

September 2022

Rhodo News

Newsletter 454



**Sustainable
Tourism**
Accredited
Business

Official Newsletter of the

Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc

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Patrons: (International) Kenneth Cox, (Tasmania) Her Excellency the Governor of Tasmania, Barbara Baker AC



Heavy Traffic On the Garden Approaches

Our General Manager Geoff was late to a meeting at the Garden the other day, and this was his excuse! It's gratifying though, to see parents instructing their children on the road rules—such as waiting at a give-way sign and looking both ways. Unfortunately Geoff was behind them and didn't have priority!

Calendar

Thursday 6th October
Management Team Meeting
at EVRG

Saturday 8th October
At Woolmers, Longford
Flower Show

Saturday 22nd October
Spring Festival
At EVRG From 12 noon

See us at: emuvalleyrhodo.com

General Manager's Report

What do Guy Fawkes Day & Emu Valley Garden have in common [at least in 2022]?

Well, on November 5 they both go off with a bang. For the garden it is the start of the Cruise Ship Season. Hopefully it will turn out better for us than it did for poor old Guy!!!

Meetings with various stakeholders, workshops and roster planning are all happening. Burnie Council, Regional Tourism organisation West by North West and TAS Ports Burnie are working together to ensure the season kicks off in the best possible way.

COVID has already made a difference. Passenger numbers have increased for tours booked from the ships whilst those opting to do their own thing ashore have decreased.

We are operating two buses from the drop off point at the Burnie Arts & Function Centre. They will run throughout the day and take visitors for a trip to Emu Valley where more of our volunteers will be there to greet them and give them the opportunity to meander the garden.

In addition we are continuing to partner with InterCruises and Bob Wood Cruises who conduct pre booked tours which very much include Emu Valley. So, by April yours truly and all of our other volunteers might just be looking out for discounted straight jackets — that is unless we get more volunteers! 😊

Juanita and the outdoor team have the garden looking great and this is so important. Visitors need to go away having enjoyed the experience. Marketing is important but so is the feedback visitors give to others. (The sun is shining — call me and find out what you might be able to do in the garden itself.)



If only money did grow on trees

Honestly, if only this could happen just once in a while. There will be a detailed report in the next newsletter but with the full support of the Management Team and the Board of Directors a decision has been made to move forward on a number of projects. Then we find that the oven needs replacing — around \$10,000. My only comment was “oh, how disappointing” or words that meant this!

Gift Shop — all going well an already-built structure will be arriving by the end of November. This has been possible by way of a \$10,000 grant from Burnie Council. It is much needed and will allow the sale of a greater array of Tasmanian made gifts.

Coffee Machine — likewise this purchase was the result of a previous grant from Burnie Council. The machine was purchased more than 12 months ago and was intended to be installed when the Tea Room renovations were completed. Due to COVID and the subsequent revenue loss everything was placed on hold. The Coffee Machine is now going in within the next few months.

Renovations — It is odd but COVID did have a silver lining. It gave us time to reconsider what we need. If that money tree was around we would go full out but this is not the case. The changes originally planned for the Tea Room have been scrapped. Both financially and for far better management/usage it has been decided to basically join the Kitchen and Tea Room. It is expected that this will be completed by mid 2023.

Geoff — geoffreywood@me.com /// 0427722060

Around the Garden

As I drove down the driveway here first thing this morning, it's amazing to see how much can change in just a few short days. The garden on the left hand side opposite the tearoom has started to show some fantastic Spring colour and makes the entrance for our visitors so inviting, with just a small taste of what they can expect to see once they explore further into the garden. I for one am super excited to see colour exploding on a daily basis along with slightly warmer days—so welcome to Spring time, we welcome you!!



Even though it has been a reasonably quiet winter here in the way of visitors, we remained open to the public, as it is a space to relax and enjoy no matter what time of the year it may be. We have been unlucky though, with people still trying their very best to avoid paying entry fees. Without the help of garden entry, we just couldn't survive as the upkeep (as I am sure you could imagine) - it is just never ending. Entry fees are a necessity if we want to remain a leading tourist attraction for this area.

With the help of my little garden gremlin to promote the word that payment is required to explore this amazing hidden gem, we have had signs made up and dotted around, which will hopefully help. They are big and I have placed them smack bang at the beginning of a few walking tracks, so there should be no excuses as to people being unaware of a fee before entry. Thank you to those who support us in the way of bringing friends and family into the garden, becoming a member, having a function here and buying local plants from our small nursery. We value your continuing support.



For something a little different, six of us from the garden participated in an ‘Operate and maintain a chainsaw’ course last month.

It was a two day course divided into theory and hands-on practical work. I think I can speak on the behalf of all of the crew that we all had a lot of fun, learnt heaps, including new techniques even if some of us have been cutting wood for years—tricks of the trade with tucking in thumbs and all! But don’t panic, the garden will still remain lusciously green and alive for many more years to come, we are not going to all go crazy and get rid of history. 😊



Moongate update

It has left the workshop from our volunteers home base and is in position here at it’s forever home. See the photo below.

The building team have said that it is still on schedule and remains well within budget and is starting to create a lot of interest with visitors, who can now see what it is we are trying to create! Exciting times ahead! Great work yet again 😊



That’s a wrap from me for this month. Make sure you call in and wander this amazing garden with breathtaking scenery and heaps of colour to immerse yourself in. Happy gardening,

Neet 😊



Rhododendron kawakamii

This bright little species of subgenus vireya is native to the Chungyang Mountain Range in Taiwan where it is found growing on the lower slopes of Mt. Morrison in humid rain forests, usually as an epiphyte at elevations of 2000-2135m.

It was first collected by T. Kawakami and U. Mori in October 1906 on Mt. Morrison, and by Sir John Holford in 1969, and widely distributed by John Patrick in 1970. It was introduced to Edinburgh in 1971 and in 1993, where it was found to be easily grown outside.

Rhododendron kawakamii grows into a shrub to 1.5m producing its obovate to elliptic leathery leaves in loose pseudowhorls, the upper surface dark green, lower surface covered with small brown scales. The white to yellow flowers are produced in terminal clusters of 3-7 and are saucer shaped.

At EmuValley we find it grows well in our vireya section, where the bright yellow flowers appear from May onwards. Only once a year, but still a pleasing sight. *Maurie*

The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:



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