



# NEWSLETTER

Volume 20: 3

Editor: Ian E. Efford

March 2009

## President's Message

February is such a short month and here it is coming up to March already! I am writing this when the weather is superb: sunny, some frost, lengthening days. There are some snowdrops and aconites in bloom and I see some crocus shoots above the ground, so spring is on the way. At least in some areas. There are places that I have seen recently where I was surprised how much of the white-stuff is still lying around. Looks like everything will be delayed this year. Poor Tourism Victoria and its 'Flower Count', they won't have much to brag about this year.

Sharon and I were out to Tofino with a group of our friends at mid-month (brilliantly sunny weather by the way) and noticed that Ken Gibson's hill doesn't have many blooms on it yet. There are always several plants blooming at this time of the year, but not this February. Apparently they had snow out there only once this winter!

The plant sale in May is starting to gear up. At the last meeting some of you volunteered to do some things to help out. If you can contact Peter Lewis, he would be happy to hear from you to refresh his memory.

See you at the meeting on Wednesday, March 4<sup>th</sup>.

David Annis

## 2008-9 Directors

President:	David Annis
Vice President:	Alan Campbell
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President:	Janet Gardner
Treasurer:	Judeen Henrickson
Secretary:	
at Executive Meetings	Janet Gardner
at General Meetings	(vacant)
Members at Large:	Sharon Tillie
	Jeremy Evans
	Marie Therese Evans
	Bill Dumont

## 2008-9 Conveners

Librarian:	Leslie Bundon
Newsletter:	Ian E. Efford
Garden Tours:	(vacant)
Spring Sale:	Peter Lewis
Club Liaison:	Ingeborg Woodsworth
Raffle:	Judeen Henrickson and Hilda Gerrits
Membership:	Sandra Stevenson
Speakers:	Alan Campbell
Tea Coordinator:	Cynthia Gracia
[for 3 meetings only]	
Ways and Mean:	(vacant)
Website:	(vacant)
Social:	(vacant)
Historian	Mona Kaiser
Propagation	Alan Campbell
Sunshine	Mary Gale

### From the Editor

It has also been suggested that I am aiming too “highbrow” in the content and that members would prefer more articles on “hand on” issues related to the growing and production of rhododendrons. If you feel such a change would improve the newsletters then you have to let me know. I always ask for suggestion but I have only received one over the last two years.

I must apologize for two errors in the last newsletter. In the first place, I muddled the dates for the Everett Conference with Fraser Day. **"Fraser Days in Ucluelet" is on the Saturday the 23<sup>rd</sup> May** and you are all encouraged to go to Ucluelet for the day.

The second error is the name of the author of the Glendale Garden article. The author was Jane Tice, who works at Glendale not Bill McMillan, who arranged for it to be written.

Finally, I should note that just before going to press, I received a copy of the information about the new rhododendron stamps from David Annis. I have reprinted it in this issue without permission from the Canada Post authorities. The material is copied from “Details: en detail” publication of Canada Post Jan-Mar 2009 (XVII) #3.

Ian E. Efford

### Annual Picnic

the picnic this year will be on the 20<sup>th</sup> June and will take place in Brenda and Bill Dumont’s garden. Details will follow in the next issue.

### What is Coming Up?

**March 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday 7.30pm:**  
**Siggi Kemmler** speaking on the ARS Fall Conference in Hilo.

**April 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday 7,30pm**  
**Don Martyn** speaking on Magnolias in the rhodo garden

**May 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday**  
CVRS Plant Sale

**April 29<sup>th</sup> - May 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
ARS 2009 Rhododendron Rendezvous in Everett, WA.

**May 6<sup>th</sup> Wednesday 7.30pm**  
Wanda McAvoy speaking on Fraser Days in Ucluelet May 23, 2009.

**May 14 to 17 or May 21 to 24, 2009**  
Proposed tour of Washington State

### Proposed Tour of Washington

The number of individuals who have signed up for this tour is too low to justify the costs. Unless more people step forward by our Wednesday meeting, Bill Dumont will have to cancel this exciting event.

If interested, phone or e-mail Bill. 743-9882 or [wedumont@shaw.ca](mailto:wedumont@shaw.ca).

## Rhododendrons

Issue Date: March 13, 2009

**EARLY MARCH IS BLOOMING SEASON AT** Canada Post, and the clusters of vibrant bell-shaped flowers that blossom on this fresh stamp set are nothing short of spectacular. The blooms belong to the beautiful rhododendron and, as Danielle Trottier, Manager of Stamp Design and Production at Canada Post, puts it, "What better way to welcome spring than by spotlighting this lively flower?"

Though all rhododendrons share a reputation for fabulous flaring petals and deep evergreen leaves, much variation exists within the 700-specie genus to which they belong. In fact, though "rhododendron" is Greek for "red tree," the blooms can also be found

in magenta, purple, pink and white shades, often blotted with speckles and splashes of colour.

When asked, many gardeners agree that if they could grow only one rhododendron, it would be an *R. yakushmanum* 'Mist Maiden.' As beautiful in as out of bloom, this stunning seedling selection boasts an abundant array of flowers in shades of rose, pink and white, all tightly bound above their foliage. Once the Mist Maiden was introduced to the gardening world (1947), plant breeders cross-bred it with other species and hybrids. Among such crossbreeds is the *R. Minas Maid*, a hybrid introduced and registered by Canadian breeder Dr. D.L. Craig in 1979. "Its rich,



Souvenir sheet  
Bloc-feuillet  
403730145 \$ 1<sup>00</sup>



OFDC  
PPJO  
413730131 \$ 2<sup>00</sup>

22

## Rhododendrons

Date d'émission : le 13 mars 2009

**LA SAISON DES FLEURS ARRIVE EN MARS À** Postes Canada. Les grappes de fleurs campanulées au vif éclat qui figurent sur le nouveau jeu de timbres consacré aux rhododendrons sont tout simplement spectaculaires. « Nous n'aurions pu mieux souligner l'arrivée du printemps que par cette magnifique fleur », avoue Danielle Trottier, gestionnaire, Conception et production de timbres, à Postes Canada.

Bien que tous les rhododendrons aient la réputation de porter de fabuleux pétales bien ouverts et des feuilles d'un vert sombre, il en existe plusieurs variétés parmi les 700 espèces que compte ce genre. Même si le terme rhododendron est dérivé du grec et signifie « arbre à fleurs roses », ses inflorescences, souvent mouchetées, se distinguent par des teintes qui vont du blanc au magenta, en passant par le mauve et le rose.

Lorsqu'on leur pose la question, plusieurs jardiniers s'entendent pour dire que s'ils ne devaient faire pousser qu'un rhododendron, ils choisiraient le rhododendron de Yakushima 'Mist Maiden'. Aussi belle en fleurs qu'au repos, cette plante impressionnante porte une profusion de fleurs dont les teintes varient du rose au blanc, réunies en bouquets compacts jaillissant du feuillage. Lorsque cette espèce a fait son apparition en horticulture en 1947, les phytogénéticiens se sont empressés de faire des croisements avec d'autres espèces et hybrides. Parmi les cultivars obtenus, on trouve le 'Minas Maid', un hybride introduit et enregistré en 1979 par D. L. Craig, un phytogénéticien canadien. « Ses fleurs d'un rose riche et éclatant ainsi que son feuillage vert sombre forment un tableau frappant », explique le chercheur. « Cette plante est aussi très robuste, fiable et facile à cultiver. »



CALL TO ORDER 1-800-565-4362

vibrant pink flowers and dark green foliage create a striking display," explains Dr. Craig. "It is also very sturdy, reliable and easy to grow."

The photographs featured on the stamps were taken at the 2008 Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada exhibition in Kentville, Nova Scotia. An extensive rhododendron selection was in full-bloom by mid-June, when stamp designer Isabelle Toussaint visited the site.

To capture the flowers in all their glory, natural light was needed. "I didn't want to resort to artificial lighting, fearing I might lose some of the more striking features," explains Toussaint. Luckily, weather

conditions helped realize her hopes. "It was a partly cloudy day, but I was able to take advantage of the brief intervals of sunshine that occurred throughout."

Pastel green leaves were reproduced digitally to soften the background—an effect carried onto the booklet and souvenir sheet. "The softer backdrop highlights and frames the flowers, bringing them to the foreground," Toussaint elaborates. The end product? Fresh blooms so vivid you can almost smell the first signs of spring. ☺

To learn more about Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, visit: [www.agr.gc.ca](http://www.agr.gc.ca)



Booklet of 10 stamps  
Carnet de 10 timbres  
413730111 \$ 5<sup>00</sup>

Envelope seals  
Sceaux d'enveloppe

Les photographies utilisées pour les timbres ont été prises en 2008 lors de l'exposition annuelle d'Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada, à Kentville, en Nouvelle-Écosse. Un nombre impressionnant de rhododendrons étaient en floraison à la mi-juin, lorsque la conceptrice des timbres Isabelle Toussaint s'est rendue sur les lieux.

La lumière naturelle était essentielle pour saisir toute la splendeur des fleurs. « Je ne voulais pas me résoudre à utiliser une lumière artificielle de peur de perdre certaines des caractéristiques les plus marquantes », explique la conceptrice. Fort heureusement, les conditions météorologiques étaient favorables. « Même si le ciel était partiellement nuageux, j'ai pu profiter de brèves éclaircies qui ont illuminé la journée. »

Des feuilles vert pastel ont été reproduites de façon numérique pour adoucir l'arrière-plan – un effet qui

est repris sur le carnet et le bloc-feuillet. « Cette toile de fond tout en douceur met en valeur les fleurs et les encadre, pour qu'elles occupent l'avant-scène », explique Isabelle Toussaint. À quoi ressemble le produit final ? Des fleurs pleines de fraîcheur, et si réelles, que vous pouvez presque sentir les premiers signes du printemps. ☺

Pour en apprendre davantage sur Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada, consultez le site [www.agr.gc.ca](http://www.agr.gc.ca).

POUR COMMANDER, APPELEZ AU 1 800 565-4362

RHODODENDRONS	
Date of Issue	March 13, 2009
Denomination	2 x 54¢
Layout	A: Booklet of 10 stamps B: Souvenir sheet of 2 stamps
Product No.	A: 413730111 (\$5.40) B: 403730145 (\$1.08)
Design/Photography	Isabelle Toussaint Design graphique
Printer	Lowe-Martin
Quantity	A: 13,000,000 B: 275,000
Dimensions	A: 32.25 mm x 26.25 mm (horizontal) B: 120 mm x 75.6 mm (horizontal)
Perforations	A: Simulated perforation B: 13+
Gum Type	A: Pressure sensitive B: P.V.A.
Printing Process	Lithography in 6 colours
Paper Type	Tullis Russell
Tagging	General, 4 sides
Official First Day Cover (OFDC) Cancellation	Kentville, Nova Scotia
Product No. and Quantity	413730131 (\$2.08 – 21,700)

Domestic lettermail and overseas rates are subject to rate approval.



Postcard (White)  
Carte postale (blanc)  
262198 \$ 1<sup>69</sup>

Postcard (Pink)  
Carte postale (rose)  
262197 \$ 1<sup>69</sup>

RHODODENDRONS	
Date d'émission	13 mars 2009
Valeur	2 x 54 ¢
Présentation	A : carnet de 10 timbres B : bloc-feuillet de 2 timbres
N° de produit	A : 413730111 (5,40 \$) B : 403730145 (1,08 \$)
Conception / Photographie	Isabelle Toussaint Design graphique
Impression	Lowe-Martin
Tirage	A : 13 000 000 B : 275 000
Format	A : 32,25 mm x 26,25 mm (horizontal) B : 120 mm x 75,6 mm (horizontal)
Dentelure	A : dentelure simulée B : 13+
Gomme	A : sensible à la pression B : A.P.V.
Procédé d'impression	Lithographie en 6 couleurs
Papier	Tullis Russell
Marquage	Procédé général, sur les 4 côtés
Obliération du pli Premier Jour officiel (PPJO)	Kentville (Nouvelle-Écosse)
N° de produit et tirage	413730131 (2,08 \$ – 21 700)

Tarifs Poste-lettres du rég. int. et des articles surdimensionnés assujettis à l'approbation tarifaire.

## SILENT BOOK AUCTION

The kind donation of books by one of our members, Mr. W. James Crawford, has meant that our library now has a number of duplicate copies.

These duplicates are being auctioned. The auction begins immediately and concludes on the 1<sup>st</sup> May. Bids are to be sent to [efford@shaw.ca](mailto:efford@shaw.ca) identifying the item and the offered price. The highest bids for each item will be listed weekly on the website and e-mailed to those that bid. See <http://cowichan.rhodos.ca/newsletters/Silent%20Book%20Auction.pdf>.

Those who cannot bid over the internet can telephone their bids to 250-597- 4470.

Ian E. Efford

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Barrett, C.; 1994	History of the Rhododendron Species Foundation
Cox, Peter A.;1985	The smaller Rhododendrons
Cox, Peter A.; 1979	The larger Rhododendron Species
Cox, Peter A.; 1979	The larger Rhododendron Species
Cox, Peter & K. N. E. Cox ; 1997	The Encyclopedia of Rhododendron Species
Cox, Peter & Kenneth Cox ; 1988	The Encyclopedia of Rhododendron Hybrids
Cox, Kenneth; 1998	Rhododendrons, a care manual [\$19.95]
Davidian, H.H.; 1982	The Rhododendron Species:(I) Lepidotes
Davidian, H.H.; 1989	The Rhododendron Species (II) Elepidotes
Davidian, H.H.; 1995	The Rhododendron Species Volume IV Azaleas [With protective cover, \$54.95]

<b>Fairweather, Christopher; 1988</b>	<b>Azaleas, classic garden plants</b>
<b>Fang Wenpei; 1986</b>	<b>Sichuan Rhododendron of China</b> [\$18.95]
<b>Galle, Fred C.; 1991</b>	<b>Azaleas</b> [ revised and enlarged edition]
<b>Hooker, J.D.; 1849</b>	<b>The Rhododendrons of Sikkim-Himalaya</b> [1979 Reprint]
<b>Jaynes, Richard A.; 1988</b>	<b>Kalmia, the Laurel Book II</b>
<b>Kneller, Marianna; 1995</b>	<b>The Book of Rhododendrons</b> [\$45.00]
<b>Kenyon, John &amp; Walker, J.;1997</b>	<b>Vireyas, a practical gardening guide</b> [\$19.95]
<b>Leach, David G.; 1961</b>	<b>Rhododendrons of the World</b> [\$60.00]
<b>Leach, David; 1961</b>	<b>G.Rhododendrons of the World</b> [With protective cover,\$70.00]
<b>Spurr, Joy; 1980</b>	<b>Cuttings through the Year</b>

**NOTES:**

**These books will be on display at the next meeting of the Society on the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2009.**

**See Also: <http://cowichan.rhodos.ca/newsletters/Silent%20Book%20Auction.pdf>**



## Playfair Park: A Hidden Gem

### Donna Wong

Senior Horticulturalist, Saanich Parks.

Playfair Park is a hidden gem of Greater Victoria. Its 3.7 ha (9.1 acres) contain a large rhododendron and azalea garden, a Garry oak meadow and a 300 foot perennial border.

Prior to 1912 the land was part of a dairy farm. It reverted to the municipality as a tax sale in 1924.

In 1956 Dr. Adam Szdzwinski and ten volunteers started to develop a rhododendron garden at Playfair Park as the first step towards establishing an arboretum in the Greater Victoria area. Plant contributors included Dr. Stuart Holland, Kai Christensen, Ed Lohbrunner, Bill Goddard, Rudolf Williams, UBC, Grieg nursery at Royston, the University of Washington Arboretum. A young camphor tree, now a magnificent specimen, was contributed from a lady on Saltspring Island. By 1963, 650 Rhododendrons, 600 Azaleas, 45 Camellias, 300 Heathers, *Daphnes*, Cypress and companions plants had been planted. There was a high mortality rate because of a succession of hard winters and an astoundingly high rate of vandalism. Of 350 Glenn Dale azaleas from the Seattle Arboretum, not a single plant remained. By 1980 the dream of a full-scale arboretum was abandoned.

Blooming each spring with the rhododendrons and azaleas are the wild flowers of the Garry oak meadow: *Erythronium*, *Camas*, *Dodecatheon* and *Fritillaria* are some examples. The yellow montane violet, *Viola praemorsa*, is found here.

A perennial border was established on the north side of the Park in 1958. It provides interest from spring to late fall.

Saanich Parks manages Playfair Park. It hosts gatherings and events including weddings. On Mother's Day there is a concert to accompany the rhododendron and camas displays. It is the perfect setting for quiet contemplation, photography and painting. You might be lucky to see the Cooper's hawks that nest here.

Parking is available on Cumberland Road, Rock Street or Judge Place. Visitors who have difficulties managing steep walkways can be dropped off at Judge Place and be picked up at Rock or Cumberland.



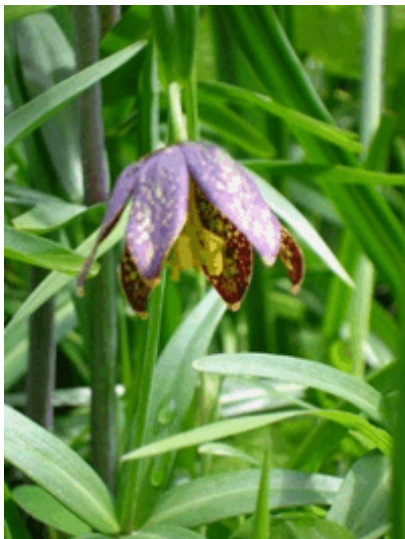
Perennial Border at Playfair Park

Tea and Goodies Teams 2009

<b>March</b>	Carrie & Richard Nelson 743 3679	Anne & Roger Slaby ☺ 748 4623	Susan O'Connor 746 8695
<b>April</b>	Ruth Cook ☺ 748 8293	Marie Jacques 743 5021	Joyce Gammie 246 2484
<b>May</b>	Peter Kearns ☺ 746 5782	Jackie Walker 743 3650	Maria & Siggi Kemmler 746 8751
<b>September</b>	Janice Graham Andrews ☺ 246 5420	Jeremy & Marie Evans 748 5787	Sharon Tillie 748 8254
<b>October</b>	Peter Lewis ☺ 746 7000	Liz & Allan Murray 743 9190	Sandy & Allan Campbell 743 3597
<b>November</b>	Hugh & Fiona Lawrence ☺ 743 7808	Ron Martin 748 8700	Susan Stitt 701-9031

- ☺ Indicates the team leader
- Please let your team leader if you can't come to the meeting.
- The team leader will bring ½ litre of milk.
- The team under each month's heading will supply goodies, set up and make tea and coffee; are also responsible for the kitchen clean-up after the meeting. The teams should be at the hall by 7:15 p.m.
- The kitchen supplies are now kept at the Church Hall; if anything is needed or if there are questions or problems, please call your team leader who will also call to remind you the day before the meeting.

Azaleas in Playfair Park



*Fritillaria lanceolata* in Playfair Park



**Brian Minter**

**Mark your calendar now for Tuesday September 15, 2009.**

**The Mill Bay Garden Club is very pleased to announce that it is hosting Brian Minter on Tuesday, September 15, 2009 at the T. Gil Bunch Theatre at Brentwood College. The topic for his presentation will be “How New Introductions make a Difference in the Landscape”. The evening will commence at 7pm and therefore the audience must be in their seats prior to that time. Last year we hosted Des Kennedy and sold out in less than two weeks. Contact Brenda Dumont at [me@brendadumont.com](mailto:me@brendadumont.com) if you would like tickets. Further details regarding price etc will be provided in future newsletters as the arrangements are finalized.**