

Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society

Newsletter

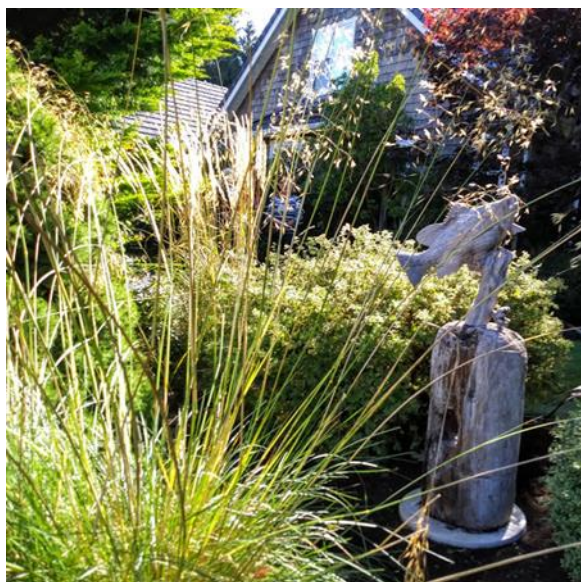
Volume 30:7 November 2019

Message from the President

Alan Campbell, CVRS President for November

The Western Regional Fall Conference of our American Rhododendron Society closed over a week ago, but I am still processing the amazing amount of information that was made available to the over 250 attending members. Members visited from throughout North America, but also a couple from the Chinese Rhododendron Society, who were extending an invitation to the the ARS to attend their upcoming Conference next March.

Presentations were given by the likes of Marc Colombel whose talk was not only informative, but also humorous. (Marc gave me a DVD copy of his presentation for our Chapter to enjoy) Dr. Nancy Turner's presentation of local ethnobotany opened many people's eyes.



Spectacular private gardens were open to the participants of the ARS Fall Conference in Parksville.

GUEST SPEAKER

November 6; 7:30pm

Dr. Glen Jamieson

Plants of Southern California

(More details on page 3)

Tea Service:

David Anis's Team

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Sunday morning offered us a presentation by Dr. Julianna Medieros from the Holden Arboretum in Ohio, whose scientific study on varying water usage of the different rhododendron sub-genus was given in such a way that it held the interests of this lay person.



One of the biggest pleasures of attending an ARS Fall Conference or Spring Convention is re-establishing contacts with friends having complimenting interests. People like Bill and Anne Mangels from Baltimore; Tim and June Walsh from Eureka; Mike and Maria Stewart from Sandy, Oregon; Darlene and Steven Henning from Valley Forge, Pennsylvania; and of course, the lively Mike Bones and his wife Kathy from Siuslaw, Oregon. These are people we may only sit down with once a year, and even though they may not be presenters, they are in themselves a depth of knowledge.

The conference revealed an even more local surprise interest in the presentation of ARS Silver Medals to Marilyn Dawson of the MARS Chapter, and to Cowichan's own Ian Efford. I must add that Ian is the first "full" member of the Cowichan

Chapter to receive the Silver Medal in our 30-year history!

The Fall season brings even more than just the chance to attend conferences, as it is now propagation season, whether it be from seed or from cuttings. Hopefully, more members will step into this avenue of rhododendron culture as many plants are no longer in the commercial trade, or are, in the context of species plants, very difficult to come by.

Once the ground is wet, fall can be a good time to add mulch to our gardens, which will trap and hold moisture longer into the dry growing season next year. While spreading out the mulch, Sandy and I have found that this is also a good time to trim out dead and/or weak branches, thereby allowing more air flow and sunlight to reach our plants. It is also an opportune time to pull out those maple or "wild" cherry whips that seem to manage to grow three feet tall without being noticed.

An added bonus this year is being able to drain our irrigation system much earlier. For the past three or four years, it seemed to be dry right up to almost November, and it became a gamble whether I could stop irrigating before the freezing temperatures hit.

Our November speaker will be Glen Jamieson, President of the MARS Chapter. He is interested in offering his presentation of desert flora. Glen also includes an additional short educational presentation with a narrow focus, perhaps on vireyas, for example. This may relieve members in that it will delay me continuing my verbal treatise of rhododendron botanical nomenclature.

See you all at the meeting on the first Wednesday in November.

Alan Campbell

Guest Speaker:
Wednesday, November 6, 2019 7:30pm

DR. GLEN JAMIESON

“PLANTS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA”



Our November speaker is Dr. Glen Jamieson from the Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society (MARS) and current Editor of the Journal of the American Rhododendron Society (JARS).

He is also the Editor of a new and very important resource, *Rhododendrons International*, the Online Journal of the World's Rhododendron Organizations.

Dr. Jamieson has been a research scientist with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and continues to have a keen interest in biology, and in gardening! He is successfully growing tender *Vireyas*, as well as more hardy rhododendrons. He is an active member in District 1, and across the ARS.



Dr. Jamieson has presented at our monthly meetings almost every season and this month will present on a topic not specifically about rhododendrons. His topic: **“Plants of Southern California”**

Letter *from the Editor*



Fall Greetings to all of you!

No, these are not photos of the cuttings that club members stuck at the CVRS Propagating workshop several weekends ago. We could definitely be excited about the idea of marketing some of the most beautiful rhododendrons available if they were!

Alan's description of the unparalleled opportunity of learning at these conferences is so true!



This is how beautifully samples of rhododendron foliage were displayed at the ARS Fall Conference in Parksville in October.

Furthermore, the event was extremely well organized and smoothly executed. Congratulations to Linda Derkach and the incredible members of MARS and the other North Island Chapters for their outstanding work!

We did have a nice turnout for Ali's "Propagating by Divisions" workshop and ended up with approximately 110 plants for our 2020 Plant Fair. The "Propagating by Cuttings" workshop was not as well attended as in the past several years. It was however, most enjoyable and participants learned a considerable amount from one another.

Isn't it exciting to hear that our scholarly member, Ian Efford, has been recognized as the worthy recipient of the ARS Silver Medal?

We, of course, know well of Ian's Efford's efforts to ensure that we at least have the opportunity to become more knowledgeable each month! Over the years, he has been the most consistent contributor of articles to the Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society Newsletter. Our part, of course, is to learn by

reading his articles. How fortunate we are, and we celebrate with him for this most deserved recognition!

How many of us are really aware of the awards that are regularly presented or understand how meaningful these are? I admit that the only reason I know about the awards is because I serve on the Executive Committee and work on the newsletter. Otherwise, although I could, it is unlikely that I would visit the CVRS webpage specifically to learn about them. My attention must be drawn to them first! It is time to look at some of these facts.

Recently, I came across a number of photos of some of the pioneers responsible for the promotion and development of the genus rhododendrons on Vancouver Island. It seems appropriate, as we approach the end of another year, to reflect on the contributions and achievements of such special individuals, both from Vancouver Island and from the other West Coast chapters of the American

Rhododendron Society. They are some of the award winners.

In this issue of the newsletter, you will also find a *Vancouver Sun* article about Alleyne Cooke, a garden guru who was the designer of the Rhododendron Gardens in Stanley Park and planted the first rhododendrons in VanDusen Botanical Gardens.

And, once again, I repeat the promise of an article about Les Clay of Langley, but I have realized that to do justice in this effort, I have to meet with him again to confirm facts and to gather additional information. Many of Les Clay's rhododendrons have been resituated in the Glades Municipal Park in Surrey and it would be wonderful to gather photos from this site, as well as from his property, while rhododendrons are in full bloom.

So, please enjoy the November newsletter.

Verna Buhler

Hi Barrie, Verna and Al,

First, many thanks for coming to the conference. Hope it was a worthwhile weekend for you.

And thanks also for the exquisite wooden bowl made by Ken Broadland. It was stunning and our Debbie Mitchell was the lucky winner.

Please convey our thanks to all the members of your club.

Barrie, I know it was a very hectic time for you stretching yourself between Master Gardeners in Victoria and Marsians in Parksville so I want to personally thank you for making the trip up and being the "thanker" for Steve Hootman. And isn't it fun to sit with Steve's mother Sharon who is so justly proud of her amazing son!

Best Wishes,

Linda Derkach, on behalf of MARS

IAN EFFORD

Awarded the

American Rhododendron Society

SILVER MEDAL

On September 28, 2019 Ian was awarded a well-earned ARS Silver Medal.



The Award reads:

"Your passion for plants in general and for the genus Rhododendron in particular has motivated you as a mentor, speaker and educator. In your many roles in the Cowichan Valley Chapter, you have ensured its robust future and increased its profile throughout District 1.

Your dynamic leadership has secured many exceptional partnerships and spearheaded many initiatives such as publishing your book on the public rhododendrons gardens of Vancouver Island and being a significant contributor to the ARS Journal through a wide variety of article topics.

*For your exceptional contribution, the American Rhododendron Society is proud to award the Silver Medal to **IAN EFFORD**.*



GARDENING GURU

Rhododendrons are his legacy.

Vancouver Sun

23 Oct 2019

JOHN MACKIE

jmackie@postmedia.com



Alleyne and Barbara Cook in their garden in North Vancouver.

Alleyne Cook died Sunday, just shy of his 95th birthday.

Some people come to Vancouver for the weather, others for the scenery or the nightlife. Alleyne Cook came for the rhododendrons.

“He knew rhododendrons and azaleas would thrive here,” said his son Nigel. “He’d be able to grow them as well as anywhere in the world.”

And he did.

“He was credited with being the main designer and planter of the Ted and Mary Greig Rhododendron Garden in Stanley Park, which is possibly the best formal-designed and laid-out planted gardens in the park,” said former Vancouver Sun gardening writer Steve Whysall. “He was a gardener for many years at the (Vancouver) park board, but more than that, he became a rhododendron expert. He was given the top award for the American Rhododendron Society, and honoured as a

world expert. He was very significant, and much-loved.”

Cook died Sunday at his North Vancouver home after a battle with chronic lymphocytic leukemia. He was just shy of his 95th birthday, which is amazing, given that he had survived three heart operations over the years.

“He had two triple (bypasses) and a quadruple, so 10 bypasses in total,” said Nigel Cook. “He outlived two cardiologists.”

“No three,” corrected Alleyne’s wife, Barbara.

Alleyne Cook had quite a life. He was born in Kaponga, New Zealand, on Nov. 8, 1924, and was turned on to plants by his aunt. He apprenticed at a top nursery, Duncan and Davies, before deciding to move to Britain in 1950.

“The most experienced plantsman in New Zealand is inferior to one who has travelled and gone beyond his horticultural comfort

level,” he explained in a profile by Terri Clark, former head of communications at the park board.

On-board the ship Rangitata for 28 days, he met his future wife. In England, he went to work for the legendary Sunningdale Nursery and planted the rhododendrons and azaleas at Castle Howard.

In 1954 he moved to Vancouver, where he installed gardens for a contractor before becoming a gardener at the school board. He lived frugally — he told Clark he lived at the Salvation Army until he finally married Barbara in 1961, 11 years after they met.

In 1966, Ted Greig had some health issues and he and Mary decided to close their nursery in Royston on Vancouver Island.

The Greigs offered the plants from the nursery to the park board, which bought them. But there was a catch. “The Greigs said you can’t have

them if you don’t get Alleyne Cook,” said Barbara Cook.

So park board supervisor Bill Livingstone phoned Cook, telling him, “We just bought an entire collection of rhodos and I know nothing about them. Come work for me, and you’ll be able to do whatever you want with these plants.”

Cook accepted the offer and worked at the park board for 23 years until his retirement. Besides overseeing the Ted and Mary Greig Garden by the Stanley Park Pitch and Putt, he installed the first rhododendrons at VanDusen Botanical Garden.

His love of plants combined with his love of family — he identified and registered a variety of *magnolia dawsoniana* ‘Barbara Cook’ after his wife. It’s in Stanley Park, as is another magnolia called ‘Briar Cook’, after his daughter, and a rhododendron called ‘Sir Nigel’ after his son.

Useful Links:

Cowichan Rhododendron Society:
cowichanrhodos.ca/

Victoria Rhododendron Society:
victoriarhodo.ca/index.html

Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society:
marsrhodos.ca/

North Island Rhododendron Society:
nirsrhodos.ca/ws/

The American Rhododendron Society:
rhododendron.org/

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society:
nanaimorhodos.ca

Nanoose Bay Garden Club:
nanoosegardenclub.ca/

Linda Gilkeson’s website:
lindagilkeson.ca/

Vancouver Island Rock and Garden Society:
virags.com

Linda Chalker-Scott:
<https://puyallup.wsu.edu/lcs/>.

Steve Henning:
rhodyman.net

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE AN AWARD WINNER?

“Well, it’s all there on the CVRS website,” Sandra pointed out.

“Just look it up.”

Recently, at our Library Club Meeting, we chatted about what it meant for Ian Efford to win the Silver Medal. Sandra suggested I research the ARS Silver Medal award and include an explanation in the newsletter for members who may not be aware of the award and its significance. Although I protested, suggesting that she write the article, Sandra refused. “It’s there, on the website.”

“And for those of us who do not use computers?” asked another Book Club enthusiast. “Maybe we could explain these at a general meeting,” she suggested.

“You are absolutely right, we should. We need to draw everyone’s attention to this. Where again is all that information?”

“It’s quite easy, really” Sandra insisted. “It’s all right here.” As a former CVRS President she knew where to look. She went into the library and pulled out the booklet *Celebrating the First 25 Years*. It holds a museum of information, information important for the current Executive members to note what might easily be overlooked. It covers the period from 1989 to 2013. And this is, once again, thanks to Ian Efford.

Similar important information since 2013 is not as readily available. Records exist, of course, but not in the neat format that Ian’s publication initiated. And definitely not easy to find!

It is time to update this information.

CVRS AWARD RECIPIENTS 2014 -2019

YEAR	ARS SILVER	ARS BRONZE MEDAL	SILVER BOWL RECIPIENTS	CITATIONS FOR SERVICE	AWARD OF MERIT	TRUSS WINNERS
2014		Ian Efford				
2015			Marie Jacques			
2016			Sandra Stevenson			
2017			Roy Elvins			
2018		Mary Gale	Carrie Nelson			
2019	Ian Efford		tba			



Sandra holds the CVRS Silver Bowl, generally presented at the Christmas Party, which this year will be held on December 1, 2019

So, what does it mean to be an award winner?

It means everything actually, to the CVRS members as a whole. Clubs are composed of like-minded people who come together to learn, share and enjoy the passions they hold in common with others. It is characteristic of most clubs that a few individuals carry out the majority of tasks of coordination and organization for other club members. But generally, there is definitely a sense that individuals join clubs to share in responsibilities at various times and at commitment levels that are manageable in their personal lives. Very few join with complete passivity in mind. They realize that every single person's willingness contributes to the whole and they choose to be a part of that association.

What role do awards play?

Awards demonstrate that the contributions by any individual within that organization have been noted and valued by that organization or society.

The greatest shortcoming of the awards process is that too often it is overlooked in hustle and bustle of squeezing in volunteer tasks in the midst of meeting the demands of everyday life and responsibilities. Not enough time and consideration is given to thanking and recognizing the people we truly do appreciate. Ultimately, those working quietly and steadily over years may begin to feel tired and slightly under valued, and unfortunately, rightly so.

At this point in the year, November, we always pause to remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifices. Too many so sadly, with their lives; others with their physical, emotional

and mental health. While we reflect on those we can never thank enough, we could also consider valuing those currently in our midst. We can appreciate those who still hear us because they are here with us.

Consider who we continue to expect will quietly carry out the tasks that may not be those flamboyant and in the limelight. A club only has one hard-working president; well, that is usually the case. Often Presidents are awarded the Silver Bowl when they leave, and they have earned them, of course. Realizing what others in a club contribute happens too often once those task performers withdraw. And that is not good!

Take time to consider the meaning of **Citations of Service** and **Awards of Merit**. When were these last awarded in the CVRS community? **Citations of Service Awards** were given out in 1993, in 2006, and in 2009. Are current members of the CVRS even aware of these awards? Apparently the recipients *do not necessarily have to be members of the Society*. Perhaps we have come to understand that they are only awarded to non-members. But the original intent appears to have been that that would be the exception rather than the norm. How do we initiate recognitions such as these?

Let's think about this; let's talk about it; **let's make some nominations.**

Let's add to this record of recognition and thanks!

Verna Buhler

To Gain **20/20 VISION**, Plan Early



The American Rhododendron Society celebrates its 75th Anniversary with a return to the Portland area, where the Society began in 1945, to present a group of world-renowned keynote speakers and tours to the Northwest's outstanding gardens and nurseries. The 2020 Convention will also feature a plant sale, photo exhibit/contest, and poster session.

Mike Stewart and Harold Greer, convention chairpersons, will offer a welcome presentation on Wednesday evening, April 29, followed by an introduction from some of our international guests.

Breakfast buffets will be included on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings as well as lunches on Saturday and Sunday. Banquets will be offered Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights. No-host socials will be included on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, before the evening programs, providing time for socializing, reviewing the day's experiences, catching up with old friends, and making new ones.

Visit ars75.org and register early!!

CVRS CHRISTMAS PARTY!

Sunday, December 1, from 1-5 pm

For the last several years, we have held our Christmas party at McLay's Heritage House.

McLay's House is an early twentieth Century House, with beautiful wood floors and a fireplace!

We hold this special event in the afternoons, as it can be challenging for anyone to drive at night in dark and, possibly, stormy weather.

Participants' experiences last year produced a range of responses, from gentle lasting smiles to much laughter---all indicators of having a blast!!

So this year, once again, we're having an Afternoon Christmas Party!

McLay's Heritage House
5241 Koksilah Rd, Duncan, BC V9L 6V3
Phone: (250) 746-5233

SIGN UP EARLY!! Due to the size of the facility, our limit is 40 people.

Some things stay the same:

Food and Goodies: Buffet-style Potluck Table
Bring your favourite Sweet or Savoury dish to share and delight!
Provided: Non-alcoholic punch, Wine, and Soda/
Fruit juice

Photo Contest: Bring your best three Rhododendron photos. Partygoers bring four (4) quarters to place in the bowls to vote for their favourite photos! Photos look most competitive in 8 x 10 format. Prizes: 1st, 2nd and 3rd most popular photos. The photos may be posted at the Plant Fair in spring.



Tall Tale Telling: Back by extremely popular demand. It is a well-known fact that Rhododendron lovers are the best storytellers in the Cowichan Valley.

There are very few rules to this contest:

- Your story may be fact or fiction, indeed truth or veracity is discouraged
- You will have 3 - 4 minutes (approximately) to spin your yarn

Following are 8 words that must be used at least once in your tale:

- **Glen Fiddich, Chubby Cheeks, impeditum, Dopey, Johnny Bender, Fireman Jeff, keysii, rigidum**

The master storyteller will be chosen by the most appropriate method (clapping-of-hands volume) and presented with a lovely prize. Start dreaming up your claim to fame.

Gift Table: Everyone/couple is asked to bring an unwrapped gift for the Auction Table. An arm's length of tickets is sold to serve as your bidding tokens. Put your tickets into the cup of the gift you would most like to receive; if your number is called, the gift is yours.

Local Food Bank Donations: As usual, we will be collecting for those less privileged. Cash is ideal as it goes further and is easier to handle. This season, the **Salvation Army** will also receive the proceeds from the Gift Table Auction.

If you would kindly RSVP Diane Allen at: (250) 748-2308 or email her at: frenchyallen@shaw.ca we will set a place at the table especially for you. She will also help you arrange a ride.

We sincerely hope you are able to join us in the fun and festivities.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2019; 7:30pm

CVRS Monthly Meeting Speaker – Glen Jamieson: "Plants of Southern California Deserts"

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2019; 2pm

CVRS Book Club Meeting Verna and George's: 3908 Cowichan Lake Road, Duncan

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2019; 1 – 5pm

Christmas Party, McLay House

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2020

CVRS Monthly Meeting Guests - Expert Panel: "Answers to Your Questions"

APRIL 30 – MAY 3, 2020

ARS ANNUAL CONVENTION (75th Anniversary) Portland, Oregon



2019-20 Executive

President: Shared/CVRS Executive Team

Vice-President: Diane Allen

Past President: Barrie Agar

Secretary: Verna Buhler

Treasurer: Elaine Kitchen

Members-at-Large: Alan Campbell, Candice Feeney,
Ali Morris, Rhoda Taylor, Wendy Wilson

Membership Chair: David Annis, 250-748-1338

Convenors

Sunshine: Mary Gale

Tea: Judeen Hendricksen

Raffle: Hilda Gerrits

Club Liaison: Alan Campbell

Program Committee Co-ordinator: Alan Campbell

Garden Tours/Trips: Al Murray

CV Garden Fair: The Team

Christmas Party: The Team

Library: Verna Buhler

Newsletter Editor: Verna Buhler



Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society

A Chapter of the American
Rhododendron Society
P.O. Box 904
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<http://cowichanrhodos.ca>



Saturday, April 25, 2020

<http://cowichanvalleygardenfair.com>



[www.facebook.com/
CowichanValleyGardenFair](http://www.facebook.com/CowichanValleyGardenFair)

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