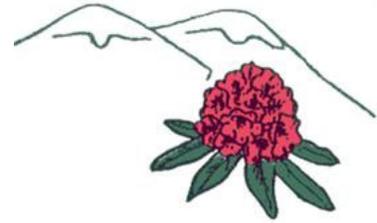


THE RHODOVINE



THE MOUNT ARROWSMITH RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

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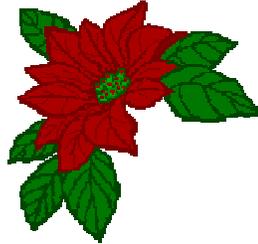
PR

Refreshments Anne Gutsche

Sunshine Maria Bieberstein

Truss Show Al Bieberstein

Ways & Means Susan Lightburn



Christmas Party

Wednesday 10th December Starts at 6 pm

Rotary House Qualicum Beach

At the corner of Beach and Fern

Pot Luck

Already provided is ;

Turkey, Ham, Mashed potatoes ,Gravy,
stuffing, Tea, Coffee, Bread, Butter.

Bring

- Favourite recipes
- BYOB and wine glass
- Donation to Food Bank
- \$5 to \$10 gift each person for gift exchange game.
- Donations towards door prizes,
These will be donated to the SOS.

Cutlery, cups, plates are provided.

Invite your friends and past members to join us. Make sure that you provide them with the bring list and that you notify one of the executive as to how many are coming so that we can set up the right # of tables.

A Fun Evening

Yummy food.

Terrific company.

Entertainment will be singing with
George and Gwen Despins



MARS Meetings

Qualicum Beach Civic Centre

2nd Wednesday of the month

7:30 pm

Next Month's Meeting

Wednesday

January 14th 2009

Glen Jamieson is a known quantity to members of MARS.

He always gives great a presentation and perhaps, for this reason, members should alert their friends. Visitors are welcome free. Glen, a recently retired scientist from the federal Department of Fisheries and a longtime member of MARS, will be talking about one of his latest trips to Borneo. His interest on plants, particularly rhododendrons and their relatives, is well documented.

Glen is particularly well known for his interest and collection of vireyas, a tropical rhododendron and has given talks on the subject throughout the Island and the Lower Mainland. His last talk to the club was on his trip to Western Yunnan and the changes that have happened in rural China over the past 100 years.

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President's Message

“Nature gives to every time and season some beauties of its own.”

Charles Dickens (1812-1870)

After six weeks experiencing the ‘Downunder springtime’ on the fascinating ‘Red Continent’, where the profusion of blossoms caresses the eye everywhere, in city parks, botanical gardens and across the landscape in strange forests, strange because the majority of the trees are Eucalyptus with their distinctive ‘gum tree’ appearance! But the blossoms! Jacaranda trees (blues and purples), Oleanders (red, white, pink), Bottle Brush trees (red), Flame trees (red), Frangipangis, Acacias, Banksias, Wattles... the list goes on... the giant Karri tree, one of the tallest hardwood trees in the world, the Morton Bay Fig Tree, which is about as big as a fig tree can get. What a treat!

Then there are all the charming Aussies in the places that we visited, Perth, Margaret River, Mount Barker, Adelaide, Clare, Tununda, Hobart, Eaglehawk Neck, Sydney... their lives are different, yet upon reflection, they are similar to Vancouver Islanders.

All holidays come to an end; we are happily home in Qualicum Beach, which is not unknown to those distant Aussies. In Hobart, capital of Tasmania, a young church deacon asked us where we were from. After narrowing the geographic location he confessed to having been in Qualicum Beach visiting his aunt less than a month before our chance meeting. Small world.

In this Rhodovine edition you will find details about our MARS Christmas Party on 10th December. I encourage you to come out and enjoy an evening of socializing and fun with your fellow MARTians while supporting, in our small way, the Salvation Army and the SOS.

Wishing you and your family a Merry and Blessed Christmas as you share the joys of this season on our beautiful and peaceful Island.

John England

Members' Corner

October's prize

The special rhodo for the draw is Inkspot, one of those sought-after but hard to find plants. Described as pink to lavender, this hybrid comes from irroratum Spatter Paint x Purple Splendour. Last month's special rhodo, a Ken Gibson hybrid, was won by Tony Ansdell.

New Positions

Arlene Johnston has volunteered to take care of our library, Anne Gutsche the refreshment and Glen Jamieson meeting coordinator. Thank you all.

For many reasons we are still looking for volunteers to fill positions to enable our club to run well. You may have talents that you can share with us for program chair, public relations and others. Please contact one of the directors. This is a fun group who work well together.

Web Sites to Enjoy

From Art And Susan Light burn

Great Plant Picks

Great Plant Picks is an educational program of the ‘*Elisabeth Carey Miller Botanical Garden*’ which is committed to building a comprehensive list and information about outstanding plants for Pacific Northwest gardens.

www.greatplantpicks.org

Click on “Search Great Plant Picks” at the top for the “Searchable Database” of plants. The “Nursery Directory” link is designed to help gardeners find the current year's winning selections. The directory lists nurseries and retail outlets who indicate that they carry Great Plant Picks plants.

Finnerty Gardens

One of Canada's best collections of rhododendrons, many of which were started from seed obtained from famous plant explorers, is on display in the University of Victoria's Finnerty Gardens.

The garden contains more than 500 different rhododendron species and hybrids, 1,600 trees and shrubs and a spectacular range of companion plants, including ferns, vines, bulbs, ground covers, water plants and ornamentals on a 2.6 hectare (6.5 acre) site at the southwest corner of UVic's campus.

www.external.uvic.ca/gardens





General Meeting Minutes

November 12th, 2008 7:30 pm. at Q.B. Civic Center.

MEETING AT: 7:30 pm. at the Qualicum Beach Civic Centre. Minutes of the October meeting appeared in the Rhodovine. They were accepted as presented.

GUESTS: Joanne Hamilton, Lee Teal, Harvey Teal, Marietta Dodds, Gordon Dodds.

BUSINESS ARISING: 1.Regarding the possible 7pm start of the meetings, several people indicated it would be very difficult to attend; therefore, we will leave the meeting start at 7:30 pm.

2. The Christmas party is on Dec. 10, a Wednesday. The Rhodovine will have all the details.

CORRESPONDENCE: B.C. Council of Gardens bi-monthly newsletter. B.C Lottery denies MARS request for a grant to facilitate a propagation program at Milner Gardens and Woodland.

Vancouver Island University announces the MARS recipients of our bursary winners.

REFRESHMENTS: Anne Gutsche, Lorne Hepting.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Tony Ansdell, reported that we are solvent this month.

GARDEN TOUR: Six gardens are already firm for next spring, but Barbara Kulla, Marilyn Dawson or Linda Derkach are eager to hear about great gardens in the area that runs from Eaglecrest to Highway 4 in Parksville.

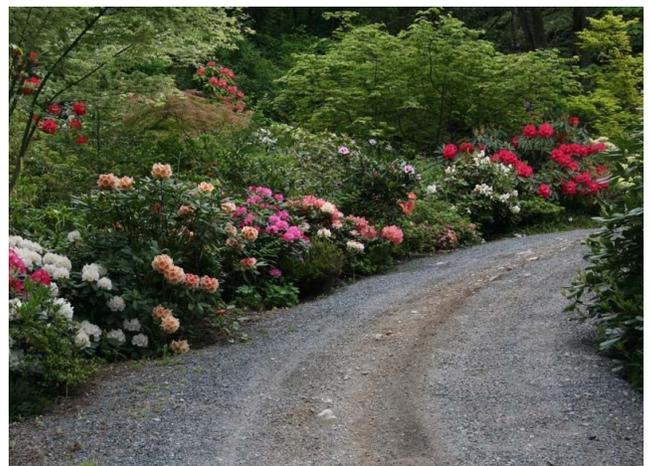
PROGRAM: Because it was a longer program, Art and Susan Lightburn began the presentation of their trip to the British Isles before the coffee break. Their power-point program focused first on beautiful English gardens. After the break, the audience was treated to a tour of Scotland, not just the gardens but a travelogue of their weeks-long visit.

WAYS AND MEANS: The various prizes won were: Joanne Hamilton, aluminum labeling tags; Gordon Dodds, R. Pink Parasol, Ann Robertson, R. Lucy Lou and Raymer von Conruhds, gardeners' soap.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:45pm

John England President
Marilyn Dawson Secretary

Some people dream of a white Christmas, but most Rhodo lovers are dreaming of the time when all those buds that have set this fall are going to bloom. Art and Susan shared their trip and photos with us to keep us dreaming.



[Blooming Flowers and Gardens.](#)



Christmas Holly Norma Senn

Holly has been used to decorate European homes since Druid times. Over the centuries and with the advent of Christianity, many associations have developed concerning holly decorations at Christmas time. The evergreen leaves have come to represent everlasting life, and some traditions say that holly made up Christ's crown of thorns. The legend holds that all holly berries were originally yellow, but turned red from Christ's wounds. Perhaps the symbolism associated with holly is less important now, but the bright red berries and lustrous green leaves still make welcome additions to winter flower arrangements and our Christmas decorations.

In addition to their decorative use at Christmas time, hollies are prized by carpenters for their fine, dense wood. Leaves from some holly species have been used to make tea, and their flowers are very attractive to bees, yielding fine honey. Where they are hardy, they also make lovely large specimen trees in the landscape. We are most familiar with the red-berried varieties, but there are also very attractive orange- and yellow-fruited hollies.

Commercial holly sold by florists at Christmas time is harvested from *Ilex aquifolium*, the English holly. In Canada, commercial holly orchards are located in the mildest areas of British Columbia, most are on Vancouver Island, but there are a few orchards in the lower Fraser Valley. English holly is best grown in fertile, deep, slightly acid soils that have good drainage. They like moderate growing temperatures, neither very hot nor very cold, and even moisture is required throughout the growing season. It takes eight to ten years after planting before the trees are large enough to start harvesting, and often plants are 15 years old before major harvesting begins. Commercial growers want to know the exact characteristics of the holly they grow, so typically they plant grafted plants or plants that were started from cuttings. Growers play a guessing game in selecting varieties for future harvesting. They have to predict what will be fashionable in the florist trade in a decade's time. I remember talking to a commercial grower who was trying to decide whether or not he should top-graft his green leafed holly trees to change them over to variegated types because of the rising trend towards the use of more variegated plants. He had planted mostly solid green forms which at the time of planting were what the florist trade preferred. As well, growers have to decide on the number of prickly-leaved or smooth-leaved varieties to plant. Another decision to make at planting is to balance the number of male to female plants in an orchard. Most English holly is dioecious, that is, some plants are male and have only staminate flowers that provide pollen, and other plants are female and have pistillate flowers. In order for berries to form on the female trees, pollen has to be transferred from the staminate to the pistillate flowers. A ratio of about one male tree to every fifty to sixty female trees is commonly planted in large commercial orchards, but this ratio can vary tremendously depending on the size of the planting. For home growers, if berries are wanted on English hollies, care must be taken to plant both a female and a male tree. Watch for the identifying tags on plants in the garden centres that tell you which plants are male and which are female.

Happily, there are now some holly varieties that have perfect flowers, so berries will be borne on a single tree. Growers are paid based on the weight and quality of a crop. Good berry set adds to the weight, so growers want a balance of berried branches to leafy branches in order to make the most money. Of course, the overall quality of the leaves and the ratio of variegated and dark green branches also determine the crops' value.

Holly is cut by hand in late November. The branches have to be handled carefully to avoid having the prickly leaves physically damage other leaves, and to prevent knocking off the berries. After cutting, holly is washed to rid the leaves of algae or dirt. The leaves are also inspected for obvious damaged areas and any individual leaves with leaf miner spots or other blemishes are removed. For floral arrangements we want the berries to stay on the branches as long as possible, but once holly is cut, the berries start falling off. To prevent both premature berry drop and leaf discoloration, many growers dip cut holly branches in a weak solution of naphthalene acetic acid. This material is related to the naturally occurring auxin compound found in plants, and it can prolong the useful life of cut holly by several weeks.

After dipping, the branches are allowed to partially air dry, and then are boxed for shipping. Garden centres sometimes sell a holly dip product for homeowners.

To use cut holly in floral arrangements, re-cut the stem ends using sharp shears. Try to make the cuts on the diagonal to expose as much wood as possible to the water. Make sure the arrangements have ample fresh water, or if oasis is used, it should be kept well-moistened at all times. Arrangements will last longer if they are kept in a cool location. Well-conditioned holly should last for at least three weeks if kept cool. For holly wreaths or other outdoor decorations, the cool weather helps to preserve their appearance. However, if exposed to very cold weather, the berries will freeze and as they thaw, they turn black. To prolong the life of your wreath, if possible, keep it in a protected location, for example between a main door and the storm door.

The Yak December 2006



CHRIS' SPECIAL CRANBERRY SAUCE

2 ½ cups cranberries

1/3 cup water

1 cup sugar

1tbsp each grand marnier, kirsch & brandy

1 tbsp lime juice (or lemon & lime 50/50)

1/3 cup orange juice

Cook cranberries in the 1/3 cup of water until the berries burst.

Place in blender with the sugar, liquors and fruit juices and process until smooth

Place in hot jars and seal.

Serve with turkey or as a sauce over ice cream or cheesecake.

Yield: approx. 3 half pint jars

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEA Greer Guidebook to Available Rhododendrons.



Beautiful Gardens in England
Photos Susan and Art Lightburn



Merry Christmas

