

New Zealand Rhododendron Association

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Newsletter September 2018

President's Report

Flicking through a rather old gardening magazine recently I came across what I thought was a very clever analogy. The author wrote, "I liken the onset of spring to lighting a large firework. It fizzles a bit at first, splutters into life, then there is no stopping it."

Our garden is at the "spluttering" stage. Rhododendrons *grande*, 'Choremia', 'Ina Hair', 'Christmas Cheer', 'Seta' and a red *arboreum* were all putting on an impressive display until a severe frost hit on the morning of 19 August. However, our rhododendron bushes are covered in flower bud (and others say the same) so we look forward to the explosion of colour to come. Winter has been very mild and as a result flowering in some areas is thought to be a month earlier than usual so we have to expect a few "splutters".

An email from Seamus O'Brien of the National Botanical Gardens of Ireland has prompted NZRA to look into the role New Zealand played in sponsoring the Frank Kingdon Ward expeditions. Seamus is writing a biography of Kingdon Ward. He states that Kingdon Ward's associations with Britain, Ireland and the USA are well recorded, NZ much less so. Our Archivist, Brian Coker has informed Council that correspondence between NZRA and Kingdon Ward from the 1940's to the 1960's is held at the Hocken Library in Dunedin. As our Immediate Past President Tony Fitchett lives in Dunedin he has been given the task of talking to the staff at the Hocken Library in the hope considerable information can be sourced. So, watch this space.

To maintain interest and to promote rhododendrons in our local groups it is desirable to have



interesting speakers willing to share their knowledge. Council is working on compiling a list of speakers to assist both local groups and future conference organisers. I believe a list of speakers was compiled some years ago, but now needs updating. If you have any suggestions for suitable speakers please forward them to our Secretary, Chris Wilson.

The 2018 Nelson Conference organisers are busy finalising arrangements. Don't miss the opportunity to view amazing gardens not seen before, listening to an excellent guest speaker and socialising with fellow rhododendron enthusiasts. A gentle reminder, the cost of registration increases by \$50 after September 30th.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Nelson.

Joy O'Keefe

Conservation News

One of the main objectives of the New Zealand Rhododendron Association is the conservation of both species and hybrid rhododendrons in New Zealand. To this end a dedicated team have been canvassing gardens with significant collections, to identify specimens which are not readily available commercially. In February 2018, Sue Davies and Doug Thompson spent two days visiting the Dunedin garden which used to belong to Brent Murdoch, to identify species and tag with numbers, which will be replaced with permanent labels in the future. Joy and Bernie O’Keefe assisted on the second day and Sue has been potting on cuttings and grafts collected on the visit.

Leonie Day & Bjarne Hendriksen are the current owners of the garden known as “Dalebrook”, and they have an amazing collection of species rhododendrons.

Our organisation is grateful it is in the care of keen gardeners who are willing to share what they have, in the interest of the conservation of species.

Brent and Patricia Murdoch now live in Cambridge, and Brent has kindly shared his memories in the first Newsletter article showcasing gardens which have been visited for conservation initiatives.

Sue Davies has also obtained some 10 year old seed from Brent Murdoch and is trialling germination.

Editor

A brief update of conservation as part of the Collection Strategy at Pukeiti

In accordance with the rules set down in the Collection Strategy the following has been achieved.

1. Successful propagation of every rhododendron within the collection – species and hybrid, that had only one or two plants represented.
2. Propagation of sick, or at risk, rhododendrons prior to removal
3. Propagation of any plants deemed tired/moribund in garden beds needing renewal that could not be sourced from the trade.

In regard to the NZ Hybrid collection area, the Stead, we are continuing to select and display NZ raised material primarily. As part of the overall garden planning NZ hybrids are being considered as first selection unless the brief dictates otherwise. We continue to propagate or source plants as required, but will focus solely on material that we are confident will perform well at Pukeiti and accept that not all rhododendrons, hybrid or species, can be grown here.

We have now made three successful collection trips to “Gwavas” over the last few years. The target of recent times has been Michael Hudson’s collection of hybrids, primarily *maddenia*, he has created over the years. In total we collected in excess of 700 scions with varying degrees of propagation success and have now planted the first Gwavas group at Pukeiti. It is our intention to also be able to return young plants to Gwavas over time. It is worth

noting that the selection process was carried out, and supervised by Graham Smith and Alan Jellyman to ensure that we collected the best material and time was not wasted on plants that didn’t pass muster.

Andrew Brooker

In response to this report our President, Joy O’Keefe commented:

This is an impressive effort Andrew, well done to you and your team.

If the same could be done, for as many as possible of the gardens with significant collections of rhododendrons around New Zealand we will have achieved our goals. To me, this is the very best way of conserving at risk hybrids and species and we don’t need to be trialling. Once sufficient numbers of plants can be propagated they will be gradually distributed locally and further afield. It will soon become evident what doesn’t do well in a given area.



“Dalebrook” – a labour of love

My interest in Rhododendrons began from typical beginnings some thirty years ago – a random planting of hybrids performed quite well in what by chance proved to be an ideal location on the hills above Dunedin. This success led to many further acquisitions and a growing interest in the genus was further enhanced by membership of the Dunedin Rhododendron Group.



Typical winter snowfall

At this stage my horticultural experience in any sphere of gardening was practically non-existent, and I was in considerable awe of the seemingly encyclopaedic knowledge possessed by some members of the Group. And so began the long and pleasurable experience of learning about this most interesting genus while slowly building up a sizeable hybrid collection.

It was not long, however, before I began to appreciate the enormous diversity and special attributes of Rhododendron species, especially foliage and flowers, and acquired species plants from numerous sources throughout the country. As the plants matured, however, many disappointments were in store, as all too often it became apparent that my prized species were not true to type and were in fact hybrids. It was this inability to acquire authentic species that led to the idea of growing species from seed acquired from expert individuals and associations overseas.

Seed was initially acquired from the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden, Seattle (mainly hand pollinated), and from wild collections distributed from the American Rhododendron Association and the Royal Horticultural Society (UK).

In addition, Patricia and I contributed financially to several very successful seed collecting expeditions led by Alan Clark of Muncaster Castle, Cumbria, England.

There was a steep learning curve, but experimentation regarding germination of rhododendron seed quickly led to a foolproof method. At our Dunedin property we had an ideal setup with a workshop where the seedlings were grown under lights, and tunnel houses to protect the plants while young. The seeds were germinated in pottles each year in our living area, where the under-floor heating provided ideal bottom heat, although I had to sow the seed when Patricia was out, so that I could use the kitchen without her seeing exactly what a mess I made!

Our six acre property was 1000 feet above sea level on the hills behind Dunedin city, and the plants thrived in conditions that were ideal for almost the entire Rhododendron family. Around 1500 collections were acquired and at any time we had around 300 different species in various stages of growth.

The timing of this activity (1980s and 1990s) was very fortuitous, with significant areas of China and other countries within the sino-himalayan region finally being opened up to plant hunters from the UK and USA in particular. Most of the areas the various expeditions covered had either not been explored by rhododendron seed collectors at all, or had last been visited by early plant hunters like Frank Kingdon Ward in the 1920s and 1930s. As a result seed from a virtual avalanche of rhododendron species that had not previously been discovered, and new collections of known species, became available.

Plant hunters tend to end up with a lot of seed, some of which they cannot grow on themselves, and as the scale of my seed acquiring and growing activities gradually became known, a number of world renowned plant hunters forwarded me parcels of seeds from their latest expeditions, completely unsolicited. On several occasions people who had recently been overseas would arrive at my house, and thrust a sizeable package at me saying, “Alan Clark (for example) said to give you this!” In those days there did not appear to be any difficulty in bringing into New Zealand rhododendron seeds, although I imagine that the situation would be very different today.

In this regard I have been most heartened and interested to read of the National Rhododendron Species Conservation Project being undertaken by Dr Marion MacKay, Doug Thompson, Dr Sue Davies, Graham Smith and others, and wish this important initiative every success.

As the number of species we were growing increased, and plants gained a reasonable size, we began to develop a small nursery with a very specialised offering. Thousands of surplus plants were widely distributed throughout the country via a website, by word of mouth and via Rhododendron Group distributions etc, with unsold plants tending to be planted within our garden, which eventually covered around three acres.



R. dalhousiae var rhabdotum flower

Our property, “Dalebrook”, was quite a difficult site to develop, being very steep in the upper areas and somewhat exposed to the often boisterous southerly winds. It was also ‘above the snowline’, and most years two or three heavy snowfalls were received.

The previous owner had fortunately planted a Christmas tree crop on the lower slopes in front of the house, and by removing most of these, but retaining others, a degree of shelter was gradually obtained. The property also had a small creek running through it, and several boggy places where a diverse range of plants including dwarf rhododendrons could be successfully grown. Frankly, it was quite a rugged environment, but the rhododendrons loved it; and although in time what I thought was quite an innovative garden emerged, a certain wildness still existed which, I believe, added to the natural attraction of the rhododendron plantings, which ranged from the smallest of dwarfs to the large leafed varieties.

This ‘wildness’ was particularly evident in the very steep upper area of the property, where a gully covered by native bush was enhanced by a small creek which tumbled down through a chaotic assembly of large lichen covered rocks. A number of large leafed rhododendrons were planted in this area, which I believe gave a reasonable representation of a Himalayan landscape, albeit on a very small scale.

Over the years we were most fortunate to receive helpful advice and encouragement from many people both from within New Zealand and overseas who were experts in rhododendron taxonomy. These included a memorable visit from Peter and Patricia Cox with whom we spent an enjoyable (and educational) day

assessing plantings, especially the young plants growing from species seed received from the more recent seed collecting expeditions, including one that Peter had participated in himself.

The main developed part of the garden was on the lower slopes of the property, in the area where the Christmas trees had been removed.

After a visit to Sir

Miles Warren’s garden on Banks Peninsular, we wanted to have a certain formality in the ‘bones’ of the garden, so we started with two wide walkways, intersecting about halfway down the slope of the land. This gave us four ‘garden rooms’. The walkway down the slope was dubbed ‘San Fran Way’ after the hilly streets of San Francisco, and had a Luytens bench seat at the bottom – an ideal place to sit and enjoy the views of the garden. On either side of San Fran Way were wide flower beds with some rhododendrons, perennials and roses, and a backdrop of a brush fence. The walkway across the area was planted on either side with English beech, with the plan being to hedge them and thus ‘hide’ parts of each of the rooms. Sculptures and old telephone boxes etc were dotted around to add character.



**Snow on *R. arboreum*
*var albotomentosum***

The two upper rooms formed by the walkways had themes of a nautical room on one side, and a room of contemplation on the other. The nautical room had a rowing boat, with wooden sleepers being set into the ground to indicate the 'bones' of a boat; 'Hector' the seagull, who 'flew' down from Picton with a fish in his mouth, hailed from the top of a pole above the rowing boat, and plantings completed the area. The 'contemplation' room had one seat (made from wood from a demolished Carisbrooke stand) and a spherical sundial, calibrated for the latitude and longitude, plus of course, plantings.

The two lower rooms had more of a woodland feeling, with many rhododendrons and other plantings, and walkways through.

Other areas of the garden were well planted with a wide variety of rhododendrons and favourite special plants. And, of course, throughout the property there was a wide range of trees.

In the garden development, we were ably assisted for some years by an Otago University student from Southland, and every Saturday would find us developing pathways, creating ponds, spraying weeds and planting out. Sundays were for making up plant orders etc.

Patricia and I decided to move north around 2006 to be closer to our children, and we eventually settled in Cambridge where we have a large suburban garden featuring (again) rhododendron species.

It was a huge wrench to leave our Dunedin property, but for us the time was right. To be honest, the biggest wrench was to leave our beloved plants – Patricia's snowdrops (her favourite plant), her celandine which grew so beautifully on the banks of the creek, and her roses; and Brent's rhododendrons, the rare species, plants that hadn't flowered (not only in our garden, but probably in New Zealand). When we left Dunedin we had hundreds of young plants which we gave to the Dunedin Botanic Gardens, and hopefully some of these are gracing this wonderful asset that Dunedin has.

We hope that our efforts in collecting and raising rhododendron species may have in some small way benefited other connoisseurs and enthusiasts, by providing them access to plants that might by now be lost to cultivation in the wild, and not otherwise available to New Zealand gardeners.



The Nautical garden takes shape



Looking back up San Fran walkway towards the steep hillside beyond

As for "Dalebrook", I am confident that successive owners of this somewhat unique property will treasure and enhance the rhododendron species plantings, thus allowing these often magnificent but endangered plants to, in time, achieve their full glory.

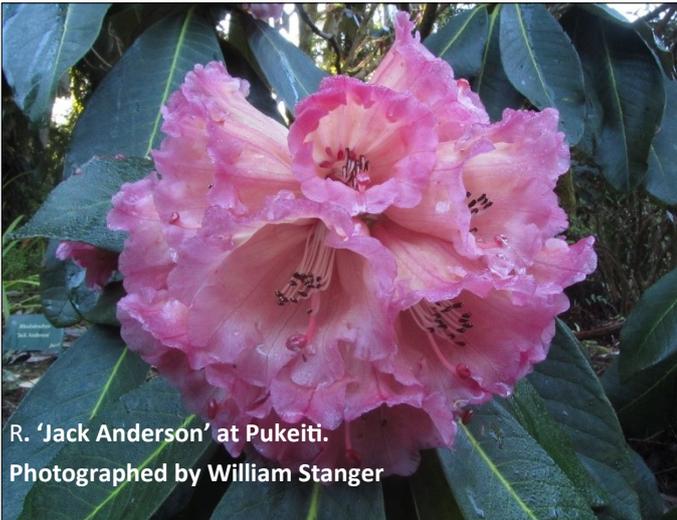
Brent Murdoch

Cambridge

9 August 2018

Facebook

The NZRA has a Facebook page which is regularly updated with photos and snippets of interest by Sue Davies. As there are a number of members who do not follow Facebook a selected few photographs of rhododendrons, flowering in July and August, are published below for all to enjoy. All are welcome to add photos, either by posting themselves, or by emailing photos to Sue: suegardiner20@icloud.com



R. 'Jack Anderson' at Pukeiti.
Photographed by William Stanger



R. longipes at Tannock Glen,
Dunedin. Photographed by
Mark Joel.



White form of R. mucronulatum
Mark Joel, Dunedin



This very fine form of *R. arboreum* was raised from a cutting from a garden that had belonged to a deceased NZRA member. It is now being further propagated to make sure it lives on to bloom in other NZ gardens. This is part of the NZRA initiative to conserve fine forms of rhododendron species.



R. 'Pink Beauty' is a lovely sight in the garden in August. We are not sure of its breeding, but it obviously has *R. arboreum* as one parent. Seen at Heritage Park, in Kimbolton.



R. magnificentum

This was posted with a "feeling happy" emoji.



R. rothschildii, a big leaf rhododendron, not often seen in New Zealand.

This plant was raised from seed obtained from the Rhododendron Species Foundation by Brent Murdoch.



R. 'Pukeiti'

Photograph: William Stanger



What does Andrew, our Garden Manager, love most about Pukeiti?

"One of my favourite plants in the garden here at Pukeiti is R. 'Pukeiti' which was a species collected in 1953, on a trip sponsored by this garden, from the wilds of Myanmar or what was known as Burma at that time.

And it has been growing in the garden here since then. It grew for about 60 odd years and got to a size where it was 30 feet across and 20 feet high. But because of our wonderful growing environment here at Pukeiti it effectively grew itself to death. It had got to a size where the top of the plant (everything above ground) was stripping too much energy from the roots so it couldn't survive long term. It was effectively having no

rest. But the news isn't all bad because we were able to propagate young plants, young babies if you like, and there are now four new plants in the garden for us to have in a different space so they don't suffer some of the problems that the parent plant had.

You'd expect to see the flowers on R. 'Pukeiti' in July through to August, great big soccer ball sized pink flowers with a soft pink bud opening up to this magnificent bloom and the energy that that flower takes from the plant sucks a litre of moisture a day per flower. So it is an incredibly energy sapping feature but beautiful all the same."

GARDENS OF THE NETHERLANDS

2018 ARS Pre-Convention Tour

Although we are members of the American Rhododendron Society we were privileged to be able to join their five day tour of The Netherlands being held prior to the Convention based in Bremen, Germany. It was mandatory to attend the Convention in order to take part in the pre and post Convention tours. Owing to other commitments we were unable to attend the Bremen Convention. Luck was on our side, two more attendees were required to enable the tour of The Netherlands to proceed so Bernie and I filled the gap. As the tour organiser said “we did them a favour”. “Netherlands” means “lower countries” which is most appropriate as only about 50% of its land exceeds 1 metre above sea level. With a population density of 412 people per square kilometre, The Netherlands is classified as a very densely populated country. Gardening has been very popular for centuries and today Holland is the centre of Europe’s horticultural industry.

Before viewing any gardens we were given a taste of Dutch village life from the late 19th century by visiting the Zaanse Schans Village on the Zaan River, a popular tourist attraction with historic windmills, houses, craftsmen at work and museums.



Our first garden visit, the Keukenhof is a must if visiting The Netherlands from mid March to mid May. A full afternoon was spent admiring the kaleidoscope of colour provided by the approximately 7 million flower bulbs planted annually in the 32 hectare park. Plantings include over 800 tulip cultivars and many daffodils, hyacinths and other bulbs. The best time to view the tulips is around mid April. Tulips were certainly past their peak but still beautiful when we visited on 8th May.

On day two we were taken to Boskoop and the Planten Tuin Esveld, a nursery with a massive variety of plants, their catalogue listing 10,443 different plants, many rare and unusual.



1000 -1100 different rhododendrons are available here and 100 different hydrangeas, however very small quantities of each plant variety are produced. This business has been in the same family since 1865. The present owner gave us an entertaining talk on site then spoke again at our dinner that evening on garden design. Japanese maples are his love/hobby illustrated by the 700 different maple species and hybrids growing in the nursery garden. The Dutch Plant Collection of rhododendrons and azaleas is held here, covering one hectare. Being in the nursery business this visit interested us greatly. We found the potting mix particularly interesting, peat, bark and rock chip with cocoa fibre on top of the pot acting as a weed suppressant. No chemicals are used, natural fertilizers include seaweed, salix and grape seed extract. R. ‘Cunningham’s White’ and surprisingly, R. ‘Elegans’, are used for root stock.



The afternoon was spent at Arboretum Tropenburg, a seven hectare botanical garden in Rotterdam. Situated 4 metres below sea-level it is drained by canals. National Collections of conifers, *Quercus* and *Fagus* are held here. Tropenburg is not only an arboretum, thousands of perennials are planted throughout the garden including National Collections of *Rodgersia* and *Hosta*. *Rhododendron* species and hybrids, azaleas, *Wisteria*, *Kolkwitzia* were all in full bloom looking spectacular in the dappled shade provided by the huge trees.



The first private garden we visited was that of Professor Lou Traas, a collector of species rhododendrons, especially the large leafed varieties, and choice hybrid rhododendrons. Considering the size of this town garden (4000 metres square) there were an amazing number of plants. Some of the species to impress were *R. coryanum*, *yuefengense*, *quiaojianense* (an excellent foliageed plant), *complexum* and *falconeri*. Of the hybrids *R. 'Virginia Richards'* was looking very healthy, *R. 'Loderi Venus'* was tall and flourishing, and *R. 'Wind River'*, a lovely colour combination of soft yellow, cream and pink. There was so much to see in this very interesting garden, we could have spent a lot more time there.



R. 'Wind River'



R. quiaojianense



R. 'Virginia Richards'

one of the largest conifer collections in Western Europe. Many other trees and shrubs including laburnums, magnolias, lilacs, maples and birches have been added over the years.

Appeltern Gardens, was a series of approximately 200 model gardens displaying ideas for garden design using a huge range of plants. The aim is to give visitors inspiration about what to do in their own gardens. The designer gardens have been designed by professional garden designers and commercial enterprises use it as a means of advertising their products. One area is a more natural environment (what I would call a "wild garden") displaying aspects of sustainability. There were ideas aplenty for large and small gardens.



Ramonda species

As we entered the next garden, there in front of us was a huge rock garden standing 10 metres high, apparently one of the largest in Europe. This is part of the Fort Hoofddijk Botanical Garden in Utrecht, a University garden, its primary function the support of education and research. Over 1600 species of alpine plants, including NZ alpines, are grown here on simulated mountain terrain. Beyond the rock garden there were beds of interesting perennials including *Paeonia*, *Iris*, *Dysosma*, *Podophyllum*, *Trillium*, *Erythronium* to name a few.

Day 4 began at the Von Gimborn Arboretum which was started in 1924 as a private collection of conifers and ericaceous plants including, rhododendrons. It is still



Von Gimborn Arboretum

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Email: a-c-wilson@hotmail.com



Our last two nights were spent at Hotel Wageningen. It was late afternoon on Day 4 before we realised there was an amazing botanical garden, Belmonte Arboretum, on the terrace immediately behind our hotel, just a 200 – 300 metre walk. Up until 2009 this garden was part of the Botanical Gardens of Wageningen

University, the plants being used for scientific education and research. In 2003 the Dutch Rhododendron Society and the Dutch Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society together donated about 250 species and more than 500 hybrids to the Belmonte Arboretum. 93 rhododendron species in this collection are considered to be endangered. Azaleas, both evergreen and deciduous were a blaze of colour, sheltered by the many trees such as magnolias, flowering cherries, viburnums, *Halesia* and an impressive *Davidia involucrate*.



Het Loo Palace Garden



Het Loo Palace Garden



Het Loo Palace Garden

Het Loo Palace Garden on the last day was totally different from any others seen on the tour. The palace and gardens date back to the 1600's. From 1977 to 1984 a massive restoration of the gardens took place restoring them to their original state. The garden boasts the highest spouting fountain in Europe. The numerous statues are gods and goddesses from Greek mythology. This very formal garden has a definite French influence.

Rinus and Petra, both members of the Dutch Rhododendron Society were excellent tour guides, highly organised and so friendly. Several members of the Dutch Rhododendron Society, including the President, joined our group for dinner on the final night, a very nice conclusion to a wonderful few days.



New Zealanders

ARS members from USA, Australia, Canada and NZ made up the tour group, providing a wonderful opportunity for networking. There is nothing better than travelling with like minded people.

Joy O'Keefe

Reference: ARS Bulletin Summer 2017
Article written by Rinus Manders

Providing Botanical Information to the Public

On May 2nd this year our son took us to visit the George Landis Arboretum near Esperance, New York State, USA. A long cold winter had delayed the onset of spring, trees were still in tight bud. Despite bare branches not only was it a great place to go for walks and enjoy nature, it was also a place of learning. Much of the arboretum consisted of old growth native forest. Among, and on the edge of the forested areas a huge amount of planting had been done over many years. Trees, many of which are ornamentals, have been planted in groups according to their genus, *Syringa*, *Malus*, *Quercus*, *Rhododendron*, a conifer collection including sixteen species of *Abies* to name a few.



What really impressed us was the method used to provide information to the public on each genus. A mail box was situated with each group of plantings and in the mail-box was a laminated sheet with detailed information on that particular genus.

What didn't impress us was the condition of the rhododendrons, deer had had a feast as illustrated in the accompanying photograph.

Joy O'Keefe



R. 'Kit Collier'



At the 2017 NZRA Conference in Feilding there were 15 gift plants of R. 'Kit Collier' which had been grown especially for the Conference. The organising Committee have no idea where these went to live! This is a rhododendron which is not available commercially and the Conservation Sub-Committee would be very interested in any feed back from those who now have it planted in their garden. Information such as which district it now lives in, how it is thriving (or not) would be appreciated, as would photos. Please send any information to the Editor (details on page 9).

STOP PRESS FROM THE TREASURER

Subscriptions are now due and second reminder notices have been sent. There are still 25% of subscriptions outstanding.

If you are among this group please make my day and remit your payment.

Also a reminder that there are gift subscriptions available at 50% deduction for the first year. If you know of someone considering joining NZRA this gift may be all they need towards a long term membership.

New Zealand Rhododendron Association Inc

75th Jubilee Annual Conference



Rotorua, Natural Geothermal Wonderland, New Zealand

Tuesday 29 October - Friday 1 November 2019



The Rotorua organising committee extend a very warm welcome, and invite you to revel in the beautiful gardens in the Rotorua district, an area where rhododendrons and companion plants grow to perfection.

In line with the conservation theme of the conference, the keynote speaker's presentation title will be
"Fighting Rhododendron Extinction"

The conference will be based at **The Holiday Inn, 10 Tryon Street, Rotorua, 3010**. Early booking is advisable as we are dealing with a tourist city. Motels/hotels close by are: - **Rotorua Motor Lodge** **Alpin Motel**

Birchwood Spa Motel **Rotorua Geysersland**

Convenor: Paul Shaw 07 332 3733 email: paulcarol.shaw@xtra.co.nz

Registration Secretary: Rob Singleton 07 827 5607 email: ry.sing@xtra.co.nz

NZRA Member Gardens

The following members have kindly indicated that they will welcome NZRA members wishing to visit their garden. Please contact the garden owner in advance and note information regarding payment (where applicable) or other requirements. To add your name and garden to this list or to correct any information please contact Brian Coker b.hcoker@xtra.co.nz

Region and Member	Address	Contact details	Charge	Other information
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Manawatu Region

Warren and Robyn Walker	124 Alfredton Road, RD3, Eketahuna	ekewalkers@hotmail.com	No charge	Spring garden predominantly. Groups are asked for a donation for Ronald McDonald House.
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Nelson Region

James Mathieson	Songlines, 153 Bushend Road, Tadmore, RD2 Wakefield Nelson 7096	027 976 0980	No charge	Receives visitors all year (but away at times). Primarily a tree arboretum on 100 acres. 25 kms of timber walks and 15 acres of native forest. Five acres around house has rhododendrons and camellias.
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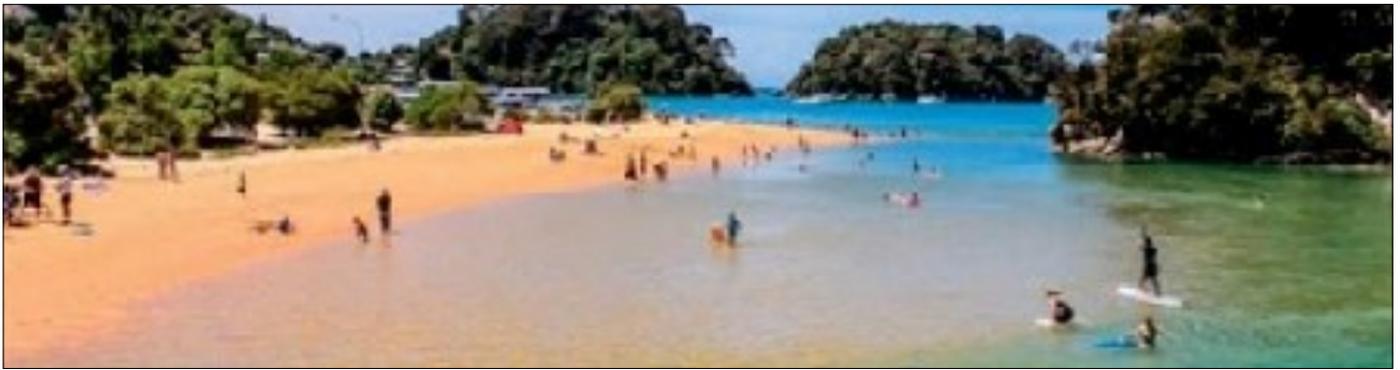
Canterbury Region

Brian and Helen Coker	Stoneycrop 8B Barnsley Crescent, Halkett Grove, West Melton 7618	03 347 0010 b.hcoker@xtra.co.nz	No charge to NZRA members. Others \$5pp.	Open all year. Garden started in 2014 with 400+ rhodos (many NZ hybrids). Wide range of small trees, shrubs and perennials on 360m2.
Bernie and Joy O'Keefe	16 Burdon Road, Woodbury, RD21, Geraldine 7991	03 692 2864 joybernie@gmail.com	No charge to NZRA members.	Open all year. Large garden with nursery attached.
Rosa and Graham Peacock	Orari Gorge Station 993 Tripp Settlement Rd, Geraldine 7991	rosa@orarigorge.co.nz	\$10pp-garden and bush walk Oct. to Dec. \$15pp for groups 10 or more Oct. to May, includes garden and historic buildings.	Entry goes to upkeep of buildings.

A Message from Our Registrar

Brian, our Registrar, did not receive any registrations during 2017, yet is aware there are several rhododendron hybrids out there awaiting registration. Some have been named, but not registered, and duplications can and do occur. We all tend to get too busy at flowering time when bloom details need to be taken, so put the process of registration into the too hard basket. Brian strongly recommends filling in the majority of the form during winter so all that is left to do in spring is fill in a few vital statistics. The registration Form is available on the website:

https://www.rhododendron.org.nz/Rhododendron_registration_form.pdf or phone Brian Coker 03 3470010



OPTIONAL PRE-CONFERENCE TOUR

Tasman National Park on Friday 2nd November, 2018.

You will be taken by coach to Kaiteriteri Beach. Here you will board a catamaran which will take you to view the little bays along the way to Awaroa Beach. Awaroa is the beach that New Zealanders funded in order to save it from going into foreign ownership. Lunch is at your own expense at the Awaroa Lodge .

The cost of this tour is \$76.00 providing 50 people register. If you are interested in this trip, please contact Miriam Lee mirilee73@gmail.com

Colour India Himalayas in bloom

Sikkim is renowned for the diversity of its indigenous flora including orchids, magnolias, and rhododendrons, many of which will be in bloom when we are there. It's also known for its mountainous beauty, temples, chanting monks, flickering candles and flying prayer flags.

In hill-top, heritage, Darjeeling we learn about the growing and of processing tea.

Kashmir, besides its beauty, is famous for 400-year-old Mogul gardens, traditional hydroponics on Lake Dal and tulips gardens which will be in bloom in April.

The tour includes numerous botanical day-walks in National Parks and nursery and garden visits.

20 days, departing on 6 April 2019, small group (max 10) and hosted by plantsman Brent Atherfold and local botanical guides. This is India made easy. Brent has been there many times and still loves it.



**Contact: elight@kiwilink.co.nz • Ph: 09 4220111
Mob: 021 235 3932 • colourindia.co.nz**

Getting to know your Council representative - Richard Nanson

I was born in Nelson in 1937 and have lived most of my life in the North Island. My parents were both keen gardeners and I became one at an early age. My horticultural career started as an apprentice with Duncan and Davies in New Plymouth in 1954 and completed with Christchurch Parks Department in 1958. I sat my National Diploma in Horticulture exams while working as an apprentice. I completed the thesis a few years later and was awarded the National Diploma in Horticulture with honours and the Cockayne Gold medal in 1969.

Between 1959 and 1962 I travelled overseas working as the head gardener for the late Constance Spry for 18 months, before enrolling in a one year course at the College of Park and Recreation Administration in Berkshire. Following this, I worked for 6 months with the Landscape firm, John Waterer Son and Crisp in the South of England.

In 1961 I travelled overland on motor scooters with my sister, and another couple of NZers, from the UK through France, Switzerland, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, India and Ceylon, visiting gardens and temples en route. On returning to NZ I was appointed the Assistant Director of the City Parks in Hamilton, before moving to Wellington City where I was Deputy Director of the Parks and Recreation Department from 1967, and then Director until 1992. During this time I was fortunate to have three working trips, these were to Canada, Spain and America. I took early retirement to develop a large garden in the Ohariu, north of Wellington.



Since retirement, I have been a part-time tutor and adviser to the Hutt Valley Polytechnic, and taken evening classes at secondary schools. I have given a large number of talks to various groups in the region and supported a number of gardening groups, as well as fronting the gardening talk-back radio program for News Talk ZB for 9 years.

An active member of the Royal N.Z. Institute of Horticulture from my early apprenticeship days, I was made an Associate of Honour in 1992.

I have been a member of the NZRA since 1990 serving as president for five years, and a current council member for the Wellington Region. I was the chairperson of the Wellington group for 13 years and have been an active supporter of Heritage Park.

I enjoy travel, and have taken two group tours overseas, one to the UK and one to China and I was fortunate to attend the Bremen World Convention with other NZRA representatives.

In 2011 I was awarded the MNZM for services to Horticulture.

My wife Jenny and I moved back to Wellington City nearly four years ago and now live in an inner-city suburb. I have a small but intensive garden which keeps me busy. We look forward to travelling and would love to see any members who pass through the city.



New Zealand Rhododendron Association

74th Annual Conference



Garden Delights of Nelson & Tasman

Saturday 3rd November - Tuesday 6th November 2018

We, the organising committee, extend a cordial invitation to all members, friends and overseas visitors to the Nelson and Tasman region to enjoy some of our most beautiful gardens and places of interest.

Conference events will be based in the central Nelson city.

Accommodation for Nelson Conference 2018: Organisers are concerned people may miss out on suitable accommodation, as one complex is already fully booked for November 2018. If you plan to attend the 2018 Nelson Conference, it is recommended you book your accommodation now. All listed below are within close walking distance of the main venue. When booking, check that cancellations will be accepted nearer the time, should you find you cannot attend.

The Sails 7 Trafalgar St , www.thesailsnelson.co.nz Ph 0800 724576

Cedar Grove Lodge 59 Trafalgar St, info@cedargrove.co.nz Ph 0800 233274

Century Park 197 Rutherford St, info@centuryparkmotorlodge.com Ph 0800 867668

Chelsea Park Lodge 214 Rutherford St, stay@chelseapark.co.nz Ph 0800 660065

Palazzo Motor Lodge 159 Rutherford St, info@palazzomotorlodge.co.nz Ph 0800 4725293

Palms Motels 5 Paru Paru Rd, Inner City, www.palmsnelson.co.nz Ph 0800 725676

Rutherford Hotel Trafalgar Square, reservations@rutherfordhotel.co.nz Ph. 0800 437 227 Booking code 352700



Enquiries to:

John Clayton 027 4535928

Margaret Clayton 027 22 48313 email: jclayton@xtra.co.nz

Sue Gardiner 03 543 2596 email: suejeangardiner@gmail.com

Registration forms are available at www.rhododendron.org.nz .

Reminder: Early Bird registrations close September 30.