

Blue Mountains Rhododendron Society of New South Wales Inc.

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NEWSLETTER

Vol. 36 No. 5

PO Box 238, Blackheath, 2785.

General Meeting Saturday 18 September 2010 at The Lodge 2:00 pm start

We welcome all members, especially those who have recently joined us

Because of the Gardens Open Days throughout October, the usual bi-monthly meeting has been brought forward to September

Guest Speaker at the General Meeting – Jeannette Adrian

Election of Management Committee for 2010-2011

At the Annual General Meeting of the Society, held at The Lodge on Saturday 21st August 2010, the following management committee was elected for the coming twelve months.

President – Rob Emanuel
Vice President (and immediate Past President) –
Judy Johnston
Vice President – Jeannette Adrian
Vice President – Robert Reid
Vice President and Secretary – Alan Lush
Treasurer (and Public Officer) – Joan Hailstone
Committee Members –

Barry Barnes
Beryl Black
Bette Brown
David Cook
Nancy Etccl
Marion Freidman
Dick Harris

The committee positions of Archivist, Garden Supervisor, Minutes Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Social Secretary, and Webmaster will be confirmed at the first Management Committee meeting in September.

Our thanks go to Terri Hamilton for chairing the meeting with her usual aplomb during the election of the new committee.

Survey of the Gardens

Work is underway on the Survey of the Gardens, to provide the Society with up-to-date plans of 'just what is there – and where'. Three quotations were received from various surveying firms, with that from Mark Bowler & Associates of Wentworth Falls being accepted.

Among the items to be included on the final plan are: boundaries, fences, gates, etc; made and unmade roads, walking tracks, steps; parking areas and grassed areas; lakes, ponds, water courses; and The Lodge and all other made structures.

This survey will complement and enhance the current series of maps, diagrams and handwritten notes held by the Society from its inception. We will be given copies of all the data produced in the Survey, with the facility to add other significant items as we see fit (service lines, watering points, locations of groups of (or individual) plants, etc).

To give members an insight into where we have come from, and where we are going, Jeannette Adrian will give a talk at the meeting on the maps we currently hold, with some of their known shortcomings, and Barry Barnes will give an update on the Survey and where it is headed.

President's Annual Report 2009-2010

In this fortieth year of the Campbell Rhododendron Gardens, members of the Society can look back with pride over the years of achievement by volunteers, which has resulted in the creation of this Blackheath landmark.

We acknowledge members, community groups and many non-members who have freely given assistance and welcome donations throughout this year, in fact throughout the forty years of its existence.

Recently we have had great improvements made to garden areas including the Dr Matheson-Lines lookout and surrounds, the Members' Native Walk and landscaping around the Lodge extension, itself a major and much needed project. The labelling of all introduced plants and selected natives is the ultimate aim of the engraving and labelling program undertaken by Dick Harris, Jeannette Adrian, Alan Lush and others.

At the instigation of Rob Emanuel we now have an informative professional website to connect us with garden lovers and prospective visitors.

Alan Lush has been closely involved in this project, as well as attending to his many secretarial and editorial duties. Robert Reid has taken the job of Minutes Secretary which relieves our overworked Secretary of this chore.

David Cook, our official photographer whose pictures enhance our new website, has donated a tall garden lamp to be installed near the information shed for use at evening functions.

Beryl Black, our indefatigable archivist, has spent many hours researching and bringing the archives up to date.

Marion Freidman, with her laptop, has listed and indexed all the extra books donated, making this an excellent reference and lending library. Marion has also taken on the position of Membership Secretary which has become a computerised job, and our sincere thanks go to ex-Membership Secretary Bette Brown, whose hard work has been most appreciated.

To Nancy Etccl, who resigned during the year due to ill health, we offer our great appreciation of your help and professionalism during your years as Secretary.

Our thanks also go to Les Hayward who had to resign from the committee during the year due to pressure of other commitments.

Though not a member of the committee, Barry Barnes has undertaken the job of getting quotes and organising a registered survey of the cultivated areas – a job long overdue.

Treasurer Joan Hailstone has efficiently tangled with endless columns of figures throughout the

year in the most relaxed fashion, and continues as a valued committee member.

Dick Harris as Garden Supervisor has led a team of Monday workers with wisdom and never-failing enthusiasm, and his decades of experience on Committee has been invaluable.

All members of the Management Committee have been involved and active in matters relating to the gardens, and I thank them for their help and friendship throughout my term as President.

It has been a pleasure to work with such a many-talented and forward thinking group.

Sadly during the past year we noted the deaths of two long time members, Dr Joan Storey, who variously occupied the positions of Secretary and President, and Mrs Joyce Brister. Both had a passionate interest in, and knowledge of, Australian native plants which they willingly shared with others. Their presence will be missed.

Now it's time for the Society to elect a new President and Management Committee, who will be assured of the support of all during the coming year.

Judy Johnston – President (2007-2010)

www.rhodogarden.org.au

The Society's new website has been up and running for a couple of months now, and is attracting quite a bit of interest, and many favourable comments.

Rob Emanuel has been busy arranging for 'reciprocal links' on the websites of a number of other organisations – we put links to their sites on our website, and they do the same for us on theirs. At present there are reciprocal links with Blue Mountains sites (Council, Tourism, etc), other Garden and similar sites, and a site where comments can be made.

At least two new members have joined after seeing on the website what the Society has to offer. There have been a number of enquiries about holding a wedding in the Gardens, and some Melbournites found we are one of the top attractions on the mountains to visit when they are up here for a wedding in October.

It looks like our advertising is starting to pay off!

Annual Garden Report 2009-2010

The last 12 months have seen many advances in the garden. We have planted the Members' Native Walk and installed a timber sign, and also a sign on the Presidents' Row.

Our program to label the plants in the garden is up & running, and already several of the Rhodos have been named, including the Bob Baker Walk and adjacent area, the area across the lake and some of the area inside the main driveway.

The pools in front of the Lodge have been cleaned out & sealed, and the lilies divided. Also the lily pond in the valley area has been cleaned of silt, which was quite a task.

The Glade Walk area, where a lot of holly and other weeds were removed, has had some native ferns planted. Ongoing weed removal has happened in this area as well as a follow-up removal of Himalayan Honeysuckle in the swamp area. We are now attacking the holly at the end of the Quota Walk.

This year has seen a lot of large Eucalypts come down in the wind; any that across paths and roads have been cut up & removed. However there are still some just lying in the bush.

We are having some survey work done in the garden so that our overall plan of the garden will be more accurate, and we can then show the plants on our plans in their true position. To do this we have put taller, colour coded stakes on various watering points.

On top of all this there has of course been the ongoing maintenance such as fertilising, weed control, pruning, spraying, repairing paths, etc.

This garden could not operate without the huge effort put in by all the volunteers – not just those in the garden, but those printing the plant labels, making the cups of coffee, etc & serving them in our open period, producing the newsletters, sending the letters, keeping the books, arranging for our website, and even cleaning the toilets. May I, on behalf of all members, give these a big vote of thanks?

In closing, I have got our garden on Graham Ross's website, and am attempting to get the Channel 9 Today Show to feature us. If anyone knows someone that may be able to help us with achieving this, could they please contact me?

Dick Harris – Garden Supervisor

David Cook's comment on how we do things differently here in the Southern Hemisphere – 'The Azalea called "Mother's Day" has flowered nicely – for Father's Day!'

Coming Events

Working Bee

The next major Working Bee will be held in the Gardens on Saturday 25th September, starting at 9:00 am. The object is to put the finishing touches to the gardens prior to the Open Days of October and early November to ensure they are looking their best, and to complement the sterling efforts carried out by the band of Monday workers.

Most of the work to be done should be of a fairly light nature (no cutting up of fallen trees required), so come when you can and stay for as long as you are able. Tea/coffee will be available in The Lodge, but please provide your own lunch.

So, come along, enjoy the company of like-minded people, and help to beautify one of the main attractions on the Mountains.

Fundraising Dinner

Also on the 25th September, Rob Emanuel will be hosting another of his popular dinners at The Lodge. Dick Harris has offered to lead a 'Champagne Garden Tour' with wine at the Lake at 5:00 pm, followed by the serving of the food in The Lodge at 6:30 pm.

There are still some places available for the dinner, so please contact Rob Emanuel (4787 5558) if you wish to take part in an enjoyable evening of fine wining and dining.

Open Days

As mentioned in previous newsletters, The Lodge will be open during the period Friday 1st October to Monday 8th November for the serving of Devonshire Teas, selling of souvenirs and plants, and general welcoming of the many visitors to the Gardens – local, state, interstate and overseas. Jenny Curtin has been doing an admirable job in arranging a roster of members to help out during the period, but would still like to hear from anyone who would like to volunteer their time – even for just half a day – to help spread the load.

Jenny can be contacted on 4787 5558, or you can leave a message at The Lodge 4787 8695.

Management Committee 2010 – 2011

President

Rob Emanuel
4787 5558
0412 062 236

Vice Presidents

Jeannette Adrian – 4787 7904
Judy Johnston – 4787 7298
Robert Reid – 4787 5253

Garden Supervisor

Dick Harris

Secretary

Alan Lush
4787 6983

Treasurer

Joan Hailstone
4787 5859

Membership Secretary

Marion Freidman
4787 8416

Committee Members Barry Barnes, Beryl Black, Bette Brown, David Cook, Nancy Etccl

Editor/Webmaster Alan Lush

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