



THE JUNE EDITION

RHODOTELLER

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NORTH ISLAND RHODODENDRON SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2017-2018

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Newsletter

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JUNE 2018

COMING EVENTS

5th June 2018-- Executive meeting

Our final Executive meeting of the season will be held at the home of Noni and Dave Godfrey. The meeting will start **promptly at 10 a.m.**

16 June 2018 -- Annual Picnic

This year's Annual Picnic will be held at **Robert Argall's place**. Imagine -- so much fun, so much good food, so many of your friends -- surrounded by Robert's beautiful gardens. Throw in some gorgeous summer weather and this will be a day not to be missed. **Saturday 16 June starts at 4 p.m.**

11 Sep 2018

Our first meeting of the new season. A new President, a new Board of Directors with all kinds of new ideas, a new schedule full of exciting speakers but the same old friends you partied hard with at the Picnic in June. Hope to see all of you in September as well as some new faces.

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

FROM THE NEW PRESIDENT

Time flies so quickly in May when all the garden work seems to pile up at once. Judi is away on holiday in Germany so I am writing the first of The Presidents Notes as your new president for the next two years. It seems that not too long ago I was just a new fledgling member of the NIRS. Then, when Judi became President, she asked me to be the V.P. I am excited about my new role in the club and look forward to working with the executive to keep our NIRS the great club that it has become over the years.

May is the busiest month for the NIRS. Our annual Mothers Day garden Tour and The Plant Sale were both outstanding successes this year. Thanks to all who participated in these events. A special thanks to the members who had their gardens on The Tour, Anne Chevrier, Kailey & Nathalie Caldwell-Waluk, Robert Argall, Louise & Roger Casson, Wolfgang & Wilma Hoefgen and Antje Guertler. It takes a tremendous amount of work to prepare a garden for the tour! All the gardens were fabulous! However these events are not just about raising funds for the club, but also a chance for us all to get to know one another better and have fun!

Our last major event before the summer is The June Picnic. Robert Argall at 387 Wireless Rd. has generously offered his beautiful garden for this potluck. Please bring your own cutlery, mug and chair and a sweet or savory dish to share. The club will providing a ham. There will be games on the lawn.

CHEERS!

Maureen Denny

THE RHODO GARDEN

Maureen Denny



May was Rhododendron Month in The Comox Valley. Hopefully everyone will have had a tour of the CVRG to see the magnificent rhodos in their full blooming glory. Our next work party will be the **EVENING of Tuesday June 12th at 7pm.** We will begin to deadhead the rhodos and do general clean up. Please bring your own tools: secateurs, rake, and bucket. A wheelbarrow would also be appreciated. The CVRG is now officially listed on The City of Courtenay website as a Partner in Parks . Google City of Courtenay Partner in Parks for more info.

Our next work party will be held Tuesday June 12th at 7 p.m.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Antje Guertler

Thanks so much to everyone who provided goodies throughout this season. At the upcoming picnic the club will be providing a ham and our members are invited to bring a sweet or savory dish.

Please don't forget your mugs, cutlery, chairs and whatever else you might need.



R. 'Blue Jay'

PROPAGATION GROUP

Diana Scott

Spring brought on a flurry of activity and in late April many hours were spent preparing plants for the upcoming sales. The rhodos and azaleas were well budded and those in bloom put on a good show. We were delighted to see so many of them move on to their new homes! We had a very successful 'sale' season and thank everyone who purchased from our stock.



Under Wolfgang's guidance, the Propagation Group members continued to work in teams to pot up the more established plants into two and three gallons, and moved our cuttings from last year up to $\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 gallon pots. Our most recent cuttings were potted up as well so now all have room to grow. The plants have been well spaced in the outdoor beds to allow for good branching and access to water. Wolfgang and Antje continue to water and weed on a regular basis, supported by a few members as the need arises.



Noni and her team will do an updated inventory now that the major sales are over. Our new 'babies' are coming along well, and we look forward to having some very interesting plants available to our members and the public in the coming years.



As we move into the hot summer months we will continue to monitor the watering, and put on the shade cloth if required. Thanks once again to all who are participating in our Propagation activities!

NIRS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MAY 8, 2018

The Annual General Meeting of The North Island Rhododendron Society was held at the lovely home and garden of Adrienne and Robert McNabb. We had a few rain showers that evening, so held the meeting on their large covered porch with a full view of the garden. Thanks Adrienne and Rob for hosting this meeting.

A BIG THANKS to Diana Scott, who did an excellent job of chairing the election portion of the AGM. She provided us with a very clear explanation on how the elections proceed and then proceeded to the actual elections.

Also A BIG THANKS to Jake Ellis who successfully encouraged members to fill vacant positions on the board.

Leaving the board are Judi Murakami who was a very fine president for past two years, Jill Gould membership, and Fran Thornton Revenue Table. THANK YOU!

Our new Executive and Board are as follows:

Maureen Denny, President, Jake Ellis , Vice President, Carolyn Chester, carrying on as Secretary, Dave Godfrey carrying on as Treasurer and Program Coordinator, Wolfgang Hoefgen carrying on as Propagation Group Coordinator, Nadine Boudreau for Membership, Judy Walker for Revenue Table (assisted by Naomi Chester). Claudia Ellis for Ways and Means, and Antje Guertler carrying on as Social Coordinator. Also continuing are Joanne Williams as our Sunshine Lady, Ruth Fowler and Noni Godfrey as Librarians, Dave Godfrey as Web Master and Dave and Garth Wedemire as Programme Co-ordinators.

THANK YOU to those members who have served the club and we welcome those taking on new roles or renewing their positions.

I think that with this team in place the club will continue to thrive.

Maureen

International Rhododendron Conference.

Family reunion of "Rhodoholics" from all over the world.

The International Rhododendron Conference attracts visitors from the USA, Canada, Japan and New Zealand to Bremen.

For Mike Stewart from Oregon, the Rhododendron Park is a pilgrimage site. He is already for the second time in Bremen.

Just now John Stephens is very enthusiastic about the upper hall of the Bremen Town Hall, which he visited this morning. The World Heritage site impressed the American from Long Beach near Washington, but then his eyes fell on some yellow *Yakushimanum* hybrids - and City Hall, Schnorr or Roland are forgotten. The plants want to be looked at closer.

. "This diversity here is breathtaking," says the former publishing manager as he examines the bed in the Rhododendron Park. "I've never seen it like this before."

Like him, it also happens to the other participants in the International Rhododendron Conference, which has been meeting in Bremen since Monday.

Around 175 "Rhodoholics", as André-Michael Schultz calls it, have come to Bremen from around the world. Schultz has been president of the resident German Rhododendron Society for eight years and is thus mainly the chief organizer of the numerous excursions and the extensive lecture program. "In fact, this is basically the annual convention of the American Rhododendron Society, we just hung our own annual convention," he says, rejecting the role of sole host.

The fact that the Americans are meeting in Europe has to do with the somewhat idiosyncratic structure of their association: The American Society also includes the Azalea and Rhododendron associations from Canada, as well as from the Netherlands, Scotland, Denmark, Finland and Sweden. "Therefore, the friends from the USA have asked if they cannot do their annual meeting with us this time," says Schultz.

One reason for the request is also the rhododendron park in Bremen, in whose founding his company in the 30s was significantly involved. The 46 hectare site is a kind of pilgrimage site in the global community of rhododendron fans.

"Those who love and appreciate these plants must have been here once," says Mike Stewart of Oregon. It is already his second visit to Bremen. This week, however, this week is only one stop on a trip to Europe, which will take him to other gardens in Scandinavia over the next two weeks.

"They are really crazy," says Hartwig Schepker. The director of the Rhododendron Park has just led about 30 guests of the conference through the garden and needs first a sip of water. Because the flower lovers from overseas - including visitors from New Zealand and Japan are among them - have the park director with many detail issues for this and those subspecies from the large family of rhododendron plants heavily used. And not always the expert can provide the answers, because hardly anyone can have all kinds and varieties in mind. "The park is basically a living museum, with breeds and crosses from two centuries," he says. The bottom line is over 650 wild species and about 3500 so-called

hybrids, so hybrids in the garden. "Some fashion brands from 100 years ago are no longer outside this park today," says Schepker.

For most conference visitors, this diversity is an important part of the fascination this plant exerts on them. And the variety wants to be photographed and documented, especially with the current flowers in many species. Every plant that Schepker draws attention to in his guidance is photographed, and what he does not mention is in demand. "The roughly 20 worldwide rhododendron companies, like numerous plants, are also somewhat hybrid", Schultz explains the composition of the audience.

Professionals such as tree nursery operators, park directors and scientifically working botanists have also found their way to Bremen as pure lovers and hobby gardeners, which includes Stephens.

However, he takes care of around two hectares of land in Long Beach, an order of magnitude that goes well beyond the average German garden. The dimensions of the rhododendron park are therefore not just for him to marvel at. "You can also be well inspired here for new plant arrangements", he sums up his visit.

Cheers,

Steve Henning

HOT OFF THE PRESS

The 75th Anniversary 2020 conference will be held April 29 - May 3 at the Heathman Lodge in Vancouver, Washington.

They invited everyone at the conference, 150 members from 20 countries to attend, and will have big shoes to fill as this conference has been stellar!

Starting with the opening reception and banquet, we've had great speakers, fabulous meals (including dinners in the oldest restaurant in Bremen and botanical conservatory in the rhododendron park), and lots of time to chat with Marc Columbel, Lionel de Rothschild, and Hartwig Schepker who's been keeping us in line. We've been to nurseries, gardens, and a variety of speakers, the most fascinating was Prof. Dr. Matthias Ullrich on "Rhododendrons as medicinal plants".

I look forward to seeing you at the picnic.

Judi M.

THE RHODO IN THE BANNER

'BLUE JAY'

The photos below are of a beautiful R. 'Blue Jay' growing in the garden of new members of the NIRS, Janet and Michael Campbell. These photos were taken by Janet on the 25th May 2018. Welcome to our club, Janet and Michael and thanks for sharing this lovely rhodo with us.

