

# VICTORIA RHODODENDRON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER JUNE 2023

## VICTORIA RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Our purpose is to promote and  
educate the public about the  
genus  
RHODODENDRON

We meet at the Couvelier Centre  
on the grounds of the  
HCP Gardens

505 Quayle Street  
Victoria B. C.

For further :  
[www.victoriarhodo.ca](http://www.victoriarhodo.ca)



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



We are now in the midst of our peak bloom period, and is about one month later than is typical for our area. Please enjoy the visual palette of blooms, and for some, scent as well. Thank you to all who opened their gardens so we could see and appreciate their efforts dedicated to rhododendrons and other plants as well. We enjoyed having communications with the owners, giving even further information on the garden's history and the challenges of planting and maintaining our beloved plant. We are hoping that as COVID becomes not so rampant that getting together socially will become once again, a part of our history.

The Jim Barlup Legacy Garden has experienced some water and weed issues and the Esquimalt Parks Department has become aware of these problems. As the park employees are in a union, we walk a fine line to communicate without creating work issues for the township. On June 6, we have an opportunity to contribute to the beauty of the park by volunteering to assist in its growth and development.

Our annual picnic will be held on Sunday, June 25, starting at noon. This year Ken and Madeleine are hosting. Their address is 5008 Old West Saanich Road. It will be a potluck lunch. Last names beginning with A-M are asked to bring a savory, and those whose last names begin N-Z are asked to bring a dessert. BBQ salmon will be on the menu. If one has COVID issues, please bring your own meal. What is needed is your own cutlery, plates, napkins, chairs and non-alcoholic drinks.

The rhododendrons at the Norm Todd Propagation Center have received increased fertilizer feedings and the new growth is responding well. Some repotting is occurring. We still will need propagators to produce cuttings for eventual sale. We are asking for help with this from our members. Choice plants, favorite plants, unusual rhododendrons will help with this cause as we want to be able to offer the public choices that are not available in the market place. More information will be coming in the fall.

Two Jim Barlup (lost labels) have bloomed at the propagation center. The quality is excellent and may warrant registration in the future. Not every plant is worthy of registration. Some plants may be sold as decent garden material, but some are just compost. No hybridizer want to be associated with poor quality plants as it gives rhododendrons a bad name. Quality control is important.

Mulch pick up for \$10 cash is at the Royal Colwood Golf Course on May 30 at 10 am. The location is the work yard on Aldeane Avenue in Colwood. A reminder will be sent out.

Potting up of rooted cuttings will occur sometime this fall. Stayed tuned for an update.

Stay healthy and happy and will see you at our round-up picnic on Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup>.

# CAPTURING HI-LITES FROM OUR ANNUAL TRUSS SHOW

## THANK YOU ANNE ALLEN



# AND THE WINNERS ARE



## FROM OUR ANNUAL SHOW AND TELL

RED TRUSS ... JOHANNA MASSA

ORANGE TRUSS ... THE MORRISONS

YELLOW TRUSS ... ROY BLACKMORE

WHITE LARGE TRUSS ... THE MORRISONS

SMALL WHITE TRUSS ... THE MORRISONS

LAVENDER/PURPLE TRUSS ... SEAN RAFFERTY

PINK LARGE TRUSS ... SEAN RAFFERTY

PINK SMALL TRUSS ... ANNE ALLEN

LARGE BLOTCHED TRUSS ... SEAN RAFFERTY

PENDULOUS TRUSS ... JOHANNA MASSA

INDUMENTUM LEAF ... JOHANNA MASSA

WEEVIL-NOTCHED LEAF ... THE GORDONS

HAMMERHEAD TRUSS ... JOHANNA MASSA

SCENTED TRUSS ... HEATHER DICKMAN

POTTED RHODODENDRON ... THE MARQUARDTS

SPECKLED TRUSS ... ANNE ALLEN

COMPANION PLANT ... THE MORRISONS, JOHANNA MASSA, DAN SYROID



## ALAN MURRAY

### The next step in the propagation of rhododendrons

The process of propagation is a time and patience science. Alan showed us his methodology that he has learned through diligence and determination, and tonight shared those experiences with us. In a very small space, Allan has rooted some 320 cuttings. He shares information about rhododendrons with the Cowichan Rhododendron Society at their annual plant sale.



Alan likes individual pots as he is able to see the stage of rooting of each plant. With the holes in the bottom of the pot, he is able to simply push each plant out as it is ready to repot. He uses a hand sprayer for application throughout the winter. When needed, he uses a hand pump sprayer to fertilize the cuttings, once he sees roots at the bottom of the pots. The solution is 100 parts water to 1 part fish fertilizer. He does this every 8-10 days, watching to see the darker green color along the veins of the cuttings announcing they are responding to the fertilizer application.

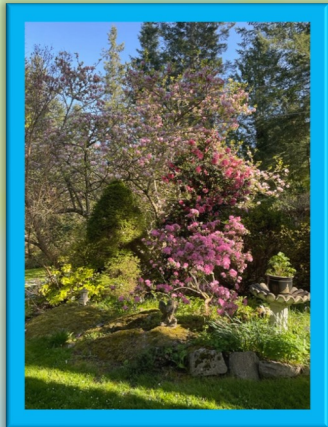
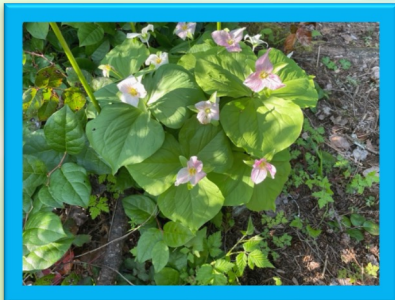
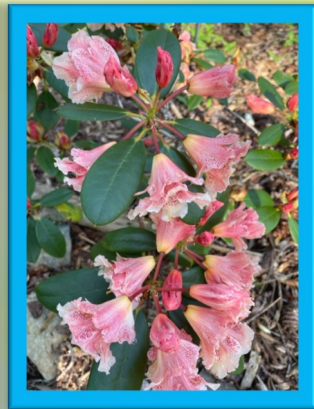
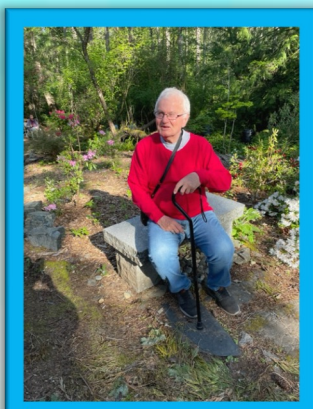
The next step in the process is to transplant each cutting directly into a one gallon pot. He finds that by the time he is ready to transplant, his cuttings would not fit into the typical 4 inch pot. He has found his magic mix of one wheelbarrow at a time : 60% bark mulch and 40% compost and several buckets of perlite to make the soil porous. The bark mulch Alan uses has more ground wood in it than past years. He believes that the ground wood absorbs more nitrogen than bark, so adding fertilizer later is necessary.

He does not use any fertilizer when he first transplants into 1 gallon pots. The compost he uses is made from leaves and manure that he gathers on his property. Finding healthy compost is difficult, as it takes several years to mature. After approximately 10 months, Allan uses Jimmy Jons 6-12-12 fertilizer as it has a lower nitrogen component. It is important to analyze the compost mix and to choose the right fertilizer and fertilizer ratio.

In a new discovery recently, Allan found that adding grit to the top of the pots reduces the splatter and loss of soil and fertilizer. This is done after the plants have been in gallon pots for one year. The fertilizer is then put on top of the grit , making for a tidy process. Alan's methodology has been developed based on his observations over time. He is always learning and implementing what he has observed and what he has learned. His propagation journey continues.

# CELEBRATING THE OPEN GARDEN

AT THE BILL AND BETTY GORDON HOME



# SUMMER ANNUALS

## ...THE POSITIVE AND THE **NEGATIVE**...

Info from Garden Design



**Calibrachoa**

- .Never needs deadheading
- .Comes in many colors
- .Just needs water/fertilizer
- .Great in containers
- .Ideal in hanging baskets
- .Pretty well deer proof



**Heliotrope**

- .Very fragrant
- .Attractive to hummingbirds
- .Attractive to pollinators
- .Loves full sun
- .Deer resistant
- .Needs deadheading



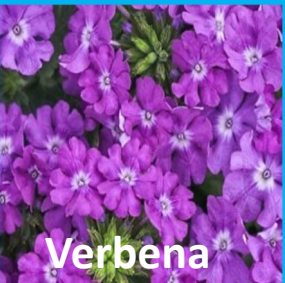
**Marigolds**

- .A no-fuss annual
- .Bloom all summer long
- .Attracts beneficial insects
- .Needs deadheading
- .Shades of yellow, orange, red
- .Deer proof
- .Likes full sun



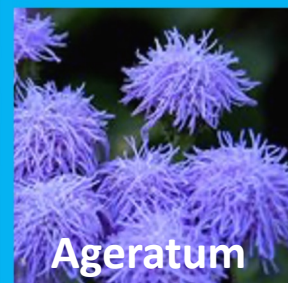
**Zinnias**

- .Deer resistant
- .Comes in many colors
- .Likes sun
- .Can tolerate some dryness
- .Dahlia-like blooms
- .Fungal spots
- .Powdery mildew



**Verbena**

- .Scented
- .Great as a spiller
- .Red, pink, purple, coral
- .Likes full sun
- .Powdery mildew
- .Spider mites



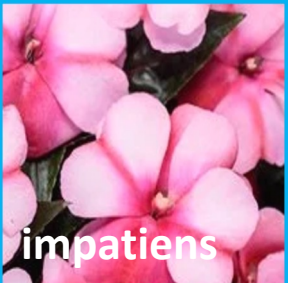
**Ageratum**

- .A rare blue plant
- .Full sun to partial shade
- .A heat lover
- .Powdery mildew, aphids
- .Toxic to grazing animals
- .Deer resistant



**Begonia**

- .A good shade plant
- .Wax begonias are annuals
- .Tuberous begonias upright or trailing
- .Deer resistant
- .Toxic to pets

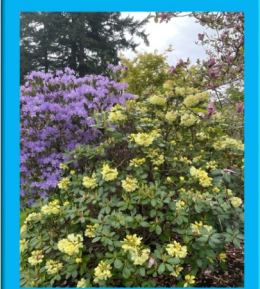


**impatiens**

- .A go-to for shade
- .Abundant bloom production
- .Some double flower varieties
- .Subject to downy mildew
- .Some sun tolerant varieties



# CELEBRATING THE OPEN GARDEN AT THE STEPHEN AND MARJORIE BRICE HOME





# BEST CARE FOR HEALTHY RHODODENDRONS

ADAPTED FROM THE VICTORIA RHODODENDRON SOCIETY WEBSITE  
(LO AND BEHOLD)

## WASH



**WATER** IN THE SUMMER

**ACIDIC** DAMP SOIL IS BEST

**SUN** HALF DAY OF SUN, PROTECTION IN THE AFTERNOON

**HUMUS** BARK MULCH IS GOOD

## LADS



**LOAM** SOIL

**ACIDIC** CONDITIONS

**DRAINAGE** IS A KEY FACTOR

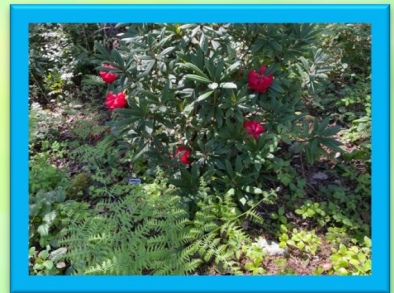
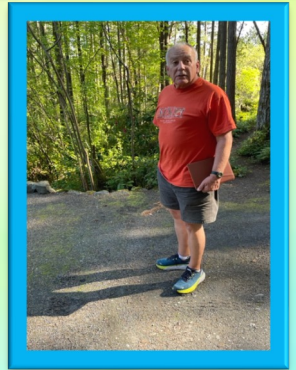
**SHALLOW** PLANTING AS ROOTS GROW SIDEWAYS





# CELEBRATING THE OPEN GARDEN

## AT THE HOME OF IAN DUNCAN AND ANNE ALLEN



# ANNUAL CHECK-UPS FOR RHODODENDRONS

RHODODENDRON AND AZALEA NEWS PUBLICATION

As rhododendrons herald spring in Victoria, it is a good time to see how to keep your rhododendrons and azaleas long-lived and healthy. As with all check-ups, start with a physical examination. Look for symptoms of nutrient deficiency, such as pale leaves or dwarfed leaves which may indicate a lack of nitrogen. Yellow mottling on the leaf margins may due to an excess of potassium. If the leaves are smaller and darker green than usual and the tips of the leaves are dead, your shrub may need phosphorus. Yellow or yellow-white (chlorotic) leaves may mean there is too much calcium. When the PH is too high for acid loving plants like rhododendrons and azaleas, it means that some nutrients are tied up in the soil and are unavailable to the plant.

Past weather conditions also have a determination of health of your plants. Leaves can be discolored from hot sun or winter frost. Interior leaves that are shaded out can also turn yellow and drop off. This is called senescence.

Nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium are three elements that are needed to keep plant growth in proper balance in terms of growth, flower set and leaf color. Nitrogen promotes normal growth and healthy green leaves. Phosphorus promotes root development and increases flower production. Potassium provides vigor and resistance to disease.

When fertilizing, water use and rainfall will determine the amount of fertilizer needed. Watering systems may require more fertilizing as water does wash away some fertilizer. Green Valley's 10-8-6 fertilizer comprises of 10% nitrogen, 8% phosphorus, 6%potassium, 5% magnesium, 1.8% iron, 6% sulphur and trace minerals.

Suggested times for chemical fertilizer application are 1. mid-March 2. mid April 3. first week May

Alan Murray's organic fertilizer is ideal for rhododendrons as they are byproducts of things once living. It is slower than chemical fertilizers, but lasts much longer. Alan fertilizers only once each year.

Alan's formula is:

4 parts alfalfa meal, canola meal and blood meal

2 parts dolomite lime

1 part each of rock phosphate, bone meal, kelp meal and green sand

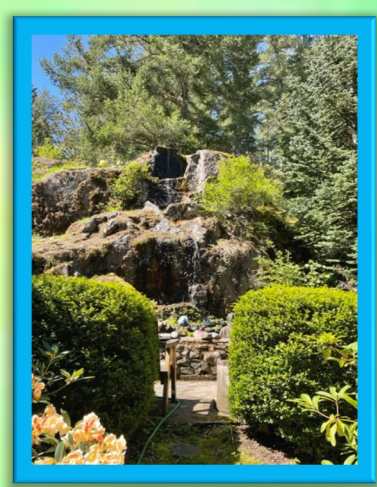
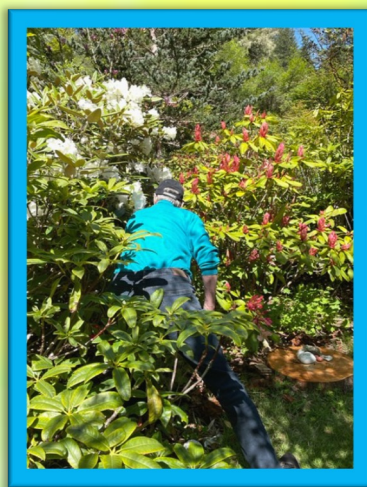
When applying organic fertilizer, the fertilizer will release for 2-3 years, but should be applied every year.

When to apply depends on the weather. Beginning of March, spread magnesium sulphate (Epsom Salts) at the rates of ½ pound per 100 sq. feet. Mid March, sprinkle organic fertilizer around the drip line , 2-3 ounces (by volume) per square yard.



Image from Glendoik Gardens

# CELEBRATING THE OPEN GARDEN AT THE JOHANNA MASSA HOME





# OUR ANNUAL PICNIC 12 ONWARDS

**THIS YEAR**

**COURTESY OF KEN AND MADELEINE WEBB**

5008 OLD WEST SAANICH ROAD

**BRING SAVOURIES IF YOUR LAST NAME IS A TO M**

**BRING DESSERTS IF YOUR LAST NAME IS N TO Z**

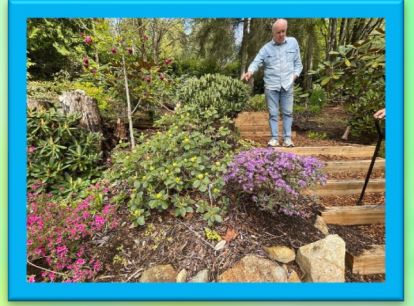
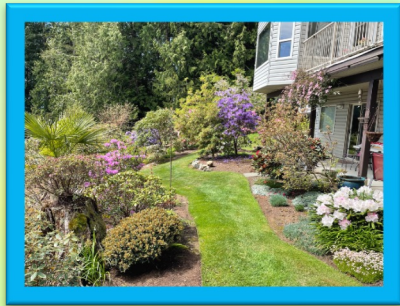
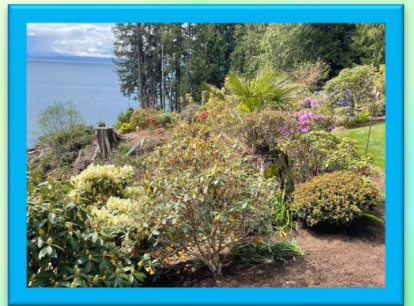
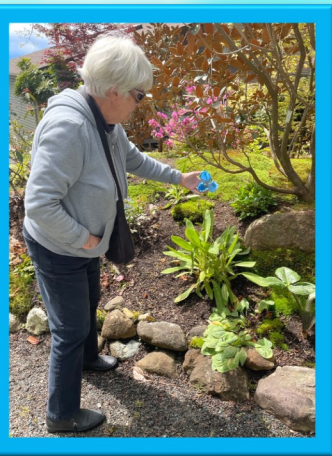
**BRING A PLANT OR TWO FOR THE RAFFLE**

**BRING YOUR OWN PLATES, CUPS, CUTLERY, CHAIRS**

**BRING YOUR OWN PICNIC LUNCH IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO BE  
PART OF THE SALMON BBQ AND POTLUCK**

**SALMON ON THE BARBECUE FOR EVERYONE**

# CELEBRATING THE OPEN GARDEN AT BRENDA AND SEAN'S HOME





# DID YOU KNOW?

According to the Masala Monk



Masala Monk is an online Indian market operated by Shashank Aggarwal. His sources are small producers, local growers and regional farmers in which he makes traditional foods based on classical, time-honored and long-established traditions..

Juice from the flower relieves stomach aches.

Homeopathic and Ayurveda medicines use rhododendron petals and leaves to cure inflammation, including gout, arthritis and bronchitis.

The Quercetin in rhododendron flowers provides effective relief in kidney, prostate and urinary bladder infections.

The Rutin in the flowers treats mouth ulcers, gastrointestinal tract infections and osteoarthritis.

The juice of rhododendron flowers lowers blood pressure and bad cholesterol.

The antioxidant properties reduce the risk of stroke and heart disease.

Quercetin is highly effective in treating hypertension, atherosclerosis and bad cholesterol.

Rutin prevents the formation of blood clots.

The antioxidant "hyper" inhibits the action of various glucose enzymes, causing a drop in blood sugar and cholesterol levels.

Rhododendrons contain bioactive steroids and phytochemicals which lab studies indicate their effectiveness against different strains of bacteria.

The two flavonoids (Quercetin and P-coumaric) maintain healthy gut flora against foreign microbial activity.

Locals consume rhododendron petals as it strengthens immune response, leading to a lower risk of asthma, allergies and hives.

The mixed dried leaves mixed with tobacco helps cure respiratory diseases naturally.

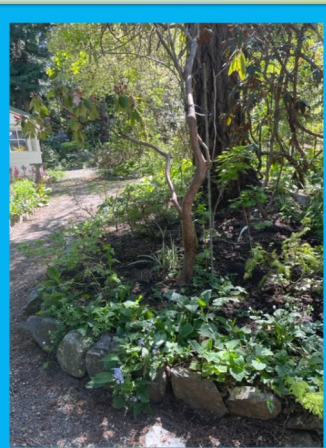
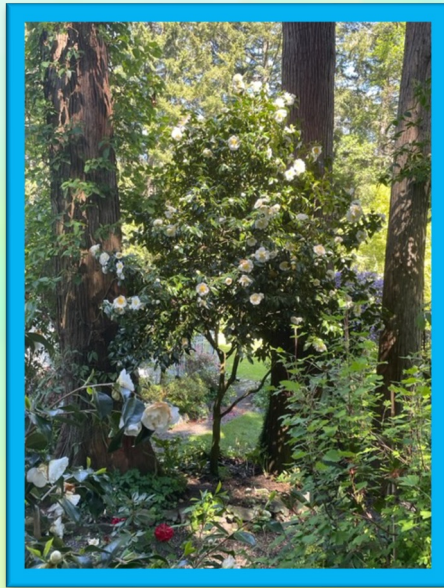
Flowers used in Ayurveda medicine reduce the risk of liver damage.

Quercetin and Rutin in rhododendron flowers prevent oxidative damage to normal cells that leads to cell mutation and then cancer, and inhibits the growth of existing cancer cells.





# CELEBRATING THE OPEN GARDEN AT THE CARMEN VARCOE HOME





# WHAT DO BEES SEE?

Adapted from Mongabay News from nature's front line in India



Complex flowers attract more bees. The diversity of the flower species and their density play a role in attracting bees. There are many ways to support pollinators. Pollinator friendly urban gardens to roadside planting of flowering trees and shrubs would add a staggering contribution to world economics. This is especially important as the world's population continues to grow.

Bee's eyes are more sensitive to ultraviolet light and they seem to prefer blue and violet flowers. While it is possible that bee vision has evolved to become more attuned to flowers, it is more likely that flowers have evolved to attract insect pollinators.

However, bees rely on a combination of signals that include color, fragrance, shape and size to find pollen and nectar. Thus, if a bee finds a flower rewarding, it will tend to visit the flower irrespective of color. Bees do not just look at color, but also structure. To that fact, by basically planting a species of flowers that have a diversity of synchronous flowering times would be ideal.



Encouraging urban wildlife is both a way to tackle the biodiversity crisis and an opportunity to engage people with nature. There is no significant downside and there is abundant evidence that we are healthier and happier if we can see green leaves, hear the sound of birds and the hum of bees. Even a few herbs in a window box or in a planter on the patio are better than nothing. Bees are remarkably good at sniffing them out when they flower.

# NO HONEY, NO HIVES BUT SOLITARY BEES HAVE IMPORTANT LIVES

ADAPTED FROM MONGABAY

There are over 20,000 species of bees in the world. Most of them are solitary bees that do not live in hives and do not make honey. Solitary bees live solo and forage and fend for themselves. The availability of nesting sites is key to the survival of these species. As bees are important pollinators, increasing nesting sites for solitary bees is an active topic of discussion in the bee world.



Solitary bees are crucial to the pollination of several crops like blueberry, cranberry, tomatoes, eggplant, apples, plums, almonds and all manner of lentils. In a 1993 paper, "India's Buzzy Biodiversity of Bees", it states that carpenterbees were used to carry messages tied to their thorax, much like carrier pigeons. In Sanskrit poetry, the big, black shiny carpenter bee was usually found hovering around young maidens, as a symbol of lovesick men.

Carpenter bees are great at trap-lining. This is a method in which individual bees follow set routes to forage. For signs of solitary bees, look for neatly sculpted leaves and eyes peeking out from crevices in walls. Female carpenter bees carry the nectar in their bellies and pollen on their legs. Once in her cavity, she mixes regurgitated nectar with pollen. This will be deposited in a single chamber where she will lay a single egg and seal the chamber. She then moves to a new chamber and repeats the process.

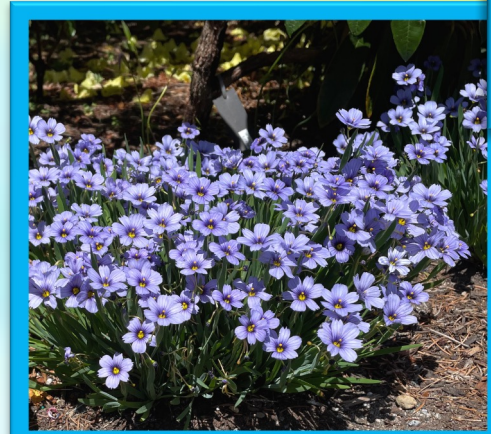


These bees do something very interesting with the topmost chamber. The egg laid there hatches male. The male then pushes out of this topmost chamber and prepares to mate with other females. The honey/pollen bee bread is for the new larva. They will emerge, eat, pupate and emerge as a bee to mate and carry on the lineage. The mother is most likely never to meet her offspring.

# OUR RHODODENRON SALE AT THE HCP

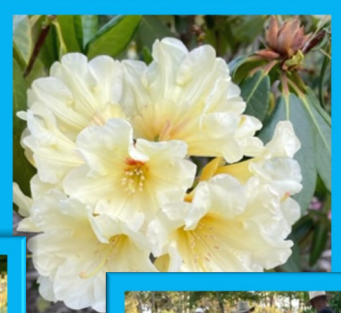


# CELEBRATING THE OPEN GARDEN AT THE JACK MCNEILL HOME



# AN EVENING AT THE GORGE PARK AND THE BARLUP LEGACY GARDEN

Several members of our group made their way to Gorge Park on a Thursday evening to see the progress of the Barlup Legacy Garden. These photos represent some of the evening's journey.



# FROM THE BARLUP LEGACY GARDEN

Photos are a thank you to Bryan Bonnell





# OUR HIVE NEEDS HELP

**TUESDAY, JUNE 6 FROM 9AM TO 12 NOON**

**In order to do our fall planting, we need help with pulling roots and deadheading. This will be a team effort between the Esquimalt staff and volunteers from our society. Last time we were rained out. Please help if you can...the more the merrier...**

**PLEASE CONTACT CALVIN AT  
[sinogrande50@gmail.com](mailto:sinogrande50@gmail.com)**

WE ARE CALLING ON MR. AND MRS. "JOE TIDY"

TO HELP

WITH A BIT OF WEEDING AND DEADHEADING  
AT THE BARLUP LEGACY GARDEN



TUESDAY, JUNE 6 FROM 9 AM UNTIL NOON

CALVIN AND HIS CREW WILL BE GETTING THE NEW AREA  
READY FOR PLANTING IN THE FALL





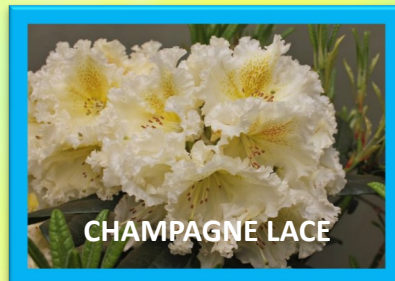
## CENTENARY FUND STARTED IN 2022

**A fund to help conserve rare Rhododendrons, Camellias and Magnolias before they are lost forever.**

For the last few years the Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia Group have been active in supporting the conservation of threatened species and hybrids. Over a longer period we have established four successful collections of rhododendrons and one of camellias. These are all open to the public for education and enjoyment.

Starting with our initiative to help Bodnant Gardens safeguard some of its important hybrids through the funding of micropropagation, we have now been involved in the rescue and re-establishment of a large number of rhododendrons which otherwise could have disappeared.

We want to continue to develop and expand this important work and start new planted collections within secure garden trusts throughout the country, to showcase some of the best of our genera and to give homes to plants that are in danger of being lost.



**The Jim Barlup Legacy Garden  
STARTED IN 2019**

# NOTES FROM THE BOARD

1. After much discussion, the board decided to have our annual truss show and plant sale at the Gardens of the HCP on May 11, 2024.
2. Set up will take place on Friday, May 10. Further information to follow.
3. Exploration of having a rhododendron display at two shopping centers the week end previous to the show and sale will be explored.
4. The arrival of the paired geese statue will not be arriving until sometime in July.
5. The salmon will be ordered for the picnic barbecue and will be BBQ cooked.
6. It was noted that those attending the picnic must bring their own plates, cups, chairs and cutlery, as well a a contribution to the raffle.
7. The board decided that the maximum amount of wine given to the winners of the truss show shall not exceed 3 bottles.
8. A dessert party and get together will be the agenda for the first meeting in September to celebrate the ending of COVID restrictions.
9. An "in person" board meeting will be held in August as we start the 2023 2024 rhododendron season for our club.



# VICTORIA RHODODENDRON SOCIETY BOARD



## BOARD MEMBERS



## MEMBERS AT LARGE



## KEY CONTRIBUTORS

PRESIDENT ... LLOYD GILMORE  
250-642-2256

VICE-PRESIDENT ... FRANK BUFFAM  
250-590-0489

TREASURER ... BILL GORDON  
250-479-0820

SECRETARY ... SHARON JOSEPH  
250-383-1756

PAST PRESIDENT ... BRENDA MACDONALD  
778-528-3647

CALVIN PARSONS ... 250-590-0489

IAN DUNCAN ... 250-479-0820

KEN WEBB ... 250-477-1785

LOIS BLACKMORE ...236-562-6778

DAN SYROID ...250-477-9210

ELLEN WELLBORN ...250-479-1898

IAN DUNCAN ... 250-479-0820

ROBERT BURKE ... 250-477-5386

BRENDA MACDONALD ... 778-528-3647



**IN MEMORY OF A BELOVED MEMBER OF OUR SOCIETY**

## **DEAN GOARD**

**AUGUST 31, 1940 - MAY 6, 2023**

Dean passed away peacefully May 6, 2023 suffering from declining health due to dementia.

Dean is survived by his sons Ian and Kyle, his daughter Susan and two grandchildren, Sophia and Carson, and his second wife, Helen

Dean was life-long learner graduating from UBC with a Masters in Adult Education, finishing his educational career at the University of Victoria, Dean loved his garden and his rhododendrons and took particular joy in showing his garden to others. He will be missed.

**A MEMORIAL SERVICE WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY, JUNE 3 AT 11:30 AM  
BROADVIEW UNITED CHURCH 2625 ARBUTUS ROAD**