

The Victoria Rhododendron Society Newsletter



Box 5562 Postal Station B, Victoria BC Canada V8R 6S4

Garth Homer Centre, 811 Darwin Street, Victoria, B.C.

April 2007

Twenty-seventh Year of Publication

e-mail: mdeweese@shaw.ca

web page - <http://www.VictoriaRhodo.ca>

Monday, April 9th, 7:30 p.m.

'Rowallane; a special garden in the North of Ireland' Mike C. Snowden BEM. AHRHS

Mike is a recently retired Head Gardener at the famous garden Rowallane, in County Down, Northern Ireland. He is visiting BC with his wife, June, and we wish them a very special welcome! Please use this opportunity to bring your friends to hear this very special presentation. Donations to help offset the costs of bringing this National Trust Garden speaker to our club will be appreciated.

VRS Board

President:

Bill McMillan

478-3515

wtmcmillan@telus.net

Past President & Membership:

Dean Goard

592-6915

deangoard@shaw.ca

1st Vice President:

Margaret deWeese

748-0538

mdeweese@shaw.ca

2nd Vice President:

Jacqueline Bradbury

389-1379

jacqbradbury@shaw.ca

Treasurer:

Ann Widdowson

479-9167

awiddowson@shaw.ca

Secretary:

Theresa McMillan

478-3515

tmcmillan@telus.net

Members-at-Large:

Karen Morrison

477-8281

bkmorrison@shaw.ca

Lois Blackmore

478-6615

loisb@shaw.ca

Dick Pitfield

592-4261

rpitfield@telus.net

Arthur Ralfs

479-2629

acralfs@shaw.ca

Newsletter Committee :

Margaret deWeese

748-0538

Joyce Whittle

656-7313

Peggy Pitfield

592-4261

Website Pat Fuller 370-2170 A.Ralfs 479-2629

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April Refreshments:

Wilf and Georgina Jones, Charlie Johnson, Betty Kennedy, Dora, Robin and Linda Kreiss, Ed Kubek, David and Agnes Lynn, Karen Burns and Dave Mackas are kindly asked to bring goodies for the assembled members and guests. Please phone **Theresa** at 478-3515 to confirm contributions and willingness to help behind the counter. Thank you all.

District One Website

Thanks to Garth Wedemire simply type in rhodos.ca for the District One Chapter's websites and newsletters. Lots of good information from our sister associations. And remember our website is victoriarhodo.ca You can find it on the District website as well.

The Annual General Meeting

Margaret deWeese, 1st V.P, called the AGM to order and then read the minutes of the last AGM. It was RMS by Jason Jones/ Bill Gordon that the minutes be adopted as read.

Margaret also read the President's message (Bill McMillan) thanking those who served the club so well during the last year. Special recognition was given to Liz Keay and Keiko Alkire who are leaving the Executive this year. Ann Widdowson read the financial statement, which had been reviewed by Bruce Maycock, accountant. RMS Ann Widdowson/ Karen Morrison that the financial statements be adopted as read. Carried.

RMS Dean Goard/Murray Matheson that the VRS waive the appointment of an auditor. Carried.

Dean called for any nominations from the floor. There being none he moved the slate as printed in the March newsletter be approved. Carried.

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**This concluded the AGM portion of the meeting.
Recorded by Lois Blackmore**

Exchange Seeds from Poland

We received a number of seed packages from an enthusiast from Poland. I have no idea if the seeds are open pollinated but would suspect so. If you would like any please contact me at deangoard@shaw.ca

The sender said he was specially interested in: Podophyllum Hepatica Americana, Sanquinaria Canadense Pink, Tecophilaea, and Trillium

He asked if we could send him seeds of:

Podophyllum Difforme, P. Tsaybensis, P. Veitchii, P. Mairei, P. Delavayi, P.

Versipelle, P. Pleiantha, P. Yunnanensis, P. Peltatum, "Missouri May", "Kaleidoscope", Spotty Dotty", "Carousel", P. Hexandrum "Butan"

At the propagating group meeting, it was agreed that we should share the list and should figure out what we can do to help him. The list is as follows:

Rhododendron

R. smirnowii, R. caucasicum, R. racemosum, R. ferrugineum L., R. schlippenbachii, R. molle, R. ponticum, R. albrechtii Maxim, R. japonicum H&S 97-295, R. brachicarpum

No Longer Available R. kiusianum H&S 97-121

Other

Astragalus Membranaceus, Codonopsis Clematidia, Codonopsis Pilosula, Codonopsis Ovata, Codonopsis Tubulosa, Codonopsis Ussurienses, Dictamnus Albus. Dictamnus Purpureus, Helleborus Foetidus, Leonurus Sibiricus, Pulsatilla Vulgarus "Poland", Schisandra Chinensis, Scutellaria Bricaleensis,

Dean Goard

Show and Sale Raffle Booth

Please help by donating garden items for the raffle, especially garden art, tools, as well as plants. The raffle helps out with the year's expenses and it would be great to have a wide variety of items similar to the Christmas party raffle table.

Thank you,
Margaret deWeese

Alec McCarter Bowl

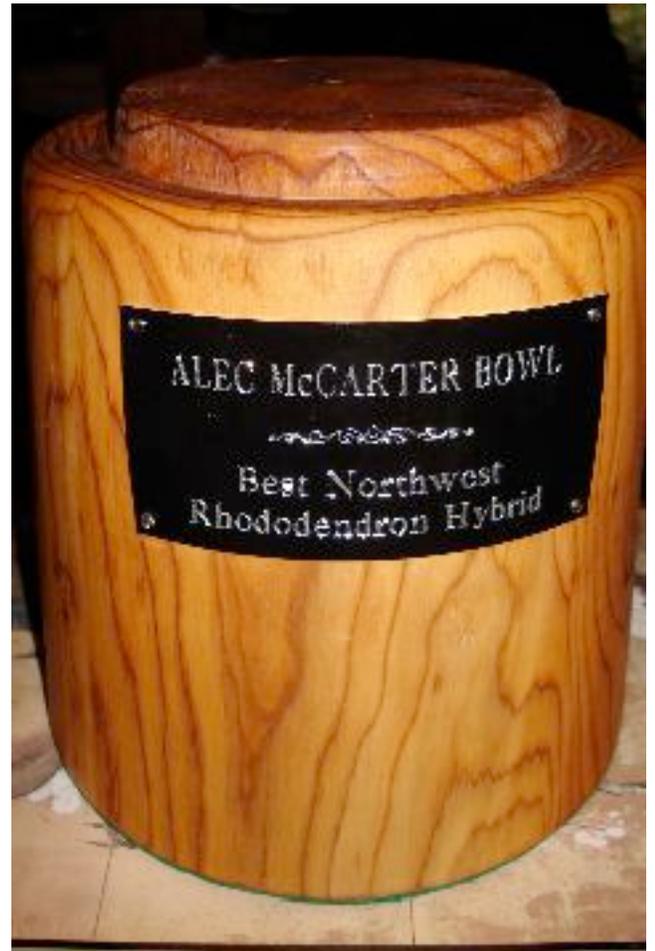
This is a new trophy recognizing Alec McCarter for his dedication to the Victoria Rhododendron Society. Member Nancy Thompson provided the Yew wood for the base.

“The Yew is an incredibly atmospheric tree with a strong presence. This is especially noticeable when you enter a Yew grove or are in the presence of an old venerable 'Yew-being!'”

Anna Fraser

Alec was that old venerable ‘Yew-being.’”

Murray Matheson turned the magnificent base and Margaret deWeese provided the silver bowl. It was decided to make this the trophy for the best Northwest Hybrid truss in Show which differentiates it from the Best Vancouver Island hybrid, to include hybrids hybridized on the B.C.mainland, and in Washington and Oregon.



Victoria Rhododendron Society - 2007 Annual Show
April 28, 2007 - 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Set-up for Entries, April 27 - 3 to 7 p.m.

Cadboro Bay United Church Hall,
2625 Arbutus Road, Victoria

Victoria Rhododendron Show Schedule 2007

Copies will be provided at the April meeting and at the United Church Hall for participants.



**May 7th Speaker
Dr. Glen Jamieson**

The history of exploring for plants in China, and the changes that have happened in rural China over the past 100 years.

Glen Jamieson has a B.Sc. in Agriculture, McGill University, but obtained his Doctorate at UBC and has been a research scientist with Fisheries and Oceans Canada for the past 30 years. He is a keen gardener with an extensive one acre garden, and has traveled extensively in both Central and South America and Asia. His interest in plants focused on orchids from 1980-1995, but since then has switched to rhodos and temperate trees and shrubs in general.

Since 1999 he has established what is likely Canada's largest tropical rhododendron (vireya) collection and now is a strong advocate of these beautiful plants. Glen frequently gives garden talks, and has talked at most of the rhodo clubs in British Columbia, focusing on the winter garden, vireyas, and in the past year, botanizing in Yunnan, China.

**Rock Gardening
by David Sellars**

Rock gardens can be a lovely complement to a rhododendron garden. Rhododendrons are mountain plants and look and grow best on slopes. The smaller rhododendrons also look good growing among rocks. A rock garden integrated with a rhododendron garden could have alpine perennials planted below dwarf rhododendrons and heathers merging with larger rhododendrons above. It's the same principle as any garden bed, small plants at the front, bigger behind. The only other thing to remember is to use bark mulch only around the ericaceous plants as most alpine plants don't like

the acidic conditions.

As rhododendrons grow into massive shrubs there seems to be less to do in the rhododendron garden. They eventually smother all those lovely little companion plants you so carefully planted in between them when the rhodos were smaller. You are having to dig up Spanish bluebells, hostas and primulas and try and find them a space in the garden with a little more light than is found in the black cave of a R. 'Polar Bear'

So where to expend all that pent-up gardening energy? There is only so much deadheading and pruning you can do. One advantage of getting into rock gardening is that it takes up so little space that you feel you are gardening in miniature. Suddenly the available room for the amusement and experimentation seems huge.

The other interesting thing about rock gardening is that the range of plants it is truly immense. This can actually be quite intimidating. However, once you find out about all the interesting plants it doesn't seem to help that most nurseries carry a fairly pathetic choice and worse still, all the stuff is the same - like going into different hardware stores.



photo: David Sellars

However, while reading a gardening magazine at the dentist's office I saw an ad for a nursery in the Interior that specializes in alpines and better still, their catalogue is available free through e-mail. The plants we have ordered arrived beautifully packed and they are all doing well. Beaver Creek Nursery has a fantastic selection of alpines and may be contacted at:

Canadian Mail Address: Beaver Creek Greenhouses

Box 129 Fruitvale

British Columbia V0G 1L0

website: www.rockgardenplants.com email: bvcreek@netidea.com

reproduced from Rootstalk , October 2000

Where have all the people gone?

abridged

by Dick Murcott

In 1962 I started to get involved in what I call "Organized Horticulture". At that time there were many civic, religious and horticultural organizations. Every church and temple had a men's club, women's club, single's club, couple's club etc. There were Masons, Elks, Moose, Odd Fellows, Eagles. Societies existed for chrysanthemums, rhododendrons, African violets, roses, orchids and several others that I can't remember. Many localities had a garden club, probably 30 or so in Nassau County alone.

All of these organizations were vibrant, active, energetic groups. A look now at these organizations is a sobering experience. Everyone is suffering from a lack of interested members. There are still Masons struggling along with limited membership but the Elks, Moose, Odd Fellows and Eagles are basically gone. All of the other groups, if they are still around, are down to 10 to 15% of what they used to be. Also, leaders of these groups all report a general lack of "spark plug" members, those who are right there ready to do or help on any project. Most of the members are long time members who feel that they have done their share in the past and now want to relax and let the younger members do the work.

The problem is that there are no new members. Where has everyone gone? Why are all these organizations not attracting new, young members? There are several reasons. The first is competition from television, especially cable and satellite television, together with rented movies. These make television a remarkable entertainment medium. You don't even have to go to a Blockbuster Store to rent a movie; the staff will mail it to you and give you a postage-free envelope in which to return it. The old expression "watching the boob tube" just is not true anymore. There is an infinite amount of very interesting programming available.

If the competition from TV is not enough we have the Internet. There everything is available from information on any subject and correspondence with people, to infinite entertainment options.

We have the new life style of young people. Housing is very expensive. In order for young married couples to live here, most of the time both partners must work, and usually, work long hours. Getting home at 6:30 or 7PM to prepare and eat dinner really kills the idea of picking up at 8PM to drive to a Rhododendron or Mum or whatever society meeting. And I have not even mentioned interacting with children, which must be done if there are any. Most of these people are simply overworked and have very little spare time for outside activities.

Lastly we have the feeling on the part of young people that horticulture is "so 1930" and "so uncool". Any gardening work is to be done by hired workers. So very many middle class families now use services to even to cut the grass and do garden maintenance work, jobs that, years ago, every home owner considered his or her duty to perform.

Sounds dismal and hopeless doesn't it. Well it's not. We (the VRS) have something to offer these people that is not found elsewhere. People. You. What we must show the community that rhododendrons are fun, interesting, exciting and most important they can develop a whole new circle of friends from all walks of life.

We must become new member focused; after all new members are the future.

Please give the Board your suggestions. And if you are a new member tell us what you want from being a VRS club member. Thank you.

Purchases

The VRS Board, on your behalf, purchased a new Toshiba laptop with Microsoft Windows software and 80 Gigabyte hard Drive and a CD/DVD player to use in presentations. The total cost was under \$1000.

Lost and Found

Pair of prescription glasses found at last meeting. Please phone Margaret at 250-748-0538



GARDEN VISITS

Many thanks to Lois Blackmore for organizing these visits and to our members who are opening their gardens this Spring. Let us show them our support with our visits.

Get out your calendars and your walking shoes as we have a delightful array of gardens to visit this year. These fine folks have offered to open their gardens to visitors and we encourage you to bring others to enjoy the fruits of their labors. Make a special note that on SATURDAY MAY 5 AND SUNDAY MAY 6, Two open gardens to visit on each of those days.

Thursday, April 19 from 6:00-8:00p.m.

THE MCMILLAN GARDEN.. 562 HALLSOR DRIVE

Our garden is on a normal city lot, so space is a factor. We have three raised beds, two with shade covers because shade is minimal on most of our lot. The front area features heathers, designed to 'sweep through the seasons'. Six of the other beds are rhododendron-centric but companion plants add year-round interest. One bed with Berberis, a Pin Oak, a pogonanthum rhododendron and other drought tolerant plants is kept very dry. Magnolias, Smoke Bush, Pieris, lilies, roses - a range of other plants have found a place in our garden. It is a work in progress and the lawn area shrinks each year.

Directions: Coming from town, take Hwy.1 to the Colwood/View Royal (exit 10) exit. Continue on Sooke Road to Ridley Drive. (Colwood Pentecostal Church is on the right.) Turn left on Ridley Drive for one block. Turn right(Jenner) for one block and we are right on the corner at 562 Hallsor Drive. If all else fails, call 478-3515.

Wednesday, April 25 from 6:00-8:00p.m.

THE MORRISON GARDEN 2150 FERNDAL ROAD

For over thirty years, we are still changing our garden. We have collected mostly species rhododendrons, but, as there are no hard rules, we have hybrids too! We have many companion plants, including hellebores, cyclamens, hostas, ferns, magnolias and cornus...and a rapidly disappearing perennial bed. Basically our garden is a collection of plants we like, arranged so we get maximum pleasure out of our space! But kids grow, plants and trees die and freezes happen...we're always reworking the garden. Come and enjoy a walk through!

Saturday, May 5 from 1:00 to 3:00p.m.

THE PEET GARDEN 8600 Klee Wyck

The garden created by the late Joan and Bob Peet is situated in North Saanich on a steep wooded slope. It is on the waterfront and has a seasonal creek running through. This mature garden features rhododendrons, camellias, Japanese maples and dogwoods under a canopy of big-leaf maples, arbutus, fir and cedar trees.

Directions: 8600 Klee Wyck Road is off West Saanich Road, on the ocean side, about halfway between Mount Newton X Road and McTavish Road. Coming from town, it is just past Peninsula Nursery. Please park on Klee

Wyck Road and walk down the steep driveway.

Saturday May 5 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

THE TRELAWNY GARDEN

John and Ruth were a great team and when John passed away in December Ruth was determined to keep the garden as it has always been, open to those who truly love gardens. This is such a special garden, situated on an acre of hillside above Deep Cove. It is mainly a rhododendron garden with wonderful specimen trees, now reaching great heights. Dappled shade and interesting criss cross paths take the visitor on a journey through this lovely woodland garden.

11388 Chalet Road, North Saanich. Please park at the top and walk down the steep driveway.

Sunday May 6 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

THE DANCER GARDEN 3950 Sherwood Road

Ours is a very young garden as when we bought the property, it needed lots of work. Every variety of weed that could possibly grow in Victoria had found a home in this garden. We started by removing and clearing. You will find that most of our plants are species: rhododendrons, ferns, magnolias, peonies, as we think they are important to grow. I once read that it takes eight years before a garden begins to develop. We think that by the end of eight years, the bones of this garden should be established.

Sunday, May 6 from 2.00 to 4:00 p.m.

THE LYNN GARDEN 3913 Woodhaven Terrace

Our garden has many rhododendrons, but you will also find many companion trees and shrubs under-planted with spring bulbs. Our aim is to have a low maintenance garden with year-round interest. Included are many native plants, most adapted to handling our very dry summers. Additional summer interest is added with annuals planted in pots on the patios. As well, there are a number of "small treasures" we keep in pots.

Saturday, May 12 from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.

THE JOHNSON GARDEN 635 Lost Lake Road

We are situated on Teanook Lake and built our own log house in 1975 through 1981. We inherited a number of rhododendrons from my wife's father, Dr. T.M.C. Taylor, who lived on the other side of the lake. Since that time we have collected a number of rhododendrons. Last year we had a pond and waterfall installed in what we call the Rhododendron Dell, adding several new rhododendrons. The garden is very much rhododendrons established amongst the native vegetation.

Directions: Coming from town, take Hwy. 1 to the Langford/Highlands (exit 14), taking the Highlands option. Continue on Millstream Road until you come to Lost Lake Road. Turn right and continue on Lost Lake Road to 635. If all else fails, call 474-1349.



\$1⁰⁰ off

a one gallon or larger rhododendron
with this coupon

View and Identify your favourite rhodos
Limit one coupon per visitor

Valid only on show day April **28, 2007**

APRIL 28th **RHODODENDRON** **10:30am**
and Companion Plant **to**
SHOW & PLANT SALE **4:00pm**

at the Cadboro Bay United Church
April 28, 2007 - 2625 Arbutus Road

Admission by Donation

