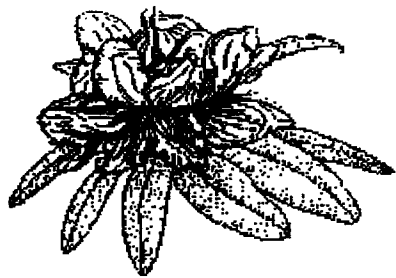


Fraser South Rhododendron Society



a chapter of the ARS

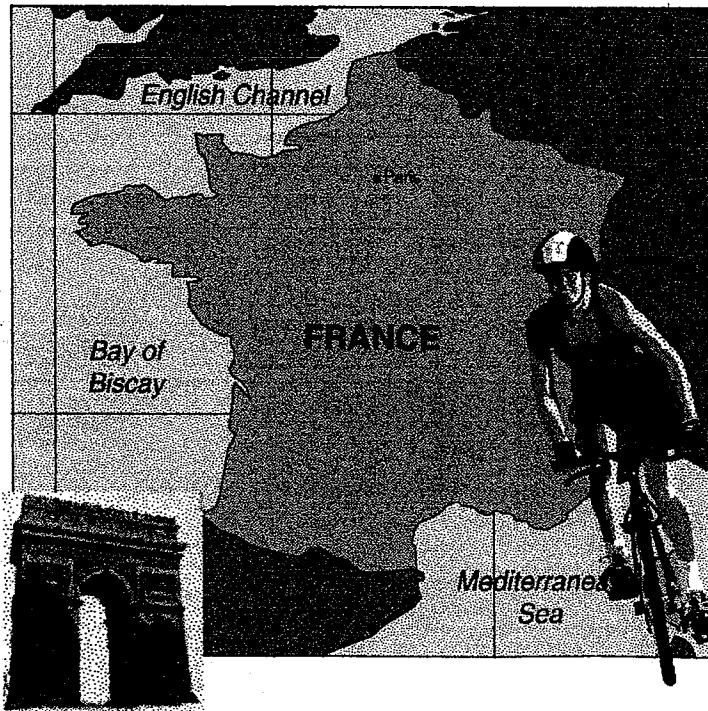
The Yak

Volume 11

Number 2

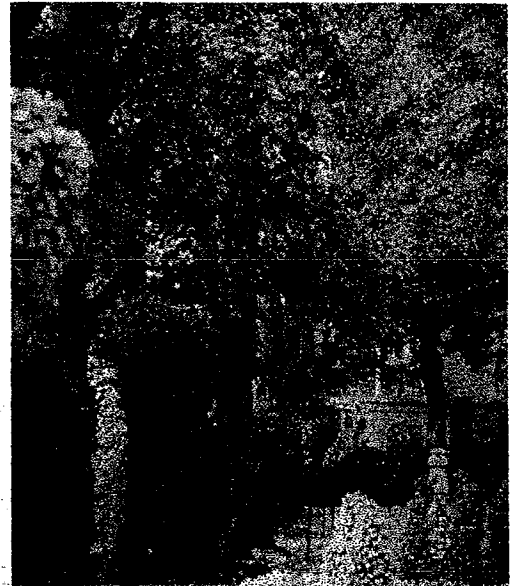
February 1998

February 18, 1998
St. Andrew's Anglican Church Hall
8.00 p.m.



SUSAN MURRAY

*Biking to Gardens in France
and
Things Seen Along The Way*



Botanic Garden
Nantes

Inside

Reports & News.....	2
Yakalender.....	3
From the president.....	4
Trees, good & bad.....	4
A Rhododendron Primer....	5
Rootstalk.....	6

January Meeting

Thanks to some of our own experts, we had a very interesting programme:

Don Martyn raised our enthusiasm for hybridising. He explained that pollen, if refrigerated & stored with a desiccant, remains viable for several seasons. That seed, also, if properly stored retains its viability for surprisingly long periods of time. Don suggested that we might include a spring tour to member gardens with a view to seeking suitable pollen for those of us bitten with the procreation bug - and offered his garden as one source.

Dr. G.R. Finley demonstrated (with caustic comments on the side), the art of grafting understock or nurse grafts, large and small.

Dr. Norma Senn produced a horror show of damages from illnesses, poor maintenance, acts of God (weather), and creepy critters of assorted zoological orders. To questions from the frightened audience, various control methods were discussed - from chainsaws and burning, to delicate finger-squishing, and not so delicate spraying.

Colleen Forster discussed companion plants, and brought with her a most interesting assortment of small trees, shrubs and perennials. These included plants for fall colour, winter berries, scent and form. (Too bad if you missed seeing these.)

The Yak

Fraser South Rhododendron Society
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Annual General Meeting

Officers and executive for 1998:

President - Les Clay
Vice President - Don Selman
Secretary - Janet Warner
Treasurer - John Warner
Past President - Bobby Ogdon
Directors:

Trevor Badminton - one year
Michael Neyedli - two years
Colleen Forester - three years

Following the first meeting of the new executive, the following have been confirmed in "office" :

Coffee & calories - Melba Johnson &
- Lillian Emerson
Hostess - Phil Anderson
Library - Pat Dahl & Janet Warner
Membership - Vicki Neyedli
Newsletter - Mike Trembath
Programmes - Trevor Badminton
Publicity - Hedy Dyk
Ways and Means - Diane Scott

Tours : John Warner has agreed to be the "point man" for tours. You will hear of suggested dates and places in later Yaks.

Ella's Garden. As you know,, we will continue to maintain this garden at St. Andrew's. A 'work bee' to weed, tidy and feed will be called for, perhaps in March. Maybe we can manage this by coming early for the meeting - expect to here about this later, too.

'Harold's Garden' at William's Park. We agree to supervise here, materials will be provided by the parks board. Our president will report in more detail after speaking with the Parks Department.



Yakalendar

- **March 18, 1998 FSRS
Regular Meeting
Speaker -Clint Smith
Visit to Ireland and the U.K.**
 - * March 28, 1998
VRS Annual Early Show
Asian Gardens
 - * April 4, 1998 PARS
Spring Sale & Truss Show
Elgin Hall, Creasent Rd., Surrey
 - * **April 5, 1998 FSRS
Annual Spring Sale
Clay's Nursery**
 - April 15, 1998 FSRS
Regular Meeting
Speaker Jerry Gibbons
 - April 18, 1998
Fraser Valley Dahlia Society
Annual Tuber Sale
West Oaks Mall
32700 South Fraser Wasy, Abbotsford
- NB DATE CHANGE**

 - * **April 25, 1998, FSRS
Annual Sale and Truss Display
Willowbrook Mall**
- May 9 & 10 Vancouver R.S.
Annual Show
VanDusen Floral Hall



Do you read your ARS Journal ? Remember the article " Containers are Murder " in the Summer 1997 issue (Volume 31, Number 3) ? I remember writing in our news letter some years ago, some similar thoughts; not nearly so well presented or complete, of course. In the new Journal (Winter, 1998, Vol.51, No. 1) a letter to the editor takes the writer severely to task. It seems to me that the ideas in the article are well worth repeating, and are applicable to even those of us who feel we are expert in the care and growing of rhododendrons. When I was young and foolish (a long time ago - well the young part at least is long past) I recall having great difficulty with container grown plants, and I lost more than I care to remember. So - OK - it was my own fault, ignorance and laziness - but I still remember, and regret the losses. It is worth one's while to be aware of the needs of plants transferred from containers to gardens.

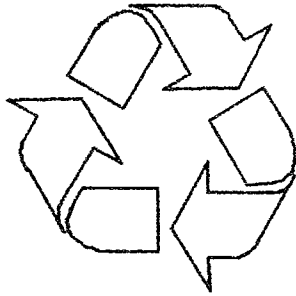
Remember:

- 1. The growing medium of container plants is far different from garden soil.
- 2. Container plants have been cosseted (of necessity) with careful feeding and watering programmes
- 3. Roots are somewhat restricted, and top growth may be out of proportion to root development - supported as they have been by fertiliser..

Fixes :

- 1. Soak root ball
- 2. Prepare planting hole of adequate size, and use compost, or peat to mix with the soil into which you will place the plant
- 3. Break out the root ball enough that container medium and planting soil can be blended so that there is not a sharp division between the container medium and the soil - else roots may refuse to extend.
- 4. In the case of large plants with very restricted roots, it would be worth while to : a) disbud the plant (at least partially if you can't bear to lose ALL the flowers) prune some of the new growth to restrict the demands made on an inadequate root system.
- * 5. Water - you must be diligent - all season.





Notes from Your Recycled President

This year our chapter celebrates its 10th Anniversary. In November of 1988 the first meeting of the Fraser South Chapter was held at the Clay's residence where 18 interested rhodoholics assembled and decided to form a chapter. The A.R.S. granted us chapter status at the Spring Board Meeting in 1989.

Membership steadily rose till 1995 when we had 49 A.R.S. members. Since then we have been in a slow decline dropping to 32 members last year. If we wish to keep a viable organisation this cannot be allowed to continue. I urge you to share your enthusiasm for the genus *Rhododendron* with others and invite them to one of our meetings.

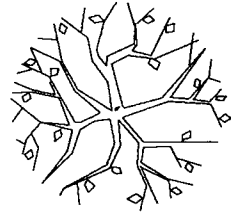
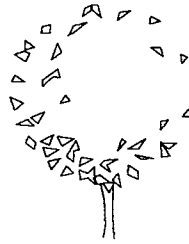
The A.R.S. Board has issued a 'Campaign 1000' District Challenge for 1998 to try to increase A.R.S. Membership by 1000 new members. This is approximately a 20% increase. In the case of our chapter we would require 7 new members to meet this goal.

Let's see if we can better this number.

Les Clay

Trees

(Thanks to the Newsletter of the Eugene Chapter of the A.R.S.)



The January meeting of the Eugene Chapter was devoted to Trees - the best and worst to associate with rhododendrons. Their speakers were nurserymen - growers of rhodies, and growers of trees, and a head gardener from a city park rhododendron garden.

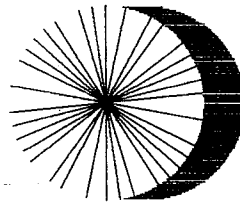
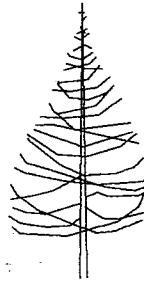
I found it interesting to compare their choices.

There was agreement in general on the following "**best trees**":

- ✓ *Acer palmatum* - and varieties thereof
- ✓ *Acer griseum* - Paper Bark Maple
- ✓ *Cornus kousa*, and *kousa chinensis*
- ✓ Magnolias - *kobus*, *denudata*, some *soulangiana* hybrids
- ✓ *Stewartia pseudocamellia*

There was also conformity on some of the "**worst trees**"

- ✓ *Acer macrophyllum*
- ✓ *Ailanthus altissima* Tree of Heaven
- ✓ *Salix babylonica*



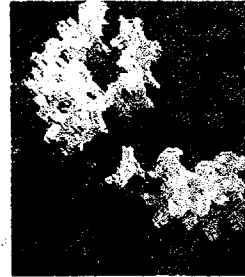
Surprisingly little mention was made of coniferous trees. The Parks Gardner liked Douglas fir - the others counted it among the worst trees. Dwarf *Chamaecyparis* - assorted cultivars, were highly praised, where the larger varieties were frowned upon. Little use was made of pines. It seems that these experts do not care for oak trees in general .

A Rhododendron Primer



is for *hanceanum*-(Nanum Group)

This lovely dwarf rhododendron is suitable for all small gardens.



The first time I "met" this plant was at the plant sale at the American Rhododendron Society's Conference in Victoria. Every time I walked by the plant, I stopped to pick it up because it had such lovely leaves. At the time, I only had a balcony apartment garden, but I managed to grow the plant for several years in a container. Eventually, I transplanted it to a raised bed where it did very well until it succumbed to drought. (The person who was supposed to water the raised beds didn't!) However, this is one plant I intend to replace this summer.

The foliage is a lovely clear green, and my plant had pale yellow flowers in early May. Both P. Cox and H. Greer write that there are other forms with clear yellow flowers. The habit is neat and tidy, spreading to form a nice small mound, and it is reliably hardy in the Fraser Valley. I have never seen the straight species, but according to the descriptions, it is more sprawling and taller. The species is native to Mt Omei in Szechwan at 1500 to 3000 meters

Norma Senn



is for *Haldan Lem*

The Hon. Jean Marie de Montague X 'Red Loderi'
5ft (+), -5* F., M, 4/5

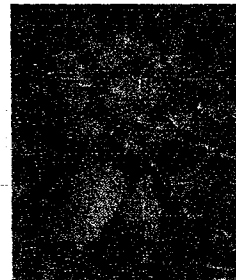
The cross was made by Lem in the 1960s. The plant was named, introduced and registered by the Seattle Chapter of the A.R.S.

A very strong grower, it puts on ten or twelve inches (or even more) per year. Even though my plant is in our most exposed location, severe pruning is required to keep legginess in check, and to keep the plant well branched and well clad with its beautiful long, thick, dark green, polished leaves.

Flower buds are large and prominent, basal bud scales dark red, bud tips are light green. Huge tight trusses have thirteen large, glowing florets of dark ruby-red. The flower texture is thick and waxy.

Truly a spectacular garden plant.

Vern Finley



DOORSIDE

BY INDUMENTUM

From Peru

This part of Lima is called Miraflores which means "look at flowers". As you would expect there are lush gardens overhung with huge tropical trees and at this time of year in the Southern Hemisphere, summer has just begun and everything is in flower.

The big flowering trees catch your eye first. Most are not indigenous and the trees planted in gardens here can also be found in residential gardens in South East Asia and Africa. There are blue flowered Jacaranda, brilliant Flame trees and many others I do not recognize. On the way to the office from the little hotel where I stay, I pass a huge Fig tree planted in the sidewalk. The aerial roots hang down, hoping to find a crevice to get started but they rarely make it to the ground as the pedestrians brush by them. The leaves are as big as a sinogrande but shiny green and the new growth is quite attractive as the leaf is furled and pointed before opening. Is this where the idea came from for using a fig leaf to cover up critical parts?

The shrubs are magnificent at this time of year. The Hibiscus have amazingly large bright red flowers which make the house plant variety look drab. There is also a yellow flowered bush that may not be an hibiscus at all but looks pretty nice anyway. My favourite shrub is the frangipani which has creamy white fragrant flowers set off by sprays of large green leaves. Bougainvillea hang over the walls with gaily coloured bracts of white, red, and purple.

The gardens are full of plants that are grown as house plants in Canada. Not being a house plant person I cannot tell you the names. Pelargoniums can be grown year round of course so they become small twiggy shrubs.

There is not much rain here on the dry coast of Peru. Most gardens are watered by hand every morning. With the heat, traffic noise and not much change to the seasons, maybe a cool wet British Columbia winter is not so bad after all.

