

September 2023

# Rhodo News

Newsletter 463



**Sustainable  
Tourism**  
Accredited  
Business

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

Chairperson: Ant Dry Newsletter Editor: Nigel Burch

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

## *On Track With The Renovations*



*Our builders assure us that the renovations will be finished on time, well in advance of our Spring Festival.*

### Calendar

**Saturday 7th October**  
Spring Festival

**Friday 13-15th October**  
ARS Conference

See us at: [emuvallleyrhodo.com](http://emuvallleyrhodo.com)



## *From the Board*

### **Renovations - internal**

The renovations started on time. The builder moved on site on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> August and within two days we had new doorways, old doors bricked up, and walls and counters ripped down. The place is looking very messy (as does any building site), but the bones of the new space are there, and it is going to look very good when it's finished.

The cabinet makers, window tinters flooring specialists, the plumbers and the electricians have all been in and will re-appear as required. It's all happening at the EVRG. The builder assures us that the job will be complete by late September, in plenty of time for our first event this Spring on 7<sup>th</sup> October.

### **Renovations – external**

These too, are continuing and when we open our visitors will be greeted with a wonderful splash of colour and a huge array of greenery.

### **Access to site**

Please remember though, that this is a construction site. It may be tempting to come and have a sticky-beak, but please resist the urge. For insurance purposes, we must restrict access to staff (including garden volunteers) and trades people. The gate may be left open, but this is only to allow access to authorised people.

### **Australian Rhododendron Society (ARS) Annual Conference**

Yet another reminder that this conference is to be held at the Garden from Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October through Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>.

Remember, this is a prestigious event, and the invitation to host it should be seen as a compliment to the Garden and testament to the years of hard work put in by all our volunteers. Thanks to Geoff Wood and Nicole Maxwell for initiating and co-ordinating this in conjunction with the ARS. Please register to attend and support this great opportunity.

### **Spring Festival – 7<sup>th</sup> October.**

One of our main fund-raising events is coming around again. On 7<sup>th</sup> October we celebrate the Spring Festival. This will double as our “opening event”, as it will be first time we host visitors at our re-furbished site. By the time this goes to press we will already have held our first organising committee meeting but anyone wishing to assist with organising will be welcome. Please phone me on 0400 841 011.

### **[Cruise ship planning / experience / slight change](#)**

The first Cruise ship of the season will be docking in Burnie on 19<sup>th</sup> November. We are planning to hold a pre-season briefing on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October at the Garden at 10 a.m. Anyone with any suggestions to make on the running of these visits, please attend and put in your tuppence worth. This is the only way we learn how to improve the experience we provide the visitors.

Just putting one suggestion out there: One way to make the day easier on volunteers is to end the shuttle bus service. It would be replaced by the tour buses that already go to the City Lookout, Guide Falls, the Emu Valley Rhodo Garden, and then Hellyer Road. These bus operators are keen for us to do this too, as they are trying to fill their buses.

Doing this we will lose very few, if any, visitors. The advantage is that we would have to find six fewer volunteers (3 drivers, 2 people at the City Centre, and one cashier taking entrances fees). We may even get more revenue as the bus operators have agreed to pay us for every person on the bus, and not only for those who visit the garden.

This would free up 6 volunteers and allow us to lighten the burden on the others so that we can concentrate on giving our visitors the best experience they could get!

It is especially important as there is one week in January where we have 9 cruise ships in 8 days. Enough to drive any volunteer nuts. Think about it and let me know how you feel.



## *Around the Garden*

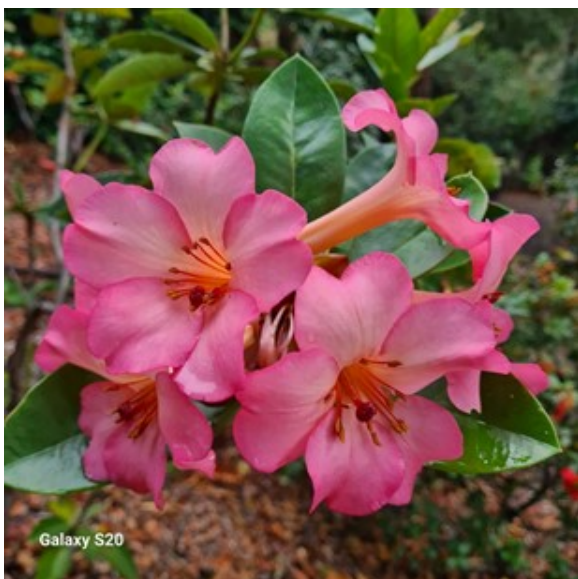
It looks as though the call last month for an early Spring was pretty much on the money. A lot of lovely colours throughout the garden, but with much more to come, so please don't think you are missing out.

While the garden remains closed to the public due to major renovations, the outdoor crew are taking full advantage of being able to make extra noise on the tools and are kicking goals. We have priority to have the garden looking it's best for the upcoming Rhododendron conference as well as our Spring Festival in October, and we are all doing as much as we can every day that we are here. There has been no slacking off just because the gates are closed, and soon enough you will all be able to see the effort that has gone into the last few weeks (which feels like months).

It was suggested to me that perhaps for this month that instead of a page full of words, that I show you all a pictorial edition instead. So here it is, enjoy ☺

Happy Gardening, *Neet*







## Rhododendron calendulaceum

If your taste is for an easy-to-grow deciduous azalea species, *R. calendulaceum* is well worth a try. In cultivation this species will grow from 1.2 to 1.8 meters high, well branched and cover itself with tubular-funnel shaped yellow, orange or red flowers just as the leaves start to emerge. The flowers appear from terminal buds in loose trusses of 3-8, the stamens can be 3 times longer than the corolla tube. The leaves are elliptic, oblong-obovate or lanceolate, upper surface dark green and sparsely pubescent, under surface pale green and sometimes covered with minute hairs. *R. calendulaceum* has a wide distribution from southern

Pennsylvania, through West Virginia to North Carolina and Georgia where it can be found growing along the banks of streams, on hillsides and in undergrowth making a wonderful display at flowering time. It is hard to say when it arrived in Europe perhaps as early as 1750 – 1800.

At Emu Valley Garden we had one or two plants very early though not in their country of origin, but as the American section was cleared many plants have been planted there. They start to flower from mid October onwards. *Maurie*

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



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