



NEWSLETTER

Volume 22:6 Editor: Ian E. Efford September 2011

President's Message

Welcome to the new season! I hope that you have survived this summer of continuous drought and weeds that seem to thrive on a lack of water. With luck or good management, I am sure most of you will have made it through without the loss of your choice plants.

Last year ended with a very successful plant sale and bus tour, both managed by Bill Dumont, and another excellent picnic in the garden of a long time member, Mary Gale. Our thanks go out to Bill and all the other members who helped with these activities, in particular the plant sale where almost everyone played a role. We must also acknowledge the sponsors of our plant sale as they made it possible to expand our activities into a much grander location. They will be listed in a subsequent newsletter.

My primary task as President, apart from generally keeping the ship afloat is, with the help of the Treasurer, to make sure that the finances are in order and that they are well managed. With that in mind, let me provide an overview of the financial picture.

Since I joined the branch, some have argued that the branch is going bankrupt because of wild spending by the Executive. I can assure you that this is far from the truth! Below you can see that our net balance has remained relatively stable over the last decade despite us taking on some new expenditures.

1999	\$8,400	2006	\$16,299
2000	\$23,966	2007	\$17,112
2001	\$20,456	2008	\$17,960
2002	\$19,753	2009	\$19,574
2003	\$21,726	2010	\$19,283
2004	\$21,241	2011*	\$21,080
2005	\$19,822	(*To July 31st)	

[1999-2005 compiled by Siggie Kemmler; 2006-2011 compiled from accounts.]

Coming Events

September 7
Siggie Kemler & Ken Webb: "Rhododendron Nurseries in North Germany"

October 5
Bill McMillan: "Selected English Gardens & Birds"

November 2
Gerry Gibbens: "The Rhododendrons at VanDusen Gardens"

December 7
Christmas Party

The main source of money remains the membership dues, the plant sale and the bus tour although the raffle at each meeting does contribute a small steady income. This latter activity can only take place because of the generous support of the few members who donate new plants each month for the raffle. In particular, we must thank Ken and Madeleine Webb, Alan Campbell and Siggi Kemmler for their contributions.

More than 75% of the membership dues flow through our account to the ARS in order to pay for the excellent journal that you all receive and various other programmes in support of rhododendrons. These programmes will be reviewed at one of our autumn meetings.

Our main local expenditures can be divided into those that support the membership directly:

- Speakers' fees and expenses (\$1,000)
- Hall rent and other administrative costs (about \$1,200)
- Newsletter and website (about \$600)

and, those that promote rhododendrons and our branch in the Cowichan Valley or support rhododendrons and horticulture more generally:

- Support for a Cowichan Valley horticulture student or, if one is not available, a public rhododendron garden (\$500)
- Gift of rhododendrons to a non-profit or government garden in the CVRD (\$500)

A number of the benefits to members cost very little. These include the garden tours, the ready availability of rhododendrons and other plants in exchanges with other members, the picnic and the Christmas party, etc. Like everything else in the branch, these activities depend largely on the volunteer effort of members which is just as important as our financial strength. The volunteers deserve our thanks and I would encourage more

members to volunteer even in a small way as it increases the friendships that develop between members and lightens the work load on those that volunteer a lot.

In conclusion, the branch is sailing along quite smoothly and no one is going to be required to bail!

I would like to hear from members if they feel that we should delete or add initiatives. **It is your society and your Executive will respond to your views.**

I look forward to hearing from you.

Ian E. Efford
President efford@shaw.ca 250-697-4470

From the Editor

Switching from summer gardening to being an editor again is not too easy so this month's newsletter is a little skimpy on articles. Things should improve.

In the case of the November newsletter, however, I will be out of the country and we must find an editor for that one edition. Before I leave, I will help with developing some articles and Mary-Lynn Boxem does the formatting of the newsletter so the task is not too difficult. Any volunteers?

The October newsletter will contain an article on our bus tour. I would be grateful if those who enjoyed this trip could send me one of two of your best photos.

Ian E. Efford

COWICHAN VALLEY RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Programme for 2011-2012

7:30 pm at St John's Anglican Church

163 First St, Duncan, BC V9L 1R1

(1st and Jubilee)

September 7	Siggi Kemmler and Ken Webb "Rhododendron Nurseries in North Germany"
October 5	Bill McMillan "Selected English Gardens and Birds"
November 2	Gerry Gibbens "The Rhododendrons at VanDusen Gardens"
December 7	Christmas Party
February 1	Bill Terry "The Perfect Garden: Plant Hunting in Tibet" Co-Sponsored with the Cowichan Valley Garden Club
March 7	Geoff Ball "Milner Garden and its Rhododendrons"
March 20	District 1 Executive Meeting
April 4	Bill Bischoff "A Prize Winning Garden in the Making"
May 2	Dennis Bottemiller, Rhododendron Species Botanic Garden "Variables in Propagation of Rhododendron Cuttings"
May 5	Garden Fair and Rhododendron Sale
June 16	Summer Picnic

**Stan Groves,
December 22, 1927 – August 4, 2011**

Stan Groves, husband, father, and rhodoholic, passed away on August 4th in Saanich Peninsula Hospital after a brief illness. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Nyra; his daughter Melanie Groves of Victoria, and son Cameron Groves of Toronto; and numerous other family members.

Stan was six months old when the family moved from Scotland to New Westminster. He grew up in that city and after graduation took a position with the government in Terrace. This is where he met Nyra Dow, a young teacher from Penticton. They married in 1951 and were soon transferred to Vernon.

In 1958 they moved to Vancouver Island to enter the tourism business, buying Beach Acres Resort at Rathrevor Beach at Parksville. They operated this resort for the next 23 years as joint owners and operators along with Bert and Joyce Ellis.

On retirement in 1981, they sold Beach Acres and moved to Cherry Point in Cobble Hill. Their property on Kingscote Road was a garden paradise. Stan planted hundreds of rhododendrons and other plants on the large oceanfront property. The site was a popular venue for garden tours for the CVRS and other Island rhododendron and garden clubs.

Their house was the scene of several CVRS Christmas parties.

Stan was one of the earliest members of the Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Club, as his name appears on the first membership list in December 1988. He served as Vice President of the club in 1989 and was President in 1990, 1991 and 1992. He received the 'CVRS Silver Bowl' in 2004 and was awarded the ARS Bronze Medal in 1995.

Stan and Nyra founded 'All About Travel' here in Duncan and also started the Arbutus Travel Club for Seniors. They had more than 20 years planning and escorting groups to the far corners of the world as well as day trips up and down Vancouver Island.

Stan and Nyra sold their Kingscote property in 2001 and moved to 'Woodmere' on Quamichan Lake for four years. In 2006, they moved to Sidney to be closer to family.

Stan was a builder of houses, gardens, rock walls and flower pots. He was an avid steelhead fisherman and collector of antiques. He had a keen eye at garage sales and flea markets. He was a warm and friendly gentleman and had a generous spirit. He loved to laugh. All those that have known him will miss him.

Submitted by David Annis



Stan Groves
Dec. 22, 1927 – Aug. 4, 2011

CVRS June Picnic 2011

We held our annual picnic on June 19th at the Mill Bay garden of Mary Gale. The weather in the early morning was rather damp and there were a few people who thought that maybe we were going to get really wet. As it was, the rain held off until after the event and it was surprisingly warm under the clouds.

Thirty-two people came out. Bill and Brenda Dumont made two main courses of chicken and salmon that were very tasty. The rest of us brought salads or desserts. There was plenty of food to go around. Thank you Dumonts.

Everyone had a great time of eating and visiting. The Webbs brought up some plants from Victoria for a raffle and the Murrays provided two magnolia trees. Lots of people went home with a treasure. Thanks go out to the Webbs and the Murrays for their generous donation.

Mary's lush green lawn and gardens sloping down to Mill Bay provided an ideal site for the picnic. It was very scenic with the ocean in the background! Thank you Mary, Chris and Kathleen for hosting us.

Submitted by David Annis





Pinxter Apples

A plant of Ben Morrison was found to have a white “growth” on a couple of its branches. As I could not identify it from the information on hand, I asked Douglas Justice of UBC Botanic Garden. He replied “The gall on the azalea is caused by a fungus *Exobasidium vaccinii*. In the eastern US, the growths are called Pinxter apples. They should be cut out as soon as they are visible, otherwise they will spread, although in most cultivars they seldom amount to much and hardly affect the health of the plant. They seem to affect white and pink cultivars.



Ben Morrison



Ian Efford

Membership Dues for 2011-2012

Our chapter membership fee was increased to \$38 last year for all regular memberships including family memberships. Thirty dollars per membership is forwarded to ARS largely to cover the cost of the journal that all members receive. Eight dollars remains with the chapter to cover our local costs. ARS schedule recommends that we charge \$40 per regular membership and \$10 remains with the chapter and the remaining \$30 goes to ARS. As the Society is not short of money, see earlier article above, it has been decided by your Executive that the fees this year will remain at \$38 next year.

It would help our new membership secretary, [Marie Jacques](#), if we paid our membership dues at the September or October meetings because she must send the ARS monies in November.

We have about 44 members, if we can increase this by more than 10% before next summer, Greer’s Nursery will send us a number of free rhododendrons plants. This should encourage you to bring a friend to our meetings as a potential new member. Remember, all new members receive a free rhododendron.

Ian Efford

Rhododendron albiflorum

This week, we took the opportunity to visit Mount Washington to see the chalet being built by two carpenters, one of whom is our son. We were astonished by two sights, one was our son 38ft above the ground putting in the trusses and the other was the largest number of rhododendron flowers that we have ever seen in one place.

Rhododendron albiflorum bushes border almost all of the small lakes in the alpine meadows and were covered in flowers at this late date in August. The plants are a metre or so in height and they are crammed together in entangled masses. A great number were in full flower and they formed a fringe around all the small lakes and ponds.

One the few native rhododendrons in the province, it is only found at the tree-line in the mountains above 1200m [4000ft] from British Columbia to Colorado. Despite our the proximity to its native habitat, it is considered very difficult to grow and flower in cultivation. It is said to prefer sunny well-drained sites in stony soil, however, on Mount Washington, although away from direct contact with water in the lakes and streams, it appeared as if the roots would be flooded during the period of snow melt.

Ian E. Efford



R.albiflorum



R.albiflorum habitat



Alpine meadows on Mount Washington

Rhododendron canadense

This poem by Ralph Waldo Emerson celebrates the beauty of *Rhododendron canadense*, a native North American deciduous azalea with pink/mauve/purple flowers that open before the leaves and is usually no more than three feet high. It grows in the east, from New Jersey and Pennsylvania, north to Ontario, Quebec, the Maritimes and Labrador. It is found in damp and swampy places.

The Rhodora

by Ralph Waldo Emerson

On being asked, Whence is the flower?
In May, when sea-winds pierced our
solitudes,
I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
The purple petals, fallen in the pool,
Made the black water with their beauty gay;
Here might the red-bird come his plumes to
cool,
And court the flower that cheapens his
array.
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for
seeing,
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being:
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask, I never knew:
But, in my simple ignorance, suppose
The self-same Power that brought me there
brought you.

Many thanks to Joan Rich for this
contribution to our newsletter.

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2011-2012

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Tea: Debra Kobulka
Raffle: Hilda Gerrits
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Christmas Party: The team