



The RHODOTELLER

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#

coming events



Monday 30 Apr 2007 — Executive Meeting—Begins at 2:00 p.m.

Meeting day changed due to arrival of Whidbey Island delegation. The meeting will be held at the home of Barb and Brian Staton, 1524 Seaview Road, Black Creek. Seaview is in the Miracle Beach area. From Courtenay/Comox go north on the Island Hwy, turning onto Miracle Beach heading towards the park. As you approach the park, keep 'right' don't go into the parking lot! If you keep going you will end up on Seaview which is on the other side of the Park.

Tuesday 8 May 2007 — Annual General Meeting

Venue: This year's AGM will be held at the home of Robert Argall on Wireless Rd. Directions as follows: Drive past the Comox Valley Airport along Knight Road. Continue around to Kye Bay Road (the road that goes behind the Airbase), until you come to Wireless Road. Turn down Wireless road to #387, on the right side about half way down. This year we are starting early to take full advantage of the garden, so the viewing starts at 6:00 p.m. Don't forget to bring your lawn chair.

NORTH ISLAND RHODODENDRON SOCIETY



2006/2007 Executive:

President

Harry Wright.... 338-8345

Vice-President

Dave Crucq 339-7845

Secretary

Diana Scott 338-0208

Treasurer

Don Law 339-2735

Director: Ways & Means

Dave Godfrey .. 335-0717

Director: Membership

Brian Staton 337-5228

Director: Publicity

Chris Aldred 335-3231

Director: Newsletter/Library

Noni Godfrey ... 335-0717
..... Nonigod@shaw.ca

Social Committee:

Evelyn Wright.. 339-7493

Bernice Morrison 339-0932

Revenue Table Committee:

Joan Walsh..... 335-1349

Tiffany Wyles .. 336-8188

Historian:

Lois Clyde..... 337-5754

The club meets the second
Tuesday of the month
(except May through August)
at the United Church
Comox Avenue,
Comox 7:30 p.m.



President's View

(by Harry Wright)

This is a good time of year to fertilize the Rhododendrons, as they start developing next year's buds shortly after dead heading. I like using Green Valley's 10-8-6 blend which was developed for Rhodos and includes trace elements. A good hand full sprinkled around the drip line on mature plants then watered in (shouldn't be a problem here!) If the plants colour is a problem, a tablespoon of Epsom salts in a gallon of water can be used as a drench, or can be sprayed on the foliage weekly, for three weeks. This should make a difference in the foliage. Rhodos are not heavy feeders and, when planted in good soil and mulched, should not require feeding every year.

Now for some tips on bringing Rhodo trusses to our plant sale and show. Vases are not required, as the club's vases are at the hall.

When picking trusses look for ones with a straight stem, with blooms at the top, and a nice whorl of leaves around the truss sets it off. Prune judiciously, if need be, as sometimes rain damage is unavoidable. It is better to have one or two unopened buds than to have the truss become overblown at the show. After cutting the truss, plunge the stem deeply into warm water; make an angled cut on the stem under water, so that more water will be taken up. Store the bucket of blooms in the coolest place you can find and leave them there until ready to transport. This could be done the night before, as preparing the trusses usually takes longer than expected. We need a good variety of trusses so don't be shy about bringing lots to show off.

If you have some time around the second weekend in June, why not try to spend a day at Rhododendron Lake, just south of Parksville. Only 15 km, off 19A, on an active logging road, the area affords the best opportunity to view rhododendrons in the wild. This picture was taken at the lake a couple years ago by Brain Staton.



See you at the meeting. Harry

Member Notes

(by Dave Godfrey)

A large gathering of 48 members and guests were on hand for our regular meeting on April 10th to hear guest speaker, Carol Dancer, provide information and a slide presentation on "The Gardens of Government House".

As Carol explained, in July 1871, British Columbia entered Confederation, and Cary Castle became Government House, the official residence of the Lieutenant Governor of the Province of British Columbia. The property located on bluffs overlooking the Strait of Juan de Fuca consists of 36 acres, with the front half primarily formal gardens and the back half dedicated as a protected Garry Oak meadows.

In 1991 during a visit by Queen Elizabeth and Prince Phillip, the Prince remarked to then Lt. Governor, David Lam that the gardens must have been wonderful at one time, but were unfortunately in a



poor state. In response, Dr. Lam established a procedure by which the gardens and grounds could continue to be improved through ongoing consultations between incumbent Lieutenant Governors, Provincial Governments, and the people of the Province, through The Friends of the Government House Gardens Society.

Guest Speaker
Carol Dancer



Although in recent years the BC Government contemplated selling the back half of the property, this is no longer an option. In 2002, the house and property was given official protected status as a historic site.

Without government funding for maintenance of the gardens, the 120 volunteer "friends" hold a plant sale on the last Saturday in April each year to raise the necessary funds. Tens of thousands of dollars have been raised for this project.

Restorations and maintenance were very evident in the slides which Carol showed, and the beauty of the estate's gardens is open year round free to all visitors. Various gardens have been added over the years as different Lt Governors wished to include their own preferences for various plants and designs.

Following Carol's presentation, draws were made for the door prize R. "Ernie Dee" which was won by member Betty Piercy, and for the raffle R. "Winsom" won by guest Wendy Cummings. Congratulations to both winners.

the yanks are coming

On Tuesday, May 1st, fifteen members of the Whidbey Island Chapter of the ARS will be visiting our area. Billets are being arranged by Paul Wurz, and garden tours are being organized by Harry Wright. The group should be arriving at Harry's about 4 PM, and following a tour of Haida Gold Gardens, a hot dog and burger BBQ is being offered to all members and guests who attend. Feel free to drop by Harry & Gwen's to help welcome our American friends.

Following tours of gardens on Wednesday, May 2nd, the Whidbey group and all members of our chapter are invited to a pot-luck dinner at Bob & Adela Smith's garden. Be sure to bring a dish for dinner, your cutlery and lawn chairs. In the event of inclement weather, the Smiths will be opening their home for all to enjoy indoors.

The Whidbey group will depart on May 3rd, with some heading south to Victoria while others will head west to visit Tofino. Please join us in providing a warm welcome and enjoyable stay during their time here.

Another successful CVRG work party was held on Thursday morning, April 19th. Spring weeding was completed and four truckloads of bark much spread around the beds in preparation for the grand opening of the BOVI bed at 2 PM on Friday May 4th. Thanks to all those members who came out to lend a hand. Many hands make light work!



Speaking of gardens, President Harry passes along that we are in need of a suitable garden for the June pot luck dinner. We usually have an afternoon of fun and games, before enjoying a delicious picnic supper. With the uncertainty of the weather, the event may need to be held indoors. So if you feel you can accommodate 30 to 40 members and guests, please notify Harry as soon as possible.

Plant Sale, Plant Sale, Plant Sale

Plans are all set for our largest fund raiser of the year. Special thanks to Diana Scott for organizing the volunteers this year. I believe we have most positions filled, but can always use some extra help, if you haven't yet put your name down.

Set up will begin between 8:30 and 9 am, with the doors open to the public at 10 am. Please remember to pot up a few items for our NIRS companion plant table, and bring flats if you have some. A coffee break will take place about 9:45, and lunch refreshments will be available for all the helpers and vendors. Please bring along any food items you wish to share.

Mothers Day Garden Tour

Tickets are now on sale for \$10 at our usual outlets (Art Knapp's, Anderton Nursery, Francis Jewellers, Home and Garden Gate – Courtenay & Cumberland locations, and this year, at Blue Heron Books in Comox.) So if you haven't already taken a poster for display in a prominent location, you'll find one attached to this month's newsletter. Please help spread the word.

Thanks again to Diana Scott for organizing the gate sitters. All time slots are now filled for each garden. A complimentary ticket will be provided for each volunteer to enjoy the tour when not sitting at a gate. Be sure check with Diana for your garden directions and times.



May is Rhododendron Month

Comox Valley Rhododendron Garden

The grand opening of the newest addition to the Comox Valley Rhododendron Garden, and the commemoration of "May is Rhododendron Month" will be happening on May 4th. The ceremonies begin at 2 pm with an official ribbon cutting by Mayor Starr Winchester and NIRS President Harry Wright, followed by coffee, cakes and goodies.

The Rhododendron Garden, which is a joint venture between the North Island Rhododendron Society (NIRS) and the City of Courtenay has been an ongoing project since April of 1996 when the first bed was completed. The garden actually consists of seven separate beds now.

The latest and the newest bed to be completed is a specialty section with only rhododendrons that were hybridized on Vancouver Island. The hybridizers of Vancouver Island with plantings in the bed are: Dr. Stewart Holland of Victoria, George Fraser of Ucluelet, Mary Greig of Royston and Harry Wright of Courtenay. This newest garden bed, or as it is more commonly called the BOVI bed (Born on Vancouver Island), is the brainchild of N.I.R.S. founding member, and current president Harry Wright.

Many past and present members of the club have helped with the building, improving and upgrading, deadheading and maintaining of all the beds over the past 11 years. Too many members to be named, but all are to be thanked and appreciated for all their dedication and hard work.

This winter, the Rhododendron Society petitioned the city of Courtenay to declare May as Rhododendron month. Many thanks to Secretary Diana Scott for her perseverance and determination in making this happen.

The initial gardens were planted, mapped, labeled and a sign erected with their locations. The original sign was made by one of the NIRS founding members, Richard Bonney.

Most recently with the addition of the BOVI bed all the previously bedded areas needed to be remapped, checked and verified. This procedure was taken on by another longtime member, Bernie Guyader. Using the Tourist Bureau Park layout provided by Bob Foster, all the beds were meticulously checked and the map was redrawn. Bob then had the new plant identification drawing printed and laminated. Richard refurbished the wood-work.

Thanks to Richard, Bernie, and Bob Foster, we now have a new laminated map that will be placed on the sign at the gardens for our garden visitor's information. I understand Bernie also filled in a dead spot with rhododendron "Hallelujah" that he recently donated.

**At three minutes and four seconds after
2 AM on the 6th of May this year, the
time and date will be
02:03:04 05/06/07
This will never happen again.**

Garden Chatter Xatter and Notes

(by Mary Palmer)

A few good garden hints from recent March issues of Amateur Gardening.

*Don't forget to give your watering cans and pots a good cleanout before using them this year - they may contain fungal spores, as well as the usual muck in them.

*It is time to dig up those snowdrops you promised friends - they will perform much better next year than if you allow the bulbs to dry out.

*Check variegated evergreen shrubs - if they have some shoots that have reverted to plain green - remove them before they take over the whole plant. *While you are at it, look for stems that have come up from under the graft on shrubs such as "Harry Lauder's Walking Stick". I remember seeing a huge old rhodo in Vancouver one time - half with red flowers, the other half with purple. What a sight - but you might also have a grafted rhodo - best not to let that happen to it.

*Last call for trimming tall ornamental grasses (if the snow didn't do it for you) and shrubs such as lavender. Don't cut into the old wood on lavenders and ornamental cytisus.

*Remember though, gardening is supposed to be a pleasure. If it has become a burden, best to pack up and try another hobby. There are always jobs to be done - but if they don't all get finished, -Oh well, maybe in the fall....

*This is a good time to look around the bases of your hellebores and cyclamen. The little plants may be too small to put on the sale table this year, but they will be nice robust plants in a year. Hellebores take about 3 years to go from seedlings to flowering plants, but what a lovely surprise you get, when they do bloom. I have some nice hybrids now that I added a few pots of dark purple and large-spotted white to my plants in the woods.

*If you have any unusually coloured leaf elders, prune them hard now to encourage fresh stems and foliage. It should be safe to cut the buddleias back hard now - I killed a couple of these by pruning in March as advised - now I wait until warmer days in April or even May. Late-blooming clematis should also be pruned now at the latest.

*Does your pond go green in summer? Barley straw is the answer. Advice in the magazine suggests 2 oz. of straw (available as pet bedding?) into a fine-mesh net bag, including a bit of garden soil to encourage rotting.



"Put a poly block or a small plastic bottle to act as a float, tie one end to a stone so the bag is suspended just below the surface of the water. Position it near moving water to spread the inhibitor around, and replace it when the straw has rotted."

**Allium fistulosum* (Welsh or Japanese bunching onions), with a flavour like chives, but these are evergreen, make a lovely clump of green onions year-round. Easy to grow from seed.

*To add to the argument about sealing or not sealing tree wounds (we all had large wounds to prune or repair after this past winter), it is recommended that you rub a bit of dirt on the larger wounds - they won't be as noticeable, and beneficial fungi and micro-organisms will help heal the wound.

*Talking of slugs, here are some plants reputed to be slug-free when mature.

Nigella, *Echinops*, *Ceanothus*, *Lavender*, *Alchemilla mollis*, *Hebes*, and *Lilies* in pots.



Alliums



These are such rewarding plants, for they look nice among the rhodos, and the deer don't eat them. I picked up some further information from the Oct. 2006 issue of *Gardeners' World*.

Apart from *A. schoenoprasum* (Chives) most of them are planted in fall. They enjoy sun, but hate wet feet in winter. Don't plant the large-flowered varieties too close together, as they need room for those giant flower heads. Small-flowered ones can be closer together and can be left to form a clump.

I found *A. moly* (small, bright yellow flowers) really rampant in the rhodo bed, but the larger ones seem to multiply more slowly. You can also start them from seed, (your own if you wish) for those big seedheads are loaded with little black seeds in the fall).

The leaves look rather floppy and take time to die down in fall, but planted among *Hostas*, *Rhodos* or other shrubs, or with ornamental grasses, they are not too noticeable.

"This is a large and happy family: there are about 700 assorted aunts and cousins, all of whom are related by blood or marriage to the humble onion. Most are pretty hardy and there are varieties to suit almost every growing condition and the caprice of every gardener. There are flowers that vary in size from cabbage (*A. Schubertii*) to ping-pong ball (*A. caeruleum*) from waist-high (*A. giganteum*) to little ankle-biting *A. forrestii*."

Colours range from bright yellow to many shades of mauve and purple to pure blue, and white. A couple of white ones I plan to look for are *A. 'Mount Everest'*, which grows to 4', and *A. 'Silverspring'*, white with a pink centre, grows to 24".



BOOK REVIEW

Encyclopedia of Perennials,
Editor-in-Chief Graham Rice,
Pub. Dorling Kindersley, 2006.

Now this is a book every gardener should have in his/her library. I found so many fascinating facts in it, I really need this book to keep, but I have to take it back to the Campbell River library. The photographs of individual flowers as well as groups in gardens, are excellent, and the text will keep you fascinated for hours. Chapters include "What are Perennials", "Perennials in the Garden", and "Using the A-Z Directory", then a directory listing over 5000 perennials, including many new on the market. Additional information includes an Index of common names and Potentially Harmful Perennials. There are maps of Hardiness Zones for North America and the world, and also an explanation of the Heat-zone map made up by the American Horticultural Society. They divided the US into 12 zones based on the average number of Heat Days and though this map doesn't stretch into Canada we can presume we would be almost the same as for the coast of Washington.

What I really enjoyed about the book were interesting comments about various plants in little green areas, describing differences between similar related species, plant breeders, and enthusiasts for particular plants, medical uses (not necessarily endorsed by the authors), growing from seed - many tips for growing - really a book in themselves. Many, many cultivars of favorite plants are described, and important information such as climatic zones are always mentioned.

Take Hellebores for instance, because they are in bloom now. There is a great deal of information on these plants, as well as photos of various forms such as anemone-flowered, double, picotee, spotted and many others.

Hellebores comprise of 16 species "of tightly clumping deciduous or evergreen plants distributed across Europe, with outposts in China and Syria. Some are shade-lovers, others enjoy sunny situations, and some are more adaptable.

There are two groups: Most species are long-lived, stemless with leaves and flower-heads arising separately from the woody crown, and rarely more than 18" high. The others (*H. argutifolius*, *H. lividus*, *H.x sternii*, and *H. foetidus*) are relatively short-lived plants (4-5 years), with upright, semi-woody stems up to 4', and, at the top, clusters of flowers; these stems die away after seeding and are replaced by new shoots from the base."

There is a great deal more information about this plant, but I already learned something I did not know previously - why I have had nice healthy *argutifolus* and *foetidus* plants that disappeared after a couple of years! A few more details - the deer don't eat them, and all parts are poisonous if eaten. You will have to request the book from your nearest library and finish the article. Or request



it for the next birthday.

Hint to the librarian: How about putting this book on the next list for purchase of new books?

Rhodo Fertilizer

If you prefer to use a more organic type, instead of chemical fertilizers, here is Alan Murray's recipe. Many of our members have seen his beautiful mountain-side garden in the Duncan area.

4 parts each of alfalfa meal, canola meal and blood meal, plus 2 parts dolomite lime, and 1 part each of rock phosphate, bone meal, kelp meal and greensand. This mixture should be applied once a year only.

Thanks to Bill McMillan, writing in the Victoria Rhodo Society newsletter in Jan. 2007.

Taking Cuttings

Mike Creel, writing in the Rhodo News of the Portland Rhodo Society, Jan. 2007, talks about TAKING CUTTINGS. Someone asked him the ideal time to take Azalea hardwood cuttings.

"This is a difficult question for me because I stick woody (not half-ripe) cuttings year-round and I root all species available. I usually reply that the best time to stick cuttings is when I can get my hands on fresh material of some really unique form.

I find that growing season "LEAFY" cuttings with mature leaves on woody stems root quickest and in highest numbers, which would be mid-summer for some deciduous and evergreen varieties in my area. Fall is also good for leafy cuttings in dome pots left to over winter outdoors IN MY ZONE (8A). Dormant winter cuttings can be taken immediately after leaf fall and over-wintered outdoors in warmer areas, but a prime time for dormant cuttings seems to be at the very end of the dormant season, just before bud break."

This is very interesting to us, I think. How many times have I tried to root deciduous azalea cuttings? I forget. Of course, my garden is Zone 7 or even less in a bad stretch of weather. I keep well-rooted cuttings in the cold frame in winter, and they seem to survive. But first we need roots, right?

There is a great deal more information in his articles, and if you can look up the website for the Portland Chapter, which is www.rhodies.org you will find the answers you seek.



Snippets From Sayward

(by Rose-Marie Silkens)

Well, it's still winter up here. The mornings are cold, and the air doesn't lose its clammy chill until the day is more than half gone. Very few days don't include a shower.



While the winter hasn't been the coldest or wettest or windiest on record, I don't think we've had such inclement weather phenomena packed into one season the way they have been this past winter. A lot of plants have taken a beating, and (as always) it's surprising to see which ones fared well and which ones didn't.

Among the rhododendrons in my garden, there are some surprising invalids. A fairly large 'Molly Ann' has been in the same spot for 18 years, quite sheltered, yet I think I've lost it. Only one or two desultory leaves remain. Last year it looked vigorous and bloomed profusely, so I'm blaming the bad winter. I can't help but remember, though, that Ken Gibson advised me against keeping it when he first visited my garden, saying only "it's no good, it won't last."

Next to 'Molly Ann,' a large and venerable late-blooming purple (purchased years ago from Ben Dinter simply as 'Blue Hybrid') has frost and/or wind scarring on most of the leaves on its top half. Until now it has been completely trouble-free, and its been through much colder winters. 'Ruby Gold' is nearby and demonstrates the same sad testament to this winter's harshness. It is only about five years old. Perhaps those hurricane-force winds funneled through that part of my garden and did the damage. Yet right nearby, a ten-year old *R. williamsianum* is looking better than it ever has. Last year I almost discarded it as a hopeless wimp, not up to the rigours of life in the Salmon River Valley.

Most surprising is 'Teddy Bear.' I planted this beautiful hybrid in a fairly exposed site near the house seven years ago. It has always come through the winter looking as if a large truck drove over it, and didn't look respectable until August at least. For non-horticultural reasons, I have wanted to keep this plant where it is: a particularly fine dog with whom I shared 15 rewarding years, a collie called Teddy, used to lie in that spot while I worked outside, so I planted 'Teddy Bear' there after she died. Well, this spring, Rhododendron 'Teddy Bear' is looking



amazingly healthy. There is no damage on its lush, dark foliage, and its generous flower buds are beginning to show colour. Gardening is never predictable, but I like it when the results surprise us this way.

On Friday the 13th I drove to Port McNeill to speak to the garden club there. The weather was particularly vile, and I drove through wet snow for at least half of the trip. The scenery is beautiful, especially along Nimpkish Lake, but the weather wouldn't let me see much of anything. The gardeners with whom I spent the afternoon made the trip entirely worthwhile, however. They are an enthusiastic group, and I visited a few gardens before and after the meeting to see rhododendrons doing well for appreciative audiences.

Even though it's a lot further north, Port McNeill is significantly milder than Sayward. Queen Charlotte Strait is much wider than Johnstone Strait, so the moderating effect of the ocean is stronger. There is no valley effect as we have here in the frosty hollow of the Salmon River Valley, tucked between the mountains. Soil is another matter. In Port McNeill it's very rocky and exceedingly well drained. Rainfall is heavy, but the gardeners told me that their soil dries out completely within 24 hours. The Sea Soil production plant in Port McNeill makes it easy to find soil amendments, at least.

I encouraged the group to attend our truss show and sale on May 6, and several of them expressed enthusiasm about doing that. I'm looking forward to it myself, particularly as I haven't made it to any meetings this year.

George Fraser Day Coming...

On Saturday, May 26th, Ucluelet will be celebrating the seventh annual "George Fraser Day and Heritage Fair." This year BC's Lt. Governor, Iona Campagnolo, will be the guest of honour. As Carol Dancer mentioned in her presentation at our last meeting, this is the final year of Ms. Campagnolo's time in office, and she has decided to return to Ucluelet to help celebrate the life and times of Mr. Fraser. Invitations have been extended to all ARS members to attend this special event.

The committee would also appreciate any donations of plants or garden related items which may be auctioned or raffled for this annual fundraising event. The George Fraser Project provides a lasting legacy of this pioneer of rhododendron hybridization and is appreciative of any support members can provide.

Sweet Smell of Success in Safely Killing Insects

I found this interesting article in the March 2007 issue of the Central Vancouver Island Orchid Society Newsletter.

Someone in Florida complained about the bad smell in the area when the fumigator sprayed bugs in his greenhouse. The final result is that Wal-Mart is selling environmentally friendly insecticide in U.S. stores. In between it was a learning experience for UBC entomologist and toxicologist Murray Isman.

In 1991, a Florida pest control officer, tired of complaints about the smell, decided to mix his poison with some cheap perfume. The bugs were killed in about 15 minutes instead of 24-48 hours.

When Mr. Isman heard about this, he started testing various chemicals in the mixture and found, rather than the poisons killing the bugs, it was a neurotoxin in one of the fragrances. There was very little literature about this, so Mr. Isman and fellow entomologists at the University of California, U. of Rochester and Iowa State University sat on a scientific panel to find out exactly what made this mixture work.

These men found, to their surprise, that clove oil, peanut oil, wintergreen oil, thyme oil, rosemary and peppermint oils are all deadly to insects. So very soon, Wal-Mart will begin selling EcoSmart insecticide in all its US stores. Unfortunately it might be some time before it is available in Canada.

Mr. Isman says the research done has convinced him of its efficacy and safety. Workers can return to a sprayed field in half an hour, instead of 24 hours, and come to no harm, but the stuff will kill most flying and crawling insects.

I am sure we can purchase peppermint oil at the drugstore, and the others might be available at health food stores. I plan to try it on the weevils and will let you know.

Two New Nursery Discounts

Just a reminder that NIRS membership brings discounts at many garden retailers. Two new garden centers have opened recently in the Comox Valley and are offering 10% discount to NIRS members who show their membership cards.

"The Plant Collector Nursery and Gardens" is located at 1886 Waveland Road (the extension of Anderton Road after the split for the Powell River Ferry terminal.) Owner Leana Richardson (339-3565) has a large variety of most perennials and is willing to help members find whatever they need for their garden.

"Bees & Blooms Nursery" is located at 2940 Lanyon Road (off Marsden) in Courtenay. Owner Carla Pederson provides friendly knowledgeable advice for all your gardening needs. Carla can be reached at 702-0450

See next month's "Rhodoteller" for a complete listing of the nurseries that provide a discount to our members.

Members: Please print next page and post in "High Profile" locations.



Recipe Requests

HEAVENLY CHOCOLATE BAR (Pauline Bonney)

The Base:

1 C flour
1/2 C butter.

1/2 C brown sugar

Mix until mixture has a pie crust consistency.

Pat mixture in bottom of buttered 9 x 13 in. pan and bake 350°F until slightly brown.

Topping:

1 C brown sugar
1/2 tsp Baking Powder
6 ozs chocolate chips
2 beaten eggs.

2 Tbsp Flour

1/4 tsp salt

6 ozs dried cranberries

Mix topping ingredients together and pour evenly over the base layer. Bake until brown. (20-25 mins)

BAKEWELL SLICE (from an Australian friend)

Legend has it that the original Bakewell tart was the result of a mistake made by the cook at a pub in the village of Bakewell, Derbyshire, UK. Instead of adding butter, eggs and sugar to the pastry, she put them on top instead! This recipe is just one of the many, many variations of the original tart.

Filling

1/3 cup raspberry jam
1/2 C caster (Berry) sugar
3 eggs ground

1/2 C soft, unsalted butter

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/2 C blanched almonds, coarsely ground

Topping

2 Tbsp flaked almonds

Icing sugar for dusting

Shortcrust pastry

1 C plain flour
pinch salt

3/4 C cold unsalted butter, chopped

Method

Using a processor, make shortcrust pastry mixing together the plain flour, cold unsalted butter and salt until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Then add 2-3 tablespoons of iced water and process until mixture just comes together. Form mixture into a ball and wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for about 1 hour.

Then, roll out pastry on a lightly floured surface, and line a 22cm tart tin [or something of similar size] with the pastry and blind bake for about 10 minutes. Take out of oven and allow to cool a little.

Whilst this base is cooling use a mixer or processor and beat butter, sugar and vanilla extract until light and fluffy, then add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each is added. Stir in ground almonds and combine well.

Spread the raspberry jam over the base of the pastry case and top with filling and spread evenly. Sprinkle the flaked almonds over this.

Bake in oven at 400°F for 35 - 40 minutes or until mixture has risen and brown. Dust slice with icing sugar and serve sliced into squares or fingers. Yummy eaten warm, but equally nice served cold.

North Island Rhododendron Society's



**12th Annual
"Mother's Day
Garden Tour"**

SUNDAY – 13th May 2007

10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Enjoy a tour of six great gardens in the
Royston/Union Bay/Fanny Bay area.
Plus a chance to win a Rhododendron!

Tickets only \$10 each.... Available at Blue Heron Books in
Comox, Home & Garden Gate (Courtenay & Cumberland),
Art Knapp's Plantland, Anderton Nursery, Francis Jewellers,
or call Harry Wright 338-8345

Don't miss your chance to see these beautiful gardens!