

# Rhododendrons South Australia

Australian Rhododendron Society Inc. South Australian Branch

Issue 78 - April 2014

## Coming Events

### April 'bring a friend' Social Meeting 16<sup>th</sup> April 7:45pm

In an effort to recruit new members, we call on all current members to 'bring a friend' to this month's meeting.

[Dr Robert Stone](#), Doctor of Philosophy, Department of Archaeology at Flinders University, will be the guest speaker. Robert whose thesis was a study of the [Stately Homes of Colonial South Australia](#), will be talking about the Mansions of Adelaide and surrounds and in particular the grounds and gardens.

**Please 'bring a friend' and a plate.**

### Enfield Autumn Plant Show April 12th & 13th

This is an excellent show, with displays of Tuberous begonias, African Violets, Streptocarpus, Orchids and many other plants. Get there early as the plants are in great demand.

Enfield Community Centre at 540 Regency Road. 10am to 4pm on both days - \$3.00 entry.

### Society Outing Anlaby Station, Kapunda Sat 31<sup>st</sup> of May

Anlaby is the home of the oldest Merino Stud in South Australia. Located at Kapunda in the Barossa Valley, a tour of the Anlaby House will take you on an historic journey back in time giving a sense of how the family and servants lived and worked there.



Surrounded by approximately 10 acres of historically listed old fashioned "English style" gardens, a guided walk typically includes the shade house, glass house, walled vegetable garden, rose gardens and terraced lawns. The original carriageway winds past the front of the house and down to the peacock aviary.

Members interested in this outing are asked to bring \$35pp to the meeting for the trip.

Should there be sufficient interest a bus may be arranged, at additional cost.

[www.anlaby.com.au](http://www.anlaby.com.au)



By Bill Voight

## Culture Notes

### "What you should be doing with your rhodies and garden this April"

Vireyas are making new growth now and need to be protected from lace bug which is still active due to our warm season. "Confidor" is a safe spray to use. A fungicide will prevent rust from infecting the plants.

"Rose Queen" is an evergreen azalea that flowers very freely from winter into spring. It is bright rose pink, with a spotted throat. Well worth growing, "Rosa Belton" is another hardy free flowering azalea. It is white with a striking mauve border, and a lime green throat.

Rhododendron Lutescens is a lemon yellow species that flowers in September. It has slender growth with foliage that is bronzed when young. An attractive addition to any collection.

With cooler weather, repotting of any plants that have outgrown their pots can be done safely now. Don't move plants to much larger pots, but add some slow release fertilizer to any new soil used.

Bunnings and Valley Nursery (between Hanhdorf and Mt Barker) have stocks of both rhododendrons and azaleas now.

When choosing trees for autumn colour and/or shade visit the nurseries now to see the colours displayed, Liquidambar in particular vary greatly in their autumn colouring; so select the colour you favour by observing its toning at this time. The spindle tree (Euonymus Europaeus) is a delightful small tree with fine autumn foliage and pink berries.

Camellias often produce far too many buds, so smaller plants in particular will benefit from having many buds removed. Larger, better blooms will result and the vigour of the plant will not be lessened.

Time to divide primroses, polyanthus and auriculas. Spring flowering bulbs can be planted now. For winter and spring colour sow seeds of linaria directly into their permanent positions.

Don't neglect visits to Mt Lofty Botanic Gardens.



Rose Queen



Rosa Belton



Lutescens

## Tesselaar's Rare Plant Show April 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>

Richard and I took a leisurely trip to the Dandenongs for the weekend of the plant show, stopping briefly at the Ballarat Botanic Gardens to view the Tuberous Begonia Display. The Begonias were at their peak and the presentation rivalled anything we had previously viewed at Chelsea. It is certainly worthwhile to spend the morning in the gardens, not only for the Begonias but also for the bedding displays in and around the venue.



*Display of Begonia*



*Tesselaars Plant Sale*

Saturday morning saw us rise early to get prime pick at the Rare Plant Show. Even though we arrived well before opening time we were greeted with a long line of eager plant hunters. It reminded me of photos of sale days at large department stores. The stall holders had worked very hard to present their plants in attractive and enticing ways. Needless to say we bought numerous plants, bulbs and seeds and were fortunate to be able to spend time with Andrew Rouse, a Vireya expert

from the Victorian Rhododendron Society, who is keen to maintain contact with the SA branch. He is interested in swapping cuttings and being involved with tissue culture once we can get it to work reliably. By lunch time the whole Tesselaar garden area was crowded and many people found a place to sit and listen to the talks presented by renowned nurserymen.

The whole event was very well organized and certainly worth the visit in terms of quality plants and information. Many nurseries in the area were also doing very good trade and we occupied ourselves during the afternoon visiting Conifer gardens, Cloudhill, The Wishing Well and Gentiana, the latter having some small unusual maples.

This trip, along with the spring visit to the Dandenongs is highly recommended. There is a range of excellent accommodation and eateries in a setting which would appeal to any keen gardeners and garden lovers.

Bronwyn & Richard



*Ballarat Botanic Gardens*

The South Australian Branch of the Australian Garden History Society invites you to attend an illustrated talk by

**Dr Anne Vale on "Garden writers and Philosophers of the 1980s".**



Kevin Heinze, Tommy Garnett and Trevor Nottle. Photos: Anne Vale and Penny Garnett

There are many garden history Society members who will fondly remember how Kevin Heinze, Tommy Garnett and Trevor Nottle promoted garden making in their own unique way. They inspired their many followers through their practical, philosophical, intellectual and spiritual influence. Individually and collectively they shaped our concepts of what a garden is and how we engaged in gardening through the second half of the 20th Century and beyond. Trevor Nottle in particular continues to influence the art of landscape management and conservation into the 21st century.

Dr Anne Vale is an author and lecturer in Australian Garden History with a focus on 20th century practitioners. She is an active member of the Australian Garden History Society, a passionate gardener and photographer. As the principal of consulting practice Heriscapes, [www.heriscapes.com.au](http://www.heriscapes.com.au), Anne enjoys assessing and researching 'gardens with history.' Anne has published garden guides or histories on significant heritage gardens such as Dalvui, Wirruna Nursery, Durrol and the Kyneton Botanic Garden. Her latest book, *Exceptional Australian Garden Makers* was launched at the Australian Garden History Society Conference in October.



*Dr Anne Vale*

The Adelaide launch of *Exceptional Australian Garden Makers* will be immediately after Anne's talk. Trevor Nottle will launch Anne's book. Copies will be available for purchase on the evening.

**5.30 for 6.00pm on Tuesday, 6 May 2014.**

**Ira Raymond Room of the Barr Smith Library, The University of Adelaide**

(Parking on Victoria Drive near the University Bridge, or on the campus (there is a charge).

Cost \$5, RSVP by Monday 5th May to Ray Choate, University Librarian, Barr Smith Library  
[ray.choate@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:ray.choate@adelaide.edu.au) or 8313 4064

## Bee Hotels

### More Bees 'Check-in' to the Bee Hotels

Following Bron's article on the success she has been having with Blue Banded Bees, David Inverarity sent me this picture of a bee he had managed to photograph and send to Dr Katja Hogendoorn.



She identified it as a Leaf Cutter Bee. Several of the 'rooms' in his bee hotel have now been rented! It would seem members are having continued success attracting native bees.

Michelle

## Tissue Culture

The tissue culture project is continuing to progress well, with our first explant in the multiplication phase. At three months our original plant has now grown to seven. There are still problems to be overcome, with our garden collected plant material showing varying levels of benign internal bacteria that are not destroyed by the sterilization procedure. The literature indicates that this can be quite an intractable problem but we persevere in joyful hope!

Richard & Milton

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## March Meeting

The March meeting was very well attended (we had all obviously been waiting with bated breath for a new rhodi year to begin). Members were very generous with contributions for the trading table and it was the most abundant table since its inception. We also welcomed two new members.

Bill Antel's discussion on irrigation was extremely informative. Janie brought in some vireyas to identify and capped her night off by winning the raffle !

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*Milton Bowman*

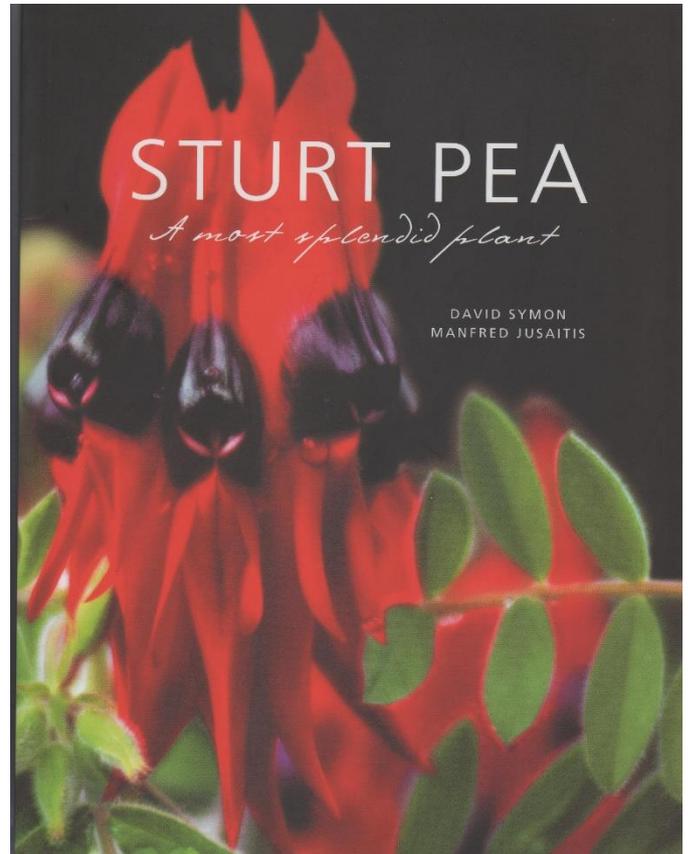
## Librarian's Report

The year has got away to a good start and here we are in April and Autumn is upon us already. March was a cool month which is what the gardens and the gardeners needed after the Summer, and there was useful rain in the middle of March. 40+ mm fell on Forest Lodge and has served to keep most plants looking healthy. Hopefully the Autumn rains will set in this month and watering will become a memory, until next summer.

The library has been reorganised to make selecting books a little easier and I am pleased to see quite an active level of borrowing. The bound copies of the journals have now been archived at Forest Lodge because they were rarely borrowed and did take up a lot of shelf space, but if anyone wishes to follow up a topic using the old journals please email me and I can find the appropriate copy for you.

At the last meeting David Wotton generously donated a book called "Sturt Pea, a most splendid plant" by Symon and Jusaitis. This is a splendid book, and gives an account of the discovery of the plant by William Dampier in 1699, and then the sightings of the plant in flower by people like Oxley, Eyre and Charles Sturt after whom the plant was eventually named. There is ongoing controversy about the correct botanical name and even what genus it belongs to.

There are sections on the propagation of the plant and from my reading a good display of blooms in the home garden has more than an element of luck in the creation. Richard Illman is finding the micropropagation of Rhododendrons a challenge, but it looks like Sturt Pea is vastly more challenging.



This book makes a good read, and will occupy a few evenings in front of the fire.

Happy reading

Milton Bowman



## A Sorry Tale of Woe

In May last year I posted on the website under "Bloom of the Month" a picture of a Vireyas which was flowering in the main street of Stirling outside of the National Bank. At the time one of our members commented that it was a good job I taken this photo, as it would not be there this time next year. How prophetic these words proved to be. As I was passing the plant recently I took this photograph, I very much doubt it will be flowering this May.



*Unknown Vireya in Stirling May 2013*



*Same Vireya April 2014*

## Bird of the Month

The Noisy Miner is a native honeyeater and is found on the Adelaide Plains and the Adelaide Hills, though probably not in the Stirling - Crafers area yet.

The Noisy Miner is an aggressive territorial bird and has adjusted well to settlement.

It is not welcome in most gardens as it drives smaller birds away.

There is often confusion between these two birds.

The Indian Myna, also known as the Common Myna, is NOT found in South Australia. It is found in Eastern States.

It is an import and dramatically competes with our native birds.

The Indian Myna is an attractive bird, and a good singer, hence the introduction in the 1800s.

Chris



*Noisy Minor*



*Indian Myna*

## What's in the Nurseries?



*Glenberry Nursery*

Glenberry Nursery (off Rangeview Drive Carey Gully) has a wonderful

selection of Autumn trees and shrubs. They are presented very well and at this time of year provide a true indication of their autumn hues- a very good time to select your autumn colour. The nursery also has an excellent range of reasonably priced healthy and hardy rhododendrons.

Bunnings at Mile End has new stock of Camelias and azaleas. Some old varieties have come back on the market- worth the trip.

Bronwyn

## From the Propagating Bench

We have now reached the end of the usual period for taking Rhododendron and azalea

cuttings, although, it is not too late with this current spell of mild weather to seize the opportunity to try your hand at propagation.

However, Vireyas, with their different growth habit can be propagated from cuttings at any time of the year. Pinching out semi-matured wood for cuttings has the advantage of producing denser, more compact plants.

In terms of other garden plants, a little hand pollination of your Nerines can produce a large number of seeds that are easy to germinate and rapidly increase the number of these delightful autumn plants.

Richard

## Committee News

### **Team Smylie Will Not Be Standing For Another Term**

During the course of the March meeting Ian and Janie Smylie announced they would not be standing for their positions as President and Secretary respectively, at the next AGM. The Society has greatly benefited from their excellent leadership and their contribution in these positions can never be underestimated. Once again the Society has benefited from members who are dedicated to encouraging the interest in the cultivation of the genus Rhododendron by devoting enormous amounts of time and energy to the Society, from which all members have benefited. The Society owes a great debt of thanks to these two individuals.

## Neutrog Orders

Please post or email your order direct to Neutrog by APRIL 15th. Remember to keep a copy of your order for collection.

## Blooming Success

Our esteemed life members Daphne and Dennis Chandler, who relocated to Waikerie some three and a bit years ago have continued their tradition of intrepid gardening. Not only did they win the best garden under two years in the Wakerie Garden Competition of 2012 but they followed it up by winning the best established garden in November 2013. Along the way they have proved you can grow rhododendrons in the most unlikely climate.

Michelle

Article attached to end of Newsletter.

## Interesting Article

Greenworld Magazine(Vol.31no5,p11):

“The introduction of a new law in Australia to control the availability of synthetic drugs could impact on the legality of growing some garden plants. Legislation just passed in NSW Parliament to ban psychoactive and other substances may have the unwelcome side-effect of banning the growing of some plants. Many common garden plants including wattles, cactus, passionfruit, brugsmenia and yellow oleander contain psychotropic and other substances. Growers and gardeners are asking if the new law criminalises cacti and calling for greater consultation in drug reform.”

A classic case of how Government and bureaucracy have gone crazy creating rules that have greater consequences than planned. Will this affect rhododendrons and will gardeners become criminals?

Bronwyn



*Bloom of the month, Meicho, one of a number of azaleas that flower well during autumn*

# Mildura Weekly

## RIVERLAND EDITION

# Bloomin' good effort



Meet green-thumbed Waikerie couple Daphne and Denis Chandler. The pair love gardening, and took very little time to establish colourful surrounds about their home when they moved there from Aldgate, in the Adelaide Hills three years ago. Last year they won the best garden (under two years) in the Waikerie Garden Competition, and have followed that up this year by winning the best established garden (outside of town). For more see page 22.



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## IN THE RIVERLAND THIS WEEK

Daphne and Denis Chandler love gardening, and took very little time to establish colourful surrounds to their home when they moved to Waikerie from Aldgate, in the Adelaide Hills three years ago. Last year they won the best garden (under two years) in the Waikerie Garden Competition, and have followed that up by winning the 2013 best established garden (outside of town), when competition results were announced this week. The Mildura Weekly's Riverland writer BEV STORY enjoyed a tour of the Chandler home and garden this week, and spoke to the couple about their hobby, and passion.

# Power plants in a Garden of Eden

FROM The very moment you walk into Daphne and Denis Chandler's Waikerie property, you know straight away that they love gardening - especially when you are greeted by a blooming palette of colour.

And they have made good use of the few large trees that were just about all that was growing on the double block surrounding their home when they moved in.

The front garden is a mass of roses during spring and summer, with clever under-planting adding to the view.

Likewise in the huge back yard, where they take advantage of the shade offered by the large trees to grow varieties that seem unlikely to survive the heat of the Riverland summer - much less flourish as they do - rhododendrons, azaleas, clematis, begonias and hostas to name just a few.

Daphne has enjoyed a long history with rhododendrons and azaleas, and at one stage was secretary of both the International Rhododendron Society and the Australian Rhododendron Society (SA branch).

She said the knowledge gained along the way had helped her to successfully grow some species that would appear unlikely to succeed in the dry, hot Riverland climate.

"I like a challenge," Daphne said. "When they say 'you can't do it' I do it. There was nothing out in the paddock at the start."

The couple had a few good reasons for deciding to move to the Riverland - Daphne suffering from three auto-immune diseases was just one of them, and it was just too cold and damp in the Adelaide Hills.

Another good reason is that Daphne's sister Raelene lives in the Riverland - at Sunlands.

"Denis retired a year earlier to be my full-time carer - and now we find we have plenty of time to do what we want."

"I couldn't part with 30 years of plants, so I paid \$1500 to bring a lorry-full of them with me to Waikerie," she said. "Our largest collection of one species were the alpine plants - Primula Auricula...we had over 500 of them."



Daphne loves rare plants, but when the couple decided to move to Waikerie they sold many of them...the money helped with transportation costs of the remaining species.

It is amazing to see how, with tender loving care, many

of the small plants have developed into vigorous shrubs and trees - after just three years.

One plant that they have plenty of is maple trees - seedlings sprouted unintentionally in many of the pot plants the couple brought from Aldgate, and they have placed them throughout the garden, which is a series of different 'rooms' and collections of plants.

Daphne has limited mobility so she takes charge of planting seeds and striking cuttings for their magnificent garden, for foliage, flowers and fruit and vegetables.

"I propagate and I am a seedaholic," she said. "I hunt around for rare seeds - I'm a rare plant and seed enthusiast."

Daphne works her magic mainly in a large greenhouse that Denis built for her 60th birthday last year. It is also there that the couple house their large collection of succulents, including a big range of Kalanchoe.

"Denis has made the back area easy for me to get around

in, and built the greenhouse just out the back door," she said.

Nestled throughout the garden are a huge range of Aquilina - more commonly known as Granny's bonnets, rare azalea such as Old Hamii, Spanish almonds, 1800s' rose William Lob, rhododendron and rare dwarf rock jasmine.

By situating plants with a mixture of shade and light, Denis said they were also able to grow more unusual fruits, such as boysenberry and Loganberry.

"We are self-sufficient with our vegetables and fruit," he said.

Daphne is a former florist, and during the 30 years the couple lived at Aldgate, she and Denis opened their garden to the public once a year. During the years that she owned The Bower (florists) in Unley, Daphne had a regular segment on Channel 10's A Touch of Elegance.

Denis was a visual merchandise manager at David Jones - dressing windows for the fantastic displays enjoyed by passers-by in Rundle Mall.

The work was interrupted when he was called up for National Service, but the job was waiting for him when his two years were up.

It was while they both worked for Myers that the couple first met - Daphne initially worked in the china department before moving into the florists section.

They have just celebrated 43 years of marriage, and were delighted this week to find out that they had built on the gardening accolades from last year's Waikerie Garden Competition.

Daphne said having won the 'under two year' garden in 2012 they weren't expecting a lot in the open section.

"We didn't expect to come anywhere near it after last year," she said.

Inside their home, the Chandler's love of gardening is evident in numerous artworks on their walls, some by internationally-renowned floral painter Darryl Trott, who was a regular visitor to their home to gain inspiration to paint, as part of his painting trips across the world.

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• GARDEN GURUS: The transformation of the Chandler property from a barren landscape, ABOVE, to a beautiful garden has turned into an award-winner.

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