

The Yak

FRASER SOUTH RHODODENDRON SOCIETY
A Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society

April 1996

In The Garden



*What is this life if,
full of care,
We have no time
to stand and stare.
—W.H. Davies*



What's Inside

Yakalendar	2
Garden Tours	3
Rootstalk	4



Wednesday, April 17, 1996
8:00 p.m.

St. Andrews Anglican Hall
20955 Old Yale Road, Langley

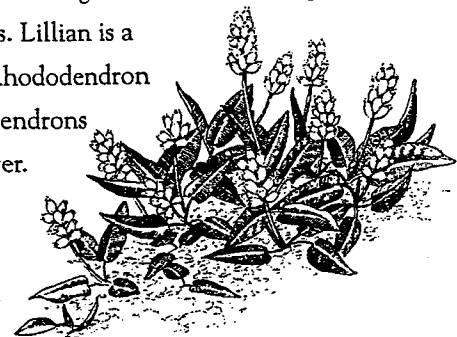
GUEST SPEAKER: Lillian Hodgson

“Gardens of Britain”

Lillian Hodgson has travelled extensively in Britain for over 30 years identifying plants for the UBC Botanical Garden collection. She has also sent plants the other way and shipped 3,000 cuttings to establish the North American hybrid collection at the Valley Gardens in Windsor Great Park.

Her presentation will include most of the great rhododendron gardens of Britain and many private and ancient gardens. Lillian is a founding member of the Vancouver Rhododendron Society and has been growing rhododendrons for 50 years in her garden in Vancouver.

As an additional treat, Bobby Ogdon and Kay Huffman will be bringing some blooms from their gardens.





YAKALENDAR

✿ APRIL 17

Fraser South Chapter Meeting
Lillian Hodgson—"Gardens of
Britain"

✿ APRIL 20, 9:30-5:30

Fraser South Show and Sale
Willowbrook Mall, Langley

✿ APRIL 27 & 28, 9:00-5:00

Primrose Show and Sale
Southlands Nursery
6550 Balaclava, Vancouver

✿ MAY 5, 2:00-4:00 P.M.

Tour—Huffman Garden
5710 Spruce Street, Burnaby
See page 3 for details.

✿ MAY 12, 1:00 P.M.

Tour—Mike Bale's Garden in
Agassiz. See page 3 for details.

✿ MAY 15

Fraser South Chapter Meeting
Members' Night and Truss Show

✿ MAY 26, 1:00 P.M.

Tour—Thomas Hobbs Garden
4585 Bellevue Drive, Vancouver
See page 4 for details.

✿ JUNE 19

Fraser South Chapter Meeting
Annual Picnic, Williams Park

✿ OCTOBER 4-6

ARS Western Regional
Conference, Ocean Shores, WA

New Members

Fraser South is pleased to welcome
Graham Park of Abbotsford, Dalen
and Lori Bayes of Sumas, and Julie
and Philip Blackburn of Langley.

From the Library

To all members, new and seasoned,
just a note to remind everyone
interested in ordering books through
the library at a discounted price, to
please do so soon, before summer
recess is upon us.

Please feel free to ask your friendly
librarian for further details at the next
meeting.

—Julie Garland

Wilf Nichols Plant Hunting in B.C.

At our March meeting Wilf gave us a
very entertaining and informative
presentation on native plants in B.C.
and the plant introduction program at
UBC. We learned that some of our
native plants, such as skunk cabbage,
are very popular in Britain and some
of our native plants are sold in B.C.
originating from U.K. nurseries!

March 31 Plant Sale

A big THANK-YOU to Diane Scott for
doing such a great job of organizing
the March Plant Sale and to everyone
who helped at the sale. Also a hearty

thanks to Hedy Dyck for arranging all
the publicity.

Harold Johnson Garden —Williams Park

On a cold, rainy Saturday morning,
eleven stalwart Fraser South members
arrived at Williams Park armed with
shovels, wheelbarrows, rakes and
other implements of their trade. A
huge pile of bark mulch was provided
by Langley Parks Department and
about half of it was transferred by the
enthusiastic participants to create
beds around the rhododendrons
planted last Fall. Harold's bench looks
in good condition. Melba looked after
everyone with coffee and goodies.
The rain-soaked mulchers were
Melba Johnson, Gord Finley, Sue
Finley, John Warner, Trevor
Badminton, Pat Dahl, Sandy Paul,
Ray and Jocelyn Hanson, and David
and Wendy Sellars.



Newsletter Editors
Wendy and David Sellars

Design
PageSet Graphic Design

16877-30A Avenue
South Surrey, B.C., V4P 2V7
Tel 604 • 535-0763
E-Mail 75111.2434@compuserve.com

Garden Tours

Huffman Garden—A Romantic English Garden Tour—May 5, 2:00–4:00

Hidden behind evergreen hedges on a quiet street in Burnaby, is the secluded, magical garden of Kay and Harry Huffman.

Winding paths lead through beds containing rare trees, such as a 25-year old *Ginkgo biloba*, underplanted with flowering shrubs interspersed with perennials and tiny rock garden plants. Their garden style has evolved over the past 50 years and closely resembles what Graham Stuart Thomas calls 'gardening in four layers' which he believes to be the most satisfying garden design. Trees provide retreats for shade-loving shrubs and cast their dappling of shade across the lawn and groups of larger shrubs on corners give shape to the views and create surprises.

Of particular interest in early May will be the collection of Milton Wildfong's hybrid rhododendrons and a number of tree peonies in flower.

The Huffman's garden has won the Burnaby Garden contest several times and our visit will provide us with lots of ideas for our own gardens.

Drop by on Sunday, May 5, 1996, 2:00 to 4:00 P.M. 5710 Spruce Street, Burnaby—take the Kensington Avenue exit from the TransCanada Highway and head northwest along Canada Way and turn left onto Spruce Street.

Lu zhu—A Dewdrop above the Fraser River Tour—May 12, 1:00

Imagine the ultimate rhododendron garden. It would be nestled in a sheltered bowl high on a rocky mountain ridge above the raging waters of a mighty river. Thousands of rhododendrons would be planted among towering native trees and perched on rocky ledges high on mossy crags. Ponds and streams would reflect the foliage and flowers, and winding paths would lead down narrow ravines and over wooden bridges. A stepped walkway would take you to the edge of a rock gully with torrents of water below sheer rock walls. The view from the garden would convey the eye from the wild river below over a verdant valley towards snow covered mountains.

Such a garden existed in the imagination of Mike Bale and since 1993 he has been creating it on a 25-acre mountain ridge near Agassiz. The garden is called Lu zhu which is Chinese for "dewdrop". A dewdrop is a symbol of purity, sincerity, honesty and beauty in China. We are fortunate to have been invited by Mike to visit his garden this Spring and to join him in celebrating the beauty of his creation.

To get to Mike Bale's garden take the Rosedale Bridge to Agassiz and turn west onto Hwy. 7 and head

Continued on page 4

Continued from page 3

towards Mission. Just after the road rises on to a rock ridge, the first driveway on the right is Mike's. If you pass a lookout, you've gone too far. Arrive at 1:00 and bring your mother. Mike will be providing some food and refreshments. Call Dave Sellars at 535-0763 if you will be coming.

Sunday, May 26, 1:00 P.M.
Thomas Hobbs Garden

Recently featured on PBS Channel 9,
Gardens of the Pacific Northwest,
4585 Bellevue Drive, Vancouver
(corner of Bellevue Drive and West
Second Avenue). Contact John
Anderson at 820-0821 for car pooling.

Riverview Horticultural Centre Society

Open House—April 25
3:00 to 9:00 P.M., Overview 7:00 P.M.
at Henry Esson Young Building,
Riverview Hospital, Coquitlam

Public Ideas Forum—May 8
(call 876-8990 to confirm date), 3:00 to
9:00 P.M.

Walking Tours

April 20, May 18, June 22, July 20,
August 24, September 21 and
October 19. All tours begin at 1:00
P.M. from the east side of the Henry
Esson Young Building, Riverview
Hospital.

ROOTSTALK

BY INDUMENTUM

While browsing through the Cloverdale Public Library archives recently, looking for information on why there are so few rhododendron species native to Surrey, I came across the newsletter of the Ganges North Maple Society. This organisation meets on the third Wednesday of every month in a Temple Hall a few kilometres north of Katmandu, Nepal. There were newsletter articles on themes such as "Companion Plants for Maples: The Use of Rhododendrons to Fill in the Gaps" and "Avoiding Invasive Rhododendron Roots" and "Why Maple Species are superior to Hybrids".

Yes, it seems there are species snobs even in the Maple societies and the most far-out are the lovers of large-leaved species. These obsessives will go to the ends of the earth to seek out specimens of their adored treasures.

It was fascinating to read an elaborate account of a lecture given by Mustapha Notherplant, the famed Nepalese plant explorer who had recently mounted an expedition to Western Canada in search of the rare and coveted *Acer macrophyllum*, the maple with the largest leaves in the world. He paddled a small canoe up something called Howe Sound and was astonished to find huge groves of Bigleaf Maples growing between elevations of sea level to 500 metres in mixed woodland. Some of these specimens must have been more than 100 years old and were tens of metres high!

Mustapha explored the woods for several days, collecting seed pods and taking photographs of these ancient giants. He was about to get back into his canoe when he smelled wood smoke and was aghast to discover the local people cutting down the enormous maple trees and using them for firewood!

At this point in the narrative, the newsletter reported that gasps of astonishment rose from the audience for they were horrified to hear of such sacrilege. Although a heated discussion ensued, the night was getting cool and Mustapha threw another log of *R. hodgsonii* onto the open fire. One of the members complained that the society should set a better example as that log would have made a perfectly good yak saddle.