

December 2015

# Rhodo News

Newsletter 381



Official Newsletter of the

*Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc*

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Chairman: Geoff Wood Newsletter Editor: Nigel Burch

Patrons: (International) Kenneth Cox, (Tasmania) Her Excellency the Governor of Tasmania, Kate Warner



## *Vale Don Dosser*

*We were saddened to hear of the passing of master gardener and hybridiser Don Dosser. Don's beautiful garden at Wilmot boasts some superb rhodos, and he made available many of his Lockington hybrids to us. You can see them on the bank towards our nursery. Don is photographed at EVRG with R. Lockington Pride. We extend our sympathies to his family.*

## Calendar

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December  
Social Meeting & bbq  
Meeting at 4pm, bbq after

No Meeting  
or newsletter  
in January



## Sue's Corner

With this Newsletter comes a copy the 2014/15 annual report from our Chairman delivered at our Annual General Meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 2015. If you would like a copy of the audited financial report, please let me know and I will send you one.

The members at our AGM ratified the standing committees for 2015/16, being:

- **Finance:** Eric Weeks, Geoff Wood, Bob Stevens, Sue Johnson.
- **Horticulture:** Juanita Wood, Trevor Warmesley,

Ivan Johnston, Maurie Kupsch.

- **Hospitality:** Jenny Chalk, Charmaine Shafer, Kay Shadbolt, Audrey Weeks, Anne Jones, Marilyn Jacqus, Anne Holloway.
- **Infrastructure:** Ray Tavner, Pete Stratford, Maurie Kupsch, John Moore, Kevin Walters, John Englund.
- **Publicity:** John Hudson, Ian Chalk, Margaret Starick, Sue Johnson.
- **Social:** Pete Stratford, Sam Biggins, Elaine Biggins, Ethel Tavner, Deann Brooks.
- **Work Health & Safety:** Geoff Wood, Ivan Johnson, Sue Johnson, Juanita Wood

The Management Group consists of our Curator Maurie Kupsch, a representative from each of the above committees (which the committee appoints) and one nomination from the floor at 2015 AGM, which was Ivan Johnston.

We gratefully accepted the nomination of our existing Honorary Officers for:

Librarian: Maurie Kupsch; Newsletter Editor: Nigel Burch; Membership Officer: Tony Simpson; ARS Reps: Ian Chalk and Ivan Johnston; and Burnie Tourism Association Rep: Margaret Starick.

Although the meeting agreed to increase the membership fees from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016, there was much discussion as to how much this increase should be, before the motion to increase the fees to \$30 for single and \$50 for double was accepted.

Following the AGM, spirited flower voting resulted in first place for Frank and Beris Medwin in BOTH the rhododendron and non rhododendron sections, with R. "Ring of Fire" and the rose "Fiona's Wish". Following their lead, Ray and Ethel Tavner took second place in both sections, with a R. javanicum cross and a kalmia. Funds raised were Flowers \$27.70, Raffle (won by Val De Bomford) \$48.50 and Trade Table 108.00.

For those able to join us, please join us at our December meeting on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December, commencing at 4pm, followed by a BBQ.

May your celebrations this festive season be both joyous and safe. *Sue Johnson*

## Welcome

A warm rhodo garden welcome to new members Christine Dunham & Maxine Smith, Sharon & Peter Ghossein, Alison Yaxley, Peter & Janet Dawe, Colleen Yaxley, Robyn McCarthy, Paul Hornby & Nerida Winder, Andrew & Christine Grzona, Gillian & George Lee, Alan & Alison Gill, James & Neisha Ferrao, Rosie Wasson, and Robyn & Steve Stewart.



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## *Around the Garden*

What a dry spring we had! Flowering was earlier this year due to the lack of rain and warmer days and therefore we had to start irrigating a few weeks in advance to keep everything looking its very best. The garden sure has had a fantastic display of colour but is now slowly coming to an end for the rhododendrons, except for a few species which are late bloomers, and as always I'm bursting at the seams to see *R. dalhousiae* var. *rhabdotum* which will flower around January.

I have started taking deciduous azalea, vireya and early flowering rhododendron cuttings and my aim is to fill the hot bed up completely this year. So if you see me buzzing around with secateurs and plastic bags (recyclable of course) in hand, then you'll know exactly what I am up to!

It's that time of the year for :

- those pesky little critters known to us as thrip and lace bug as they will be out and about for sure due to the early warmer weather conditions. You will not only find them on rhododendrons and azaleas, but also viburnums, flowering quince and even crab apple trees. Check underneath the leaves for the bugs BEFORE you see the mottled leaf damage. Remember that prevention is better than cure! We use Confidor, or you could use neem oil, white oil, Pyrethrum or Mavrik.
- The black and yellow creatures that have no legs but can make our visitors run a mile and usually with a tale to tell our volunteers once they get back up the top and have caught their breath! ! Yes, it's the tiger snakes! We love it here in the garden and it appears that these snakes do too. We have had more sightings of them this year, so just make sure you stick to the paths and make a bit of noise as you are walking around and 9 times out of 10, they'll be out of sight before you even approach them.
- Dead heading – here at EVRG we mainly dead head the big leaf rhodos as they not only will look better for it, but instead of the plant putting all of its energy into producing seed, its energy is much better spent putting on healthy new growth ready for the upcoming flowering season. This, however, is not to say you can't dead head your hybrid or other species rhododendrons—it all just depends on how many you have growing in your garden and what time you have to do this.

Happy gardening everyone, and a Merry Christmas to you all! *Neet*

## *Chairman's Report*

Well, I got through my first AGM as your Chairman without too many hiccups, although I need to brush up on agenda and motion procedures. A big thank you goes out to all of the members who have helped me since taking on the role as Chairman back in June.

As we head towards Christmas and 2016 EVRG is as busy as ever. There is even a Cruise Ship arriving in Burnie on New Year's Eve! One of the main points that our many visitors are attracted to, is the fact that the Garden is owned by the members and relies so heavily on the work of the volunteers. If you can spare a few days or hours over any period of time to help out it will be greatly appreciated. Would not it be great, for example, if we could keep the tea room open every day during our spectacular Autumn? To do that, we would need at least twenty new volunteers!

In our February newsletter I will give an update on the review of the Garden that is well under way, the future of horticultural students utilising EVRG as a training venue, and thoughts about celebrating our 35th birthday!!!

To everyone, have a happy and holy Christmas and a great New Year. *Geoff* 0427 722060 [geoffreywood@me.com](mailto:geoffreywood@me.com)

## *Donald James Dosser 6/11/35 – 21/11/15*

Don was born in Wangaratta, Victoria. He worked for Karl van de Ven at Olinda Nurseries from 1966-70 and Karl showed him the finer points of hybridizing rhododendrons and started him on a long career of hybridizing and growing his beloved rhododendrons, plus conifers and Japanese maples. In 1994 he filled four shipping containers with his plants and moved to Tasmania, where after a little bit of searching for a site to build a garden he settled at Wilmot, where he established "Lockington" to showcase his many rhododendrons, conifers and maples. Shortly after he made a visit to EVRG and donated an evergreen azalea of his called 'Beau Bonnie'. As the years went by Don donated many of his hybrid rhodos to the garden – so we now have a large collection named 'The Don Dosser Hybrids'. Don's memory will live on in his collection at Emu Valley.



## *Rhododendron sanctum*

From September onwards the Japanese section of the garden has seen a large number of deciduous azaleas species flowering – all native to Japan. The last of these to flower is *R. sanctum*.

*R. sanctum* was described in 1932 from a plant growing on Mount Kamiyama in the sacred area of the Great Shrine of Ise. However the introduction to western gardens is unknown. It is closely related to the earlier flowering *R. amagianum* and *R. weyrichii* in flower colour and leaf size.

An attractive bush in its form, as it tends to grow outwards with a layered effect. The leaves are large and shiny, arranged in threes, and they also put on a great autumn show – deep orange and yellow. The strong purplish pink flowers are arranged on tops of these branches making a delightful display.

To view *R. sanctum* and the many other members of the Reticulatum Alliance we grow at Emu Valley you can see them growing inside the main entrance to the Japanese Garden. *Maurie*

*The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:*



**Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc.**  
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