

A Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society

Volume 13

Number 3

March, 2000

Meetings are held on the third **Wednesday** of the month at St. Andrew's Anglican Church Hall
20955 Old Yale Rd., Langley **8:05 p.m**



Next Meeting - FSRS
March 15, 2000



Jim Greig
"The Story of The Royston Nursery"

The son of Mary and Ted Greig, Jim is ideally suited to tell us of their famous nursery. Among the early and best known rhododendron growers of Vancouver Island the Greigs did much to popularize the genus. Very knowledgeable, and always hospitable, a visit to the Greigs and Royston Nursery was to be treasured and long remembered.

Much of the rhododendron collection of Stanely Park originated at Royston, and Royston Hybrids are still being named and registered.

☼ May 13, 2000
Fraser South's First
Great Garden Tour

☼ May 17, 2000 FSRS
regular meeting AND
The Great Annual
BEER BOTTLE TRUSS SHOW

☼ May 20-21, 2000
Fraser South's
Van. Island Bus Tour

☼ May 24-28, 2000
ARS Annual Convention
Burlington Massachusetts

☼ **ARS Western Regional
Conference at
Cowichan Bay
Sept. 14 - 17, 2000**



Yakalenda

Sales and Shows

☼ Saturday April 1, 2000

10:00 am - 4:00 pm

FSRS Annual Plant Sale
at Clay's Nursery, 224th St.

The Bradner Flower Show
Ap.7,8&9 5305 Bradner Rd

☼ April 8, 10-3 **PARS**
6th annual plant sale Elgin Hall
Crescent Rd at 142A

☼ Saturday April 22, 10-3
**FSRS Annual Plant Sale and
Display of Trusses**
to be held this year at
Langley United Church
5673 200th St.

please note change of venue

☼ April 29 & 30
Vancouver R.S. Show and Sale
UBC Asian Gardens

☼ May 7, 2000
Fraser Valley R.S. Show and Sale
Whonnock Lake

**April 15 - Fraser Valley Dahlia
Society's Annual Tuber Sale**
Aldergrove Mall

☼ April 19, 2000 FSRS
Regular Meeting
Frank Fujioka

NB
{ April 23rd
{ First Fraser Valley
{ Garden Visit
{ Map in May Yak



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February

Hope you all had your say regarding those "proven performers" for our area. We are pretty lucky - the list could go on and on. (PB) Did pictures of all those new hybrids start you thinking about nursery-crawling come spring? Drooling a bit?

I must be a grinch indeed - after a while I kept thinking - what well behaved, plump and neat little plants with their plump and neat trusses.** I longed for one to look awkward and irregular, flinging and flaunting its spectacular blooms odd in shape and form. Guess I'm just contrary. Not every garden is big enough (so they tell me) to have many of the tall, elegant, bare-legged-with-the-fringe-on-top type.

** (All his pictures were of young plants explains Trev. and meant for city-lot gardens. OK fair enough I guess - grump mumble, grumble)

\$\$ ONE \$\$ Table

Thanks to those who saw the notice in the Yak and acted upon it - we had some lovely snowdrops in bloom, some cyclamen and augustinii cuttings plus---- The \$\$ one \$\$ table will be operating again for the March meeting so keep us in mind when you start tidying up your garden. Many a little this or that may be just what your colleague has been yearning for.

Did anyone see our Question Box??
Did anyone use our Question Box??

New Member

Welcome Bill Dale of Sidney, BC as an associate member of Fraser South R.S. Bill is a member of Cowichan Valley R.S. He is an expert on the life and times of George Fraser, and has been of great help to me with his knowledge of early growers especially on Vancouver Island, and his knowledge of the Abkhazi's and their garden.



I omitted the Finley Garden from the list of host gardens for the Great Mother's Day Garden Tour - and we all know that it is one of our very special garden treats. My sincere apologies.

Mother's Day Garden Tour

Arrangements are now well in hand. Eleven host gardens have committed to the project and I suspect are busy getting their gardens in order. Brochures and tickets are now being prepared and an update will be given at the March meeting. Tickets will be \$15 single, \$25 couple and blocks of 20 tickets @ \$10 a piece will be available for distribution to garden clubs. As this is a fund raising venture for the chapter, all members are encouraged to solicit sale of tickets to other garden clubs to which they may belong and advise as soon as possible how many tickets they might need.

Colleen has been extremely busy and successful in getting sponsors

for the brochure. The income from this will likely offset the printing expenses. It is hoped that every member will help make this inaugural venture a success, and it is therefore hoped that everyone will help in getting gardens ready. We will distribute a sign-up sheet for non host members to "buddy" with "Host" garden members to help in preparation. In addition, on the day of the tour, every garden will need assistants to greet visitors, check tickets, encourage membership in FRSR and perhaps give directions to plant sale locations.

Those of you who are full members of the ARS through Fraser South, will find, enclosed with your newsletter, a decal from the ARS. It is hoped that you will decorate your vehicle with this, and perhaps plan to leave said vehicle parked in a prominent spot at your favourite nursery - we need full value for all advertising plays. When those hordes of curious people gather, asking about the lovely decal - be prepared to enlighten them with suitable enthusiasm and assure them of a warm welcome at our meetings

R.S.R.S.

A Chapter of the A.R.S.

President: David Sellars 835 0763
Vice Pres.: Trev Badminton 856 0046
Secretary: Wendy Sellars 835 0763
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Membership: A&W March 532 9062
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YAY!!!

**THE GREAT
VANCOUVER IS.
BUS TRIP
IS ON !!!**

- Bus and accomodation comfirmed
- The MARS executive have very kindly offered to provide a picnic lunch, and organize garden tours in their area on Saturday
- confirmed our opportunity to visit Stubbs Island
- just a few spare spaces - let Mike Bale know (853 8839) ASAP

The following article is guaranteed to whet your appetite (as if you needed it) for the trip.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CLAYOQUOT PRESERVE ON STUBBS IS- LAND

By Ken and Dot Gibson

Clayoquot, also known as Stubbs Island, was named after Captain Napoleon Fitz Stubbs who circumnavigated Vancouver Island with Mr. Barrett-Lennard aboard the yacht "Templar" in 1861. Many local points were thus named: Lennard Island, Templar Channel, Barrett Island, as well as Stubbs Island. The word Clayoquot comes from the Indian word "Clea-o" which means another, or different, and "aht" which means people or village. Hence "Cla-o-quat" means people different from what they used to be, or warlike. The principle village of the Clayoquot Indian Band (now spelled Tla-o-quot) is at Opitsaht across from Tofino. "Opitsaht" means " the people who live in the winter sun".

The white settlement of Clayoquot on Stubbs Island, became one of the first trading posts outside of Fort Victoria around 1860. In the 1890's Clayoquot was under the jurisdiction of the Hudson Bay Company and ships bound for the Berring Sea were outfitted here with the Victoria Sealing Company footing the bill. At times, it was not uncommon for 16 schoon-

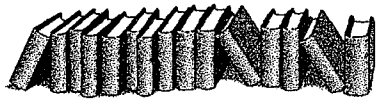
ers to be moored here.

In 1898 Walter Dawley built the first hotel on the Coast, and opened a store to service the early settlers. The original hotel burned in 1908 and a similar one was rebuilt immediately. In 1918 this second hotel burned, and was replaced with a third, smaller structure that eventually became the first beer parlour on the West Coast of Vancouver Island. It was under the management of Major George Nicholson. In approximately 1937, the Island was bought from the Dawley family by Betty Farmer, and she talked her sister Jo Brydges into moving here from Victoria. Betty loved to garden in the true English fashion. While Betty spent time in the garden, Jo mainly looked after the household chores, but she did venture into the forest where her preference was for a wild garden that blended with nature. We will see the remains of both styles. Mary Grieg of Royston, often visited Betty and Jo, bringing with her many tender plants. She recognized, as had George Fraser, that this was not only the wettest place to garden, but also the warmest. San Francisco has been colder. Due to its proximity to the Japanese Current, and the 5,000 ft. high mountains which prevent arctic outbreaks, *Stubbs Island boasts the warmest climate this side of California.* May Grieg is to be credited with many of the long-lived plants we will see.

In recent years a commendable effort has been made by Susan Bloom, the present owner, with the horticultural expertise of friends and managers Sharon Whalen and Chris Taylor. The Island is now known as Clayoquot Preserve, with an emphasis on plants and trees.

For the past five years, a visit in the fall by interested propagators from Victoria Rhododendron Chapter has resulted in many broad large plants being donated to the Preserve. Plants such as *R sinogrande* and *R maccabeanum* are thriving in the damp rain forest.

For your tour in May, you are warned : you could need warm, water-proof boots, warm clothes with perhaps a squall jacket. I always say " Tofino is either damned good or damned bad" - never underestimate mother nature, just try to meet her half way. This land is known as "the wild side" and, as we take the boat behind Felice Island, you would be able to see Japan - if you had eyes that could see that far.



Cougar Annie's Garden *

Margaret Horsfield

This is the story of Ada-Annie Rae-Arthur, who went as a pioneer homesteader to Boat Basin, in Hesquiat Harbour, several miles north of Tofino on Vancouver Island in 1915. She arrived with three small children and an alcoholic and opium-addicted husband. Determined to make a new life she set about clearing the land in order to survive. In the early years a small sum of money arrived each month from her husband's wealthy sister in Scotland, and almost as regularly another baby arrived to add to the work load and become another mouth to feed.

The garden evolved by sheer determination and hard work and also as a means of providing a source of income. Food was the first crop of course, both animal and vegetable, but flowers and trees must have followed on very quickly, because Ada-Annie was soon running a mail order bulb and perennial nursery. She next started a post office to handle all the mail she was generating, and included a small general store where she sold some of her own produce as well as a few canned basics. She must have been quite an interesting character, because although it was known that most of the eggs she sold were already rotten, customers always came back for more. She is described as being "wily and ingenious" and the author's descriptions of the way the 'accounts' were kept to justify the post office are both amusing and believable. She was also an indefatigable worker.

The author has researched and interviewed extensively; (Ken Gibson is one of the names acknowledged as giving local knowledge - must be 'our' Ken Gibson), and chapters are devoted to historical and geographical background, bringing the whole saga to life.

For those of us gardening today, with out running water, electricity, groceries from the store, and neighbours and friends to baby sit when we need a day off - or have another baby ! - it is difficult to comprehend how Ada-Annie managed with none

of these. Her garden was producing for sale dahlia tubers, daylilies, gladioli, peonies, lythrum, irises, azaleas, rhododendrons, and heathers. And goats. It was because of the goats that she earned the name "Cougar Annie". As cougars threatened to deprive her of her source of meat, milk, and income, she revived a skill she had learned from her father as a seven year old when they lived in South Africa. Her prowess was legendary - she never wasted a bullet. For Ada-Annie it was a matter of survival.

Cougar Annie died in 1985, just a few months short of her ninety-seventh birthday. In 1981 she had persuaded Peter Buckland to buy her property, with the understanding that Annie could stay there as long as she wished. Peter employed various people to look after Annie, as she was completely blind by *this time, and becoming increasingly feeble although she still had a very sharp mind, particularly where they garden was concerned.* She was not an easy person to help - she was not about to change anything that had worked for the past fifty years - (including her dress)

In the years following Ada-Annie's death, Peter Buckland went to the property about once a month, and became more and more drawn to it. In 1987, after building a house across the other side of Boat Basin, he started clearing the tangled overgrown mess it had become - he called it chainsaw gardening - hacking down salal, salmonberries, broom, blackberries and small conifers. Gradually plants that had been lost for years began to return. The whole five acres had now been cleared and paths restored and, incredibly, more plants are still appearing. No plants have been added and yet the photographs depict a woodland garden of exquisite beauty. One is awed by Cougar Annie's knowledge of plants when we consider that she went into the bush as a young woman of twenty seven and virtually never went outside again, and had very limited contact with anyone else. The list of plants that have resurrected themselves is incredible - they would be a credit to any modern garden. Much of Cougar Annie's spirit has been absorbed by the very soil - the garden too is a survivor.

The book is totally absorbing. I highly recommend it.

* Available in our Library

Joan Bengough, Librarian

More Acers

Acer palmatum "Bloodgood"

Probably the most well known red Japanese Maple. Holds its blood red colour throughout the summer. Comes quite true from seed.

Acer p. "Osakazuki"

A sturdy upright growing form with rather large rich green leaves turning brilliant red in the fall.

Acer p. "Koto no ito"

A green linear-leaved maple. It is a small tree. The new leaves have crimson tones when emerging, then become rich green and have yellow fall colour.

Acer p. "Shindeshoja"

A small tree with small leaves, excellent for container growing. New growth brilliant in colour, fading to reddish green with cream or white flecks.

Acer p. "Trompenburg"

A cultivar selected at the Trompenburg Arboretum in Holland, is a strong growing small tree with very deeply lobed red-purple leaves, fading to bronze in the summer, then crimson in autumn.

Acer p. "Katsura"

A dwarf small leafed form with striking spring growth. As the leaves develop they are pale yellow - orange, changing to rich green then bright yellow with orange tones

Acer p. "Ville Toronto"

A small linear-leaved form. Leaves are green with red overtones. The foliage is lacy, and turns gold in autumn.

Acer p. dissectum "Seiyu"

An upright growing dissect maple; feathery light green foliage turns brilliant in the fall.

Acer p. dissectum "Crimson Queen"

Acer p. dissectum "Everred"

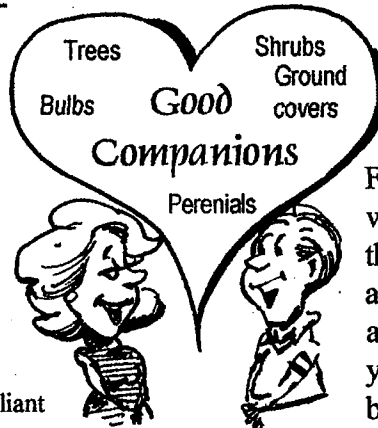
Acer p. dissectum "Nigrum"

Small spreading shrubs, suitable for rockeries or borders - the above are all red-leaved forms.

Acer p. dissectum "Virides"

Acer p. dissectum "Waterfall"

are green-leaved forms of the dissectum maple.



Buxus (Boxwood)

For those of you who think of boxwood as just "that big bushy thing that goes all brown in winter," think again! There are marvelous varieties and hybrids that can fit any space in your landscape, from very tight little bun forms ("Morris Midget" or "Kingsville Dwarf") to strict fastigate forms ("Greenpeace") to even weepers ("Pendula" and "Aurea Pendula").

I recently had the privilege of visiting a fascinating nursery in Hampshire, England (surprisingly - Langley Boxwood Nursery,) and was absolutely blown away by the diversity of form and foliage. These plants are very slowly sneaking into our market areas, but not fast enough.

Imagine a plant with large dark green rounded leaves marbled in gold that suddenly bursts into growth in spring in stunning sunny yellow. That's *Buxus sempervirens* var *Latifolia Maculata*! Picture a very dense shrub with dainty white-edged leaves, ultimately only 5 ft. x 5 ft. brightening up a shady corner, or a dark fence. That's *Buxus sempervirens* *Elegantissima*.

Are you into container gardening? Try one with very narrow blue-green leaves 1/4" long, that's slow growing and bushy, for a great texture contrast. That's *Buxus sempervirens* *Rosmarinifolia*.

All boxwood will grow in most soils; ever so much better in moist fertile soils, with partial shade. Most respond very well to constant and even heavy shearing, hence their popularity as topiary. However, by choosing the right named variety, you might just be able to throw away your hedge clippers!

Les Clay

Colleen Forster

NORTHWEST FLOWER & GARDEN SHOW
2000

If you missed the Northwest Flower & Garden Show in Seattle February 2nd - 6th this year you might want to make a special effort to set aside time for next year... it is definitely a worthwhile visit.

On arriving at the Trade & Convention Centre the first surprise was to find that the garden show was localized on a 5 acre site on the 4th & 6th floors of the building. The entrance to the show was through a magnificent 40' high glass atrium which was decorated with numerous, unbelievably beautiful and original flower arrangements. The lobby was so beautiful that one had difficulty comprehending that the exhibit was being held in the downtown of a major city many floors above ground level in a high rise building. The formal garden displays were located on the 4th floor and extremely well presented. Most of the plants were well labeled and easily identified making the preparation of a 'wish list' endless.

The displays were very individualistic but my own personal preference was for the display in which eighteen foot split, ancient cedars with charred interiors had been arranged in a vertical manner around a futuristic marble ornament. The entire arrangement was surrounded by moss and granite and provided a wonderful sense of "being in a forest in the mountains". Another display featured a traditional Japanese teahouse created of bamboo and cedar, complete with serenity garden, Ikebana arrangements and futon, (would make for a very romantic occasion.) The Brigg's contribution was surprisingly short on rhododendrons but was attractive and contained an ornate crafted "twig" bedstead with an inviting mattress of moss and wildflowers. Another display featured a variety of heaths and heathers in a tranquil setting. The display sponsored by Valleybrook Gardens of Abbotsford was superb and featured a traditional English country garden. A large variety of exotic perennials were exhibited at their best. Other exhibits featured waterfalls and ponds. Many of the displays contained large mature plants including one particularly attractive exhibit with a 30' *magnolia grandiflora*. One had to marvel at how the exhibitors had been able to construct such detailed garden arrangements on the

4th floor of a downtown high rise

The 6th floor featured a very large and extensive display of orchids and many plants were available for sale although the prospects of bringing them back to Canada was too daunting.

Adjacent to the orchid display was a magnificent collection of bonsai specimens, many of them ancient and no doubt very valuable. In addition, there was a superb display of Ikebana flower arrangements by the Seattle Chapter of the Ikebana. One can only marvel at the beauty achieved with such simplicity.

Many of the individual booths provided information on the latest available garden publications, recent and historic flower prints, novel tools and equipment, greenhouses and materials, garden ornaments and accessories and a variety of other garden related miscellaneous articles.

The Seattle Rhododendron Chapter and Meerkerk Gardens were well represented and offered some fine rhododendron prints free with membership to the A.R.S.

The show hosted lecture presentations by distinguished individuals on a variety of subjects and these were so well attended one had to queue early in order to gain entrance. Of particular interest at the time of our visit was a talk by Ciscoe Morris on the "Best Small Trees for Home Gardens". (A copy of suggestions given at this presentation may well appear in an ensuing edition of *The Yak*)

Sadly, the arrangements for refreshments were disappointing and could certainly do with re-vamping. The cost of beer and wine was sufficiently outrageous that intoxication by visitors and exhibitors was an unlikely scenario !

CONCLUSION: Definitely worth making the effort - if you plan to go we would strongly suggest that you go very early to avoid the late afternoon crowds and make use of the parking arrangements at Northgate with a very efficient and courteous bus service to the garden show entrance.

Mike Bale

A Rhododendron Primer

Book 2



is for *bureavii*

Sub section Taliensia

Rhododendron bureavii is grown as much for its foliage as for its flowers. This species has a thick coating of superb cinnamon brown indumentum and the leaf tops are dark green, with fairly prominent veins.

Buds of *R. bureavii* start off a deep rose colour, and as the flowers open, they fade to white, often with red markings. Flowers are bell-shaped, held in loose trusses, and appear in May. With age, this species flowers freely.

R. bureavii is native to the Chinese provinces of Yunnan and Sichuan where it can be found growing along rivers and streams at fairly high elevations. In the wild, it can become a large plant, reaching over 6 meters in height. It needs excellent drainage and does best locally with overhead shade.

It has been used in hybridization and imparts good foliage to its descendants. Rhododendrons 'Hansel' and 'Gretzel' are both *R. bureavii* x 'Fabia' crosses.

Norma Senn



is for Blue Peter

Thought to be a ponticum hybrid - no parentage registered.

Waterer, Sons and Crisp A.M. 1933 F.C.C.T. 1958
Hardy to -10 degrees F (-23C) or more. 4-5 ft. M 4/3 /3 /3

A lovely old hybrid - very floriferous., robust and good natured. The tight trusses are conical, composed of frilled florets of light lavender-blue each with a large deep purple flare.

The glossy dark green leaves are very attractive to weevils. You may have some luck controlling them this way : place shingles under the plant's branches. Lift the shingles in early morning and clean off the weevils from the under side.

Vern Finley

DOOTSTALK

BY INDUMENTUM

Last month we had an interesting discussion on choosing a list of "good doers" for our region. The list was sent to the ARS who are compiling a brochure of "Proven Performers" for each region. There are so many choices of rhododendrons for our mild climate that we had difficulty keeping the list down to a manageable number. But imagine you were going to live on a temperate island somewhere and were allowed to take only one rhododendron with you, rather like participating in the old BBC radio programme "Desert Island Discs". What rhodo would you choose?

Some of the most attractive rhododendrons available these days are hybrids of *R. yakushmanum*, For some odd reason, there are many who denigrate the yak crosses as being too boring "all pink fading to white". While this is true of some yak crosses there are a surprisingly large number with stunning foliage and beautiful flowers that hold their colour for weeks. How is it possible that the wonderful pink and white flowers of 'Mardi Gras' set off in large dark green leaves could be boring? Or the subtle soft pink flowers of 'Queen Alice' or the stunning flowers and foliage of 'Silver Skies'. The yak-bureavii crosses such as 'Teddy Bear' probably win the amazing foliage competition with their brown fuzzy indumentum just like yours truly.

But unless it was an extremely small island, the one rhodo that I would take would not be one of these. My choice would be the finest hybrid ever made, the magnificent 'Loderi King George'. This was a cross of *R. fortunei* and *R. griffithianum* that was made by Sir Edmund Loder of Leonardslee in 1901. The buds are pink and become extended candelabras opening pure white. The flowers are huge and fragrant and have inherited all the best characteristics of the parents. Coming across a specimen in full bloom is a stunning sight and the fragrance is heady, The new growth is entrancing and the attractive bark of old plants adds a nice touch.

But you probably think your garden is too small for such a strong grower. Do not despair for you can grow it as a small tree by pruning away the lower branches. It will only grow as fast as a Japanese maple and most gardens can find room for one or two small trees. Imagine walking underneath the huge fragrant trusses on a warm evening in early May and you will have found your island paradise.

Here is the list of "proven performers" for F.S.R.S

Lepidotes:

PJM	Biskra	Blue Boy	Vulcan	Hino Crimson	Arpege
Dora Amateis	Conroy	Gomer Waterer	<i>R. yakushmanum</i>	Helen Close	Fanny
Blue Diamond	<i>R. augustinii</i>	Mrs. Furnival	<i>R. smirnowii</i>	Rosa Flora	Ginger
Ginny Gee	<i>R. litangense</i>	Nancy Evans	<u>Evergreen Azals:</u>	Elsie Lee	Irene Koster
Patty Bee	<i>R. keleticum</i>	Bruce Brechtbill	Blaauw's Pink	<i>R. kiusianum</i>	Balzac
Ramapo	<u>Elepidotes:</u>	Percy Wiseman	Pink Rosebud	<u>Deciduous Azals:</u>	<i>R. albrechtii</i>
Olive	Helene Schiffner	Odee Wright	Mother's Day	Cannon's Double	<i>R. occidentale</i>
Mary Fleming	Taurus	Fabia	Blue Danube	Cecile	<i>R. luteum</i>