



THE MAY 2019 EDITION
RHODOTELLER

www.nirsrhodos.ca

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RHODODENDRON SOCIETY
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MAY 2019

COMING EVENTS

7th May 2019 -- Executive meeting

This month's meeting will be held at the home of our Secretary, Carolyn Chester.

The meeting will start at **10 a.m.**

14th May 2019 -- AGM

This year's Annual General Meeting will be held at the home of our Membership Chairperson Nadine Boudreau. Please see inside for further details.

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

Spring is definitely here. We gardeners are entering the fanatical green thumb mode... and the sore back mode. It is the time of year we have all been waiting for! Our wonderful club is also in its busiest time. The Annual Plant Sale has already come and gone. The display of Rhodos inside the hall was fantastic. By all accounts we did very well due to the hard work of all volunteers. Thank you!

I spoke with Wolfgang after the sale. He informed me that we sold approximately 140 rhodos. The NIRS sale table pretty much sold out too. I saw a lot of happy customers walking around with plants in hand; evidence that our efforts are appreciated by the community of gardeners in the Comox Valley.

Our next big event is the Annual Mother's Day Garden Tour, Sunday, May 12 from 10am to 4pm. All is organized for that. Hopefully the weather will be warm and sunny. Thanks to all who volunteered to be a Gate Sitter.

I also want to thank all club members who waited so patiently during our last meeting as Garth tried to get Judi Murakami's presentation on The Bremen Conference up and running. Her new computer did not like something at the church. We all had a good time anyways and got to see some of the presentation about a GIANT nursery in Germany. This was tree and plant production on a scale that was astounding.

Don't forget about the ARS fall conference in Parksville. The conference will take place September 27, 28, 29th and is a great opportunity to hear wonderful speakers so close to home. **Google: www.marsrhodos.ca/ars2019 to find out more.**

The Annual AGM will be held at the home and garden of Nadine and Gerry Boudreau. All positions for Directors have been filled; however we do need someone to volunteer to be Vice President for 2019 to 2020. Does anyone want to jump in head first or feet first for this position? It is a great chance to get into the inner workings of our club and attend the District meetings in August and March.

Also needed is someone to take over the Newsletter position. This could be done by a team of two. The newsletter is such an important part of our club. Please give some serious thought to helping the club.

The AGM evening at Nadine's starts at 6.30 pm with a tour of her new garden. Bring a lawn chair.

See you all soon!

Maureen

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the North Island Rhododendron Society will be held on Tuesday 14th May 2019 at Nadine Boudreau's garden, 3782 Meredith Drive in Royston. Come at 6:30 pm for a self-directed garden tour, meeting starts at 7:30. Bring a lawn chair!

Business to come before the meeting will include the Annual Financial Report, Reports from Committees, and the Election of Directors and Officers for 2019/20.

There are four 2-year board terms, and one 1 year ending in May. Members wishing to put names forward for nomination are to contact our President Maureen Denny or Nominations Chair Judi Murakami.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

MEMBERSHIP

Nadine Boudreau

The April meeting was well attended with 63 members signed in. There were no guests, as all those who came as a guest signed up as members! Welcome Arnie, Deb, Linda, Lynne and Charles. We now have 95 members.

I hope you all have a chance to go on the Mother's Day Tour, always inspiring to see what others have done or are going to be doing in their gardens.

Happy gardening!

THE RHODO GARDEN

Maureen Denny



The weather certainly was non-cooperative last month and all efforts to have a work party had to be postponed due to rain. Dave Godfrey managed to spend some time in the garden in the rain doing a cleanup. Thanks Dave. **This month the work party will meet May 16th at 10 a.m.**

Some good news is that the bench dedicated to Harry Wright, one of our founding members, has been refinished by the crew at Courtenay Parks. Thanks To Tyler Johns, our liaison with the City, for taking care of this.

It seems then that this is a good excuse to take a break, visit the CVRG and sit down on that bench, and gaze at all the beautiful Rhodos that are just now bursting forth with their yearly display.

Bring your tools and buckets and hope to see a good turnout on May 16th.



Need a ride to one of our meetings?



Call Sue at 250-331-1013
or send her an email at grant.sk@gmail.com

THE PROPAGATION GROUP

Report by Diana Scott

As expected, spring has been a very busy time for the Propagation Group. Wolfgang and team made sure that the plants were well cared for over the late fall and winter, watering and tending as needed. Our current stock is at an 'all time high' and the 100 rhodos that are being grown for the Fall Conference are coming along well.

We thank Garth and Sue for hosting our April Propagation Meeting where we shared information and mapped out our plan for the coming months. The morning meeting began with the opportunity to put our names in a draw for 5 wonderful little rhodos. Garth generously donated the plants that were won by very appreciative members of the group! Thanks Garth!

Paul conducted an interesting and informative demonstration on pruning and pinching plants for shape and overall health. We really enjoyed watching and having the opportunity to ask questions and share tips and techniques. We went on to discuss planting mix and fertilizing options, noting the challenges of getting good potting material. Thanks Paul!



Wolfgang reported on the propagation area and work to be done. The rhodo stock from the cool greenhouse has been moved outdoors, organized, spaced, fertilized, and an inventory done. Small plants in the 4 inch pots are still in the propagation greenhouse and can stay for another year unless seen to be root bound in the fall.



Noni organized a Member Sale on April 13th and despite light drizzle and downright RAIN, the sale went well. Gardeners know how to dress for the weather and shop regardless of the elements. Noni reports that 107 plants were sold in a little over an hour, and the members went away with some lovely plants! To ensure a good selection for those not in the club, Nadine put aside plants for the Rhodo Sale April 28, and for the upcoming Fall Conference. Great plants for everyone!

As part of the Mother's Day Garden Tour, Noni is organizing extra volunteers for the Smith Garden that will include Propagation members available to tour the propagation area and sell plants to those who might be interested.

Repotting sessions will take place after the Garden Tour, and a watering/maintenance schedule has been established for mid May till the end of August. We are well in to our next season! Thanks to all the members in the Propagation Group, and we continue to welcome any new folks who might like to participate!

THANK YOU

by Wolfgang Hoefgen

You probably noticed while reading the President's Report that our club sold 140 rhododendrons at the Plant Sale on Sunday April 28th. This would not have been possible without the generosity and dedication of the members of our Propagation Group. This group of volunteers gave close to 200 hours of their time to maintain these quality plants over the past year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who gave of themselves to help provide the funds required to allow the NIRS to operate so successfully.

UPCOMING PROGRAMMES

by Dave Godfrey

Our next meeting on May 14th will be our AGM 7:30 PM at Nadine Boudreau's garden. Then on Saturday, June 15th at 4 PM, we will be gathering for our annual potluck picnic at Robert Argall's garden. This will cap off another successful season of monthly meetings.

Following the summer hiatus, we will resume our monthly meetings on Tuesday, Sept. 10th with our guest speaker, NIRS associate member, John Deniseger on "Why Do I Garden?" (Remember the meeting that was cancelled due to snow back in February!) For our October 8th meeting, we will welcome back Margaret Cadwaldr. After the success of her first book "In Veronica's Garden", Margaret has written a second book on the origins of "Dart Hills Park" in White Rock. She has agreed to speak to us on the history of Dart Hills and its legacy.

Deadline for the Spring Photos is quickly approaching. Take your camera out now while all the rhododendrons are in full bloom. Be sure to have all your shots to Garth gwedemire@gmail.com by June 21st (first day of Summer.) Please put "Spring Photos" in the subject line of your e-mail so they don't get lost in the shuffle.

“Rhododendrons by the Seaside”

September 27 to 29, 2019

Parksville Community and Conference Centre

Register at www.marsrhodos.ca/ars2019/

With the theme of “Rhododendrons as the World Warms,” the lineup of speakers, workshops and tours promises a busy and exciting weekend for everyone. This conference is one of the biggest bargains of the year. An early registration fee of \$95 will entitle you to 12 speakers over three days, including two workshops, choice of one of three bus tours, two continental breakfasts and lunch on Saturday.

As well, there is access to a plant sale, a display of international rhododendron photos throughout the facility and a silent auction. Two keynote speakers follow the evening banquets on Friday and Saturday. Dinner is buffet style for an additional \$50 for each night.

The conference theme relates to climate change implications, but the context is for all gardeners who are interested in growing healthy plants of any type in our area. Speakers include a wide range of local and internationally-recognized experts in their fields:

Dr. Richard Hebda, *Curator Emeritus from the Royal BC Museum;*

Dr. Linda Gilkeson, *entomologist;*

Mike Stewart, *rhododendron nurseryman;*

Steve Hootman, *Executive Director and Curator of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden (RSBG) in Federal Way, WA;*

Dr. Nancy Turner, *UVic ethnobotanist;*

Marc Colombel, *author and hybridizer, France;*

Ron Long, *botanist and wildflower photographer;*

Nancy Moore, *landscape designer & horticulturist;*

Geoff Ball, *executive director Milner Gardens and Woodland;*

Dr. Juliana Medeiros, *research scientist, Holden Arboretum, Ohio.*

*In addition, bulb and seed propagation workshops will be conducted by **Bernie Dinter**, Cowichan nurseryman and **Dennis Bottemiller**, propagator extraordinaire, recently of the RSBG.*

For those who need a place to stay, the MARS website has a list of various accommodations near the conference site. For best choice and best price, we suggest booking early as late September is still busy with tourists.

THE RHODO IN THE BANNER

R. 'SEAVIEW SUNSET'

(photo by Frank Fujioka)



Such a delight! Just today I walked through a garden full of wonderful Rhodos, of all sizes, colours, with and without scent, but when I approached 'Seaview Sunset' I just couldn't help coming to a screeching halt.

Now I know I'm rather fickle when it comes to my rhododendron love affairs, but I think this may be the real thing. Three feet tall, hardy to -12 deg C, with 'Nancy Evans' and 'Canadian Sunset' as parents, this may well be one of the best of Frank Fujioka. What do you think?

VOLUNTEER NEEDED
NEWSLETTER EDITOR

I have advised the NIRS Board of Directors that, as of end of June, I will be retiring from my position as editor of this newsletter. It really has been fun, but it's time for me to move over and allow someone else to take over the reins — time for someone else to bring fresh thinking to the production of this newsletter. After serving as V.P. and President of the NIRS, I can honestly say this job is just the best. I've enjoyed the challenges of pushing my limited computer knowledge to the max and having the opportunity to try my hand at writing — to put a bunch of words together to, hopefully, form an intelligent sentence. Editors come and editors go, but this newsletter — The Rhodoteller — is vital as a means of communicating with our members and must go on. But we need an editor.

The position of editor requires only a few hours per month spent in the comfort of your own home. Gather information from other members of the Board of Directors and members of the club and put it together in a format of your design. The newsletter is produced once a month. In the past, I produced the newsletter and sent out assorted items to the club members. But the new editor will be tasked solely with producing the newsletter.

Please everyone, don't look around and wait for somebody else to volunteer. This position is too important to leave it to someone else. If anything, I have shown that anyone with minimum computer skills and Grade 10 English can produce this newsletter.

Make an old man feel good — put your hand up and say, "I'll do it".

JAKE

P.S.

Please don't forget our planned photo night in January of 2020. If you have any photos of your spring garden, please send them to Garth Wedemire.

Good Gardening and I'll see you at the AGM on 14th May 2019.