



The Rhodoteller

www.nirs.rhodos.ca



2015

January



North Island Rhododendron Society

2014/2015 Executive

President

Jake Ellis 337-8516

Vice-President

Nadine Boudreau..... 339-0909

Secretary

Adrienne McNabb..... 898-8712

Treasurer

Dave Godfrey 335-0717

Past President:

Paul Wurz..... 287-4301

Director: Ways & Means

Dick Bonney..... 339-7594

Director: Membership

Jill Gould..... 331-1859

Director: Revenue Table

Fran Thornton..... 339-3754

Director: Library

Ruth Fowler..... 890-9448

Director: at large

Garth Wedemire 941-5598

Newsletter

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

Social Committee:

Claudia Ellis 337-8516

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.



6th Jan 2015 - Executive Meeting 2:00 pm

The January executive meeting will be held at the home of Ruth and Howard Fowler, 1500 Hudson Road, Comox BC. Directions: heading up Ryan Road take a right at Anderton. Turn left onto the first main road called Atlas. Continue on Atlas and as it veers to the right it turns into Hudson. They are the third house on the left with the cobblestone/pavers driveway. Howard will be directing parking.

13th Jan 2015 - Regular Meeting

"Panel of Experts"

~Facilitated by Nadine Boudreau~

Once again, our ever popular panel of local experts will be discussing various aspects of gardening, with Nadine Boudreau as the panel moderator. Although the emphasis will be on rhododendrons, the panel consisting of NIRS members Bernie Guyader, Paul Wurz, Garth Wedemire and Wolfgang Hoefgen will take questions and try to provide answers on any aspect of gardening. So be sure to bring along any questions or concerns you may have from your gardening experience.



President's View

...by Jake Ellis

As the New Year approaches, most of us will spend some time looking back at the year 2014 as it comes to a close and becomes just another chapter in the history books. And that can certainly be a productive exercise both personally, professionally and as members of a club, such as the NIRS.

As I look in the rear-view mirror, I see a year full of positives. At a quick glance, all the scheduled events like the Plant Sale, the Mother's Day Garden Tour, the AGM at Becci and Keith's place, the June Picnic at Roberts and Adela's garden, as well as the recent Christmas Party were not only successful, but even more importantly, were a great deal of fun. There were in-house tours of members' gardens and some of our members took part in tours to Oregon and California, as well as Whidbey Island. Antje and Peter Guertler went further afield on a garden tour to Germany and Denmark; while Garth and Sue Wedemire attended the ARS Conference in New Zealand.

There were those work-parties at the Rhodo Garden that prove that old saying about many hands making light work. It's amazing to me how much fun working in a garden can be when it's done with a group like ours. There were so many interesting and gifted speakers. The last speaker of the year was Ken Webb from the Victoria Chapter. Ken spoke with great enthusiasm about the propagation of rhododendrons and that talk resulted in the formation of our own propagation group which will meet in mid- January. It was also a year of planning. The initial planning for the Rhododendron Species Garden at Milner got underway and intensive planning sessions for the Sidney Convention in May 2015 were held throughout the year.

2014 really was a good year for the NIRS!

But as we look at the road ahead -- the year 2015 -- can we do even better? All the scheduled events of last year will be held again on different dates and in different places. Can we change them up? Spice

them up? Can we involve even more members in all the different facets of the club? Can we meet our mission of providing information and encouraging the growing of rhododendrons within the community all the while maintaining a lively social atmosphere? NIRS is a big part of the upcoming ARS Convention in Sidney -- can we meet our obligations to this major event?

Well, unlike most exams I've written in my life, I don't need multiple choice to know the answers to those questions. The answer for all of the above is a resounding YES! While the spring of 2015 is going to be challenging with so much happening in a 2 week period of time, it is also going to be satisfying, informative and incredibly enjoyable. It always amazes me how responsive the membership of the NIRS is when it comes to volunteering. All of our major events require the participation of our members and I am sure the additional need for volunteers for the Convention will be easily and eagerly met.

Like a Saskatchewan farmer, I always feel that next year will be the best ever. Being forced inside during these waves of hurricane-like weather right now is allowing some time for planning, not only for NIRS, but also for some much-needed improvements to our own garden. It's also allowing me time to fulfill my personal commitment to continue to increase my knowledge of rhododendrons. I will not rest easy until one day the moderator of a panel of "experts" asks me if I would join them at the table. And don't forget my golf game. I think I've finally got it all figured out and 2015 just could be the year when it all comes together. Hopefully, you've got it all figured out also!

Happy New Year

and see you at the meeting on 13 Jan 2015!
President Jake



Member's Notes

...by Dave Godfrey

This year the North Island caught a break in the weather for our annual Christmas gathering on December 9th. Storms pounded the island on Monday and Wednesday depositing record amounts of rain, but fortunately Tuesday was a lull between the storms.

Due to a variety of reasons, and the weather may have played a part, some regulars were not able to attend the party this year. However, the 50 members and 1 guest (*John & Lilly Vanderhorst's* daughter *Cathy Callicano* from California) who did attend enjoyed a festive evening. By all accounts, everyone was well fed, entertained and went home happy with a gift provided by the club.

Hall preparations began at 4 PM and as members began to arrive at 5 PM hot apple cider (prepared by *Noni Godfrey*) was enjoyed with festive music playing in the background. Before the dinner, President *Jake "The Elf" Ellis* welcomed all and thanked the committee of *Nadine Boudreau, Barb Staton, Corrine Innes* and *Claudia Ellis* for all their time and efforts in organizing the evening.



Jake also thanked those members who arrived early to help with the set-up and decorating. Hamper coordinator *Margaret Griffith-Cochran* took the opportunity to thank all those members who donated to the hamper project this year and accepted some of the last minute gifts. Margaret delivered the hamper to the Salvation Army in the days following the party.

With the dinner table overflowing, and the hams carved by *Dale Paterson*, it was time to eat. A delicious assortment of savories and salads supplied by the members complimented

the ham and bread buns provided by the club. There was something for everyone's tastes, and we thank all those who brought their favourite dish.



Dale carving the ham, Adrienne serving

One special lady for the evening, *Fran Thornton*, just happened to be celebrating her birthday. When this was announced by President Jake, everyone broke into a warm rendition of "Happy Birthday to you!" Fran said this really made her day, and as luck would have it her table was the first to serve themselves dinner. So it was only fitting that Fran got to lead the way.

Before and during dinner, members took their best guess on the two guessing games organized by *Corrine Innes*. Following dinner, the winners were announced. The winners were *Claudia Ellis* whose guess of 112 gum drops was the closest to the actual number of 117 and *Brian Storey's* guess of 419 Skittles was the closest to the 417 in the smaller jar. Congratulations to them both!



Claudia wins the gumdrops!



Brian wins the skittles!

With the dinner and desserts consumed, it was time for Santa's "Elf" and his helpers to hand out gifts. An assortment of gifts was presented to those selected through a draw. An extra special surprise of "Miss Piggy" came with the gift awarded to **Antje & Peter Guertler**. A club tradition requires that they must display "Miss Piggy" in a prominent location in their garden throughout the year delivering her safely back to next year's party, along with her photo album of adventures

Peter and Antje win Miss Piggy



To round out the evening, another club tradition has been the "NIRS Trivia Game." A fresh batch of trivia and bonus questions were once again prepared in a PowerPoint presentation by **Dave & Noni Godfrey**. It is always fun when all in attendance participate in teams of 7 or 8. However, given that the ladies outnumbered the men 3 to 1, it was somewhat surprising that President Jake's team "The 7 Elves" was comprised of all men. With the likes of **Garth Wedemire, Peter Guertler, Bernie Guyader, Rob McNabb, Bob Trimmer** and **Harris Chester**, it is little wonder that they came out on top with 29 out of a possible 40 points.

Congratulations to them as each received a small potted Rhododendron for a prize.

With the festivities at an end, it was time to pack away the tables and chairs, remove all the decorations and clean up the hall for another year. Many were overheard saying what a wonderful time they had and that they look forward to the party again next year. Congratulations and thanks to all those members who made the event so enjoyable. (Photos of the party are now available on our website's Gallery page.)

For NIRS members thinking of attending the 70th Anniversary ARS Convention in Sidney in May, don't delay getting your registrations paid soon. There will only be 600 seats available for the meals and they will be filling up fast; not to mention the motels in the surrounding area. Find out more, including an online registration form, at <http://2015rhodo.ca/>

With a few last minute dues paid at the party and several more received in the mail, it seems we are now ready to begin the preparation of the 2015 issue of our Members' Yearbook. We hope to have the booklet published and ready for distribution at our January 13th meeting.

To kick off the 2015 programs, the January meeting will be our "Garden Panel". This year's panel will consist of **Bernie Guyader, Paul Wurz, Garth Wedemire** and **Wolfgang Hoefgen** - with **Nadine Boudreau** as the moderator. Be sure to attend this informative meeting to learn more about Rhododendrons (and other plant varieties) and have your gardening questions answered. We hope to see you there!

Raffle Rhodos

Catawbiense Boursault

...by Dick Bonney



Grows to 6 feet in 10 years and is hardy to minus 20 F (-29 C). This plant has a good dense habit with Rose-lilac blooms of funnel shaped flowers. A tough plant that can take heat and sun, and was picked this month in a cold spell. A wonderful addition to any garden.



ARS 2015 ANNUAL RHODODENDRON CONVENTION

Hosted by the Victoria Rhododendron Society
6 - 10 May 2015

Sidney-By-The-Sea - Highlight Speakers

Guan Kaiyun



Dr. Guan Kaiyun is a professor and deputy director of Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography, and also a director of Turpan Eremophyte Botanic Garden, the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS). He was the director of Kunming Botanical Garden, CAS from 1995 to 2006. He is also the vice-secretary general of the International Association of Botanic Gardens, vice-president of Rhododendron Society of China.

Dr. Kaiyun has published 135 scientific research papers and 23 books or monographs, holds ten patents and registered twenty seven new plant cultivars. He was awarded as an outstanding scientist by the Chinese government. His research interest includes conservation biology and plant taxonomy with special interests in the genera of Rhododendron, Camellia and Begonia.

Dr. Guan Kaiyun was born in January 1953 in Yunnan Province, China, an area well-known for its rhododendron species. "I don't want to say anything bad about other flowers ... but rhododendrons are special," he said. "If you talk about the shape of the flower, they can be huge or tiny; the plant shape, they can be anything from 5cm to 30m; and the leaves and the colours, there's a great variation." He said rhododendrons were used for ornamental purposes in China, as well as a medicine against rheumatism and arthritis. People often ate the flowers as a vegetable.

During the past 35 years, Dr. Kaiyun has explored many times to those Rhododendron distribution areas such as Yunnan, Sichuan, Tibet, Guizhou, Guangxi and Guangdong of China. He has also visited Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar for several times to explore rhododendrons. He is very familiar with the distribution of rhododendrons in China, especially sub-alpine and alpine species. He was invited to give speeches on rhododendrons in Great Britain, Germany, Norway, Denmark, Japan, New Zealand, Australia and other countries. He is also the author or co-author (translator) of several rhododendron books such as "Rhododendrons of China" (3 volumes) and "The Book of Rhododendrons".

Dr. Guan Kaiyun will be the speaker for ARS Convention session first thing on Saturday morning, May 9th. Be sure to take in all of the planned sessions by registering early at: www.2015rhodo.ca



Happy New Year!



4. Even very large plants can be cut back severely to stumps with no leaves. They will recover, though it will be a year before the plant has much foliage and two or more years before they flower.

5. As a plant grows, some of the inside limbs will be shaded out and become weak and die. It is a good idea to remove these, plus other weak limbs that are on the ground or crossing over each other. This provides better air circulation and does not provide a place for insects and diseases to start.



6. Evergreen azaleas can be sheared for hedge or border. Unlike rhododendrons, evergreen azaleas can be sheared each year after flowering to create a dense rounded plant. Deciduous azaleas can be cut anywhere on the stem and they will branch from that point, though they should not be sheared as severely as evergreen azaleas.



RING
OUT
the old

NEW YEARS
resolutions



Tidbits....

13TH ANNUAL QUALICUM BEACH SEEDY SATURDAY

Saturday, 7th February 2015 - 10:00 a.m. – 3:30
Qualicum Beach Civic Centre
747 Jones St., Qualicum Beach, B.C.

Seed Swap Vendors
Speakers Master Gardeners
Farmer's Market Seedy Cafe

Speakers: DIANE SHARP 10:30 a.m.

“Growing Your Groceries”

KATE GREEN..... 12:00 p.m.

“Seeds grow more than food.”

GARDENING PANEL

Kathy Claxton – Candace Coghill – Kim Hammond

Cost: Admission by Donation

Publicity Representative 2015 OB Seedy Saturday:
Louise Kelsey, qbsspublicity@gmail.com

Welcome to Our Newest N.I.R.S. Members

Kathy Gordon

Leslie & Phil Robertshaw



GARDENING BY THE NUMBERS

Plant one row of turnips:

Turnip the music and dance.



Plant two rows of lettuce:

Lettuce be kind

Lettuce be true



Plant three rows of peas:

Peace of mind

Peace of heart

Peace of soul.



Plant four rows of squash:

Squash gossip

Squash indifference

Squash grumbling

Squash selfishness.



Plant five rows of thyme:

Thyme for God

Thyme for family & friends

Thyme for fun

Thyme for rest

Thyme for ourselves



Water freely with patience and cultivate with love. There is much fruit in your garden because you reap what you sow.

January Goodies

Carinne Innes - Donna Young

Cathy Storey - Helen Stefiuk

Sheila Medori

Until Next Month Noni