



May 2015

President's Message

With our incredible weather this spring it has been a joy to see many of our rhodos and even azaleas beginning to bloom substantially earlier than usual. It is great fun to watch the unfurling of a plant's first ever flower truss! It is usually well worth the wait.

Your fellow club members have been working hard at organizing and promoting our annual show and sale. You should see the "May is Rhododendron Month in Nanaimo" banner going up in Nanaimo's downtown shortly, followed by articles in the local papers. Thank you all for putting up posters and spreading the word to your gardening friends and others. It is such a great time to educate folks on the fantastic attributes of our favourite plants so even if friends aren't purchasing rhodos, do encourage them to come along to see the fantastic display you all contribute to our show. For those of you bringing plants for the show and sale do your very best to bring trusses on Saturday evening after 6:30 pm. The more that we have organized the evening before, the smoother the set up will be.

This year for the first time we'll have a table of folks from the Vancouver Island Master Gardener's Association at the Show and Sale. Bring your questions about your rhodos or azaleas as well as any other garden-related question you might have. It helps to have a sample of a plant that you're curious about, too.

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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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Next Meeting

Thursday May 14, 7:30 pm Beban Park Social Centre

2014 Whidbey Island Garden Tour

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

President's Message *continued from page one*

Thanks for working at potting something up for the show to sell at our ever-popular NRS table. We'll also have a large number of some VERY interesting plants donated by our generous friends Ken and Madeleine Webb of Victoria, many difficult to find species and hybrids.

May is our Annual General Meeting, which means it is time to think about serving on our NRS Executive. We have one executive meeting per month, from late August through May. If you haven't been part of this team in the past, think about serving as a member at large. The current president, vice-president and treasurer have all agreed to run again for those positions as well as some of the current members at large. Nominations will be taken from the floor as well.

Enjoy your gardens, go and see the Hailey Rhododendron Grove in Bowen Park and we'll see you at the Show and Sale on Sunday.

Chris

Rhododendron Calendar

Cowichan Valley Rhodo Society's Plant Sale – Saturday, May 2nd - Duncan

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society's Annual Show and Sale- Sunday, May 3rd – Centennial Building, Beban Park

MARS Special Program with Kenneth Cox and Hartwig Schepker: On the Search for Rhododendrons in an Unknown and Mysterious Part of North-Eastern India – 7:30 pm Monday, March 4th at Qualicum Beach Civic Centre \$5.00

American Rhododendron Society International Convention, Sidney May 7th to 10th

MARS Annual Mother's Day Weekend Garden Tour – Saturday and Sunday, May 9th and 10th

NRS General Meeting for May – May 14th 7:30 – Program: Whidbey Island Garden Tour – 2014

NRS Annual Bus Tour – May 16th – still a few seats left but going fast!!

NRS Annual Wind-up – June 13th at Gayle and Allen McRae's 3570 Oakridge Drive

SEEN IN PASSING...



Plant hunter on Mount Washington looking for specimens of *R. albiflorum* on Friday April 17

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Truss Show Sunday, May 3

"A passionate look, touch or a hug on a plant is enough to open your inner eyes than going for a serious yoga and other therapies." Karthikeyan V

Increase your knowledge and appreciation of rhododendrons by participating in our annual truss show. Access valuable information and tips from the winter 2013 ARS journal, the NRS website and the NRS May, 2012 2013 newsletters.

Largely due to the increase in truss show entries last year, we introduced new efficiencies in the registration process. Registration forms can be obtained at the NRS meeting, prior to the show, or from the May 2014 newsletter and this newsletter or at the registration desk. Your name, the name of the truss and its entry class should be entered on the registration form. On the second page, provide a duplication of the **truss names in the same or identical order as on the registration form**.

On arrival, give the registration form to people at the desk, thus enabling the withdrawal of the appropriate rhododendron name cards from the bank. Keep the separate list for assistance in organizing your entries. (Matching the identifying cards to the entries has been a major hold-up in the past).

On the table adjacent to the registration desk, entrants can then place trusses in the water filled bottles and **arrange them in the same order as on the registration form**. Help will be available for this and for transporting the bottles and appropriate identification card to the display tables.

To ensure uniformity in the show, don't guess which class your truss belongs to. There is an updated PDF file with a list of plants sorted into show classes available from the truss show page of the club website. If in doubt, leave the class blank and it will be filled in by the clerk.

Avoid the Sunday morning rush by bringing trusses between 6PM and 8PM Saturday evening (May 2). Alternately, trusses can be entered from 6:30 – 8:15 AM Sunday morning.

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 the 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 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 (except for the hammerhead class). Hammerhead definition (Seattle) is inflorescence with multiple rachis emanating from a single leaf stem.

The judges will be Al Campbell and Glen Jamieson.

Participate and enjoy this showcase!

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Number Please leave blank	Entrant's Name	Truss Name	Category/Class

[illegible]



Getting to know each other...

By June Bouchard

This month, I am pleased to feature Gayle McRae. Gayle has supported the NRS in almost every possible way since joining in 2001 including treasurer, plant sale raffle (with her signature hat!), 2012 conference co-coordinator, co-organizer of our 2011 garden tour, soliciting donations from the community for club fundraisers, and together with husband Allen, coordinating the plant sale and the Christmas auction, as well as opening their garden/home for tours, meetings and club events. And as you will see below, there is more to Gayle than rhododendrons!

Thank you Gayle for all your hard work for the NRS.

1. How long have you been growing rhododendrons?

When we moved to our home in 1974, there were already a few rhododendrons in the garden, so we (mostly Allen of the “royal we”) just started in to create places for planting more.

2. How long have you lived on Vancouver Island?

I moved from Ontario to Penticton in 1963 and to the island in “64

3. Describe your best day in the garden. ☺

My best day is when many of the rhododendrons are out in bloom and I can enjoy their beauty while weeding, deadheading, or just tidying up. That’s when I can easily lose track of time and just enjoy being there.

4. What other interests do you have?

I have a wide variety of interests from exercising at the gym, walking, golfing, skiing (though not this winter), reading, baking, and sewing to entertaining, attending concerts, theatre, and movies. Finally, I really enjoy my various volunteer activities within our community.

5. Do you have a favourite rhododendron?

I love all rhododendrons but if I had to pick one, it would be *R. linearifolium* because it is so different. I bought ours as a very tiny plant at the Victoria conference and now enjoy watching it grow happily in our garden.

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

I enjoy the fact that people come together to share the joy of these lovely plants. We have people like myself who know little about rhododendrons, to those who are experts – who have studied them, collected them, and have made a living because of them. Our club is very accepting of all. I enjoy the regular meetings with interesting presentations, our annual events, and the special conferences, which give us a chance to hear some of the world experts. It is all good.

7. Anything else you might like to share?

I have learned a lot about rhododendrons, gardens, and gardening from being a part of this club, and that plus the people in it, has enriched my life. For this, I am most grateful.

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society General Meeting Minutes
April 9, 2015

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Welcome - visitors (new member plants) Elaine Fell (1 more person)

1. President's Report:
 - Attended District 1 Presidents' meeting at the Quamichan Inn at the end of March – the ARS is grappling with increased costs and fewer members – no decision has yet been made as to what that might mean for members. Possibilities are to increase the cost of membership, reduce the cost of the Executive Director or to provide an option of having the ARS Journal in electronic format.
 - Attended Milner's Species Garden meeting and gave them our cheque for \$2000 towards the Species project. Our club has been very involved in this project with Art Lightburn, John Deniseger, Craig Clarke, Dorothee Kieser and Chris Southwick involved.
2. Treasurer's Report (Krystyna): Balance is \$12,937.62
3. Membership (Sandra): 3 new members
4. Social (Edith): Will send get well wishes to Ann Beamish.
5. Spring Plant Sale (Brenda and Chris) and Show (Doug):
 - Coming quick – on Sunday May 3rd.
 - Need volunteers the night before to set things up as well as volunteers to take things down after the event.
 - Sign-up sheet being circulated
 - Doug explains new system (started last year) to enter flowers into the truss show – makes it a lot easier if plants are listed ahead of time and brought in in the order listed.
 - Doug brought sheets to distribute to members who plan to bring trusses to the show – the forms are also available on line on our web site.
 - Centennial Building will be open the night before at 6:30 to set up and to start registration for truss show.
 - Bring trusses no later than 8:30 on Sunday morning to allow for judges to do their work – plants arriving after that time will be “display only”.
 - Chris demonstrates how a truss is judged:
 - Size: according to variety the diameter of the individual corolla & number of flowers per truss
 - Color: true to variety and good rep. of the group
 - Form: rachis is full, well-rounded, & typical. Stem is trait with full crown of leaves
 - Foliage: well-shaped of good colour and size with min. of mars or blemishes
 - Substance: corolla is firm and turgid for variety
 - Condition: all blooms at peak and not faded or wilted. 3 unopened florets will not count against the entry. Bloom should be free of all extraneous materials.
- Discuss need for volunteers (at end of show) and sign up
6. Bus Tour (John): Still a number of seats left for upcoming bus tour. The tour will focus on the Alberni Valley; we'll visit 6 gardens (5 private and 1 public) which are all new to the NRS – also a market, a nursery and a winery.
7. Wind Up Pot-luck will be at Gayle and Allen's on June 13th - come around 4:30.
8. Flowers in bloom - Thanks to all who brought rhodos in bloom for “show and tell”!
9. Raffle (Val and Ann): Many happy winners! ☺
10. Dollar (Bargain?) Table ??: Please keep the bargain table in mind when you're splitting or propagating plants in your garden – all money goes to purchase books for our library.
11. Exec. meeting – April 16th at Craig's home 2:00 pm
12. Other:
 - May has once again been proclaimed “Rhododendron Month” in Nanaimo – the banner will be set up downtown – thanks to Bryan Jubinville for organizing all this.
 - Members Plant Sale: Chris reminded everyone to bring plants for the NRS table at our plant sale on May 3rd.
 - May meeting is our AGM – please consider standing as a member of the Executive. Chris is staying as president.
13. Tonight's program: “Miniature and Dwarf Rhododendrons in the Rock Garden” by Bernie Guyader – a very informative presentation with great pictures!

Meeting adjourned around 9:00.

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

What a great group! Here is a list of the items donated for the NRS basket for raffle at the ARS conference.



From the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society:

- *One voucher for 2 complimentary tickets to a "Spotlight Series" Performance at The Port Theatre (Value up to \$115.00)*
- *One bottle Pinot Gris (Nanaimo Millstone Estate Winery)*
- *One Nanaimo tea towel*
- *One Nanaimo mug*
- *Two cloth shopping bags*
- *One set of Nanaimo playing cards*
- *One set of "Play On Nanaimo" cards (Vancouver Island Symphony)*
- *One Nanaimo Area Land Trust calendar*
- *Gardener hand cream*
- *Six handcrafted greeting cards*
- *One jar Maritime Mustard Pickles*
- *One can Clam Nectar*
- *One can Shrimp Pâté*
- *One can Wild Pink Salmon*
- *One St. Jean's Cannery and Smokehouse recipe book*
- *One VIU Culinary Institute recipe book*
- *One Vancouver Island Book of Everything*
- *One Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast book of photos*



See you on Sunday!