

# NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY



December 2010



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

It's time for our Christmas social and auction which is always a lot of fun. While we'll have a number of donations from local businesses, we're also hoping for donations from club members. This could include rhododendrons, plants, gardening related items, home-made articles, and more - please bring them along. You may even have a plant in your garden that has outgrown its space. If so and you need help transporting something to the auction, give me a call. Guests are more than welcome; bring your neighbours, friends and family. For our potluck, remember to bring along your favorite savory or sweet finger food, as well as your own plate and cutlery. We'll be supplying the beverages.

Our auction is also an opportunity for our club to give back to the community. We ask that everyone bring along at least one non perishable food item for the Loaves and Fishes. Remember that we also contribute 10% of our auction proceeds to the Salvation Army.

Don't forget that we'll be starting at 6:30. I'm sure that Sandra will appreciate any help in setting up. See you on the 9<sup>th</sup>!

John

## EXECUTIVE

President	John Deniseger	390-3605
Past President	Paul Lawry	806-2370
Vice President	Sandra Dorman	390-0136
Secretary	June Bouchard	390-3605
Treasurer	Gerry Moore	756-1427
Directors	Glenda Allard Barr	390-2822
	Chris Southwick	390-3415
	Debbie Gaboury	758-1204
	Reinhold Gorgosilich	758-6533
	Burkhard Dressler	758-1738

## COMMITTEES

Advertising	vacant	
Library	Ann Beamish	758-2574
Newsletter	Kathryn Grant	245-7879
Membership	Debbie Gaboury	
Program	Glenda Allard Barr	390-2822
Raffle	Ann Davey & Val Harvey	
Social	Sandra Dorman	390-0136
Bargain Table	Reinhold Gorgosilich	758-6533

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society  
Box 241, #1 – 5765 Turner Road  
Nanaimo, BC V9T 6M4  
Website: [nanaimo.rhodos.ca](http://nanaimo.rhodos.ca)  
email: [nanaimo@rhodos.ca](mailto:nanaimo@rhodos.ca)

## NEXT MEETING



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9

BEBAN PARK SOCIAL CENTRE

6:30 pm

CHRISTMAS POTLUCK AND AUCTION

# NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

## TWIGS and STEMS



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### GOODIES FOR DECEMBER MEETING

Everybody!

Please bring finger food to share, a plate and something for the food bank.

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### CHRISTMAS FARMER'S MARKET

Green Thumb Garden Centre

Saturday December 4

10 am to 3 pm

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### MILNER GARDEN CHRISTMAS MAGIC

Milner Gardens and Woodland

December weekends

5 pm to 8:30 pm

Admission by donation

[www.milnergardens.org](http://www.milnergardens.org)

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Malaspina Choir and Nanaimo Chamber Orchestra

Present

### SING-ALONG MESSIAH

St Andrews United Church

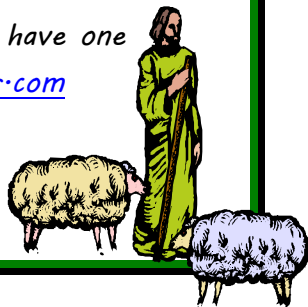
Sunday, December 12

2 pm and 7 pm

Tickets \$25 at the Port Theatre Box Office

Bring your score if you have one

[www.malaspinachoir.com](http://www.malaspinachoir.com)



## RHODODENDRON VARIETIES & LOCATIONS WITHIN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Many years ago I started a project which included collecting Rhododendron names and their location in BC gardens. So far I have 125 gardens listed with an inventory of over 4000 varieties.

I would like to update my list for the Western Regional Conference in Nanaimo in 2012.

At this time I would like to ask those who have sent me their inventory, to update it and to those who haven't please consider doing it.

I will accept garden inventory's during all of 2011, this will give me time to compile the information before the conference in Sep, 2012.

Harry Wright  
250-338-8345  
Email [haidaau@shaw.ca](mailto:haidaau@shaw.ca)

### More than a Beetle?

At home in Friar Park, Henley, Oxfordshire, George Harrison devoted much of his resources to restoring the garden. The house was commissioned in 1896 by a Victorian eccentric and plant enthusiast, Sir Frank Crisp, to whom Harrison the former Beatle dedicated The Ballad of Sir Frankie Crisp. The centrepiece of the rock garden had been a 30ft model of the Matterhorn built from 7,000 tons of Yorkshire stone.

Crisp claimed to be a scholar of the history of gardening and planted his large collections in plots designed as replicas of renaissance and medieval gardens. Crisp was also famous for having an unrivalled collection of garden gnomes, some of which survived to feature on the cover of All Things Must Pass, Harrison's first solo album after the Beatles split.

After Crisp's death, the garden had fallen derelict, his alabaster topped Matterhorn devoid of plants. When Harrison bought the 120 room house, an extravagant piece of Gothic revival architecture with turrets, towers and gargoyles, for £200,000 in 1971, he set about restoring the 30 acres of gardens with their network of subterranean passageways, waterfalls, lakes and the five caverns where the gnomes were displayed.

# NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

## NRS Meetings Minutes

Date: November 10, 2010

1. Meeting called to order at 7:35
2. Number of people present: approx. 35
3. President, John Deniseger, welcomed everyone.
4. **President's report:**
  - Reminder that it's time to renew your membership if you don't want to miss any issues of the ARS journal.
  - Mike Miller's donation of tools has now brought in nearly \$200.00 for the ARS Conference account. Thank you Mike for your generous donation!
  - A reminder that our next meeting is our Annual Christmas Auction. It will start at 6:30 rather than our usual 7:30. Letters to local businesses have been sent for possible donations to the event. Donations from members are welcome. As always, 10% of the proceeds will go to a local food bank. Don't forget to bring a non-perishable item to be donated to a local food bank.
  - The "Fall Colour" outing at Milner Gardens on October 30th was a success with a good turnout. Don't miss their "Milner Christmas Magic" weekends during the month of December. Craig has sent an email to all with specific dates of the event – or check the following link:  
<http://www.viu.ca/MilnerGardens/special-events.asp>
  - Harry Wright's message:  
*"RHODODENDRON VARIETIES & LOCATIONS WITHIN BRITISH COLUMBIA  
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I will accept garden inventories during all of 2011; this will give me time to compile the information before the conference in Sept. 2012."*  
Harry Wright  
250-338-8345 Email [haidaau@shaw.ca](mailto:haidaau@shaw.ca)
5. **Secretary's Report:** M/S/C to adopt the minutes of the last meeting as printed in the newsletter. A reminder that monthly meeting minutes are in each newsletter in case you miss a meeting.
6. **Correspondence:**
  - Many gardening related events coming up – see list of events in this newsletter.
  - Latest issue of the BC Council of Garden Clubs "The Bulletin" is in – it will be available from the library.
  - A lovely letter (read to all by Sandra) from past-president Richard White and his wife Linda from Christina Lake. They have renewed their membership and made a donation towards our 2012 Conference. Thank you Richard and Linda!
7. **Treasurer's Report:** Balance as of November 10, 2010:
  - Conference 2012 account: \$777.65
  - NRS account: \$3902.29Thank you Gerry for keeping us up-to-date!
8. **Committee Reports:**
  - Program:
    - o January: Steve Hootman; he will also be speaking at MARS the night before; Glenda will try to coordinate with MARS so that both talks are different in case people want to attend both events.
    - o February: Dick Beamish will be presenting: "A walk in my garden".

# NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

- Membership: See Debbie to renew.
- Social:
  - o Thank you to people who have brought goodies tonight.
  - o A reminder to bring either a savoury or sweet finger food for our next meeting/auction.
  - o Let Sandra know if you have any questions about the potluck part of the event.
- Bargain Table: A lovely Hazelnut tree among other goodies – check it out at the break!
- Raffle/Door Prizes: Many lovely plants – get your tickets at the break! Door prizes tonight were Rhodos given to the club from Briggs Nursery due to meeting their 10% annual growth challenge

## **9. ARS Western Regional Conference:**

- The planning committee is busy – things are moving along nicely.
- MARS is coordinating the plant sale part of the event – thank you MARS!
- Registration committee is growing – thank you Earl Daneluk for offering to be registrar.
- Sponsorship soliciting will start in the spring.
- Advertising: thank you Brian Jubinville for accepting to coordinate this part of the event.
- Garden tour: John has confirmed most of the gardens that will be on the tour.
- Program: Craig is busy setting up speakers for the Saturday morning seminars and key note presenters for the Friday and Saturday evenings.
- Sandra is doing a tremendous job organizing the food/catering part.
- Foliage display: **position vacant** - please let Gaylle or Chris know if you would like to coordinate this part of the conference.
- **Spring 2011 Garden Tour Fundraiser:**
  - o The date is now set – it will be on Sunday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011.
  - o We now have 9 gardens confirmed.
  - o Thank you Art Lightburn for meeting with Gaylle and June to share tips from his experience organizing garden tours with MARS.
  - o We will be working next on contacting possible vendors in our community.
  - o We also hope members will invite their friends to purchase tickets to the garden tour.
  - o There will be more information on this event in the new year – we will be needing help and support from the membership for a variety of jobs such as “garden sitters”, posting advertising posters in the community ahead of time, putting signs up on the day itself, etc... Stay tuned for more details...

## **10. Raffle/Door prizes winners:**

- Door prizes: Rosina Schmidt, Jan Moles, Mary Jane Derkson, Anne Tennant
- Raffle draw: Jan Moles, Joyce Mitchell, Dick Beamish, David Mitchell

11. **Program for tonight:** Gordon McKay from Alba Plants presented us with a variety of plant choices that could complement a woodland rhododendron garden. Great pictures and a selection of plants for sale as well.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00

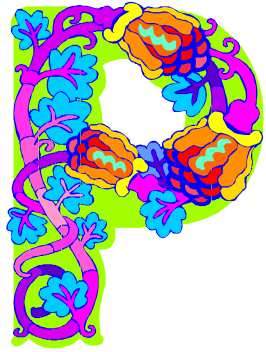
# NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

## Companion Plants

P is for Pieris

of the Heath Family

Family: Ericaceae



Try to imagine a spring without the retina-searing banks of 'Forest Flame', or the foreboding ox-blood red displays of 'Mountain Fire'! These Lily-of-the-Valley shrubs, staples in the landscapes of our area, are useful and versatile, but many other varieties have been developed that expand the spectrum far beyond the norm. Blooms come in white, shades of pink, and red, and the appearance of the new foliage several times during the growing season is possibly even more eye-catching. Size will range from low mounds of tiny foliage and perky blooms to soaring trees forming a brilliant canopy over pathways below. Generally fine-textured, dense and well-clothed with foliage, they can fill gaps in perennial gardens or mix well in woodland gardens.

Of the 7 species known worldwide, most of our garden cultivars are hybrids or selections of *P. Floribunda* (Zone 5), *P. formosa* (Zone 8), or *P. japonica* (Zone 6). The latter has a sub-species – *P.j. yakushimana* – that has caught the attention of plant breeders lately, and given rise to a flurry of dwarf, white-bloomed plants that make excellent foreground material, container subjects or even bonsai specimens. Look for names like 'Prelude', 'Sarabande', 'Cavatine', 'Debutante', 'Purity', and others.

Coloured flower selections started with 'Blush', a very soft pink, which led to 'Christmas Cheer', 'Flamingo', 'Daisen', 'Pink Delight', and 'Valley Rose'. A fantastic variety called 'Dorothy Wyckoff', has very dark green foliage that develops a dark bronze tint in winter, and prominent burgundy buds that open to pale pink and fade to white – very dramatic in its contrasts! The darkest flower colour comes in 'Valley Valentine', a deep red that gets a bit lighter at the base with age.

The large-growing white-flowered forms combine the best in foliage and bloom, especially 'Scarlet O'Hara' – the earliest and longest blooming cultivar I've ever seen. It blossoms from March 'til May and follows this up with shiny scarlet red new growth. For extra heavy blooms on compact plants, try 'White Cascade' or 'Snowdrift'. A fairly new hybrid with additional cold-hardiness is 'Brouwer's Beauty' (Zone 5), unusual in its purplish flower buds and the refreshing lime green new foliage that matures to a darker shade.

Different again are the variegated leaf forms - the first selection was *P. japonica* 'Variegata', with thin white edges on smaller green leaves. 'Little Heath' is a miniature form, which rarely blooms but has red new growth. Two sports of 'Forest Flame' have been named: 'Flaming Silver', a vigorous form with brilliant red/pink new growth, and slower growing 'Havilla' with bolder creamy white edges. Because of the white on the foliage, the blooms are not especially showy.

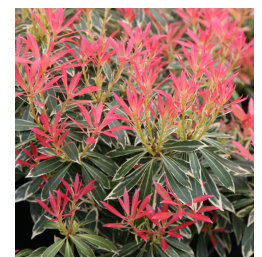
All of these are quite happy in moist well-drained acidic humus soil, in sun or part shade, and away from cold winds. Pruning is rarely needed unless the plant has been damaged, except that, as with rhodos, deadheading is esthetic and helps develop more even branching. New growth is susceptible to late frosts, but plants recover well and the blossoms are usually not bothered.

I'd love to have space to plant all the different types, but what I'm really waiting for is the first pink-flowered, variegated form – and I already have a name picked out – how about 'Raspberry Frost'.

Happy planting!



*Pieris* 'Flamingo' has bright pink flowers



*Pieris* 'Flaming Silver'

Colleen Forster