

Blue Mountains Rhododendron Society of New South Wales Inc.

Inaugurated April 2nd 1969

September/October 2012

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 38 No. 5

PO Box 238, Blackheath, 2785.

General Meeting Saturday 15th September 2012 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 again been brought forward to September

Election of Management Committee for 2012-2013

At the Annual general meeting of the Society, held at The Lodge on Saturday 18th August 2012, the following members of the management committee were elected for the coming twelve months.

President – Judy Johnston

Vice Presidents – Jeannette Adrian
Dick Harris

Secretary – Alan Lush

Treasurer (and Public Officer) – Joan Hailstone

Membership Secretary – Marion Freidman

Committee Members –

Beryl Black
Geoff Cannings
David Cook
Julia Hanley
Sonia Levitt
Val Moorhead
Diane Twose

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

Our thanks go to Sabine Erica,
President of the
Rhododendron Festival Committee
for chairing the meeting
during the election of the new committee.

September Guest Speaker Juliette Palmer-Frederick

Juliette is the Director of the Blue Mountains Radio Players, with fascinating life experiences!

Come along and be prepared to be entertained. I can't tell you on which topic she will be speaking, but from what she was telling me it could be on anything from entertaining American troops on R & R in Sydney in the Second World War, to planting Rhododendrons at Yester Grange at Wentworth Falls, to performing radio plays, to Collett's Inn & ghost to

2013 Calendars

Don't forget – our splendid 2013 calendars, produced by **David Cook** and **Jimmy Lim**, are on sale now at a cost of \$8 each. For those members unable to pick them up at the Lodge, we can post one out to you at a total cost of \$10 (which includes postage). Just send your details (and a cheque) to:

Blue Mountains Rhododendron Society,
PO Box 238, Blackheath, NSW 2785.

If you want to send one overseas for Christmas, surface mail to England closes on 21st September.

President's Annual Report 2011-2012

On behalf of the Management Committee I am pleased to present this report for the year ending 30th June 2012.

Overall the events of 2011-2012 call to mind the fundamental elements of the ancient Greek philosophers – earth, air, fire and water. Each of these natural factors influenced our progress and achievement throughout the year. (One can easily see we need to propitiate many gods.)

Firstly – earth. One major achievement this year has been the repair and resealing of the service road, and extending the sealed surfacing along the valley up to the Wentworth Street entrance. This will allow much better access for disabled visitors in future. Other improvements included the re-spacing of daffodils along the exit driveway, together with the refurbishment of the rockery adjacent to the Lodge.

Large maintenance activities continued, including:

- * Seasonal application of fertilisers to rhododendrons, azaleas and camellias,
- * Pruning, weed treatment or removal, pathway and seating improvements,
- * New signage installed near the entrance, car park and dam.

Plant labelling continued only slowly, and no further surveying was undertaken owing to other priorities and for safety reasons.

Secondly – air. Damage caused by the winds of 5-6 July 2011 was a real disaster for us. For the only time in the Society's history we had to close the Gardens to public access. This closure continued until 12 September 2011 when access was again safe within all but one-third of the planted area, and this part remains closed now and until all dangerous trees/branches are removed.

We were grateful for the disaster relief support and consequent work by Angophora tree Services in removing and chipping felled timber. Our own volunteers achieved wonders during the whole year.

Thirdly – fire. Other priorities intervened and the planned hazard reduction burn was postponed. Necessary clearing has been completed by our volunteers.

Lastly – water. Alerted by a large bill last May, our volunteers turned most of their efforts to tracing sources of leaks and repairing pipes, joints and stop-valves. That exhausting work has continued until early August, saving us some thousands of dollars in plumbing costs.

As a point of interest, one leak caused the death of a rhododendron, drowned through constantly wet roots.

In general, the weather throughout the year has suited our rhododendrons, and next season is expected to be one of the best.

Now in a time-space jump we must note the effect of cyberspace. Our website, maintained by webmaster Alan Lush, has carried our Newsletter for some 18 months now, but the February 2012 issue (Vol. 38 No. 1) was the first to be made available via the Internet for downloading by those members who provided their e-mail addresses.

Traditional activities such as our Lodge Open Days in October were again a great success, in public relations as well as financially, with appreciative comments from visitors encouraging our hard-working volunteers, who shared their expertise with visitors from all states of Australia and over twenty other countries. Plant sales were popular, and greeting cards and calendars with David Cook's photographs of our Gardens were consistent sellers. A big "Thank You" goes to all of the workers who helped in these activities.

Special thanks are also due to the "Monday workers" for their gardening activities, and to the many other members who so generously support us in diverse ways. It is encouraging that several new members have joined us this year as volunteers in the Gardens or in social activities and specific projects.

Finally I thank the 2011-2012 Management Committee, and particularly our Hon. Secretary, for their support and energy during the year. All these people ensure the continuance of our Gardens as a major tourist attraction in the Blue Mountains.

Jeannette Adrian – President 2011-2012

Spring Working Bee

To ensure the Gardens are looking their best for the Open Days, a working bee will be held on Saturday 8th September, starting at 9:00 am. Bring along your gardening gloves and favourite gardening implement.

A light lunch will be provided.

Don't forget to vote at the local government elections before or after (but not both) doing your bit in the Gardens!

Come one – come all!

Garden Report – August 2012

The past year has been a busy one in the Gardens, starting with the clearing of fallen trees and branches which is still ongoing. We still have some work to be done by the tree contractor which will leave us with more work to clean up after him. As well as the above, every time we get some wind an odd branch or tree comes down, blocking a path. No doubt there will be some more after this week's wind. These would have been compromised by the big wind of July 2011.

The late summer / early autumn rain caused quite a few drainage problems which have required additional maintenance as well as path maintenance.

We have fixed some drainage problems on the path near the toilets. Hopefully we fixed a couple of leaks on the Lodge roof as well as some general maintenance on the buildings. We have also sealed the road into the valley.

The fertilizer program this year has paid dividends – there will be a spectacular show this spring with a huge but set over most varieties. One never stops learning about plants. Rhodos usually set their buds in January and early February, and while a few early varieties set in late December, this year there was quite a bud set in December. Did the plants know that late summer was going to be wet and dull with only a touch of sun?

More recently we have had to find and repair several leaks in the water system. When I returned from overseas I found we had a huge water bill and a plumber had tried to find the leak. We eventually found a large leak in the valley and repaired it. We still, however, had a leak somewhere. We found two faulty gate valves and replaced these. Still a small leak. While trying to drain a wet spot on the Centenary Walk, which we thought was from the increased rain having an effect on the old hanging swamp, we discovered a leak in a pipe and repaired same. Still a small leak. We found another faulty gate valve with a very small leak, and I was at a loss. I knew it was somewhere between an isolating gate valve near the Lodge and one near the toilets. Was it under the pavers? Was it somewhere in the plumbing for the Lodge? I was coming back from the toilet area and the sun was shining onto the ground under the meter box on the wall of the old kitchen – and I noticed a little pool of water. On examination we found where the builders had altered a storm water pipe from the old kitchen roof when they built the new kitchen. They had obviously damaged the water pipe in the area and caused

two small leaks. They had also left the old earthenware pipe in the ground and the water from the old leak was running into this and out the other side of the Lodge into the old hanging swamp. All is now repaired, and on examination after the repair the water meter was not moving.

We have also been taking a lot of dead wood out of the Rhodos that needed it taken out. We have done lots of tidying up in many areas, pruned the hydrangeas, and a great deal of environmental weed has been treated in the area near the conifer garden – mainly cotoneaster, holly, ivy and honeysuckle.

I have no idea whether our hazard reduction burn is going to take place this season. I would suggest that the weather has made it difficult for the fire brigades to implement their program.

As you can see, it has been a busy year for all the volunteers, and we have increased our numbers significantly over the past few months, which has been a great help. Could we please give our volunteers a round of applause?

Our Jazz afternoon this year is in the spring – Sunday 21st October. It will be a great day at \$10 a head, so you can appreciate the flowers and some great music!

Dick Harris – Garden Supervisor

Judy's Jottings

As incoming President for the 2012/13 year, I welcome the new committee members elected at the AGM.

New members **Sonia Levitt, Val Moorhead** and **Diane Twose** have joined with us to share their ideas and expertise for the benefit of the Society. Our thanks and congratulations on a job well done go to ex-president **Jeannette Adrian** whose solid contribution is on record.

Bette Brown has stood down from the committee and will remain our able social hostess.

We will look forward to a busy October involving members and volunteers working to serve teas and sell plants and souvenirs, including the much sought after 2013 calendar produced by **David Cook**.

Don't forget the Working Bee on the 8th September, and of course we'll meet again at the general meeting on the 15th.

Judy Johnston – President 2012-13

43rd Annual General Meeting 18th August 2012

The AGM was attended by 30 members and 4 visitors, with 13 apologies noted. Jeannette Adrian gave a warm welcome, on behalf of all present, to Judy Finch, our guest speaker, and Sabine Erica, President of the Rhododendron Festival Committee, our guest chairperson.

Jeannette gave her President's Report for 2011-12, as shown on page 2, followed by Joan Hailstone with her Financial Statement for the year ending 30th June 2012. There were some questions from the floor concerning errors in the figures for the previous financial year which were not picked up in the audit – Joan has provided her comments on this in the item following.

Dick Harris gave his Garden Report for the year (see page 3), after which all members of the Management Committee stood down and handed over the meeting to Sabine Erica who conducted the election for the new committee for 2012-13. At the last minute Bette Brown withdrew her nomination for the committee, but we are pleased to see that she will still be our very able Meeting Hostess. The Society is fortunate that three of the newer members have been elected to the committee. They come with different ideas and skills which will help the Society continue to move forward in the coming years. At the end of the election, Norm Campbell and Dick Harris were endorsed as Patrons, Warren Boorman as Official Auditor, and Colin Pausey as the Society's Solicitor. Jeannette Adrian thanked Sabine for her professional handling of the election, and then retired to the body of the hall to relax as one of the vice-presidents. The new President, Judy Johnston, welcomed the new committee and called them forward to receive their badges of office.

Our guest speaker, Judy Finch, the manager of BANC (the Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre), started by complimenting the Society for its longevity and work in the Gardens. She said the goal of BANC was to assist the members of the community who are doing it a bit tough. They are now using the old medical centre building in Wentworth Street to provide some of their

services.

Judy's main topic was on East Timor, a country of just over one million people, and only about 400 kilometers from Darwin. The Portuguese controlled East Timor for over 400 years, before Indonesia took over in 1975. Timor Leste gained its independence in 2002. There are mountains immediately behind Dili, the capital, providing an environment very similar to the Blue Mountains – very cold in the mountains, but the seasons are more predictable. However, although the terrain is similar, everything else is different. The roads are winding and narrow, or the infrastructure has broken down, with a car trip of 120 kilometers (equal to Blackheath to Sydney) taking 6 hours to complete. The government has few resources, most people are poor, and there is dire poverty with many people dying from hunger. Most families live by subsistence farming (land around the house, one metal digging tool), supplemented by bought rice. Education is provided by volunteers after the Indonesians left, with much improvements to the infrastructure noticeable lately. There are high levels of literacy and numeracy, but many students leave after 2nd class. However, the UN is starting a new education policy. Everyone works – the men hold most of the administration and teaching jobs and the children look after younger children, collect water and firewood, etc. Coffee is grown, with some being exported, but there are no major manufacturing exports. Much of the land has been cleared of timber, notably the Sandalwood trees, but reforestation is now starting.

Judy has spent some time since 2004 as a member of the Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters and recently took one year's Leave without Pay from the BANC to work in East Timor as a volunteer, to continue working on various projects set up between the Blue Mountains and East Timor. Her comment at the end of her talk was "Go to Timor!"

Judy Johnston thanked Judy Finch for her very interesting and informative talk, and invited everyone present to stay for afternoon tea at the close of the meeting.

From the Treasurer

The sharper eyed among our membership may have already spotted a discrepancy in the figures for year ended 30th. June, 2011.

Everything was correct in the Receipts and Payments figures, the only errors being in two places in the Balance Sheet figures, which affected only the final Profit figure.

1. The Garden Furniture 2008 value should have been taken as \$318.00, not \$600.00.

2. The Current Liabilities figures totalling \$1,012.00 should have been deducted, not added on.

The result, after these amendments, makes the Profit for the year \$27,587.93 – as shown on the figures for 2011 in this year's Statement.

My apologies for this error – old age catching up with me, I fear.

Joan Hailstone - Treasurer

Spring Open Days

Once again we are getting close to our major fund raising event of the year – our Spring Open Days. Last year we hosted visitors from all over Sydney and the Blue Mountains, the rest of New South Wales, all the other states in Australia and over 20 countries in the rest of the world. Most of the visitors were amazed at the size and scope of the Gardens and were taken with the beautiful displays of colour from both the exotics and natives throughout the area, even though the flowering was not as good as the previous year. Many from overseas couldn't believe that all the hard work involved with the maintenance of the Gardens is carried out by we volunteers as a genuine labour of love.

This year our Open Days will be from Saturday 29th September to Monday 1st October (the October long weekend) and from Saturday 6th October to Monday 5th November inclusive. This year, to try to alleviate some problems we experienced last year, we have decided to ask the volunteers to be at the Lodge from 9:30 am, with the doors opened to the visitors at 10:00 am. In the afternoon, last orders will be taken at 3:30 pm so we will (hopefully) be able to close the doors by 4:00 pm. Last year we had a few days with the stragglers not leaving until close to 5:00 pm. We are hoping that these altered hours will enable a more orderly start and finish to each day.

As the Lodge is open for a total of 34 days, we

would like to be able to call on quite a few of our members to volunteer their time over that period. There should be a minimum of three people in the kitchen at any one time to prepare and serve food and drinks, and one person 'working the room', greeting visitors, selling souvenirs, raffle tickets, etc. During the rush hours, when up to 50 people from one coach tour may descend on you en masse, another 1 or 2 may be needed to help out.

Val Moorhead is drawing up a roster of volunteers for kitchen duty, so even if you can give of your time for just half a day, please see Val – she would love to hear from you!

Souvenirs are always good sellers – we will have a wide selection of tea towels, cards and all sorts of other goods, with a number of our 40th Anniversary fridge magnets still available. David Cook's 2012 calendar sold very well last year, and the 2013 calendar, produced by David and Jimmy Lim is even better – with many more photos of named individual flowers. At \$8 each, the same price as last year, they again should walk out the door during the Open Days. Again, it will be a year-long remembrance of the Gardens for the visitors – and great publicity for the Society. And they will make an excellent Christmas present, especially for friends and relatives overseas.

Raffles are always great earners, with one of the prizes being a beautiful quilt made by Enid Paddon-Row and the other being a hamper of special local products donated by Marion Freidman. There should be no difficulty in selling many tickets each day.

The Jazz in the Gardens day on Sunday the 21st October, as mentioned by Dick Harris in his Garden Report, will also include a raffle – to be drawn on that day. The prize for this raffle will be a collection of mountains plants specially selected by Dick. Please make a day of this and bring a picnic lunch, rug, etc., and enjoy the music in the valley.

One of the main functions of the 'Meet & Greet' volunteers is to put the visitors in a good frame of mind when they first come into the Gardens – but then, with most visitors who come here being avid gardeners already, it is very, very easy to meet & greet at the Information Kiosk. Other activities include selling plants (\$25 each for 3 to 4 year old rhododendrons and mollis azaleas) and calendars, keeping an eye on the donations box, and providing information about the Gardens.

**Hope to see you during the
Open Days this year.**

|

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

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



**BLUE MOUNTAINS RHODODENDRON SOCIETY OF NSW INC.
RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS YEAR ENDED 30TH. JUNE, 2012**

	CREDIT:	DEBIT:
Affiliation Fees & Subscriptions	\$	\$ 96.00
Audit Expenses		200.00
Calendar Sales	7,857.00	
Donations Received	21,145.70	
Gardens - Labour		7,381.81
" Materials & Equipment Maintenance		1,838.43
" Rubbish Removal		3,654.90
" Major Projects		2,678.11
Gifts, Gratuities & Flowers		106.00
Insurances		4,335.48
Interest Received	11,943.67	
Labelling Programme		317.89
Lodge Maintenance, Equipment & Supplies		2,328.67
Lodgement Fees (DFT)		128.00
Membership Subscriptions	630.00	
Postages & P.O. Box Rental		419.80
Power & Water		3,537.32
Printing & Stationery		633.11
Publicity Expenses		1,467.09
Raffles Income	1,555.90	
Repairs to Paths/Roadway		18,700.00
Souvenir & Plant Sales - (Open Days etc.)	4,375.50	
Sundries	217.35	137.25
Tea Sales (Open Days etc.)	9,230.15	
Telephone Rentals		341.99
Website Expenses		500.00
Payments in Advance - Calendars	3,066.00	
Receipts in Advance - Members Subs.	700.00	
GST on Income & Expenditure	133.00	4,769.65
GST Refunds received	2,764.00	
Trading Account - CBA	28,118.87	
Term Deposits - CBA		38,165.64
	\$ 91,737.14	\$ 91,737.14

Cash at Bank 1/07/11 \$ 61,754.25 Term Deposits 1/07/11 \$ 179,142.49
" " " 30/06/12 33,635.38 " " 30/06/12 217,308.13
\$ 28,118.87 \$ 38,165.64

Quartern

 11/8/12

BLUE MOUNTAINS RHODODENDRON SOCIETY OF NSW INC.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30TH. JUNE, 2012

Fixed Assets:	2012	2011
Buildings & Improvements	\$ 163,196. 00	\$ 163,196. 00
Library	558. 50	558. 50
Garden Furniture at Cost 2008	1,818. 00	
Less Depreciation	1,818. 00	- 318. 00
Lodge Furniture at Cost 2008	103. 00	
Less Depreciation	103. 00	1. 00
Lodge Equipment at Cost 2009/10	331. 00	
Less Depreciation	264. 00	67. 00 177. 00
Library Bookcase at Cost 2010	1,545. 00	
Less Depreciation	1,062. 00	483. 00 993. 00
Garden Seats at Cost 2010	727. 00	
Less Depreciation	400. 00	327. 00 567. 00
Lodge Equipment at Cost 2011	272. 00	
Less Depreciation	120. 00	152. 00 242. 00
Garden Equipment at Cost 2011	1,362. 00	
Less Depreciation	150. 00	1,212. 00
Current Assets:		
Cash at Bank - CBA	\$ 33,635. 38	\$ 61,754. 25
Term Deposit - CBA	137,308. 13	129,142. 49
" " "	80,000. 00	50,000. 00
Cash on Hand	300. 00	300. 00
Payment in Advance	3,066. 00	3,066. 00
Debtors GST Received	133. 00	176. 00
TOTAL ASSETS:	\$ 420,438. 01	\$ 410,491. 24
Less Current Liabilities		
Prepaid Membership subs	700. 00	920. 00
GST collected on subs	70. 00	92. 00
BALANCE	\$ 419,668. 01	\$ 409,479. 24
Represented by Accumulated Funds		
Balance from Previous Year	\$ 409,479. 24	\$ 381,891. 31
Plus Profit/Loss for the Year	10,188. 77	27,587. 93
Total Accumulated Funds	\$ 419,668. 01	\$ 409,479. 24

I certify that I have examined the books of the Blue Mountains Rhododendron Society Inc. and found them, and the Reconciliation Statement and Balance Sheet, correct, as represented by the above.

Signed: 
 W. Soormon
 11/8/12