

# Newsletter of the ARSV



## President's Report

by John O'Hara



Dear fellow plant lovers, and I use the term plant lover rather than 'rhodo fanatic' deliberately because I have always found members of the ARSV share a great interest and knowledge of a very wide range of plants. This depth and breadth of plants is part of the shared joy we get when we meet with other Society members. I thought I would take this time, immediately after the ARSV Annual General Meeting, to talk briefly about where the Society currently stands.

The Society is in a very healthy financial situation with about \$470k in the bank, a considerable portion of which came as a gift from the estate of Simon Begg and is to be used for development of the North Queensland Garden. Some \$25k is set aside to relocate and improve the nursery, so that our propagation can also improve. This still leaves about \$320k in bank deposits which is about where we were ten years ago when I took over as President. So even though we have spent a fair bit of money on improving assets at Olinda (Vireya House, nursery and a few other major items) in an era of bugger all bank interest rates, we have not depleted our cash reserves. This means we are in the very fortunate position of not having to beg for funds or flog our members hard to raise money for our survival.

The Society's ongoing health is not threatened by financial constraints. It is probably not at risk of losing members to the point of non-existence, but it is shrinking, now being down to about 90 members. The committee is ageing and the executive of the committee are all looking to step back over the next year or so. The Society will continue to make major contributions in the development of the North Queensland Garden (now in the final stages of engineering before ground breaking starts early in the new year), the expansion of the nursery and re-development of parts of the garden at Olinda, but without some renewal of member involvement and some recruitment then the energy of the Society will diminish.

We will be having an excursion to visit some gardens (still to be decided as to where) in early autumn. These events are usually well attended and a great day out. Meanwhile, the committee members and I will be canvassing views as to what projects we think we should be undertaking, how we might recruit greater member involvement, and how we might all get more out of the Society.

With that time of the year fast approaching, the executive committee and I wish all of the Society members a safe and enjoyable festive season spent with family and friends and travels. We sincerely thank you for your ongoing interest and support with the Society.

## ARSV 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting

The 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting of the ARSV was held on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> of November in their lunch room at DRBG. A number of proxy forms were received in addition to attendance, enabling the meeting to proceed with a quorum. The result of the office bearer election was that all executive committee positions were filled for the new term with the same elected members from the previous term.

Committee						
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## Membership Reminder - ARSV Annual Membership Renewals 2021-2022

By Richard Florey, Membership Manager



Again, thank you to our members who have paid their annual membership renewals, but also for the generous donations made to enable our ongoing efforts at the Dandenong Ranges Botanic Garden. A reminder to everyone that the annual membership renewals are due prior to 31<sup>st</sup> of August 2021. The ARSV membership form was included with the June newsletter. The ARSV communicate to members via the website, social media and hard copy publications. Please let us know your preferred method of receiving information whether via post or email. The ARSV Newsletter is published bi-monthly with news and activities, items of local interest and the calendar of forthcoming activities. Event dates are on the website as well as in the newsletter. The ARS national journal, *The Rhododendron*, is published yearly as a high-quality colour publication featuring articles on the genus from contributors throughout Australia and overseas. It is sent to members and released at a later date on the website.

## Updates from members

By Richard Florey, Newsletter Editor

ARSV has members across Australia and overseas and it would be good to receive news from you that we can put in the Newsletter from time to time. Has anything of interest flowered? Any triumphs or disasters? Have you visited any interesting nurseries or gardens? A question for other members? Please email your snippets and separate JPG photos to me at [richarddflorey@gmail.com](mailto:richarddflorey@gmail.com). In this newsletter edition, we have received articles on member's gardens from Len Sloggett and John O'Hara.

## Update on ARSV activities at DRBG

By Alex Pottage

The Tuesday group has been tidying up the propagation house and doing cuttings. The shade houses are going well and there has been some repotting. Prue has been busy with cataloguing the collections she has sorted out. John has been working on repairing the shade cloth in the first shade house. The Covid-19 lockdown has meant that we haven't been able to hold any plant sales but we are selling plants through the shop. Hopefully we will attend the Ferny Creek Horticultural Society Plant Collectors Sale next March and sell more plants. We hope to ramp up the propagation after Christmas to maintain the collection and replace what has been lost over the lockdown period.

Four of our members, Ian, John, Prue and Alex visited Laurie Begg at the end of November and he wanted the society to take some rhododendrons and other plants as he isn't able to manage them.

## Event - ARS Spring International Convention 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> May 2022 Portland, Oregon

Plans are going full speed ahead for the ARS Spring Convention, celebrating the (belated) 75th anniversary of the American Rhododendron Society (ARS). As you can see by exploring their website, the plan is to duplicate most, if not all, of the elements that were in place for the postponed 2020 convention. Assuming Covid-19 is under control by then, ARS will be enjoying the company of fellow members with a variety of meetings at the Heathman Lodge in Vancouver, Washington, and bus tours of featured area gardens, in addition to optional Pre-tours 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> May and Post-tours 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> May. Registration is open now!

To register for the event, updates, and tours, go to <https://ars2022.org/register-now/>

To reserve your accommodation and meals directly with Heathman Lodge, go to <https://ars2022.org/hotel/>

## Member's Garden – Len Sloggett, Burwood Victoria

As my wife and I get older our garden is not improving. Unfortunately, all we can do now with our garden is to look at it and dream of what we could or should be doing if our age and health would allow.

Sitting in our sun room looking out, everything looks great but when we go outside the weeds and the “unwants” are taking over. Although this is so, some of our plants have flowered exceedingly well.

There are three I wish to highlight, Colehurst, Clare Rouse and Kusadama. I've asked myself how can I enjoy looking at plants that are scraggly and appear like they are dying? However currently they are flowering and look beautiful.

### **R. Colehurst**

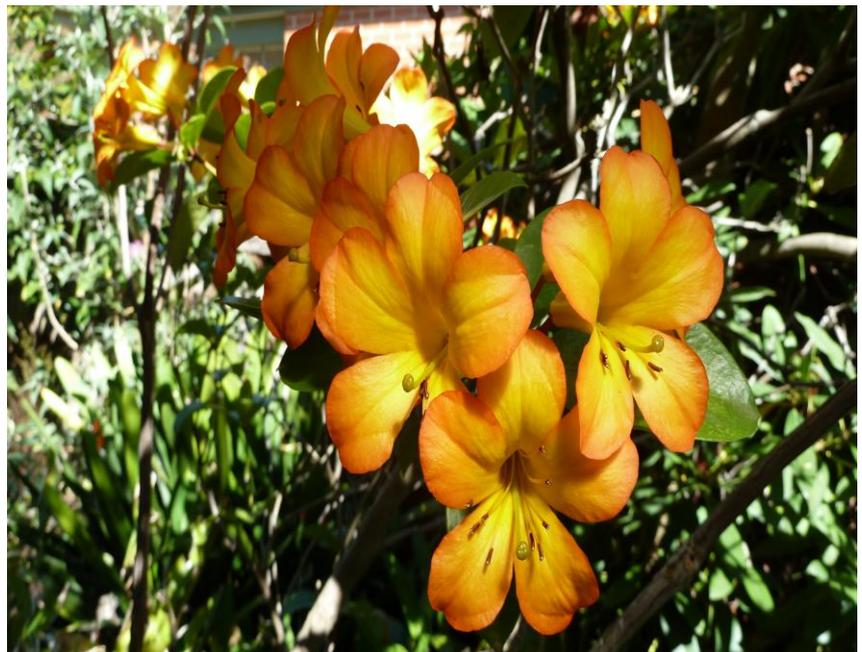
This was won by my wife Margaret as a door prize at the rhododendron Christmas function held at Simon and Marcie Begg's in 2008ish.

The plant has never really thrived but the flower trusses are terrific. It is of note that our area isn't generally good for Asiatics.



### **Vireya Clare Rouse**

This plant is 6-7 foot high, very scraggly amongst the camelias but over the many years we have had it, it always flowers very well every year.



### **Satsuki azalea Kusadama**

This plant could be at least 30 years old or probably more.

Most people wouldn't take this plant home even if it was given to you but if you are like me, and love Satsuki azaleas, it was worth what I paid for it.

It has never let me down because every year the flowers are outstanding.



At this stage of my life, my Rhododendron family in the garden still gives me joy. I don't think I will ever underestimate the gift of having beautiful things to look at and I take pleasure in knowing I took the chance of bringing them into my garden.

### **Member's garden – John O'Hara, Camberwell Victoria**

#### ***R. Noyo x Chief Kilimanjaro***

This rhododendron is often described as one of the best red flower rhododendrons. It was bred in New Zealand in 1958 by Ron Gordon as a cross between Noyo Chief and Kilimanjaro. It forms a compact plant that flowers reliably. The photo is of a small plant in my Camberwell front garden (excuse the ladybug damage).

