

a chapter of the ARS

The Yak

Volume 12

Number 1

February 1999

FSRS

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for 1999

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2 yr. Colleen Forster
3 yr. Mike Bale

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✘ **Feb. 17, 1999 FSRS**
8.00 p.m.

St. Andrew's Church Hall
20955 Old Yale Rd., Langley

Les Clay -fertilizing

Peter Wharton

Those 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

Sat. April 10
10 am to 3 pm
PARS annual plant sale
and truss display
Elgin Hall
Crescent Rd. at 142A St.

✘ **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



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December Doings

.. What a dandy party we had for our 10th anniversary and Christmas celebrations !! Many thanks to our hosts - the Clays - and much thanks to all of you who so cheerfully brought those good things to eat and drink. I didn't see an unhappy face in the crowd.



January AGM etc.

I am impressed with the number of you who remembered the meeting. I was beginning to develop a very large feeling of guilt as more and more Div. I newsletters arrived in my mail ! I think I must have been the only editor who failed to put out a letter prior to the Jan. meeting. Our business meeting went off with its usual speed and tidiness - thanks to the Chairperson of our Nominating committee - namely Bobby Ogdon.

After business our programme consisted of a mutple of scenes

Dr. G.R. Finley on taking scions for grafting and cuttings.
Les Clay - how to turn your container grown plants into happy garden growers,
Colleen Forster - companion plants, especially those for winter interest, and those with interesting scents.. Colleen brought a goodly number of these plants - camellias, mahonias, naked holly (guess I should call it deciduous) and other berried plants.

Les : foiled at the Xmas party - when he was not given time to present his collection of "Guess What" slides , snatched this opportunity to humiliate us. The format he used was a group of 15 pictures of Rhodo species, then a group of 25 hybrids,

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then a goup of 25 companion plants. The knowledgeable soul who knew (or guessed) the largest number correctly in each group was awarded a prize (I think there was a booby prize too) (Since Les kindly included a few things like daffs, tulips and lilac I wasn't totally skunked)



From the Cowichan Valley R.S Newsletter - in a letter from Tofino Ken Gibson tells the sad tale of damage done by a dump of twelve inches of wet snow in Tofino while the Gibsons were away for Christmas . Some 6 or 7 thirty-year old plants were snapped off at ground level (or below), and another six or more uprooted; many others are damaged and require straightening. There was, of course break-ages, tho' surprisingly neither Taurus nor Grace Seabook suffered any damage. The big broad leaves of his 11 ft. *R.sinogrande* simply shed the snow with no damage!



Letter to Editor

We had approached Dr. Norma Senn - a past president of our Society - to ask if she knew of some local project that our club might participate in. The following letter is, no doubt, the result of that request :

"As part of the University College of the Fraser Valley's Ornamental Horticulture program, our students are required to design a special campus project. This year they are designing a demonstration garden. The garden area will be fenced and will have an 8 meter wide landscaped area around the perimeter, which is 220.3 meters in length. Obviously, this area will require a huge quantity of plant material, and our budget will not cover this.

We are hoping that your members will consider donating part of their gardens to the University College. We are looking for named plant material of all types (perennials, ground covers, shrubs and trees) Sun-loving and partial shade plants hardy to Zone 6 are preferred. Divisions, seedlings and rooted cuttings would be wonderful.

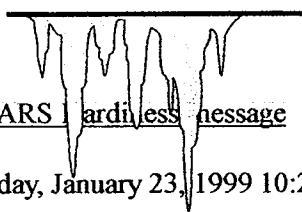
We would very much appreciate your participation in the creation of our demonstration garden, which will be constructed and planted from April 6 to April 23, 1999. We have the ability to hold plant material in our cold frame and greenhouse facilities. We have a large quantity of pots of all sizes and would gladly arrange to have pots dropped off for your members use to pot up plants.

If you would like more information, please contact:

Shelley at (694) 795 2813."

Signed by Nancy Moore, Instructor, Agriculture Department.

Your executive thought members might like to respond to this request. (If any are interested, perhaps I could act as a 'register' to note who has what, and then determine when and where material could be collected. Ed.)



ARS Hardiness message

Date: Saturday, January 23, 1999 10:25 AM

To Newsletter Editors or other chapter contact person:

The erratic and episodic cold weather that the continent is experiencing this year should provide an opportunity to collect significant hardiness data on rhododendrons. I would appreciate it if you could include the following appeal in one or more of your upcoming newsletters.

The winter of 1998-99 is developing into a winter that should cause some damage to rhododendrons. This means that we will have an opportunity to collect hardiness information. This is only possible if there is participation of many people in the effort. The submitting of information although exacting (one must follow the criteria carefully or the data is not significant) is not difficult or time consuming. This is especially true if one maintains a list of rhododendrons in their garden. One need provide only basic data like name, address, cold temperature, etc. It is then possible to highlight damaged rhododendrons and cross off rhododendrons that do not meet the criteria. The remaining ones on the list are undamaged. See how simple it is. If you are on the Internet you can find information and details directly at:

<<http://members.aol.com/RandANews/Hardiness.htm>>

or from the Rhododendron and Azalea News Website
<<http://members.aol.com/RandANews/news.html>>.

If you are not on-line you may obtain information by calling 1-503-585-2427 or writing:

Herb Spady
Chairman, ARS Hardiness Committee
9460 SUNNYVIEW ROAD N E
SALEM OR 97301-9060

I have some reporting forms and will be happy to provide same - give me a call.

Also - will download the criteria, make some copies, and have them available at the meeting.
Ed.

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President's Message

Late Winter is always an exciting time of year for rhododendron lovers. Buds start to swell, well at least you imagine they are, and the longer days encourage you to get out in the garden. Members of our club start dreaming about new acquisitions, moving rhodos to give them more room and wondering what the club will get up to this Spring.

According to the American Rhododendron Society web page, our purpose is to encourage interest in and to disseminate knowledge about rhododendrons and azaleas. The Society seeks to provide a medium through which all persons interested in rhododendrons and azaleas may communicate and cooperate with others through education, meetings, publications, scientific studies, research and other similar activities.

Your Executive are planning special activities over the Spring season which we hope will meet the needs of the members and fulfil the objectives of the Society. Read *The Yak* to learn about upcoming events. If you have any ideas regarding club activities, please talk to a member of the Executive. New, or even old, ideas are always welcome as we want the club to be fun and interesting for all the members.

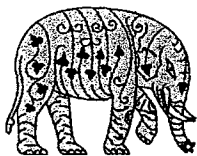
Finally we are all very grateful for the hard work of the Executive last year. We had a great picnic, an excellent Christmas party, stimulating newsletter and the program was always interesting. Your efforts are very much appreciated.

Nufer ninety-nine

There is an attempt abroad to educate us !! seems this is one of the tenets of the ARS - and so - added to each month's programme will be a short, hopefully painless, and perhaps even useful 'educational' section. Les will lead off this month with words of wisdom on fertilizing, and fertilizers.

We have a couple of 'hot to tour' members already organizing garden tours for the season. If you have any 'dying-to-visit' wishes - call either Mike Bale or John Warner.

* I have just received a schedule for garden visits !! See next month's *Yak* for details. Ed.



Mr Fred Collins

Bill Dale

Sydney, BC



Fred started growing rhododendrons while living in Maple Ridge about 1960. He got started by buying 200 liners from John Henny of Brooks Oregon. He had five acres of property and met and became a good friend of Bob Rhodes about that time.

It was Eric Langdon (Langton ?) who got the two of them interested in propagating and growing rhodies.

Fred got involved in the Vancouver Rhododendron Society. At the time that Vanc. first hosted the ARS annual convention, Lloyd Smith was Chairman. and Fred was vice chairman.

Fred and his wife Ann (recently deceased, and very fondly remembered by those of us who had known her) moved to Vanc. Island in 1978 - and brought a lot of his plants with him.

He bought one and one half acres from Bob Rhodes on Gabriola Is. and moved some of his rhodies over there.

He was a good propagator, both from cuttings and seed growing.

He moved to Duncan and the rhodos he took with him were quite large, so Fred gave a lot of them to Queen Margaret school where they may still be seen.

Fred was (and is) very generous with his plants and generous with his time in support of the ARS.

Fred was one of those responsible for getting the Victoria Chapter organized - tho' he never received any recognition for this. Having been pres. of the Vanc. Chapter he knew how it should be organized. He refused to take a position on the executive since, living in Cobble Hill, he felt he was not close enough to be as effective as he should be. Later, he and Stan Groves organized the Cowichan Valley R.S. which recently celebrated its 10th anniversary.

A very able grower of rhodo's and camelias, Fred has shown quiet leadership and support for the ARS Chapters. Although he seems to manage to avoid the limelight, his contributions were recognized by Cowichan Valley when he was awarded a Bronze Medal

Titles added to the Library in 1998

Illustrated Encyclopedia of Camellias Lillies, A Guide

What To Plant Where (R. Lancaster) Propagation from Cuttings (RHS Wisley)

Rhododendrons (RHS Wisley Hand book)

The Rhododendron Handbook RHS (last previous handbook - 1980)

* Guidebook to Available Rhododendrons (H. Greer) - most recent edition.

(* copies of the Greer Guide may be purchased from th Librarian for the very reasonable price of \$22.00)

The Librarian would be happy to receive suggestions from members for books to be added. (New Librarian - Joan Bengough 596 8740)

Also note: you may order books through the Librarian for your personal library. This is to your advantage since FSRS receives a sizable discount when five or more titles are ordered at once. The club will pass a portion of this discount on to members.

ATTENTION MEMBERS !!

Don Martyn will be bringing some wee plants to the meeeting - for sale. These are seedlings from material collected by Peter Wharton. Don also says he will bring for raffle a specimen of one of the newly discovered species (whose name escapes your Alzheimer afflicted editor) Best you come early to see what new things are available now.

A Rhododendron Primer



is for *quinquefolium*

Subgenus pentathera Section Sciadorhodion

This lovely deciduous azalea is easy to identify because, as the name suggests, its leaves appear in whorls of five. The white flowers of *R. quinquefolium* appear in early May just as the new foliage is opening. Individual flowers may be up to 5 cms. across, and they may have a green blotch or speckling. The new foliage is light green in colour. Leaves are characteristically outlined in reddish purple. The contrast of flowers and foliage is outstanding. In the fall, foliage colour may be brilliant orange or red.



R. quinquefolium is sometimes called the cork azalea because of its soft, corky brown bark. The plant can become large in time, measuring up to 7 metres in height, and it can also have wide spreading habit. According to C. Fairweather, Rhododendrons and Azaleas For Your Garden, the cork azalea can be hard to establish, but is well worth the trouble. It is rated hardy to USDA climate zone 6a.

Norma Senn



is for *Queen Mary*

Marion X Mrs. C. S. Sargent Felix & Dijkhouis
F.C.C. Boskoop - 1948 4/3/3 -15 degrees F

In our garden, this lovely old hybrid is a shrub-like tree reaching twelve to fifteen feet. Shiny, leather-textured leaves cover the many open branches, creating a wonderful background for the many large, deep rose-pink trusses that adorn it every year.

Not as leggy as some others of the "Pink Pearl type", it is reasonably disease and pest free. It should do well in a sunny location in the cooler garden.

Vern Finley

ROOTSTALK

BY INDUMENTUM

February is Olive month in our garden. Not memories of the hot dessicated olive groves of Greece but real luminous orchid-pink flowers lighting up the cold dank days of Winter. When there is nothing much else happening in the garden, except for a few sodden pieces of pink Kleenex hanging on the *Viburnum bodnantense*, the radiant flowers of Olive are uplifting. Olive is a cross between *R. moupinense* and *R. dauricum*, both very early flowering species, and Olive's reliable early blooming surpasses even her parents.

We bought our first Olive unwittingly 11 years ago when we started our garden. At Cedar Rim nursery we purchased a dozen assorted rhododendrons and promptly lost the name tags. When a tall azalea-like rhododendron cheered up the gloom the next February we were amazed and spent considerable efforts to find out its name. We ended up deciding it was *R. dauricum* which was not a bad guess under the circumstances. *R. dauricum* it remained until Dave and Ella Crabb dropped round one February a few years later and identified it as Olive.

The following year, Olive keeled over in a strong wind. It had rotted at the base because we had planted it too deeply. By that time we had learned to plant rhodos in a mound and not to let soil or even mulch bury the stem. The books tell you to do this but not why it is important. With this experience, we really learned our lesson but it was too late for Olive unfortunately. We found a replacement at Southlands Nursery in 1996 and gave Olive pride of place near the driveway so she can be easily seen and appreciated.

Meet our New Officers for 1999

We are happy to welcome Dave Sellars, and Mike Bale back into harness.

Sue Klapwijk has agreed to try and fill part of the hole left by Diane Scott's departure - and we must all give her our support.

Joan Bengough has agreed to be our Librarian -

Wendy Sellars has agreed to be Membership Chairperson.

We wish to thank Vicki Neyedji for her fine work in the above job - with the ARS computerizing everything it can lay hands on - especially memberships and financial transactions- it became increasingly difficult to handle this job without computer access.