

**THE AUSTRALIAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY
VICTORIAN BRANCH Inc.
PRESENTS**

RHODODENDRONS IN AUSTRALIA

GOLDEN JUBILEE CONFERENCE

**CELEBRATING
50 YEARS OF THE AUSTRALIAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY
& 50 YEARS OF THE NATIONAL RHODODENDRON GARDENS**

SUNDAY 17TH OCTOBER to WEDNESDAY 20TH OCTOBER 2010

IN THE DANDENONG RANGES, MELBOURNE, VICTORIA



REGISTRATION INFORMATION

RHODODENDRONS IN AUSTRALIA

17TH - 20TH OCTOBER 2010

The members of the Australian Rhododendron Society welcome you to the Golden Jubilee of the Australian Rhododendron Society and the magnificent National Rhododendron Gardens in Olinda. The conference will be held just one hour from Melbourne's CBD in the beautiful Dandenong Ranges and the programme will include visits to extensive public and private gardens and local attractions.

Noted plantsman and author, Kenneth Cox, from 'Glendoick Nursery' Scotland will be the keynote speaker. Ken has written several prestigious books about rhododendrons and his plant hunting adventures. He is a talented speaker and this will be his first visit to Australia. Well known New Zealand molecular biologist Dr. Sue Gardiner/Davies and Australian research botanist Lyn Craven will be among the many talented speakers who will entertain and inform delegates over three days.

On the Sunday afternoon members and friends are invited to afternoon tea at the National Rhododendron Gardens to view the 50th Rhododendron Show of the Australian Rhododendron Society Vic Branch. This will be followed by a visit to 'William Rickett's Sanctuary' a world renowned sculpture park and an optional dinner at the vibrant 'Cuckoo Restaurant'.



The following three days will include workshops, garden visits, good food and wine and much social interaction. The conference dinner on the Tuesday night will be held at the 'SkyHigh' restaurant with spectacular views over Melbourne and Port Phillip Bay.

A wide variety of comfortable accommodation is available in the Dandenong Ranges and nearby suburbs ranging from motels and apartments to luxury Bed and Breakfasts. Buses will transport delegates to the conference venues from four designated pick up points (see Accommodation section). Delegates staying elsewhere will need private transport. There is no public transport to the conference venues.

We look forward to sharing our wonderful Dandenong Ranges with you in Spring this year during the peak rhododendron flowering period.

Enquiries: email: secretary@vicrhodo.org.au or mnbegg@gmail.com

PH: 0418 340 240 Website: www.vicrhodo.org.au

THE NATIONAL RHODODENDRON GARDEN, Olinda

This is a 100 acre garden created by volunteers from the Australian Rhododendron Society on land granted for the purpose by the Victorian State Government in 1960. The intention of the ARS was to create a garden as a reference collection of rhododendrons and a means of displaying and promoting these to the public. A Volunteer Group of Society members still assists in the maintenance of the gardens which have been managed by Parks Victoria since 1995. Today the gardens incorporate about 15,000 rhododendrons making them the most extensive such collection in the country.



The gardens also incorporate extensive plantings of conifers, magnolias, cherries, beeches, maples and many other plants making the gardens a true botanical garden rather than a single genus garden. Water is derived from a spring on the property which was captured by excavation of two lakes. An extensive network of bitumen

sealed roads was developed and today these roads are used by a bus which ferries people around the gardens during the peak rhododendron flowering season. The gardens offer extensive distant views of the valleys toward Warburton and the more northerly portions of the Great Dividing Range. Just below the hall is an extensive Kurume azalea bowl which is truly spectacular in the spring.

Early garden development was principally focussed on Asiatic Rhododendrons, evergreen azaleas and mollis azaleas however more recently considerably more attention has been given to Vireya rhododendrons and many plantings of these have been undertaken. While they have taken some time to establish in the open they are now maturing very well.

This garden is without doubt a world class botanical garden which should be on the agenda for every person interested in gardening and gardens.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY (May be subject to change)

SUNDAY 17TH OCTOBER

- 1.45pm Bus pick up from 4 designated points
- 2.30pm Venue - National Rhododendron Gardens, Olinda
Registration and welcome by Australian Rhododendron Society
President, Neil Webster
Rhododendron Show presentation of awards, afternoon tea.
Bus tour or walk around National Rhododendron Gardens
- 5.00pm Bus/car to William Rickett's Sanctuary (unique sculpture park)
- 6.30pm Bus/car return, own arrangements for dinner
OR
Bus/car to Cuckoo Restaurant in Olinda (optional extra) and return

MONDAY 18TH OCTOBER

- 8.00am Bus pick up from 4 designated points
- 8.30am Venue - National Rhododendron Gardens, Olinda
Registration and viewing of Rhododendron Show
- 9.00am History of Australian Rhododendron Society, Lesley Eaton past
President & Peter Damman former Director of the Rhododendron
Garden
Australian hybrids – panel led by Dr. Graham Price, past President &
hybridiser, & Laurie Begg, Nursery owner.
- 10.30am Morning Tea
- 11.00am Keynote speaker Kenneth Cox, author and plant hunter of Glendoick
Nursery in Scotland. 'Woodland Gardens in the 21st Century'.
- 12.00pm Lunch
- 1.00pm Welcome and talk by Parks Victoria representative
Guided walks/bus tour of National Rhododendron Gardens
- 2.30pm Bus/car to Gembrook gardens
'Wuurn' Laurie and Joyce Begg's Garden, Gembrook
'Blackwood Lane Gallery' Sue Jarvis's Garden & Gallery, Gembrook
- 5.30pm Bus/car return. Own arrangements for dinner.

TUESDAY 19TH OCTOBER

- 8.00am Bus pick up from 4 designated points
- 8.30am Venue – Mont De Lancey Historic Homestead and Museum, Wandin
- 9.00am Australian Vireyas Today: Andrew Rouse, Vireya
Classification: Lyn Craven, Molecular Diversity of Vireyas and their
Conservation: Dr Sue Gardiner/Davies from NZ.
- 10.30am Morning Tea

- 11.00am Talks: Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden, Tasmania; Graham Simpson. Mt Lofty Botanic Garden, South Australia: Robert Hatcher. National Rhododendron Garden Olinda, Peter Damman.
- 12.00pm Welcome and tour of the Mont De Lancey Homestead and Museum
Lunch
- 1.30pm Bus/car to- Katandra Native Garden, Bob & Dot O'Neill, Wandin
- 3.00pm 'Beechmont', Simon & Marcia Begg's garden, Olinda
- 5.00pm Bus/car to accommodation
- 6.30pm Bus/car to conference dinner at SkyHigh
Speaker: Kenneth Cox, Riddle of the Tsangpo Gorges.
- 10.00pm Bus/car return

WEDNESDAY 20TH OCTOBER

- 8.00am Bus pick up from 4 designated points
- 9.00am Grants Picnic Ground, Sherbrooke Forest, Kallista
Forest walk, parrot feeding and lyrebird talk.
- 10.00am Ferny Creek Horticultural Society Garden
Morning Tea
- 11.30am 'Hollingdale', Michael & Inge Hammer's garden, Sassafras
- 12.30pm Bus/car to 'Como', George & Pat Hetrel's garden, The Basin
- 1.00pm BBQ Lunch and close of conference by ARSV President, Mike Hammer.
- 2.30pm 'Kenloch', Tim & Angela Orpin's garden, Olinda
- 4.00pm 'Cloudehill', Jeremy & Valerie Francis' garden & nursery
- 5.00pm Bus/car return

END OF CONFERENCE

OPTIONAL POST CONFERENCE DAY TOUR, Thursday 21st October

Coach starts from Olinda at 8.30am

Visit 1. Guided tour of Cranbourne Botanic Australian Garden

The award winning Australian garden is a place where visitors can immerse themselves in Australian flora, landscapes, art and architecture. This amazing new garden features a gallery of exhibition gardens, sculptures and displays.

Visit 2. Lunch at Mc Lelland Gallery & Sculpture Park

McClelland's outdoor sculpture collection showcases over 70 works by prominent Australian sculptors. McClelland's three indoor exhibition spaces accommodate temporary exhibitions and collection displays of works on paper, photography, painting and sculpture.

Visit 3. Private garden – to be advised.

Return to pick up point by 6pm. OR Mini Coach for transfer to Airport.

Cost includes all entries & meals. Transfer to airport additional cost. Payment & enquiries to tour manager; Merryle Johnson, Country Farm Perennials, Email: cfp@dcsi.net.au

SPEAKERS

KENNETH COX

Born in 1964 into a family of renowned plantsmen, Kenneth Cox is grandson of plant hunter, writer and nurseryman Euan Cox and son of Peter Cox VMH. The three generations were and are considered the world's leading experts on rhododendrons. Kenneth, himself a nurseryman and author of numerous books on rhododendrons, has carved out his particular niche in the world of plant-hunting in leading nine expeditions to South and South-East Tibet and Arunachal Pradesh, India, 1995-to the present. He graduated in 1986 at the University of Birmingham, England with a BA in General Arts and a diploma in commerce.



Kenneth is an experienced lecturer on rhododendrons, horticulture and exploration and has lectured throughout the UK, many parts of Europe, North America and New Zealand. Kenneth is managing director of the family firm Glendoick Gardens Ltd in Scotland, a garden centre and mail order nursery specialising in Rhododendrons, Azaleas, Ericaceous plants, Meconopsis, Primula and other plants collected by the Cox family around the world. Kenneth will present two talks – ‘Woodland Gardens in the 21st Century’ and ‘Riddle of the Tsangpo Gorges’.

DR SUE GARDINER / DAVIES

Sue and her husband Lindsay have developed their 10 acre property in Palmerston Nth. over more than 20 years to focus on their favourite plant, the Rhododendron. Sue is also Vice President of the NZ Rhododendron Association and a member of the Board of the Rhododendron Species Foundation in the USA. In her professional capacity, Sue is a molecular biologist at the New Zealand Institute for Plant & Food Research, where leads the Mapping & Markers Team in the Breeding Technologies Group. Her team is well known internationally for its development of DNA 'fingerprinting' tools that assist plant breeders to select elite seedlings from large breeding populations of apple and other fruit crops, increasing the efficiency of breeding programmes. In 2009 Sue was presented with the Outstanding International Horticulturist Award by the American Society of Horticultural Science, in recognition of her professional achievements. Award of grants by the NZ Rhododendron Association and the American Rhododendron Society Research Society, as well as other donors, enabled her to supervise a PhD student Ahmed Fayaz in a study that combines her private and professional passions. Ahmed is investigating the molecular diversity of Vireyas in collections in New Zealand and USA, with the goal of assessing which accessions should be targeted as priorities for conservation. His key questions are: 'Can DNA analysis

tell us how unique this particular rhododendron, that is reported to be in danger of being lost in the wild, is? Is it a conservation priority?'

Sue's presentation at the 'Rhododendrons in Australia' Conference will be an interim report on Fayaz's findings, based mainly on accessions from the Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust. NZRA members have enjoyed hearing about this project at their recent conferences, and Sue promises she will make the work easy for all to understand.

LYN CRAVEN

Lyn Craven began his acquaintance with Vireya rhododendrons as a teenage member of the Australian Rhododendron Society in the early 1960s and, also as a teenager, saw his first species in the wild, *R. loranthiflorum* and *R. luraluense*, in Bougainville in 1964 during survey work with CSIRO. Lyn has worked in plant taxonomy in the Australian National Herbarium, CSIRO, for over 40 years but recently gave up full-time employment in favour of holding a Post-retirement Fellowship and becoming Emeritus Principal Research Botanist. Lyn's research into the taxonomy and systematics of various plant families, in particular Myrtaceae (esp. *Melaleuca* and *Syzygium*), Malvaceae (esp. *Hibiscus*) and Ericaceae (*Rhododendron*) is continuing. He is the sole, or co-author of about 150 scientific articles, 14 of these involving *Rhododendron*. Lyn's passion for Vireya rhododendrons has grown from their cultivation and taxonomy into participation in studies of their evolutionary relationships and classification.

Lyn's topic will be: 'Vireya Rhododendrons: their monophyly, classification, and nomenclature.' [His presentation will amend the 2008 classification of vireyas by Craven, Goetsch, Hall & Brown].

DR GRAHAM PRICE

When Graham joined the ARS in the late 1970's he was a novice and set about collecting the Maddenii series. As he became more involved he served on the executive as Secretary then President of both the Victorian Branch and National Council. In 1988 he wrote and published a booklet 'Rhododendrons and Azaleas in Australia'. Later at Latrobe University he used shade houses for systematic hybridization of vireyas and built the collection up to over 2500 plants. After moving to a city apartment he donated the plants to the Rhododendron Gardens. He is currently editor of 'The Vireya Venture' newsletter.

LESLEY EATON

Lesley caught the 'rhodo bug' after moving to the Dandenong Ranges in the late sixties with her husband and young family. Involvement with the ARS and the National Rhododendron Society soon followed and as time passed terms as secretary and president were served with both the Victorian Branch and with National Council. She developed her own garden featuring all members of the rhododendron family particularly the smaller species and hybrids and her

collection became registered with the Garden Plants Conservation Association of Australia.

PETER DAMMAN

Peter has been interested in rhododendrons for over sixty years and has been a member of the Australian Rhododendron Society since its inception. He has held many executive positions on the Society Committee and the Board of Management of the National Rhododendron Gardens including the position of Director.

ANDREW ROUSE

Andrew lives in the suburbs of Melbourne and has built a glasshouse which has heating for the winter and cooling for the hot summer days. He grows vireyas from seed imported from overseas and hybridizes using carefully selected species. He aims for small, compact, hardy shrubs and is very generous sharing his seedlings with Society members. His father Dr John Rouse was also a keen hybridizer and Society member.

Andrew works for WWF as a Program Manager for Resource Conservation.

GRAHAM SIMPSON

Graham has been the President of the Emu Valley Rhododendron Society since 2005. Following a 40 year career in Telstra, an earlier interest in the Society developed into a passion for the Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden.

Graham will speak on the historical development of the Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden.

ROBERT HATCHER

Robert is a horticulturalist with experience at the Adelaide Botanic Gardens and local government Parks and Gardens. He spent some time in New Guinea working on the production of cocoa during which time he saw vireyas growing in the wild. He is presently on leave from a position as Horticultural Supervisor at Mt Lofty Botanic Garden in the Adelaide Hills where he is working with magnolias and rhododendrons. He will talk about Mt Lofty Botanic Garden.

LAURIE BEGG

Laurie joined the Society in the early 1960's and later worked at the National Rhododendron Gardens for several years as Head Gardener. Following this he started a nursery in Gembrook which he owned for over 20 years. He is a keen plantsman with a special interest in trees while growing and propagating all plant species. He has hybridized many rhododendrons and registered six with more to come.

ANNE O'CONNOR *Botanical Artist*

Anne O'Connor is a member of the Society and has been an art teacher on the Mornington Peninsula for many years. She is especially interested in studying and painting vireya rhododendrons but has painted other botanical subjects also.

Largely self-taught, Anne joined the Botanical Art School of Melbourne in 1994 and in 2000 won the Royal Horticultural Society's gold medal in London. In 2005 she received a royal invitation from Prince Charles to paint two types of plants that feature in the prince's magnificent garden at Highgrove. She chose a rose and a fern and both were selected to feature in bound limited editions of botanical art.



Anne will display her work at the National Rhododendron Gardens.

DANDENONG RANGES ENVIRONMENT AND GARDENS

The Dandenong Ranges are the southernmost spur of the Great Dividing Range which extends down the east coast. The Dandenongs are situated about 45 km east of Melbourne GPO at an average elevation of around 500 metres. The highest peak is Mt Dandenong at an elevation of 620 metres. Annual rainfall is around 1100 mm a year which supports the native temperate rainforest which is such a prominent feature of the environment. The dominant trees in the forests are *Eucalyptus regnans* (Mountain Ash), the tallest flowering trees in the world some over 90 metres and fern gullies. It is about 5C cooler in the Dandenongs than Melbourne city; cool enough to grow virtually all Asiatic rhododendrons including the big leaf rhododendrons yet still warm enough to grow Vireyas out in the open. Temperatures in spring range from 12C-25C.

The area has a volcanic history and the deep rich acidic soil combined with the cool/wet climate makes this area ideal for growing a very wide range of plants, especially the rhododendron family. Most of the area was logged in the late 1800's then used for market gardens but as these failed the forests regenerated and in the early 20th century it became a very popular location for nurseries and large cool climate country garden estates for Melbourne's wealthy. More recently, Melbourne's increasing size has put it on the fringe of the outer eastern suburbs but, as a result of conservative planning laws, the area retains its country garden character with many large multi acre mature estate gardens, forest lined roads and a very diverse range of botanical plantings in which rhododendrons feature prominently. This close mingling of mature, densely planted exotic gardens and native rainforest creates a spectacular and close to unique environment.

It is a very popular tourist destination in all seasons and the quaint villages offer an interesting range of art/antique shops, restaurants, wineries and nurseries. The many National Parks have picnic areas and walking tracks where the Superb Lyrebird, famous for its capacity to mimic both natural and artificial sounds, can often be seen scratching for food in the undergrowth.

THE GARDENS WE ARE VISITING

Most of the gardens being visited are privately owned residences maintained by the owners. They reflect the botanical and design diversity so characteristic of the Dandenong Ranges environment. Several also have historical significance being either long established gardens or redevelopments based on and incorporating features from earlier gardens/nurseries on the sites.

CLOUDEHILL *Jeremy and Valerie Francis*

Cloudehill is an operating nursery attached to an extensive elaborate garden developed by the current owners. It incorporates features and some plantings from a much older nursery and garden on the site (Woolrich nursery) dating back to the early part of the 20th Century.

A maze of decorative stone walls and hornbeam hedges delineate around 20 separate garden rooms in this 10 acre garden. These rooms are set within meadowland and woodlands of magnificent and historic, cool climate trees including an avenue of 80 year old European copper beech, magnolias, maples and a collection of Asiatic rhododendrons. A major highlight of the garden are the extensive traditional colour coordinated English herbaceous borders which focus on two magnificent Japanese weeping maples. The range of cool climate herbaceous plants and shrubs being grown is very extensive and includes many rare and very beautiful species.

KATANDRA *Bob and Dot O'Neill*

Katandra is an 8 acre garden at low elevation at Wandin in the Dandenongs. In contrast to many other hills gardens Katandra is a native Australian garden featuring an extremely extensive range of plants from all over this diverse country. Katandra is an Australian aboriginal word meaning "Song of Birds" and over 75 species of birds have been recorded in the gardens including honeyeaters, blue wrens, wattle birds, fantails, willy wag tails, thornbills, grebes and many others. Katandra has been developed as a garden since 1976 and is an excellent venue for seeing the enormous diversity of Australian plant species as well as offering a peaceful environment to commune with nature. The property holds the Ornamental Plant Collection Association (OPCA) registration for Australian Correas or "Bush Bells" as some like to call them.

COMO *George and Pat Hetrel*

Como is an historic garden first established as a nursery in 1873 by the Chandler family at the foothills of the Dandenongs at "The Basin". It was here that the Ornamental Plant Collection Association was first inaugurated in 1989 and Como holds the registration for Magnolia and Prunus. For many years it was the site of the renowned Chandler nursery as well as an extensive display garden. The gardens in total cover an area of 6 acres and include an ornamental lake, formal gardens, wetlands and some long established trees of historical significance.

The garden also incorporates a display hall of 16 historically significant vintage and veteran cars dating back as far as 1896 and a miniature railway. The railway is based on 650 metres of 7.25 inch track and can carry up to 30 people as it winds its way around the garden.

KENLOCH *Tim and Angela Orpin*

Kenloch Manor in the very heart of the Dandenongs is an historic mansion dating back to the early 20th century. For many years it functioned as a very high class restaurant and wedding reception venue and was widely renowned for its spectacular and extensive gardens. These included many rhododendrons as well as a very wide range of cool climate trees and shrubs in dense plantings. There are several trees classified by the National Trust. In the early 2000's the property was sold to Tim, who is a botanist, as a private homestead and he is converting the grand mansion back to its former glory, undoing several of the questionable extensions done to the buildings over the years.

The gardens have maintained their earlier standard and the new owners have a special interest in rare bulbs, perennials and alpines. They are building up an extensive woodland garden understory based on these plants.

BEECHMONT *Simon and Marcia Begg*

Beechmont is an 8 acre garden in the heart of the Dandenongs close to the National Rhododendron Garden. The current owners purchased the property in 1997 and have been developing the garden ever since. The tennis court has been converted to a formal walled garden with ornamental pond, perennial borders and parterres. The rear portion has been developed as garden beds set among sweeping lawns with a reflection pond connected by a serpentine water rill. Parterres, sculptures, and a secret garden add further interest.

The current owners have a particular interest in vireya rhododendrons and their extensive collection growing both in the ground and in a shade house are of especial interest for rhododendron lovers. There is also a young collection of *Nothofagus* (southern hemisphere beeches) and Wollemi Pines to be seen as well as many other plantings.

HOLLINGDALE *Michael and Inge Hammer*

Hollingdale is a 6 acre property originally established in the 1930's as a wholesale rhododendron and camellia nursery. Many of the stock plants from that era are still growing on the property today. Following the nursery closure in the 1970's the property passed through several hands and was purchased by the current owners in 1989. These owners are keenly interested in horticulture and have been working to extend the botanical diversity displayed especially cool climate perennials and shrubs.

Today the garden is entirely occupied by densely planted garden rooms accessed by sawdust covered paths and gravel roads. It is a relatively shaded garden with many mature trees, rhododendrons and camellias. There is also an extensive

collection of liliams, a genus of significant interest to the owners. More recently a vireya and maple garden room has been created and is now maturing.

FERNY CREEK HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Ferny Creek is a very vibrant horticultural society in continuous existence since 1932. It maintains a hall and 10 acre ornamental garden on land leased from the government (an old tip site). The garden incorporates a very extensive display of heathers (*Calluna*), Proteas and Leucodendrons. It also has a large more formal section consisting of beds of mature trees, shrubs and perennials set among lawn paths. The Society bears some similarity to the Lakeland Horticultural Society in the Lakes District of England both in scope and outlook.

The society holds 4 competitive shows a year and the gardens form a significant additional attraction for visitors at these events.

WUURN *Laurie and Joyce Begg*

Laurie and Joyce's garden started life as the growing- on area for their nursery in Gembrook before they built their present home on the site. Rooted cuttings were planted in rows and so became the supply plants for the nursery. Later these were lifted and sold, leaving just one or two specimens as stock plants for further propagation.

It is now an eclectic collection of species from around the world. Of special interest are the magnolias, lapagerias, clematis, bulbs, double mollis azaleas and rhododendrons Laurie has hybridized.

BLACKWOOD LANE GARDEN & GALLERY *Sue Jarvis & Ian Bennett*

Sue Jarvis' gallery overlooks 4 hectares of sloping site adjoining the forest and Cockatoo Creek. Over the last 25 years what was once a paddock has been planted with bulbs, shrubs and trees of all species. Sue's passion is trees and there are examples of hundreds of species both native and exotic. A pinetum on the lower area includes over 20 species. A trial garden of Laurie Begg's rhododendron hybrids is getting to the flowering stage.

Sue is a well known artist and has held many exhibitions. Her works are hung in many galleries and private homes.

ATTRACTIONS TO BE VISITED DURING THE CONFERENCE

WILLIAM RICKETT'S SANCTUARY

Situated in the Dandenongs in a ferny glade, William Ricketts Sanctuary is a place of beauty and tranquillity, due both to the natural setting and the mystical sculptures half hidden among ferns along the pathways. Ninety-two kiln-fired clay sculptures of Aboriginal figures and animals are discreetly set among rocks, tree ferns and *Eucalyptus regnans* (Mountain Ash). These sculptures are an expression of William Rickett's philosophy - that all people need to act as custodians of the natural environment in the same way as Aborigines, the inspiration for much of his work.

CUCKOO RESTAURANT

The Cuckoo Restaurant is located in pretty Olinda along the Mount Dandenong Tourist Road. The charming building is designed in the Bavarian Chalet Style and is today one of the world's most renowned smorgasbord restaurants receiving visitors from all over the globe. Live entertainment is provided most days by a variety of musicians and performing artists including yodelling equal to any in Switzerland or Bavaria. Guests are invited to join in the fun and frivolity and the evening entertainment also includes the famous wood-chopping slap dance.

MONT DE LANCEY Historic Homestead & Museum

Mont De Lancey is located in the rolling hills of Wandin in the Yarra Valley. It was built by Henry Sebire, a stonemason from France, in the 1880's, with handmade bricks produced on site, and has been lovingly restored and furnished by the Wandin community. The old Homestead, St Mary's Chapel and the surrounds, are maintained and managed by volunteers. There is a gallery/museum, working forge, wood turners' workroom, slab kitchen, French restaurant and garden.

SKYHIGH

Situated on the uppermost reach of the Dandenong Ranges, amid cool fern glades and lush towering native forest SkyHigh Restaurant has stunning 180degree views, from the Mornington Peninsula across the majestic sweep of Port Phillip Bay, surrounded by Melbourne's growing urban fringes, to the You Yongs on the southern horizon. After sunset the southern sky, brilliant in the clear mountain night, is illuminated by a spectacular carpet of city lights. Sculptures, an English garden and a maze surround this recently redeveloped historic area which was first established as a survey point in 1861

GRANTS ON SHERBROOKE



Grants Picnic Ground is in the Sherbrooke Forest which is part of the Dandenong Ranges National Park. The majestic eucalypts and fern gullies are home to some of Australia's most famous birds, the Superb Lyrebirds (see back page). They are famous for their amazing ability to mimic natural and artificial sounds as part of their courtship dance. Though elusive they may sometimes be seen scratching on the forest floor. Other birds to be seen are Sulphur Crested Cockatoos and Crimson Rosellas which may be hand fed with bird seed.

OTHER ATTRACTIONS IN THE DANDENONG RANGES

Information can be obtained from the 'Dandenong Ranges Tourism' office
1211 Burwood Hwy Upper Ferntree Gully Ph: (613) 9758 7522

Puffing Billy Historic Steam Train	Ferny Creek Flower Show
National parks	SkyHigh Lilly Pilly Maze
Olinda and Sassafras Villages	Pirianda Garden
Emerald Lake Model Railway	Warratina Lavender Farm
Sherbrooke Art Gallery	Karwarra Australian Plant Garden
Australian Rainbow Trout Farm	Tindale Gardens
Wineries	Silvan Reservoir Park
Hamer Arboretum	Tesselaars Tulip Festival
Kokoda Memorial Trail	Dandenong Ranges Garden Festival
Burrinja Gallery	Alfred Nicholas Gardens

ACCOMMODATION INFORMATION

Accommodation in the hills includes boutique Bed and Breakfasts ranging from suites to fully self contained cottages. These are scattered and have limited individual accommodation. Prices range from Aus\$130 per night to Aus\$380 per night for 2 people. Delegates who have cars and do not wish to use the conference bus service can contact the 'Dandenong Ranges Tourism' office which has a free booking service or they can book direct with a BandB. Delegates who opt to use their own transport will be supplied with a map to find their own way to the conference venues and gardens.

Motels and serviced apartments are situated in the suburbs at the foot of the mountains. There will be 1 pickup point in the hills and 3 at the foot of the hills (15-25mins away from the conference venue).

'Dandenong Ranges Tourism' can be sourced by the internet, email drt2@bigpond.com, Free phone 1800 645 505, Ph: 61 (03) 9758 7522, Fax: 61 (03) 9758 7533. The volunteers who assist tourists will be aware of the Rhododendron Conference and will make every effort to find suitable accommodation.

The following are Motels and Apartments in the suburbs at the foot of the mountains (please note, all prices are approximate and delegates should mention the Rhododendron Conference for special rates)

PICKUP POINT No. 1 Outside Hotel Cavalier

Hotel Cavalier: 3.5 star rating. Thirty seven rooms/studios/apartments, most fully self contained. 343 Stud Rd, Wantirna Sth, Vic, 3152. Look up Hotel Cavalier on web. Email: hotelcavalier@hghotels.com.au PH: 613 9801 9733 Fax: 613 9887 1359. This is more like motel/apartment accommodation than a hotel. It is near a large shopping complex but is 10 mins further than other accommodation venues.

PICKUP POINT No. 2 Outside Lifestyle Apartments

Lifestyle Apartments: 4.5 star rating. Ten modern one bedroom apartments Aus\$140 per night and eleven two bedroom apartments Aus\$195 per night. 1 Station St, Upper Ferntree Gully, Vic 3156. Ph: (613) 9753 1999 Fax:(613) 9753 1900
Website www.lifestyleapartments.com.au Email:enquiries@lifestyleapartments.com.au

PICKUP POINT No. 3 Outside Ferntree Gully Hotel/Motel

Ferntree Gully Hotel/Motel: 3.5 star rating. Double and family rooms with ensuite bathrooms from Aus\$100per night per double. 1130 Burwood Highway, Upper Ferntree Gully Vic, 3156. Website: www.ferntreegullyhotel.com.au Email: ferntree.gully.hotel@alhgroup.com.au PH: 613 9758 6544 Fax: 613 9752 2809

PICKUP POINT No. 4 Outside the Olinda Pharmacy.

This pick up point is located within easy walking distance of the accommodation listed below. They are surrounded by natural rainforest in Olinda in the heart of the Dandenong Ranges, 500m from the National Rhododendron Gardens and near the Olinda Village shops where the conference bus will pick up delegates. Each will have a special rate for conference delegates.

Lochiel and Credo Luxury Accommodation. Eight cottages with prices from Aus\$200 per night per double. Lochiel: 1590 Mt Dandenong Tourist Rd Olinda, Vic 3788 Website:www.lochielaccommodation.com Email:info@lochielaccommodation.com PH: (613) 9751 2300 Fax: (613) 9751 1852.

Loft in the Mill. Nine suites from Aus\$130per night per double. 1602 Mt Dandenong Tourist Rd Olinda Vic 3788. Website: www.loftinthemill.com.au . Email: info@loftinthemill.com.au PH: 613 9751 1700. Fax: 613 9751 2030

Delvin Health Retreat. Traditional style guest house with six bedrooms and ensuites from Aus\$100 per single per night or Aus\$125 per couple per night. 25 Monash Ave Olinda, Vic, 3788. Website: www.delvin.com.au Email: Michael@delvin.com.au Ph: 613 9751 1800 Fax: 613 9751 1829

TRANSPORT TO/FROM AIRPORT

It is the delegates' responsibility to arrange their own transport to and from the airport.

Cars can be hired at the airport. By car the distance is about 1.5hours to the Dandenong Ranges. If using freeways (Tullamarine/Monash and Eastlink)a toll fee can be paid by contacting City Link on PH: 132629 or Email: assist@citylink.com.au no later than 2 days after travel.

Taxis will be approximately \$120 from the airport to Upper Ferntree Gully & Wantirna, \$140 to Olinda.

Shuttle and charter buses are available from the airport. 'Airport Bus Eastside' services this area. Bookings are essential and can be made at www.airportbus.com.au or Ph: (613) 9729 7622. Cost per person is from \$60-\$84 and will be via a circuitous route.

'**SkyBus**' transports visitors between the city (Melbourne) and the airport (Tullamarine) for \$16 one way. Contact SkyBus on PH: (613) 9335 2811 or Email info@skybus.com.au. Then catch a train on the Belgrave line.

Trains go from the city to Upper Ferntree Gully on the Belgrave line. Those staying at Hotel Cavalier exit the same train at Boronia. Delegates would need to catch a bus or taxi from the station to their accommodation.

Public transport to the Band B's in the Dandenong Ranges is infrequent. Train to Upper Ferntree Gully then taxi from the station PH: 13 2227 (phone from the Information Centre opposite station)

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SHARING OUR WONDERFUL DANDENONG RANGES
WITH YOU THIS OCTOBER IN SPRING.**

