

a chapter of the ARS

# The Yak

Volume 11

Number 10

December 1998



## Yakalendas

### Jan. 20, 1999 FSRs AGM

and election of officers.  
A panel of our experts will answer questions and illustrate aspects of the growth, development and care of rhodies.

N.B. - mark this on your calendar NOW - there will be no Jan. *Yak* to remind you.

- ✘ Sat. April 24, 1999  
FSRS Annual Truss Show and Plant Sale at Willowbrook Mall
- \* April 27-8, 1999  
International Rhododendron Species Symposium  
Bellevue, Wa
- \* April 27 - May 3 1999  
ARS Annual Convention  
Bellevue, Wa



## !! Party !!

our usual bang up turkey dinner ++ celebrating 10 years for Fraser South  
Come join the fun  
AT: Bev & Les Clays  
Time: any time after 6 p.m. - Dec. 9th

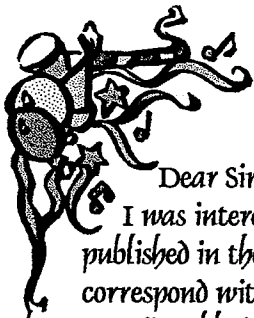
**if you have not received a phone call about this - (we have tried our very best to reach all of you) - come anyway!**

We plan to have a little basket where we ask you each to drop in a twonie - this money to go to the local food bank.

- ✘ Feb. 17, 1999 FSRs  
Peter Wharton  
Rhododendron Aristocrats
- ✘ March 17, 1999 FSRs  
Clint Smith  
New Zealand Gardens
- \* Sat. March 27, 1999 VRS  
Early Show at UBC  
Asian Gardens
- ✘ Sat. April 3, 1999  
FSRS annual Plant Sale  
Clay's Nursery 12 - 4 pm

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Letter to the editor

Dear Sir or Madam as the case may be:  
I was interested to read the letter you published in the Nov. Yak. I would like to correspond with your corresponant, if possible.

I have considerable interest in the disease discussed, and am trying to study the epidemiology of same. Any help you or your readers can give me would be appreciated.

Your truly  
Bitchen Bighte

Dear Bitchen Bighte

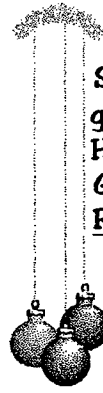
Our previous correspondant failed to have an address attached, and unfortunately the signature was utterly illegible.

If it would be of any assistance to you , I am happy to suggest to our readers that they might offer some information for your studies via these pages - a short expose on how and when they discovered their infection - if indeed any of them are infected.

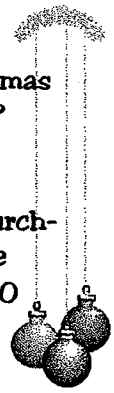
Editor

After receiving the above communication, I was heartened by Trev's description of his early introduction to 'rhoditis' - as a child playing in English woodlands containing escaped *Rhododendron ponticum*. He describes the course of his disease as rather like malaria - recurring bouts of illness, even long after you thought you were cured. Obviously, Trev is currently suffering from an acute exacerbation of symptoms, since he provided us with a learned, and well illustrated lecture on the hybrids of *R. yakusimanum* - if even half of those excellent photos were taken in his own garden ( and I expect that is so) it is indeed evidence of a most pernicious and even advanced case of rhoditis.

Yak hybrids usual characteristics :  
plant growth habit - restrained and nicely branching



Still looking for the right Christmas gift for some one to give you ??  
How about the latest edition of Greer's Guidebook to Available Rhododendrons. This can be purchased from our Librarian for the very reasonable sum of \$22.00

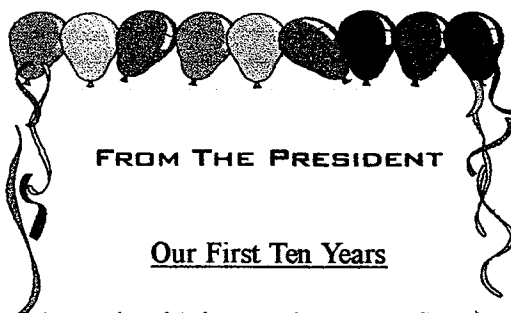


foliage - good colour, often nicely indumented ;  
flowers - usually floriferous held in tight, rounded trusses, often frilled and nicely proportioned to plant size  
colour - now there's the rub - first generation crosses tend to fade quickly and no matter how brightly coloured they may start out - all tend to look remarkably alike after a few days. It seems that second ( ? or more ? ) generation hybrids are better at maintaining colour depth.. No doubt they also lose some of the other strongly 'yak-like' characteristics. It seems, at least to me, that an inordinate number of 'yak' hybrids have been made- many failing to be sharply different from the next. More recent hybrids are apparently making a better show.

### LIBRARIAN WANTED

Our current Librarian would like to be relieved. She is wearing two hats - Secretary and Librarian - and finds it a bit too much. How about a volunteer for this small duty - you even get to see the new books first - and maybe even get to choose some.!

Speak to any member of the executive - Bobby Ogdon is the nominating committee, tho' this is an appointed rather than elected position.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our First Ten Years

On November 16, 1988, The Fraser South Rhododendron Society was formed when a group of Rhododendron lovers met at the Clay residence. Of this group 12 committed to the formation of our chapter by paying the necessary dues. The following were elected as the executive of the chapter:

President - Les. Clay

Vice President- Gerry Emerson

Secretary - Carole Fisher

Treasurer - Lillian Emerson

Directors. Harold Johnson and Pat Glennie

Our second meeting as held at the Crabb residence, December 14th with our membership increasing to 16. The first meeting at our present location St. Andrews Church hall, was in January 1989. Our speaker was Frank Dorsey, the past President of the Vancouver Rhododendron society, speaking on dwarf Rhododendrons. By the time official recognition was received from the American Rhododendron Society at their Spring board meeting, we had 23 members.

Our first truss show and sale was at Willowbrook Mall in the Spring of 1990. We also had a number of tours of local members gardens. In June we had our first picnic at Williams Park. In August with the Lily Society we placed a display at the P.N.E. In October, jointly with Vancouver and the Fraser Valley chapter, we hosted the Western Regional Conference at Whistler, B.C., then closed out the year with a Christmas party at Clay's.

In 1991 our first field trip to Victoria was arranged by Harold Johnson, to visit a number of gardens. We had another successful truss show and sale at Willowbrook Mall, also a joint sale with the South Surrey Garden Club. Our June meeting was again at Williams Park. With the Lily Society, we placed a display in the P.N.E. in August. The year closed out with a Christmas party at the Glennies.

1992 saw a successful auction with \$300 Canadian being sent to the A.R.S. Endowment Fund. Our first successful sale was in April at the Clay's, followed by a field trip to Victoria and our annual Show and sale at Willowbrook Mall. Our June picnic was again at Williams Park. In September, we held a successful propagation workshop. Christmas party again at the Clay's.

In 1993, Don Martyn became President. In February another auction was held to raise funds for Peter Wharton's plant hunting trip to China. Sales as in previous years. In April, a guided tour of the David Lam Asian Gardens at U.B.C. In May, David Sellars won the "Name the Bulletin" Contest with the "Yak". Dave and Ella Crabb received the ARS Bronze Medal. Picnic at Williams Park and Christmas party at Clays.

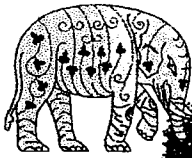
1994 - Norma Senn became President. Auction in February and fertilizer sale in March. Sales again as previous years. Spring tour of members gardens and a field trip to Hammond's in Arlington and Bainbridge Island. Our bottled truss show in May. Christmas party at Newlands Golf Club.

In 1995 - usual Spring shows and sales at Clays and Willowbrook. Members opened gardens for tours on Thursday evenings. Tour of Victoria gardens in April. Peter Wharton presented a program on his trip to China and distributed seed collected. In October we planted a Memorial planting and bench in Williams Park in memory of Harold Johnson. Christmas party at St. Andrews.

In 1996 - Bobby Ogdon became President. Sales as usual. Our members night and truss show in May, picnic in June at Williams park. We visited Mike Bales mountainside garden in May. Christmas party ended again at St. Andrews.

In 1997 - started with David Sellars speaking on constructing a pond, and Norma Senn on the gardens of Scotland. Sales as usual. In May we joined with other mainland chapters in hosting the A.R.S. convention at the Westin Bayshore Inn. The awards committee presented our club's first three Memorial awards- Les Clay, Arnim Roeske & Pat Dahl. Bronze Medals were awarded to Diane Scott, and to David & Wendy Sellars.

( Please turn to page 4 column 2)



## REMEMBERING

Taken from an article The Open Gate written by Bill Dale of Sidney, BC

published in the July, 1995 issue of The Island Grower and used with permission of the author.



Dr. Stuart S. Holland

Each spring when the azaleas and rhododendrons are in full bloom, the gate at 608 Transit Road in Oak Bay is

left open so that passers-by may know they are welcome to enter and enjoy the beauty of the garden created by Dr. Stuart Holland.

One walks beneath a bow of deep blue flowers from one of the 40 or more *R. augustinii* in the garden whose colours range from almost white to deep purple. To the right of the gate is a *R. yakusimanum* - one of many grown by Dr. Holland from seed collected by Dr. Serbin on the Island of Yakushima. The garden contains large specimen plants of *R. discolor*, and *R. rex* - grown from seed planted in the 1950's.

Perhaps the most striking display is from a group of *R. thomsonii*, grown from seed collected in the wild near Dareeling, India. The blood red flowers with their yellow calyces, the dark green foliage, and the peeling reddish bark - produce an unforgettable sight.

(I still remember with delight these particular *thomsonii* - the first I had ever seen 'in the flesh'. Seen on a tour to some of the Island gardens organized - I think - by Vancouver R.S. - a long time ago! Ed.)

Also growing in this garden is one of the lovely *R. wardii* from the seed collected by Ludlow and Sherriff in south east Tibet.

(These are the gorgeous *R. wardii* of excellent yellow colour and with basal staining in deep red or purple. - smashing! Ed.)

Dr. Holland named only one hybrid of his own making - this is "Transit Gold" a hybrid between a cream form of "Royal Flush" and *R. xanthocodon* Ludlow Sherriff number 17521. This hybrid has now been registered.

continued from page 3

In 1998 - Les Clay arose from the depths of obscurity to become president once again. Programmes throughout the year included: Hybridizing, Plant Diseases, and Companion plants. Clint Smith spoke on English, Scottish & Irish gardens; Gerry Gibbons on the Himalayan gardens at Van Dusen. Shows & sales as usual. Spring picnic at the Badminton's.

1998 Memorial awards to John Anderson, Melba Johnson & Lillian Emerson. The Bronze Medal was awarded to Pat Dahl.

Our tenth year then will finish with :

COMBINED PARTY TO CELEBRATE OUR  
10TH ANNIVERSARY AND OUR USUAL  
CHRISTMAS PARTY AT THE  
CLAY'S DECEMBER 9, 1998, 6.00 PM.

Les Clay

### In retrospect:

*Fraser South has lost some of its members through the years, and we miss them and mourn:*

*Gerry Emerson*

*Ella Crabb*

*Harold Johnson*

*Dr. Ed. Markowski*

*Kay Huffman*

*Jane Whitehead.*

*Some others we lost to illness*

*Bob and Alice Mann*

*John Crosby*

*Phil and Jean Hope ( Phil has recently undergone very serious surgery - we send them our greetings and all good wishes)*

*Some we lost to attrition, to moves and perhaps to changing interests.*

*We have been happy to have known you and we thank you all for your participation in the growth and development of Fraser South Rhododendron Society*

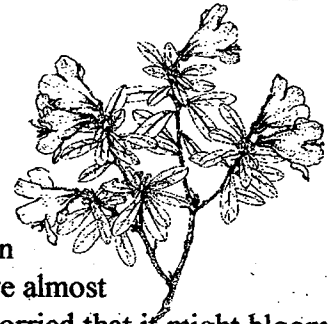


# A Rhododendron Primer



is for *pemakoense*

Subgenus Rhododendron, Section Rhododendron  
Subsection Uniflora



This lovely small rhododendron is easily grown, and is a good garden performer. When it blooms, there are so many flowers, that the leaves are almost completely hidden. The first couple of years my own plant bloomed, I worried that it might bloom itself to death; but each year it continues to "shine"

The flowers range in colour from pink to pinkish purple. They are about 3 cms. long. Leaves are small - about 1.5 cms. in length and a rich dark green colour. The plant habit is rounded, and it can be stoloniferous.

*R. pemakoense* is native to eastern Tibet, and is found growing between the 3,000 and 3,500 meter level. According to P. Cox, The Smaller Rhododendrons, this plant forms carpets on steep slopes. Cox also notes that the flowers are easily damaged by frost and since it is an early bloomer, it often fails to live up to its promise. My own plant is located in a sheltered spot on the north side of the house where it is both protected and flowering is delayed. This helps protect the flowers most years.

Norma Senn



is for *P. J. M.*

P.J.M. is a group name. Cox says 'P. J. Mezitt' is a clonal name whereas Salley and Greer say it is "the name as used in Britain, but not a selected clone"

*minus* Carilinianum Group X *dauricum* Sempervirans Group. The cross was made in 1939 by P. J. Mezitt. It was introduced in 1959 and registered - as a group - in 1987.

It received an A. M. in 1972

This is the perfect small rhododendron: a 4/4/4 rating, hardy to -25 degrees (F), and sun tolerant; the foliage is aromatic and the plant is easily propagated.

Small, round dark green leaves cover the well branched, upright plant, and turn reddish bronze in the fall. This colour remains throughout the early spring while the buds open to trusses of beautiful, bright purple-pink flowers. These contrasting colours are a delight.

Since the plant blooms in early spring, you may want to cover it if a late frost is forecast.

Vern Finley

# ROOTSTALL

BY INDUMENTUM

Early on Sunday morning we got the bonfire going despite having over four inches of rain the previous week and it was still coming down. We had the accumulated prunings from last March plus a pile of punky logs so it was a fine pyre. (If the pile was just pine logs, that would make a splendid double Spoonerism.) By lunch time the bonfire was reduced to hot ashes and blazing logs so we went inside for lunch.

While gazing out the window admiring our neighbour's huge smoke plume I was startled to see a man in a bright yellow jacket, fireman's hat and walkie talkie, scurrying through the bushes. Racing outside, I found a whole posse of firemen (and one firelady, so I suppose they were really firepersons) plus a huge throbbing luminescent fire engine.

They were having a great time looking grim and stern, unrolling their hoses and panting breathlessly into their walkie talkies.

"Fires are not allowed in Surrey," they said. "We had a complaint about that other fire" they said, "We didn't realise there was this one as well." Desperately I pleaded to save my precious fire but to no avail. I had to go back inside as I could not bear to see our hard work drenched with the satisfaction only a fireman can feel. We were admonished to recycle and compost. So feeling rather sheepish we put some of the remaining punky logs out with the garbage on Monday. Surrey claims to pick up an unlimited amount of organic waste as long as it is bagged and bundled.



The garbage men came and went and left the can of logs with a note on it. The note said that they did not pick up logs. Subsequent clarification provided by phone - logs were not picked up because they damage the trucks. So we can't burn them or have them carted off. If we bury them we could infect the garden with honey fungus. (If you want a real horror story about honey fungus, read the article on page 44 of the Winter 1998 edition of the ARS Journal.) I guess the only solution is to buy a huge gas-powered chipper and pollute the atmosphere another way.

# Merry Christmas