Vireya Venture

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Beejay Bay – a stunning baenitzianum hybrid from Graham Snell's collection.

Hi all, it has been some time since the last Vireya Venture but I really do have an excuse. While surfing (boardriding) my other passion from age 11, I suffered a heart attack. Some might suggest that at 52, I should have given that up many years ago but as it turns out this obsession probably saved my life. With a 90% blockage of the Aorta right next to my heart, I should have been a statistic when that little platelet/free floating piece of Cholesterol came along to complete the blockage, causing my heart attack. The Cardiologists explained that the co-lateral vessels surrounding my heart were open and working beautifully supplying my heart with that vital trickle that kept me going. 41 years of paddling around in the Pacific Ocean chasing waves with progressively blocking arteries had stimulated these co-laterals to compensate. A triple bypass coupled with excellent rehabilitation has me back in the surf most days and writing my final Vireya Venture. Thanks to my family the Vireya Nursery came through my absence well but I do need to shed as many stressors as possible including The Vireya Venture and High School Teaching.

The Victorian Branch of the Australian Rhododendron Society has an active Vireya group as opposed to my one man band and may offer this newsletter as part of their package. I will pass on the mailing list and any remaining funds for them to contact you with their proposal. I have enjoyed putting The Vireya Venture together and I hope you have enjoyed the photos and articles. I have a wonderful collection of Vireya thanks to Graham Snell, Sylvia Saperstein and Brian Clancy and now intend to enjoy them.

The contact I have had with Vireya Specialists and enthusiasts worldwide has been inspiring and rewarding and I thank all those especially Clyde Smith that have supported my efforts. If you are travelling along the East Coast of N.S.W. Aust please call, Vireya grow well in our subtropical climate and our beaches are some of the best in the world.

Cheers Neil