

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY



May 2010



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings:

It was a pleasant surprise to receive the Bronze Medal Award and I thank you for the honour. It has been fun and a pleasure being your President these past years. As Linda and I will be doing a bit of travelling I will not be running for President. Please consider joining the executive and/or a committee to help keep our club moving forward.

This is the month of our Annual Truss Show & Plant Sale which will be held at Beban Park, May 8th. John & June are managing the Plant Sale and Craig is in charge of the Truss Show, please contact them if you are able to assist. We will again have our own table and need your donation of plants and/or books on horticulture, etc.

I hope the show is a success and look forward to seeing you all at the May meeting.

Cheers,
Paul

EXECUTIVE

President	Paul Lawry	816-2370
Past President	Craig Clarke	390-4090
Vice President	John Denisegeer	390-3605
Secretary	June Bouchard	390-3605
Treasurer	Gerry Moore	756-1427
Directors	Glenda Allard Barr	390-2822
	Linda Lawry	390-2370
	Sandra Dorman	390-0136
	Chris Southwick	390-3415
	Debbie Gaboury	758-1204
	Reinhold Gorgosilich	758-6533

COMMITTEES

Advertising	vacant	
Library	Ann Beamish	758-2574
	Helene Sullivan	758-7023
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
email: nanaimo@rhodos.ca

NEXT MEETING

THURSDAY, MAY 13

BEBAN PARK SOCIAL CENTRE

7:30 pm

BARRIE AGAR

'The Gardens of Hatley Castle'

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

TWIGS and STEMs



GOODIES FOR MAY

Ann Beamish
Janet Atkinson
Pat Schulson

NRS TRUSS SHOW & PLANT SALE

Saturday, May 8
Centennial Building, Beban Park
10 am – 2 pm
Open to members at 9 am

Bring in your trusses for the show Friday
evening between 6:30 and 8:30 pm

Trusses must be in place by 8:45 Saturday as
judging begins at 9

Help is needed to unload plants from 7 am
Saturday and to load plants at the end of the
sale

Party follows at the Black Bear Pub!

NRS ANNUAL BARBEQUE

Saturday June 5th
Chris Southwick's house
6647 Green Acres Way

Bring something to barbeque and an appetizer,
salad or dessert. Please bring your own plates
and cutlery. The conference raffle will be
drawn.

OUR MAY SPEAKER BARRIE AGAR

Barrie is the head gardener at Royal Roads
University, and a talented photographer with a
delightful sense of humour.



NRS Garden Visits

We are appreciative of the enthusiastic support
of those who will be opening their gardens this
spring. Below is the current schedule of garden
visits 2010:

April 23, Parker, Deniseger, Southwick (2
adjacent gardens)

April 30, McRae, Miller

May 6, Clarke, Bissonnette

May 7, Setting up for show and sale at Beban
Park; May 8, Sale and Show

May 14, Tennant, Peters, Hardy (3 adjacent
gardens)

May 21, Moore, Blenkarn

May 25, Grant
Information on address, best routes or access,
and descriptions of each garden will appear in
the April and May newsletters. For further
information or questions, please email
ddblenkarn@shaw.ca or call Doug Blenkarn at
250-756-0951.

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

NRS 2010 Bus Tour



On Saturday April 24th, forty five garden enthusiasts headed south towards Victoria on our club's 10th annual spring bus tour. While the weather could have been warmer, the showers held off for the most part, and our spirits were never dampened or chilled. From Dinter's Nursery where we began to fill the bus's luggage compartment with plants, we were off to Al and Sandy Campbell's fabulous garden in Shawnigan Lake, which inspired all of us. From there, we headed to the Saanich Peninsula for the rest of the day. Ken and Madeline Webb welcomed us to their beautiful garden and wonderful hospitality and generosity. Lunch was at Elk Lake Park, where the cold wind tested our resolve. Thankfully, the bus had a good heater. After lunch, Norm Todd welcomed us to his garden and Firwood Nursery. Norm led us through the garden and his incredible Rhodo collection. Of course, the luggage compartment really started to fill up at this point. Our final stop was at Evelyn and Nick Weesjes "Towner Crest" Garden in Deep Cove, where Evelyn led us on a tour through one of the most stunning woodland gardens you'll ever see. We ended the afternoon at Sea Cider for a tour of their facility and cider tasting.



A special thank you to our generous hosts who opened their gardens for our club. They've once again inspired us with their creativity, passion and hard work. A further thank you to Paul and Linda Lawry for organizing the prizes and entertainment while we were on the bus and to Garth Wedemire who came over from Maple Ridge to be our "official photographer".



A small black bag containing some personal items was left behind on the bus. If it's yours, please contact me.

John

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NRS Meetings Minutes

Date: Thursday, April 8th, 2010

1. Meeting called to order at 7:35.
2. Number of people present: approx. 40
3. President, Paul Lawry, welcomed guests and members.
4. **President's report:**
 - If you have an email address and are not receiving emails, please pass on your address to the secretary.
 - Next month is election month – someone will be phoning you to see if you're interested in running. Please consider joining our executive – it's a fun way to contribute to the club!
5. **Secretary's Report:** M/S/C to adopt the minutes of the last meeting as printed in the newsletter.
6. **Treasurer's Report:**
 - Balance as of April 6th is \$2631.95, including money for bus tour.
 - Conference 2012 account balance: \$516.00
7. **Committee Reports:**
 - Program: Program for May will be: Barrie Agar from Royal Roads University – details to come.
 - Membership: We have 48 members.
 - Social:
 - o Please check newsletter to see if you are bringing goodies to the next meeting.
 - o Year end BBQ will be on Saturday, June 5th at Chris Southwick's place, 6647 Green Acres Way. Bring whatever you would like to BBQ as well as either an appetizer, a salad or a dessert. Also, to reduce waste, bring your plate and cutlery.
 - Bargain Table: Check the bargain table for deals on great plants! Consider bringing plants for the bargain table when splitting your plants. Proceeds to go to the Conference fund.
 - Raffle/Door Prize: Thank you once again to Val and Ann for purchasing great prizes for the raffle table.
 - Library: New book: *Seeds of Adventure, In Search of Plants* by Peter Cox and Peter Hutchison
 - Other:
 - **April 24th:** Bus tour; sold out, waiting list is started. We leave at 7:00 on the dot from Northfield Road / Parkway parking lot.
 - **May 1st:** Info table at Art Knapp to promote the club and the upcoming sale – come by to check it out! Thank you to everyone volunteering their time on that day.
 - **May 8th:** Plant sale and show:
 - o Sign up sheet circulated – thanks for volunteering your time to make this event a success.
 - o If you can donate plants or gardening books for the NRS table, please bring on the day of the sale. Please note that all sales from that table will go directly to the club.
 - **Conference 2012:**
 - o Thank you to Gaylle McRae for stepping in as co-chair to replace Kathryn Grant who had to step down for personal reasons.
 - o It has been agreed that money from raffle table and bargain table will be re-directed to the conference fund; as well as the raffle on the day of the plant sale.
 - o As mentioned in your April newsletter, here are the details for our next fundraising raffle for the conference: prizes will be a \$50.00 gift certificate to Art Knapp Plantland, a \$40.00 gift certificate to the Mahle House Restaurant and two tickets to a Port Theatre Presents production (value up to \$80.00!). The draw will be held at our annual barbeque on June 5th.

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- **Open gardens on Fridays:** check page 2 of your April newsletter for a complete list of members' gardens that will be open on Friday evenings, 6:00 to 8:00 from April 23rd to May 25th. Thank you to all members who have volunteered their gardens for this great learning opportunity!
 - **Congratulations to our newsletter editor** from Bill Hardy and seconded by the rest of the audience. Of the many newsletters Bill receives from various clubs, the NRS newsletter is his favorite. Thank you Kathryn Grant for doing such a great job with our newsletter.
 - **The Bronze medal was presented to our president Paul Lawry:** the Bronze medal is the highest award that can be presented by a local chapter. Congratulations Paul! (See photo and caption in this newsletter.)
8. Raffle/Door prizes winners: Many happy winners! ☺
9. Program for tonight:

“Four Seasons at Haida Gold Gardens” - an inspiring presentation by Harry Wright with great photos highlighting their beautiful garden through the year.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15



Vice-President John presents Paul with the Bronze Medal



Paul and Linda Lawry

It is with great pleasure that the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society awards Paul Lawry the Bronze Medal for his service to our society. Soon after joining the club in 1997, Paul became our newsletter editor, a position that he shared with his wife, Linda, for the next 7 years. He has served on our Executive for more than 6 years, first as Director, then as Vice-President and most recently as President. He and his wife Linda have been important contributors to our club through committees and events, including our annual auction, truss show and plant sale. Paul has been a great ambassador for our club.

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Truss Show and Plant Sale – Saturday May 8th

Truss Show Classes

1. Truss Classes (1st, 2nd, 3rd ribbons)

Alpine species
Azalea (truss or spray)
Blotch/Flare hybrid
Elepidote species
Lax truss
Lepidote species
Pink hybrid
Purple/blue hybrid
Red hybrid
Salmon/orange hybrid
White hybrid
Yellow hybrid
Best scented
Foliage only

2. Trophies and rosettes

Hammerhead (multiple buds/trusses on same leader)
Best Scented Rhodo (not azalea)
People's Choice (voted on by those at show)
Best of Show
Philip & Joy Paull award (total points)

Tips on Exhibiting Trusses and Sprays

A day or two before the show go around and make a list of the blooms you will pick on Friday morning, the day before the show. Organize whatever containers you will be using to transport your blooms to the show. They needn't be elaborate. Empty bottles or cans work well. Be careful to avoid crushing the blooms. Fill the containers with water almost to the top. Bottles in six-pack cartons are great for transporting blooms.

Picking blooms always takes more time than you think it will! When choosing trusses, select ones that have straight stems with the bloom at the top. Don't choose ones with crooked stems that are growing at odd angles (e.g. pointing straight down). When choosing sprays, look for ones that will present



R. 'Loderi Venus'

themselves gracefully in a bottle. Pieces of cork can be used to stabilize the stem in the neck of the bottle.

Prune judiciously if need be to enhance the shape of a spray. Avoid choosing entries with bruises. Sometimes rain damage is inevitable, but avoid it if you can. Look for freshness. In a spray, it is better to have one or more unopened flower buds (for they frequently open after they have been picked) than to choose blooms that are already open and going over. Some judges like to see one or two unopened or partially opened buds, but a **truss must not have flowers from more than one bud.**

Choose blooms with good-looking foliage. Avoid ones with chewed or otherwise damaged leaves. Once again, some judicious snipping of damaged leaves can be done - but don't go too far because some foliage is needed (and you must NOT trim off the bitten parts of a weevil-chewed leaf!) For a truss, one nice whorl is best - with flowers from one bud only. For sprays, more foliage will often be needed for balance, and of course, more than one flowering bud is allowed.

After cutting your truss plunge the truss deeply into lukewarm water. Later you can make an oblique cut across the stem leaving the right length to make the exhibit look balanced - and do this under water. This will help the truss to take up water and keep it fresh all day. You may then store your exhibit in its water-filled bottle in the refrigerator.

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GARDEN VISITS IN MAY

May 6, 6 – 8 pm

CRAIG and JOYCE CLARKE
6866 Doumont Road, Nanaimo

An established informal garden in Pleasant Valley. We started it in a forest clearing around our house in 1982. Five years ago more forest was cleared to build an earthen pond. We have more than 300 Rhodos and Azaleas, as well as magnolias, dogwoods, and other exotic trees.

BOB BISONETTE
6276 Icarus Drive, Nanaimo

This garden was initiated in 1992 with construction of the residence on the lot. The lot is high bank waterfront, 68X500. Soil structure is 2cm organic on 5 feet of coarse alluvial gravel on thirty feet of sand. Drainage is not an issue. Water retention is. Exposure at initial planting and for many years was full sun with time now providing some significant shade to the front garden.

*From Dover Road turn toward
the ocean on Blueback. Turn
right when you get to the end.*

The philosophical aim was to minimize maintenance, get garden to the beach, maximize flower impact and be done work by July 1st. After 1st July, lawn mowing and fishing only.

After 18 years, the deer have the front gardens almost maintenance free, the back garden has no room for any new rhodies and the bank to the beach has won the war - no garden to the beach. Because we now have a second garden on Brannen Lake, I don't fish much.

The collection is varied. There is nothing unique. There is, of course, a "Unique" and about 70% hybrids and 30% species. Total number of varieties is forgotten having failed to update the catalogue for about ten years. It is between 150 and 180.

Planting have now matured to big rhodies, midsized rhodies and an occasional companion plant. There are a very few small rhodies. This is a good garden to visit with the eye to how to space plants and how not to space plants. Members of genus don't stop growing unless they die. This does happen too. Time marched on. Flowering season runs from very early, sometimes January to mid July with the classic end-of- April to end-of-May peak.

I welcome my friends and members I haven't met. Just be advised that we have two standard poodles and I am not perfect at finding every shoe doo doo. Look down occasionally.

To reach the garden from Metral Drive, turn onto Doumont Road and look for our gate on the right after 3 kilometres. If you are coming north on the parkway, turn left at the Mostar/Jingle pot exit & then immediately right onto Biggs Road. Follow Biggs road around Brannen Lake to the intersection with Doumont Road. Turn left onto Doumont Rd and follow it down the hill for about 1 km; our gate will be on the left.

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May 14, 6 – 8 pm

ROYCE and ANNE TENNANT
6256 Sechelt Drive, Nanaimo

The front of the pie-shape lot faces west. We have lived here 15 years and done all the hard and soft landscaping ourselves, except for the large cedar tree. The soil is sand. We took up all the grass, installed a pond and put steps down to a sunny patio area. The slope is covered with bark mulch; we have raised beds, a small vegetable garden, and have made much use of white granite stones. We put in an Abezia (silk tree), a Magnolia Soulangiere, two Ginkos and numerous rhodos, including a Point Defiance which is doing very well. We fenced in the back two years ago which has given us a chance to have some variety in the perennials and annuals. In the front the centrepiece is a white Star Magnolia, plus we have a variety of rhodos. We do not have a sprinkler system.

*Hammond Bay Road to McGirr
Road to Dover, turn right at
elementary school, go one block
on Dover and turn left at Sechelt
Drive*

STAN and LILIAN PETERS
6200 Sechelt Drive, Nanaimo

Various trees had to be removed and the slopes terraced to allow enough space to be developed into a garden. When the property was purchased no garden existed as it does now. There are a variety of trees, bushes, perennials and rhodos. This garden is still ongoing as it was started in 2003, which makes it seven years young.

CHARLIE and DOT HARDY
6255 Sechelt Drive, Nanaimo

We have about 100 rhodos on our property along with other plants we find of interest and which are scattered in all sorts of spots.

May 21, 6 – 8 pm

GERRY and LINDA MOORE
5118 Carriage Drive, Nanaimo

We have an urban garden we have been slowly developing over the past 4 years. In the beginning it consisted of lawn, some conifers and 3 rhododendrons. It also was a feed lot for the local deer population. It now consists of many varied plants as well as my favourites, "Rhododendrons".

*From the Island Highway take
Hammond Bay Road to
Entwhistle and turn left. Drive to
Carriage Drive, turn right and
continue up to Coach House
Drive. My garden is the corner
lot on Carriage and Coach House*

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DOUG BLENKARN
4834 Blue Jay Trail, Nanaimo

Originally totally forested, this one plus acre lot has gradually supported an ever enlarging garden. Low visibility fencing keeps the dog in and the deer out. Native trees and plants and Rhododendrons dominate the larger unprotected area. Pieris, Hollies, Boxwood, Magnolias, Bamboo Sequoia, Japanese Maple, Plum and varied ornaments provide some variety. The protected side garden has a small lawn surrounded by Camellias, Aucuba, Kerria, Pieris, Boxwood, Hydrangea, Forsythia, Lilac and of course Rhododendrons. Various strategies have eliminated powdery mildew. Many types of ground cover have been tried and with mixed results. The sloping property presents some challenges for effective watering.

Blue Jay Trail is a short loop street that connects at both ends with Lost Lake Road. Lost Lake Road can be accessed from Hammond Bay Road by turning onto Malaspina Road. Proceed up the hill and turn left on to Laguna Way, continue to Lost Lake Road, keeping right, and stay right to Blue Jay Trail. An alternate route from the north would be to turn off Rutherford Road onto Vanderneuk which becomes Lost Lake Road. Proceed about 2 km then turn left onto Blue Jay Trail.

May 28, 6 – 8 pm

KATHRYN and RICK GRANT
11761 Fairtide Road, Ladysmith

*Head south on the Island
Highway toward Ladysmith.
Pass the airport, then the south
end of Cedar Road, where there
is a traffic signal. Turn left at the
next road: Brenton-Page.
Proceed for about 8 km, past the
Page Point Inn; the main road
changes name to Shell Beach
Road. Watch for a graveyard on
your left and shortly after, turn
right on Fairtide Road.*

We began in 1995 with a completely forested lot. We cleared for the building site and septic field, and the 3/4 acre lot remains surrounded by very tall fir trees. Rhododendrons thrive in this shady environment and anything that requires sun does not do well. We are only a few feet above sea level and rarely get frost. A moderate, east-facing slope has required some terracing. Everything leans to the side, as it strives to get some sun. I'd like to rotate the whole property by 90 degrees! Rick has built many dry-stacked stone walls, collecting the sandstone from beside the highway during road construction. We have also carried large river stones from the Nanaimo River. That was when we were younger and stronger.

We have a moderate collection of both species and hybrid rhododendrons. Several large-leafed species appear to be quite happy; *R. calophytum* bloomed for the first time this year. Everything is so early this year and I'm afraid it will all be over by the end of May, but you are welcome to come and have a look anyway.