



April 2015

President's Message

There are so many excellent events coming up in our rhododendron calendar over the next few months. Further in this newsletter you'll find a calendar outlining the dates and times. Please mark on your calendar our Show and Sale on Sunday, May 3rd between 10 and 2 as well as Saturday, June 13th, for our annual wind up pot luck. This year, the pot luck will be at Gayle and Allan McRae's lovely home.

It isn't too late to register for the Sidney Convention coming up between May the 6th and 10th. Registrants can choose to participate in all of the offerings or just one or two. Perhaps you like only the bus tours, or just the speakers. You can select whatever you wish. Thank you to those who have volunteered to help the Victoria Club. Such a large undertaking takes many volunteers.

Speaking of generosity, I'm continually amazed at the generosity of gardeners. This past weekend, the NRS was enriched by the generosity of our District 1 vice-president and his wife, Ken and Madeleine Webb. They are highly successful propagators who have been donating plants to clubs up and down the island for many years. This past rainy weekend, I returned from Victoria with a car load of hybrid and species rhododendrons, destined for our show and sale on Sunday, May 3rd. These plants have been propagated from seed from the Rhododendron Species Foundation or from cuttings from gardens in the area. I would say almost all of those plants are those that you would not find in local nurseries, *(continued page 2)*

EXECUTIVE

President	Chris Southwick	390-3415
Past President	Art Lightburn	468-7516
Vice President	Brenda Lewis	751-3639
Secretary	Ann Beamish	758-2574
Treasurer	Krystyna Sosulski	729-0948
Directors	Craig Clarke	390-4090
	Susan Lightburn	468-7516
	Dorothee Kieser	390-4136
	Gayle McRae	758-7589

COMMITTEES

Advertising	Jan Moles	
Library	Ann Beamish	758-2574
Newsletter	Kathryn Grant	245-7879
Membership	Sandra Dorman	390-0136
Program	Art Lightburn	468-7516
Raffle	Ann Davey & Val Harvey	
Social	Susan Lightburn	468-7516
Bargain Table	Reinhold Gorgosilich	758-6533
Website	Craig Clarke	390-4090
Sunshine	Edith Higgins	390-9340
Bus Tour	John Deniseger & June Bouchard	
Truss Show	Doug Blenkarn	
Spring Sale	Ann Beamish	

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society
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Nanaimo, BC V9T 6M4
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email: nanaimo@rhodos.ca

Next Meeting

Thursday April 9, 7:30 pm Beban Park Social Centre

BERNIE GUYADER

Miniature Rhodos in the rock garden and planter

OUR APRIL SPEAKER BERNIE GUYADER

After retiring from the RCAF in 1977 and settling down in Courtenay I decided to get serious about one of my hobbies, gardening. My father-in-law was a member of the Alpine Club of BC and after hiking in the local hills, I thought I would like to get involved in alpines and rock gardens. I joined the AGC and had access to their seed exchange and was able to grow some of these plants. I started a small nursery where I was able to produce enough plants to sell at plant sales and also to the Horticultural Center of the Pacific. I also joined the Scottish Rock Garden Club, who also had a great seed exchange. When a group of Nursery people thought we should have a garden club, I was approached to be on the executive, I was elected President and the Comox Valley Horticultural Society was formed. I worked for Harry Wright in his landscape maintenance business and when he got interested in rhodos, I tagged along. I discovered dwarf rhodos and thought they would fit perfectly into my rock garden which I was about to construct. After the North Island Chapter was formed, I joined the Rhodo Club. I was involved with moving the remaining Greig rhodos from Royston to Filberg lodge. We then planned and put in the Courtenay Rhodo garden. When Ucluelet decided to honor George Fraser I donated, and helped collect and deliver the rhodos to Ucluelet for their George Fraser recognition. I continue to be a member of NIRS and The CVHS.

President's Message continued

e.g., R. sinofalconeri, R. insigne, R. Creole Belle and R. Bert Larson. I can see a scrum coming up on May the 3rd! Thank you, Ken and Madeleine.

Another case in point is the generosity of our members who have filled the NRS basket of Nanaimo "flavoured" items to auction at the Sidney Convention. Thank you, everyone for demonstrating what a super group of people you are.

My R. pachysanthum is an exceptional plant that I enjoy year round for its beautiful and unique foliage. Everyone who sees it stops and can't resist stroking its blue-grey leaves and remarking on the rust-coloured indumentum. I must say that I am particularly excited this year as it is ready to burst forth with trusses on almost every branch terminal. It has never been so loaded with flower buds! Maybe it will be in full bloom at our next meeting on the 9th. If so, I'll bring a sample to show you all. If you have something interesting to share, please bring it along with you.

Happy gardening,
Chris



R. pachysanthum

Upcoming Calendar

April 9	NRS General Meeting 7:30 pm
April 16	NRS Executive Meeting 2 pm Craig and Joyce Clarke's
April 25	MARS Rhodo Show and Sale, Parksville Arena
May 3	NRS Show and Sale – Centennial Building
May 4	Ken Cox and Dr. Hartwig Schepker – MARS Qualicum Beach Rec Centre
May 7 – 10	American Rhodo Society International Convention – Sidney, B. C.
May 9 – 10	MARS Mother's Day Weekend Garden Tour
May 14	NRS General Meeting 7:30
May 21	NRS Executive Meeting 2 pm
May 16	NRS Annual Bus Tour
June 13	Wind Up Banquet – Allen and Gaylle McRae's

Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society
Presents

Ken Cox and Hartwig Schepker

Internationally Respected Rhododendron Experts and Plant Hunters Extraordinaire

Arunachal Pradesh: On the Search for Rhododendron in an Unknown and Mysterious Part of North-Eastern India

Date: Monday, May 4, 2015

Time: 7:30 pm

Place: Qualicum Beach Civic Centre

Everyone Welcome!

Refreshments - Door Prize

Non-members of MARS: \$5

Presentation: Ken Cox was one of the first people to get into the remote north eastern region of Arunachal Pradesh in 2001. Hartwig's expedition to central parts of Arunachal Pradesh turned out to be the trip from Hell, with non-stop rain, mud, landslides and rebelling porters. Ken and Hartwig will show this amazing part of the Himalaya and reveal its people and plants.



Camping in Arunachal at 3,300 metres.



Rhododendron concinnoides was introduced for the first time into horticulture by Steve Hootman and Ken Cox after a 2005 trip to Eastern Arunachal with Hartwig Schepker.

Ken Cox of Glendoick, Scotland is a well-known nurseryman, author and plant hunter.

Dr. Hartwig Schepker is Scientific Director of the Botanic Garden and Rhododendron-Park, Bremen, Germany.

**The 15th Annual
N.R.S. Bus Tour
Saturday, May 16,
2015**



Continuing our tradition of visiting a great mixture of gardens, nurseries and special places, we're heading north and west through Parksville, Qualicum and out to the Alberni Valley this year.

Cost: \$40 per person
(includes wine tasting)

Where do we meet?
Chapters/Woodgrove Mall parking lot. The bus will be leaving at 7:30 am. We expect to return by about 6:30 pm

Don't forget to bring a picnic lunch and appropriate clothing. Bring a friend!

***Call John to reserve a seat at
778 424-3605***

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Getting to know each other...

By June Bouchard

I am pleased to introduce Doug Blenkarn as this month's feature member. Doug has been a member of the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society since 1995. Over the years, Doug has supported the club's activities by being a member of the Executive, opening his garden on a number of tours, organizing local members' garden visits, and currently coordinating our annual Truss Show. Thank you Doug for sharing a bit of yourself with us and for your continuous support of the NRS.

1. How long have you been growing rhododendrons?

When we moved into our house in 1982, there were 2 rhododendrons in the garden...that was the start.

2. How long have you lived on Vancouver Island?

Deb and I moved to Nanaimo from Halifax in 1981.

3. Describe your best day in the garden.

The best day in the garden would be during the spring flowering. Almost every day in the garden is a good day. Our climate is a blessing.

4. What other interests do you have?

Retirement allows one to pursue many areas...traveling to Asia and India, video editing, geology, skiing, tennis, hiking in the Linley Valley with Deb and our dog.

5. Do you have a favourite rhododendron?

Phyllis Korn

6. What do you like about the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society?

The strength of NRS is in the membership and in their gardens. Garden visits are enjoyable and give members encouragement and insight into managing their own plot.

7. Anything else you might like to share????

Don't let Ponticum hysteria get to you. Denser planting reduces the area available for weeds. Transplanting frequently, when plants are manageable, allows one to have the healthiest plant, in the ideal location. Layering is my favorite propagation technique, 100% success with minimal care. Why don't the growers cultivate and sell the rhododendrons that win the ribbons during truss shows?

Doug in his garden with *R. calophyllum*



NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Photos taken March 15, 2015 by Doug Kitts in Ken Gibson's garden, Tofino



R. fortune



R. macabea