



THE
RHODOTELLER

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**NORTH ISLAND
RHODODENDRON SOCIETY
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2015/2016**

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(Help Wanted)

NOVEMBER 2015

COMING EVENTS

3rd November 2015 -- Executive meeting

This month's meeting will be held at the home of our Secretary **Carolyn Chester** 636 Parker Rd, Courtenay. The meeting will start at **10 a.m.**

10th November 2015 -- Regular meeting

So you thought Bernie was good last month -- and he was -- well double your pleasure this month with **Barb and Brian Staton** delivering a presentation about the gardens that were featured in the Sidney Convention. I had the privilege of seeing a number of these gardens during the Convention and can't wait to see them again -- along with the ones that I couldn't fit into the schedule.

Rhodo in the Banner

Identify the "**RHODO IN THE BANNER**" and become the latest winner of "**The Garth**", the prestigious award for rhododendron identification. See the back page of this newsletter for a few clues for those who need them. Cathy Storey and Judi Murakami have proven themselves worthy. What about you?

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

PRESIDENT'S

notes



As President of the NIRS I find myself sometimes thinking about the success we've enjoyed with our club over the years and ways that we can continue or maybe even increase that success. When you think about the purpose of the ARS and its chapters -- "to encourage interest in and to disseminate info about the genus Rhododendron" -- we're way more than that. There is a very strong social component that keeps us coming back for more. Oh, we're learning about rhododendrons alright but maybe even more importantly we're having fun while learning.

And it starts right at the front door.

I noticed that when Dick and Nadine teamed up as greeters for our first meeting, it was like we were arriving home after a hard day's work. I could have sworn I heard someone yell, "Hi Honey, I'm home!". While it's nice to have "official greeters" don't forget we all should be involved in making visitors and newer members seem welcome and comfortable. And then we need to take that same fun feeling into the remainder of the meeting. Even the business section of the meeting can be fun -- who doesn't enjoy Fran at the Revenue Table or Dick's antics throughout and even the odd heckle from the members?

Show and Tell is a very popular, fun part of our programme -- light-hearted and informative. Maybe it would even more enjoyable if more of our members took part. And don't forget that while we're having fun, this too is an educational tool. We want to know everything about that plant from your garden. Yes, Dick, I know it's a pink one.

I absolutely love the Educational segment of our programme. Getting back to basics with information applicable not only to new members but to those of us who have forgotten or maybe never knew. By the way this segment could be given by any member. I'd love to see some "non-expert" take on a topic -- research it and present it to the group. What a way to learn! Maybe get together with another member and have fun with this project.

One scary thing for newer members and others (like me) is the botanical names of the species rhodos. I know that there are some members who avoid these names and, sadly, maybe even these rhodos, because they're afraid of the names. I think we all know the importance of species rhodos with their descriptive, botanical names. Some of the names are difficult but avoiding them is not the answer. Talk to members who do know, learn about the rhodos and the meaning of the name and then go for it. Have fun with it -- when in doubt just say the name and maybe somebody will correct you and demonstrate the correct pronunciation. That's how I learned about *R. yuefengense*. After Lynn Wurz picked herself up after falling down laughing at me, she told me the correct way, and then I took the time to learn more about that particular species. Now if I could only say *R. qiaojiaense*. Maybe Lynn could tell us at the next meeting.

It's all about learning while having fun. Every kindergarten kid knows how that works.

See you on 10 Nov at the church. Happy Hour x 2 starts at 7:30 p.m. Lots of fun - no hangover..

Jake

NIRS Treasurer's Report

For November 2015

Book Balance for Sept.30, 2015 \$7454.46

Income:

W&M (Oct. Sales).....\$107.30
Rev. Table (Oct. Sales).....\$ 79.00
Membership Dues (15 reg. & 1 associate).....\$535.00
Social Donations.....\$ 33.95
\$755.25

Expenses:

Publicity (correction plant sale 2015).....\$116.55
Erica Enterprises Ltd. (plant order).....\$1464.14
Work Party Coffees & Mail 1 Newsletter.....\$ 19.40
Website Change.....\$183.88
Program (Speaker).....\$100.00
Mail Box Rental.....\$163.80
\$2047.77

Book Balance @ Oct.31, 2015 *\$6161.94*

(Balance includes CVRG fund -- \$120.28)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

In order to cut some time from the business section of our meetings and make that time available to the Speaker of the evening, we are including the following information from the NIRS Committees. Your feedback on every one of our programmes is encouraged and each idea will be thoughtfully considered.

MEMBERSHIP

Jill Gould

As of the meeting of October 13, we have 42 members or associates who have renewed their membership for 2016. Unfortunately that means we have 39 who have not got there yet! Dave and Noni Godfrey, who make up our yearly Rhodo who's-who booklet, need the list of members by December 31. Lots of time, you say? Well, no, because our December meeting is generally our Christmas party, so it is extraordinarily difficult to renew memberships at that time—too much party. However, of course I'll be glad to do it. That leaves the November meeting. We'll be ready at our little table with our receipt book and smiles in place to renew your memberships. If you can't make the meeting, you can still mail your cheque for \$35.00 to the NIRS mailbox, Box 3183, Courtenay, BC V9N 5N4.

Since it is not out of my way, I can put in a order when I get two or more requests.

We had a great turnout at our October meeting—61 members and 1 guest.

WAYS AND MEANS

Lois Clyde

Our Raffle Rhodos this month are Winsome & R. rubiginosum "Wakehurst".

Winsome is a 3 footer, good to -18 deg C. degrees & has a good rating. It is compact with small pointed foliage & rosy cerise flowers.

The 2nd one is R. rubiginosum "Wakehurst". This is an elegant variety with large clusters of soft pink blooms speckled with red. It's lightly scented &

blooms in mid spring. It can be anywhere from 4-10 feet.

Our door prize will be Olive. It's a 4 footer, blooms very early spring. Has Orchid pink flowers & is a hardy vigorous grower.

We also have our "Greer's Guidebooks" for sale @ \$25

"The Public Gardens of Vancouver Island" by Ian Efford. \$25

Plant tags @ \$12 a box

Fundamentals for Growing Rhododendrons @ \$3, great for beginners.

Lovely bags @ \$14 in a variety of colours, very handy for shopping, meetings & travel.

Not to forget our truly coveted bumper stickers "I Brake for Rhododendrons". Only 2 left!!

Hope you will be at the meeting!

I won't be there this month as we will be sunning on the sandy beaches of Sayulita, Mexico. Our good friend Dick will entertain.

"Winsome"



R. rubiginosum

"Olive"



REVENUE TABLE

Fran Thornton

Thanks everybody for your generous support! Every cent you spend at the Revenue Table goes directly to the NIRS to help cover our costs.

As you know, we are now selling our donated items only at the break and that worked very well at our last meeting. Time for you to browse and time for us to set up.

Please remember to tag and price the articles prior to leaving them with us and to pick up any unsold items at the end of the meeting.

THE PROGRAMME

I am so looking forward to this presentation by Barb and Brian Staton. The garden tours arranged for the Convention were top-notch whether you were there or not, I know this will be a memorable event.

Barb & Brian have been living at Miracle Beach since 1986 and have been building their Rhodo garden out of the bush since then. Their collection of rhodos includes a variety of species and hybrid Rhodos and generally speaking they are all one of a kind. In the beginning they had a collection of 15-16 plants and now there are over 250. ☐

Their presentation on Nov.10th will include highlights of their trip to the ARS Convention in 'Sidney by the Sea' in early May of this year. The photos will feature many of the Victoria gardens they were able to visit on the bus tours each day of the convention. Although the days were long, they were able to tour 3-4 fabulous gardens a day including Royal Roads Gardens, Horticultural Center of the Pacific and the serene 10 acre woodland gardens of 'Towner Crest' owned by 93 year old Evelyn Weesjes.

UPCOMING PROGRAMMES

Paul Wurz

Nov 10.....Barb and Brian Staton "Gardens Featured in the Sidney Convention.

Dec 8.....NIRS Annual Christmas Party

Jan 12.....Garth and Sue "Convention Tour in New Zealand".

Feb 9.....Peter Guertler "England Garden Tour".

Mar 8.....Sean Rafferty "Rhodo Searching in Tibet"

THE RHODO GARDEN

Wolfgang Hoefgen

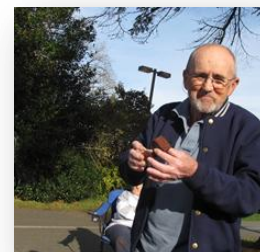


First I'd like to thank everybody for their help on

Oct 15th. We dug out one old rhodo, in very poor condition and replaced it with a R. bureavii "Greig f." which was taken from a very shady area.

We most likely will need one more work party on Nov. 12th at 9 a.m. to take most of the leaves before winter. I will try to get Tyler (from the City) to get us a truck to take the leaves away. We will need a few wheelbarrows, rakes and maybe a blower to clean the walks. That should put the garden to sleep until early next year.

Editors note: Apologies to all -- especially Lois who sent me a beautiful set of photos of the work party in action. Strangely the only one I could insert properly was one of me eating. Having spoken with Dave he will have the Prop. Group and Work Party galleries updated very shortly.



SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Judi Murakami

All is well on the social end but we have lost one of our volunteers and would like to put a shout-out for 1 more helper in the kitchen during the meetings. Not a hard job but so important to making this club's meeting nights a social highlight.

Please don't forget that while we don't charge for tea and coffee and all those delicious goodies, which our members bring, we will gladly accept donations.

And lastly, just a gentle reminder to those who signed up to bring goodies for our next meeting which include: Sue Grant, Louise Casson, Gwen Wright, Summer Joy, Noni Godfrey and Carolyn Chester.

A SITE TO SEE

I'm sure you remember our first meeting of this season when we had a guest speaker, Mr. Bob Zimmerman. Bob gave such an interesting presentation about species rhododendrons and how he came to have such love affair with them. I'm hoping that his visit inspired your interest as it has mine. It just seems like the longer I'm exposed to speakers like Bob and members of our own club like Bernie and Paul and Garth, and many others, the more intrigued I become. If you feel the same, then I have, for you, **A SITE TO SEE**.

Hopefully, you'll remember Mr. Zimmerman has a nursery in Washington State called Chimacum Woods which propagates, grows and sells species rhododendrons. This site is a real delight to visit. You will find an alphabetical list of all the rhodos they normally have in stock -- which, if I counted correctly, is 90. When you click on the name of the rhodo you will see, not only beautiful pictures of the rhodo, but so much detail on everything you need to know about this species rhododendron.

Give it a look -- chimacumwoods.com -- **A SITE TO SEE**.

PROPAGATING NEWS

Noni Godfrey

Once again our little propagating group went on the road on Saturday Oct 3rd. This time we were headed to Nanaimo and surrounding area to do some snooping in a few gardens looking for the best candidates for our recently learned cutting technique of propagating. We set out, confidently armed with our new knowledge gained from the last outing to the Green Thumb Nursery in Nanaimo. Fourteen 'bunny' group members braved the warm summer-like day and carpoled down to Nanoose Bay for our first stop at Art Lightburn's. Members on the trek were, *Claudia and Jake Ellis, Dave and Noni Godfrey, Antje and Peter Guertler, Paul and Lyn Wurz, Dick Bonney, Helena Stewart, Jill Gould, Caroline Chester, Ruth Fowler and Garth Wedemire*.

Our first hosts Art and Susan Lightburn provided light refreshments, coffee, tea and goodies to fortify us for many hours of traipsing through rhododendron gardens. We were joined by nine members of the Victoria Propagating Group; headed by Ken and Madeleine Webb as well as five members of the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society. I don't know if Nanaimo has an official propagating group, but they certainly have several members keenly interested. In fact one of their members, Rienhold Gorgosilich presented several of our NIRS members with small potted cuttings he had done the previous year. I was lucky to get a pseudochrythum, Briggs variety dwarf, as did several others.

On to our best imitation of Edward Scissor Hands, everyone started foraging and snooping thru Art's garden looking for good rhodos to gather for our very own cutting propagation practice. We don't have a 'common' area to do our propagating, so every member gathers and takes home what they want to do on

their own. It was interesting to see the different methods of labeling the cuttings so as to not mix them up and lose the names. Also, two or more of each selected rhodo needed to be collected to ensure success, maybe. Some collectors used elastic bands to band cuttings together with names on labels attached. Others had plastic zip lock bags with labels inside bags, or names written on the outside of bags. Whatever method was used, they all seemed successful. Several comments of "I'll share my such and such with you if you give me one of your so and so's. Better yet, let's wait until they have rooted then we can all share." This is shaping up, and I can see it is going to be more fun down the road, as we will undoubtedly be having a swap meet in the spring or early summer to boast, brag and share.

Back on track with our rhodo cutting collecting we headed over to Paddy and Mark Nixon's. Their garden has been on several garden tours and one of our NIRS bus tours went there a few years ago, so many of you will be familiar with their shoreline garden with steep slopes including that killer driveway that gets your heart pumping! We spent about an hour at their garden collecting, visiting and just plain enjoying the scenery, before it was off to Nanaimo for lunch.

Our lunch stop "Brown's Social House", just across the road from the Nanaimo Superstore was an excellent place to stop. After all, in Jakes words, we couldn't have him missing out on having lunch since he has never missed one in his life and wasn't about to start this day!

After lunch it was onward to Chris Southwick's garden in North Nanaimo. Although she was away for the day, she graciously offered her garden for cuttings for the entire group. Her rhododendron garden is relatively new compared to Lightburn's and the Nixons, however she did have quite a few dwarf rhododendrons of which I for one availed myself of. I saw quite a bit of cutting going on here as well by others.

With several dozen clippings in bags we all headed home to plan what to do next. I know everyone

involved had an excellent time and was looking forward to potting up those cuttings as soon as they could. I managed to get mine done the next day, under a dome, on a heat pad and under lights. Operation complete! Now we wait for the swap meet!



STUFF 'n STUCH

Discount list for NIRS

Jill Gould

We have been checking to see if our list of retailers that offer members a discount is current. To date, here are the findings:

Arrowsmith Greenhouses, Coombs: a discount on 1-gallon sizes and up.

Art Knapp's Plantland, Courtenay: 10% but not on sale or discount items.

Black Creek Farm & Feed Supply

Campbell River Garden Centre: 10% on regular priced potted plants. Not on seeds, bulbs, fertilizers, etc.

Hidden Acres Rhododendrons, Campbell River: 10%

River Meadows Farms, Courtenay: Non-sale items only

Shar-Kare Courtenay and Campbell River

There are a couple of retailers I have not yet been able to contact. Paradise Plants no longer offers discounts.

Please note that you must produce your card in order to claim the discount, before the sale is rung up. Discounts are not usually available on sale or already discounted items. Check with the retailer while purchasing.

These are the companies listed on the back of the membership card. There may be more. If anyone out there is aware of a retailer who would participate, or someone we've missed please let us know as soon as possible, and we will publicize it in the Newsletter. Having said that, perhaps a couple of people could take it on themselves to scout around?

NAME TAGS

Jill Gould

NIRS orders our name tags from a local supplier, who is very prompt. As is the way of all things, the price on the tags has gone up. A pin-backed tag is \$11.00 plus tax, or \$12.32. A magnetic-backed tag is \$14.50 plus tax, or \$16.24.

I have on hand name tags for Julie Waller, Margaret Ryan, Kathy Gordon, Connie Prain and Paul Wurz. Pick them up from me at a meeting, and get your receipt too. Don't forget, wearing your name tag entitles you to a free raffle ticket! The rhodo on the tag is not coloured but you can get creative with your paints or felt pens.

Since it is not out of my way, I can put in a order when I get two or more requests.

A GOOD NEWS STORY

As you are all aware Diana's husband John was in Royal Jubilee Hospital recently for cardiac surgery. Well they are home now and John is on the mend -- looking good and taking short walks. They would like to pass along their regards and thanks for all your concerns. Hopefully we'll see Diana back at our meetings shortly.

THE RHODO IN THE BANNER

Win "The Garth" -- a fun, and hopefully educational contest to determine your ability to identify rhododendrons. You might know this one just by the photo but don't forget this contest is all about using whatever resources are available to you

All entrants e-mailed to jakeellis@shaw.ca with the correct answer will be entered in a draw which will take place at the next meeting.

PRIZE! PRIZE! PRIZE!

The Clues

1. B.O.V.I.
2. It's seed parent was "Ring of Fire"
3. Named after our first First Lady



Who am I?

HAVEN'T RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

THE NOVEMBER MEETING WOULD BE A PERFECT TIME TO DO IT.

That's All Folks!

