

THE RHODOTELLER



Remembrance Day Nov 11th

President's View

This year seems strange in more ways than one. Although the Covid pandemic has disrupted our lives immensely, so is 'Mother Nature' confusing many rhododendrons.

As we all know, the prime flowering season for most rhododendrons is April and May. However, in our garden we currently have a few trusses showing on 'Noyo Brave', 'Elizabeth Ostbo', 'Cunningham's Blush', 'Fabia x Bureavii' and 'Titan Beauty'. Although they are lovely to enjoy now, this will reduce the numbers for display in the spring. Time will tell.

We were incredibly pleased to hear that our Vice President Robert Argall is now home recovering from his very scary open-heart surgery. It was bad enough that he had to have this procedure in the first place, but to have to go through it twice in one week was even more upsetting. Thankfully, he is recovering comfortably with help from his close friends and neighbours. It will take Robert at least six months to recover fully. During his absence, Maureen Denny has kindly offered to cover his VP position. Thank you, Maureen. [continued...]

On Monday, October 26th, a few members of the NIRS Propagation group welcomed members from other island chapters to take cuttings from the many rhododendrons at the Smith's garden. This was a one-time opportunity for their propagation groups to take these cuttings to build up their inventory for future years. Thank you to all who attended.

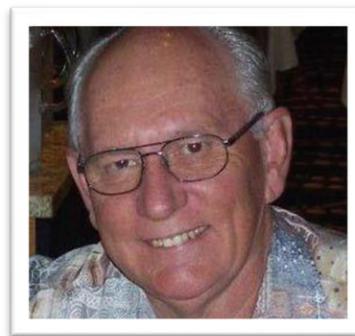
I hope that most of you have had a chance to read and respond to our latest survey on Zoom technology. It is our hope to have as many members as possible using this program to enjoy future meetings and special presentations.

One such special presentation will be coming on Wednesday, November 18th at 7 PM. District 1 members will be provided access to a District-wide Zoom account when RSBG Executive Director Steve Hootman will give a PowerPoint presentation of his "Plant Hunting in North Vietnam." Each participating chapter has contributed a \$50 honorarium to Steve through District Director Glen Jamieson. As with presentations at our meetings, Steve's presentation is expected to last about 45 minutes. There will be no business conducted during this special Zoom meeting.

If you have not answered the survey or provided us with your information, there is still time to do so. We will provide information on how to activate the Zoom app and give personal training if required. Please email me (davegod@shaw.ca) as soon as possible so that we can get you up to speed before Steve's presentation. For those wishing to participate, a link and access code will be provided by email closer to the date of the presentation.

That is all I have for this month,
so remember to "*Be kind, be calm and be safe!*"

By Dave Godfrey



Suggestions for Your Viewing Entertainment...

British Gardens in Time - Great Dixter: Great Dixter lays claim to being the most innovative, spectacular and provocative garden of the 20th century. [Maureen]
<https://hdclump.com/british-gardens-in-time-great-dixter/>

"The Big Flower Fight" on Netflix is about a giant floral sculpture contest associated with the Royal Botanical Garden. Crazy fun with flowers in reality TV-style series. [Kathy]

A good link to the Heronswood Garden videos... no recent ones, but they are all worthwhile.
[Judy]
<https://heronswoodgarden.org/video/>

Meetings

Nov. 3 at 10 am NIRS Executive meeting will be held socially distanced at the church.

Regular monthly meetings and other events have been cancelled until further notice due to COVID-19, however, there will be some meetings on Zoom.

Steve Hootman Special Zoom Presentation

On Wednesday, November 18th, at 7:30 pm all District 1 members are invited to attend a special Zoom presentation by Steve Hootman, Executive Director of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden in Federal Way, WA. Steve's topic for the presentation will be "Plant Hunting in North Vietnam."

Prior to joining the Zoom call, you will have to download the App on to your computer, iPad, etc. As per the survey recently sent to all members, we will offer tutorial assistance in getting you set up, if needed. Please let us know if you need assistance.

Host Glen Jamieson, District Director, will mute you, so you will not be able to actively participate during the presentation. We will also try recording the presentation, so it can hopefully be viewed at a later date if that night is not convenient for you to attend.

We will send out the Zoom login information to participating NIRS members a few days before hand, so you will know how to connect with the presentation that will start shortly after 7:30 pm. There will be no NIRS business conducted at this meeting. This is a trial procedure. Let's hope it is a success and we'll see you there!

Dave and the Executive

Membership Renewal

So far in the months of September and October we have received 41 membership renewals. That is approximately 50% of our present memberships. We thank those members who have kindly renewed and encourage others to do so, sooner rather than later.

Register before November 30, 2020 and you will be entered into a draw to win your 2021 membership fee back as an incentive in our "**Early Renewal Program**." We would like to have memberships renewed ASAP so we can have everyone signed up with the ARS by January 1st to ensure you receive your Winter edition of the Journal.

We encourage members to mail a \$35 cheque payable to N.I.R.S. to PO Box 3183, Courtenay BC V9N 5N4. Or, if you prefer, you can e-transfer \$35 to the club treasurer by email nonigod@shaw.ca. Did you know that many financial institutes have now waived e-transfer fees for their clients?

Thank you from Dan & Margaret

The Comox Valley Rhodo Garden



The last work party of the year was held on October 15 with about ten club members attending. Raking was the main task to be done, and when we were all done the garden looked fabulous! Thanks to everyone who has pitched in this year to keep the gardens looking good and staying healthy. The public is very appreciative of our efforts, as we regularly receive very positive comments as we are working there.

I hope everyone has a safe and healthy winter.

Maureen



Revenue Table News

The fall weather is upon us, and finally you can put away the hoses and watering wands and find time for those more interesting chores- like potting up plants in readiness for our **Spring 2021 Plant Sale!**

It's a good time to divide and pot up perennials, but don't leave it too late –



they need to make some root growth before cold winter weather sets in. Also repot small plants, but just into next sized pot- big pots might just get too soggy over the winter. Label all, as the "I'll remember" never works...especially once the leaves are gone!

As well as plants, any gardening related items are very welcome at our sale. All funds raised by the revenue table sales support activities by the NIRS members.

Thank you and Happy Fall Gardening, from Naomi & Judy

Show & Tell

Some suggest that chestnuts help ward off spiders from basements and crawl spaces. Noni has been using this method for a couple of years now and we can assure you it does work. There are plenty of chestnuts around the valley and most owners would be pleased for you to gather them up.

Dave



Rhodo Planting at Habitat for Humanity

Most of you are familiar with the work that Habitat for Humanity does to provide affordable housing for low-income families. Their most recent building site is on Lake Trail Road, just across from Lake Trail Middle School.

They have reached the point where the last building is being finished, so the rest of the site is being landscaped. Habitat is a charity and was searching for inexpensive solutions for plant material.

A few years back, before the site was being cleared for building, Maureen Denny and I took a prowl through. It had been the old McQuillan homestead. The house was demolished, but much plant material remained. Unfortunately, the apple trees and a giant walnut were slated for removal, but there were many large (and old) rhododendrons blooming bravely. Along comes the Propagation Group! Cuttings were taken of a couple of unknown varieties and turned over to the Propagation Group for growing.

With the help of Wolfgang's expert teaching and the care of the Group, eight rhododendron cuttings grew to the three-gallon-pot size and were aching for a home!

Finally, this fall the word came out that landscaping stage had been reached, so seven of the eight plants have been put in the ground, with prayers said over them. The remaining one will have to wait for the next stage of landscaping to be completed. That will probably be the spring.

Thanks to Paul Wurz who made a tentative identification (from a photo) of one of them as "Mrs. Charles E. Pearson". We'll wait for blooming to find out for sure. With any luck and Mother Nature's help, rhododendrons that were part of the original garden will once again bloom in their new locations.

By Jill Gould



Rhododendron planted at Habitat's housing site.

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Newsletter submission deadline is the 25th of each month.

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