



FSRS

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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@planeteer.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)



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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.



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 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 30A 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



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'.

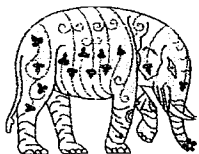
May 16 : Mulching

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.

Cowichan 2000

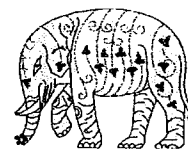
Cowichan Valley Chapter will be host to the 20th Western Regional Conference of the A.R.S. Sept. 14 - 17, 2000, at The Inn at the Water, Cowichan Bay. A roster of excellant speakers on both scientific and general interest topics; town and country garden tour, salmon barbeque, and the traditional banquet - speaker Frank Fuioka.

For further information contact the Registrar: Joyce Gammie, Box 259, 10101 View St., Chemainus, BC, VOR 1K0, phone 250 246 2484, e mail jgammie@cow-net.com



REMEMBERING

Beautiful Gardens and their Talented Creators



The Abkhazi Garden

The Glades



(a view along the spine of the garden looking east)

My first visit to this garden left me speechless with its beauty, and humbled by its designers artistry. It was many years ago, and I was with a tour group from Vancouver Rhododendron Society. We walked through an entrance that was a rhododendron forest - miniature in depth only - big old hybrids meeting above our heads, and out onto a landscape that filled one with delight. A green lawn swept down from the highest area - looking for all the world like a river in itself - with trees, and shrubs creating its banks. The right hand 'bank' as it were is a large rock outcrop. Plants and trees grow in cracks and crevasses, and several pools have been created by sealing basins in the rock. One pool acts as home to a pair of mallard ducks and their family. What could be more charming.?

The garden contains some beautiful old rhodies - *R thomsonii*, *R. auriculatum*, *R yunnanense*, 'Naomi' hybrids, 'Luscombei' and a lovely hybrid made by Albert de Mezey : 'Penjerrick' x 'Aurora' and named 'Peggy Abkhazi' after the Princess. Far from being confined to rhododendrons and azaleas, although there are many of each, this garden holds much of interest.. There is a beautiful specimen of the striking *Acer aureum* 'Full Moon'; much use is made of perennials, and of course water lilies and other aquatic plants.

Having come through tumultuous war years (both having spent several years as prisoners - Prince Abkhazi captured as a member of the French Army in Germany, Princess Abkhazi interned by the Japanese in Shanghai), both were determined to find a happy, quiet haven. This they found in Victoria, and created a most beautiful, peaceful garden.

(With many thanks to Bill Dale, and his article "The Abkhazi Garden" in the ARS Journal - Vol. 42 No.4 Fall, 1988)

The Yak

The Glades is now owned by Jim and Elfrieda De Wolf, who are doing a major restoration in this fine garden. The original owner and designer of The Glades was an arrogant, autocratic, opinionated, irascible Scotsman - W. Murray Stephens, and I enjoyed him immensely. I met Murray sometime in the 1960's - probably at one of the Vancouver Rhododendron Display Shows in the Oakridge Mall where he had a host of interesting trusses on show, featuring his yellow blooms from a cross between *R wardii* and *R. caloxanthum* (now both considered forms of the same species). My family had recently moved to a long and narrow property - and we needed some expert help in planning how to deal with it. Murray seemed like a natural - and so it was that my husband and I scurried about the yard with wheel barrows answering to the martinet in the centre - waving a cane and calling " more manure here, Jim ", or "Mike - that hole needs to be BIGGER and add some peat ". The end result - trees and rhodos and azaleas - gave me much pleasure. Murray despaired of me - " Mike you're not a gardener - you're a collector " - an accusation which is still true.

Murray had a lofty contempt for the commercial rhodo hybrids tho' he deigned to use them in The Glades (just to add some colour off season) His true love was species rhodos, and he grew a large number from seed, obtained from friends he had made in Scottish gardens. Unfortunately, not all were of these were pure. Nonetheless he

(please see page 5, col. 2)

We are gearing up for our Annual May Beer-Bottle Truss Show. The (informal) show committee (actually, everything about the show is informal) is asking for suggestions from the members for possible new classes ?

Below is the list of classes for our SHOW for 1998

CLASSES

Colour

1. Red
2. White
3. Pink
4. Yellow - to include cream
5. Mauve - all shades of purple
6. Orange
7. Bi- or Multi-colour

Special Classes

8. Blotch - each floret to show on dorsal lobe (or three lobes) a solid colour-mark of distinctly different colour than the base colour of the florets.
9. Most Flaccid
10. Most Lurid - defined as vividly garish
11. Best Last Year's Truss
12. Most Elegantly Weevil Notched

In view of the large number of entries in the pink class, it is suggested that the class be divided into a Light Pink (pastel - no darker than say the Naomis or Mrs. G.W. Leak ?) and a Dark Pink - (rosier, but not yet red)

We have no classes for species - ? should we add any here ?

We have no classes for Azaleas, nor for Azaleadedndons ?? Want any ?

Surely we must maintain our "special" classes - maybe add a Best (or biggest?) Hammerhead - would be a natural for a nice trophy. Just on the off chance - Hammerhead trusses are those where the inflorescence being displayed is the result of the opening of multiple buds rather than a single bud. This type of bloom is disqualified from those important stuffy shows, but it can make a beautiful bouquet all on its own.

Anything else ?? Give us a call - Colleen Forster Wendy Sellars, Sue Finley, Vicki Neyedli or myself

The Yak

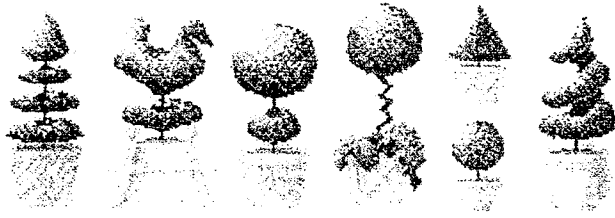
(continued from Page 4, col 2)

grew some very fine forms of the species and I was fortunate enough to obtain some from him. Murray had a superb plant of *R. russatum* - the bluest I have ever seen. I looked in vain for it last year when visiting the garden - guess it was lost in those wilderness years. A plant thought by Murray to be *R. aberconwayii* is doubtless an hybrid - (perhaps with *R. morii* ?) - now grown, and I believe registered as 'Glades Dark Eyes' it is an attractive plant. I remember a hybrid he made of *R. thomsonii* x *R. sutchuenense* (I think) - a big growing plant as you would expect, but with dark green foliage setting off immense, bright red trumpet shaped florets- really superb. I believe Silver Creek Nurseries still has a few of Murray's hybrids - including one called ' Glades Cherry ' - also a big beauty. Murray grew a large number and variety of trees including some rare and exotic ones. He managed to keep the Chilean Fire Bush (*Embothrium coccineum*) alive long enough to bloom - tho' it frequently was cut back by frost. Murray was very proud of his lake, with its huge *Gunnera chilinensis* at one end; its golden orfes, and the swans. The later were to have been the piece de resistance to the garden, and it took some time and effort for him to find an available pair. Sam and Suzie joined the Glades - temporarily. They didn't seem to appreciate their good fortune, and kept leaving - for the Peace Arch Golf Course (next door). In case you didn't know - this was easier to say than do - the swans were hilariously awkward on land - invariably stepping on their own feet and skidding forward on their beaks. Murray's neighbour Harry Dring (who himself became a rhodie grower - out of self protection I suspect) used to help out at the Glades, and he tells of his trips of swan recovery, when Harry sat in the back of the pick up, a swan under each arm, and was nearly throttled by two swan necks wrapped about his neck for security.

Lydia, Murray's delightful wife, did her best to maintain the garden after his death, but with advancing age it became impossible. Lydia always worked in the garden - under the master's direction of course (Murray would call her - from the farthest corner of the property - with a loud whistle and a stentorian shout of " TOOTS " and she was expected to drop everything and respond.)

Murray was a veteran of WW I , who had been left with damaged lungs from the gas used at that time, so he was never very healthy when I knew him.

He did his very best to 'bring me up ' as a gardener, and I certainly did learn a lot from him.



Don't Pinch Me. (or Mine)

Wherever did this pernicious belief arise ?
 - that rhodies require hands on picking, pinching and constant 'shaping' !! - Well keep your blankety-blank pinching fingers off MY rhodies.

To be reasonable (after all, some of my best friends are commercial growers) I concede that the nursery trade seems to expect to have bushy, budded little dears in 2 gal pots - to sell to the uninitiated, and uninformed public in large quantities. But we rhodoholics should know better, surely. After all, not every person has a 'perfect' shape or form - and I say "Vive la difference."

I wonder - when I read of landscape or garden designers who dislike using many rhodies in their designs - complaining that they form heavy, dull uninteresting blobs of green when not in bloom - if this isn't the result of the "pinch it" syndrome.

Far from making a stronger plant. it is my feeling that plants forced to branch at a very early stage in their life, produce a skeletally weaker shrub. Breaking out the young plants sends growth shoots flying out from the starting stem at a wide angle - and leaves the plant wide open to being split down the main stem if subjected to heavy snow, (or an inadvertent foot).

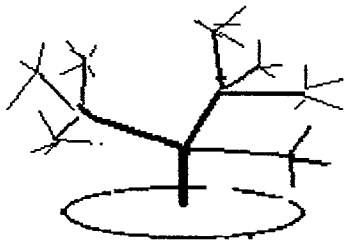


Figure 1

No doubt, if pinching is religiously continued, the plant can be forced to send some twigs

back toward its centre, but often these "well branched" offerings from the nursery - in a few years - wind up like a tonsure - an outlying fringe (of leaves and blossoms), and a bald centre - not a pleasant sight, and very prone to damage.

If, on the other hand, you stay those itchy fingers, and allow the plant to develop a spine, it will indeed branch on its own, certainly as soon as it blooms if not before, and these branches appear to me to be at a narrower angle to the stem, and so are more resistant to heavy pressure from above - such as a heavy rain, or snow load.

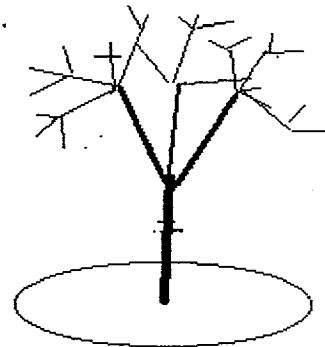


Figure 2

I like to see differences in my garden - from those lovely mounds of "willie" and "yak" hybrids, to the stately tree-like growth that 'Sir Charles Lemon' should have, to the almost uncontrollable whippy sprawl of 'Sappho', and some of the older *R. greirsonianum* hybrids.

I feel strongly enough about the hybrids - but I am adamant about the species - they really should be left alone to develop their own unique form.

If all of you afficiandos agreed with me, I would say that we need to educate the gardening public . Since some of you are avid pinchers yourselves, I can only try to convince my own small circle !!

(There. I feel better! Ed.)

A Rhododendron Primer



is for *sinogrande*

Subgenus *Hymenanthum* Section *Ponticum* Subsection *Grande*

R. sinogrande - the rhododendron with the largest leaves in the genus. Leaves can measure up to 90cm. long and 30 cm. across (for us old fogies - that's @35 in. by 12 in.). Western gardeners have George Forrest to thank for its discovery in the forests of Burma and Tibet in 1912. When protected from the wind and cold, the leaves of *R. sinogrande* are deep, shiny green on top, and have a silvery-grey to soft brown indumentum underneath. Plants that I have seen growing well in Victoria (BC) have overhead dappled shade, and are in sheltered locations. While it is wonderful, *R. sinogrande* is not reliably hardy in the central Fraser Valley. Where it can be grown, it is a plant for the large woodland garden as *R. sinogrande* can eventually reach 9 metres in height.

Flowers on *R. sinogrande* are in large trusses, with 20 or more florets per truss. Most are creamy white with a dark red blotch, but there are some forms with very soft yellow flowers. The plant blooms in April.

Norma Senn



is for "Sir Charles Lemon"

5 " 5 degrees F. 4/5/3

This plant is either: 1) a selected form of *R. arboreum* subspecies *cinnamomeum*
or : 2) a natural hybrid between *R. arboreum* subspecies *cinnamomeum* and *R. campanulatum*

(Take your choice - or believe whichever 'expert' you prefer - in any case it matters not - this is one of the most truly beautiful of rhododendrons - to my way of thinking - Ed.)

As this plant matures, it becomes a focal point on the garden. Regal in stature, it is well clad with thick, crisp, dark green elliptic leaves whose under surface is covered with woolly, bright cinnamon coloured indumentum. If grown above the eye-line, one has a striking view of deep green leaves and bright indumentum as one looks up into it. New growth is covered in white velvet.

The flowers are ivory-white, slightly speckled with dark red. The conical truss contains about ten florets.

Although relatively easy to propagate, it is slow to reach blooming maturity.

Vern Finley

DOODSTALK

BY INDUMENTUM

Surrey City Council has recently passed a new Landscaping Bylaw that regulates garden design. It will operate in a similar fashion to the Building Bylaw. If you want to make a change in your garden you have to get a qualified landscape architect to prepare plans and submit them to City Hall for approval. Exceptions are made for use of native plants which are, by definition, unregulated and can be grown anywhere you like.

Mayor Doug McCallum maintains that the new bylaw is not an invasion of property rights as the existing tree bylaw prohibits tree removal and therefore the City already dictates garden design. The City has been moving towards control of City gardens for some time. Garden bonfires are banned and there are sprinkling restrictions in the summer. The advantages of the new bylaw include minimizing the amount of water that needs to be delivered to homeowners and reduction of the amount of garden waste that has to be trucked away. Our vision for Surrey, City of Parks, has a dual focus said McCallum. In our striving for mediocrity we want much of the City landscape to be pristine and plastic with lots of colourful petunias and pansies. Homeowners can also choose to have a totally native garden with stately groves of alders and cottonwoods.

The City is currently debating whether to allow Himalayan Blackberry to be classified as a native plant. It would seem logical to allow it as its drab foliage and rampant unchecked growth symbolizes Surrey's bold new future. The only rhododendron that will get easy approval is *Rhododendron macrophyllum* as it is native to southwestern British Columbia and is extremely drought tolerant. We don't want people growing Asian rhododendron species said McCallum. They need a lot of water in the summer and compete with the shallow roots of native trees and stunt their growth. If you go for the green and native look you can always have a few hanging baskets to provide a bit of colour.