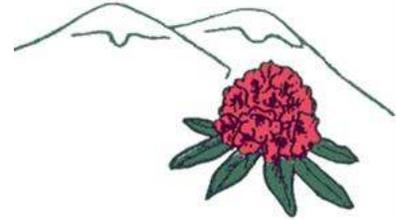


# THE RHODOVINE



**THE MOUNT ARROWSMITH  
RHODODENDRON SOCIETY**

**MARS**  
P. O. Box 342  
Qualicum Beach. BC  
V9K 1S8  
mars.rhodos.ca

**Volume 23, Issue 9**

**NOVEMBER 2011**

## 2011/2012 Executive

### President

Tony Ansdell  
752-4475

[ansdella@shaw.ca](mailto:ansdella@shaw.ca)

### Treasurer

Bert Harding  
752-3923

[ruber@shaw.ca](mailto:ruber@shaw.ca)

### Secretary

Marilyn Dawson  
752-3694

[dawsom@shaw.ca](mailto:dawsom@shaw.ca)

### Past President

John England  
752-6131

[jaengland@shaw.ca](mailto:jaengland@shaw.ca)

### Directors

Don Bridgen  
723-3916

[dabridgen@gmail.com](mailto:dabridgen@gmail.com)

Velda Rhodes  
724-2480

Linda Derkach  
752-3545

[lindaderkach@shaw.ca](mailto:lindaderkach@shaw.ca)

Ann DeBrincat

724-5594

[darrylhatch@shaw.ca](mailto:darrylhatch@shaw.ca)

### Director at large

Maria Bieberstein

468-7252

[abieberstein@telus.net](mailto:abieberstein@telus.net)

**Bursary** – Tony Ansdell

**Christmas Party**

**Dollar Table** - Cassy LaCouvee

**Newsletter Editor** - Linda Derkach

**Garden Tour** – Ken Jones

**Greeter** - Velda Rhodes

**Historian** - Cassy Lacouvee

**Library** – Donna deBoer

**Meeting Coordinator**- Tony Ansdell

**Membership** – Bert Harding

**Milner Gardens** - John England

**Plant Sale** – Marilyn Dawson

**Program Chair** - Ann DeBrincat

**PR** - Marilyn Dawson

**Refreshments** - Anne Gutsche

**Sunshine** - Judy McMaster

**Door Prize** - Sandra Hemsworth

**Truss Show** –

**Ways & Means** - Don Bridgen

## This Month:

In November, **Garth Wedemire** returns to present Part Two of To MARS and Back: Gardens of the Peace Arch Area.

In October 2010, **Garth Wedemire** of the Fraser Valley Rhododendron Society, brought us Part One of this presentation.

These were great pictures of local gardens and people that were taken on a garden tour exchange between our chapter and the Peace Arch chapter.

Among the properties toured are Darts Hill Garden Park and The Glades, both very well-known and gorgeous old gardens.



*Rhododendron* 'Mango Tango' as seen growing in the Smith Garden near Portland, Oregon during the ARS 2011 Convention. This Thompson hybrid ('Nancy Evans' x ('Mrs. Lamnot Copeland' x 'Tweedy Bird')) comes highly recommended by Mike Stewart, our speaker in October.

Photo by Linda Derkach

## MARS Meetings

**Qualicum Beach  
Civic Centre  
2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the  
month 7:30 pm**

**Next Meeting  
9<sup>th</sup> November 2011**



At this time of year, *Acer palmatum* takes centre stage with stunning colour that accentuates its graceful lines! Standing silently, this one was waiting patiently to be noticed on the side of the old highway at Black Creek.

## Inside this Issue

<b>President's Message</b>	<b>Page 2</b>
<b>Ask An Expert</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>Books We Love</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>Minutes</b>	<b>Page 4</b>
<b>Magical Transformation</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>Garden Journal</b>	<b>Page 6</b>

## From Your President...

Because we were able to increase our membership by more than 10% in the period to August 31, we became one of the winners of a flat of Rhododendrons from Briggs nursery in Oregon. We will distribute these plants in an order determined by lottery at our November meeting should the plants arrive on time.

For some time now we have been trying to encourage the building of a Species Garden at Milner Gardens. In an attempt to expedite this, we have formed a committee to follow up and locate a spot at Milner agreeable to everyone. Then we can start planning the work needed to get the project underway, and especially how MARS can contribute. Don Bridgen is coordinating our efforts with Milner Gardens.

The idea is to start with a simple garden and over time improve it as the need becomes clear. While this is clearly not a short term project, we hope to proceed as quickly as possible.

As I announced at our last meeting, our sister club, Peace Arch Rhododendron Society has disbanded and merged its members with the Fraser South Club. This was partly because of low membership but also because no volunteers stepped forward to run the club after the existing Executive - who had been running the club for many years - decided to step down.

This seems an appropriate moment to remind you that we need volunteers for the following positions:

- Vice-President
- Plant Sale Committee Chair
- Member and Guest Greeter at meetings

If you are interested in giving back to the club and the community, and would like to discuss what each of these jobs entails before deciding, please contact me in person at the meeting or by email.

Tony

**Membership Dues for 2012**  
**Please remember to bring your membership dues to keep your ARS Journal coming.....and to qualify for a free rhododendron at our November meeting**

**Friendly Remember**

**Mark your Calendar....**

**MARS Christmas Party**

**Saturday, December 10  
5:00 pm**

**Rotary Clubhouse  
Qualicum Beach**

### **New Book of Norm Todd's Articles**

The Victoria Rhododendron Society is publishing a collection of 23 Norm Todd essays which should be on sale sometime in November.

MARS will be placing an order and already has a list of members who want a copy. Anyone who wants to be added to the list should contact Marilyn Dawson at [dawsom@shaw.ca](mailto:dawsom@shaw.ca), by phone at 250-752-3694 or at the next meeting.

Norm is well known to MARS members who have visited his Saanich nursery. He has also been part of the Truss Show for many years bringing species and hybrids to sell to eager buyers.

## Ask an Expert.....

### Bob asks:

Several of us have become enamoured of *Rhododendron* 'Conroy' – bewitched by its unusual glaucous blue leaves and subtle orange flowers. But sadly it is prone to powdery mildew! What can I do?

### Answer from Terry and Joan:

*R.* 'Conroy and *R.* 'Virginia Richards' are notorious for powdery mildew. Here are some things you can do:

- Put these rhododendrons in more sun but protect from the winter wind
- Ensure there is good air circulation for all your rhododendrons
- Try spraying with a mixture of Epsom salts – you must get under the leaves where the mildew is lurking.

Interestingly, the latest issue of the ARS Journal contains an article on powdery mildew by Doug Blenkarn of Nanaimo with quotes from our Terry Richmond – well worth reading.

**Editor's Note:** *I tried this and found that it had some positive effect....will need to do repeated treatments to clear the powdery mildew and protect other rhododendrons.*



October sunshine at Cameron Lake

## Books We Love...

Joan Rich shares her thoughts about a book to which she refers often.

### Perfect Plant Perfect Place

### by Roy Lancaster

This book is a compilation of three books by Roy Lancaster...What Plant Where, What Perennial Where and What Houseplant Where. It is an excellent guide to choosing plants for the house and garden.

A wonderful selection of suitable plants is offered for different conditions, sites and decorative effects in the garden. Many plant features are noted and photographed including seasonal features, size, shape, leaf and flower colour.

The outdoor section fills roughly 75% of the book and is split into 5 sections –Perennials, Climbers, Shrubs, Conifers and Trees. There are more than 1,800 high quality illustrations which accompany the plant suggestions. Many choices are offered for all indoor locations for houseplants.

There are a few pages with adequate information on care, maintenance, propagation and problems of houseplants. Specific uses of plants include those which improve the indoor environment by removing airborne pollutants in homes and offices.

The index is straightforward with a common symbol beside each plant which has an illustration in the book.

**MARS General Meeting Minutes**  
**October 12, 2011**  
**at the Qualicum Beach Civic Centre**  
**7:30 pm**

Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted without change.

**GUESTS:** Harry and Gwen Wright, Rema Stroink, Art and Susan Lightburn, Louise Wall, Mike and Maria Stewart, Glenda Allard Barr, Beverley Chambers

**REFRESHMENTS:** Nancy Vickers, Ann Gutsche and Linda Derkach

**BUSINESS ARISING:** 1. Tony promised and delivered a short business meeting so speaker Mike Stewart would have plenty of time for his address. Tony would speak for the rest of the executive.

2. He reported some worrisome ARS news: The White Rock chapter PARS has folded and members have joined Fraser South. Apparently the chapter found it more and more difficult to fill executive positions.

3. PARS gardens will be the subject of Garth Wedemire's November presentation, focusing on the MARS trip to White Rock some time ago.

4. We still need volunteers to fill executive positions, specifically a greeter and a vice president.

5. MARS is still waiting for rhododendrons from Briggs Nursery, originally expected for this meeting. We have a firm shipping date and they should be here for the raffle in November.

6. Treasurer Bert Harding is out of town but he reported that MARS finances are in good shape and where they should be for this time of year.

7. The Truss Show needs a chairman. Other committee members are in place, but the top slot is empty. Al and Maria Bieberstein have held the post for the past three years and are not available this year.

8. Ken Jones will head the Garden Tour Committee with the first meeting expected soon.

9. Tony urged members to note the date of the annual Xmas Party, Saturday Dec. 10. That's turkey and all the trimmings with veggies, apples and desserts provided by members. Anyone who has an idea for vocal entertainment should contact Tony.

**WAYS AND MEANS:** Door prize was *R.* 'Sumatra'. Draw plants were: *R.* 'Blue Danube', *R. sutchuenense* (a seedling), *R. spiciferum*, *R.* 'Bronze Wing', *R.* 'Francesca'

**SPEAKER:** Former ARS President Mike Stewart held the large audience captive with his presentation on new hybrid rhododendrons. The owner of Dover Nursery east of Portland, he and his wife Maria tend 1,200 varieties on 80 acres, some field grown, others grown in greenhouses. He showed spectacular slides from such well known propagators as Don Wallace, Jim Barlup and Frank Fujioka. Many of the new introductions were crosses of plants already familiar to us. For example, *R.* 'Nancy Evans' is used in many different plants. One spectacular plant was *R.* 'Mango Tango', a marriage of 'Nancy Evans' x ('Mrs. Lamot Copeland' x 'Tweedy Bird') and propagated by Thompson Nursery. Another, *R.* 'Madlen's Meringue' is 'Nancy Evans' x ('Percy Wiseman' x 'Orange Marmalade'), a Don Wallace creation.

Mike said the rhododendron growers are working hard on several issues - hardiness, disease-resistance and producing plants that can grow in extreme weather conditions and still look good. The growers also listen to retailers across the continent who want plants with fragrance and even "disposable rhododendrons". This last category brought a gasp from the audience, but Mike explained that florists, tired of the ever-present azalea, have expressed interest in getting colourful rhododendrons to appeal to a highly sophisticated market.

On Thursday, Mike and Maria travelled to Nanaimo to talk about some of the new dwarfs and smaller rhododendrons appearing on the market. Several MARS members made the trip as well.

**RAFFLE WINNERS:** Door Prize was won by Gwen Wright. Other draw winners were: Al Bieberstein, Linda Derkach, Gillian Walker, John DeBoer and Velda Rhodes.

**MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:30 PM**

# A Magical Transformation

Shirley and Dougal Meekison are no strangers to hard work....or a creative touch. In their Qualicum Beach garden, they inherited a scalped and dreary wasteland of a back yard...unless of course you just like grass. Over the last four years, they have created a luscious sanctuary, with interesting borders and healthy perennials, including many beautiful rhododendrons.

Purchased in 2006, the back yard first needed to have 11 dead or dying trees removed.



Here is every passionate gardener's dream – a blank slate to start a new garden after years of experience making mistakes and discovering what you really love.



What an amazing difference a few years make – it hardly looks like the same property! And the Meekison's were only here about half time!

Shirley and Dougal have filled their garden with many rhododendrons, azaleas, viburnums, osmanthus, daphne, *Kalmia latifolia*, buddleia, sarcocca, philadelphus, cryptomeria and clematis. Herbaceous perennials include gaura, hostas, helleborus, primulas, astrantia, fritillaria, peonies and iris. Trees include *Picea orientalis* 'Pendula', *Magnolia stellata*, *Cornus kousa*, *Salix contorta*...and many, many more.

We hope that Shirley and Dougal get to sit back and enjoy their beautiful garden sometime soon – perhaps when the snow flies this winter!! And then – maybe when they are ready – they will share this amazing and horticulturally diverse garden with the other passionate gardeners in MARS.

*Editor's Note: Do you have a garden-related transformation that you can share with your fellow MARS members? Please send me your photos and your story.*

## **Garden Tour of France, Belgium and Holland Featuring Floriade 2012**

**World Horticultural Expo**  
May 29 - June 12, 2012

Glen and Dorothy Jamieson will be hosting this tour that starts in France where gardens in Paris, Versailles, Giverny, Dieppe and Vernon will be visited. Next is Belgium with stops in The Imperial City of Bruges and Antwerp, hometown of Rubens. We continue to Holland with a stop in Lieden located near Amsterdam. Then we travel to Apeldoorn before arriving in Venlo where the "Floriade 2012 World Horticultural Expo" is being held.

Full details are at

[www.greatexpeditions.com/TourDetail.asp?TourID=EUR002](http://www.greatexpeditions.com/TourDetail.asp?TourID=EUR002)

## **PH Meter Looking for Work**

Members are reminded that MARS owns a PH meter that can be borrowed any time. Phone Marilyn Dawson at 250-743-3694. Unless there's a huge waiting list it can be borrowed for a week or two at a time.

# Garden Journal

## Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden

This public garden was started in 1950 by the Portland Chapter of the ARS in an area mostly covered with brush, black berries and native trees. Today, waterfalls and bridges, terraces and extensive plantings have contributed to an exceptional seven acres of rhododendrons, azaleas and their companions. Most of the plants were donated by volunteers who still maintain the garden.

At the ARS Convention in May, our tour of this garden was a delight. We were treated not only to the healthy and abundant blooms, but to a delicious pulled pork barbecue as well!!!



These gorgeous blooms on *Rhododendron* 'Karin' have prompted me to run out and buy a small plant to get started!



*Rhododendron* 'Faggetter's Favourite' – blooming high over my head.



Many of the huge rhododendrons – now trees – are under-planted with friendly natives and companion plants such as these candelabra primulas and hostas.



*Rhododendron* 'Snow Queen' was a show-stopper!



Crystal Springs is home to many brilliantly-coloured Azaleas – orange, magenta, pink, purple, white – all growing splendidly together alongside a small lake.

Story and Photos by Linda Derkach