



NEWSLETTER

Volume 17, Number 5

EDITOR: LESLIE DREW

May 2006

The Gift of Rhododendrons

Malaspina University-College's Duncan campus is being recommended to the Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society's membership as the recipient of \$500 worth of rhododendrons from the chapter.

Malaspina was favoured over four other suggested recipients when CVRS directors met on April 19. The others were Abbeyfield House, Chemainus Nursing Home, Providence Farm, and Chemainus Communities in Bloom. Approval by the membership would be a first step. The proposal has yet to be accepted by Malaspina.

CVRS directors debated the subject at length. One of the strongest statements came from former president **Alan Campbell**, who said he had trouble reconciling such a use of chapter funds with the CVRS constitution. Donations from reserve funds for a bursary or the Milner Gardens were appropriate, but to spend money on the premise of "depletion because we have it" did not sit well with him. The financial reserves generate the interest used for educational purposes.

Malaspina's lease with the Tribes expires in 2011. Although a new location for the Duncan campus is contemplated, the rhododendrons could be moved.



Potential rhodo planting spot at Malaspina

What's Coming Up

May Meeting: May 3 in St. John's Anglican Church Hall, 486 Jubilee Street, Duncan. Set-up 7 PM, meeting starts 7:30.

Main Speakers: Roger Slaby on Kalmias, and Leslie Drew on the importance of good drainage when growing rhododendrons. Slides with both talks.

Tea and Goodies: Peter Kearns* (746-5782); Daphne Jackson (748-9475); Mary Gale (743-9329).

Spring Show and Sale: May 6 from 10 AM to 2 PM at St. John's Anglican Church Hall, Jubilee Street. Set-up starting at 4 PM on Friday the 5th.

Propagating Group Meeting: May 16 at 7:30 PM at the home of Alan and Sandy Campbell, Shawnigan.

Directors' Meeting: May 24 at the home of Leslie Drew, 4491 Creighton Road, Sahtlam. Plant sale workers are invited to supper at 5:30 PM along with the directors, and can stay for the meeting if they wish.

George Fraser Day: Ucluelet May 27. See also page 7.

Annual Picnic: June 3 at 1 PM at Ingeborg Woodsworth's Mayo Creek Gardens, with members of the North Island chapter as guests, bringing desserts (about 12 are expected). The gardens are 20 km west of Duncan via Highway 18. Turn left off Highway 18 at the Skutz Falls turnoff, then immediate left onto the Old Lake Cowichan Road, then take first road on the right (Mayo Road), then first turn left onto McLean Road and continue to 6596 McLean. Signs along the way.

ARS Western Regional Conference: Harrison Hot Springs, September 22–24. See also page 7.

*Next meeting to be held September 6, 2006,
in St. John's Anglican Church Hall,
486 Jubilee Street, Duncan*

The Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society

A Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society
PO Box 904, Duncan, BC V9L 3Y2 <http://cowichan.rhodos.ca>



May Garden Tours

May 11 (Thursday) 6:30–8:00 PM

Siggi & Maria Kemmler
3730 Gibbins Road, Duncan

May 17 (Wednesday) 6:30–8:00 PM

Wilson & Jane Grahame
6541 Bird's Eye Drive, Maple Bay
and

Barbara & Don Grantham
6487 Pacific Drive, Maple Bay

The Garden of Jane and Wilson Grahame


by Wilson Grahame

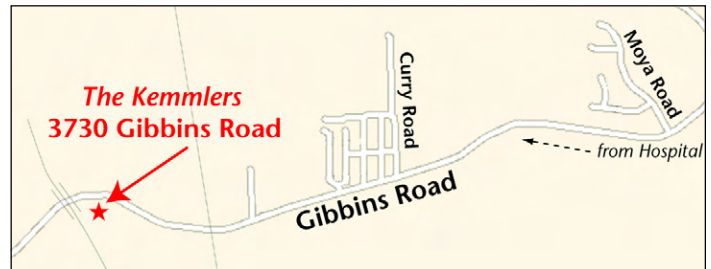
About 10 years ago, we built our dream home with a panoramic view overlooking Maple Bay. Initially we decided to have a low-maintenance garden, but after Ann Springford invited us to the Garden Club and the Rhododendron Society that idea went out the window. The main problems we had to contend with were the slope and the shale.

To begin, we developed paths throughout the garden. These paths traversed the slope and involved many steps. In turn, the paths dictated the position of the beds. We then filled up the beds with topsoil, although getting the soil down to the lower garden was quite a feat—a chute of aluminum sheet metal did the trick.

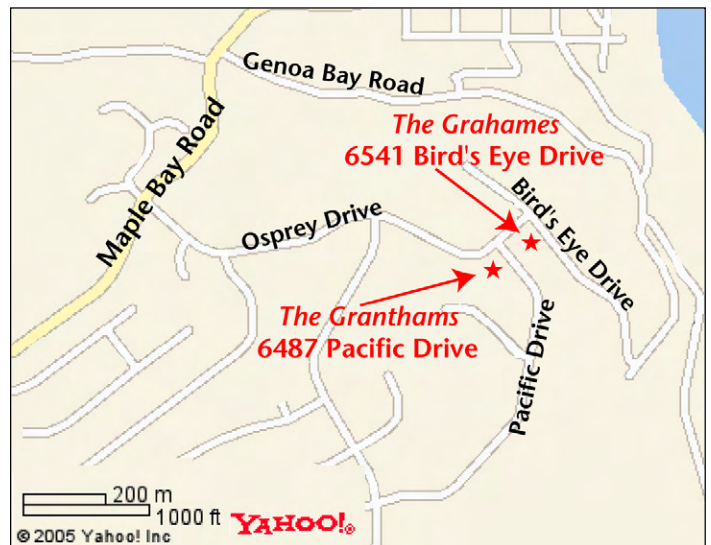
We then planted a number of trees, including robinia, ornamental cherry, magnolia, sumac, camellias, *Acer griseum*, Young's weeping birch, and Japanese maples. Then came the shrubs and the perennials. There are also two ponds—one Japanese-like pond and another in the lower garden with a waterfall.

The lower part of the garden, which was crammed with Douglas-fir and arbutus, was thinned out 3 years ago to make a woodland garden with rhododendrons and several beautiful trees including *Cladrastra lutea*, *Sorbus*, *Prunus*, and Japanese maples.

When you come to visit our garden, do not expect a “rhododendron” garden. We have a general garden with some rhododendrons and a wide variety of other plants. 



Map to the Kemmler garden




Map to the Grahame and Grantham gardens

The Granthams' Garden

by Barbara and Don Grantham

We finished house construction in February of 1986 and started the garden soon after. It has been a “work in progress” ever since. Our mortal enemy, the deer, have been kept at bay by the construction of a fence around the whole acre.

The main focus has been the rhododendrons, over 300 in all, placed in two main areas as well as throughout the garden. We also have a large number of other plants, including azaleas, ornamental grasses, and large shrubs. A substantial area has been set aside for dahlias, which are usually planted in late May. In the fall the Jerusalem artichokes, Michaelmas daisies, and dahlias give colour to the garden.

We have two greenhouses filled with geraniums and cuttings. 

The Reluctant Rhodoholic

by *Siggi Kemmler*

We were fortunate. We had a garden then—“then” being the years immediately after the insanity of the Second World War.

Although it was not much larger than 100 m², it provided us with vegetables and fruit almost unobtainable in the stores, even necessities such as potatoes being rationed then. There were—on either side of the little summer house, which was equipped with a stove and even had room to sleep some of us on summer weekends—



The little summer house

two great fruit trees, a pear and an apple, which we boys enjoyed climbing for the harvest, and which provided fruit almost to Christmas, the fruit being carefully stored on wooden racks in the basement allotment of our flat in the city. There even was room for some flowers. I well remember the peonies framing the entrance gate, one white, the other red, powerfully fragrant and giving a great show every Whitsun. An Arcadian idyll! We boys hated it.

The garden was about 5 km distant from our city flat. To get supplies there and the harvest back, a hand wagon was loaded and we had to pull it there (and back, of course) almost every weekend from spring to fall, sometimes on summer evenings during the week as well. At this time, it was not possible to go to the next nursery and buy plants and fertilizer, so we had to get our own. Plants and seeds were traded, fertilizer collected. Here is how: the hand wagon was equipped with buckets, a shovel, and a coarse short-handled broom. Then we scouted the major roads for piles of apples—horse apples. The best were left by the big Belgians pulling the brewery drays. When a load was full, it was pulled to the garden and added to the compost/manure pile for ageing. This was part of the fertilizer business; you don't want to hear about the other one. There was much other work, planting,

weeding, and getting water (not an easy task). The advantage of this whole undertaking was, of course, that we never went hungry during a time of great need—but my brother has made the point that everyone got through these hard times even without hard labour, as we saw it then.


Soon after I finished my apprenticeship I escaped, garden and all, to West Germany, hoping never to work a garden again. I found and married **Maria**. We emigrated to Canada and raised a family.

Fast forward to 1994. We both took early retirement, found a lovely piece of land, and built our retirement home. Land implies landscaping. I have always liked rhododendrons, so we decided to plant some along the driveway. They drowned. Heck, let's try again. I dug up what looked like a more rhodo-friendly part and transplanted what had not quite died as well as some new acquisitions. They did not do very well, either. It was time to get help. A neighbour told us there was a rhodo club in town, found us a number of call, and lo and behold, a very friendly lady made an appointment. A few days later **Ingeborg Woodsworth** and **Margaret deWeese** visited us and introduced us to the wonderful world of rhododendrons. We became members

of the Cowichan Valley ARS chapter and have been busy growing rhodos with much better success.



The house and garden of today

Maria looks after most of the garden that does not involve rhodies; my department are the rhododendrons and the trees. Thanks to the freely given expert advice and help of so many of the rhododendron enthusiasts we have befriended, our garden is now doing much better. We now have more than 140 plants, most of them, of course, quite young, but we are confident that some day it will be a good garden. What, after my childhood initiation into gardening I had never thought was possible, is happening: I am becoming a gardener. 



VANCOUVER ISLAND HYBRIDS – PART 3

The Royston Nursery Hybrids

by Alan Campbell

Ted and Mary Greig, at the time of purchasing the Buchanan Simpson Nursery stock, were primarily interested in alpine plants, especially those of the Primula family. Mary is known to have written in her journal: “I remember being quite unimpressed with the species rhododendron, never having seen any before . . .”. Grudgingly, Ted and Mary agreed to include the rhododendrons as part of the sales agreement. Fascination with the genus *Rhododendron* quickly took hold of the Greigs, especially Mary. With this increasing fascination, so increased the rhododendron seed orders to the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh; Sunningdale Nurseries and Kew Gardens.

At one time, it was commonly thought that seed collected from the seed pods of species rhododendrons would quite naturally produce seedlings of that species. Two hybrids that are attributed to the Greigs are offspring of this wrongful thinking. ‘Buchanan Simpson’ is one. Though registered (1963) and propagated by the Greig nursery, the original plant came with the stock purchased from Buchanan and Suzanne Simpson. It is suspected that ‘Buchanan Simpson’ is a bumble bee hybrid, an off-chance, open-pollinated cross, the seed of which was among shipments from Britain to the Cowichan Lake nursery. This large-growing plant needs lots of space, but would quickly become a favorite with its heavy-textured leaves and pink flowers, which are openly funnel-shaped, wide enough to display the double blotch of maroon deep in the throat.

The next “Greig hybrid” I would like to mention is a choice little *R. campylogynum* cross. ‘Canada’ was named, registered (1977), and introduced by Jim Caperci of the Mount Rainier Alpine Gardens in Seattle, and he attributed the cross to the Greigs. In a letter dated June 9, 1985, Mary Greig explained the mixup to Stuart Holland of Victoria: “Caperci’s plant came from Sunningdale via us. I expect it was an accidental cross, I never made any *campylogynum* cross.” In any event, this is a must-have plant, a good one for the rock garden. ‘Canada’ is a rounded compact dwarf with reddish stems contrasting with the green foliage and covered with tubular deep rose-pink flowers.

One dwarf plant that was hybridized and registered (1961) by the Greigs is ‘Cutie’ (*R. calostrotum* × *R. racemosum*). This is a really fine plant for the rock garden that has a tendency to develop rust, but with good air circulation the risk is reduced. A rounded upright-growing plant, ‘Cutie’ may reach three feet in 10 years, and carries very small leaves and an abundance of small pink flowers tinted lilac. Adulation came quickly to this little gem. The Royal Horticultural Society gave its Preliminary Award to ‘Cutie’ two years before registration, and the American Rhododendron Society gave its Award of Excellence in 1962. With this praise you might think that any criticism would be difficult to find, but here is what Ken Cox has to say about ‘Cutie’ in his new book *Rhododendrons & Azaleas – A Colour Guide*: “The sickly name probably also accounts for its declining fortunes.”

More familiar to us on Vancouver Island are three very different Greig hybrids. First is ‘Royston Red’ (*R. forrestii* ‘Repens’ × *R. thomsonii*), named by Alleyne Cook of Vancouver, but as yet not registered, a lower compact plant supporting dark green leaves and blood red flowers. The second on the list is ‘George Watling’ (2001). It is unsure whether this hybrid is a *wardii* or a *campylocarpum* cross. Both species were used extensively by Mary Greig in her hybridizing, though Alleyne Cook is of the opinion that this plant was another “bumble bee cross,” which came out of Britain. Mary named the plant in 1965, and Leslie Drew has cleared up the puzzle of where the name came from, in researching the career of pioneer Victoria nurseryman Richard Layritz. George Watling was the senior staff member with whom Mary Greig always spoke in dealing with the Layritz nursery, and it appears that she respected his knowledge of rhododendrons. A larger-growing plant with rounded, glossy leaves and pale primrose-yellow flowers, ‘George Watling’ makes a fine addition to the garden. ‘Harry Carter’ (*R. strigillosum* × *R. sutchuenense*), not registered, is the largest of the three. With its olive green, bristly leaves and pink flowers, Harold Greer calls it “a combination of the best of both parents.”

When those in the rhododendron community speak of a “grex,” they are speaking of a group of hybrids grown from seed collected from the same seed pod of a single cross. Perhaps the most notable grex would be

... continued on Page 5



Royston Nursery Hybrids

... continued from Page 4

the 'Loderi' group hybridized by Sir Edmund Loder of Leonardslee or the 'Naomi' grex from Lionel de Rothschild of Exbury. The Royston grex, a crossing of *R. auriculatum* and 'Fabia', has given us 'Royston Yellow', 'Royston Peach', 'Royston Reverie' (yellow with edges of bright brick red), 'Royston Orange' (more salmon colour), 'Royston Copper', and 'Royston Regency' (not known to exist any longer). The plants in this grex all seem to retain the long leaves of *R. auriculatum* and bloom in late July with flowers forming a lax truss (from both parents) and the varied calyx length of 'Fabia'. Not all of these hybrids are registered, but Alleyne Cook is working at getting them into the books.

More Greig hybrids with the Royston name that have been registered by Alleyne Cook exist mainly in the Ted and Mary Greig Garden in Stanley Park—'Royston Festival' (*R. auriculatum* × *R. kyawii*) 1981, 'Royston Frost' (*R. auriculatum* × *R. hemsleyanum*) 2000, 'Royston Radiance' (*R. hemsleyanum* × *R. auriculatum*) 2000, 'Royston Rose' ('Last Rose' × *R. auriculatum*) 1981, 'Royston Summertime' (*R. auriculatum* × 'Last Rose') 1981. I have not seen any of these in bloom as yet though the registrations give good descriptions of each of them, also mentioning that some hold some fragrance.

Not mentioned in the above paragraph is 'Royston Opaline', registered in 2000 by Alleyne Cook as *R. auriculatum* × 'Last Rose'. A question arises over the cross registered. In *Rhododendrons on a Western Shore*, Stuart Holland wrote an article entitled "About Vancouver Island Hybridizers" in which he mentions the Greig hybrid 'Royston Opaline' (*R. auriculatum* × *R. crassum*). In the same article is a copied listing from the Royston Nursery catalogue No. 18 (1965) in which a cross of *R. auriculatum* and *R. crassum* is stated. This suggested crossing may raise some eyebrows. *R. auriculatum* is of the subgenus *hymenanthes* (elepidote) and *R. crassum* is from the subgenus *rhododendron* (lepidote) and "never the twain shall meet." It is understood that elepidotes and lepidotes are not inclined to cross-breed. Of course, never say "never." A good project would be to set about verifying this cross. I wonder if Dr. Ben Hall is busy?

A number of unrelated hybrids out of the Royston Nursery that should be propagated more are 'Last

HELP!

More volunteers are needed for the annual plant sale on May 6. To sign up, please see Ian Efford at the May 3rd meeting, or phone him at 246-1453.

Rose' (*R. discolor* × 'Tally-Ho', 'Veronica Milner' (*R. campylocarpum* × 'Little Ben') 1962, of Milner garden fame, 'Len Living' (unregistered), a sister seedling of 'Harry Carter' (do we actually call two plants with men's names sister seedlings?) and 'Butter Ball' (*R. xanthostephanum* × *R. chrysodoron*) 1968. An unregistered, unnamed cross that is seen quite often in area gardens is a cross of *R. bureavii* and 'Fabia'. I have seen this plant labelled 'Fabia' × *R. bureavii* most often yet the only cross listed in the Greigs' hybridizing stud books is *R. bureavii* × 'Fabia'. Perhaps I'm just being . . . well, there is an unpleasant name for that. Halfdan Lem of Washington State did the same cross (*R. bureavii* × 'Fabia'), giving us 'Hansel' and 'Gretel', but Ken Gibson states the Greig plant is far superior to either of Lem's plants.

Many of the Greig hybrids are only in Stanley Park, and being in one location, in my mind, puts them in a precarious position. Many of these plants are hard to propagate, but Les Clay, Harry Wright, and I continue to try to get them established in more gardens. The hybrid 'Edith Berkeley' (*R. auriculatum* × (*R. consanguineum* × 'Loderi King George')) 1963 is rumoured to still be growing on the Island, but has yet to be found. Too many Greig hybrids have already disappeared. 'Royston Regency' (*R. auriculatum* × 'Fabia') 2000 died out in Stanley Park five years ago without being propagated. 'Ted Greig' (*R. griersonianum* × (*R. campylocarpum* × *R. discolor*)) 1965, 'Mary Greig' (*R. neriiflorum* × *R. souliei*) 1962, 'Cyril Berkeley' (*R. forrestii* × *R. sperabile*) 1965, 'Royal Anne' {'Azor' × (unnamed *R. fortunei* hybrid × *R. dichroanthum*)} 1962—these and a host of crosses listed in the Greig stud books are thought to no longer exist. A lifetime of love's labours lost. The artistry of the hybridizer should be viewed as no less important than that of the playwright. ☞

[Alan's Vancouver Island Hybrids series will continue in September.]



A New Rhododendron Memorial Garden

Planning is under way for a rhododendron garden in the Town of Lake Cowichan which will be a memorial to **Dr. and Mrs. Richard Stoker** and their great friends and successors **Buchanan and Suzanne Simpson** whose alpine nursery ultimately encouraged the growing and hybridizing of rhododendrons in this part of the world. Their property at Marble Bay on Cowichan Lake now belongs to the University of Victoria.

The **Lake Cowichan Communities in Bloom Committee** is behind the plan for the memorial garden, which will be located in the centre of town beside Beaver Creek, a year-round fish-bearing stream.

The mayor and councillors at their April meeting designated a one-acre area within Beaver Creek Park as the Lake Cowichan Rhododendron Memorial Garden. The organizing committee hopes to make a start this year, with the municipal public works crew doing preparatory work at the site.


The proposal went before the CVRS directors' meeting in April in a letter to **President Ingeborg Woodsworth**, who has worked with the Communities in Bloom projects at Lake Cowichan, with mention that donations of suitable rhodos are being sought. The president said she hoped the club's propagating group would be able to provide cuttings and assist in other ways.

The Simpsons settled on Cowichan Lake in 1914, and among their few neighbours were Dr. Richard Stoker and his wife Susan, who had come to the Cowichan Valley in 1900 and made a summer home and garden at Marble Bay. Colonel Stoker had been a medical doctor with the British Army in India and his wife was an artist-naturalist. While posted at hill stations in India, they had made expeditions into the mountains and became ardent botanists, and may have obtained seed of rhododendrons and other plants from sources there and from the British Isles after they retired to the Cowichan Valley.

By the early 1920s, the Simpsons had started a plant nursery on the edge of Marble Bay, specializing in rhododendrons and raising their stock from seed

obtained directly or indirectly from the early plant hunters collecting in Southeast Asia. Their knack for selecting only those forms they deemed of value to hybridizers for decorative gardening was soon recognized in rhododendron circles.

The diminutive Suzanne Simpson, Sorbonne-educated and an accomplished plantswoman, came from an old and aristocratic French family. Upon her mother's death, Suzanne and Buchanan Simpson sold their Marble Bay Alpine Plant Nursery stock to **Ted and Mary Greig** of Royston, formerly of the Cowichan Valley, and left for France with the intention of remaining there. However, by 1938, seeing the rise of Nazi Germany and the threat of war in Europe, they changed their minds, bought the adjacent Stoker property which an intermediate owner was willing to sell, and returned, thus acquiring the Stoker garden and the remnants of their old nursery on the northeast corner of the property. Although they never resumed the nursery business, they did proceed to build up a spectacular private rhododendron collection that expanded the framework of the existing Stoker garden.

When the University of Victoria inherited the property on the death of Suzanne Simpson in the 1970s, most of those rhododendrons and companion plants that could be safely moved were shifted to the UVic campus under the direction of **Rex Murfitt** and **Alleyne Cook**. About 300 trees and shrubs were relocated and became the nucleus of the Finnerty Gardens. So the choice stock raised by the Simpsons not only aided the hybridizing of ARS gold medalist Mary Greig, but also formed the base of a major public rhododendron collection as well as benefitting private gardens. Some original plants (several yet to be identified) and their progeny remain at Marble Bay. 

[The background material here is extracted from an article in the ARS Journal of Winter 1989 by Leslie and Frank Drew on information from Dr. Stuart Holland of Victoria and Dorothy Shaw of Duncan, both of whom knew the Simpsons and the quality of their plants, and from material kindly provided by Roger Wiles, long-time custodian of the Marble Bay property.]



Rhododendrons in May

May flowers, an explosion of colour in our Northwest Pacific rhododendron gardens—what joy! Alas, as with all beautiful things in this world, maintenance of various sorts is required.

Today I would like to bring deadheading to everyone's attention. For experienced gardeners, this is not always a much-enjoyed task. Performing the job on 'Virginia Richards' particularly brings a sticky substance that glues fingers or gloves together. I can think of a few other rhodos that also give this problem. Putting butter on one's fingers helps alleviate the stickiness.

Not to deadhead, not to remove faded bloom trusses, especially on young plants, may lead to heavy flowering every other year with few blooms in between. After all, rhododendrons are prodigious seed-setters. Producing large quantities of seed takes

a lot of energy that the plant would otherwise use to form flower buds for the next year.

Often young rhododendron plants spend their first several years in the garden establishing a framework of limbs at the expense of flower buds. This tendency will vary somewhat according to variety; some species raised from seed may require 5–15 years or more to reach blooming age.

Shade is probably the most frequent cause of low bloom production on established plants. Sunlight, or at least light, is required to set flower buds for the following spring. Too much sun may burn foliage, too little cuts down on flowers. Finding what's right is largely a matter of trial and error, the solution depending on one's location and varieties.

Happy gardening!

by Ingeborg Woodsworth

ARS Regional Conference

Diversified speakers and tours have been arranged for the ARS Western Regional Conference being held September 21–24 at Harrison Hot Springs Resort and Spa with the Fraser South Rhododendron Society as host.

The banquet speaker Saturday, September 23, will be author and humourist **Des Kennedy** with a talk titled "Passionate Encounters in the Garden." **Steve Hootman**, plant explorer and co-director and curator of the Rhododendron Species Foundation, will be speaking on Friday, September 22, at 8 PM on "Rhododendrons in the Wild", and again on Sunday, September 24 on "Frolicking Among the Species: Aristocrats and Tramps."

Lecturers and their topics will be: **Dalen and Lori Bayes**, "In Search of Arctic Rhododendrons"; **Colleen Forster** on companion plants, "Romancing the Rhodo: Perfect Partners for All Seasons"; **Glen Jamieson** on "Vireyas: The Natural Progression of a Rhodoholic"; **Charlie Sale** on "What Can Be Learned from the Gardens of New Zealand and Tasmania"; **David Sellars** on "Valley Gardens and the United Kingdom Rhododendron Species Collection"; and

Norma Senn on "Coast Gardens of the Pacific Northwest."

Also lined up are boat tours of Harrison Lake, a visit to the Minter Gardens and nearby Bridal Veil Falls, and garden and historic site tours. Ikebana and bonsai demonstrations are on the program as well.

For more information, members can go to www.arsfallconference2006.com

Tribute to Bill Dale

Ucluelet's sixth annual **George Fraser Day** and heritage Fair on May 27 will be a tribute to **Bill Dale** of Sidney. Invitations are going to all ARS members to attend the event.

A member of the Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society and long-time researcher of rhododendron historical subjects, he is the prime champion of the work of the pioneer Vancouver Island nurseryman and rhodo hybridizer **George Fraser**, and has written about him extensively.

The local committee is also asking for any donations of plants or garden-related items for auctioning or as prizes at the annual fundraiser. *☺*



Editor's Notebook

Dave and Lurana Dougan, central figures in the founding of the Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society, have sold their Malahat home with its outstanding rhododendron garden and moved to Campbell River.

And at the complex of patio homes where they're now settled, the grounds are mostly planted with rhododendrons and Dave himself is on the garden committee. "Why they would put me on there, I don't know," he says typically.

Dave was president of the Victoria Rhododendron Society, working hard on the hosting of Victoria's first ARS convention, when he and Lurana and a few others saw the need for and organized the Cowichan Valley chapter in 1988-89. In the broader picture, both worked for all Island chapters and the ARS through stepping into breaches, entertaining, encouraging people new to rhododendrons, and by example at their Moonridge garden, showing all of us how a superb rhododendron garden could be made on a rock outcropping. Their talents are unlimited, whether one talks of Lurana's porcelain painting, which has benefitted ARS conventions, or Dave's public speaking, or their adroit landscaping, or their capability with plants. The Campbell River garden committee is lucky indeed.

We extend them every good wish.



The world is full of perils for wasps. Here's a tip in advance of the wasp season: before they arrive, blow up a brown paper bag, tie the neck so that it takes the shape of a wasp's nest, and hang it near wherever you don't want them, over a well-used doorway, for instance. Being territorial, when looking for a place to build a nest, they won't invade another queen's realm and risk retaliation. The brown paper bag fools them into believing a queen is in residence. **David Mills**, mentor of the Cowichan Macintosh User Group, is the source of this information.



From our member **Mona Kaiser**, who lives at 6181 Grieve Road, comes an offer that few will resist. "Tom and I have many erythroniums popping up in the

wrong places in our garden—mostly in the middle of footpaths. Members are welcome to come and dig them up and take them home. It breaks our hearts to be always treading on them." Phone first (715-1814) to be sure someone's home.



The North Island Rhododendron Society plans this fall to install a new bed at its Rhodo Garden in Courtenay devoted entirely to Vancouver Island hybrids—plants "bred and born on the Island," in **Harry Wright's** words. At present, the group is trying to locate as many of these plants as possible, and would be happy to accept donations. Contact Harry Wright, phone (250) 338-8345 or email

haidaau@mars.ark.com



We all know it—the distinct aroma that arises when it rains. "It is caused by the spores of the *Actinomyces bacterium*," says *BBC Focus* magazine. "This . . . bacterium grows as tiny filaments in soil all over the world. When conditions are dry, the bacterium releases microscopic spores, and subsequent rain will splash these spores a few metres into the air. When we breathe them in, we experience the distinctive earthy smell of rainfall."



Once a stalwart of our club, always a stalwart. **Eunice Shields** of Lake Cowichan, though not currently member, will be hard at work with the rest of us at the plant sale next Saturday. Seems she doesn't want to be left out of the action.

Portraits from Our Gardens

by Janet Gardner

I would like to collect photographs of special spots in your garden. I am looking for a special corner that just looks fabulous, or that you just look forward to seeing each year. I will compile these in a folio for the library.

Please call me (748-1867) and I will come and take a photo, or you can take a picture and e-mail it to me. Or give me a photo that you have taken and I will make a copy. Email: jdgardner@shaw.ca




We Are Invited

The Cowichan Valley Garden Club has a series of open gardens in June and more in July. Members of the Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society have also been invited. The schedule follows:

- **Wednesday June 7, 6:30–9:00 PM:** The gardens **Surinder Mann**, 6140 Sumas, and **Laura Williams**, 3355 Gibbins Road.
- **Sunday June 11, 1–5 PM:** The garden of **Ali Morris**, 751 Satellite Park Drive.
- **Sunday June 18, 1–5 PM:** The gardens of **Sylvia Scott**, 2245 Moose Road, **Rose Magdanz**, 1924 Stamps Road, and **Beryl Lindley**, 1507 Chilco Road.
- **Sunday June 25, 1–5 PM:** The Chemainus gardens of **Maureen Deptuck**, 2901 Fuller Lake, **Joyce Gammie**, 10101 View Street, and **Janice Graham-Andrews**, 10543 Victoria Road.
- **Wednesday June 28, 6:30–9:00 PM:** The gardens of **John and Glynis Ballard**, 6216 Lower Chippewa Road, **Bill Plasman** and **Marjorie Gunnlaugson**, 6038 Stonehouse Place, and **Barry and Deborah Brassington**, 6042 Stonehouse Place.
- **Wednesday July 19, starting at 6:30 PM:** The garden of **Joan and Henry Westwick**, 2750 Dingwall Road, Koksilah. There will be a picnic supper followed by an informal discussion of container planting led by **Lindy Holman**.

New Members

Welcome to several new members. First, to **Peter Lewis**, artist and water diviner, who has been a good friend of the CVRS for some time now and joins as a full member. And welcome to **Johanna and Moe Massa**, who join as associate members, being full members of the Victoria chapter. The Massas are doubling the size of an already superlative rhododendron garden at their property on the Glinz Lake Road at Sooke, and have just planted 80 more rhodos. Both are as enthusiastic about rhododendrons as anyone you'll ever find. They have been contributors of huge displays of blossoms for the shows that accompany our spring plant sales, and will be bringing a bundle for the May 6 sale. And a welcome back to the membership to **Stan Groves**, one of our founders and several times former president, who is walking much more spryly than before. 

— 2006 Directors —

PRESIDENT	Ingeborg Woodsworth <i>mayocreekgardens@shaw.ca</i>	749-6291
VICE-PRESIDENT (Acting)	Ian Efford <i>efford@shaw.ca</i>	246-1453
SECRETARY	Leslie Drew <i>sahtlamrise@shaw.ca</i>	748-6152
TREASURER	Siggi Kemmler <i>siggi-k@shaw.ca</i>	746-8751
MEMBERS AT LARGE	Roger and Anne Slaby <i>rs0321@telus.net</i>	748-4623
	Ian Efford <i>efford@shaw.ca</i>	246-1453
	Jackie Walker <i>jacquelinewalker@shaw.ca</i>	743-3650
EX-OFFICIO	Alan Campbell <i>stonefold@shaw.ca</i>	743-3597

— 2006 Conveners —

BARGAIN TABLE/RAFFLE	Joyce Gammie Daphne Jackson Dawn Fedorchuk	246-2484 748-9475 715-1233
GARDEN CLUB LIAISON	Joyce Gammie	246-2484
GARDEN TOURS	Anne and Roger Slaby	748-4623
HISTORIAN	Bev Mountain	746-6339
INTER-CHAPTER RELATIONS	Ingeborg Woodsworth	749-6291
LIBRARIAN	Janet Gardner	748-1867
MEMBERSHIPS	Jackie Walker	743-3650
NEWSLETTER	Leslie Drew	748-6152
PICNIC/CHRISTMAS PARTY	Joan Clarke Mhairi Bruce	748-1272 743-8327
SPEAKERS (to mid-June)	Sandy Campbell	743-3597
SPRING SALE	Ian Efford Michael Krieger	246-1453 391-6215
SPRING SHOW	Sharon Tillie Janet Gardner	748-8254 748-1867
PROPAGATION	Alan Campbell	743-3597
REFRESHMENTS	Maria Kemmler Sheryl Krieger	746-8751 391-6215
SUNSHINE	Ann Springford	746-7303
WEB SITE	Alan Campbell	743-3597