



The Rhodoteller

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DECEMBER

North Island Rhododendron Society

2013/2014 Executive

President

Paul Wurz287-4301

Vice-President

Jake Ellis337-8516

Past President/Director:

Diana Scott338-0208

Secretary

Adrianne McNabb898-8712

Treasurer

Dave Godfrey335-0717

Director: Ways & Means

Dick Bonney339-7594

Director: Membership

Brian Staton337-5228

Director: Revenue Table

Chris Aldred335-3221

Newsletter

Noni Godfrey335-0717

..... nonigod@shaw.ca

Social Committee:

Claudia Ellis337-8516

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.



3rd Dec 2013 - Executive Meeting 2:00 pm

The executive meeting will be held at the home of Dave and Noni Godfrey, 4686 Montrose Drive. South end of Courtenay, turn left onto Spindrift Road, which is about 1 Km past the Kingfisher resort. Then turn at first right, then first right again. Go to end of Inverness Road and turn left onto Montrose. House is on the left, look for tall house with green shutters next to an empty lot.

10th Dec 2013 - Regular Monthly Meeting Christmas Party.....

NIRS Christmas Party time again....Everyone ready for another great party?? Following tradition, we will be ending the year with a festive social get-together on December 10th. We will be starting at 5:30 to make it an earlier evening for the drive home in the December darkness. Everyone attending is reminded to bring their appys, salads or desserts to the pot-luck dinner. (Remember what you signed up for? If not give Claudia Ellis a quick call) The club will be providing a ham and buns.

NO GIFT required this year as the committee has decided to forgo gift giving in favor of draws for various prizes throughout the evening.

To lighten the evening a bit, Dave and Noni will again be hosting the "Christmas Trivia" game, with all new questions.

Your Christmas committee is working hard to make this year's Christmas party a big success. Come on out and have yourself a merry merry good time. Socialize over hot cider drinks and play the now traditional guessing games to fill the time before dinner. See you there!



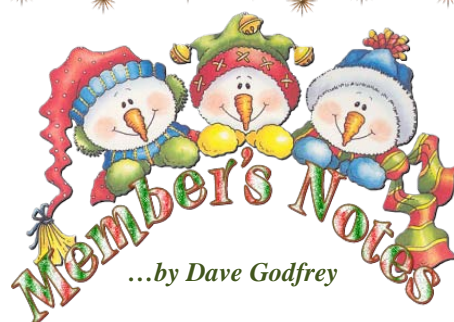
I seems when there is little else to talk about, we can always talk about the weather! Way up here in north Campbell River, we managed to escape a mini cold spell with the thermometer dropping down to -5C on several nights with a few more mornings having a fairly light frost. I think the rhodos were happy with that, as they received a mild touch of winter with an opportunity to adjust to the cold with little chance of any damage. The forecast for the next week is for warm mild weather with showers and possible rain. In no time, we will be getting close to the winter solstice and the days will soon start getting longer – that date is always one I look forward to!

Getting to some rhododendron business, VP Jake Ellis and I (and wives) took the trek to Victoria last weekend to represent NIRS for the 2015 planning committee. We have a very strong committee and everything is moving forward. They will be looking for volunteers as the May 2015 date approaches, and there should be lots of opportunity to get involved in the actual running of the convention. If you have a few spare minutes, and are interested, you can access the Convention website by entering: “ARS Convention 2015 – Sidney by the Sea.” (www.youtube.com/watch?v=cOO0M8oEMcY)

This preview is wonderfully put together by the committee and gives an excellent overview on what to expect at the conference. We will not be showing this video at individual chapters, so it is important to access it yourself. In the not too distant future, the official website will include the necessary information to get registered and see the agenda for the convention.

Gardeners often wonder what they can do to winterize their gardens for the coming months. Other than clean-up and putting away the tools, hoses, draining irrigation etc., there is not much else that we can do. We can hope that the “gods” are good to us, sparing us of heavy snowfalls and extremely cold weather – but keep ready to clear off the wet heavy snow that may fall on your rhododendrons and other treasured shrubs.

Lynn and I wish you all the very best for the holiday season, and we hope to see many of you at our annual Christmas Party on December 10th.



It's hard to believe there is now just one month left in this year. After all this fabulous autumn weather, you know the winter rains are coming back. So when they arrive just batten down the hatches and enjoy those indoor winter activities!

Speaking of winter activities, for our December meeting, it is time once again to enjoy another fun Christmas party. The team of **Barb Staton**, **Lois Clyde**, **Claudia Ellis** and **Nadine Boudreau** have been busy organizing all the fun activities for the December 10th party. Prizes have been purchased and will be raffled off to some lucky winners, games have been prepared and a delicious potluck dinner being organized. No doubt by now, you have been contacted by one of the “team” to determine what you can bring to the feast. The club is funding a ham, buns and condiments, while members will be asked to provide appetizers, salads or desserts. So if you haven't been contact as yet, and you plan to attend, please notify one of the organizing committee members ASAP.

There was another packed house for our November 12th meeting with a near record 68 members and 6 guests in attendance. A warm welcome was extended to our newest member **Wolfgang Heofgen** who signed up at the meeting. We also welcomed fellow Rhodoholics **Terry Richmond** of MARS and **Earl Daneluk** of NRS, who came to hear Paul's presentation.

Membership Chair **Brian Staton** advises that we now have 65 paid memberships, including 4 associates. However, there are still approximately 20 members who have not yet renewed their memberships for 2014. If you are one of them, there is still time to get your \$35 dues paid, either at the Christmas party or by mail. Don't delay... pay them today!

President Paul Wurz reminded all those in attendance of the program schedule for the remainder of the term in June. Once we are into the New Year, there will be the “*Gardens Through the Seasons*” photo presentation of member's gardens prepared by **Diana Scott** on January 14th; another “*Garden Panel*” open for discussion of various garden related questions moderated by **Pauline Thompson** in February; a presentation of “*The Evolution of the Rhododendron*” by **Dr. Glen Jamieson** (JARS editor-in-chief) for our March

meeting, and **Margaret Cadwaladar** presenting the history of "*Veronica Milner and the Milner Gardens*" in April. So, lots of interesting variety in the coming months.

Hamper coordinator **Margaret Griffith-Cochrane** has been notified by the Salvation Army that this year our sponsored family consists of mom and dad (both in their late thirties) and their two children – a boy age 15 and a girl age 12. Word is the boy is in to music and movies, and likes to skateboard, while the girl typically likes makeup and hair accessories. Members wishing to contribute towards the hamper may bring non-perishable food items, unwrapped gifts or cash donations to the Christmas party, where Margaret will gladly accept them. The hamper is due to be delivered to the local Salvation Army headquarters in the days following the party, so this will likely be your last opportunity to donate. Thank you to all members who voluntarily support this worthwhile program each year.

To round out the business portion of the meeting, we had our usual "Show & Tell" segment. This time it was an all ladies show with **Jill Gould** leading off. Jill brought in some examples of tiny flowers that continue to provide colour in her garden – osteospermum, *Nicotiana glauca*, miniature roses and snapdragons, to name a few. **Summer Joy** then presented several potted plants, such as *Tradescantia*, New Zealand flax and a shrimp plant (*Justicia brandegeana*); all of which can be left out all summer but must be brought in for the cold winter months. Thank you ladies, for providing this interesting educational.

Congratulations to the winners of the rhododendron raffle prizes: 'Lee's Dark Purple' – **Jim Webb** and 'Pink Cameo' – **Ron Cameron**; the door prizes went to **Linda Billings** who won a jar of hanging basket fertilizer (donated by **Noni Godfrey**) and **Adela Smith** winner of a colourful garden pot (donated by **Diana Scott**.)

Following the evening's draws and a short break, **Paul Wurz** presented his program on "*Upgrading Your Rhodo Collection*." Paul began by explaining that there are well over 50,000 different hybrid rhododendrons around the world. A common rating system for most rhododendrons is Greer's "5/5/5", which indicates a scale of 1 through 5 with the numbers representing "flowers/foliage/plant" qualities.

As Paul explained, many hybridizers now use the rhododendron '*Noyo Brave*' as a seed parent because it has excellent foliage and above average plant habit. This hardy plant was hybridized by Clint Smith back in the 1960's.

It was a chance meeting with the late **Jack Lofthouse** about 25 years ago that Paul admits hooked him on rhododendrons. Jack had a tremendous knowledge of the genus which he passed along to Paul over the years, along with cuttings of his many hybrids. Paul has managed to

successfully propagate these to expand his nursery business in Campbell River. Jack also bequeathed many full grown rhododendrons to Paul at the time of his passing in 2005. The full beauty of these plants can be seen in their Hidden Acres gardens.

As Paul described, " '*Viennese Waltz*' has almost perfectly shaped trusses, while '*Sierra Sunrise*' has huge trusses up to 18" high. And the Lofthouse '*Party Orange*' is one of the few truly orange coloured rhodos in existence." '*Pink Petticoats*' and '*Canadian Sunset*' are two of Jack's best known.



As you may recall, back in April of this year Lois Blackmore gave us a colourful presentation of **Jim Barlup's** many award winning hybrids. Jim is from Bellevue Washington, and for his outstanding work in hybridizing and sharing his knowledge, pollen and seeds, he was awarded the ARS Gold Medal in 2004. Some of Jim's most notable hybrids include '*Cimarron Sun*' a compact yellow cross ('*Nancy Evans*' x '*Mrs. Furnivall*'), '*Silk Ribbon*' and '*Fire Rim*' ('*Nancy Evans*' x '*Pink Petticoats*') – not to be confused with '*Rim Fire*! Jim is also the hybridizer of the ARS 2015 Convention official rhodo – '*Champagne Lace*' – available for the first time at the conference!





Dr. E.C. Brackenbrough was another famous hybridizer from the Bellevue area. He is credited with the 'Horizon' series of hybrids, many of which we have in our gardens today – 'Horizon Monarch' and 'Horizon Lakeside' are two popular yellows.



Another well known hybridizers and friend to NIRS members, **Frank Fujioka**, is still naming new hybrids after many years of cultivation. Some of Frank's top hybrids include 'Seaview Sunset' which Paul notes "is regarded by many as the most nearly perfect rhodo." His rhododendron 'Chemainus' has fantastic foliage with leaves that look polished. One of his scented hybrid is 'Spring Fragrance', while one of his most recent, 'Cherries & Merlot', has almost red indumentum.



As agreed upon at the meeting, one final work party for the CV Rhodo Garden was held at 10 am on Thursday, Nov. 14th. The gardens and pathways were cleared of fallen leaves, a few small branches collected and weeds were pulled. With 10 members in attendance, the work was completed in less than an hour. As always, the club paid for the coffees and goodies were shared by those attending on a sunny fall day. Garden Director **Ross Munro** thanks all those members who came out throughout the season to help keep our community garden looking great for locals and visitors alike. The gardens are now dormant until the spring! (Photos of all work parties can be found on our website.)

As this is the last newsletter of 2013, we wish all our members a safe and happy holiday season. In closing, remember, good judgment comes from bad experience... and most of that comes from bad judgment. Hope to see you at the party!

MEMBER PROFILE RON CAMERON



...by Helena Stewart

Watch Ron Cameron with his two Arabian mares, Miss Elly and Spice, and it's a toss-up which is nearest to his heart—his horses or his rhododendrons.

"I've always liked horses," he says, "but I never ever had time to care for them. Now I do." Miss Elly is the mother and is now blind. Spice, the daughter, is Miss Elly's seeing-eye horse and leads her around Cameron's 5-1/2 acres off Williams Bay Road in Merville. The property sits adjacent to a 28-acre pond that offers some fine canoeing and brings in a huge assortment of bird life. The horses share all this with scores of rhodos, some newly planted in raised beds under hemlock and fir trees, others actually hauled to the Island from West Vancouver in amputated wine barrels. Each of the new rhododendrons is wrapped in deer fencing to protect them from marauding wildlife, mainly pesky deer that like to nibble the tender new shoots on the rhodos, the occasional cougar and some Type A local beavers.

"The beavers were at least thoughtful enough to leave one stem on one of my rhodo bushes when they did their logging," says Cameron with a chuckle.

Cameron grew up in Campbell River, so settling down in the Comox Valley doesn't seem a giant step in world travel—at least until he starts to relate some of the details in his career as a mechanical/project engineer-cum-globe trotter. He met his wife shortly before taking on a three-year-long project in Columbia. So they spent their honeymoon in Acapulco while waiting for details to be sorted out for the Colombia assignment. Later, there were engineering and paper industry projects in Switzerland and Sweden.

Among the rhodos, Ron confesses to a few favourites—"Elsie Fry" and "Fortunei"—but his current passion is introducing species rhodos to his growing collection. When asked if he's got all the rhododendrons he wants, he laughs and says, "I

don't know about that. I haven't run out of space yet!"



DECEMBER in the garden



December and winter where frost, rainfall and winds are increasingly common, sunshine hours are much reduced and there is a risk of snow. You probably will not want to be working outside at this time of year, but luckily there's not a lot to do.

It's time to think about pruning open-grown apples and pears too (but not those trained against walls.)

Prune maples, birches and vines before Christmas as well to avoid bleeding. Various deciduous trees and shrubs can still be planted and transplanted. Take care not to tread on or work your soil when it is really wet - you will likely do more harm than good. Frosts, however, will help to improve the crumb structure of previously dug soil, and may kill off some pests and diseases.

Tender plants will suffer unless protected, so staking, tying and protection of plants is a must. The wind can be destabilising, physically damaging, chilling, and very drying for plants.

Some plants (e.g. poinsettias) respond to reduced light as we near the winter solstice, by induction of flowering, or the colouring up of bracts.



Snowflakes are one of nature's most fragile things
but look at what they can do
when they stick together. ❄️



tidbits... I LOVE CHRISTMAS!

Milner Gardens Christmas Magic

Dec 6 - 8, Dec 13 - 15, Dec 18 - 22, 2013

5:00pm to 8:30pm, admission by donation.

Festival of lights and music in the Garden. Santa will be here!

The Gardens will be lit up with thousands of Christmas lights. The Milner House is decorated in old fashioned Christmas splendour, where volunteers from the local library delight children and parents alike with storytelling, and a variety of local musicians perform seasonal music from choral to instrumental. Guess the number of teddy bears in the gardener's cottage to win a prize or bid on silent auction items. Tea Room, outdoor refreshments stand and Gift shops will be open. Jams made from fruits from the garden make tasty gifts. All entry donations support the garden. Although there are thousands of Christmas lights, we suggest you bring a flashlight.

For more info please visit www.milnergardens.org or phone 250-752-6153



The Qualicum Beach Seedy Saturday is coming around again on February 1st, 2014.



The American Rhododendron Society Board of Directors has authorized the creation of an online ARS site that would not be selling items but would link to other providers. The online store was authorized to develop a relationship with Amazon as an affiliate store. The online store will use the ARS logo and name to sell "ARS" merchandise. Product providers accessed through the ARS online store at ARSSStore.org pay referral fees directly to the ARS on sales made from ARSSStore.org referrals. These fees from sales referrals go 100% directly to the ARS. ARSSStore.org has no expenses, only earnings.

The store has three divisions:

- **ARS Logo Merchandise:** featuring knit, woven and denim shirts, caps, visors, and computer briefcases.
- **Amazon Merchandise:** featuring Rhododendron & Azalea Books, Garden Books, Garden Tools, and any other item sold on Amazon.
- **Participating Merchants:** featuring other merchants who agree to give referral fees to the ARS for each purchase when you mention ARSSStore.org.

To access go to ARSSStore.org and from there select what interests you. Amazon sells just about everything. You get the same low Amazon prices from the ARS store, but by using it the ARS gets a fee for referring you. As long as you go to Amazon from ARSSStore.org before making a purchase, the ARS gets a referral fee.

ARSSStore.org has the Main Store, a Canadian Store and a European Store. The Canadian Store uses Amazon.ca, a Canadian affiliate, which carries many of the same things. If Amazon.ca has the item, the shipping within Canada will probably cost less. Do not go to the other Amazon stores directly from Amazon.com. If you do, your purchase will not qualify for a referral fee. Go to ARSSStore.org first and use links from there.

People who are not members of the ARS may use ARSSStore.org. The objective of creating the ARSSStore website is to raise money for the ARS. The more money we raise, the better it is for the ARS. Invite all of your friends to use it. Invite your favorite nurseries to add links to ARSSStore.org.

The referral rate starts at 4%. If a total of 7 or more items are purchased from Amazon in a month, the rate is 6% or more. It is 17% on ARS Logo Merchandise.

At ARSSStore.org, every purchase you make results in a contribution to the ARS at no additional cost either to you or to the ARS. (A link is now on our NIRS website 'Links' page)

Holiday RECIPES

Mom's Gingersnaps

(Jill Gould)



$\frac{1}{2}$ C shortening	2 C all-purpose flour
1 C sugar	2 tsp. baking soda
$\frac{1}{4}$ C molasses	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt
1 large egg	1 Tbsp. ground ginger
1 tsp. ground cinnamon	
Sugar	



Cream shortening and the one cup sugar well. Beat in molasses, then egg. Combine dry ingredients and stir into creamed mixture until blended.

Shape dough into 1-inch balls and roll in sugar. Place on greased baking sheet about 2 inches apart. Do not flatten. Bake at 350 deg. F. for 15 minutes or until done. Makes about three to 3-1/2 dozen.



Until Next Month

