

December 2023

# Rhodo News

Newsletter 466



**Sustainable  
Tourism**  
Accredited  
Business

Official Newsletter of the

*Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc*

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Chairperson: Ant Dry Newsletter Editor: Nigel Burch

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

*Merry Christmas to All*



*And a Happy New Year!!*



## Calendar

**Monday 25 December**  
GARDEN CLOSED  
CHRISTMAS DAY

**January**  
NO NEWSLETTER IN JANUARY  
Garden open every day

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

## From the Board



### Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held on Friday 10 November at 4.00 p.m.

The audited financial statements showed that for the year ended 30 June 2023, we made a surplus of \$28,034. This was distorted by the inclusion of grants (including \$10,000 from the Burnie City Council for the development of the Plant Store, and \$50,000 from the Royal Hobart Botanical Garden for assistance with the running expenses of the garden). Without Grants we made an operating loss of \$32,868. This includes depreciation so excluding this we made a trading cash surplus of \$50,615. The figures clearly show the need for us to continue to work together as a team to ensure we are making sufficient revenue now and into the future to guarantee our future operations.

### Life memberships

Two life members were made at the AGM.

Life member John Englund, whose citation read:-

*John's involvement with the Garden began at its inception.*

*John was never an expert on Rhododendrons and never professed to be, but he remains a contributor in every other way.*

*He lives just up the road. This has been a blessing for the Garden, but one wonders if perhaps it has been a curse for him?*

*John has become the first point of call for many. He is a Mr Fix It and a Mr Fill in Guy. Problem with the plumbing? Call John. Gate won't open? Call John. Need to fix a vehicle? Call John. Need a buggy driver to take visitors around? Call on John. Need someone to be the tour guide for a bus full of tourists from the cruise ships? John's the man.*

*John has been on the Board for about five years and his contribution is always valued. Sometimes seen as grumpy, sometimes as controversial, John is not afraid to go against the flow. No matter what, he has always had, and will always have, the best interest of this Garden at heart.*

*This is a well-deserved award in recognition of many years of service and dedication to the Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden. Thank you, John.*

Life member Geoff Wood, and his citation read:-

*Normally life membership is given for very long service to an organisation. Geoff Wood's length of time as a member of the Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden does not in itself qualify him for Life Membership - which is why this award is so special.*

*Geoff joined the Garden as a volunteer and was very soon involved in running it. He became the Chairperson of the Management committee in 2015.*

*When Geoff took over the running of the Garden it was a relatively modest establishment, with no great commercial leanings.*

*The members were happy to chug along and just have fun. Funding was of little concern and there were times when members loaned the Garden money so that it could continue to operate. Geoff changed that. He recognised that we needed a more*

*commercial approach and that the garden must be able to generate sufficient funds in order to do so. He worked on a network of contacts with the Burnie City Council, the local schools, Centrelink, and the Tourism Enterprises, all for the financial benefit of the Garden.*

*Geoff used his background in HR to recruit, retain and encourage volunteers. Some five years ago, he recognised the need for a more commercial and professional approach to running the garden. He asked for advice from the professionals, and then he acted on that advice. He had the constitution changed to set up a board of Directors.*

*The Board was appointed, and Geoff became the General Manager. His intention was to stand aside but replacing him became a problem. A problem why? Because he had done such a brilliant job.*

*Geoff did eventually leave earlier this year, and as a sign of the part he played in the running of this place, he has been replaced by three people.*

*Thanks, Geoff, for everything you have done for the Garden.*

### Other life members

Two other Life Memberships were awarded, to John's wife Ann (for her services to the garden and for putting up with John), and to Geoff's wife Bev (for lending us Geoff, and effectively putting her life on hold for several years). Both of these ladies refused to accept these awards, stating that there were other member more deserving of the honour.

We respect their decision and their reason for not accepting this honour and will have the records adjusted accordingly.

### **Discussion following the AGM.**

At the conclusion of the meeting the floor was opened to the members. The discussion was robust, and following on from the feedback from the members it would appear that we have a mandate from the group to prioritise and review our internal processes and procedures, specifically in respect to greater clarity pertaining to job roles, volunteer roles and expectations, operating procedures and communication with members and volunteers/employees.

We have worked through the first level of job descriptions and will be discussing these with all volunteers and employees in the coming weeks and months.

We have also begun the process of reviewing all other internal procedures and our policies in general. It is clear that those present felt there were opportunities to improve the workplace culture, and we are keen to get this started. We will be inviting everyone to contribute their thoughts on what core values they feel are important in this organisation. These core values will be the heart of this organisation, determined by you and your feedback, and will help guide everyone in understanding what behaviours and values are important to us and for this organisation to be the best it can be.

### **Cruise ships**

The Cruise Ship season is upon us. The first two ships arrived in November and the process went off seamlessly.

Having decided that we would forgo the bus shuttle service as a result of there being too few volunteers, we decided after the first ship, that in fact this service was needed. We have therefore re-instated the shuttle buses, but this time they are being run by "Tours Around Tasmania" a tour group with whom we work very closely. They are using our bus (and paying for the fuel) and are supplying another bus themselves.

The final result is that the shuttle bus remains in place, but involves no input from us, or our volunteers. A win-win situation.

We hired some traffic lights (for traffic control purposes) for the first two ships. These were extremely successful and saved on two volunteers! Another win! Our own traffic lights have now been delivered to Burnie and will be installed in time for the next cruise ship.

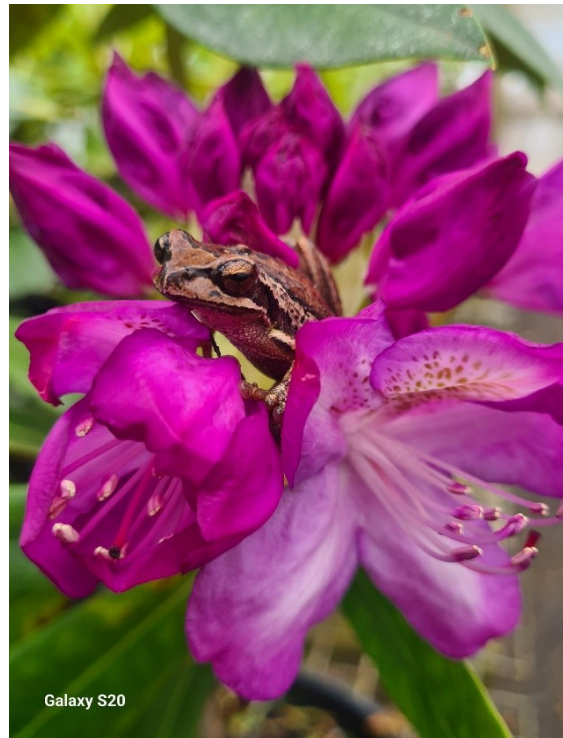
ANT DRY

*Chairperson & Acting General Manager.*

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## *Around the Garden*

Merry Christmas to all of our loyal supporters of our amazing garden which I am lucky enough to be a part of for almost 14 years now! As we are now coming into a new season, it was suggested by a member that I share some photographs at the beginning of each season rather than giving you all a page full of words every time so please enjoy the delightful colours that we have been lucky enough to work amongst these last few months. It sure does make my job an extremely pleasurable one 😊



Merry Christmas to everyone and don't forget to put us on your list of places to visit in 2024!

Happy gardening everyone and Merry Christmas! Neet



Galaxy S20



Galaxy S20



Galaxy S20



Galaxy S20



## Rhododendron pseudochrysanthum

This species is native to Taiwan where it can be found growing on mountain slopes and on the edges of conifer forests. It is very variable in height and shape depending on location, ranging in height from 30cm to 3m.

The leaves are ovate to oblong-lanceolate with the margins lightly recurved. The upper surface of these thick leaves is usually glabrous with the midrib on the under side covered with indumentum. The flowers are produced in loose trusses of 5-10 and can be white, white tinged pink or pink with deep pink spots on the upper petals.

*R. pseudochrysanthum* was described by Hayata in 1908 and introduced by Wilson in 1918 and reintroduced by Yashiroda in 1938. In later years Patrick and Hsu were to send seeds including seeds of a dwarf form. At Emu Valley we grow this species in association with two other species native to Taiwan—*R. hyperythrum* and *R. morii*—and they can be found on the southern side of the Noel Sullivan walk as it meanders through the Taiwan section. *Maurie*

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



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