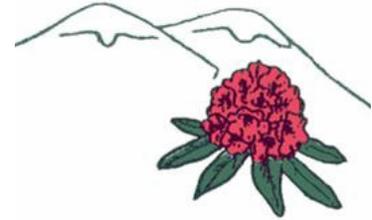


THE RHODOVINE

THE MOUNT ARROWSMITH RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

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March, 2007

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March Speaker

The panel discussion centers on a wide ranging subject, Rhododendrons of all Seasons.

Dick Beamish: A founding member of the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society, Dick has a huge interest in rhodos; there are from 400 to 500 in his garden. In fact, gardening has been a way of life for him, as he worked his way through the University of Toronto PhD program in zoology. He has had a varied and distinguished career, holds the Order of B.C. and the Order of Canada for his discovery of acid rain. At the present time he is working for the federal government studying the travel habits of salmon fry.

Glen Jamieson: Here is someone well known to MARS, as a member, a past president and a frequent speaker. (He entertained us last spring with his talk on botanizing in Yunnan.) A keen gardener, Glen's interest in plants focused on orchids, but later shifted to rhodos, specifically the tropical vireyas. He has probably the largest collection in the country. Glen holds a B.Sc. in agriculture from McGill and a PhD from UBC and has been a research scientist with Fisheries and Oceans Canada for the past 30 years.

Terry Richmond: A charter member of MARS, Terry is also very well known to members; he has been a willing source of information on growth and care. He first became interested in rhodos in the 1980s when his parents moved to a property outside Port Alberni where there were lot of them. He's been involved with them ever since, growing and selling them at MARS plant sales. For his efforts with rhodos and MARS activities, he holds the ARS bronze medal.

Dave Crucq: A relative newcomer to the rhododendron scene, Dave "discovered" them in 1993 when he moved to the coast. "Before moving to Courtenay, I had never heard of a rhodo," he said, although gardening was in his genes. Dave grew up in Dauphin, Man., spent 35 years in the manufactured housing industry, gradually moving west. In Courtenay, he learned about rhodos at Harry Wright's knee (so to speak). Now retired, Dave is vice-president of the North Island chapter and still learning.

MARS Meetings

Second Wednesday of the Month
7:30 pm
Qualicum Beach Civic Centre

April Meeting

Wednesday, April 11th, 2007

Speaker

Bill Dancer

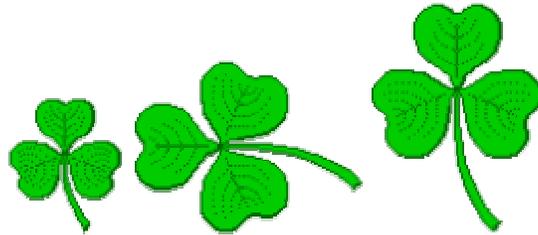
Subject

The Gardens
of
Government House.

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President's Message

The individual who won the \$400.00 subsidy for the ARS April/07 Convention in San Francisco will now not be able to use it. Therefore we will have a new draw at the March Meeting.

The rules for the subsidy are:

1. Has not attended an ARS meeting before
2. Needs to turn in \$400.00 of receipts from the San Francisco Meeting

The following is an article written by Dick Murcott who is a member of one of the New York Rhododendron Chapters, I thought that his article is very timely. As you will see it addresses the number one concern of most Rhododendron chapters "how to attract new members?" Maybe there is something here we could use in Oceanside.

Where have all the people gone?

By Dick Murcott

In 1962 I started to get involved in what I call "Organized Horticulture". At that time there were many civic, religious and horticultural organizations. Every church and temple had a men's club, woman's club, single's club, couple's club etc. There were Masons, Elks, Moose, Odd Fellows, and Eagles. Societies existed for chrysanthemums, rhododendrons, African violets, roses, orchids and several others that I can't remember. Many localities had a garden club, probably 30 or so in Nassau County alone.

All of these organizations were vibrant, active, energetic groups. The Long Island Chrysanthemum Society limited itself to 125 members and it had a waiting list. Its annual show had 1300 entries and would attract 3500 visitors during its two day run at the State University at Farmingdale. The New York Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society met at a Schraft's Restaurant on Fifth Ave. in Manhattan and would attract at least 100 people from New Jersey, Conn. And Westchester and Long Island. At one time the NY Chapter of the ARS had 450 members. In one year alone we took in 150 new members from our information booth at the NY Flower Show. All of the local garden clubs had waiting lists for membership. Two that I knew of had a 10-year wait to become a member.

A look now at these organizations is a sobering experience. Everyone is suffering from a lack of interested members. There are still Masons struggling along with limited membership but the Elks, Moose, Odd Fellows and Eagles are basically gone. All of the other groups, if they are still around, are down to 10 to 15% of what they used to be. Also, leaders of these groups all report a general lack of "spark plug" members, those who are right there ready to do or help on any project. Most of the members are long time members who feel that they have done their share in the past and now want to relax and let the younger members do the work.

The problem is that there are no new members. Where has everyone gone? Why are all these organizations not attracting new, young members?

(Continued on next page)

There are several reasons.

The first is competition from television, especially cable and satellite television, together with rented movies. These make television a remarkable entertainment medium. You don't even have to go to a Blockbuster Store to rent a movie; they will mail it to you and give you a postage-free envelope in which to return it. The old expression "watching the boob tube" just is not true anymore. There is an infinite amount of very interesting programming available.



If the competition from TV is not enough we have the Internet. There everything is available from information on any subject and correspondence with people to infinite entertainment options.

We have the new life style of young people. Housing is very expensive in the NY City area. In order for young married couples to live here, most of the time both partners must work, and usually, work long hours. Getting home at 6:30 or 7PM to prepare and eat dinner really kills the idea of picking up at 8PM to drive to a Rhododendron or Mum or whatever society meeting. And I have not even mentioned interacting with children, which must be done if there are any. Most of these people are simply over worked and have very little spare time for outside activities.

Lastly we have the feeling on the part of young people that horticulture is "so 1930" and "so uncool". Any gardening work is to be done by hired workers. So very many middle class families now use services to even cut the grass and do garden maintenance work, jobs that, years ago, every home owner considered his or her duty to perform.

Sounds dismal and hopeless doesn't it. Well its not. We have something to offer these people that is not found elsewhere. People. You. What we must show these people is that rhododendrons are fun, interesting, exciting and most important they can get to develop a whole new circle of friends from all walks of life?

How? First of all we should sponsor and run one hour free information sessions about rhododendron horticulture at local libraries at least once a quarter. I would be glad to give the presentation. We should start out in the communities closest to Planting Fields, Oyster Bay, Syosset, Locust Valley, Glen Cove, Bayville and then move out from there. Garden clubs in the area of the library could be notified of the upcoming meeting and invited to attend. Publicity for the meeting would be through a poster at the library and notices in the local newspapers. The name and address of each attendee would be taken and an invitation sent to attend the next meeting at which they would be given a small rhododendron, 'Scintillation', 'Parker's Pink' something nice and a cultivar different from what they would normally see at Home Depot. We would continue to send out invitations for the ensuing three meetings.

When a visitor attends the first meeting, the President should meet the person before the meeting starts and chat with them to find out where they live and if they are interested in any other plants. The President should also introduce the visitor to several older members and encourage the old members to stick with the visitor and continue in conversation. If the older members are uncomfortable with this they should "pass" the visitor off to other older members. **THE VISITOR SHOULD NOT BE LEFT ALONE AT ANY TIME DURING OR AFTER THE MEETING.** Everyone should have a nametag with the locality in which they live. This will help everyone remember names.

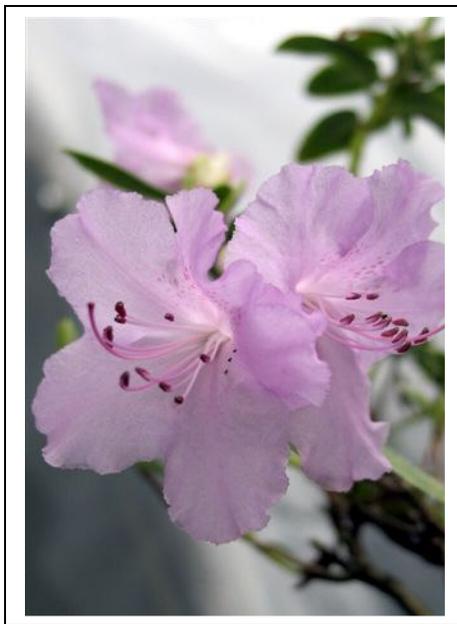
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At the start of the meeting, the President should introduce the visitor saying where they live and if they are interested in other plants. The reason for this is that it gives other members a topic of conversation to start with the visitor after the meeting is over. All of this gives the visitor a sense that everyone is actually interested in them. Very important. During conversation, the new visitor should be asked if they have any rhododendron problems and if so offers to visit their garden to give suggestions should be made by some of the older members.

We should also consider having a half hour beginner’s session before the regular meeting. Each session would go over what should be done for rhododendrons during the coming month. A plant could be given as a reward to those who attend 75% of the beginner’s meetings during the year. Why not have a class at the May show just for beginners with a special award for the best entry in that class.

We must become new member focused; after all they are the future.

Morsels from Mars



Wonderful photos of spring taken by our Mars members



“Olive (Moupinese X Doricum 4’,-15’F, VE, 3/3/3. One of the earliest to burst forth with a display of orchid pink flowers in early spring. Hardy vigorous grower.

Left- Rhodo photo by Susan Lightburn. Right-Rhodo Photo by Judy McMaster Rhodo notes from ‘Greer’s Guidebook’

Terry’s Tips for March

- **Transplant Rhodos.**
- **Plant new Rhodos.**
- **Use Dolapril around Rhodos.**
- **Wait a few more weeks before you fertilize.**





MARS Minutes

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

February 14, 2007.

MEETING called to order at 7:35 pm.

WELCOME GUESTS: Dave and Ellen Brown, Margaret Hill and Jill Green

MINUTES of the last general meeting, January 10, 2007, were approved as circulated; no corrections necessary.

BUSINESS ARISING: none.

CORRESPONDENCE:

February 2007 Victoria Rhodo Club newsletter

Jan./Feb. 2007 B.C. Council of Garden Clubs bulletin and an ad for their general meeting.

Letter from Marlys Diamond thanking MARS for the get well card.

Letter from SOS thanking MARS for the Xmas donation.

Associate member renewal form from the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden

2006 / 2007 MARS EXECUTIVE and COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN:

- 1) Meeting Coordinator: still require a volunteer for this position
- 2) Barbara Kulla still requires a helper with refreshments for each meeting and directing clean-up after meetings. She now has casual help but would like a regular volunteer.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Tony Ansdell gave the January 31, 2007 financial report and it was accepted.

WAYS AND MEANS: Tonight's door prize was Rhododendron 'Hotei'. The raffle prizes were Rhododendron 'Tortoise Shell', Rhododendron 'Kokardia', Rhododendron Morii and a 3 kg package of Norm Todd's rhodo fertilizer as a substitute prize.

REFRESHMENTS: Barbara Kulla: this evening's goodies were brought by Lorne Hepting, Sharon Kevis and Carol Hanson.

SUNSHINE: Maria Bieberstein: sent a card to Marlys Diamond.

GARDEN TOUR: May 12th and 13th, 2007. Art Lightburn says they are still looking for a couple of large gardens – if you have any in mind, call Maria. Also, the committee could use another volunteer.

TRUSS SHOW and SALE: Bert Harding has the sign up sheet for truss show volunteers ready tonight. Eleven vendors are signed up so far.

MEMBERSHIP: Bert Harding says we have 112 members (65 memberships). New members tonight are Jill and Jim Green and Margo Moser.

OCEANSIDE GARDEN SHOW: Marilyn Dawson. This year we will be selling plants as well as garden tour tickets and Greer's books. Volunteers and plants are needed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. ARS spring convention in San Francisco (April 12-15, 2007). The website is www.ars2007conf.org. The MARS draw for the \$400 subsidy for a first time convention attendee was won by Margaret Moser.

2. Seedy Saturday: Marilyn Dawson gave a brief overview of the MARS table. Marilyn, Barb Kulla and Cassie Lacouvee had rhodo pictures, talked to many interested people and handed out info cards with our show/garden tour dates as well as info on growing rhodos. It was very successful and should be done next year too.

3. Vandusen Garden Show (June 7-10, 2007). ARS District One (our district) is paying for a booth and would like volunteers to man it

4. Des Kennedy will be giving a talk on Feb. 24th from 2-4 pm at the Village Theatre in Qualicum Beach. Tickets are available at the library.

5. Vireya rhodo book: the book MARS ordered is still in England; we should get it sometime in the near future,

6. Ron read the letter from SOS thanking MARS for the Christmas donation.

(Continued on page)

7. Ucluelet rhodo project: MARS will postpone applying for an ARS grant for signs and water systems until next year as Ucluelet is still planning improvements for the main road and downtown (where the rhodos would be going).
8. A friend of Harry Wright's would like to buy a greenhouse. Anybody have one for sale?
9. MARS elections (May general meeting): anyone interested in running or nominating somebody, call Brenda Moore.
10. Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden associate membership renewal: MARS has the form and will be renewing. This means MARTIANS can get in free. Just check in at their gift shop and let them know you are with us! A membership card or pin wouldn't hurt.
11. Ron read the letter from Marlys Diamond thanking MARS for the get well card.
12. Our Milner Gardens representative, John England, said the garden will be open for winter flowering plant viewing (teahouse will be open too) on Saturday, Feb. 17th from 10am to 4pm.

GUEST SPEAKER: Tonight's guest speaker was Ron Knight. He put on a program with slides, plant material and audience interaction. His topic was "Pruning with Confidence". Very educational and lots of fun.

DOOR PRIZE: Susan Lightburn won Rhododendron 'Hotei'.

RAFFLE: Carol Hanson won R. Kokardia, Ellen Brown won R. Tortoise Shell and Al Bieberstein won R. morii.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:30 pm.

DATES TO REMEMBER: The next general meeting will be March 14, 2007 at 7:30 pm.

Secretary,
Ann De Brincat

President,
Ron McMaster



R.moupinense 2', 0'F, VE, 4/3/3. Habit somewhat, open and spreading one of the finest early blooming species. Large snowy white flowers with deep purple red blotches. Leaves 1.5" are elliptical oval shiny and polished. Funnel shaped flowers 1.5" in trusses of 3. Bronze/red new growth give a second display after flowers have gone. Photo by Susan Lightburn.

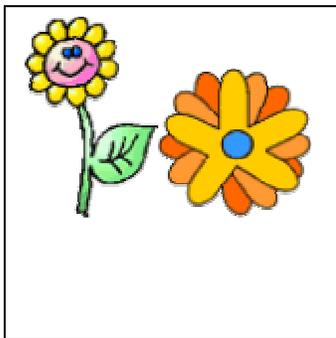
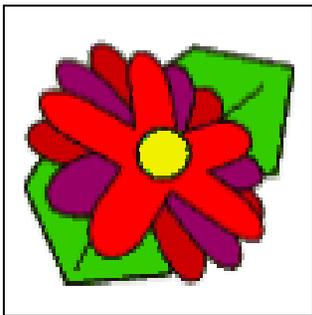
EVENTS

Milner Gardens Spring Plant Sale & Festival April 21st & 22nd, Milner Gardens and Woodland, 2179 West Island Highway, Quailicum Beach
10:00am to 4:00pm

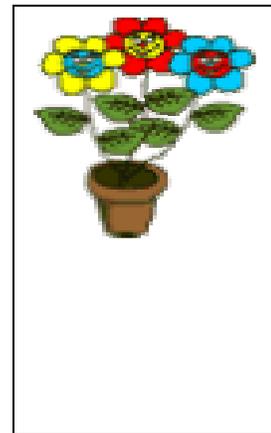
Add a piece of this Heritage Garden to your own garden. A large selection of propagated material will be offered for sale. The festival also features various gardening demonstrations and advice, live music, afternoon tea, and outdoor Bistro. Admission by donation.

TRUSS SHOW

CATEGORIES FOR APRIL 21 2007 TRUSS COMPETITION



Colour Collection
LAX Truss
Pink
Blue Collection
Red
White
Species
Spray
Foliage
Novice
Hammerhead
Best in Show – Large Leaf
Best in Show – Small Leaf
Popular Choice



**TRUSSES ARE TO BE BROUGHT IN FOR SET UP AT 7.00AM
Take them home with you after 2.00pm.**



More information on how to prepare your trusses in the next newsletter and in the April meeting



Don't forget our new venture, **the Oceanside plant** sale at Coombs.

At the February meeting, members were given forms to fill out if they are planning to participate in the Oceanside Garden Show in Coombs on April 28 and 29. Barbara Kulla and Marilyn Dawson are spearheading MARS' contribution to the show, but they need your help. Members are asked to look around their garden and see what they can divide and pot up for the sale. Phone Marilyn with any Concerns

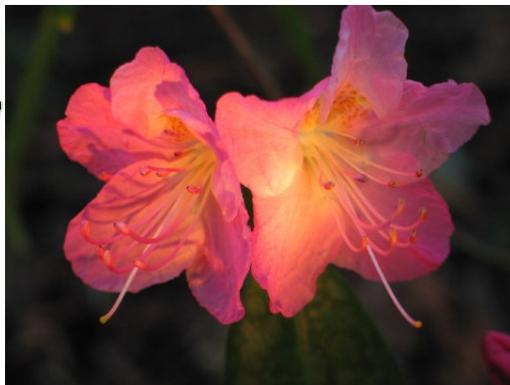
Completed forms can be handed in at the March meeting. If you need pots, or can donate pots, let us know; if you need help with the potting, be sure to speak up. The sale is over a two-day period. Last year MARS had an informational desk and sold Garden Tour tickets only. Selling plants will be a new experience, and, we hope, generate some income.

"R.moupinese"

Photo by Susan Lightburn.



"Coral Glow" (mucronulatum X lutescens) 4', E -ve 20'F
 slightly fragrant orange to red flowers, upright habit, mahogany winter colour.
 Photo by Susan Lightburn



HAPPY SAINT PATRICK'S DAY