

October 2018

Rhodo News

Newsletter 412



Official Newsletter of the

Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc

Postal Address: PO Box U33 Upper Burnie Tasmania 7320 Phone: 6433 1805

enquiries@evrg.com.au Office Hours: Mon-Fri 10am-2pm

General Manager: Geoff Wood Newsletter Editor: Nigel Burch

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

An Unexpected Vice-Regal Visit



Our Patron, Her Excellency the Governor of Tasmania, Mrs Kate Warner and Mr Warner visited us on September 6th for a quiet visit. Our wonderful catering staff prepared a lovely lunch for the Her Excellency and her two staff members. They weren't shy about a little dampness in the air, taking a short walk past the Vireyas and hybrids. Seen here in front of *R tuba* are, from the left, Mr Warner, Her Excellency, Neet, our General Manager Geoff Wood and Chairman Ant Dry.

Calendar

Saturday 20th Oct
Cherry Blossom Festival
10-4pm

NO SOCIAL MEETING
IN OCTOBER
(too busy)

Sunday 18th November
Social Meeting
At EVRG 2pm

See us at: emuvallorhodo.com.au

General Manager's Report

I often wonder what to start with in each newsletter and this month is no exception. There is so much happening!

Financially August was a little disappointing as the weather was not good to us. Early in 2019 we will look at how we might entice more visitors. October is a different story. Not including one cruise ship visit there are 35 events taking place. This is made up of group visits and functions. Help is needed in lots of areas. The Tea Room has gaps in the roster. If you can spare some time to help out it will be greatly appreciated. Just helping during the busy 11am to 2pm slot would take pressure off those rostered on. You do not need experience.

On Thursday October 25 the Australian Rhododendron Society, Southern Tasmanian Branch, will be visiting Emu Valley. Members are invited to join in with them for a barbecue lunch from 1230. To offset costs those attending are asked to pay \$3. A number of their members have had close links to Emu Valley and it is an opportunity to hear what is happening in the south of the state. For catering purposes if you will be coming along please either email the office or myself or phone or text me.

Thank you to everyone who helped out at the Blooming Tasmania Flower and Garden Festival at the Albert Hall in Launceston. It was a big three days and I am sure the exposure Emu Valley got will pay off big time.

It is encouraging to see Emu Valley being approached to hold events such as art exhibitions and musical performances. It shows how our increased marketing and advertising is paying off.

Hope to see lots of members at our Cherry Blossom Celebration on October 20.

Geoff — geoffreywood@me.com // 0427 722 060

Social Meeting of September 16th

Our meeting commenced with those present observing a minute's silence to remember much respected fellow member, David Cherry. Our condolences are extended to his family.

Maurie spoke about the irregular seasonal blooming patterns of some of our flowering cherry trees. After having been a mass of blossom one year, the following season they can have a very poor bloom coverage, if any. This also happens with some fruit trees.

Also shown to us, were five different trusses of hybrid rhododendron, each plant grown from the same seed pod, but with blooms ranging from a blended pink, named "Jenny Cox", through to a completely white bloom. That neither parent was white, added to the interest. This was all followed up with an extensive explanation about each of a selection of arboreum forms, including their countries of origin. Thankfully, the threatened "test" at the end of his talk was thwarted by time constraints!

Although there was a good display of flowers on the voting table, the outcome was predictable, as they all came from the Tavner's garden. A great credit to them, since their new garden is only a year old. Taking first honours was an iris, with a hybrid daffodil, named "Ethelaine" following up for second. Well done, Ray and Ethel.

The door prize went home with Leah Ling, while Catherine Jones held the lucky raffle ticket. Thanks to your support, \$32.60 was raised towards our funds.

Please note; Due to our very heavy commitments, there will be NO OCTOBER MEETING. *Pete.*

In the Garden

We've had some busy days here at the garden for the first month of Spring, with some promising visions ahead and so much to look forward to, where does one start!!??

The official Spring opening was held on the 8th Sep and the weather held out for us until after the auction, so it made for a great day. The rare rhodo auction raised just over \$700 and the money will go back into the maintenance and upkeep of the garden. A recently new member volunteered to be our auctioneer for the day and considering it was his first time drumming up business and drawing in a crowd, hats off to you John Biggs for stepping up and helping out. Consider it your job again next year! Thank you to all for your ongoing support, lets keep it up!

What a great time we had at Blooming Tasmania's showcase event held on the weekend of 21-23rd September at the Albert Hall in Launceston. The weekend started with a cocktail event featuring our very own Emu Valley patron, Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner AC. She gave a history into the gardens of Government House dating back to the original concept gardens, predating the actual building.

Saturday started with a rush of people coming through the doors at 9am and people were constantly stopping to gather information about our beautiful site, our majestic cut flower display featuring our ever so popular rhododendron tuba for everyone to admire. Our stall was manned by a few of our Board of Directors and the GM so it was great to see them all in action! We had a lot of interest in our site and hopefully lots of people visiting us especially in October to see us in full spectacular colour.

Plenty happening here in the garden as usual –

- * continuing along with track work and rock edging.
- * ongoing weed control
- * garden seats and tables around the garden are getting a bit of a make over
- * deciduous mollis azaleas - flower buds are starting to swell and colour up so it wont be long now until these magical colours take our breath away. We have already sprayed twice for petal blight, which is a fungal disease, so by getting in nice and early will hopefully avoid the unsightly slimy/browning of the flowers.
- * once we have regular sunny days occurring, we will then start painting and refreshing hand rails, bridges and wooden garden signs etc.

Plenty to see and even more to do so I had better get back to it!

Happy gardening, *Neet*

Welcome

Lots of new members this month! The warmest rhodo garden welcome to Keith & Lindy Butler, Brett Griffin & Sandra Harris, Mike and Pate Dixon, Kevin & Terry Appleby, Mark & Karen Witcombe, Mark Taylor, John & Joan Biggs, Justin Martin, Steven & Tessie Lisk, Lisa Redman & Carmel Whiteroad, Kiri Griffin, Dr Andrew & Mrs Kathleen McMahon, Tony & Donna Gibbons, Peter Brunt & Eleanor Gwilliam and Grant Hawley.





Rhododendron ssp. nilagiricum

In the Nilgiris hills of southern India grows a member of Subsection Arborea called *Rhododendron nilagiricum*, named after the hills from which it was first collected and described by the Rev. Schmidt near Madras in 1836. The first recorded introduction to western gardens was in 1840 where it flowered eight years later.

R. nilagiricum differs from *R. zeylanicum* (its close relative from Sri Lanka) in the narrower more pointed leaves with the margins slightly rolled under, and the upper surface dull green but still bullate, the lower surface has a spongy yellowish-brown indumentum.

The flowers are in beautifully shaped trusses of deep crimson here at Emu Valley but can be crimson-rose or pink in its native home. *R. nilagiricum* have grown into sturdy single trunked bushes over 4 metres high standing proud with an air of grandeur about them, as most arboreums do, and when in flower at the end of September is a sight to behold.

If you would like to meet these rare aristocrats at EVRG they live on the bank above the junction of the main gazebo road and the Bob Malone drive. *Maurie*

The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:



Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc.
PO Box U33 Upper Burnie, Tasmania 7320