



The **Rhodoholic**



Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society

Volume 27:23 April 2016

President's Message

I begin this message with a sad heart, reflecting on the passing of Marie Jacques, our membership chair for the past few years. Marie was one of the most positive people I have ever met. Even while enduring constant pain she greeted everyone with a smile and continued to give her all. Recently, she created a new rhododendron bed in her beautifully mature garden on Lover's Lane in Cobble Hill. It would be a nice gesture to present the family with a rhododendron to plant there.

While in our gardens, our thoughts are so often on those special to us; Marie, who was dear to so many of us, is with us in our gardens at this time. We dedicate a section of this newsletter to sharing our stories of our personal memories of Marie.



R. hyperythrum Origin: N. Taiwan, 900-1200 metres
Terrestrial, Early midseason H5

CVRS Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, April 6

7:30pm St. John's Church
The Rhododendron Gardens of
Vancouver Island

Ian Efford

More details on Page 3

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News from District 1:

Al Campbell and I recently attended the District 1 meeting in Ladner. Each chapter's newsletter is linked to our website, www.cowichanrhodo.ca, where you can find all the chapters' activities, sales, tours, and more.

A common priority of many chapters is propagation of rhododendrons to sustain a supply of unusual varieties for sale or for donations. Twenty-eight members of VIR, NRS, and NIRS met to collect cuttings from five gardens up -Island. Specializing in plants of one hybridizer, or of more heat tolerant varieties, could present an opportunity for members of our club, or for commercial growers.

Ken Webb presented an overview of the tentative itinerary for the 2018 Breman, Germany Convention plus pre and post convention garden tours. The event sounds fabulous!

Finally, after another round of discussions on how to allocate the 2015 Convention Legacy Funds, the District 1 presidents voted to divide the proceeds evenly between the seven chapters, with the expectation that the funds will be used in accordance with criteria set out by the Fund Committee and will then report back to District 1 in August. Under those guidelines, CVRS will continue with the construction of the CLUB propagator and use up to what we had requested to finish the job. That will likely leave about \$2000 of Legacy funds available to us. The Executive will entertain projects or donation suggestions once it receives the criteria.

Local CVRS news:

The CVRS Executive voted to increase member dues to \$45 and to continue to give new members



a book as a welcome gift. The \$45 covers the cost of ARS membership of \$30 US. Associate membership is currently at \$10. As per the constitution, the "change in dues must be confirmed at an AGM or a special general meeting."

There are many opportunities to become involved with the CVRS. On April 29th, volunteers will be needed to transport carts and plants to the Garden Fair venue. On April 30th, assistance with growers and customers and the take down and clean up of Melnor Hall would be greatly appreciated.

Before the June AGM, we will be seeking nominations for President, Vice-president and two members-at-large. We invite you to become involved by serving on the executive, by committing time to propagation efforts, or by presenting at meetings.

See you at the April meeting.

Carrie Nelson, President

Presentation April 6, 2016

Topic: The Rhododendron Gardens of Vancouver Island

Ian E Efford

“Ian’s illustrated talk will review the origin and links between the some of the twenty-six “public” rhododendron gardens on Vancouver Island and the individuals who initiated the interest in this group of largely Himalayan plants. A preliminary analysis of the origin of the gardens themselves will be presented along with suggestions on the role that they might play in better educating the public and ARS members about the genus and its relatives.”

Ian was a professor of ecology at the University of British Columbia for fifteen years. Ian directed federal programmes in energy conservation and renewable energy, and served as a consultant on science policy and international development, particularly in Africa. He initiated and held positions on the executives of botanic garden, rock garden, iris, and rhododendron societies, both in Ottawa and on Vancouver Island. Ian Efford is the author of the recently published book, *The Public Rhododendrons Gardens of Vancouver Island*.

Volunteer Gardeners' Annual Plant Sale

Cairnsmore Place

250 Cairnsmore Street, Duncan

Saturday, May 7 from 10:00 to 1:00

The Volunteer Gardeners at Cairnsmore Place, in Duncan, will be holding their annual plant sale.

For Sale:

- Hundreds of plants ready for planting
- Birdhouses, pot trivets and faerie doors made by members of the group.

The group is made up of 16 volunteers who work half a day a week from spring to fall.



There is no Island Health budget for this work, so money is raised through donations and the plant sale.

Funds raised pay for fertilizer, mulching, new plants, and new projects.

This work can only be done with the support of the Cowichan Valley's gardening community.

Thank you.



April Alerts

In April, most gardeners are extremely busy. There are numerous tasks to attend to: garden cleanup, weeding, fertilizing, pruning, dividing and moving plants, improving soil, planting new plants, among many others.

ADD SOME ENJOYMENT!!



ATTEND THE ISLAND GARDEN TOUR. “Should I go or should I stay?” Why not do both! GO up-island on a CVRS two-day garden tour, and STAY one night at the Kingfisher Lodge. The cost is \$230 (for double occupancy) and \$280 (single occupancy rooms). Please bring a cheque deposit of \$100 to the April 6 meeting, payable to the CVRS, or call Ian Efford directly if you are unable to attend this month’s meeting. Full refunds if the trip is cancelled.

ATTEND OTHER SOCIETY’S GARDEN EVENTS, “as we would have others attend ours”: See the intriguing announcements from Cowichan Valley Garden Club Spring Flower Show, Sew and Sew, Mill Bay Garden Club, and Cairnsmore Place Volunteer Gardeners in this newsletter.

ADD TO THE SALE REVENUE by dividing and potting up plants for the Garden Fair, April 30th. All members benefit from generous donations! Please deliver plants to the COWICHAN EX grounds on Friday between 4 – 7pm, or early Saturday between 7 - 9am, for pricing. Please label your plants, if possible.

ADD MAGNITUDE TO THE TRUSS SHOWS, at our fair and at others!! See the announcements for events to enter your trusses.



ADD AN APRON! RED APRONS are the latest trend for April! Add your name to the list of super volunteers and see just how happy you can be this month. Sign up at Wednesday’s meeting, call Elaine, or show up on Friday evening or at dawn (just kidding) on Saturday, April 30th. Please note changes to the plant purchase routines following the APRIL ALERTS!



We miss our dear friend, Marie Jacques

Sadly, we lost a very dear member of the CVRS on Friday, March 4th. Marie Jacques was born on October 14, 1949, and grew up in Bamfield. Marie passed away after a brave and courageous fight with cancer and related illness. It is difficult to express our sadness and personal memories, but not doing so somehow leaves many experiencing a great emptiness for not have expressed gratitude for a special life.

Just over a month ago, Peter Lewis contacted the CVRS executive with the conviction that Marie should know how much the club valued her. He had gone to visit Marie while she was ill, and shared how he valued the generosity, and humble spirit, of his friend Marie. *"She does so much for the club and she does it so willingly and humbly."*

Then after a recent visit he shared how he had met Marie. *"I have a rather personal connection to Marie. She was the one who encouraged me to join the club sixteen years ago. I was at a local garden center looking at some one-gallon rhododendrons. Before I knew it, this lady, appearing from nowhere, was enthusiastically telling me what a beautiful rhodo it was. I ended up buying the whole flat of 'Hachman's Charmant'. 'You should join the Cowi-*

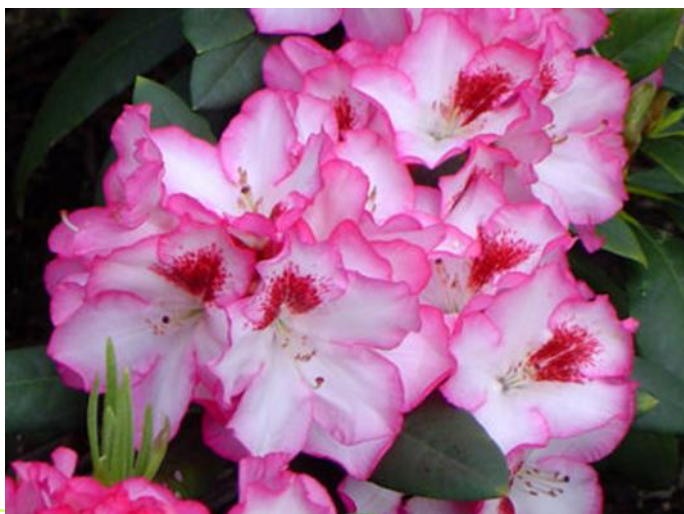


photo by Sharon Tillie

chan Rhododendron Society' she said, and the rest is history.

A week before Marie left us, I went to her house to see if she was taking visitors. No one was home, but her large camellia was in early full bloom; beside her doorway, Harry Lauder was a welcome sight in the sunshine.

I soon found myself at VGH in Victoria, and was told, upon inquiring, that, yes, she was taking visitors. When her loving husband Richard led me in, Marie looked at me and with that twinkle and joyful

R. 'Hachman's Charmant'

Hybridiser: Hachman, 1984

Elepidote Height: 4 ft.

Late midseason H5

R. 'Hachman's Diadem' x R. 'Holger'

smile said "Ooh Peter!" I told her how beautifully her camellia was blooming and how Harry Lauder was standing guard for her. She is such a lovely person. We will miss her."

Sharon Tillie notes how difficult it is to encapsulate the experience one has of a person who has passed on, but agrees that we want to attempt to do so. *"When I think about Marie I immediately see her lovely smile and what comes to mind are Rosemary Brown's words as she quoted Carl Buechner: "They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel."*

I always got a warm feeling when interacting with Marie; she created an environment that made you feel good about yourself. She was likely one of those excellent nurses who brought healing energy to her patients.

And, she was one of those members who willingly helped out wherever she could, and certainly brought a lot of goodwill and fun to our club.

When Mary Gale, Carrie Nelson, and I presented her with the silver cup last fall at her home, it was clear that she was touched by the recognition from her fellow club members. We had a lovely tea party, and that was the last time I saw Marie. I'll always keep that memory of her saying goodbye to us with her big smile while she was standing in her beloved garden."

Siggi and Maria Kemmler first met Marie when Siggi was in the hospital receiving cancer treatments. *"I remembered her because she was such a memorable nurse. I couldn't have asked for any better care. She was the very best---a lovely cheerful woman. At that time, I had no idea that we would eventually get to know Marie because of our shared interests. It is hard to express the sadness."*

Allan and Liz Murray each have different, yet share similar, memories of Marie.

Liz had just started working at Cowichan District Hospital, when the charge nurse for the evening shift mentioned that Marie Jacques had had her baby. *"All of the staff seemed extremely pleased! While I was working at the nurses' station, there was great excitement when this gal about my own age, wearing a housecoat stepped up. A sparkly person, very excited to be a new mom, shared her news with her co-workers. Everyone was so happy for her, and clearly, she was a favourite amongst her colleagues.*

Over the years, Marie became a friend who always encouraged and supported me. I will always think of Marie as a thoughtful, positive person with a wonderful smile and sparkling eyes that could light up a room."

Al met Marie when he started working in the operating room at Cowichan District Hospital. *"Even in full*



Marie at the CVRS Summer Picnic in June, 2015

scrubs and a mask, Marie's bubbly personality shone through. Whenever Marie walked into a room, it lit up. We spent many happy hours in the staff room talking about rhododendrons, our favourite subject.

One morning, in May, on our way home from a rhododendron sale, we saw Marie and her friend pulled over on the shoulder of the highway, near Dougans Lake, in order to make a left turn. There was no frontage road in those days. We stopped and, after conversing, we invited Marie and her friend to come up to visit our garden. We had a lovely visit with them and toured our garden. Marie's friend went home to make supper for both families. Marie, however, came with us to visit the Dougans on the Malahat and to tour their garden. She was thrilled! This was the first of our many garden tours with Marie.

It is a wonderful day to remember!"

Bill Dumont pictures Marie seated with pen in hand and a welcoming smile on her face. "For the past many years Marie served as the CVRS Garden Fair financial coordinator taking on, cheerfully, the challenging task of tallying thousands of plant tags and recording prices from all the plant sellers. The tags come into the counting room fast and furiously, yet she always kept up. Marie didn't leave until the last ones were counted and all the summaries were completed. She always completed this difficult task in a professional manner, and never complained or shirked from this volunteer duty.

Over the years Marie also served as the CVRS Membership Chair and dutifully worked at each meeting taking new, and renewal, membership fees and issuing receipts. After every meeting she provided me with a summary of the night's activities and her records were always without errors. We worked together to get the annual dues to the ARS office, and I really enjoyed going over to her house and garden to drop off a US money order for the dues. The highlight was usually a brief tour of her very nice gar-

den, and often she offered a gift plant to take home to mine. Her positive and bright outlook on life and her treasured garden were inspiring. She will be missed for her many contributions to the CVRS. May she rest in peace."

Carrie recalls visiting Marie at her home last November. "A few of us presented Marie with the Silver Cup for her service and dedication to the club. She was gracious and humble in her acceptance. Marie had created a new bed in her beautiful garden on Lover's Lane in Cobble Hill. It would be a nice gesture to present the family with a very special rhododendron to plant there."

To Sandra, it seemed that Marie's eyes always sparkled. Her greetings genuinely welcomed those she met, whether at meetings, special events, or while out walking. "One day I was driving on Cameron-Taggart, when I spotted Marie walking along a country road. Curious, and rather impulsively, I pulled over to say hi. We ended up chatting as if the day was totally ours for that very purpose alone. That day is still special to me."

Verna first came to know Marie when Bill assigned her to helping Marie in the accounting booth at the



2014 CVRS Plant Sale. “I had very recently joined the rhododendron club, and Bill sent me to work in the booth with Marie. I truly doubted that that job was the best use of my skills, but Bill looked convincing. In between the periods of silent sorting and counting, I came to know a person who was direct, honest, caring and fun-loving. Marie shared easily about her garden, her family, her trips to their cabin on the West Coast, and even her health, but all this only in between her silent focus on task and her self talk, “Okay, Marie, you can’t talk and do the math at the same time.” We soon developed an efficient system and at the end of the day, were quite proud of our teamwork. Last year, I definitely wanted to work in that crazy booth with Marie again, and signed up even before Bill finished his question. The big reward was continuing the two-line stories.

Near the end of the Juan de Fuca tour last spring, a number of us wandered in and out of shops while waiting at the ferry terminal to return home. Not much of a shopper, I stepped outside and Marie, who was walking alone, fell into step with me, offering me an overly generous compliment as she did so. I protested, contrasting my dull and hobbling presence to her cheerful colours and gorgeous smile. She agreed instantly that she loved bright colours, and that, yes,

I could add just a little pizzazz. Perhaps pink. To my protest that I didn’t do pink, she laughed lightly and with eyes that sparkled asked, “Why not?” That was the extent of our exchange as others joined us and lunch became the topic. Within a dozen steps, Marie left me with something that so often has come to mind since then. Not really the “pizzazz and pink” advice as much as her gentle laugh and the question, “Why not?”

And now, as I reflect on that tiny “seed” question, it has grown into something more vigorous. “Why not” practice more of what Marie modeled for us---such as those seemingly trivial moments of care?”

Some people have a special way of making others’ lives a bit better every time they interact. Our simple stories reflect the common thread that Marie had this transformational effect on people, and that she seemed to do so spontaneously and effortlessly.

We are deeply grateful for her generous spirit and the intuitive gifts she offered each of us so freely.

“Thank you, Marie.

We miss you, our dear friend.”

Friends of Marie



R. himantodes var himantodes

Vireya

Origin: Malaysia/Indonesia

Terrestrial Height: 7 ft.

Tropical

R. ririei

There is a good chance that I will receive some feed back when I say that in some instances there can be a silver lining around the thunder heads of climate change. The struggle to grow less hardy plants in a given growing zone is one such instance.

Our garden, Stonefold, is some thirty miles North of Victoria on Vancouver Island, thirty miles, half a zone cooler and normally two weeks behind in bloom time. This year's milder than normal winter and spring is allowing some plants to flower for the first time. One such plant is *R. ririei*.



According to the *Encyclopedia of Rhododendron Species*, authored by the father and son team of Peter and Kenneth Cox, *R. ririei* was first discovered in 1910 by the British plant hunter E. H. Wilson. Though placed in subsection *Argyrophylla*, which spreads itself from Tibet through China to Taiwan, *R. ririei* keeps itself and its seedlings restricted to the single Chinese Province of Sichuan. This mountainous locale gives promise to a hardy plant, though its penchant for being one of the earliest *elepidotes* to bloom sees the flower buds and new growth damaged by frost in those gardens with fickle weather conditions.

R. ririei is reported to have some variability in leaf, flower, and growth habit. Our plant is an upright grower, now at about 7 feet high by 3 feet wide. The leaves are 1 ½ inches wide by 5 inches long, smooth green atop with very thin white indumentum below. The flowers on our plant opened on February 4th and lasted until the end of the month. Our excitement was dampened somewhat with the unveiling of a rather muddy, light lilac purple corolla rather than the reddish purple described in other recordings. A rather loose truss of 6 flowers with 5 lobes, 2 inches long, in a campanulate shape and a very small calyx the same colour as the flower. This *R. ririei* redeems itself when looking up into the flowers overhead. Deep in the throat can now be seen deep, dark, black-purple nectar pouches. The contrast is matchless.

Perhaps the question now arises: "Why grow a plant whose flower buds rarely reach full florescence?" The answer is twofold; firstly, as with most rhododendron growers with 'the affliction', we didn't have *R. ririei* in our collection, and secondly, we had the desire to push the flowering time in our garden.

R. ririei has given its best to us for this season. We now turn our eyes to *R. edgeworthii* growing in a stump with flower buds swelling and blushing.

Al Campbell

Participate in the Cowichan Valley Garden Club Spring Flower Show

The Cowichan Valley Garden Club invites members of CVRS to take part in their Spring Flower Show on Saturday May 14th. It takes place at the beautiful St. Peter's Church Hall at 5800 Church Street, Duncan between 1 and 4 pm.

There are a number of divisions that are specifically for rhododendrons.

Cut Flower Division

1. Rhododendron – 1 truss, any variety – red, rose or pink predominant.
2. Rhododendron – 1 truss, any variety – yellow or orange predominant.
3. Rhododendron – 1 truss, any variety – purple or blue predominant.
4. Rhododendron – 1 truss, any variety – white predominant.
5. Rhododendron – 1 spray, any variety, any color.
6. Evergreen Azalea – 1 spray.
7. Deciduous Azalea – 1 spray.



Decorative Division

1. *Himalayan Fantasy*: A symmetrical triangle design with predominately rhododendron and/or azalea flowers, other foliage allowed.
2. *Mother and Child*: A design using 2 containers.
3. *Home Grown*: A design using spring flowers and greenery from your garden or your neighbour's garden, no purchased materials
4. *Reach for the Sky*: A vertical design.

The Spring Show Schedule and a document entitled “**Getting Ready to Enter the Spring Show**” may be printed from their website Cowichan Valley Garden Club.com, or <http://www.cowichanvalleygardenclub.com/spring-flower-show/>

If you require more information, please contact the coordinator of the show, Esther Craig at glenest@shaw.ca.

We should all have a large number of trusses available in the middle of May and it would be good publicity for our society if we had a significant number of members entering trusses.

Ian E. Efford

The Joys of Spring

Ian E. Efford

Gardeners are always excited by the first flowering of spring bulbs - snowdrops, winter aconites, daffodils – and the flush of light green that indicates the trees will be in leaf very soon.



R. 'Airy Fairy'

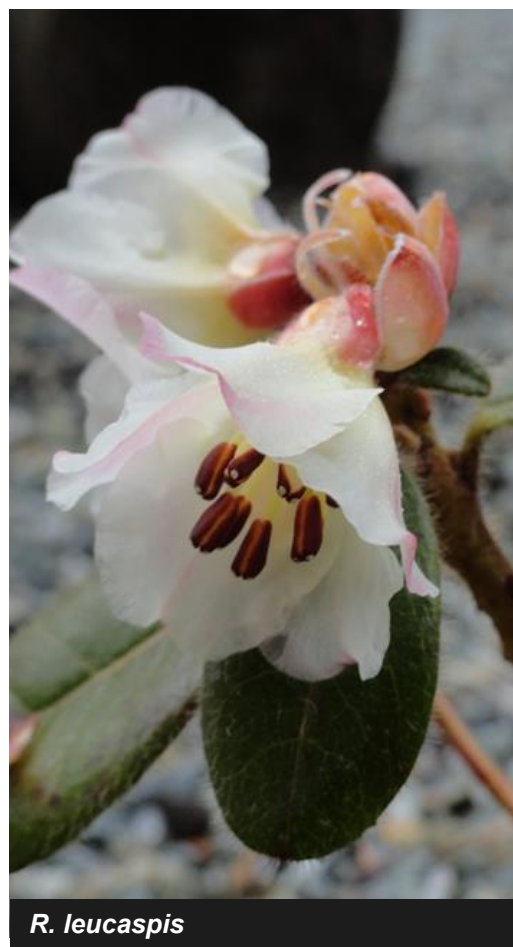
Rhododendron enthusiasts are equally excited to see their first flowers of the year. In most of the Cowichan Valley, rhododendrons flower a little later than those in Victoria and those in the coastal gardens around Nanaimo and Qualicum Beach, but we are very grateful when our plants first show their colours. This year the first three plants to open in our garden were two regulars and a very unexpected addition.

One of the regulars was the hybrid *R. 'Airy Fairy'*, which burst into bloom in late February and produced a spectacular show for nearly three weeks. The show only stopped after a very heavy rain reduced most of the blooms to little pink splashes on the ground. *R. 'Airy Fairy'* is a cross between the yellow *R. lutescens* and the darker pink *R. mucronulatum*, although it shows no sign of its yellow parent.

At the other end of the spectrum, a small, very “hairy” plant of *R. leucaspis* flowered. It is not surprising that this species flowers early, as its native home is between 2000 and 3500 m in S.E. Tibet where the plants are usually adapted to flower very soon after the snow melt. The seasons are short and an early start means that there is a better chance of flowering and setting seed before the first snowfall in autumn. The alpine nature of this species can be seen in the very hairy upper surface of the leaves, a common alpine protection against water loss by transpiration, caused by high winds. A

species characteristic is the flattish flower with chocolate coloured stamens. The latter can be seen clearly in the photograph.

Finally, I was amazed to find that a cutting of *R. burmanicum*, taken from Finnerty Garden in 2013, had flowered. As the name implies, the plant is from the



R. leucaspis



R. burmanicum

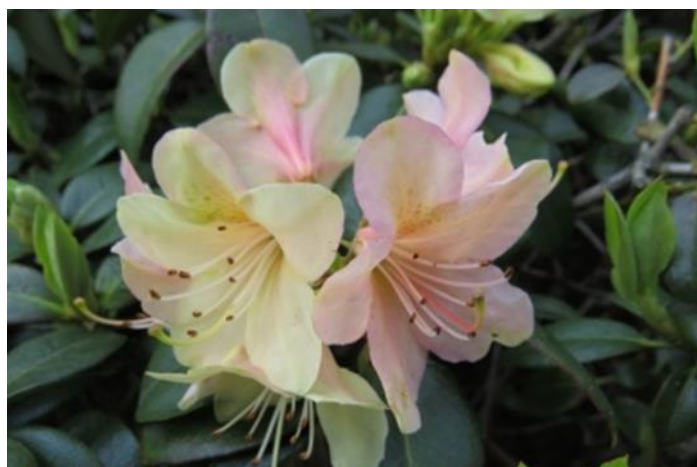
3000 m. level in Burma [Myanmar], where it can grow to nearly 2 m. Because this species in the *Maddenia* group of rhododendrons, I have assumed that it is sensitive to the cold and I have transferred it to a cool greenhouse at the onset of winter.

Although *R. burmanicum* does survive outdoors on Vancouver Island, notably, in Ken Gibson's garden in Tofino, and in Finnerty Gardens, both Victoria and Tofino are warmer than the Cowichan Valley, and I do not want to risk losing mine to frost. It has a hardiness level of 1-2 in one account and 2-3 in another. I have already lost a *R. lyi*, which is listed with a hardiness level of 1-2. Perhaps all of these species will be grown outdoors in the valley if the present trend to warmer winter conditions continues.

The flower colour of *R. burmanicum* is quite interesting. It is described as yellow or greenish-yellow to cream. I found that, depending on the daylight at the time of a photograph, the colour was either yellow tinged with green, as shown, or it could be a darker yellow-green. The clear difference was a surprise.

Next to flower will be *R. 'PJM'*, which may be the most common rhododendron on the Island. It is just about bursting from its buds and it will make its usual spectacular show in a couple of days.

Ian E. Efford



R. 'Hachman's Medley'

Hybridiser: Hobbie, 1960

Midseason Height: 3 ft.

Lepidote

R. ambiguum x *R. concinnum*



R. 'Honey Gold'

Hybridiser: Barlup, 2006

Elepidote Height: 2 ft.

Midseason H3

R. 'Percy Wiseman' x *R. 'Orange Prelude'*

Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society
Vancouver Island Spring Bus Tour 2016
May 9 – 10, 2016

Below is a tentative bus tour itinerary. If you wish to participate, please let Ian Efford know by April 6th with numbers, and whether you require single or double occupancy rooms. Thank you.

Contact: efford@shaw.ca or (250) 597-4470

May 9th @ 8:30 am

Meeting place – central Duncan location TBA

- Mary Parker's Garden *
- Chris Southwick's Garden
- Eswyn's Rock Garden - for box lunch
- Doug Kitts' Garden
- Milner Gardens
- Night at Kingfisher Lodge and Spa with dinner

May 10th

- North Island Rhododendron Society Demonstration Garden
- Filberg Park Garden
- Robert and Adele Smith's Garden
- Hidden Acres Rhododendron Garden - for lunch
- Another garden, yet to be arranged, for on the return trip*

Return arrival time: between 5-6 pm

Plants can be purchased at Milner Gardens, at the Smith's, and at Hidden Acres

Cost: The total estimated cost per person, assuming a minimum of 40 participants, is \$230/person for double occupancy and an additional \$50 for single occupancy. The fee includes the bus, all meals, hotel, and entry fees. Deposit of \$100 required. Cheques payable to CVRS by April 6th.

We need a minimum of 40 participants to cover costs. Garden club members, ARS Chapter members, and partners are welcome to join in.

Milner Gardens in May



Davidia involucrata



Rhododendron oreotrephes

CVRS Plant Donation Blooms in February

The photo of *R. 'Lee's Scarlet'* is in front of the locomotive in Chemainus. The CVRS donated this plant, and several other rhododendrons, three or four years ago when the entry park in Chemainus was upgraded. The Municipality of North Cowichan and the Chemainus Communities in Bloom were responsible for the upgrade. The Municipality refurbished the locomotive, installed a sprinkler system, grass, picnic bench, other ornamental trees, and the cedar fence. At this point, there is no signage indicating the donation of plants by the CVRS.



*Rhododendron 'Lee's Scarlet' blooming
at the end of February of this year*

Mill Bay Garden Club 69th Annual Community Flower and Garden Show

Saturday, May 28, 2016; 9am-2pm

Cobble Hill Hall, 3550 Watson Ave., Cobble Hill, BC

Flower and vegetable show featuring 70+ different classes, silent auction, plant sale, gardening workshops, commercial plant and garden vendors, garden accessories, Master Gardeners and a strawberry tea.

For more information, a brochure, or entry forms contact Pat Spezowka at 250-743-2756

e-mail: mbgardenshow@gmail.com

A Photo Gallery of Gardens of Ireland - Part Two

My navigational skills were yet again challenged when heading south from Kilkenny. I directed my driver to take a left instead of right and, yes, we ended up in a bit of a pickle. We now had the Knockmealdown Mountains range to cross before heading south to County Cork. The nearest pass, Knockmealdown, also known as the Vee, was in fine form on this day. Thickets of *Rhododendron ponticum* formed purple masses as far as our eyes could see. Understandably, it is a popular hiking region for many travelers.

For many years, I have been reading and hearing how invasive *R. ponticum* is in UK. Driving the back roads of Ireland in June, when this rhododendron is in flower, makes one appreciate just how invasive it really is. It thrives along every road, in every hedgerow, in pastures, in bog fields and in every forest. Anyone walking down a village street or peering from a lookout high on a mountaintop will be thrilled, or dismayed, by the purple displays.

R. ponticum was introduced to the UK in 1763. It is believed to have been transported from Gibraltar to England and introduced as a tender species for decorative indoor plants. It was later crossed with frost hardy species from the Appalachian Mountains and became a popular pot plant grown for the London market by 1803. This now hardy shrub became such a success it was planted as a windbreak, and also a bird cover for hunting excursions, on many large es-



tates. The rootstock was favored for grafting and *R. ponticum* also became a preferred species plant when developing new hybrids; *R.* 'Cunningham's White' (1850), *R.* 'Chionoides' (1871), *R.* 'Purple Splendor', *R.* 'Sappho', and *R.* 'Blue Peter', are a few of those familiar to many of us. Now two hundred and forty years later, the invasive *R. ponticum* has become the most damaging alien plant in "semi-natural habitats" in the UK, resulting in high control and restoration costs.



This happy little excursion, the result of my error in direction, has encouraged me in my struggle with developing my navigational skills.



"...if it is a lucky day, ... somebody makes a mistake. ... then the action can begin. ... The capacity to leap across mountains. ... to land lightly on the wrong side represents the highest of human endowments" (Lewis Thomas, 1976)

Bantry House and Gardens

Bantry House is located on the south, west coast of Ireland in West Cork on Bantry Bay. It was built in 1700, and the second Earl of Bantry, Richard White and his wife Mary developed the gardens, in 1836. Their extensive European travels influenced their style in the architecture and art collections throughout the house, as well as the Italianate design of the gardens.

The gardens surrounding the house are formal and have many varieties of evergreen clipped hedges and sculpted structures. The many shades of green



of this ornamental parterre provide the perfect framework to show off the Wisteria Pergola and pond. The walkways guide us to climb the one hundred steps behind the house to view seven terraces of

azaleas and rhododendrons. This area is not as aggressively maintained and provides us with a feeling of stepping back in time. As we ascend, the view of the estate expands. From the top, we peer over the house and gardens looking out to Bantry Bay. During the Great Famine the terraces and stairway, as well as many out building projects, were constructed



as part of the White's efforts to provide employment for families suffering from hardship in their community.

These important historic estates and their collections are under threat as the financial demands for up-keep and restoration are a challenge. Even though this private residence of the Shelswell-White family receives 25,000 visitors a year it has had to sell off valuable collections from the house to maintain its heritage. It remains a struggle to meet the financial challenges, and the remainder of the collections remains under threat.



The Gardens of Innacullin (Garinish Island)

The Glengarriff Harbour of Bantry Bay is warmed by the Gulf Stream and provides a perfect mild, humid, microclimate for growing plants, shrubs, trees, as well as sub-tropical plants from around the globe. The Island of Innacullin, 'island of holly', also known as Garinish Island, is a 37-acre garden that has been under the care of the Office of the Public Works (OPW) since it was bequeathed to the Irish people in 1956. Annan Bryce purchased the island in 1910 and began developing the garden with the help of an English architect Harold Peto.

The trails throughout the garden, guide us past one hundred year old trees, including a marvelous collection of magnolias, *M. liliiflora* 'Nigra', *M. denudate*, and the towering *M. campbellii* 'Mollicomata'. These are accompanied by numerous Camellia cultivars and lead us into a formal architectural Italian Garden. Evergreen myrtles, and fine specimens of crinodendrons border it. An avenue of Italian cypress leads to a Grecian Temple, which looks over the sea to views of the Caha Mountains. In stark contrast to this formality, the winding pathways from this area guide us around the island through a Robinsonian-style design of plantings of *Pinus thumbergii*, *Dacrydium franklinii* as well as *D. cupressium*, exotics such as *Pseudolarix*, and numerous species of rhododendrons and other trees and shrubs from around the world. After taking in the



panorama of the area and gardens from atop the Martello tower the pathways beckon us through the forest back to the formality of the Walled Garden. As words seem inadequate, we simply encourage our friends to personally view these herbaceous borders and the collections of climbers to fully appreciate this garden.

The twenty-minute ferry ride back to Glengarriff Harbour helps to appreciate the efforts involved in building this treasure on this isolated island more than one hundred years ago.



“Ummm! The complexity of navigational decisions! Which way for September’s third instalment of three?”

Sandra Stevenson

Plant Names

Since Linnaeus's time all plants and animals have been named with a scientific name to prevent confusion because most well-known animals and plants have many common names depending on the region, language, etc. An excellent example is the local elk, which, in England, is a red deer and the elk of Europe is a moose in North America. On both sides of the Atlantic, the elk/red deer is *Cervus elaphus* and the moose/elk is *Alces alces*.

For the last three hundred years all descriptions of species were in Latin and in some cases this is true today, especially in botany. To indicate that the generic and specific names are in Latin they are always written in italics or, if that is not possible, underlined. To make things even clearer, the initial letter of the generic name is always capitalized and that of the specific name is not.

With this in mind, let us look at rhododendron names. The invasive species of rhododendron is *Rhododendron ponticum*. The first name is the generic name and the second the species. Another common species in many of our gardens would be the scented *Rhododendron occidentale*, the west coast azalea.

What about hybrids or cultivars? Firstly, they are never in italics and secondly they always have a capital first letter and most often quotation marks. *Rhododendron* 'King George' is a very desirable hybrid. A more local one was hybridized by George Fraser in Ucluelet. This was the first rhododendron hybridized on Vancouver Island and resulted from a cross between *R. canadense* from the east coast and *R. mollis* from Japan.

Rhododendron canadense

Rhododendron = generic name

canadense = specific name

R. 'Fraseri'

'Fraseri' = hybrid or cultivar name

When the word rhododendron is written in the general sense, it is not necessary to use a capital or italics.

Ian E. Efford



R. huanum

Origin: Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou 1000-2700 meter

Terrestrial Height: 23 ft. in natural habitat

2016 Open Garden Tours

Each spring, several members of the Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society generously open their private gardens for tours of regular and associate members of the CVRS. These gardens are not open to the public for viewing, but instead are special events for members only. We kindly thank these hosts and hostesses for sharing their inspirational gardens with fellow club members this spring.

Date: Saturday, April 23, 2016; 1-3 pm

Gailann Squires

4321 Kingscote Road

Directions and Parking: Turn onto Kingscote Road, just off Cherry Point Road.

Please park along the roadside and walk through the pedestrian gate.

An Oceanside garden of over 500 mature species and hybrid rhododendrons .



Date: April 23, 2016; 3-5pm

Susan and Robert Stitt

1199 Sutherland Drive, Cowichan Bay Phone: (250) 701-9031

Directions: Sutherland Drive is off Cherry Point Road and leads to a marina. The first driveway to the right is 1199, where you will see a metal cattle gate. Cars should park as close to the edge of Sutherland Drive as it is a narrow single lane road, or at the top at the mail boxes on Fairbanks. A bus could continue two driveways past 1199, to a new cul-de-sac, where there is room to turn around.

Accessibility: The front gardens are flat and easy to walk on. Then lower, past the house, is a 'ramp' (grass) that is easy to walk down to access the other gardens, all with more paths. The garden is easily accessible with canes and walkers, and with some assistance while coming down the grass ramp, a wheelchair can get around as well.

The gardens: The 2 ½ acre property was purchased in 2005. One third of it was second growth Douglas Fir, another one third was logged and disrupted by 'perk' testing prior to our purchase, and the other third is an old (100 year) orchard, with, primarily, heritage apple trees. The orchard is also home to our vegetable and berry gardens and a greenhouse. We built the house with the trees from the property and have spent the last ten years landscaping and re-planting. I brought several of my rhododendrons from the mainland, but the majority have been purchased here. There are approximately 170 rhodies and azaleas of all sizes, and 38 new trees. The front gardens are relatively new, now in their third year. The gardens were planted to reflect what we call "forest side" gardens and dry/sunny gardens. The underplantings are masses of erythroniums (from seed), blankets of hardy cyclaman, dodecatheons, ferns, helliboires and trilliums.



Date: April 24, 2016 2-4 pm

Don Loewen and Louise Neveu

**6324 Genoa Bay Road,
Parking is along Genoa Bay Road**

Don and Louise's garden is a collection of plants they love. Don has become the rhododendron expert, hole digger and driver for plant hunting expeditions. Louise places, digs and hauls soil for planting, as well as hanging out with plant 'geeks' to learn all she can from them about special plants. Garden is about two acres with beds in sun, part shade and shade.

Date: Sunday, April 24, 2016; 1-3pm

Trudy Muiser

1865 Garth Way

The Muiser garden is situated on a corner property in The Garth overlooking Quamichan Lake. It presents a lovely layout, extensively planted with heathers and compact rhododendrons. This garden is readily accessible both because of its size and its terrain.

A colourful and stunning garden to visit!



Date: May 7, 2016

Lois and Roy Blackmore

758 Walfred Road, Victoria B. C.

The Blackmore Garden is situated on a mountainside overlooking the Sooke foothills. It is built amongst fir trees and rock outcroppings, taking advantage of the natural landscape. There is a large cedar deck overlooking a steep hillside at the back of the home and is filled with a large collection of Jim Barlup hybrids.

Directions: When coming from up island, take the Veterans' Memorial cutoff, keeping right to Sooke Road. Turn right onto Sooke Road to Jacklin (1/4 mile) Turn left on Jacklin to Walfred. Do not veer off Walfred. 758 is on the left side of the road, near the hill. Parking in driveway and on the road.

April 30 CVRS Garden Fair

Plant Purchasing CHANGES?!

ERICA NURSERY PLANTS, 300 bulk purchased for sale at the CVRS Garden Fair, are expected to arrive several days before the fair. A short window of opportunity will be made available for members to view and purchase plants prior to the sale. The plant prices of \$13 – \$15 apply to members and public alike. When a confirmed delivery date becomes available, the notice for pre-viewing will be sent to members.



HOLDING PLANTS AT THE FAIR: The practice of how plants may be set aside for purchase and pickup will be changed to align with methods used at many other plant sales. There will no longer be a **HOLD AREA**. Both valuable floor space and volunteer personnel are required for other purposes.

Vendors will mark plants with “**HOLD for NAME OF FUTURE OWNER**”, and will determine the specific length of time for which the plants will be HELD. If not collected by that time, the plants will become available to others for purchase.

Volunteers working at the fair are often busy for the entire day. They will be allowed opportunity BEFORE 9:30AM to place plants ON HOLD WITH VENDORS, using specially marked “**HOLD FOR VOLUNTEER – NAME**” cards. Volunteers can retrieve plants and pay for them when the pace of the plant sale slows, generally around 12:30pm and before 2pm.

Thank you to . . .

Trudy Muiser for volunteering for the role of Membership Chair effective immediately.

Peter Lewis for assuming a membership recruitment function for the club, working closely with Trudy. Peter is also assisting Sandra Stevenson with the 2016 - 2017 Program Planning task.

Thank you Sandra for your tireless effort!

After being the program chair for a few years, Sandra is stepping down so we are looking for another volunteer to work with Peter to arrange guest speakers for the monthly meetings. And thanks Peter, we look forward to hearing about next year's program.

Carrie Nelson

2015-16 Coming Events

April 6, 2016

CVRS Monthly Meeting –Ian Efford
The Public Rhododendron Gardens of
Vancouver Island

April 8 & 9, 2016

Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Garden Society's
2016 Annual Spring Show and Sale
Cadboro Bay United Church
2625 Arbutus Road Victoria, BC

April 18-20, 2016

Skagit Valley Tulip Festival
Chemainus Tours Contact: Jim Bangle

April 23, 2016

Open Gardens Tour
1-3pm
GAILANN SQUIRES
4321 Kingscote Road

April 23, 2016

Open Gardens Tour
3-5 pm
SUSAN and ROBERT STITT
1199 Sutherland Drive
Cowichan Bay

April 24, 2016

Open Gardens Tour
1-3 pm
TRUDY MUISER
1865 Garth Way

April 24, 2016

Open Gardens Tour
2-4 pm
DON LOEWEN and LOUISE NEVEU
6324 Genoa Bay Road

April 30, 2016

Cowichan Valley Garden Fair Cowichan Exhibition
10 am – 2 pm
www.CowichanValleyGardenFair.com

May 1, 2016

Nanaimo Rhodo Club Plant Sale
Beban Park Nanaimo

May 4, 2016

CVRS Monthly Meeting St. John's Church,
Duncan - 163 First St. 7:30 pm
Gordon Murray - Trilliums in the Garden
www.cowichanrhodos.ca

May 7, 2016

Open Gardens Tour
LOIS and ROY BLACKMORE
758 Walfred Road, Victoria B. C

May 9 – 10, 2016

Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society
Vancouver Island Spring Bus Tour 2016

May 14-15, 2016

Nanaimo Rhodo Society Public Garden Tour
<http://nanaimorhodos.ca>

May 28, 2016

CVGC Annual Flower Show and Tea St. Peter's
Church Hall 10 am
www.cowichanvalleygardenclub.com

June 11, 2016

Community Flower and Garden Show
Cobble Hill Hall – 9 am to 2 pm
www.MillBayGardenClub.com

June 18, 2016

CVRS Summer Picnic and Awards/Wrap Up
11:30 am to 2:30 pm

September 30- Oct. 2, 2016

ARS Western Regional Conference
Newport, Oregon

2015-16 Executive

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y1880@yahoo.ca 250-746-6419

Membership Chair: Trudy Muiser

Directors at Large:
Joe Hudak, Siggie Kemmler, Alan Campbell

Convenors

Sunshine: Mary Gale

Tea: Judeen Hendricksen

Raffle: Hilda Gerrits

Club Liaison: Alan Campbell

Library: Joyce Rodger

Membership Recruitment: Peter Lewis

Program Co-ordinator: Sandra Stevenson, Alan Campbell

History: Ian Efford

Garden Tours: Peter Lewis

CV Garden Fair: The Team

Facility Liaison: Roy Elvins

Christmas Party: The Team

Bus Tours: Vacant

Species Garden Reps: Siggie Kemmler, Alan Campbell

Newsletter Editor: Verna Buhler

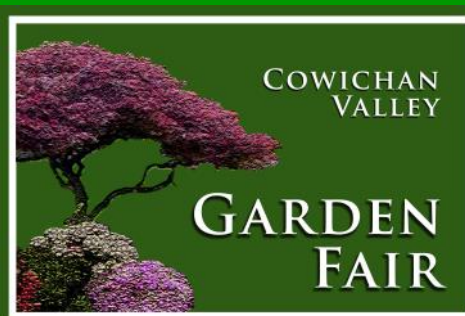
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Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society

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<http://cowichanvalleygardenfair.com>

Saturday April 30, 2016



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