

THE RHODODENDRON NEWSLETTER

November 2009

Published by the
Australian Rhododendron Society, Victorian Branch Inc. (A5896Z)
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PROGRAM

General Meetings are held at the Municipal Horticultural Centre, Jolimont Rd, Vermont. Mel 62 G4 unless otherwise stated.

NOVEMBER

SAT. 31st OCTOBER TO TUES. 3RD NOVEMBER, RHODODENDRON SHOW in Hall at National Rhododendron Gardens All members and friends are encouraged to enter the competition by bringing along any number of entries on Saturday morning. There will be experienced members available to help place them.

SATURDAY 14TH – VIREYA GROUP 10.00am at Andrew Raper's nursery. Meet at Rhodoglen Nursery, Georges Rd, The Patch, Mel 124 F5. Ring Mike and Inge Hammer for information. Ph: 9755 2176

FRIDAY 20th 8.00pm AGM. SPEAKER to be advised. AGM - Nominations for all positions must be delivered to the secretary or PO Box 500 Brentford Square 3131 by 5.00pm 13th November 2009. (See September Newsletter)

DECEMBER

BEST WISHES FOR A SAFE AND HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR TO ALL MEMBERS AND FRIENDS.



SUNDAY 6TH CHRISTMAS FUNCTION : 12.00pm

Lunch at Burrinja Café and Art Gallery 351 Glenfern Rd Upwey.

\$15 pp. Drinks extra. Details in the Newsletter.

JANUARY 2010

SAT 16TH AND SUN 17TH : LILIUM & VIREYA SHOW at the Ferny Creek Horticultural Society, 100 Hilton Road Sassafras Melway 66E12. See flyer. ARS members will be selling vireyas and entering the competitive show.

SUN 24th AUSTRALIA DAY BBQ. 5.00pm Join members & friends on the Cherry Lawn below the sheds at the Rhododendron gardens. BYO everything. There are some tables & chairs. Drive in through the golf course & the back gate. Park above the Cherry Lawn. Ph: Inge Hammer 9755 2176 or Marcia Begg 9751 1610

PRESIDENTS REPORT OCTOBER 2009

Often when I talk to people about the National Rhododendron Gardens I get the reaction “oh yes I have been meaning to have a look at that some time – must pop in and have a quick look around. But its only a small regional garden, shouldn’t take more than a few minutes to see it all”

These sort of comments prompted me to look up some statistics. The National Rhododendron Gardens cover 40 hectares. Compare that to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne 35 hectares, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney 30 hectares and Mt Tomah Botanic Garden 28 hectares. Furthermore, my wife and I have visited many high profile gardens around the world and I can truthfully say that the NRG can hold its head high with the best of them. For example, the Butchart Gardens on Vancouver Island, British Columbia are renowned world wide. They occupy 22 hectares and in my personal opinion the NRG is a better garden (other than in the on site buildings). Nor is the garden just a rhododendron garden. While rhododendrons certainly play a central and dominant role there is a wealth of other plant material of botanical significance. It can very justifiably claim to be a cool climate botanical garden.

Constructing a garden of such size and quality is normally the exclusive province of government yet past members of our society with a small amount of help from the Forest Commission of the day created this paradise. We should be extremely proud of the achievements of our past members. It is a truly monumental achievement.

That however is the past. Are the Gardens still relevant today? I would argue they are even more relevant today than ever before and the relevance continues to grow. As Melbourne’s population increases, block sizes get smaller and the effects of urban heat island make it warmer (irrespective of whether or not there is global climate change). The larger population places more demands on our available water making less available for gardens. Lack of space, lack of water and a warming environment make it increasingly difficult for people to grow cool climate plants in their back yards. Even the Royal Botanical Gardens, Melbourne are now having trouble in growing many cool climate plants. I believe it is extremely important to give people the opportunity to experience directly the botanical diversity on our planet. In fact it is no different to giving people the ability to see the animal diversity through zoological gardens. The NRG is becoming one of the very few places where Melbournians and visitors can go to see these delightful plants without travelling overseas. Indeed for people in the Eastern suburbs it is only an easy half hour drive away. Compare that with Mt Tomah for Sydneysiders. This makes the NRG a significant part of our cultural heritage and infrastructure.

The question is where to from here? The garden exists, can we walk away and leave its maintenance and further development to others? Personally I believe the society still has a very major role it can play. The greatest risk to the Gardens today is obscurity, the sort of comment I started this essay with. Most people either do not know of the Gardens or have a completely inaccurate perception of it’s size and scope. We need to publicise the Gardens’ existence and scope. We need to present them as Melbourne’s cool climate botanical garden

and a garden of major national significance, it is far, far more than just a collection of rhododendrons.

Where else in Melbourne can you walk through groves of flowering cherry trees, see magnolias in profusion, towering upright and weeping beech trees, southern beeches (nothofagus), woolemi pines, delicate lacy Japanese maples, pownonias, oaks, birches, elms, species hydrangeas, magnificent South African proteas and their equally magnificent Australian cousins the waratahs, a very wide range of rare and beautiful conifers from around the world. Plus of course the kurume azalea bowl, paths lined with Asiatic and Vireya rhododendrons, mollis azaleas and camellias. Not to mention the many other trees, shrubs and perennial plants all set in acres of lawns with stunning views towards Warburton and the great dividing ranges. Tell your friends and neighbours. Encourage them to come to the Gardens and see what is really there. Come to the Gardens yourselves, become familiar with them and act as ambassadors for the Gardens. Take pride in the achievements of the society of which you are a part and brag about it to all and sundry. This does not take any significant commitment of time nor is it an onerous chore but it would be of great benefit to helping the Gardens flourish and give pleasure to more of our fellow residents. Word of mouth advertising can be very effective. For those without too many commitments, consider joining our Tuesday group, spending some time in this delightful environment helping to maintain it and extend it further.

Patronage brings significance and significance brings money for further development and maintenance. There are many ways the gardens could be further enhanced, for example, a proper restaurant and better building infrastructure (this is the one area where Butchart garden is clearly better) a greater diversity of small cool climate bulbs and perennials (which unfortunately require much more maintenance) and sheltered environments for more delicate plants (glass and shade houses) to cite just three examples. In this way we can continue to give Melburnians the opportunity to see and experience a very beautiful range of cool climate plants. Would it not be wonderful if the National Rhododendron Gardens were formally associated with the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne?

Mike Hammer

THE SPECIES COLUMN.

trichostomum -Section Pogonanthum. [photo page 10]

Rhododendron *trichostomum* is described by Peter Cox as a superb species in its best forms (Ref. "The Smaller Rhododendron Species"). We are fortunate to have several plants of this in the main rockery which survived the drought last Summer. This is a relatively dwarf species and comes from high altitudes, so is unlikely to survive in Melbourne. Our plants in the rockery have bright pink flowers on a compact bush, and last for several weeks in October.

Name:

The name *trichostomum* means hairy-mouthed, a rather derogatory name for a beautiful flower.

Distribution:

This species is said to be common in the wild in both Yunnan and Sichuan, at altitudes of 2400 to 4600 metres, often at the edges of forests and thickets, or rocky slopes. It seems to tolerate dry conditions.

Characteristics:

This is a compact shrub of 0.3 to 1.2 metres. The foliage is distinctive with narrow leaves only 3 to 6 mm. wide, with dense overlapping brown scales. The flowers are quite small, 1 to 2 cm. long, white to pink in a globular truss of 8 to 20 flowers. Originally this species contained two varieties (ledoides and radinum), which have now been eliminated. These varietal names are still used in some places, which causes confusion.

Selected Forms:

A number of selected forms have merited awards from the R.H.S.

“Collingwood Ingram” Flowers rose, F.C.C. 1976 (see photo).

“Quarry Wood” Flowers white, A.M. 1971

“Lakeside” Flowers white flushed pink A.M. 1972.

“Sweet Bay” A.M. 1960.

Hybrids.

There appears to be only one hybrid available here:

“Sarled” (sargentianum x trichostomum) A.M. 1974. Creamy-white flowers in a tight round truss. We have at least one plant of this in the rockery.

Where to See These Plants:

We have two plants of “Collingwood Ingram” in the rockery which make a beautiful show in October (Near the steps towards the creek). There are an additional seven plants recorded on our G.P.S. survey which have possibly not yet flowered.

Alan Kepert.

VIREYA SPECIES COLUMN

R orbiculatum [photo page 10] According to the classification proposed by Dr George Argent *Rhododendrons of subgenus vireya* RHS 2006 the species is a member of Section VII Euvireya- Subsection v Euvireya. The Subsection is the biggest one with 89 species from virtually everywhere Vireya originate including the two Australian species. This species is found in Borneo (Malaysia – Sarawak and Sabah, Brunei and Indonesia – Kalimantan) and Sulawesi (Indonesia- previously called Celebes). It was first collected in 1911 by J.C. Moulton a former curator of the Sarawak Museum and Director of the Raffles Museum and Library. It took until 1965 to be brought into cultivation at Kew Botanic Garden where it flowered in 1969. The species merits an extensive narrative in *The Rhododendrons of Sabah Malaysian Borneo* by George Argent, Anthony Lamb and Anthea Phillips, Natural History Publications (Borneo) 2007. This narrative is largely taken from the latter publication. While the species merits significant attention due to its very attractive, large and, mostly, scented

flowers it is in fact hard to grow, not being very vigorous. I have one in ground, one in a reasonable sized pot and some small ones. None are vigorous though I have had flowers. Andrew Rouse and Elizabeth Xipell both have much better specimens and have produced winning flowers at Monthly meetings. Jack Morris won a class at the recent 2009 Azalea Show with a very nice plant, in flower, in a fern log.

Name

The name is derived from the Latin *orbiculatus* – circular, referring to the, often, nearly circular leaves.

Habitat

In its places of origin, very close to the equator it is found from 800-1800m. The latter is about the altitude of the Park Headquarters in Mt Kinabalu National Park, Sabah. Having been there I can vouch for extremely pleasant conditions. Like the “three bears”, not too cold and not too hot. All the year round. The lower range, 800m, is much less pleasant. Translating to Australia the species should do better in Northern New South Wales coast and Queensland coastal mountains. Atherton tablelands and the Sunshine and Gold Coast hinterland. Lamington National Park, Mt Tamborine and Malaney come to mind.

In Olinda it is perhaps too cool for the species to thrive. Species found from 1800m -3000m do better. *R retivenium* and *R rugosum* come to mind.

According to Argent *et al* *R orbiculatum* is most similar to *R edanoi*, *R sauveolens* and *R lanbianum*. These species have many more, smaller, flowers in their umbels and longer, elliptic leaves, rather than circular ones. Around Mt Kinabalu Park headquarters *R orbiculatum* is an epiphyte on large trees. No doubt that is why I did not see it. Elsewhere it is terrestrial in open vegetation on ridges and rocky outcrops.

Description

In its habitat it is a shrub or small tree to 2m. In Olinda we wish! Twigs round, green and, when young, thinly covered in small scales. **Leaves** are in distinct pseudowhorls of 4-6 leaves, with a few additional small ovate leaves which have very pronounced petioles for their size. Normal leaves are 32-65 x 35-60 mm; broadly ovate to circular; the apex obtusely pointed or rounded; the margin entire, flat with a narrow cartilaginous edge, the base rounded to cordate; mid vein slightly impressed above extending to the full length of the leaf and very slightly raised below and without distinct reticulation. Petiole green, 2 x 5 mm grooved above. **Inflorescence** an open, loose umbel of 2-6 flowers which are held horizontally or slightly hanging. Corolla pale pink or white, without or just faintly scented, 70-80 x 70-80 the tube 35-50 x 7-12 x 10-18 mm pouched at the base and five angled in the lower half.

Verdict

This species is a collector's must have, but not an Olinda garden plant.

Simon Begg

SUSTAINABILITY OF BOTANIC GARDENS

I have attended two Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand (BGANZ) conferences in the past month and both had the underlying topic of sustainability. I think that most climate skeptics agree that we should be living sustainably and would also agree that we are living beyond the means of the environment to cope in the long term.

Sustainability covers many areas.

The first to come to mind to gardeners is water which I talked about in my last article. The National Rhododendron Gardens has a finite amount and we must utilise its deep rich clay soils to store the water in the ground as best we can. Also:

*Situating plants in positions in the gardens where they will need as little as possible in the way of external water inputs.

*Water only those plants that are valuable to the collection and new plantings.

*Environmentally we are releasing water from the lake when it is most needed by the environment and only collecting water when there is an excess.

Second: we are using very few fertiliser inputs and reducing, as much as possible, our chemical use with our limited human resources. We need to measure and monitor plants for their weed potential so that we do not alter the natural environment around us by introducing yet another potential weed invasion.

Third: human resources need to be managed to maintain a balance between paid workers and those volunteers who provide valuable help in the garden. Volunteers are also valuable resources in raising public awareness of gardens and the role they can play in improving the environment and people lives.

Fourth: world wide, gardens have to come to terms with the fact that governments do not have a magic bucket of money and that gardens have to find money and resources through other means. Governments are struggling under debt and trying to plan for population forecasts doubling to over 14 billion by 2050. The age demographic and population means that the health system and other services will be in demand.

Many of the developing world's gardens are actually leading the way in self funding by accessing grants, contracts, philanthropy, health, use of volunteers & community and education.

Botanic Gardens such as the National Rhododendron gardens are instrumental in educating and connecting people to nature and explaining the stress the environment is under. Many of the developing countries Botanic gardens have been instrumental in implementing healthy food programs helping people grow their own food and improving nutrition.

The larger context of gardens from around the world and their experiences help us planning for the future of the National Rhododendron Gardens. For us, much of our role is in educating about sustainable gardening practice and connecting people, who are largely disconnected from nature, to the plant world. Underpinning what we do should be sustainable principles which consider the triple bottom line of Economic, Environmental & Social needs considered equally.

Glenn Maskell

Team Leader Parks Victoria

JOTTINGS

LITTLE RED RHODODENDRONS by Cliff Renshaw.

A little rhododendron
Lived beneath a tropical philodendron
In a shady position without much light
Almost out of sight.

Its chubby little red flowers
Totally ignoring foxglove glowers
Its roots covered by a mulch of tan
All the while doing the best it can.

Its ancestors born aeons before
Lived in valleys and upon the moor.
With winters last snow melting
New tips and buds grew quickly
Anticipating monsoons pelting.
Second cousins flourished on the pass
While long lost brothers hide
Amongst tundra's grass.

From the high mountain passes
To the depths of the valley by a hidden creek
On a high snowy mountain near to the peak
Grow little red rhododendrons.

Thankyou Cliff. Perhaps we might have some other members who might like to contribute to Newsletter?

HOW SMART IS YOUR RIGHT FOOT?

This is really interesting. You have to try this. It is absolutely true. I guess there are some things a brain cannot handle! It was sent to me by an orthopaedic surgeon and takes 2 seconds. It will confuse your mind & you will keep trying over and over again to see if you can outsmart your foot, but you can't. It is pre-programmed in your brain!

1. While sitting down lift your right foot off the floor and make clockwise circles.
2. Now, while doing that. Draw the number 6 in the air with your right hand. Your foot will change direction!!!! And there is nothing you can do about it! Try it with a friend!

LIFE'S LESSONS by 90yo Regina Brett a journalist in USA.

1. Life isn't fair, but it is still good.
2. When in doubt, just take the next small step. (*EG join the ARS c'tee, we need you!*)
3. Life is too short to waste time hating anyone.
4. Your job won't take care of you when you are sick. Your friends & parents will. Stay in touch.
5. Pay off your credit cards every month.
6. You don't have to win every argument. Agree to disagree.
7. Cry with someone. It's more healing than crying alone.
8. It's OK to get angry with God. He can take it.

9. Save for retirement starting with your first paycheck.
10. When it comes to chocolate, resistance is futile. (*That's a relief!*)
11. Make peace with your past so it won't screw up the present.
12. It's Ok to let your children see you cry.
13. Don't compare your life to others. You have no idea what their journey is all about.
14. If a relationship has to be a secret, you shouldn't be in it.
15. Everything can change in the blink of an eye. But don't worry, God never blinks.
16. Take a deep breath. It calms the mind.
17. Get rid of anything that isn't useful, beautiful or joyful.

More in the next newsletter!

Marcia Begg

AUGUST BENCH RESULTS

Class 1: Vireya species < 4cm

1st A. Rouse with *wrightianum*, 2nd S. Begg with *aquabile*, 3rd A. Rouse with *leptanthum*.

Class 3: Vireya hybrids < 4cm

1st A Rouse with *suaveolens* x *laetum*, 2nd S. Begg with 'Pacific Shower' 3rd S. Begg with 'Littlest Angel'

Class 4: Vireya hybrids > 4cm

1st S. Begg with 'Robert Bates', 2nd A Rouse with 'Coral Seas'

Class 5: Vireyas in pots

1st A. Rouse with *rubineiflorum* x *taoc* x *gracilentum*, 2nd S. Begg with *dielsianum*

Class 7: Azaleas

1st I. Hammer with un-named specimen, 2nd B. Stagoll with 'Piewacket', 3rd L. Sloggett with 'The Teacher'

Class 11: Rhododendron species

1st I Hammer with *arborium campbelli*

Class 12: Rhododendrons

1st I Hammer with *racemosum*, 2nd I. Hammer with 'Crossbill', 3rd I Hammer with *tatsiense*

Class 14: Rhododendron hybrids > 4cm

1st J. Quinn with 'Bob Malone', 2nd I. Hammer with 'Chrysomanicum', 3rd B. Stagoll with 'Donvale Pearl'

Miscellaneous entries

Len Sloggett won with a large pot of Dendrobium orchids.

Thanks to Inge Hammer who collected some blooms from our garden to enter on Simon's behalf for the bench judging. Simon and I were on holiday at the time so we also missed Barry Stagoll's excellent talk on Yunnan.

Marcia Begg

SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING

Andrew Raper, a well known society member and owner of Rhodoglen Nursery in The Patch came to the meeting armed with some lovely camellias for sale and discussion. He introduced the topic with a story about poor plant growth in the suburbs.

'Why aren't my plants, especially camellias, thriving?' complained a customer. Andrew took up the challenge and visited the suburban garden. He found camellias with straggly growth

and not a lot of foliage. Healthy camellias carry three sets of leaves, two from previous seasons and another of new spring growth. They are tough and do not mind alkaline soil unlike rhododendrons. The soil in this garden was sandy loam and held no organic matter. It was starving after years of tree growth followed by vegetable production and grazing. A soil test showed that there were two important elements missing, nitrogen and magnesium sulphate.

In this particular garden Andrew suggested a fertiliser programme that included nitrogen, gypsum and dolomite. After twelve months the changes in plant growth were obvious with the camellias holding three sets of leaves and producing more flowers.

Camellias need a broad spectrum fertiliser such as osmocote and the addition of gypsum is beneficial. He advises that they are more suitable to small suburban gardens than rhododendrons because they grow taller and narrower.

Quarantine restrictions mean there are no imports of new cultivars. To overcome this Andrew asked all Camellia Society members to help provide plants for the future. Many had hybridised camellias for a hobby and some of these have been made available to Andrew to propagate for the retail trade.

He plants banks of camellias of mixed species alternately e.g. sasanqua, reticulata species and hybrids, japonica, etc in pine mulch. Bees are encouraged as they pollinate between species. Self-seeded plants are selected for foliage first as its visual impact is year round. Andrew grows 2,500 cultivars and 2,500 seedlings for a few years before selecting the best to propagate.

One unusual problem he had was due to native rats! They undermined many larger camellias before a cure was found. The cure was easy. The grass was left to grow longer and this enabled the rats to hide without burrowing so deeply.

Andrew's final plea was the importance of spreading good cultivars with their nomenclature to at least three quite separate locations for security. In the event of bushfires, storms, change of ownership or other circumstances the more people who have collections the less likely quality cultivars will be lost. The same applies to all species of plants.

NB. THE VIREYA MEETING ON 14TH NOVEMBER WILL BE AT ANDREW'S NURSERY AT 10.00AM.

BENCH RESULTS:

Only a small number of exhibits in the vireya section but even fewer in the other rhododendron sections.

Simon Begg won all 1st places in the vireya section with *Rh. tuba*, 'Penny Whistle', *zoelleri*, 'Simbu Sunset' and 'Highland Arabesque'. The only other place getter was Barry Stagoll with 'Saint Valentine'.

In the temperate rhododendrons Simon again won first place in class 11 and 12 with unnamed blooms.

Class 13 was won by Inge Hammer with *R. veitchianum* and class 14 was won by John Quinn with a bloom of 'My Snow White'.

The azalea bloom in class 7 'Rose of Heaven' was won by Len Sloggett and class 8 was won by Simon with a stem of *schlippenbachii*. There were many classes with no entries.

The non-rhododendron section was won by Inge Hammer with a vase of camellia blooms and Len with a display of spotted orchids.

MNB & WL



R trichostomum
Alan Kepert photo
September 2009



R orbiculatum
Chris Callard's species gallery



Marcia Begg's 1st Place
Floral Display
Azalea Show 2009



Inge Hammer's
R grande Best Bloom
Azalea Show 2009



Mike Hammer's Water Feature
Azalea Show 2009



Vireya Entries Azalea Show 2009



**“Forest Lodge”
Stirling, South Australia
October 2009**

Home of Milton and Christine Bowman



**Dinner at Peter and Jill Wiadrowski's
House after National Council
October 2009**



**“St Vigeans”
Home of Drs
Jeff and Gill
Jenkinson
October 2009**

AZALEA SHOW 3RD AND 4TH OCTOBER 2009.

The 49th Azalea Show was again held in the hall at the National Rhododendron Gardens. It included an afternoon tea for Rhododendron Society members on the Saturday. The weather was fine and the hall held a variety of interest for members and the public.

The show benches down the middle of the hall held a colourful display of exhibitors entries and surrounding these were an exhibition of botanical art by Sherbrooke Art Society, floral displays of plants from members and Boulters Olinda Nursery, many new hybrid vireyas for sale from Anton Vanderbylk and a lovely water feature built by Mike Hammer. Unfortunately our own botanical artist Anne O'Connor was unable to attend as she had broken her wrist a few days before. In the week following the show B and T Ferns set up a beautiful display and sale of ferns, bromeliads and proteas which will be in place until 9th November.

Entries were down following the drought in summer and heavy rains and hail in September. Entry is open to all comers, not just members, and help is available to newcomers on the Saturday morning. There were eleven entrants who between them put in 150 entries. Most entries were in the larger hybrids of asiatics and vireyas but the best looking bench in my opinion was the azaleas. They make an excellent display. The judges had a particularly hard job judging the larger sections and my thanks go to them and their stewards and Jack Morris who organises the entries. Cliff Renshaw and Lesley Eaton had both come quite a distance to do the judging.

The member's afternoon tea was held in the Vireya Cafe. President Mike Hammer welcomed members and extolled the beauty and significance, both national and international, of the National Rhododendron Gardens. He compared it very favourably with many overseas gardens he had recently visited.

The hall stays open with cut flower displays and plant sales for six weeks and needs considerable work by members to keep it looking attractive. The Rhododendron Show will be held over Cup weekend and the Art Society will put on another exhibition. I would particularly like to thank the Volunteer Group who help set up and maintain the display which the public, who come by the bus load, have much pleasure admiring. Thanks also to Inge Hammer and Liz Xipell who have been willing assistants.

MNB

AZALEA SHOW RESULTS.

AWARDS

PRESIDENT'S AWARD: Simon Begg

Awarded by the President of the Victorian Branch for the best exhibit of a rhododendron species from either Section A, Rhododendron Species or Section C Vireyas.

SOCIETY AWARD: Laurie Begg

Awarded for the best Azalea exhibit

ENCOURAGEMENT AWARD: Awarded at Nov AGM

Awarded by the Show Committee of the Victorian Branch, and judged on the results in both the Azalea Show and the Rhododendron Show.

CHILDREN'S AWARD: Katie Noonan

Awarded for the best children's exhibit

BANKSIAN MEDAL: Awarded at Nov AGM

Awarded to the Exhibitor with the highest aggregate points from the Azalea Show and the Rhododendron Show.

BEST BLOOM AWARD: Inge Hammer

Awarded for the best exhibit of a rhododendron, asiatic or vireya, species or hybrid in the Show

SECTION A: Rhododendron Species

Class:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. One truss of a large leafed species | 1 ST Inge Hammer, no
2 nd |
| 2. One truss of a species other than large leafed | 1 st J. Quinn,
2 nd W Lobbezoo |
| 3. One container of an evergreen species, excluding any from subsection Maddenia. | 1 st S. Begg,
2 nd I. Hammer |
| 4. One container of a species from the subsection Maddenia. | 1 st S. Begg,
2 nd S Begg |
| 5. One bowl of a dwarf species having small leaves and flowers. | 1 st E. Xipell,
2 nd S. Begg |
| 6. One truss or spray of a species raised by the Exhibitor from seed. | no entries |

SECTION B – Rhododendron Hybrids

Class:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 7. One truss or spray of a hybrid produced by the Exhibitor and raised by the Exhibitor from seed. | 1 st L. Begg |
| 8. One container of a hybrid with flowers of minimum diameter greater than 7 cm. | 1 st L. Begg,
2 nd S. Begg |
| 9. One container of a hybrid with flowers of diameter from 4 cm to 7cm inclusive. | 1 st S. Begg,
2 nd S. Begg |
| 10. One container of a hybrid with flowers of maximum diameter less than 4 cm. | 1 st S. Begg,
2 nd L. Begg |
| 11. One container of an Australian raised hybrid | 1 st S. Begg,
2 nd L. Begg. |
| 12. One container of a hybrid with a lax truss: e.g. "Winsome", "Elizabeth", "Saffron Queen" etc. | 2 nd I. Hammer |
| 13. One bowl of a dwarf hybrid having small leaves and flowers. | 1 st S. Begg |

SECTION C – Vireya Rhododendrons

Class

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 14. One container of a Vireya species with flowers of | 1 st S. Begg, |
|---|--------------------------|

minimum diameter greater than 4 cm.	2 nd W. Lobbezoo
15. One container of a Vireya species with flowers of maximum diameter less than 4 cm.	1 st S. Begg, 2 nd W. Lobbezoo
16. One container of a Vireya species raised by the Exhibitor from seed. –	no entry
17. One container of a Vireya hybrid produced by the Exhibitor and raised by the Exhibitor from seed.	no entry
18. One container of a Vireya hybrid with flowers of minimum diameter greater than 4 cm.	1 st S. Begg, 2 nd S. Begg
19. One container of a Vireya hybrid with flowers of maximum diameter less than 4 cm.	1 st S. Begg, 2 nd S. Begg

SECTION D – Azaleas

Class:

20. One container of an evergreen Azalea species.	2 nd S. Begg
21. One container of a Kurume Azalea.	1 st S. Begg, 2 nd I. Hammer
22. One container evergreen Azalea (Satsuki, Gumpo, Indica but not Kurume).	1 st I Hammer, 2 nd I Hammer
23. One container of a deciduous Azalea hybrid.	1 st A. Kepert, 2 nd A. Kepert
24. One container of a deciduous Azalea species.	1 st S. Begg, 2 nd S. Begg
25. One vase of evergreen Azalea – 3 stems of distinct varieties.	1 st S. Begg
26. One vase of deciduous Azalea – 3 to 6 stems of one variety.	1 st L. Begg
27. One flower arrangement with Azaleas predominating.	1 st S. Begg

SECTION E - Plants

Class:

28. One pot, tree fern or basket, grown plant of a Vireya hybrid with flowers of minimum diameter greater than 4 cm.	1 st S. Begg, 2 nd S. Begg
29. One pot, tree fern or basket grown plant of a Vireya hybrid with flowers of maximum diameter less than 4 cm.	1 st S. Begg, 2 nd J. Morris
30. One potted plant of an Asiatic Rhododendron in bloom other than a Vireya or Azalea.	1 st A. Kepert
31. One potted plant of an Azalea in bloom. –	no entry
32. One Azalea as a ‘Bonsai’. –	no entry
33. A hanging basket of an Azalea in bloom. –	no entry
34. One Azalea as a ‘Standard’. –	no entry
35. One potted plant of a dwarf Rhododendron, species or hybrid, other than a Vireya or Azalea, having small leaves and flowers. –	no entry

36. One pot, tree fern or basket grown Vireya species with flowers of minimum diameter greater than 4 cm. 1st J. Morris
37. One pot, tree fern or basket grown Vireya species with flowers of maximum diameter less than 4 cm. 1st S. Begg,
2nd W Lobbezoo

SECTION F - Children's Exhibits

Class:

38. One truss or spray of a Rhododendron. A.R.I. 1st K. Noonan, 2nd K. Noonan
39. One spray of an Azalea. – no entry
40. One plant of an Azalea or a Rhododendron in bloom. A.R.I. – no entry

SECTION G - Floral Arrangement

Class;

41. A floral arrangement with species and/or hybrids of the genus rhododendron, including azalea and vireya, predominating. 1st M. Begg,
2nd S. Begg

Marcia Begg

VALE GEOFFREY PATTISON

Geoffrey Pattison was President of his local Rhododendron Branch, Northern Tasmania, Launceston. He became President of National Council from December 1985-December 1987. While President he initiated the process of sending balance sheets and Officer Reports to branches before National Council meetings to enable delegates to discuss ideas with committees. He visited most branches during his period of office to meet as many members as possible.

Launceston Airport had many rhododendrons planted from 1966 and Rhododendron 'Faith Henty' named after Lady Henty who opened the airport became the floral emblem of Launceston. By 1986 the plants had started to decline and the Launceston Branch under Geoffrey Pattison assisted with advice and replanting of the replacement plants. During his time as President Dr. Graeme Price was encouraged to publish his very successful book 'Rhododendrons in Australia' and Clyde J. Smith had his book on vireyas under production.

During his working life he was a highly respected school Principal and was Patron to the Tasmanian Photographic Federation until 2007. He was awarded an OAM in Tasmania. He died early 2009.

ARS NATIONAL COUNCIL AND AGM AND SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BRANCH CONVENTION 16-18 OCTOBER 2009

This year it was South Australian Branch's turn to host ARS National Council and AGM. National Council was held on Friday afternoon, 16th October, at the historic, 1853, home of ARS Treasurer, Peter Wiadrowski in Stirling in the Mt Lofty ranges. These meetings provide much needed contact between Branches spread over Australia's vast distances and exchanges of ideas and mutual support. On this occasion noteworthy decisions included

* National Council will pay Ken Cox's travel expenses to next year's 2010 Conference

- * National Council will also pay an amount towards a PA system for South Australian Branch
- * National Council decided to confer Life Membership and the Society Medal on Maurice Kupsch for his considerable services to Emu Valley Branch
- * *The Rhododendron* will be included in RMIT University's *Informit e-library*
- * National Council is to prepare a coloured brochure to be handed to retail buyers of rhododendrons giving the contact particulars of Branches.

The meeting reappointed existing office bearers for another year. They are:

Neil Webster, Victoria, President

Robert Hatcher, South Australia, Vice President, Public Officer and Publicity Officer

Peter Wiadrowski, South Australia, Treasurer

Simon Begg, Victoria, Secretary

Ken Gillanders, Tasmania, Technical Officer and Registrar

Barry Stagoll, Victoria, Chair of the Editorial Committee and Website Manager.

Delegates, appointed by branches, at the date of the meeting were:

Victoria, Marcia Begg and Julie Ann Webster

South Australia, Dr. Jeff Jenkinson and Arthur Mercer

Tasmania, Ken Gillanders and Gordon Hagan

Emu Valley, Graham Simpson and Maurice Kupsch.

After the meeting concluded delegates toured Peter and Jill Wiadrowski's historic garden. This was the first of four stately Adelaide Hills homes we were to visit. Apart from many beautiful rhododendrons there were historic trees, particularly a Cedars of Lebanon, rare plants and bulbs. An excellent dinner far outstripped the advertised light tea.

Afterwards we went Crafers Hall for the SA Branch meeting, the ARS AGM and SA Branch competitive Show. This latter was a, good fun, a first for the Branch. Marcia Begg and Julie Ann Webster were anointed judges. They set about their task with zeal. One section was a floral display. Daphne Chandler had brought a non competitive exhibit that the judges elevated to first prize and Exhibit of the Show. Visitors can get away with nonconformity. But the exhibit was really worthy. There were also excellent rhododendron exhibits including vireyas with Robert Hatcher's *womersleyi* getting the judges' nod as I recall.

Marcia and I were Mary Grant's guests and she drove us to the NC meeting and home, later, from Crafers. Saturday morning was our first outing on our own in Adelaide. Our destination, Adelaide Botanic Garden. Adelaide is a regular city, surrounded by parkland. Main roads run straight for kilometres, and intersect, mostly, at right angles. We set out from Mitcham at the foot of the Hills with instructions to find Fullarton Road. Very close by, and easy. Then we were to follow it all the way until it became Dequetteville Terrace and then follow it to the Garden keeping the parks to our left. Mission accomplished. Our feeling of achievement was not to last the day. More later.

Adelaide Botanic Garden is a very old Garden as Sydney's Melbourne's and Hobart's are. With very interesting, historic plantings. But in contrast to Melbourne, particularly, it has significant buildings some of quite recent construction. One such is the Bicentennial Conservatory which displays plants from the tropical rainforests of northern Australia, PNG,

Indonesia and the nearby Pacific Islands. It is the largest single span conservatory in the southern hemisphere. Impressive indeed. Another is the recently constructed Amazon Waterlily Pavillion. This is home, *inter alia*, to *Victoria amazonica* named for Queen Victoria. Marcia and I saw a number of these pavilions in Europe on our garden tour with Jane Edmanson in 2002. The Madagascar Palm House is a very historic construction. Not to neglect the plants we spent quite a while in the International Rose Garden, home to Australia's premier rose collection. Robert Hatcher was our guide and we had a very enjoyable morning finishing with lunch at the Mediterranean Garden.

After lunch we had to find our way to the home of Emily and Chris Giles in Milan Terrace, Stirling, by 2pm. Just retrace our morning steps and join the freeway to Stirling. Should take all of half an hour. I just don't know how a perfectly straight road should suddenly become a winding road into the Hills. It surely was no freeway. But a chance sign said Crafers so we proceeded on along the Railway and Belair Park. It took some time to get to Crafers, but not long afterwards to exit the freeway at Stirling. Still well before 2pm. We could not have been more than 500m from our destination. But, even with the help of Melways we were an hour late arriving. The location was in the corner of three maps showing winding roads. My reputation as a navigator is in tatters! Chris Giles is a long time Adelaide hills resident. His recently acquired house is next to his father's house. As a mining engineer he has spent much time where exploring miners go. He found gold, literally, in Africa. He and Emily have acquired another of the Adelaide Hills stately homes which they have renovated. Emily is masterminding the building of a new garden, building on original trees with new plantings. In front of the house is a terraced rose garden with a large lake at the bottom right. To the left is an intermittent watercourse. Significant engineering and landscaping is in progress. The evidence of empty pots was in piles and new plants were everywhere. The wooded hill beyond the boundary we were told was "Forest Lodge", the home of Milton and Christine Bowman where we were going the next day. We were, as everywhere we went, fed royally.

We found our way back to Mary Grant's house to get ready for the convention dinner. This was a half hour drive up the freeway to "Auchendarroch House" at Mt Barker. This is an historic house in a redeveloped entertainment facility with theatres and eating houses. With the freeway it is quite an easy drive for Adelaide residents. The dinner was very nice with good South Australian wines. Robert Hatcher showed us pictures of his recent trip to China including the three gorges dam. And, of course, magnificent rhododendrons in the wild.

Sunday, with Mary Grant as navigator was an easy drive to Pine Street, Stirling, and "Forest Lodge" the stately home of Milton and Christine Bowman. Forest Lodge was built between 1890 and 1892 by John Bagot as his summer house to escape the summer heat in North Adelaide. This and other stately homes in the Adelaide hills much resemble the homes of Mt Macedon to which 19th century Melburnians escaped. In the Adelaide hills the houses are built along the railway so the menfolk could commute. Today, sadly they drive along the freeway. Bagot travelled the world collecting seed from North America, Europe and Japan. His specialty was conifers. He also imported some hundreds of rhododendrons from the Waterer Nursery at Bagshot UK. Now I know where the rhododendron trivia quiz questions,

organised by Milton, were directed on Saturday evening! Many of both conifers and rhodos are still standing. So too are three copper beeches in a clump planted for Bagot children. Milton and Christine have been restoring the grand garden to its former glory. The task is really hard because the original plantings were, really, too close together. One feature still standing is the Bagot monument situate at the end of an 'alley' with conifers on one side and sequoias on the other. We should not have had breakfast as we were served a very tempting morning tea.

By lunch time we made the short journey to "St Vigeans" the home of South Australian Branch President Dr Jeff Jenkinson and his wife Dr Gill Jenkinson. This, too, is an historic house originally built by Dr E.C. Stirling in 1883. The town Stirling is named after Dr Stirling's father. The original 16 acres were laid out in 1882 but have been subdivided into three lots. Jeff and Jill have repurchased one of these but their two blocks are separated. The garden was renowned for its beauty a feature being rhododendrons from J Waterer and Sons UK. These were the first South Australian rhododendrons. Stirling was such a good customer that an hardy hybrid was named "Mrs E. C. Stirling" in honour of Dr Stirling's wife. The original plant, a bit elderly, still lives! Jeff and Gill are also restoring the remaining garden to its former glory. Their task is a little easier than Milton and Christine's because the original trees were not so densely planted. One *sequoia sempervirens* is the tallest tree in South Australia.

Our garden visit was both before and after lunch. This was a magnificent repast cooked on site with all the trimmings and wine.

All up a very enjoyable three days and thank you to our South Australian hosts.

Marcia and I wondered how this standard can be upheld at the 2010 Golden Anniversary Conference.

Simon Begg

OUR CABINET COMES TO TOWN

This news is truly hot off the press. I put the heading there before going to NRG at 12.30 pm on Monday 26 October to see what the Premier and Cabinet have to say on their whirlwind visit. Will they listen and provide more funding? Improve the jaded facilities? Provide family BBQs? Reduce the entrance charges so as to attract families to come? Associate NRG with Royal Botanic Garden Melbourne similarly to Mt Lofty's association with Adelaide Botanic Garden, Mt Tomah Botanic Garden's association with Royal Botanic Garden Sydney and Wakehurst Place's association with Royal Botanic Gardens Kew? In each case a city botanic garden needs an associated garden close by where cooler climate plants [which require cooler and wetter conditions than the city garden provides] will thrive and be shown to best advantage to the public and students of horticulture. With Melbourne suffering drier and hotter conditions is the city to be disadvantaged compared to its fellow world cities?

Will cabinet see the fire hazards that surround NRG? Does it know how little the Shire of Yarra Ranges does to reduce fire hazards? How little the Shire cares? We do not want our trees removed but it would be good to clean up the combustible litter and get expert advice on how best to reduce the risks to life and our heritage. Will Cabinet go on a tour while we point

out what needs to be done? I go to hear answers and add them to this article before it goes to press this evening.

Mike Hare, Glenn Maskell and I went on the bus tour around the garden with Minister Gavin Jennings and some Parks' officials. I am sure the Minister was impressed with the Garden and with the work Glenn was doing. Glenn stressed the link with Royal Botanic Garden Melbourne. Glenn told us that BBQ facilities are being installed soon. All emphasised the importance and diversity of the collection. As always though unspoken, the lack is money. Later I attended the "Cabinet" at Emerald Secondary College and pressed the fuel reduction risk case and Shire of Yarra Ranges lack of action. The only likely improvement I can see is for Shire residents to complain to Council about individual hazards and follow up lack of action to the Local Government Minister's office. Make enough complaints, folk, and action may happen.

Simon Begg



SUNDAY 6TH CHRISTMAS FUNCTION : 12.00pm

Lunch at Burrinja Café and Art Gallery 351 Glenfern Rd Upwey.

\$15 pp. Drinks extra.

Burrinja was formerly the Sherbrooke Shire Offices.

It has an art gallery with indigenous and contemporary art and holds exhibitions and musical performances.

After a platter lunch we will be able to view the art on display.

This is a subsidized social occasion for members and their partners and must be booked and paid by Friday 20th November (AGM).

Marcia Begg 9751 1610, Inge Hammer 9755 2176

PROGRAM 2010

JANUARY 2010

SAT 16TH AND SUN 17TH : LILIUM & VIREYA SHOW at the Ferny Creek

Horticultural Society, 100 Hilton Road Sassafra Melway 66E12. See flyer. ARS members will be selling vireyas and entering the competitive show.

SUN 24TH AUSTRALIA DAY BBQ. 5.00pm Join members & friends on the Cherry Lawn below the sheds at the Rhododendron gardens. BYO everything. There are some tables & chairs. Drive in through the golf course & the back gate. Park above the Cherry Lawn.

Ph: Inge Hammer 9755 2176 or Marcia Begg 9751 1610

FEBRUARY 2010

FRIDAY 19TH General Meeting, at 8pm, and Committee, at 5pm, both at Nunawading.

MARCH 2010

SATURDAY 13TH Vireya Group, at 10 am, TBA

FRIDAY 19TH General Meeting, at 8pm, and Committee, at 5pm, both at Nunawading.

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ARSV COMMITTEE 2009

A new committee will be elected in November 2009 for the following year. There are vacancies on the committee and members who would be interested to be more involved would be made very welcome. The committee meets at Nunawading at 5.00pm before the Monthly General Meeting on the 3rd Friday.

PRESIDENT: Michael Hammer Ph: 9755 2176

VICE PRESIDENT No 1: Vacant

VICE PRESIDENT No 2: Vacant

TREASURER: Neil Webster, Ph: 9859 3622

SECRETARY: Michael Hare, 9844 2232

Simon Begg (Editor) & Marcia Begg, Ph: 9751 1610

Inge Hammer, Ph: 9755 2176

Valerie Marshall, Ph: 9803 4434

Cynthia Sladen, Ph: 9561 8874

Alan Walker, Ph: 9726 8836

Elizabeth Xipell, Ph: 9859 9934

SOCIETY PICASAWEB SITE

Visit <http://picasaweb.google.com/ARSVic> for the latest pictures.

Additions since the May 2009 Newsletter are :-

South Australian Branch Convention October 2009

For the "Beechmont" Picasaweb site visit <http://picasaweb.google.com/simonwbegg>

Additions are Marcia and Simon's trip to the Flinders Ranges