

Blue Mountains Rhododendron Society of New South Wales Inc.

Inaugurated April 2nd 1969

**May / June 2018
NEWSLETTER**

Vol 44 No 3

PO Box 238 Blackheath 2785

GENERAL MEETING Saturday 16th June 2018 at The Lodge 2.00pm start

**We welcome all members, especially those who have recently joined us, and visitors.
Afternoon Tea is served after the meeting, please bring a small plate of food to share.**

GUEST SPEAKER: MEGAN HALCROFT Subject: BEE BUSINESS

Megan has studied and worked in many different fields. She began as a general nurse, then the RAAF, a theatre nurse at Westmead Hospital, remedial massage, Horticultural Science degree, enjoyed the Apiculture unit, garden maintenance. Then during study for a BSc in 2008 given a project about stingless bees. Granted a Phd in 2013 her thesis was titled, "Investigations into the Biology, Behaviour and Phylogeny of a Potential Crop Pollinator: the Australian Stingless Bee, *Austroplebeia australis*".

A quote from her website, "During my many and varied studies I've become more appreciative of the importance of diversity within our lives and our environment. It's been a privilege getting to know our native stingless bees, up close and personal, and I really have come to love them. I now want to share my passion for bees, of all kinds, with other people and increase community awareness of their importance in our lives. Hopefully we can all learn together and, in so doing, help in their conservation."

From the President: Alan's Account

Welcome to all our members!

There are two major items of interest under way at present – planning for this year's Open Days, and the improvement in communications to and from The Lodge.

A new range of tea towels (50% linen/50% cotton, with Rhododendron themes and the Gardens named) have been discussed and approved by the committee. We hope to have them available for sale at the AGM in August.

Discussions have also taken place about having jig saws for sale for our younger visitors, featuring our very own Rhoda the Rhodosaurus (name still to be confirmed). Our thanks go to Judy Johnston and Catherine Harker for their outstanding efforts.

Blackheath Public School has been approached to see if they are willing to take part again in the Poster Competition, where each pupil produces a painting with a Gardens / Rhododendron / Azalea theme, with book tokens being given to those judged to be the best in each class. The best paintings are then made into posters and used as advertising for the Open Days. Not only was the Principal very enthusiastic about the school taking part again, but she said last year's paintings put up at the school had only been taken down about a month ago!

After many difficulties in the use of a machine loaned to the Society by Bendigo Bank to process EFTPOS transactions during the Open Days in the last few years, the Society has decided to install a 'Telstra Go Smart Repeater' package to improve both mobile phone reception and the bank machine connectivity in The Lodge. Hopefully no more having to walk up to the parking area to make a mobile phone call or process an EFTPOS transaction. We are hoping all this will be in place before the June general meeting. Next 'problem' – changing over to the NBN.

Alan Lush – President 2017-18

Garden Report:

Proteas and Australian Native Proteaceae have been planted and a recording of varieties has been done. I have just arrived back from Plantmark today to get additional Proteas and Natives to finish that part of the project. I also got some more Rhodos for spring sales and will hold these under irrigation at my place.

Geoff and I have done some more stonework and will continue this on Mondays. I have sprayed weed in the silt trap and hopefully on Monday we can see if we can allow water to enter the Lily pond. If we can't I will go ahead and get Tony Crawford to clean out the silt trap.

We have had to continue with watering the freshly planted plants and unless we get some rain this will have to continue on Mondays.

As usual Dodder has been removed and also the dead wood in the Rhodos has been cut out.

On Monday I will get some volunteers to put 2 posts into the ground behind the big bin and stay these with steel posts so that the contractor emptying the bin does not push it back into the Banksia behind it.

After the Protea project is finished I propose to continue planting some conifers in the Dr. North Conifer Garden. I have a wonderful collection of conifers and will donate these to the Garden. This should finish the area and make it a very interesting area for visitors.

Dick Harris Garden Supervisor

(Editor many thanks Dick for your kind donation and for all your work.)

direct credit to Account name: BMR Soc,
BSB: 062-507, Account number 10012075. In
“description area” place your initial and surname.
Looking forward to hearing of you all continuing your membership.

Bill Webster

IT'S ALWAYS GOOD TO HAVE A PLAN

Any archive worthy of that description will usually contain at least a few maps and plans, along with all the other documentation and ephemera that invariably finds its way into the vault as time passes. The archives of the Blue Mountains Rhododendron Society is certainly no exception. It contains both maps and plans, but what might surprise anyone taking the time to look into it more closely, is the number and diversity of these items that are to be found there.

Maps are multi-functional creatures. They are usually practical in their intentions and are quite utilitarian to the extent that they give the viewer specific information about the place or subject they depict. What is less readily considered is that maps, just like people, evolve and change over time and it is interesting to look at the way in which the presentation and production of them has altered as the years go by. In some instances, maps are also a thing of beauty, being colourful and attractively presented. In our modern age of minimalism, we find that maps no longer include the degree of adornment that they did in the centuries past. Some would argue that this is a good thing and maps should not be “busy” with superfluous decoration. But for those of us who love maps and enjoy them as a recreation, or for those who are collectors of maps, such adornment adds spice and character to the experience of using them.

The BMRS archives incorporates a number of maps of the local area and of the town of Blackheath itself. Some of them are quite historic. The map of the village of Blackheath shown below sets out the original town as it was when planned in 1881. This particular map from our archive is a copy of the original which is held in the Mitchell Library, but it is nevertheless a most interesting and engaging inclusion in our records.



Project Report:

BMCC Community Grant:

Applications have been assessed by the Committee and funding recommendations will now be reported to the 29 May Council Meeting. Successful applicants will receive funding in early June.

Fertiliser Store:

The new weatherproof doors have been fitted by Bryce Sutcliffe and painted and a work bench built in the old gents toilet . There is still some work to be done tidying up and sealing the old sewer outlets with cement.

Jobs Pending:

New path to be made beside the gazebo into the central area and a hand rail put beside this.
A rail along the native garden to discourage visitors taking a short cut to the toilets.

Geoff Cannings Project Manager

Membership report:

New members: Mr. Raffael Garofano (Feb 2018) and Mr. John Broadfoot (April 2018), Sally Cardison (Mon. worker).

Please remember Membership renewal is due on 1st July. See attached form or preferably



In it we can clearly see structure of the town (village) as it was in the years before the Bloodworth Estate was sold, that 20 acres of land extending out from the original Gardner's Inn which today contains the bulk of the retail premises of our town.

Other more recent maps to be found in our vault are quite precise surveyors' descriptions of parts of our local landscape, including the area which has today become the Campbell Rhododendron Gardens.



Norm Campbell, in his years as Garden Supervisor, used maps such as the one above extensively. He would modify the base map and alter its contents to include additional information and colour detail relevant to his work and what the BMRS was doing. As we all know, the Gardens is very much a working place, always has been, always will be. Just ask the current Supervisor and any one of his team of workers. Plans of the gardens are an integral part of the business of the place and we are fortunate to have quite detailed and well-drawn plans in the records to assist us today and into the future. Through the four decades of its existence, countless thousands of plants have been introduced into the area, many of these donated by individuals. A comprehensive record of these plantings has been established and maintained as the years have passed and they can be seen in the archives in any one of nearly 40 plans each of which depicts a specific area of the Gardens and includes not only an accurate location of each plant but also a list of what it is and who donated it.

As well as plans for the main structural areas, there are also additional plans for specific sections such as the Dr North Conifer Garden.

Much effort by several of the



Monday workers and the Garden Supervisor is currently being made, with new structures and new plantings. A modified plan for this area will need to be created to record it all in the archives for future use.

In addition to planting plans the archives also include plans of such utilitarian things as the locations of water supply lines and valves, irrigation arrangements, waste disposal lines from the lodge and toilet block and a variety of other essential information sources. These are not things of beauty. Instead, they are purely functional but are nevertheless, maps in their own right. For aesthetic attraction and colour, we have to turn to the maps and plans drawn for BMRS by Norm Campbell, but that is a task which must wait a few months for another newsletter article.

Wayne Hanley BMRS Archives

VALE:

It is with great sadness that we report the deaths of Warren Boorman in April and Libby Raines in May.

Warren was an enthusiastic supporter of our Society. He acted as our auditor for many years and as returning officer a number of times. He was very involved in the Gardening community in the Blue Mountains. He belonged to the Central BM Garden Club and was the BM Zone co-ordinator for Garden Clubs Australia. He organised 2 yearly coach trips to interesting places.

Libby was an early member of our Society. She and her husband, Keith, were constant visitors to the Gardens. She often spoke at meetings about a wide variety of plants and the development of their beautiful Garden, Merrygarth, at Mt. Wilson. Each year she donated many cards depicting her amazing botanical paintings. She donated an unusual form of Enkianthus to swell the numbers of this genus planted in the Gardens.

We send our thoughts and best wishes to both families.

Blackheath Day. 12th May. First stall for BMRS.



Very successful! Lots of interest and volunteers gained lots of brilliant ideas. Well done to Deb, Val & Di.

Management Committee 2017 - 2018

President

Alan Lush 4787 6983

Secretary

Pam Nash 0417 485 592

Treasurer

Val Moorhead 4787 8267

Vice President

Deb Wells 0418 622 307

Garden Supervisor

Dick Harris 0439 878 33

Membership Secretary

Bill Webster 4787 6082

Committee Members: Geoff Cannings, David Cook, Di Twose, Sonia Levitt, Mary Lawley, Brough Warren, Julia Hanley

Meeting Hostess: Judy Johnston:

website – www.rhodogarden.org.au

Webmaster: Deb Wells

Editor: Julia Hanley

Any articles or news for the Newsletter, please send to Julia email julia@hanley.ws Thank you



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