

May 2017

Rhodo News

Newsletter 396



Official Newsletter of the

Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc

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

Our Beautiful Autumn



*"I think that I shall never see, a poem lovely as a tree."
From Joyce Kilmer 1913 and Heather Walmsley 2017.*

Calendar

Sunday 21st May

Social Meeting at EVRG 2pm
Guest Speaker Amarlie Crowden of Kaydale Lodge

Sunday 18th June

Social Meeting
At EVRG 2pm

See us at:

emuvallayrhodo.com.au

Sue's Corner

There's been quite a lot on media coverage in the past week or so, recognising and acknowledging the value of volunteers during National Volunteer Week. One such article was headed "*Volunteers – the heart beat of our community*". Here at EVRG, our volunteers are both the heart beat and the life blood! Our garden depends on the willingness of its members and volunteers who choose to devote countless hours to raise funds to develop and maintain the vision and efforts of yet another band of volunteers!



One such group is our hospitality team, who provide good cheer and fine tucker to our visitors, as well as catering for bus tours and a multitude of functions throughout the year. Their efforts now contribute to over 50% of the income we receive annually. Such generosity of spirit is very much appreciated.



The photo above captures just five of at least 50 volunteers in the hospitality team!

Our garden received a most welcome drenching in April, with 72 mm of rain recorded. Not only did this rain soak in and through, it also washed the plants squeaky clean – so much so that they actually sparkle in the late afternoon sun rays. Such rain was perfectly timed, as the tunnel up at the nursery is chock full of plants ready to go into the garden, with the next generation eager to take their place. Maurie and Trevor have made a start on what really is a marathon task - *planting out*.

Following the success of our inaugural garden sculpture competition and outdoor exhibition last year, we have widened the scope of the event for 2017 to include both art and sculpture. This **garden art and sculpture competition and outdoor exhibition** will run from our official Opening of the 2017 Flowering Season on 16th September through to our Cherry Blossom Celebration Day on 21st October.

Entry is free and is open to all residents in the 64 telephone prefix area – from Latrobe to Smithton and the West Coast. Entrants can choose to sell their entries during the exhibition, with EVRG retaining 15% commission. Entries close on 31st August 2017. Entry forms are available on our website www.emuvalleyrhodo.com.au or by request to email: enquiries@evrg.com.au or mobile 0417 548171.

Sue Johnson

Up Coming events for your Diary!

- Safe Food Handling Training – Saturday 5th August 2017 10.30am to noonish
- Christmas in Winter Dinner – Saturday 26th August 6 for 6.30pm BYO. \$30pp or \$25pp for members. Bookings essential, please
- Opening of the 2017 Flowering Season – Saturday 16th September at 11.00am
- Cherry Blossom Celebration – Saturday 21st October 2017 10am to 3pm

Social Meeting Report for 16th March

Autumn chill is changing the deciduous trees to bolder, brighter colours and making some spectacular displays, however those same chill conditions seem to be discouraging our members to venture out of their cosy homes of late. Those brave souls who attended our April meeting were provided with a very interesting talk by our learned curator, Maurie.

His verbal description of the autumn colouration of *Acer saccharum*, and *A. rubrum* X *A. saccharum*, was so vivid that we scarcely needed the leaves to visualise their beauty. Then we heard about the Judas tree (*Cercis siliquastrum*) and the Caramel tree (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*), both of which are growing in the garden. *R. sino-grande* var. *boreale* from south Yunnan and *R. proteoides* were also introduced to us.

While those with a strong interest in the botanical aspects were given a treat, those of us with lesser knowledge were also kept attentive. Thank you Maurie, for sharing from your seemingly boundless knowledge of our garden plants.

Speaking on behalf of Geoff Wood, Sue Johnson brought us up to date with points from our chairman. A progress report from Ivan Johnson is that we are currently awaiting progress from other sources, regarding the proposal to acquire land adjoining the nursery area. On the flower voting table a very colourful array of vireya blooms saw the Tavner duo take out both first and second places, while a truss of pink roses ("Fairy") topped the cut flower section for Frank Medwin, and Ann Holloway followed with her *Luculia*. To have so much colour on display was delightful, thanks to our avid gardeners.

The meeting raised \$47.25, with the Door prize taken by Valma Bottle and the winning raffle ticket held by Anne Holloway. We are in for a wonderful treat at our next meeting, with Amarlie Crowden from Kaydale Lodge as our guest speaker, so mark it in your diary! *Pete*

Chairman's Report

Winter is not far off but certainly Emu Valley does not become dormant. There is so much going on and we most definitely are seeing more visitors in all seasons. In 2013 we had 5866 visitors and in 2014 we had 5888 visitors (these are financial years). Since then we have had a surge in numbers. Not including cruise ship passengers, we had 7565 visitors in 2015 and 8537 visitors in 2016. This represents a huge 45% increase in visitor numbers in the last three years!

Our July Sunday meeting will be a General Meeting for members to vote on proposed changes to the constitution. In June you will receive detailed information in respect to this and if you have any queries in respect to anything please ask for clarification. All going well at our AGM in September endorsement will be sort to ratify the appointment of a Board of Directors selected through an interview process.

Now some really good news. Volunteer Grants, run by the Australian Government Department of Social Services, supports the efforts of Australian volunteers by providing grants up to \$5000 to organisations.

So it was very fitting to receive advice this week that our application to the Volunteer Grants for 2016 to purchase our very own mulcher was successful. We are grateful for such support. I'm quite sure our garden maintenance volunteers will spend many happy hours reading the manual before operating it.

Cheers Geoff geoffreywood@me.com 0427 722 060



PS: watch this space next month for news about a new People Mover!!!

SAFE FOOD HANDLING TRAINING

The next Safe Food Handling training will be held at the garden on Saturday 5th August 2017. Those involved in tea room and catering rosters are urged to keep the date free and attend, however all volunteers are welcome to attend, if interested. Safe Food Handling training is an accreditation requirement for all those involved in the preparation of food. Thank you for your



R. campanulatum

One of the first species rhododendrons to be introduced to Emu Valley was *R. campanulatum* Ssp *campanulatum* in the form of the selected clone 'Knaphill', a delightful lavender-blue flowered plant with very attractive suede-like fawn to rusty brown indumentum under the leaves. Since then we have received seed from overseas, and because *R. campanulatum* is quite variable, we now have some interesting plants.

R. campanulatum is one of the more common rhododendrons in the Himalayan countries of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan where it can grow into trees up to 5 metres high amongst birch and conifer forests.

The flower colour varies from lavender blue to pale purple, rose or white with or without purple or red spots. *R. campanulatum* was first introduced to western gardens by Wallich in 1825 and first flowered in 1839. Many other collections were to follow and given the variable nature of the plant different clones are grown. Some of these clones are 'Knaphill' 'Roland Cooper' 'WaxenBell' and a form with white flowers. One worthy of special mention is *R. campanulatum* Ssp *aeruginosum* from Sikkim and Bhutan, as it has blue-green foliage and is quite rare in cultivation. *Maurie*

The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:



Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc.
PO Box 39 Burnie, Tasmania 7320