



February 2016

President's Message

After the long dry summer of 2015 gardeners are welcoming the winter rains. The rain and warmer temperatures are encouraging the bulbs and there are many signs that spring is right around the corner. My winter honeysuckle (*Lonicera fragrantissima*) is full of buds and beginning to waft its sweet fragrance about when the sun shines, and of course, our witch hazels (*Hammamelis mollis*) have been blooming their little hearts out for a while now. If you have the hardy little *Cyclamen coum* in your garden, their beautiful little puff-balls of bright pink, magenta or white are now brightening up the garden, too.

Your hard-working executive committee have met recently and we've made the decision to postpone the 2nd NRS Garden Tour until 2017. After surveying our membership, there just wasn't enough support at this time. We'll keep the idea alive for next year. Thank you to the committee whose work will not be lost. Rosina Schmidt already has some NRS members who are willing to share their gardens for the members' garden tour. She will be looking for a few more volunteers at our next meeting. It's always good fun and nobody's garden is ever "done"....so share anyway.

The discussion at the executive meeting also raised many questions. What is the purpose of our club? How much fundraising do we need? Are we having fun, educating members about rhododendrons and other gardening topics, and sharing the tasks that need to be done to keep our group growing and enjoyable at the same time? Do we need to change things up a little, or as the saying goes, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it"! To help answer those questions, we'll be developing a quick survey to get feedback from our members to help us moving in a positive direction. We hope that you'll participate – look for that survey in the next month or so, before we all get too busy in the garden!

Don't forget to help out Reinhold and bring something for the dollar table or to share at the beginning of the meeting so that others who may be new to gardening in our area may see what's possible in our wonderful climate.

See you on the 11th of February at our next meeting. Chris.

EXECUTIVE

President	Chris Southwick	390-3415
Vice President	Brenda Lewis	751-3639
Secretary	Ann Beamish	758-2574
Treasurer	Krystyna Sosulski	729-0948
Directors	Glenda Barr	390-2822
	Craig Clarke	390-4090
	Susan Lightburn	468-7516
	Gayle McRae	758-7589
	Art Lightburn	468-7516
	Sandra Dorman	390-0136

COMMITTEES

Advertising	Jan Moles	
Library	Ann Beamish	758-2574
Newsletter	Kathryn Grant	585-2706
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
Box 241, #101-5170 Dunster Road
Nanaimo, BC V9T 6M4
Website: nanaimo.rhodos.ca
email: nanaimo@rhodos.ca

Next Meeting

Thursday, Feb. 11, 7:30 pm Beban Park Social Centre

John Deniseger

"Why I grow Rhodos"

Twigs and Stems



Goodies for February

Sandra Millen

Elaine Hutchinson

Elaine Fell

RSF spring sale, order deadline March 19th for
delivery to UBC April 4th

Milner Gardens Spring Sundays

Feb 14 – March 20

The Cowichan Valley's Largest Garden Fair

Saturday April 30, 2016 - 10 - 2 pm
Cowichan Exhibition Grounds, Main Hall
Duncan (north of Duncan at the corner of Mays Rd
and the Trans Canada Hwy)

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Calendar

Our regular monthly meetings normally begin at 7:30 pm on the 2nd Thursday of the month at Beban Park Social Centre. Executive meetings begin at 2:00 pm on the 3rd Thursday of the month. Occasionally the dates change due to events at Beban Park Social Centre or if we share an exceptional speaker with another chapter. Here is the annual calendar for your information:

Feb. 11	Monthly meeting
Feb. 18	Executive meeting – Craig & Joyce
March 10	Monthly meeting
March 17	Executive meeting – Sandra's
April 14	Monthly meeting
April 21	Executive meeting – Krystyna's
May 1	Truss show & plant sale
May 12	Monthly meeting
May 19	Executive meeting – TBD
June 11	Saturday - Tentative date for the year-end wind up party

Our February Speaker

John Deniseger

Why I grow rhodos

John, a long time club member and past president, is an avid gardener, outdoor enthusiast and a retired biologist. A conversation with a friend last summer lead him to think about why he and his wife June were growing rhododendrons and what made this genus so appealing. His presentation, "Why I Grow Rhodos" will take a look at the world of rhododendrons from a different perspective.

R. protistum blooming at the Botanical Garden of the University of California at Berkeley on January 17th. A large plant in the *Grande* subsection, it is rated hardy to -7°C (20°F) so it is suited only for very protected gardens in Nanaimo.



SEEN IN PASSING... Art and Susan Lightburn



R. luteum fall colour with frost Nov 27.

R. "Species nova" – not officially named.

PW#66 Susan & Art have this plant in bloom now! It is a new species in the **Triflora subsection** collected by Peter Wharton, Guizhou expedition, 1994.

February Raffle Plants



R. 'Ooh Gina -15°C Flower openly funnel-shaped, 3½" across, faint fragrance, vivid red, rose edges and star-shaped cardinal red blotch. Held in ball-shaped truss of 15 flowers. **Fragrant:** Yes slightly **Bloom Time:** Late Midseason **Foliage Description / Plant Habit:** Leaves narrowly elliptic to elliptic, 5" long, emerald green, retained 3-4 years. Bronze colored when new. Rounded habit, stiff, Broader than Tall. **Height:** 3 feet in 10 years. **Parentage** Golden Belle x Lem's Cameo.



R. 'Winsome' — ('Humming Bird' x griersonianum) 3', 0°F, EM, 3-4/4. The plant is compact with small pointed foliage, and sets attractive reddish flower buds which you get to enjoy all winter. It flowers extremely heavily with beautiful rosy cerise flowers.

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Minutes of General Meeting - January 14, 2016

1. Chris welcomed 37 members including new member Diana Walker.
2. **President's report:**
 - a) Happy New Year...Christmas potluck and auction:
 - Thank you to those who donated items and those that purchased items. Thanks to those who brought both the potluck items and non-perishable food items for the Loaves and Fishes. Collaborative initiatives that benefit both our club and our community reinforce our purpose as a social organization. Thank you.
 - Grossed \$1182.00 in the auction itself plus the smaller raffle items grossed approximately \$140.
 - b) Pointed out one of the possible names for our newsletter and asked people to add or comment on them (*see chart on page 5*) Rhodo Rooter, Rhodophile....more were added during the meeting.
 - c) Explained the garden tours:
 - Two different tours are being discussed/planned
 - a) Members garden tour – no tickets, no fundraiser...members and invited guests/friends – planned and organized this year by Rosina Schmidt. Gardens are strictly members' gardens. Rosina sent around a sign-up sheet.
 - b) Garden Tour Fundraiser – public tour with tickets – planned and organized by a committee including June Bouchard, Gayle McRae and Art Lightburn. Some of the gardens would be members (at this point only three willing to open their gardens), but others community members' gardens would also be included. Require at least a dozen gardens in total or more depending on the number of days it would run. This Garden Tour has not yet been given the go ahead but will be discussed at our next executive meeting. If anyone here has been thinking about it over the holidays, please see me, or any one on this committee tonight. We need your help to give this initiative the green light.
 - d) **Silent Auction** of Rhododendron decorum (explain updated process):
 - Introduced now – people bid both at the break before our speaker and then after the speaker. Chris will announce when bids close (approx. 5 minutes after the speaker). Winning bid of \$55. Thank you, Rosina for the donation.
3. **Treasurer's report:** – Krystyna is travelling and will update regarding January at February's meeting. Dec. 5th balance forward was \$10,438.68.
4. Secretary **Correspondence:** Ann reported no correspondence but she is contacting our growers by email to attempt to get a commitment for our show May 1. NOTE: CVRS show and sale is April 30.
5. Program/Milner: - Art reported that February John Denisiger will present "Why Rhodos"?
6. Reinhold: good display of plants for sale, including bamboo canes from the Beamish garden. A further supply will be forthcoming!
7. **Bus Tour:** John Denisiger reported the bus is rented for April 23 and travelers will be going south this year to Saanich Peninsula and the Cowichan Valley.
8. 2nd Annual Garden Tour: being worked on early days.
9. **Raffle Table:** usual excellent plants including **R. Seaview Sunset** and **R. Wine and Roses**.
10. Meeting adjourned at 19:50 followed by an excellent presentation by Bill Dumont on the tour to England 2015, Chris and Earl contributed in the presentation.
11. **Executive Meeting:** Glenda Barr's home on January 21st 2pm.

Suggested names for our newsletter

At our January meeting there were several suggestions and more have come since:

Rhodo Rooter, Rhodo Buzz, Rhodo Rhapsody, Rhodo Holler, Truss Talk, Rhotomentum, Rhodo Ravin, The Rhodophile, Rhodo file, Ravin Rhodo.

Send your idea to President Chris; she suggested having a vote at the June wind-up to choose the winning name.



[Click here](#) to read the recipe on the Savvy Vegetarian website.

Rhodos Worth Growing

Scarlet Wonder' ('Essex Scarlet' x *forrestii* ssp. *forrestii* Repens Group) 2', -26°C, M, 4/4-5.

This German hybrid should have a home in every garden. It is too good to miss. It is a low, exceptionally compact plant with dense glossy green leaves that have a delightful texture. The plant will stand more sun and exposure than most. This is a plant you will enjoy 11 months of the year. Then in the 12th month it will explode into a mass of brilliant scarlet red. An unforgettable show! This fabulous rhododendron won a silver and gold medal.





From the mountains on either side of the Yunnan-Vietnam border comes the newly introduced, yellow-flowered, big-leaf *R. sinofalconeri*. [Click here](#) for the description on the Rhododendron Species Foundation website.

Rhododendron rigidum — (RN, rn, Triflora) 5', -20°C, EM, 4/3. This very beautiful species, when in full flower, appears as a cloud of smoky pink. Wide, funnel-shaped flowers are white to pink or intense rosy lavender and occasionally spotted red.



In Memoriam

Dr. Janet Stein Taylor, died on January 16, 2016.

Janet was a recent member of our club but has been involved with gardens and botany for a lifetime. She completed her PhD in Botany at the University of California, Berkeley in 1957 and then joined the faculty of the Botany Department at UBC in 1959. It was at UBC that she met her husband Roy Taylor. Janet retired from UBC when Roy took a position as Director of the Chicago Botanic Garden in 1985. Later, the Taylors moved to Claremont, California in 1994 before retiring to Lantzville in 1999. They opened their beautiful garden to our club several times, including for our Fall Conference in 2012.

Click here for her obituary on the UBC Botany Dept. website.



Janet with husband Roy in Lantzville, 2012.

Milner Rhododendron Species Project.



Volunteers on site last June (left); after clearing (right)

The advisory group met at Milner Gardens on January 20th. The expenses associated with design and clearing the site have totaled \$22, 474. We will need volunteers to help with site preparation beginning in March.

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY Gardens BC Website Launch

Victoria, BC, December 15, 2015 – Gardens British Columbia is pleased to launch its new website in partnership with Destination British Columbia. As an officially recognized tourism sector, it is estimated there are currently between 50 and 100 gardens throughout British Columbia that are active in marketing their experiences.

“We recognize that online communications is very important to garden visitors,” says Dave Cowen, President of Gardens British Columbia and General Manager for The Butchart Gardens. “We are very pleased to launch our new website, which allows for greater recognition of some of BC’s premier gardens and we will continue to look for fresh new ways to engage visitor’s and garden enthusiasts alike through our website and social media platforms.”

Highlights of Gardens British Columbia’s new website include:

- Rich imagery and visual elements grab attention
- Simplified navigation with improved user experience
- Streamed Garden events and an integrated blog in the form of a news feed

Milner Gardens & Woodland is working with other BC gardens on the project.

[Click here](#) to visit the website. It has been added to the links page on our club website.

Nepalese Fundraiser Plant for the Month of February



Our Vice President, Brenda Lewis, has donated “**Fabia x bureauvii**” for auction. It is a very fine hybrid that has the best qualities of its parents. It blooms young and quite prolifically, has beautiful dark green shiny leaves with outstanding indumentum. In addition, it is a beautifully rounded shrub and is extremely hardy. Even though the cross has been around for many years, it hasn’t been named and has yet to be registered. Mary Greig was one of the many hybridizers who made this cross and Ken Gibson has a very fine example of her cross.

This photo is by Hank Helm and was found on the website: Hirsutum (www.hirsutum.info)

R. Fabia is a 1927 cross by Lord Aberconway between two species rhododendrons, *R. dichroanthum ssp dichroanthum* and *R. griesonianum* (see photos below). *R. Fabia* blooms young, is a prolific bloomer, has some indumentum, is a well-behaved plant (well-branched and doesn’t normally get leggy) and has a pleasantly lax peachy-orange truss.



R. dichroanthum ssp dichroanthum. Photo by Garth Wedemire (www.hirsutum)



R. griersonianum. Photo by Garth Wedemire



R. bureauvii Photo by Ken Gibson (www.hirsutum)