



The Rhodoteller

www.nirs.rhodos.ca



North Island Rhododendron Society 2010/2011 Executive

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Social Committee:

Louise Casson.....334-2331

Publicity:

Helena Stewart.....339-1733

Sunshine Lady:

Nancy Munro.....334-3719

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

Coming Events

1st March 2011-Executive Meeting 2.00 pm

The executive meeting will be held at the home of Brian and Barb Staton, 1524 Seaview Road, Black Creek. Seaview is in the Miracle Beach area. From Courtenay/Comox go north on the Island Highway, 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 Rd which is on the other side of the Park.

8th March 2011-Regular Monthly Meeting



"A Panel of Local Experts"

Once again, our ever popular panel of local experts will be discussing various aspects of gardening, with Paul Wurz as panel moderator. Although the emphasis will be on rhododendrons, the panel consisting of North Island Rhododendron Society members Bernie Guyader, Nadine Boudreau and Roberts Smith will take questions and try to provide answers on all aspects of gardening. So be sure to bring along any questions or concerns you may have from your gardening experiences.



President's report

...by Diana Scott

Our early Rhodod continue to bloom and last month I mentioned the species *R. sutchense* and *R. moupinense*, as well as hybrids 'Christmas Cheer', 'Rosa Mundi', 'Brick-a-Brac' and 'Olive'.

There are many other species and hybrids that bloom in winter, sometimes as early as January. Paul Wurz, one of our growers, has shared some of the early bloomers that he grows and sells at Hidden Acres. They may also be available through growers Harry Wright, Arthur Ralfs or Bob Smith. Although not everyone wishes to chance the weather to grow these early Rhodod – those who do have wonderful displays most winters! To see stunning photographs of some of these Rhodod, I encourage you to visit the Hirsutum website that we've highlighted in earlier newsletters <http://www.hirsutum.info/>. You'll see photos taken by our members and friends as well as by rhodophiles from various parts of the world!

One of the very early blooming hybrids is Lee's Scarlet (*caucasicum* x unknown). An old rhodo, it is attributed to John & Charles Lee from their nursery at Hammersmith near London, England. Its leaves have heavy indumentum on the underside and its flowers are a dark rosy crimson with bright red speckles and a blotch.



R. calophytum is a species which forms a large shrub or small tree in the garden. It is one of the 'big-leaved' Rhodod that can have a single oblong leaf up to one foot long. Its name means 'beautiful plant' and the emergence of its new leaves is almost as showy as its flowers! The white, rose, or pink blooms usually have purple flecks and a basal

blotch. As with many of our species Rhodod it comes from the mountainous regions of Sichuan and NE Yunnan in China. *R. calophytum* was first mentioned in western culture in 1886 but not introduced until seeds were

collected by Wilson in 1904.

The species *R. ririei*, which also forms a large shrub or small tree, is native to only one small part of the world – the southwestern portion of Sichuan in China. It has pale gray exfoliating bark and long narrow leaves with silvery indumentum. Showy dark buds open to lilac/purple bell-shaped flowers.

R. ciliatum is a more compact, lower growing species which has attractive glossy dark green 'hairy' foliage and reddish brown peeling bark. The large funnel-shaped flowers are white, flushed with pink. It is drought tolerant once established and it grows well in sun or light shade. It has been used in hybridizing and is a direct parent of the popular rhodod 'Dora Amateis' and 'Snow Lady', and a more distant relative to 'Cream Crest'.

The hybrids that bloom in late winter/early spring typically have parentage related to the early blooming species rhodod. 'Cilpinense' (*R. ciliatum* x *R. moupinense*) was hybridized by Lord Aberconway in 1923 at the Bodnant Estate in Wales. The parentage of two early blooming species (hence its name) has produced a mounded, evergreen shrub and like *R. ciliatum* it has interesting copper-coloured hairs on its deep forest green leaves. It produces pale bluish pink trumpets held in loose trusses of two to three flowers.

'Bodega Crystal Pink' (Cilpinense x *mucronulatum* 'Cornell Pink') is another very early bloomer, hybridized by Dr. C. Heller in 1976. It has ball-shaped trusses of clear pink flowers with deep purple-pink spots. The plant has an upright habit with small, light green semi-deciduous leaves.

Another 'Cornell Pink' cross is 'April Rose' (minus *Carolinianum* Group x *mucronulatum* 'Cornell Pink') x (white flowered *dauricum* x *dauricum*) hybridized by G.A.L. Mehlquist in 1972. Its slightly fragrant double flowers are a raspberry-mauve, blooming on a broadly upright plant. The small leaves are deep green and turn reddish bronze in the fall.

Although the parentage is not a certainty, 'Snow Lady' (*R. leucaspis* x *R. ciliatum*?) is considered another *ciliatum* cross. Snow Lady is listed as being hybridized in 1955 at Exbury, the Rothschild Estate in Hampshire England, and was introduced into the ARS test garden in Portland, Oregon by Ben F. Lancaster. When in bloom, the plant is covered with a mass of pure white flowers with striking chocolate brown anthers, and it has the 'ciliatum' hairs on its leaves. It is a low mounding plant known to bud up well even in the shade.

'Babylon' (*R. calophytum* var *calophytum* x *R. praevernum*) was hybridized in 1955 by G. Reuthe at Kent in England. This hybrid has very large satiny white flowers with a rosy-red blotch. For those who like the look of *calophytum*,



'Babylon' has its showy, exceptionally long leaves and tends to bloom earlier than the species.



'Princess Abkhazi' (R. irroratum ssp irroratum x ?) was developed by British Columbian hybridizer Dr. Herman Vaartnou in 1970. This Rhodo has, like its species parent, dramatic bell shaped pink flowers heavily speckled with red. It is a sister seedling of 'Prince Abkhazi' which has the speckles just on the top half of the flower. These beautiful rhodos were named for Princess Peggy and Prince Nicolas Abkhazi who developed a beautiful small garden in Victoria BC. After their deaths it was saved from the bulldozers and is now open to the public as Abkhazi Gardens.

For an early bloomer with fiery blood-red flowers, 'Maxine Childers' (R. strigillosum x Elizabeth group) hybridized by Art Childers from Vida Oregon, is a striking plant. The olive green leaves are textured with a light, orange-brown indumentum heavy on the midrib, and the new growth is reddish bronze.



Another strigillosum cross is 'Peter Faulk' (R. strigillosum x unknown) hybridized by Peter Faulk of Tacoma Washington prior to 1950. This Rhodo has funnel shaped cherry red flowers scattered with darker spots. It has hairy stems, and the long narrow leaves are dark green with patchy tawny indumentum beneath. It blooms in late winter/early spring.

It is possible to have Rhodos blooming throughout the winter. Perhaps it's time for us to plant a few more of these early blooming beauties!



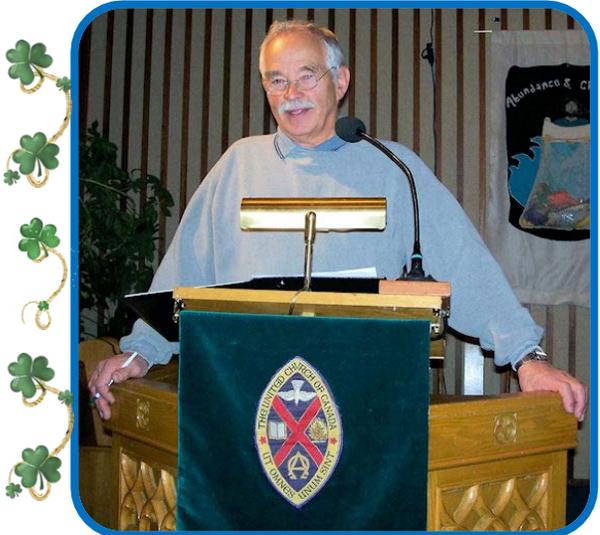
*Wherever you go
and whatever you do,
May the luck of the
Irish be there with
you.*



...by Dave Godfrey

Member's Notes

Adaptability is one of the many traits of garden plants, and the same applies to NIRS members. With our main meeting hall out of commission due the flood damage in the church kitchen, our meeting was moved into the church sanctuary. Part of the hall was still available for the registration and social gathering prior to the meeting, Kudos go to all executive members who helped make the evening run smoothly.



With **President Diana** and hubby John off touring New Zealand, **VP Paul Wurz** presided over the meeting, welcoming everyone back from the prolonged holiday hiatus. We especially welcome **Joan Collinge** and **Sasha Nowicki & Jeff Reinhart** as our newest members who joined our chapter that evening. For those who haven't met them yet, Sasha and Jeff are the couple who purchased **Dave & Marleen Crucq's** property when they moved to Okotoks, Albert last fall.

During the meeting, W&M Director **Nadine Boudreau** reminded members that we have a small supply of half gallon pots available for any members wishing to divide and pot up some plants for our May Sale. Nadine also requested members in the Comox/Courtenay area willing to show their garden on this year's Annual Mother's Day garden tour to please notify her or any member of the executive.

For the Show and Tell, **Bernie Guyader**, **Harry Wright** and **Brian Staton** all brought various samples of plants which are now blooming in their gardens. Paul reminded members that next month's meeting will feature our Garden Panel, and asked that members try to bring along any trusses of rhodos in bloom so that we all may enjoy the early showings.

Prior to the evening's presentation draws were made for the many prizes available. Congratulations to guest **Pam Harrison** as the winner of the raffle prize 'Royston Red' and to **Corinne Innes** winner of 'Kokardia'. **Peter Guertler** was the lucky winner of the orchid door prize, while **Myrna Trimmer** won the rhodo 'Cilpinense' donated by **Brian Staton**. A surprised **Bob Trimmer** won the rhodo 'Ginny Gee' donated by **Arthur Ralfs**. Congratulations to all the winners and our thanks to Brian and Arthur for their donations.

One of NIRS founding members, **Judy Walker** was our program speaker for the evening and many of the 14 guests came specifically to hear Judy's presentation. Judy gave a detailed history full of interesting stories about the connections between the early British plantmen and some of the pioneer nurseries on Vancouver Island. Through the exchange of letters and seeds in the early 1900's between Mr. E. J. Magor of Cornwall, England, Joseph Gable of Pennsylvania, USA and George Fraser of Ucluelet, BC, many of the rhododendrons growing on the island today can be traced to these gentlemen.

It was through George Fraser's friendship with the Simpsons and Berkley's of Cowichan Lake back in the early 1900's that mutual friends Ted and Mary Greig of Royston began to grow and sell rhododendrons. The Greigs became friends with the Simpsons and purchased their Marble Bay Nursery back in March 1935. Although primarily interested in alpine plants, Mary reluctantly agreed to also take the rhododendrons. They painstakingly moved all the nursery plants to their small property on the Island Highway in Royston.

Over the years, the Greigs hybridized, propagated, sold and donated many rhododendrons to various gardens around Vancouver Island, including Milner Gardens in Qualicum. When it came time to retire in 1966, Mary sold all her rhodos to the Vancouver Parks Board; over 8000 rhodos for \$15,000. It took 8 semi-truck loads to transport them to Vancouver, where there is an established "Ted and Mary Greig Rhododendron Garden" in Stanley Park. Too many for Stanley Park alone, some of these rhododendrons can be found in Queen Elizabeth Park and VanDusen Botanical Gardens. (There is a link to the Greig Rhodos in Stanley Park on our NIRS web site.)

This fascinating history of rhododendron growing and hybridizing on Vancouver Island was well documented in Judy's presentation. Since it was probably too detailed for many to remember, Judy has agreed to provide a series of articles on this presentation in future NIRS newsletters. Thank you again Judy for all that you continue to do for our chapter.

As announced at the meeting, there was a blueberry pruning workshop held at Haida Gold Gardens on Saturday, Feb. 12th. Due to the inclement weather, only a few members attended and were treated to a

demonstration of pruning on two potted blueberries in Harry's workshop. Thanks to **Ross Munro** for providing the workshop and to **Gwen and Harry Wright** for hosting it.



Plans are coming together for our many NIRS activities in May... our annual Sale & Show on Sunday, May 1st, Mother's Day Garden Tour, Sunday, May 8th and the AGM on Tuesday, May 10th. This year's AGM will be held in the Wright's 'Haida Gold Gardens'. This important meeting will also be an opportunity for members to meet and greet with **Herman and Marjo van Ree** of Holland. Herman is the originator/host of the rhododendron 'Hirsutum' website (www.hirsutum.com) The van Rees will be holidaying on Vancouver Island for a week, and look forward to visiting many gardens of NIRS members.

Also, on Tuesday, May 17th, a bus tour to gardens of MARS members in Port Alberni and Qualicum/Parksville is planned for NIRS members. Details of the tour will be made available at our next meeting, where members wishing to attend will have an opportunity to sign up.

The following Tuesday (May 24th) our guests from the Whidbey Island chapter will arrive for their 3 day tour of NIRS gardens. The tentative plans are for a welcoming meet & greet BBQ hosted by **Nancy and Ross Munro** at their 'Royston House' garden. Then on Wednesday morning, the group will travel to Campbell River for a tour of **Paul & Lynn Wurz** 'Hidden Acres' garden nursery which will include a break for lunch; following more garden visits in the afternoon, the tour will end up at **Adela and Bob Smith's** garden for a pot-luck dinner. All NIRS members are welcome to join the group for this special occasion. More details to follow as we approach the month of May.

As mentioned, our program for the March 8th meeting will be a "Panel of Garden Experts" to answer questions on any garden related concerns. **Paul Wurz** will moderate the panel discussions, so be sure to bring along any questions or concerns you might have. Don't forget to wear your name tag for that extra lucky raffle ticket! See you at the meeting.

Darjeeling Tea

...by Pauline Thompson 

Last summer, I sat with Pauline Bonney in her garden, sipping tea, and told her about my upcoming trip to India. She was wonderfully interested and I promised to write to her about our adventures. We moved on to talk about her current interest, which was ancient Egypt. Sadly, Pauline passed away just before I left. I thought of her often on the trip and especially as I toured tea estates in Darjeeling in northern India, where I started writing this article in her memory.

We are all familiar with the *Camellia japonica* – a member of the Theaceae family or tea family – with more than 2000 hybrids. It is a flowering shrub or a small tree native to Japan, Korea and China.

The most famous of the more than 100 species of *Camellia* – though often not recognized as a *Camellia* – is certainly the tea plant (*C. sinensis*).

By the 1820s the demand for tea was global. The second emperor of China, Shen Nung, discovered tea in 2737 BCE when tea leaves blew into his cup of hot water or so the story goes. Over the next 4,000 years, the art of brewing tea was refined and its medicinal and health benefits observed. Dutch and Portuguese merchant ships introduced tea into Europe by the 1550s and it was an instant success. By 1797 English tea-drinking hit a rate of two pounds per year per capita; a rate that increased by five times over the next ten years. The East India Company had a tea monopoly trading opium for tea from China. In 1833, by an act of the British Prime Minister Charles Grey (the second Earl Grey and the namesake of the famous tea), the East India Company lost its monopoly in the trade with China. British naturalist Sir Joseph Banks advised that imported Chinese tea be planted and cultivated in India.

Darjeeling is situated at 2250m (about 7,000 feet) at the top of a crenellation of very steep hills and ridges that fall to deep misty valleys. It is in the Mahabharat Range of northern India pressed up against the eastern border of Nepal. The hilly area around Darjeeling was historically controlled by the kingdoms of Bhutan and Sikkim. In 1828, a

delegation of British East India Company officials on its way to Sikkim stayed in Darjeeling and decided that the region was a suitable site for a sanitarium for British soldiers. Dr. Archibald Campbell, (1805–1874) of the Bengal Medical Service and the first superintendent of the sanitarium of Darjeeling, identified the area as a good location to grow the *Camellia sinensis* var. *sinensis*.

The hills were cleared and the first tea estate was established in 1840. Within a few decades more than 120 tea estates were established including the Happy Valley Tea Company started in 1840 and owned by Harrods of London. This is the highest tea estate of all the estates in Darjeeling and the entire production goes to London to sell for \$120 for 100 grams. Locals with the right friends, however, can purchase a kilo of Harrods finest for 300 R or about \$6.



Tea plants will grow into a tree if left undisturbed, but cultivated plants are pruned to waist height for ease of plucking.

Workers pruning tea plants





Leaves - Its bright green leaves are shiny, often with a hairy underside.

Flowers - The flowers are scented and can occur singly or in clusters of 2 to 4.

Fruits - Its fruits are brownish-green containing 1 to 4 spherical or flattened seeds.

Two principal varieties, the small-leaved Chinese variety plant (*C. sinensis var. sinensis*) and the large-leaved Assamese plant (*C. sinensis var. assamica*), are used for tea. *Camellia sinensis var. sinensis* is hardier than Assam tea, and has relatively narrow and smaller leaves. Its leaves are used to produce all green teas and China black tea. *Camellia sinensis var. assamica* is much bigger in its natural state and can grow into a loosely branched tree to a height of about 17 m. It's a less hardy variety with larger, rather droopy, leathery leaves which are used to make Assam (Indian) black tea.

Camellia sinensis var. sinensis is the source of all green teas, and the differences in taste of the different types of teas are the results of different fermentation techniques, and differences in individual plants.

Green teas are made by allowing the leaves to wither in hot air, and then heated to halt the fermentation process.

Oolong teas are wilted in the sun, then bruised and allowed to partially ferment.

Black teas are fermented in humid, cool rooms until the entire leaf is darkened.

White tea leaves are picked and harvested before the leaves open fully, when the buds are still covered by fine white hair. It is hand rolled and sun dried and not fermented (referred to by our Nepalese guide in Darjeeling as "fashion tea"). Expensive!

The Darjeeling tea is exquisite and delicately flavored, and considered to be one of the finest teas in the world. The Darjeeling plantations have 3 distinct harvests, and the tea produced from each

'flush' has a unique flavor. First flush teas are light and aromatic, while the second flush produces tea with a bit more bite. The third, or autumn flush gives a tea that is lesser in quality.



City of Darjeeling and tea estates share the same slopes.



The teas sampled here are from the top:

Black teas:

1. Thurbro spring first flush – bitter
2. Margaret's Hope – fall second flush – light
3. Rohini summer second flush – medium tea with earthy flavor
4. Singbulli spring second flush – slightly fruity flavor
5. Green tea – light flavor
6. White tea – tips and small buds only, very mild flavour, "fashion tea"

Right:

Black tea – Ruby Second flush

Oolong tea – medium with slight bitterness

Studies suggest that the green teas are the most beneficial for health because the leaves are not allowed to ferment at all, preserving the antioxidant properties of the fresh leaf.



Happy Valley Tea Estate Darjeeling – Harrods'

Darjeeling was beautiful and there is so much to say. But, I am off now to make a cup of tea and admire Pauline and Dick Bonney's cyclamen nestled in the snow.

Other Tea Facts:

1908 New York tea importer Thomas Sullivan inadvertently invents tea bags when he sends tea to clients in small silk bags, and they mistakenly steep the bags whole.

Seeds for *camellia sinensis* can be purchased online from Canadian company www.richters.com.

The Tea Farm in Duncan (www.teafarm.ca) planted *camellia sinensis* last year and expects to produce their own Cowichan tea within the next few years.

For St. Patrick's Day, consider making a cup of green tea!

The World in Your Garden Rhododendrons 2011

65th Annual International Convention of the
AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

11 to 15 May 2011

Vancouver, Washington

Convention Website www.ARS2011Convention.com



International Collaboration: Creating The Rhododendron Species Foundation - Part 2 ...by Joe Ronsley

(Joe Ronsley was the past President, Rhododendron Species Foundation and past President of the Vancouver Rhododendron Society)

Between 1963 and 1966, Dr. T M C Taylor, Head of the Botany Department, and Dr. J W Neill, Professor of Plant Sciences, somehow persuaded the university administration to create an actual botanical garden. A specific parcel of land was set aside for the purpose, and the current UBC Botanical Garden was officially approved in 1966 and opened in 1968.

My friends who were present at the time say that the arrangement between UBC and the RSF could have had no impact whatsoever on the discussion with university administrators, who, they say, were relatively insensitive on the subject. But the timing of these events suggests to me that it is inconceivable that the RSF connection, and the opportunity it provided for UBC, did not come up in the conversation. The records provide no proof either way, unfortunately, since there are no detailed records of the discussions. But the administrators must have been convinced by *something* in order to have made their decision to establish a real botanical garden, especially after having decided so recently to eliminate all reference to it at the university. And while the administrators may have had no appreciation for plants and gardens, as my friends say, they could certainly understand and appreciate the value of a collection of, say, rare books and manuscripts that might just be an important asset to the university, and worth being provided a suitable housing, or even the setting up of a new academic programme. The collection of plants coming from Britain, with their history in regard to botany and horticulture, could easily be seen as an equivalent, even by university administrators.



Meconopsis at RSF

It is intriguing to contemplate the possibility, then, that not only did UBC contribute to the establishment of the RSF, but conversely, the RSF contributed to the establishment of the University of British Columbia Botanical Garden as well. I don't suggest that the RSF connection was the sole convincing argument, but it could very well have played an important part, though, of course, I can't prove it.



Whatever the case in regard to the establishment of the two collections, since the time of this inspired initial collaboration, close relations and joint efforts among people in these three countries have continued, with the exchange of plant material, joint plant expeditions, duplicate collections as insurance against losses, and, important as anything, the sharing and exchange of experiences, ideas and knowledge.

Moreover, plantsmen and gardeners from other countries have over the years joined with those in the original three in this mutually beneficial relationship. And they have done so not only in the occasional

coming together for a single project, but in a closer, more lasting and comprehensive fashion by actually becoming a part of the now mature Rhododendron Species Foundation.



This 'now mature Rhododendron Species Foundation' now has its own, 'now mature', botanical garden with a distinct focus on species rhododendrons, and comprising arguably the most comprehensive collection of *Rhododendron* species in the world.

(Ed. Note: Series continues with Part 3 in next month's Rhodoteller.)

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the North Island Rhododendron Society will be held on Tuesday, 10th May 2011 at 7:30 pm at Harry and Gwen Wright's, Haida Gold Garden. Address 769 Chaster Road, Courtenay, BC.

Business to come before the meeting will include the Annual Financial Report, Reports from Committees, and Election of Directors and Officers for 2011-2012.

There are four two-year board terms ending in May: Pauline Thompson, Dave Godfrey, Noni Godfrey and Nadine Boudreau. The incumbents have agreed to allow their names to stand again.

Members wishing to put names forward for nomination are to contact the Nominations Chair Brian Staton.

Following the AGM, the elected Board will select a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer from among the elected Directors and will assign roles to Committee Chairs.



...Tidbits

Plant Division Tips



This is an ideal time to consider dividing your plants. Not only will it increase your plants to cover an area quickly but will also rejuvenate those with spindly growth, decreased blooms and dead centers. Here are some tips to encourage your chances of division success:

- Divide on a cool overcast day. Plants will retain moisture and experience less stress.
- Water well the day before you divide. Remove flower stalks which sap plants energy and cut off any dead material to avoid the spread of disease. Cut back foliage to reduce water loss.
- If you are not able to plant your divisions immediately, cover roots with a few layers of damp newspaper or mulch and store them in a cool shaded location.
- Water newly planted divisions well to promote root to soil contact.



Moss Where You Want It

Are you putting up a new rock wall or adding a shaded rock garden and want it to look as though it's been around for a while? Here is a simple recipe for a mossy slurry that you can apply to any surface you'd like coated in aging green.

- 1-2 clumps (a small handful) moss
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 2 C buttermilk
- 2 C water

Crumble the moss into a blender, removing any pebbles, sticks, or leaves. Add the sugar, buttermilk, and water and blend at low speed until it has the consistency of a milk shake. Beer can be substituted for the water.

Paint the mixture directly onto rocks, pots, statuary, or whatever you want the moss to grow on

Keep your moss moist until it is well established e.g. twice weekly misting with spray bottle.



MILNER GARDENS & WOODLAND

Spring Harbinger Days

March 5th and 6th from 11am to 3pm

Admission by donation. Come enjoy the early spring colour and relax with a cup of tea and scones in the Tearoom.



Volunteer Opportunity Day

Milner Gardens is holding a Volunteer Opportunity Day March 20th from

11am to 3pm, for those interested to find out what opportunities are available. No pre-registration is required.

FMI 250-752-6153 or www.milnergardens.org



CENTRAL VANCOUVER ISLAND BOTANICAL GARDEN SOCIETY

The growing season arrives with a burst of activity at the 16th Annual Central Vancouver Island Garden Festival, March 11- 13, Beban Park, Nanaimo, Entry is \$6 per day or \$15 for 3 days (children under 12 free). Keltie Chamberlain, President of the Central Vancouver Island Botanical Garden Society, the non profit sponsor of the show, states there are nearly 50 exhibitors, outstanding speakers, and hands on activities included for the 2011 Show.

Highlighting the event are speakers Des Kennedy, Dirk Becker, and Carolyn Herriot along with Make & Take and specialty workshops. Watch for the program in local papers.

Hourly door prizes along with a Best Booth-In-Show competition promise lots of excitement. Art, Music and Food complete this celebration of everything green and growing. Show proceeds support horticultural education and the quest for a Central Island Botanical Garden.

For further information visit the CVIBGS Festival at www.CVIBGS.org or call 250-802-0436.





Recipe Requests

Almond Florentines

(Barb Staton)

- 1 package Graham wafer crackers
- 250 ml (1C) Butter
- 250 ml (1C) brown sugar
- 250 ml (1C) flaked almonds
- 2 squares semi-sweet dark chocolate



Oil a large cookie sheet that has an edge, and then arrange the wafers to cover the pan. Melt butter and sugar in microwave one minute at a time until they stay together when stirred and don't separate. Pour over crackers and sprinkle with almonds.

Bake at 375°F for 7 minutes until almonds are slightly toasted. Remove from sheet right away and place on cooling racks. Drizzle with melted chocolate when cooled (may have to add a bit of butter)

Note from Noni: Barb brought these to our last meeting and she went home with an empty plate!!!



Fruit Cocktail Cake

(Bonnie Steele)

This is SO simple and company ALWAYS raves (it's so simple it's embarrassing!)

- 1 ½ C sugar
- 2 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp salt
- 2 eggs
- 2 C flour
- 1 can fruit cocktail (398 ml)

- Topping:
- ½ C butter
 - ¾ C sugar
 - ½ C milk
 - 1 tsp vanilla

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a bowl, stir sugar, baking soda and salt together. Add eggs, mixing well. Gradually beat in flour. Fold in fruit cocktail. Pour batter into a greased 9 x 13 inch pan. Bake 45 minutes, the top will be a beautiful golden brown.

Topping:

Melt butter in a saucepan. Stir in sugar. Add milk and bring to a boil, stirring frequently. Remove from heat and stir in vanilla. Pour all the hot topping over warm cake. Don't worry it will absorb all the sauce!!! Serves up nicely with ice cream or whipping cream.

Another Fruit Cocktail Cake

(Noni Godfrey)

- 1 can of fruit cocktail
- 1 C of sugar
- 1 C of flour
- 1 egg (lightly beaten)
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 C chopped nuts (optional)
- ¼ to ¾ C Brown sugar

Mix all of the ingredients, except brown sugar and nuts, into a bowl. Pour into an 8x8 cake pan. Pour brown sugar and nuts into a bowl and mix together. Chopped pecans work well. Sprinkle the brown sugar mix on top of the cake batter. Bake at 350° F for 35 minutes. If you don't use as much brown sugar, it isn't quite as gooey. Serve with whipped cream, Cool Whip, or vanilla ice cream.

This recipe calls for ¼ to ¾ cup of brown sugar. Less is not so gooey and sweet. More is gooey and sweet....your choice.

