

June 2020

Rhodo News

Newsletter 430



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

We have become a part of family memories....



Gai and Malcolm Rouse sent us photos of their wedding at the Garden in 1995, and have fond memories of the day. That's a quarter of a century ago now! We have become a part of history. Our new admin officer Sophia is working on a new wedding package and we will give more details about it next month.

Calendar

*Still no social meetings, but we are optimistic about recommencing in August.
We should be able to let you know in the July newsletter.*

See us at: emuvalleyrhodo.com

General Manager's Report

To say the past few weeks have been crazy is pretty much an understatement!!!

PLEASE, IF YOU CAN HELP — LET US KNOW

For the first time EVRG's Tea Room is open for winter — no I am not making this up!!!

COVID19 has seen enormous changes and it certainly has had an effect on us — close down / open up +++++

To everyone who has jumped on board the past few weeks to open the Tea Room and Garden back up to the public — **Thankyou!**

Now to keep the garden open to the public throughout June & July we must have someone on duty and this has resulted in keeping the Tea Room operational. If there are days when the Tea Room is not manned then the garden will be closed.

If you can spare any time any day contact either Christine on 0448 053 582 or myself. I fully understand that there will be days that due to inclement weather there might be no visitors. If we can get the message out that Emu Valley is a good place to visit even just for a coffee, Devonshire Tea or a light lunch a new clientele might start visiting. (It is not hard — I have been a tea room guru over the past weeks and managed not to spill coffee on anyone!!)

Opening times during June and July will remain 10 am to 3 pm with a discounted entry of \$10.

We need to be part of Tourism Tasmania's Intrastate Marketing Campaign —————

PLEASE, IF YOU CAN HELP — LET US KNOW

WORKSHOP

Thursday 18th
June at 10.30am

Workshop

On Thursday 18 June at 1030 we will be conducting a workshop to look at the future managing of our function area. All members are invited — not just those who have previously helped out. Even if you are not able to volunteer in this area you are encouraged to take part as the more ideas we get the better. **Safe distancing will be in place.** If anyone wants to join into the workshop via Zoom please email Sophia in the office.

Due to COVID19 there will be tighter restrictions on our operation.

EVENT PLANNING — “An Appetiser”

Just some of the things our marketing / events team have on the drawing board (we need every dollar we can earn and need to continue being imaginative):

- ◇ Cruise Ships - when they start up again what we offer will be based on the number of volunteers available and have a wider range of Tasmanian gifts for sale
- ◇ Tea Room and Garden open with reduced entry of \$10 during June & July and possibly continue take away drinks to wander around
- ◇ New wedding package will be widely marketed
- ◇ Father's Day — spit roast with bookings essential (will partially offset lost revenue from the cancelled Mother's Day Luncheon)
- ◇ 17 & 18 October — EVRG Spring Festival (Cherry Blossom Celebration)[will partially offset lost revenue from the cancelled Autumn Spectacular]
- ◇ Day Light Saving — open garden for viewing / music events
- ◇ Re-invent the successful Sculpture competition held three years ago
- ◇ EVRG 40 year birthday — spread over calendar year leading up to our November celebration
- ◇ Week long arts festival
- ◇ March 2021 — Harp Concert
- ◇ September Flower Season Opening — spruce it up — make it a bigger and reignite its popularity
- ◇ International Conference planned for November 2020 will now be held in 2021 - date not yet confirmed

Geoff geoffreywood@me.com 0427 722060

Around the Garden

The cold and frosty nights and early mornings have been followed by some lovely sunny days so well worth rugging up for wouldn't you say.

While the volunteers are slowly returning from a short break from the garden during the covid 19 shut down, work has still been progressing here in the garden.

The 'middle road' has been upgraded. For those that may not know where I am talking about, it is the road that above the Noel Sullivan walking track. No vehicles other than ATV and plant equipment will be driving along here as it is mainly for maintenance purposes but by all means walking is more than fine, a great view from here.

The job was to excavate trenches and installation of 60m length of pipe along with three catchment sumps which were positioned at the top, middle and bottom of this section. We then back filled trenches, topped with blue metal and whacker packed the top to finish. The purpose of this was it has been a problem area for a long time and many efforts to divert water on a number of occasions had been amended but would only fix the issue short term. The job was completed in two days, works well and looks great.

See before, during and after pics below.

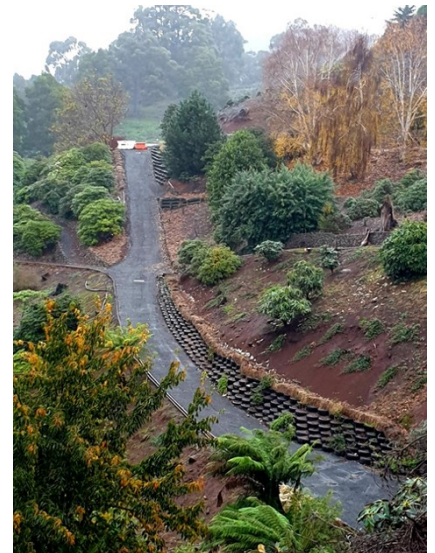
BEFORE:



DURING:



AFTER:



I've also had my little shadow here at the garden and she has been a great help. We have been cleaning drains, playing in and raking leaves from paths, weeding and mulching. Never too young to start developing a passion for gardening, enjoying the fresh air and getting your hands dirty, and she did this part so well.

Ongoing works: *Track maintenance *Rock Edging *Mulching
*Weeding / brush cutting / mowing / pruning *Planting out *Cuttings
*Database collecting * Painting gazebos, bridges, road line marking. Too much to write about as per usual but plenty going on and enough to keep most of us entertained and out of trouble.

Happy gardening everyone. Neet

*Stell sporting her new
(10 sizes too big)
EVRG jacket 😊*





Legends of the Garden

Bob Malone

Ant Dry continues his series of legends of the Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden, and the subject this week is legendary rhododendron hybridiser Bob Malone.

Bob Malone was a driving force in the recognition of species and hybrid rhododendrons in Tasmania. He was instrumental in the establishment of branches of the Australian Rhododendron Society in the north and south of the state and did much to encourage plant nurseries to stock rhododendrons. Bob was the inaugural president of the North West Tasmanian branch of the ARS in 1978 and set about educating others through garden visits and a library of books that taught members how to propagate, hybridise, protect against pests and cultivate. Up until the time of his death in September 1999, Bob remained the patron of EVRG.

Aside from his wealth of knowledge, Bob was a generous benefactor to the Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden. Living legends

Maurice and Pam Kupsch recall the early days of Bob Malone:

In the beginning, while living and working in Rosebery on the West Coast, Bob Malone's interest in growing rhododendrons began as far back as 1965 when he planted his very first plant – the now much-maligned *R. ponticum*. Bob joined the Royal Horticultural Society to obtain seeds and then became a member of the Australian Rhododendron Society to learn more, but because of the distance was unable to attend meetings so most learning was from books.

Looking towards retirement, Bob and his wife Ev purchased 8.5 hectares of land at Lapoinya, inland from Wynyard. The site enjoyed a good rainfall and basalt soil. Many of the plants grown in Rosebery were transplanted to Lapoinya where they thrived.

Bob was instrumental in starting the Tasmanian branches of the Australian Rhododendron Society. He became National Council president at a mini-conference held in Burnie in late 1981. This was the same time that outgoing president Dr Chris Laurie (South Australia) planted "Golden Dream", the very first rhododendron to be planted at Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden.

Bob offered to supply some fairly large plants to the EVRG if they could be moved. The members certainly rose to the challenge. It was a team effort to dig them up, slip a "purpose made invention" under the roots and carry them to the waiting vehicles. Probably 15-20 plants in all were acquired in this way, with many sore muscles and tired people at the end of the day. But what an achievement!

The large rhodos were driven along the wall of Lake Grebe, pulled off the backs of the vehicles and virtually planted where they landed. Thanks to Bob the Garden now had some established plants making it feel more like a garden, which was then so much in its infancy. He also donated all the large leaf rhododendrons down in the gully above the bridge. These came in pots, which were easier to plant!

To keep members' enthusiasm for growing these wonderful plants, Bob would distribute plants among members at the meetings of the North West Branch. Many of these plants came from his trips to National Council meetings in Victoria. He would ensure that Tasmania received a share of the plants the National Council was importing from overseas. He did this by taking two suitcases every trip – essentials in one carried inside the empty one ready to fill with plants on his return. No need for border control at the time!



R. 'Mrs Frances Underwood'



R. 'Bob'



R. 'Burnie Shines'

Some hybrids created from Bob's stock.

To further foster the interest in growing rhodos, Bob organised monthly study groups to encourage keen members to learn more about species and their connection to hybrids.

In 1983, bushfires devastated parts of the Mount Lofty Botanic Garden in South Australia – Bob's home state. He very generously donated two shipping containers full of rhododendrons. Many members gathered at Lapoinya to dig up these plants and load them into the containers.

Bob Malone was a keen hybridiser, with many of his plants being registered, some of which are still to be found around the Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden. He also dabbled in Vireyas, having raised so much from seed, including the now named "Big Pink Range" Burnie Shines and Mrs. Frances Underwood. He ended up with two hothouses full, which when he was packing up to leave, said "Come and help yourself to what you want before they all go on the fire!" When the Lapoinya property was eventually sold and before they moved back to their home state of SA, Bob and Ev knew that we had honoured his contribution by naming our main ring road "Bob Malone Drive".

What a debt we owe to this man for his keen interest and generosity. What a legacy!

Welcome

Now that we have reopened, new members are coming in again, and they are very welcome. Hello to Peter & Sharon Holloway, Geoffrey & Barbara Winspear, Melinda Horan, Trevor Brooks, Lauris Reed, Annie Thurlow, Gary & Dianne Wescombe, Val Cooper, Heather Beveridge, Jim Cozens & Elyse White, and Peter Reed.

Note to Current Members re Membership

For members whose membership expires on 30th June 2020, we have granted an extension due to closure of the Garden during COVID-19. The new expiry date for these memberships will now be 30th September 2020.

Check Out Our Platypus

Rick Eaves managed to catch our resident platypus foraging in Lake Grebe and kindly allowed us to put his video on our Facebook page. You can see his video at:

https://www.facebook.com/emuvalley/posts/2561009380631336?comment_id=2561087623956845&reply_comment_id=2561255437273397



Acer griseum

At Emu Valley we grow the three species of maple in Section Trifoliata Series Grisea, namely A. griseum, A. maximowiczianum and A. triflorum. They are native to China and Japan with A. triflorum also having a presence in Taiwan. Their foliage is trifoliate, with one leaflet in the centre with separate leaflets on either side.

Acer maximowiczianum is the tallest tree growing to 15m with also the largest leaves. The bark is smooth and grey not peeling as with A. griseum and to a lesser extent A. triflorum, the autumn colour a reddish-orange. A. triflorum is a tree to 8 m tall of spreading habit. The leaves are quite spectacular when they appear in spring, they are pale green, pleated and covered

in fine white hairs. The autumn colour is a very striking golden-yellow with orange-red flecks.

Acer griseum {pictured} is the most outstanding of the three trees forming a tree of slender open habit to 10 m tall, the bark is orange- brown to brown which as spring progresses the old paper thin bark peels back to reveal the light golden new bark beneath. The leaves are trifoliate, glaucous beneath and coarsely dentate. In autumn these leaves turn orange scarlet, a spectacular tree all year long. A walk along the Noel Sullivan Walk will find all three, A. griseum in Sichuan, A. maximowiczianum in Japan and A. triflorum in Korea. *Maurie*

The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:



Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc.
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