



FRASER SOUTH

RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

A Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society

P.O. Box 3040 Langley, B.C. V3A 4R3

## NEWSLETTER

WED. May 20th, 1992 at 8:00 P.M.

ROGER LOW WILL BE WITH US TO TALK AND TEACH US A BIT ABOUT BONSAI - HE WILL HAVE SOME SAMPLES TO SHOW US.

THE USUAL RAFFLE WILL TAKE PLACE, AND ALSO PLANT SALE. A 10 MINUTE SHOW & TELL WILL ALSO TAKE PLACE.

7.00 p.m. at WILLIAMS PARK - Chris Klapwijk has arranged a walk-around at Williams Park in connection with a possible Test/Display Garden for our meeting night - Wed. 20th. Please try to get there as early as possible so that we end up at our meeting in time. Please call Chris at 888-0920 if you require directions.

SATURDAY, May 23rd: Fraser South's First Annual Plant Sale to take place at Clays' Nursery, 3666 224th Street, Langley from 1.00 to 4.00 p.m. Members with plants for the sale should have them at Clays Nursery about one hour prior to sale commencement. Could those with plants please call Diane Scott (533-4378) so that they will have some idea as to what quantity they can expect.

MAY 23/24th: The Geranium & Pelargonium Society have their Spring Show Competition and Sale at Van Dusen this same weekend from 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. both days. Geraniums and Pelargoniums will also be on sale. Here's your chance, but please make it on Sunday!!!

WED. JUNE 17th: Annual Picnic at Williams Park. It will be the usual Pot Luck Supper - and here could we have some new faces in the foreground please to help probably Diane Scott with arrangements - Anyone with the time and inclination please call Diane at 533-4378 or Melba Johnson at 581-5253.

NEW ZEALAND RHODO GARDEN TOUR: The De Anza Chapter are arranging a New Zealand Tour from October 24th to November 10th, 1992. Tour leaves from Los Angeles or San Francisco, and further particulars will be available at the Hostess Desk or you can contact Jan Coyle at Australia/New Zealand Down Under Travel (415) 591-7721 or (415) 969-2153.

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

FROM THE EXECUTIVE:

MEMBERSHIP: Chris Ballyn reports the following new members which we welcome:

BROWN, Meg and Tom, 4077 West 35th Avenue, Vancouver, V6N 2P4  
- 261-7431

McINTOSH, Cathy and Ron, 21052 92B Avenue, Surrey, V1M 2B2  
888-7728

ROUND, Gene, 103 - 28 Richmond Street, New Westminster, V3L  
5P4 - 525-9161

Member Appreciation Day: The Plant sale at the April meeting was so well received, it was decided to hold this sale yearly at the April meeting.

Powdery Mildew and Others: It was decided that District 1 Presidents meet to discuss ways and means of identification of plant troubles and possible cures. To this end Don Martyn now advises that East Chilliwack Co-Op has quantities of fixed copper - 2 kilos for \$16.00, and 2 kilos Captain 50W for \$16.00 and Don suggests that members could get together and split the cost - so go ahead! Some say there is a Chilliwack Co-op in Langley at 19575 Langley Bypass. Please also see Don's article on the above at page 3.

APRIL/MAY: The past month has been a busy time for most. The April meeting with Ken Gibson's talk and slides showing the results of powdery mildew was enlightening to all and resulted in the above Motion at our Executive meeting - see Don Martyn's article on page 3.

We then had our Garden Tours, starting with an enjoyable but too short (for some of us!) a visit to Dartshill on Easter Sunday, where we joined the Vancouver Chapter group and the South Surrey Garden Club - next being across the River at the French, Ladd, Hemminger and Dempster Gardens on a lovely sunny Saturday - see Lillian Emerson's article on page 5. Harold organized our trip to the Victoria Gardens, again we enjoyed a beautiful day - see Dr. Mike's article on page 6; And a week later we had the Willowbrook Truss and Plant Sale organized by Diane and Pat Glennie, with Sue and Chris arranging the Truss Display, with all the helpers in our newly acquired aprons, looking good. The Display and Sale went over very well and can be classified another success. We followed this on Sunday by our local tour, enjoying another lovely day. So we have to say thank you to all those hosts who opened up their gardens, Maple Ridge, Victoria and the Fraser Valley, and to all those who participated by being there - thanks go too to all those helpers at Willowbrook and again at the Dahl Garden where plants were available to members. To Diane Scott, Pat Glennie, Pat Dahl, Chris Ballyn, Sue Finley, Colleen Rodgers, Dorothy Griffin and probably more of you - we do appreciate your efforts in arranging plants, carting from one area to another, etc. etc.

ANYONE with the time and inclination to lend a hand with plant sales, back up for library, hostess table or whatever, please let us know. New ideas always welcome.

Next executive Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 26th at the Dahl residence, 2054 216th Street, Langley at 7.30 p.m.

# "OUT, OUT, DAMN SPOT" (W.S.)

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(Diseases South of the River)

(By Don Martyn)

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A lot of people have been worried and wondering about spots on their rhodo leaves. The picture of powdery mildew in Cox's new Plantsman's Guide to Rhododendrons, and Ken Gibson's articles and recent talk to the Fraser South Chapter have brought our smug feelings about rhodos being trouble free to a crashing halt. With rising panic and paranoia about every leaf blemish, it makes it hard to enjoy those afternoon walks in the garden.

Before you run out and buy clippers and start burning every spotted leaf, we hope the following will ease your mind somewhat. The wise but self effacing Dave Crabb, along with Les Clay thought they would get some expert advice on "the problem". They collected a quantity of leaf samples from their gardens - the worst spots, blotches, discolouration and marked leaves they could find (some, I might add, looking virtually identical to the leaves in the picture on P.105 of Cox's new book). These samples were sent by Clay's Nursery to Agriculture Canada for analysis to verify the problem.

Interestingly enough, the lab report came back stating that there were no instances of powdery mildew on any of the samples. The spots, etc. were attributed to Anthracnose infections. This is good news and bad news! The good news is that we don't have powdery mildew - if the lab is correct. By the way the samples Ken Gibson brought to our April meeting are now in the hands of Agriculture Canada and we hope to have their report soon.

The bad news is that we now know what all those black spots and blotches are - Anyway Cox speaks in many of his books about leaf spots, susceptible varieties, and the fact that they can be controlled with fungicides. Greer's Guidebook (p.10) also talks about fungal spots and the relationship of these problems with wet weather.

So what does this mean for you and me. Well, I checked out a few references to see about Anthracnose and its control. The very scientific Sunset Western Garden book basically tells us that it is a fungi that is spread by spores through rain and sprinkling. They state they are hard to control especially on large plants or trees. Treatment is fungicidal sprays when leaves unfold and then spray 2-3 times at 2 week intervals. The equally scientific "The Complete Book of Gardening (p.384) describes fungus as one that "causes wilting of the affected plant parts. White areas appear on leaves causing them to wither...". They talk about fungicides at length, about using fixed copper, sulphur containing fungicides (only at under 70 degrees F.) and Bordeaux mixture - (Mix 2 ounces of copper sulphate in one gallons of water, add 2 ounces of hydrated lime to two gallons of water and combine to make 3 gallons of Bordeaux mixture). Honest that is the recipe!. The Nursery Production Guide for Commercial Growers (1986 version) refers to Anthracnose (gloeosporium) in relationship to tree production of Dogwoods, Ash,

Sycamore and Oak. The description of the leaf damage is "Fungus causes leaf spots and leaf scorch in rainy springs. Edges turn brown. Premature leaf fall can occur". Control is suggested with fungicides, e.g. fixed copper.

Now the problem is that there are a number of types of Anthracnose talked about in these books. We know that a number of people are already spraying with fixed copper to help control this - restricting overhead watering would help. We all (mostly all! Don) also remember that fifteen years ago the mighty Dogwood was considered the unassailable symbol of B.C.'s ideal plant growing climate. Five years later the fungal crown canker *Phytophthora Cactorum* was established as an unstoppable destroyer of our native stands.

There are a few questions that need to be addressed in a "calm" scientific way:

1. Do we in fact have powdery mildew in our Rhodos in B.C. as evidently Britain has?
2. If we do - what are the most effective, efficient, least expensive, least harmful ways to control or try to deal with the problem?
3. If we don't - is the anthracnose fungal infections a problem related to wetness and plant stress (remember the winter of 1991!) - is it just the recognition and identification of a long standing problem, or is this a new problem that needs to be dealt with publicly?
4. If Ken's samples test positive for powdery mildew and ours (in the valley) don't, what steps need to be taken to ensure that this disease doesn't spread any further

We have many resources and means to deal with this. One suggestion would be to have a joint project sponsored by all B.C. Rhododendron Chapters to look into some solutions. We could either apply for an A.R.S. research grant or fund this study ourselves using some of our B.C. plant pathologists to make careful and accurate diagnosis of the problems and then to field test (if necessary) solutions and controls.

I think we need to get more information - we have a lot of knowledgeable people in our Chapters and in B.C. that can give us complete laboratory information. If this problem is as devastating here as it is reported to be in Britain, we might want to collectively invest some Chapter money to get quick accurate information to prevent the loss of major collections. If we are lucky, we are suffering some infections that were aggravated by the winters of previous years which will solve themselves. Either way, I think a lot of us would like to know.

At the executive meeting of April 21st, it was decided that if the test results prove positive (re: powdery mildew) - that Les Clay will call an emergency meeting of all Presidents of District #1 to work out solutions to this problem as per Ken Gibson's wishes when he spoke to our chapter last month.

P.S.: On our tour of the Weesjes' Garden (which was magnificent) they had plants marked with red ribbon which they told us were on a two weekly spray program for powdery mildew.

## MAPLE RIDGE GARDEN TOUR

April 18 1992

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(By Lillian Emerson)

On April 18 this year, a group of approximately twenty five of the Fraser South Rhododendron Society visited four gardens of members of the Fraser Valley Chapter on the north shore of the Fraser River. Some of us met at the Fort Langley Ferry dock and pooled cars to cross the river on the ferry. Others crossed the river at the Mission Bridge, meeting at the first garden.

We are indebted to the Ladds for making the arrangements with the hosts so that there was sufficient time to visit and nose around at each place.

We began at the French's garden high on a ridge of land between a gully and the Lougheed highway and a gravel pit at the east end. What good drainage he must have! From the size of the plants, he has been growing Rhodos for many years. It was a treat to see some of the good 'oldies' of which we had heard, and in such ideal conditions.

The next garden was the home of Ken and Ted Ladd, a relatively new one carved out of the brush with immaculate lawns and beautiful landscaping. The rhodos were just bursting into bloom and the flowering trees enhanced the picturesque landscape. We walked around the outskirts where brush is still being cleared away and new beds being planned. It was difficult to break for lunch on the south patio where Ken had set out a coffee urn and tea to have with our sandwiches.

Our next stop was the garden of Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Hemminger, where the contour of the land had lent itself to terracing. Even an old stump was used to highlight special plants, with a beautiful 'Dora Amateis' like a star on top. Even the undercover plants were admired and some of us came home with a little pink violet to put in our own garden.

Our next garden was on River Wynd, the home of Eleanore and Peter Dempster, two newly retired workaholics. What they have accomplished is amazing! And what's more it's all planned on the computer first. The large gully to the west of the house has paths zigzagging down to a flat lawn, a vegetable garden, a rose arbour, and the beginning of a Yak display. Peat was dug out to be used on the slopes which left a hole which soon filled in with water from nearby springs. The overflow is directed into a ditch or used to water the lower gardens. Having climbed back to the top it was a delightful and new experience to look down on the tops of the flowering plants giving a different perspective from the usual eyelevel view. Also, having arrived puffing and blowing on the flat at the top, we found the coffee, tea and cookies most refreshing.

VANCOUVER ISLAND GARDEN TOUR  
APRIL 25 1992  
(Dr. M.L. Trembath)

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Saturday morning came early - VERY early. After a long trudge from the ticket office to gangplank I'm always grateful for the pleasant ferry trip. We were met by a comfortable bus, a pleasant and able driver, and Bill Dale as our tour guide.

First stop, the Dougan garden. The bus snaked its way up from the Malahat and disgorged us at this most exciting location. It was my first visit to this garden, and I was entranced, not only with the location and view, but with the landscaping itself....a formidable job atop the rocks but the result is superb. The planted entry leads you onto a lawn containing a pool of pleasantly irregular shape, containing gold fish, I suspect water plants as well in season, surrounded by rhodies and other ornamentals. When you can lift your eyes from this, you face a mini mountain of rock - on the top of which is a magnificently sited Sir Charles Lemon flaunting its white blooms and cinnamon indumentum. Other rhodies are happily blooming in pockets of soil in the rock and line your path along the top. I have rarely seen a garden filled with so many happy plants!(do you suppose he gets rid of them if they don't like him?). In front of the house paths wander down and through heavily planted areas, it would have taken much more time than we had available to really appreciate the large and choice collection. We were almost overcome by the perfume of Fragrantissimum, and admired a blooming Edgworthii - (these plants return to the cool greenhouse for the winter.) What a beautiful garden the Dougan's have created.

The alpine garden of the Smiths was a totally different experience. This looks like a fairly young garden - and oh the amount of labour that has gone into it - undoubtedly a labour of love. The garden is built on varying levels with rock retaining walls, so much of the planting is at the right height for viewing. marvellous little treasures peek out at you from the walls themselves and the beds between them. Unfortunately I am abysmally ignorant of alpines, and only recognized the most common. Ignorance doesn't stop one from enjoying the delightful beauty of some of these wee things - but those more knowledgeable than I undoubtedly appreciated the garden more.

Bill Dale very kindly invited us to his garden, and what a lovely location and view he has. How I envy him the ability to grow so many of the Cinnibarinum group and their hybrids. Even after the bad winter they seem to have recovered well - Roylei was shooting new growth even from its trunk - encouraging - maybe I'll try again! Did you know that Cytisus battandieri (Moroccan broom) can be grown as a TREE?? I thought it was a shrub - but there it stood in Bill's garden, 15 or more feet tall, and ready to burst into bloom. This is another garden built on a slope, and containing a great number of interesting rhodies, companion plants and ground covers. I was impressed by an oxalis with big pink blooms growing under some of his plants.

We were allowed a short visit to the Elk Lake Garden Centre, and I, for one, was surprised by the large selection of rhodies - both species and hybrids - all arranged alphabetically - what a good idea.

Our final garden visit was Towner Crest - the Weesjes' large woodland garden. It has been five or more years since I visited here, and the changes are very marked. What an incredible job they have done! Marvellous to see so many forms of Augustini for example, and to see many unnamed hybrids being evaluated - Evelyn grows many of Hjelmar Larson's last crosses - as yet uncirculated and some look to be real beauties. She also has a number of Milton Wildfong's crosses, some named tho' not yet commercially available I think. Frustrating that we were running out of time (and I had run out of energy) for many happy hours could be spent here.

Altogether a very full and interesting day - and many thanks are due to Harold for organizing it all, and to Bill for conducting us and keeping us on schedule! and many thanks also to Mrs. Dougan and Mrs. Dale for the welcome coffee, tea and goodies.