

February 2014

# Rhodo News

Newsletter 360



Official Newsletter of the  
*Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc*

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## Calendar

**Sunday 16<sup>th</sup>**

**February**

Regular meeting at EVRG at 2pm. Guest speaker is our own Charmaine Schafer with a presentation on her African Safari.



## Our New Signs

WOW! Our new Emu Valley Signs are receiving very favourable comment. Our special thanks to the property owners: Impact fertilizers at Round Hill, Mike & Jane Haybittel of Doctors Rocks, and Dale Elphinstone at Highclere, for their permission and support. Similar signs, although smaller, will be made and erected at the junction of Mooreville Road and Three Mile Line Road, and at the junction of Mount Street and Ridgley Highway. The signs are reflective, so they also stand out at night when caught in car head lights.

Our appreciation to our publicity committee, including Libby Dobson, Karli Franks and Ian Waller, for their professional input to the design. Also thanks to Geoff Starick and Pete Stratford for their role. Combined, a brilliant team effort, congratulations to all, and our sincerest thanks.

*Ian & Sue*

See us at:

[emuvalleyrhodo.com.au](http://emuvalleyrhodo.com.au)

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## SUE'S CORNER

Many thanks to Tony Jones, who stepped up to the challenge in our last newsletter, and offered his services to mow and whipper snipper our lawns whilst Geoff is on "limp" leave.

The challenge for the next couple of months is to recruit some more volunteers to assist with general garden maintenance. Whilst the weather is fine, it would be great to get on top of the many and varied manual tasks, such as staking up, painting the bridge rails, raking up leaves from drains and pathways, etc. If this sounds like something you could be interested in, please let me know and we will find you a buddy to work with!

So far this year, we have had 358 visitors from our cruise ships – with our next ship due on 14<sup>th</sup> February and the last for the season on April 28<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to all our volunteers who act as EVRG ambassadors on these days – personal interaction with the very folk who develop and maintain the Garden is something quite special and is often commented upon.

As you are aware, EVRG insures with and is an agency for WFI Insurance, which means that we receive part of the commission generated from each property insured. WFI Insurance was recently sold to Insurance Australia Group, and this new company is not keen on agencies, for obvious reasons. They have indicated they will withdraw our agency status at the end of 2014, unless we can generate new business. To this end, their representative Robyn Keene has indicated that any insurance quotation request that references her name and EVRG will go into a draw for a hamper of goodies valued at \$150. There will be two hampers – one drawn 30<sup>th</sup> June and the other drawn 31<sup>st</sup> December. Please contact me if you need further info. So give it a go when your insurance next becomes due – you could be a winner in more ways than one!

May you continue to enjoy our late summer.

*Sue Johnson*

## DECEMBER MEETING REPORT

Taking advantage of the opportunity to do so, some members were taken on a guided tour of the plant propagation house and nursery of the EVRG. Hearing Maurie's explanation of the process to get from seed to

flowering shrub, we all came away with a greater appreciation of this lesser known part of our Garden.

Our end of year meeting followed on from the tour, with over forty in attendance. After Ethel had extended a warm welcome to the gathering we had Maurie exhibit our newest trophy, another for the "Best Tourism Experience." Take a bow all who contributed to our success in achieving this award.

Ian Chalk introduced Chairman of the Advisory Board, Tony Fletcher, who praised the role of EVRG in the overall image of Burnie as a city, and especially the contribution towards that end made by our volunteers. Then after the reading of citations, Life Membership was awarded to two of our stalwarts, Ray Tavner and Eric Weeks, both of whom are very strongly supported by their wives, Ethel and Audrey, respectively.

All of these people have made a lasting and valuable contribution to the establishment of the Garden as we see it today. Congratulations on well deserved recognition for all your work.

Ian highlighted several visits from people whose awareness of EVRG potentially has far reaching effects, namely international travel agent Donna Dawson, a group of Japanese travel agents based in Adelaide, Tino and Angus from ABC Gardening, and last but by no means least Steve Hootman, internationally recognised rhododendron authority from Seattle.

An unusual plant with attractive bloom, *Sinocalycanthus chinensis*, was displayed and described by Maurie, though sometimes it may be that a crash course in Latin would be helpful. We rely heavily on Maurie's incredible memory when we need to re-check some of the names!

Excellent support was shown to all of our fund (and fun) raising ventures with the 3-draw raffle seeing Anne Holloway, Ray Tavner, and Geoff Starick winning 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively. The raffle raised \$109.50.

From an array of beautiful blooms the first prize Rhodo was grown by Frank and Beris Medwin, with a bloom from Eric and Audrey Weeks taking second place in the voting. A rose took out the top place in cut flowers, from the garden of Frank and Beris again, while a selection of kalmia trusses gave second place to Sam and Elaine Biggins. Flower voting raised \$40.50.

With the skills of Sam being used and some spirited and often humorous competition, a selection of scarcer plants realised a total of \$418, while from the trade table a further \$87.25 was added to the garden's coffers.

A beautifully hand crafted rug that was prize in a year long raffle was won by Nikki Wells, from Burnie. A big Thank You to all who supported these events.

*Pete Stratford*



*The regular crew (John Moore, Ray Tavner , John Englund, Kevin Walters, Maurie Kupsch and Max Hutchinson) assembling the roof section of the Chinese pavilion.*

## IN THE GARDEN

Welcome back everyone. Summer may have finally found us! Maurie started watering sections of an evening a few weeks ago now, but it hasn't been a constant thing as we have had enough rain just at the right time which has been great.

We have finally pricked over 100 punnets of seedlings that were in 'Kupsch's Cubbies' and all are doing extremely well in the first tunnel. The 2014 seed lists have been put out and we have put in our order for 70+ seeds, some of which are new species to the garden. We now just have to hope that they make it through quarantine!

Ian and crew have been knocking off weeds left right and centre but we really need to now focus spraying the walking tracks and especially the area around our Chinese

pavilion site, ready for the big unveiling. This is a shout out to anyone who knows of people who love a good chat whilst pulling a few (hundred) weeds. Bring a friend and make a day of it, we can always do with some extra help and you can never have too many friends!

The Chinese pavilion is taking shape and it won't be long now until it makes the big move from the workshop down to the site. Many, many hours for all involved have gone into the construction but for one in-particular, no doubt sleepless nights will all be worth the a colourful and relaxing retreat in the garden. Keep up the excellent work Team!

Enjoy the sunshine and see you next month.

Juanita 

## WELCOME

A warm welcome to new members Jima & Judy Trewarn, Dr Lloyd Bwanaisa & Lilly Alfonso, Daphne & Jana Kalweit , Sheryl Lam, Erwin & Erika Kalweit, Greg Boyd, Diane Hill, Eric Daniels, Ronald & Linda Stillman, Alan & Ann Bennett, and Len & Aileen Mackenzie.



*Rudy and Junette Bader contributed their talents in painting flowers and patterns on the beams.*

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Whilst seasonal conditions have been brilliant for gardening, the continuing spring and summer rains have accentuated weed growth. With weed control being our most important challenge, this year we had to engage a contractor to

assist us. This I believe to be inevitable in the future due to increasing compliance issues and our own limitations. However, there is a cost and I am seeking assistance to meet the next seasons projected cost of \$6/7000.



*Hannah Gibbons has been painting the delicate flowers on the beams.*

Any members or members of service clubs who are able to assist directly or indirectly would be greatly appreciated. We already have a commitment of \$1000 so only 6 to go. Kindly contact myself or our Business manager Sue for further info.

I am just "blown away" by the dedication and commitment of Maurie and his team who are building the Chinese Pavilion, an incredible addition it will be to the Emu Valley visitor experience. For those that have not had the opportunity of viewing the progress of this amazing structure and its associated art work, you have a thrill awaiting and just a sample for you here in our photos.

What a successful year 2013 was for EVRG and my thanks to all that have contributed. I look forward with confidence to another rewarding year in 2014.

*Ian Chalk*



## *Tutcheria spectabilis*

Tutcheria spectabilis is quite a rare small tree from the sheltered woodland near Hong Kong in China. It is closely related to camellia, and resembles its relative with serrated shiny dark green foliage and forming big fat buds in clusters along the branch which open progressively to present a colourful display. The flowers are large single white with a boss of yellow stamens with a slight orange fragrance.

Our plant at EVRG is growing nicely and is now over a metre in height. We have taken a number of cuttings – being an evergreen it will strike as readily as camellias.

*Maurie*

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



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