



RHODODENDRON SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER

A Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society
P.O. Box 3040 Langley, B.C. V3A 4R3

AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL
WED. January 15, 1992 at 8:00 P.M.

THIS WILL BE A MEMBERS' NIGHT. PLEASE BRING SOME SLIDES, APPROX. 10 OR SO, OF YOUR FAVOURITE RHODO OR ANY OTHER PLANT OR SUBJECT YOU MAY HAVE. THERE WILL BE NO PLANT SALE AT THIS TIME, BUT THE USUAL RAFFLE WILL TAKE PLACE, AND LES MAY HAVE AN INTERESTING QUIZ FOR US; A QUESTION/ANSWER PERIOD MAY TAKE PLACE, SO COME ALONG AND JOIN THE FUN TO GET US OFF TO A GOOD START FOR 1992.

FEBRUARY 19TH: MR. ROGER PINNETTE, OF PONDS BEAUTIFUL, WILL TALK TO US ON GARDEN PONDS, CONSTRUCTION, PLANTS AND MAINTENANCE.

FEBRUARY 6/9: NORTHWEST FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW, at the State Convention Centre, downtown Seattle - 9.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m. See Harold or Pat Glennie if interested in a bus trip.

APRIL 25TH: (SAT). Proposed trip to Island - Provisionally arranged by Harold Johnson and Bill Dale. 47 Passenger bus to meet Ferry - Gardens: Weesjes, Dougan's Malahat Garden, Smith and Dale Gardens. Day trip - Cost of Bus approx. \$13/\$15 per person with full bus load. Harold will have more on this at meeting, but you could check your diaries so that we can find out if we can fill this bus, and book it ASAP.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE:

A.R.S. In response to a request from the A.R.S. for additional capital for their Endowment Fund to help with Journal and other rising costs, the Executive decided to follow The Mid-Atlantic Chapter's decision to raise funds for the A.R.S. by having an auction of plants or what have you(?) donated by members. LARRY CHASE will be organizing this event. It is hoped that Members will freely participate in this event. The alternative was to deduct a little more from membership dues which the Executive decided against.

KITCHEN: A motion was passed whereby members would be asked to bring their own mugs to the meetings - a sort of "MUGALUG" idea. This will help to keep the styrofoam mugs out of the garbage buckets. There will, of course, be styrofoam mugs available for those who may find this a bit cumbersome, to which group I must admit, I belong.

GREIG GARDEN: The Mary and Ted Greig Garden has been established in Stanley Park. District 1 are to form a Task Force to oversee this project in the future, and your Executive voted to support this Task Force and take part as required. Hope to have an article on the Greigs (of Royston fame) next month.

MEETING: ST. ANDREWS ANGLICAN HALL, 20955 OLD YALE RD., LANGLEY

ELECTIONS: The following were elected as our 1992 Executive: With a lack of "applicants" for the President's post, LES CLAY undertook to serve us for one more year: Vice-President: CHRIS KLAPWIJK, whom most of you know through his skill with the raffle tickets, has stepped

into the Vice-Presidency. Chris has a background of horticulture which our Chapter will no doubt benefit from; LARRY CHASE fills the position of Treasurer - Larry hails from Cloverdale where he and Charlotte have a beautifully landscaped garden, all planned and done by themselves. Larry can also be found at Preston Chevrolet in Langley where he puts the days in as Lease Manager; COLLEEN RODGERS will take over as Secretary - again Colleen knows her plants, being a Master Gardener, and with husband Brett hails from Surrey; DON MARTYN fills the three year Director's term - Don is well known in B.C. rhododendron world and has served previously with Vancouver and the Fraser Valley Chapters - Don does spend his days as a Principal in Abbotsford, and with Louise lives in Yarrow.

EXECUTIVE, 1992

PRESIDENT: LES CLAY - 530-5188
 VICE-PRESIDENT: CHRIS KLAPWIJK - 888-0920
 TREASURER: LARRY CHASE - 576-9782
 SECRETARY: COLLEEN RODGERS - 594-6380
 DIRECTORS:(3YR) DON MARTYN - 823-4853
 (2YR) CHRIS BALLYN - 857-0253
 (1YR) HAROLD JOHNSON - 581-5253

MEMBERS AT LARGE: Appointed as Members at Large were Pat Dahl, (534-5200), Librarian, Diane Scott, (533-4378) Publicity and Ella Crabb, (534-4884) Bulletin.

COMMITTEES - were also set up as follows:

Programs: Harold Johnson and Les Clay (see above)
Membership: Chris Ballyn, assisted by Holly Gordon (856-2014)
Hospitality: Mrs. Phil Anderson, (856-8139) Dorothy Griffin, (536-3877) and Pat Glennie (538-2844).
Test Garden: Chris Klapwijk, Chairman. (888-0920)
Shows, etc. Pat Glennie (538-2844), assisted by Diane Scott.

Bulletin: As David Crabb has a good deal of input into the Bulletin, your "Editor" requested that he be appointed Associate Editor, which was passed (so now I only take 50% of the blame for anything!!). Also here we would like to ask you all to put forward any request, article, joke, etc. you may have - also any requests can be published here.

TEST GARDEN: It was decided to look into the possibility of setting up a test garden for members' and hybridizers' plants in the Fraser Valley area, and Chris Klapwijk will be forming a Committee to look into this project.

CONSTITUTION: Constitution as amended is now in the process of getting registered in Victoria, and copies will be available when completed.

THANK YOU to retiring members, Mike Trembath, Pat Glennie and Sue Finley - the Chapter has gained from your input, effort and knowledge, and we just know (and sincerely hope) you will keep working for the Club, don't we?

MEMBERSHIP LIST: We hope to have a complete Membership List for you next month.

XMAS SOCIAL: This was as usual a great success, and our thanks go especially to Pat Glennie for putting her lovely home at our disposal and who must have worked on our behalf all day, and with Diane Scott was on her feet most of the evening arranging the delicious dinner table. Those who participated had some fun with Les Clay's slide Quiz, won by Don Martyn.

POWDERY MILDEW: We had an article in our January 1991 issue on Powdery Mildew. This seems now to be a more serious problem in the Pacific Northwest, and Ken Gibson of Tofino has produced a very interesting article for the Mount Arrowsmith Chapter, which we have received and are attaching as pages 5 and 6. We are also gathering together other articles by Peter and Kenneth Cox of Scotland and Warren Berg and any others that may come to our attention and will put them all together for members' use in Pat's Library.

SOME COMMENTS ON THE OLD AND NOT NECESSARILY UGLY
(By Dr. Mike Trembath)

Ella wants some fill-in for the news letter and who else to ask but one of your most loquacious (sounds better than loud-mouthed eh?) members. She even suggested that I write about the "oldies but goodies" - but not all the oldies ARE goodies.....

First - "old" seems to vary its meaning with the chronological age of the speaker - or writer, so quite arbitrarily I will set the period as pre 1940. Then, to make it in bit sized pieces - lets break into colour categories - I'll start with the whites. OK?.....

When I think 'white rhodie' I think of Helene Schiffner - awarded an R.H.S.FCC in 1893- and still unbeatable. A moderate growing plant with nice dark foliage whose bud scales are so dark red as to look almost black, and whose flowers are pure white in a nice neat truss. She is still readily available and well worth growing. Of much the same vintage (exhibited prior to 1886) is Chionoides. This is also widely available - and I don't know why. It is also a moderate grower, late May, early June bloomer, foliage rather coarse & rugose - blooms smallish and rounded - florets white with a slight yellow centre - and goodness knows it is hardy - texture of blooms leaves something to be desired.

Who can forget SAPPHO - also pre 1887 - and a very striking plant with its round white truss and strong purple blotch. If you grow her, you have to learn to live with her untidy habit - Or spend a lifetime of frustration trying make her grow into a semblance of an independent plant.....I once did see her looking like a normal shrub - but she stood parched, starving and alone in the middle of a lawn.

Ed Trayling grew a plant called Queen o'the May with much the same colour scheme tho' a more upright truss and the blotch a bit subdued - an elegant plant and I yearn for it - but Ed's parent plant died, and no one seems to have been able to propagate it.

If you want to hide a neighbour's garbage dump - or some such - how about Mrs. A.T. de la Mare - a very big growing lady with impeccable foliage and a big white truss with green markings and fragrance. What more could you ask? well it would be nice if the flowers didn't get rust spots even in the dew let alone rain....and she is BIG. While we are on size - nothing can beat Beauty of Littleworth - gorgeous dark foliage, huge Loderi-type truss of pure white set off by purple throat speckles. I suppose it really is a big garden plant but I wouldn't want to be without it - blooms April and some times hangs on for the show.

Then there is White Pearl - (also called Halopeanum - tho' not here I think) - 1896 - another big growing plant with a tall truss of almost translucent appearance - a couple of red whiskers in the throat. It has very dark foliage completely characteristic of only itself - but I'm at a loss to describe its unique quality. As a young plant it is a bit tender, and perhaps needs some shelter even in maturity, but it is less likely to strip off its leaves than is Loders White. I have never been overly fond of Loders White, (1911) and I'm not sure why - maybe because of its readiness to slough its foliage-or if it doesn't, you wish it would when it burns so readily frost or sun. Then - to prove the constancy of the human heart - in almost the same breath I confess to drooling in delight over Snow Queen (1926) and goodness knows its foliage is usually at least half a horrid chartreuse shade, and the plant legs all over like a colt. But oh that patrician pristinely pure white bloom with its slight red throat - clean and elegant - pyramidal truss full but not packed, clean edged - no frills - I love it.

Gomer Waterer (before 1900) almost never loses its mauve tint with me, but he's big and rugged and good natured. Mrs. Tom H.Lowinsky (AM in 1919) is also a showy white with its golden blotch and round truss - slightly pointed leaves - both readily available and worth having. I suppose Mrs.L. might be superseded by Belle Heller - a much bigger truss - but I don't know the plant habit so can't really judge. Both above plants bloom late in the season. A June blooming white that is not well known, and I find delightful is Mrs. John Clutton (FCC1865) a medium grower, and well branched plant - leaves and flowers size in proportion - a neat pyramidal truss with small yellow blotch. You sometimes see Madam Masson around - (1849) its another white with yellow eye (tho' the latter not prominent) - medium grower, but flowers lack substance, and I feel others are better...

(to be continued - if necessary) Oh, Yes, it is)

Stay tuned for "Guide to Worm Composting" coming next month!
Don't Forget the Raffle Table, nor the Kitchen Goodie Bin, please.

Next Executive meeting will be held at the Crabb residence, 5319 234th Street, Langley on Tuesday, January 21st at 7.30 p.m.

IS THE UNKNOWN GARDEN INTRUDER THE KISS OF DEATH????

By Ken Gibson for M.A.R.S. CHAPTER

The past two months have been very busy for me, trying to combat a war against the so-called Powdery Mildew which, allegedly, has come from Scotland. Paul Clarke, from Long Beach, Washington, doesn't think it's a powdery mildew so we have controversy on the first line of this program. I can only emphasize that the first line of the following article describes my feelings exactly:

"This can now be considered the most serious Rhododendron disease. At first, it was virtually unheard of, at least in the present form which seems capable of attacking a very wide spectrum of hardy rhododendrons, both species and hybrids. First symptoms are light areas, usually in the form of dots or circular patches appearing on the leaf's upper surface, with corresponding brown patches below. Other parts of the leaf may turn yellow, leading to leaf fall. Sometimes, the whole of the leaf underside may be covered with white or grey powder, even though there is little evidence on the upper side. In really severe cases, a plant may be completely defoliated. In this case, some plants may die while others develop fresh, young growth the following year or even that autumn. If the season is relatively dry and unfavourable to the fungus, or if a thorough spraying program is carried out, there may be a complete recovery.

At first, it was thought that only a few species and rather more hybrids with certain relationships were susceptible but, alas, this has proven not to be the case. Very susceptible plants act as a centre of infection and, if the weather is wet with moisture hanging on the leaves over long periods, the fungus will gradually spread onto neighbouring plants, and even on to some normally considered fairly resistant. There is no doubt that the wettest and mildest geographical locations are the most easily affected and gardens or parts of gardens, with many overhanging trees, much shade and good shelter, are the places most liable to severe infection. The lower leaves on a larger plant are especially prone to attack as are smaller plants growing partially under larger ones or right under the drip of trees. This may make us have to rethink our ideas on shade for rhododendrons and consider growing all but the most tender and largest leaved species and their hybrids in much more open airy situations." The foregoing article, or portion thereof, was acquired recently from Warren Berg and I am not sure of its source.

First of all, I wish I had listened to Warren Berg's warning a year ago as I now have perhaps sixty percent of my garden infected. Each variety is affected differently, although some have a great deal of similarity. I will attempt to explain some of my conclusions: For several years now I have been trying to determine what was happening to R. Leverett Richards. It sprouts new leaves in the spring and is nearly barren by the following October. I am now convinced that this plant, along with its sister seedling R. Virginia Richards, is a carrier or a host to the intruder. R. Lutescens is totally defoliated but, since spraying with BENLATE (Benomyl) and FUNGEX in September and October, small green shoots are starting to reappear. My most positive conclusion is that the

wind spreads the spores, and nearly all of my plants show the attack as coming from the westerly side of my hill. I found this, along with plant variety, to be most noticeable indicator. R. Mrs. Lamnot Copeland, for instance, at the end of my driveway, looks like it has been "shotgunned" with yellow paint, yet the backside of the plant doesn't have many spots. Descendants of this plant, (R. Pacific gold, R. Golden Wedding, R. Orange Marmalade, R. Lem's Tangerine X Buttered Popcorn) are also very susceptible to yellow spots as are R. Carita and some Williamsianum crosses. R. Orbiculare has brown spots, on top of the leaf, that are irregular in shape and some have a border or a distinct ring around the spot. The underside is a purplish black and covers up to one third of the leaf surface. The spores appear to me to spread in May, germinating or blooming in July and August and becoming very visible in September and October. Going by what I saw last year, the fungus has run its course by late November.

I acquired several of the late Peter Evans' frost defoliated plants from Brackendale in March. When the new foliage appeared, the plants looked fantastic. By late August, however, they too were contaminated - R. Loderi Rebel being one of the worst with small pale spots, showing a purplish colour underneath. R. Skipper, R. Award, R. Red Walloper and R. Lem's Cameo have many brown flecks on the underside of the leaf. So many that, at times, they are conglomerated together. R. Ruby Bowman is another very susceptible plant. The yellow blotching on the upper side of the leaves is matched on the underside with dark yellow blotches that later turn purple and, sometimes, cause a segment of the leaf to fall out to look like a Philodendron. R. Hamma Hamma, R. Gill's Crimson Red and especially, R. Karkov, lose their leaves, or some of them, at the terminal bud and end up as nothing more than a stem with a green bud. This is especially noticeable with cinnabarinum and Yunnanense varieties. If, touch at all, the old ironclads such as R. Jean Marie, R. Pink Pearl, R. Mrs. G.W. Leak, and R. Unique are touched very little. R. Anna Rose Whitney, R. Taurus and R. Lem's Monarch are affected marginally in dark areas of the garden. The Yak and Strigillosum crosses appear to have the best fortification against this new visitor. Could this disease be nature's way of taking care of unwanted hybrids? Perhaps the future might see hybrids rated against powdery mildew attack. For instance, R. Naselle, Jim Elliott's cross, stands untouched and is certainly a plant worthy of mention.

On a recent tour of the Pacific Northwest, I found examples of fungus-infected plants, and people who knew about "it", wherever I went. I am told that "it" could have made an appearance in the Asian & Van Duessen Gardens and some plantspeople feel "it" falls out of the air. Can it be transported on one's shoes, clothes or cars? Does this mean we will have to sterilize our visitors? Will colder winters make a difference? Foggy summers? And how about the sprays? Barrier sprays, i.e. wilt proof, dormant oil - Systemics i.e. Benlate, bayleton - Fungex, Sulphur, Copper.