



FSRS

Officers & Committee Chair Persons
for 1999

President: David Sellars 535 0763

Vice President: Trev. Badminton
856 0046

Past President: Les Clay

Directors: 1 yr. Michael Neyedli

2 yr. Colleen Forster

3 yr. Mike Bale

Secretary: Janet Warner 857 0788

Treasurer: John Warner 857 0788

Hospitality: Phil Anderson
856 8139

Caloric Intake: Melba Johnson

Lillian Emerson

Programmes: Trev. Badminton

Les Clay

Shows & Sales Chairperson :

Sue Klapwijk

888 0920

Membership : Wendy Sellars

535 0763

email: pageset@intergate.bc.ca

Publicity Hedy Dyck 530 6620

Newsletter: Mike Trembath

phone & fax 856 7261

email VE7HV@planeteeer.com



❖ **March 17, 1999 FSRS**

Mini programme: "To pinch or
not to pinch": discussion led
by Trevor Badminton

Major Programme

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.

❖ **April 11, FSRS Garden Visit**

* Finley Garden 11:00 - 4:00 p.m.

❖ **April 18, FSRS Garden Visit**

* Martyn Garden 11:00 - 4:00 p.m.
*(see page 3 for details)

❖ **April 21, 1999 FSRS Regular**

Meeting - 8:00 p.m.
Frank Dorsey: The 'Dwarves'

❖ **Sat. April 24, 1999**

FSRS Annual Truss Show

and Plant Sale at

Willowbrook Mall

❖ **April 25, FSRS Garden Visit**

*Badminton Garden & Trembath

*(see page 3)

* **April 27-8, 1999**

International Rhododendron

Species Symposium

Bellevue, Wa

* **April 27 - May 3 1999**

ARS Annual Convention

Bellevue, Wa

NB - accompanying this issue
of *The Yak* is a copy of the club
membership for your informa-
tion and use. PLEASE - if you
find any errors - notify me AT
ONCE
Ed.



Sites

1. ARS Home Page:

<http://www.rhododendron.org>

2.. RandA Newsletter:

[http://members.aol.com/](http://members.aol.com/RandANews/news.html)

[RandANews/news.html](http://members.aol.com/RandANews/news.html)

3. Home Pages ARS Division 1

[www.hedgerows.com/Canada/](http://www.hedgerows.com/Canada/clubbrochures)
clubbrochures



Inside

Reports	2
From the President.....	2
Schedule of Garden Visits....	3
"Lighten Up!".....	4
A Rhododendron Primer....	5
Rootstalk.....	6

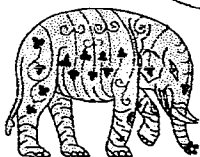
February Meeting

Les told us about a new slow-release fertilizer he has found effective to use especially for his container plants. We noted his warning that an excessively hot spell can cause slow-release fertilizers to release too quickly resulting in evidence of excessive fertilization..

I fully expect that real estate agents on Vancouver Is. are wondering what happened, and that F.S.R.S. is about to lose half its members. After watching those pictures, and hearing Peter Wharton enthuse about the possibility of: hardier forms of *R. falconeri* coming available, the recognition of new taxa, the superior forms of some of the plants within the *Fortunea*, *Grande* and *Argyrophyllum* sections., everyone wishes their garden could please these giant leaved lovelies, (and if it takes moving the garden to west Vancouver Island - so be it !!)

Interesting to see the plants grown from seed collected by Peter, and brought in by Don Martyn - might have to wait until they bloom to be certain of variety - or maybe even new taxa ! I think FSRs should start a piggy-bank now - to help Peter on his next trip of plant exploration. He says the area he ventured into was vastly underexplored for plant material.

In April I will
return



Did you ever wonder what to do with those lovely yellow flowers in your lawn ? Sue gave me the following:

Dandelion Syrup

Put 250 dandelion flower heads in a large saucepan. Squeeze the juice of one lemon and add. Add 8 cups of water. Bring to a boil, cover and let simmer for 1 hour. Remove from heat; let stand, covered, overnight. Strain mixture, and return fluid to sauce pan adding 5 cups of sugar. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for one and a half hour - or until the liquid is the consistency of maple syrup. Store in sealed jar in the refrigerator. Makes about 4 cups.

(Sue says it's goes really well on pancakes !)

From the President

One of the best things about belonging to a garden club is the organized visits to members' gardens. These visits provide an opportunity to get new ideas, chat to other members and enjoy the creations of other garden enthusiasts. It has been a tradition of Fraser South to organize Spring garden tours when rhodies are at their peak bloom. For me, some of the most memorable club experiences have been on these tours.

Your Executive Committee has come up with a new twist this year 'to provide added value' as an economist would say. Each garden host will have a particular interest to discuss with members. Beautiful rhodies and an educational experience all at an affordable price - free of charge!

I hope you will join us in these activities. Take some time out from your weeding to get to know some of your fellow members and their gardens. You will not regret it.

Dave Sellars



New Member:

Roylene Hicks

Happy to have you join FSRs

Speaking of new members - Remember the very striking posters your Publicity Chairperson provided at the last meeting ??

I hope you each took at least one. I hope you have all placed the posters with their 'rip off' pads of information in all likely places - garden centres & nurseries, bulletin boards - public buildings, offices - wherever shy rhodophiles might lurk.



GARDEN VISITS & PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION



"learn from the experts"

SUNDAYS 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. (rain or shine)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Host</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Phone</u>
April 11	Grafting	Doc. & Vern Finley	10476 125B St. Surrey	581 5100
April 18	Hybridizing	Don & Louise Martyn	42035 Yarrow Central Rd, Chilliwack	823 4853
April 25	Containers	Trev. & Doreen Badminton	25282 76th Ave, Aldergrove	856 0046
		Jim & Mike Trembath	25149 72nd Ave., Aldergrove	856 7261
May 2	Ponds & Waterfalls	David & Wendy Sellars	16877 80A Ave., Surrey	535 0763
May 9	Irrigation	Mike Bale	3599 Lougheed Hwy, Agassiz	796 8310
May 16	Mulching	Arnim & Mary Roeske	19459 5th Ave., Suirrey	538 3881

PLEASE NOTE : As the visits have been arranged for Sundays, please confine your visit to the period of 1.00 - 4.00 p.m. A courtesy RSVP phone call the day before would probably be appreciated.



April 11: Grafting

A wonderful opportunity to see early blooming rhododendron hybrids and species in one of the most comprehensive gardens in B.C. Here is your opportunity to see Gordon & Vern's early *R. strigillosum* crosses which have been consistently admired in the truss shows. Fin has also agreed to instruct in a "hands on" grafting tutorial for interested visitors.

April 18: Hybridizing

This is your chance to see a superb collection of rare species in early bloom, and to pick Don's brain about hybridizing. Don will help you do your own crosses in his garden, and then collect the seed for you in the fall to make them available for growing over the winter.

April 25: Container Growing

Your opportunity to see both mature and young plants during the same afternoon. Mike and Jim will show you around their garden where you can see large, mature rhododendrons in full bloom (newly registered hybrid - R 'Caitlin' should be in full glory Ed.) You can then journey around the corner to Trev and Doreen's garden and nursery (The Rhodo Ranch) and see a superb collection of plants and, in particular, many hybrids of *R. yakushimanum*. Thousands of plants will be available for purchase, and many will be in full bloom. Trevor has become an expert in container growing and this is your chance to learn from him everything you wanted to know about medium, fertilizing and watering.

May 2: Ponds & Waterfalls

David and Wendy's enthusiasm for gardening is well known, and this is your chance to get infected! David is an expert consultant water engineer, and has used his expertise to construct ponds and waterfalls. If you have any questions about water features for your garden, here is your opportunity.

May 9: Irrigation

This is a rare opportunity for the visitor to learn everything they will ever need to know about the collection, distribution, utilization and dispersion of dog waste !! You can also learn first hand about the advantage of the " Dan micro " irrigation sytem at Mike's beautiful 'garden on the mountain side'.

May 16 : Mulching

Arnim and Mary have agreed to open their splendid, manicured garden for our members. Learn first hand about gardening with limited water resources, and the advantage of mulch for conservation of moisture , in this magnificent garden.

With Show Season rapidly approaching, Mike Bale thought we might benefit from the following article - extracted from a publication to which he subscribes. (Heavily edited and with apologies to its 'original' author)



Of course our hobby has its serious side. We should be taking the health and welfare of our plants seriously. We should be honest, ethical and honorable in our dealings with others as well as in competition. That's important. That's serious.

But governments will not collapse, the economy will not go into immediate decline, nor will earthquakes or tornadoes ravage the

countryside because your entry failed to acquire a Winners ribbon, or Best in Show. It's just a loss, not a disaster. Still there are some exhibitors who snatch lesser ribbons, and march grim lipped from the hall, blaming other exhibitors, writing hate letters to the judge or complaining loudly to all within earshot. A few truly sick people have been known to go farther by disfiguring, or even destroying (Poisoning) a winning plant or truss. Why ?? - It's one show, one day, one person's opinion. It's supposed to be fun. It's not supposed to be that serious.

Rhododendron Clubs can bring out the best and the worst in people. Most prospective members note on their applications that they wish to join to learn more about rhododendrons, and to enjoy the company of like-minded people. But it's not long before a few are making charges and counter-charges of members overstepping their bounds, or being derelict in their duties. Jealousies and accusations arise. Factions spring up. In some cases law suits ensue. Is it really that serious ? New on the market is a T-shirt that reads " God gave us rhododendrons, the devil gave us weeds "

Judges are expected to take this business seriously, and they do bear a responsibility to be honest, fair, polite and knowledgeable. However, a judge who was presiding over a show at a national convention commented " I hope I can keep a straight face " Why ? what's wrong with smiling - common trusses are sturdy, colorful and generally do well. They are judging flower trusses, not playing poker. It's not that serious.

Those who keep such statistics tell us that the average time of involvement in the rhodie show game is from mid life to death. Hopefully it is the uptight, win-at-all-costs, nasty ones who get ulcers, burn out and depart to take up something more satisfying - like demolition derbies, paintball battles, or national politics. Those who stay in the rhodo-

dendron world over the long haul are often mellow people who take wins or losses with equal aplomb, enjoy what they do and keep it, the sport, in perspective.



Lighten up !!

Lighten Up

"Man was given an imagination to compensate for what he is not, and a sense of humour to compensate for what he is" (author unknown - at least by the writer)

Dream all you want, that's the message. But don't forget to look for the funny side of reality. It's not hard to find in the plant world. Popular authors such as Peter Cox may well have observed ' rhodaholics are crazy ' and proved it by writing several books on the subject.. That's good, because our involvement in growing rhododendrons and entering competitive shows is supposed to be enjoyable. No one twists your arm and insists that you enter truss shows; no one holds a gun to your head and makes you enter trusses for competition.. You do it because it's fun, and because you welcome the competition and camaraderie, both species and hybrids. It's a sense of humour that lets us see the ludicrous side of life and make us grin instead of grimace. And if we maintain that sense of humour, it can let us sail through the disappointments, embarrassments and trying times.. Ever take a fall at the show ?. who hasn't? One lady exhibitor lost her footing in damp grass, and slid feet first into the judge. Another exhibitor immediately spread his hands, palms down in the familiar signal and shouted "Safe!"

Even the most trying times can have their light side. After judging for several hours in a steady rain, I posed with the winners in my soggy suit and dripping wet hair, next to a sign " Sunshine Summer Rose Show ".

It's a fact, some of our most difficult times are the ones that are funniest in retelling. Looking back often puts them in perspective and lets us see the lighter side.

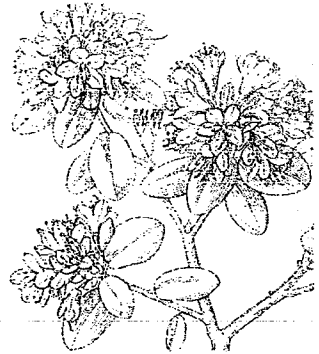
Even losing has its amusing side. Think of Susan Lucci, the soap star, who has been nominated for an Emmy countless times and has consistently lost. Her name has become synonymous with losing. Viewers who can't name the winners can still tell you that Susan Lucci lost again. Last year she was invited to give a pep talk to a baseball team that was having a dismal season, since she was obviously an expert on the subject.

A Rhododendron Primer



is for *racemosum*

Section Rhododendron Subsection Scabrifolia



This is an excellent small Rhododendron for the garden. It is unusual in that it blooms along the stems, giving it a soft airy appearance. *R. racemosum* is easily grown from seed, and the resulting plants may show a lot of variability in height and flower colour. The flowers, which appear in late April to early May, can range in colour from white through many shades of pink. Plant height can vary from less than a metre to 1.5 metres. Young stems have a red colouration which adds to the spring display.

The foliage is small (to about .5 cm. long) and grey-green in colour. As with many of the grey-green, small leaved rhodies, *R. racemosum* can take a sunny growing location. It is reliably hardy in the Fraser Valley.

Norma Senn



is for 'Ramspo'

fastigiatum x *minus* var. *minus* Carolinianum

G. Nearing - exhibited 1940

-25f/-32c EM 3/4/4

A very compact, very hardy dwarf - great for low borders and rock gardens. The early new growth is grey-blue that darkens to a darker green - still with a bluish cast at maturity. Easily propagated and blooming at an early age from cuttings, it is a thoroughly satisfactory little rhododendron. The plant is consistently healthier looking than *R. impeditum* (in my garden)

Flowers are pale violet-blue, and appear in profusion. The plant appreciates sun and is good in dry sunny areas..

Vern Finley

DOODSTALK

BY INDUMENTUM

Real estate agents will tell you that the three most important considerations in buying a house are location, location and location. Those planning to plant a rhododendron or two this Spring are probably thinking the same thing. After all, what can possibly matter more than the appearance of the plant in the landscape, the colour combination with adjacent plants and the right amount of shade?

Regular readers of this column have probably already guessed that Indumentum would like to propose an alternative viewpoint. While location has its place, it is Indumentum's view that the three MOST important considerations in planting a rhododendron are drainage, drainage and drainage.

At the time of writing, the total rainfall this year in the Vancouver area has been 18 inches, 60% more than the average rainfall. If your rhododendron has been sitting in soggy soil it will die, however nice the location. If summer ever comes around, and your rhodie has not developed an extensive root system because of inadequate drainage, it will probably expire from lack of water because the rootball will not be big enough to store water between rainfall events. Finally, the most healthy plants with the biggest trusses and shimmering foliage are those with well-developed root systems because of excellent drainage.

If you are in doubt about the drainage or even if you are not, the best way to ensure good positive drainage is to plant in raised beds. As rhododendrons are shallow rooted plants, the raised beds do not have to be very high but generally speaking, the higher the better. I would suggest a minimum of 18 inches for the height of the raised bed. The bed can be edged with rocks or cedar logs or sloped upwards from a path. In addition you should mix in a barrowload of screened bark mulch with the soil which not only improves the soil texture for drainage but also ensures the right acidic conditions. Plant the rhododendron in a slight mound so that the stem is at the apex. Then when you mulch with more screened bark mulch, the root system will be covered with several inches of mulch but the stem will not be buried. The surface of the bed can be at an even grade as you can fill the depressions between plants with mulch.

By planting in raised beds the depressions between the beds can become paths and also act as drainage courses for surface runoff following heavy rainfall. They will also act as drainage courses for cold air which, like water, also flows downhill. This will reduce the chances of frost damage to blooms with a late Spring frost. The paths/drainage courses should be linked to ensure that both water and cold air are collected and directed out of the garden. If the paths get too soggy in the winter, you can always install plastic perforated drainpipe (Big O), with drain rock around it.



FSRS

Officers & Committee Chair Persons
for 1999

President: David Sellars 535 0763
Vice President: Trev. Badminton
856 0046

Past President: Les Clay
Directors: 1 yr. Michael Neyedli
2 yr. Colleen Forster
3 yr. Mike Bale

Secretary: Janet Warner 857 0788
Treasurer: John Warner 857 0788
Hospitality: Phil Anderson
856 8139

Caloric Intake: Melba Johnson
Lillian Emerson
Programmes: Trev. Badminton
Les Clay

Shows & Sales Chairperson :
Sue Klapwijk
888 0920

Membership : Wendy Sellars
535 0763
email: pageset@intergate.bc.ca
Publicity Hedy Dyck 530 6620
Newsletter: Mike Trembath
phone & fax 856 7261
email VE7HV@planeteeer.com



Sites

1. ARS Home Page:
<http://www.rhododendron.org>
- 2.. RandA Newsletter:
<http://members.aol.com/RandANews/news.html>
3. Home Pages ARS Division 1
www.hedgerows.com/Canada/clubbrochures



- ☼ **April 18, FSRS Garden Visit**
* Martyn Garden 11:00 - 4:00 p.m.
- ☼ **April 21, FSRS Meeting**
Mini Programme : Pests
Colleen Forster, Les Clay
Main Programme
Frank Dorsey
Growing the Dwarfs

☼ **Sat. April 24, 1999** ☼
**FSRS Annual Truss Show
and Plant Sale at**
☼ **Willowbrook Mall** ☼

- ☼ **April 25, FSRS Garden Visit**
*Badminton Garden & Trembath
- * **April 27-8, 1999**
**International Rhododendron
Species Symposium**
Bellevue, Wa
- ☼ **April 27 - May 3 1999**
ARS Annual Convention
Bellevue, Wa
- ☼ **May 2, FSRS Garden Visit**
*Sellar's Garden

(* see page 3 for details and for
correction of address for Sellar's)

* **May 8 & 9, 1999**
Vancouver Rhododendron Society
Main Show
Landsdowne Mall

Sat. May 8, 1999, 9:00 - 1:00
The South Surrey Garden Club's
Annual Plant Sale
St. Mark's Anglican Church
12953 20th Ave.
South Surrey

- ☼ **May 9, FSRS Garden Visit**
*Mike Bale's Garden
- ☼ **May 16, FSRS Garden Visit**
* Roeske Garden
- ☼ **May 19 FSRS's Justly Famous**
BB Truss Show
(come early for spring
maintenance in Ella's Garden)



Inside

Reports	2
From the President.....	2
Schedule of Garden Visits....	3
Remembering	4
Show Classes	5
" Don't Pinch Me "	6
A Rhododendron Primer.....	7
Rootstalk.....	8

March Meeting

What can I say :we enjoyed , as always, hearing Clint Smith, and seeing his excellent slides of plants and gardens in New Zealand. Made me wish to go again, this time in the season of full bloom, but it was fun to see and hear about places and gardens Vern and I had visited several years ago. Clint remarked on how well grown, and brightly coloured many of the plants were. He said that the hybrids of Jack Lofthouse appear to do much better there than here - and are widely grown and appreciated.

For our 'educational' mini-programme - Trev. Badminton ably explained the reasons for, and the methods of, 'shaping' rhododendrons, and I - your **Yak** editor- undertook to express the contentious view. Then, the very next day, I received the Cowichan Valley Newsletter, and read an erudite article by Ted Irving : " Leaf Bud Pruning of Rhododendrons "

I am constrained to reply: I have been growing rhodies for 50 years - so perhaps I can be allowed to have opinions. (set in stone some may say!)

{ See page 6 }



Mike riding her hobby horse again.. (or one of them !)

The Yak

From the President

Fraser South Chapter is part of District One of the American Rhododendron Society. District One includes all of British Columbia, but the nine chapters of District One are all in the Lower Mainland or on Vancouver Island.

District One has two meetings a year and normally two representatives from each chapter attend. To minimize travel time, the meetings are held at one end of a main ferry route and alternate between the Mainland and the Island.

The meeting in March of this year was in Nanaimo at midday on a Sunday. The agenda included: discussion of the Western Regional Conference in the Cowichan Valley which will be held next year (see page 3) and whether the District should establish a test garden similar to the one at Meerkerk Gardens. Coordination of District contributions to the UBC Asian Garden were discussed.

Many chapters felt that their local contributions should be emphasized. For example, the

Fraser Valley Chapter is helping to establish a rhododendron garden at Whonnock Lake.

It was great to find so much enthusiasm and activity throughout District One.



Fraser South is very happy to welcome two new members Please add them to your roster of members, and make them very welcome to our group

Mary Berg
3594 Davie St.
Abbotsford, V2S 6G3
604 853 5737

Dixie Mueller
150 Barnston Is.
Surrey, R.R.#17, V4N 4R1
604 589 3833

Monday 12th - Our first garden visit - to the Finley Garden was a great success - lots of you came, and we were happy to have visitors from Fraser Valley Rhododendron Society. We figured PARS must be whacked out after a very successful (we hope) sale on the 10th. Onward for next week at the Martyns !! See you there.