



NOVEMBER 1995

# The Yak

A CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Fraser South Rhododendron Society  
Newsletter Editor  
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**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1995 MEETING**

**8:00 P.M.**

St. Andrews Anglican Hall  
20955 Old Yale Road, Langley

**GUEST SPEAKERS: NORBERT AND VAL WUENSCHÉ**

Norbert and Val have been growing rhododendrons for over 30 years and have over 1,000 rhodos and 49 trees on their 70' x 135' city lot in Burnaby and there is still some lawn left! Norbert has been

hybridizing quietly and secretly for many years and has been very involved in establishing the Burnaby Rhododendron Festival and getting the City of Burnaby to adopt a rhododendron flower as the official City emblem. He has also served on the Burnaby Beautification Committee, has acted as a judge in local garden contests and is a well-known plant photographer.



## **New Members**

We are pleased to welcome George Kennedy of Langley to Fraser South Chapter.

## ***The Yak* will be back**

Look for *The Yak* in early January.

## Crazy Des

Des Kennedy, author of 'Crazy About Gardening' came from Denman Island to entertain us with some of his gardening anecdotes and stories. Des opened his talk admitting he had some trepidation about talking to a group of rhododendron enthusiasts since he had only a few rhododendrons tucked away in his garden. But the crowd didn't seem to mind a bit as Des had such an entertaining way of telling how he and his wife, Sandy developed their garden. There were terrific door prizes including some choice rhododendrons and exotics such as grapes from Arnim's arbour.

## Christmas Party —Friday, December 15

Mark your calendars for the December meeting—Friday, December 15. It will be a potluck dinner at the Church Hall. Diane Scott will phone you in early December with more details.

## Rhododendron Planting in Williams Park

On Friday, October 20th and Saturday, October 21st, eleven stalwart Fraser South members dug and planted a rhododendron bed in the glade where the Harold Johnson Memorial Bench is located. A total of 16 plants were moved—15 from Melba Johnson's and one plant donated by the Finleys. The rhodos included 'Lem's Cameo', 'Hotei', 'Belle Heller', 'Robin Hood', 'Taurus', 'Halfdan Lem', *R. bureauvii* and *R. pseudochrysanthum*. Vern Finley directed the colour and height arrangement and everybody had a good time drinking coffee, chatting and digging.

The weather was wonderful and such a good job was done, the Langley Parks Department has invited us to take over the whole park! Participants included Norma Senn, Melba Johnson, John Anderson, Diane Scott, John Warner, Arnim Roeske, Mike Bale, Vern and Doc Finley, and Pat and Dennis Dahl.

## Membership Dues

November 15 is the deadline for renewal of your 1996 Membership in order to receive the January issue of the ARS Journal. Membership forms were sent out with *The Yak* in October.

Dues should be sent to:

Arnim Roeske  
19459 - 5th Avenue  
Surrey, B.C., V4P 1M7

Full Membership:	\$35.00
Local:	\$20.00
Associate:	\$10.00

Your cheque should be made payable to Fraser South Rhododendron Society.

## It's Time for Some Turnover in the Executive

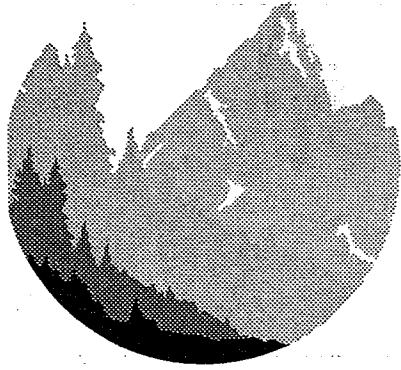
Participating in running the club is a great way to get involved and meet people. No experience necessary (or even desirable). We need fresh faces and fresh thoughts. If you have even the slightest interest in one of the following positions please call Don Martyn at 823-4853.

President  
Director (3 years)  
Librarian  
Membership Chair

## Scottish Agricultural College needs us

Dr. David Kenyon of the Department of Horticulture, Scottish Agricultural College in association with the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh is studying *Rhododendron* powdery mildew. He is requesting samples of infected leaf material be sent to the College from all over the world. Contact Dr. Kenyon at Department of Horticulture, Scottish Agricultural College, Auchincruive, Ayr KA6 5HW, Scotland for details on how to send the samples and an import license.

# Alpine Rhododendron



*In the wild waste remote from human taste  
These Rocks bring forth and desolation smile  
Here blooms the Rose where human face ne'er shone  
And spreads its beautys to the Sun Alone.*

These lines of verse were written by Thomas Blaikie in 1775 in his book "The Diary of a Scotch Gardener at the French Court". He was commissioned to go to the Alps of Europe to collect alpine plants for two doctors in England.

The verse refers to the Alperrose or Mountain Rose, also known as *R. ferrugineum*. It is very common in the Pyrenees and Alps between elevations of 900 and 2100 m in open moorland mixed with pine scrub or a carpet on the forest floor. As would be expected from its habitat, it has a compact form and usually has rosy crimson or pink flowers.

—David Sellars

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## Maud

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*Come into the garden, Maud,  
For the black bat, night, has flown,  
Come into the garden, Maud,  
I am here at the gate alone;  
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,  
And the musk of the rose is blown.  
My heart would hear her and beat,  
Were it earth in an earthly bed;  
My dust would hear her and beat,  
Had I lain for a century dead;  
Would start and tremble under her feet,  
And blossom in purple and red.*

*Maud won't come into the garden  
Maud is compelled to state.  
Though you stand for hours in among the flowers  
Down by the garden gate,  
Maud won't come into the garden,  
Sing to her as you may.  
Maud says she begs your pardon  
But she wasn't born yesterday.  
Frankly, Maud wouldn't dream of coming into the garden,  
Let that be understood,*

*When the nights are warm, Maud knows the form,  
Maud has read Little Red Riding Hood.  
Maud did not need much warning,  
She watched you with those pink gins,  
So she bids you a kind Good Morning and  
advises you two aspirins.*

*You couldn't really seriously think that Maud  
was going to be such a sucker as to come into the  
garden,  
Flowers set her teeth on edge  
And she's much too old for the stranglehold  
In a prickly privet hedge.  
Pray stand till your arteries harden  
It won't do the slightest good,  
Maud is not coming into the garden  
And you're mad to have thought she would!*

—Alfred. Lord Tennyson 1855

*(Reprinted with thanks from the Eugene Chapter March  
1995 newsletter)*

## In a bind

I have a problem with my rhododendron seedlings. I can't bear to pot any more and I can't bear to throw any out. If anyone is interested in having some seedlings from the Peter Wharton expedition, please give me a call at 535-0763 and I'll bring them along to the November meeting. The extra seedlings I have are:

<i>R. auriculatum</i>	PW 50
<i>R. fortunea</i>	PW 43
<i>R. barbata</i>	PW 79

—David Sellars

## Fraser South Rhododendron Society

### Executive and Committees

President:	Norma Senn
Past President:	Don Martyn
Vice President:	David Sellars
Treasurer:	John Warner
Secretary:	Janet Warner
Directors:	John Anderson Mike Bale Arnim Roeske
Membership: Programs:	Arnim Roeske Les Clay and David Sellars
Library: Newsletter:	Pat Dahl Wendy and David Sellars
Publicity: Hospitality: Ways and Means:	Hedy Dyck Phil Anderson Diane Scott

# rootstalk

by Indumentum

There are few things more satisfying in life than digging up a small rhododendron. The rootball is so compact, organised and predictable. A little levering around the edges with a shovel and up she comes, easy and clean like lifting a brick out of stone paving. In their early years, rhododendrons can be moved around the yard like garden ornaments. If you don't like the pink and orange there, why not try red and white?

This charming characteristic of the genus *Rhododendron* allows us considerable latitude in caring for young plants. In our new 'woodland garden' there is no woodland yet as all the greedy *alnus rubra*, the largest weed in the Fraser Valley, were removed last year and replaced with more interesting trees. Daring to ignore the recommendations of the authoritative Peter Cox, we did not want to wait for the trees to grow and provide shade before planting out the rhodos. The solution was to grow-on young plants in a nursery bed until after a few years, good sized rootballs were established. When moved to the sunny 'woodland', the large rootballs provide a reservoir for moisture and the plants are less likely to suffer sunburn which is primarily caused by drought stress. As the rhododendron grows, the leaves will form a canopy to shade the rootball and 10-15 years from now, the trees will take over.

A large plant that has been grown in the same spot for several years is often difficult to move simply because of the weight and, if too much reliance is placed on using the stem as a handle, the root system may break just below the stem. Though most rhododendron moves should be done in the rainy season when the rootball is saturated, I have found large rootballs easier to move in the summer when they are drier and lighter. The plants do not seem to suffer if the rootballs are immediately watered as they provide a large moisture reservoir that can be filled from a dripping hose.