondence has been received.

Dick Harris, Garden Supervisor.

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## MEMBERSHIP

We warmly welcome Sarah Doyle as a member of the Society and invite her to become involved in the activities that the Society has to offer.

Sarah Doyle - Blackheath

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## PROJECT REPORT

Anyone who has been to the Gardens in the last month will have seen that the project is well under way. We expect it to be completed by the end of June. THIS YEAR!!

There will still be a lot of work for Dick and the volunteers - landscaping across the front and around the sides of the block and tidying up the bottom edge of the car park. The lines will need to be repainted also but it looks like they will be able to be put in the same positions. We will not know this for sure until the builder has finished and cleaned up his mess.

The whole area will be in good order and condition before the Open Days this year.

**Tool Shed** The apple to go on the toolshed has been made and the Men's Shed is going to do the sign: "BAANER'S ROADSIDE APPLE STALL" to be placed under the apple. A more detailed story giving a brief history of the stall and the circumstances of the Baaners' generous donation will be engraved and displayed nearby.

**Gates** Two new timber panels have been purchased to replace the two that have started to rot on the exit gate. These will be painted and attached in the next week or so. The remaining panels and pipe work will be painted too.

Geoff Cannings, Project Manager.

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A poem written on October 13, 1951 by E.E. Lindsell and printed in the First Blackheath Rhododendron Festival Official Programme October 31<sup>st</sup> to November 8<sup>th</sup> 1953

## Gardeners!

I'm a gardener and I'm OK  
I sleep all night and I plant all day!  
I dress in grubby clothing, and hang  
around with slugs.  
Oh I'm happy in the garden  
With dirt and plants and bugs!

New gardeners learn by trowel and error.

My wife works over-thyme in her herb  
garden before she decides to cummin.

## RHODODENDRON TIME

At Grafton in the spring, you'll see  
The lovely Jacaranda Tree  
With flowers so blue and leaves like lace  
And avenues so full of grace

Then on to Orange you may go  
To see their lovely floral show  
Their Cherry Festival so gay  
A really marvellous display

But at our Mountain Paradise  
Our Rhododendrons will suffice  
To give us joy, and food for thought  
And other things, which can't be bought

And so each town has its own charm  
A welcome too, so rich and warm  
But visit us to see the best  
Our gorgeous blooms will do the rest

We'll welcome you to Blackheath Town  
Where Rhododendron blooms are grown  
In every colour, shade and hue  
So come along, there's room for you

---oOo---

This poem was found by Wayne Hanley in a  
1951 Rhododendron Festival Programme .

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## Presidents' Row

On the Monday before Easter this year, we had a short ceremony in the Valley to recognise the work, leadership and enthusiasm of our past President - Julia Hanley. We gathered in front of Dick Harris and Julia. Dick spoke of Julia's tremendous achievements during the three years that she held the position of the President of the Society and the Gardens. With the traditional silver spade in Julia's hands and with some help from Dick, a hole was dug for the next rhododendron for the Presidents' Way. As Dick said, the name of the Rhododendron was very appropriate for Julia - **Our Gem**. At the end of the short ceremony, all present clapped and thanked Julia for her guidance in the growth of the gardens.

## THE NEW REFRIGERATOR BEING MANOEUVRED into the KITCHEN AT THE LODGE!!!

The Management Committee decided that the old refrigerator was too old and small to be able cope with the the work and food storage that is needed. So a new one was ordered and delivered. Problem: it wouldn't fit through the door! Solution: lift it over the servery bench! The first photograph below shows the fridge being lifted up onto the servery. The second shows the fridge has been safely taken over the servery and into the kitchen. Yippee - The refrigerator is being gently manoeuvred into place.



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## Management Committee 2016 - 2017

**President**

Alan Lush 4787 6983

**Vice President**

Deb Wells 4787 6724

**Treasurer**

Val Moorehead 4787 8267

**Secretary**

Julia Hanley 0408 336 635

**Garden Supervisor**

Dick Harris

**Membership Secretary**

Bill Webster 4787 6082

**Committee Members:** Geoff Cannings, Anna Martin, David Cook, Sonia Levitt, DiTwose, Brough Warren  
**Meeting Hostess:** Joan Hailstone

**Editor:** Sonia Levitt

**Website:** [www.rhodogarden.org](http://www.rhodogarden.org)

If you have any articles or news for the newsletter, please send to Sonia at [salevitt13@bigpond.com](mailto:salevitt13@bigpond.com).

Thank-you



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