

THE RHODOTELLER



"Snow Lady" taken March 2020 by Garth Wedemire

President's View

Welcome to 2021! We have just survived the most horrible year in modern history, and with a vaccine on the horizon, things are looking brighter for the coming year.

While we look forward to better days, I would like to take this opportunity to look back on this past year and acknowledge some of our many members who make this club so productive and enjoyable.

First and foremost, I wish to thank my predecessor Maureen Denny. She not only did an admirable job as President for two years, but she also took over the leadership of our Comox Valley Rhododendron Garden project. She helped coordinate monthly work parties and liaised with the City parks crew when required. Thank you to Maureen, and her helpers, for your many hours of devotion to the club.

In addition to ensuring the coffee is on when we have meetings at the hall, our Social Lady Antje Guertler has also been a big part of our NIRS Propagation group. Along with Wolfgang

Hoefgen, Antje spent many hours this summer watering and checking on our plant inventory at the Smith garden. Thank you both.

I also wish to thank Nadine Beaudreau and Kathy Haigh for keeping us informed and entertained with interesting newsletters throughout this past year; and Garth Wedemire for all his behind-the-scenes work helping with the website. Many participating members enjoyed the Zoom presentations thanks to his expert guidance and tutorials.

Secretary Carolyn Chester has been extremely helpful and supportive in keeping accurate records of our meeting discussions. Along with her daughter Naomi, she kindly hosted our only fundraiser this year – the summer sale in July. Director Judy Walker as part of our executive helped organize this sale. And Naomi's online sales through her social media contacts also contributed to the success of the sale. Thank you, ladies, for a job well done!

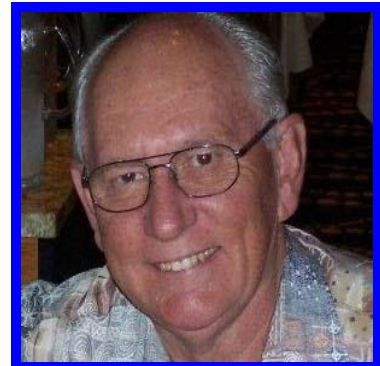
Our Sunshine Lady Joanne Williams sent out cards of condolences and well wishes throughout the year. While Diane Van Osstdam helped coordinate our Christmas Hamper campaign again this past month.

Last, but by no means least, I wish to thank my wife, Noni, for all her support as the club's Treasurer and Communications Director. She keeps an accurate accounting of our finances, while also keeping our members informed with emails about items of interest as they arise.

As you can see, even in a year where there appears to be little happening due to the pandemic, there are many members doing their part to keep the club viable. Thank you one and all. And if I missed anyone, I am terribly sorry; but know that you are also appreciated.

Although we are in the dark days of winter, there are signs that Spring is not too far off. Some snowdrops, hyacinth and narcissus are starting to poke their heads up already! And as the famous poet Shelley wrote two hundred years ago in his 'Ode to the West Wind' ... "If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?"

By Dave Godfrey



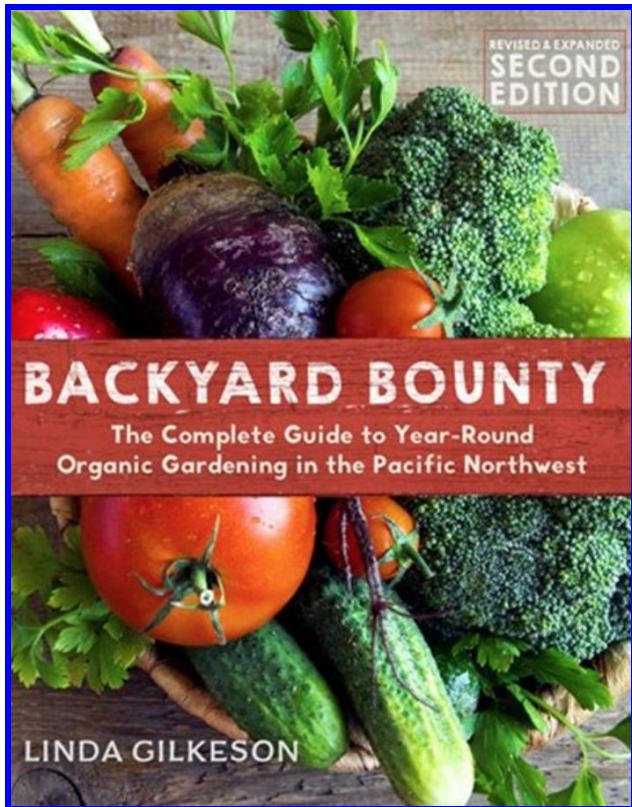
Meetings

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

The January executive meeting has been **cancelled**.

Helleborus niger 'HGC Jacob' (Christmas Rose) "which I bought in December '20 at Thrifty Foods, repotted it and it spends its time by our front door." by Garth Wedemire

Linda Gilkeson Special Zoom Presentation Jan. 15



Linda is a well known entomologist, gardener, and author, from Salt Spring Island. Her topic will be “**Year-Round Organic Gardening.**”

“Gardeners in the mild climate of the West Coast can enjoy fresh food from their gardens all year round. To do that you need to choose the right varieties and plant them at the right time. The talk includes tips on what to grow, planting schedules and simple ways to protect crops from extreme weather. Fitting winter crops in with summer plantings to make the most intensive use of your garden space will also be covered along with how to avoid common pests and other problems.”

Join us on Zoom at 7:00 pm on Friday, January 15th for this informative presentation. **RSVP** to Dave ASAP and you'll be sent a link to join this District 1 presentation before January 15th.

The Comox Valley Rhodo Garden Report

I had a quick tour of the gardens a few days before Christmas and all is well. The leaves are all down from the Maple and Liriodendron trees which overshadow the main parts of the garden, and the pathways have been cleaned up by The City of Courtenay's Parks staff.

Weather, and Covid restrictions permitting, our first Work Party of 2021 will be held 10am, February 11th 2021.

Maureen



NIRS 2020 Christmas Hamper



Well folks, this year's Christmas Hamper collection from our club looked a little different than in previous years. Because of Covid-19 neither Maureen nor Diane wanted to risk any unnecessary exposure to do the extra shopping required to make sure the hamper had all the necessary ingredients. To this end, we contacted Royal LePage to see how they suggest we handle this year's donations from our club. We were told that if we wanted to sponsor a specific family then we would have to do the shopping. However, if we wanted to just donate the money, they would put it towards buying food and gifts, possibly for multiple families. This sounded pretty good to us, so we opted for this way to help needy families. We are well aware that these donations this year were extremely important due to the financial challenges for

many families because of COVID-19.

So, the word went out to our membership that we would be collecting for this year's program "Sharing the Christmas Spirit" with cash only via cheques or e-transfers to our treasurer Noni. Thanks to our members' generous donations, a total of \$350 was collected towards this worthy cause. We were once again able to help immensely with the hamper program.

Thank you to all who donated to this worthy program again this year.

Happy New Year to all.



'Senator Jackson' May 2012 by Garth Wedemire



2015 Comox Glacier (Queneesh) and R. diversipilosum 'Milky Way' by Garth Wedemire

Membership Report

With the ARS membership year ending on December 31st, we are pleased to welcome back 61 regular members and 4 associates.

Unfortunately, we still have 28 memberships outstanding for 2021. For those who still wish to renew your membership, the easiest way is by e-transfer to club treasurer nonigod@shaw.ca or pop your \$35 cheque payable to N.I.R.S. into the mail at our club's mailing address (P.O. Box 3183, Courtenay, BC, V9N 5N4).

The Early Bird draw for those members whose dues were received by November 30th was made and this year's lucky winner was Antje Guertler. Congratulations to Antje and thank you to all who renewed early.

By Dan & Margaret Ryan





Clive Lionel Justice, Landscape Architect, Planner, Author and Garden Historian, died in his sleep at his home in Vancouver on December 21, 2020. Clive was born on August 14, 1926 at Ganges, Salt Spring Island, BC.

Clive used his WWII veteran's education allowance to study Landscape Architecture at the University of California, Berkeley, where he met and married Wanda Peckinpah. Clive blazed a trail in his professional life in BC as one of the first registered landscape architects in the province, mentoring a number of enthusiastic interns and employees. Among the firm's notable projects were Park & Tilford Gardens and UBC Botanical Garden. Clive was a founding member of the Vancouver Rhododendron Society and active in protecting local parks and Vancouver's heritage trees. A volunteer with Canadian Executive Services Organization, he spent several

years after retirement working with park planners in a number of developing countries. Clive was elected a Fellow of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects and was an American Rhododendron Society Gold Medal recipient.

Ever up for a challenge, Clive entered a PhD program at SFU to study garden history, receiving his doctorate in 2002 at the age of 76. He was a prolific and creative builder and designer and a gifted communicator. He will be remembered for his insatiable appetite for knowledge, sartorial flair (Stetson, western suit and boots, then later, Scottish kilt and related kit), and irrepressible energy, but especially for his service to the community and indomitable force of personality.

Judy Walker was fortunate to know Clive, first as a student at UBC in Landscape Architecture, and later received his book award when she became a registered landscape architect. Clive visited the Comox Valley to discuss the significant trees at Filberg Park and commented on Mary Greig's *Acer griseum* as he thought it was the largest specimen outside the UK and should have permanent protection. Later when Judy wrote "A Garden for Life – Mary Greig and the Royston Rhododendrons" Clive enthusiastically offered publishing services and his company, BC Bigleaf Maple Books, produced the book. Clive always had another project up his sleeve – even in his 90's, phone conversations always involved history that needed writing, the next research that needed doing and another story to remember. He will be missed by many in the plant world and beyond.

With thanks to Vancouver Rhododendron Society and Judy Walker

R. yakushimanum 'Koichiro Wada' photo taken in the Bieberstein garden in Nanoose Bay 2012 by Garth Wedemire





Brian & Cathy Storey in 2019

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of NIRS member Cathy Storey.

Brian and Cathy moved from Toronto to Edmonton in 1972 where they lived until 2009. By then, the Alberta winters were becoming too cold, so they moved to Courtenay. Cathy & Brian first joined the ARS-NIRS in December 2012. Cathy loved gardening and taking photos, which she did at some club events.

Cathy died from cancer at home on Dec 27, 2020. Our club has expressed condolences to Brian.



'Helene Schiffner' taken May 2020
by Garth Wedemire

For your information/education/entertainment:

- ★ Book review: A GARDEN FOR LIFE: MARY GREIG & THE ROYSTON RHODODENDRONS by Judith Walker [Vancouver Rhododendron Society](#)
- ★ BORROWED FROM NATURE is a 2020 documentary about Japanese Gardens in Western Canada, with a particular focus on Mr. Roy Sumi's work on the Nitobe Memorial Gardens at UBC in Vancouver. Other gardens visited are Nikka Yuko at Lethbridge, AB and the Peace Garden/Nikkei Centre at New Denver, BC. Watch this calm and beautiful production on CBC Gem. [CBC Gem - Watch TV Shows, Films, Documentaries and Live TV](#)
- ★ KISS THE GROUND is a 2020 Netflix production starring Woody Harrelson which looks at how the Earth's soil is key to combating climate change and preserving the planet. www.netflix.com

The 30th World Community Film Festival is ready to roll, virtually, Feb. 5 -13, 2021

Programmer Janet Fairbanks says “We are excited to be offering a great lineup of international documentary films addressing social and environmental justice, LGBTQ+, Indigenous issues, food security, climate change, music and arts. Bonus features will include interviews with filmmakers and other resource people.” Films will be available to watch from the comfort of your home at any time during the festival. Audience members can purchase festival passes or tickets for individual films and decide when to watch, in any order, for 9 days. It's “your festival, your way.” [Film Festival](#)



R. quinquefolium taken April 2018 at Bodnant Gardens, Taly'n Caf, Wales UK by Garth Wedemire

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Propagation

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Dave Godfrey and Garth Wedemire

Co-ordinator CVRG

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Sunshine Lady

Joanne Williams 250-941-2540

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& Garth Wedemire 250-331-1122

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Noni Godfrey 250-335-0717

Past President

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Newsletter Editor

Kathy Haigh 250-702-4311

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Newsletter submission deadline is the 25th of each month. Don't be shy - any members may submit photos, articles, notices, etc.

Colorado Blue Spruce (Picea pungens) Jan 2021
Garth Wedemire

