

Indumentum

Newsletter of the Vancouver Rhododendron Society

Volume 33, Number 8, April 2002



The
Vancouver Rhododendron Society
is a chapter of the
American Rhododendron Society

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This Month's Meeting: Thursday, April 18th 7:30 PM

Program: Tony Kirkham, Kew Gardens: "The Fall and Rise of the Arboretum at Kew: History and Development from 1759 to the Future"

Education: Karen Shuster: "Truss Preparation"

President's Message

Winter certainly left us with a lasting impression. Though many of the rhododendron buds at VanDusen that were ready to burst open were left unscathed, those that were showing even a bit of colour were lost to winter's final attempts to hold on. In the weeks since, many rhododendrons have come on, spotting the garden with shades of pink, white and yellow. I am pleased to report that even the magnolias show no signs of damage and are now starting to show colour in their bud. Perhaps spring is finally here.

Thanks to **Bill Spohn** for his efforts in developing a new VRS website. The site is located at www.rhodo.citymax.com. It has current information regarding the club's activities and a link to the UBC Botanical Garden site, where members can download the newsletter.

A list of open gardens is included in this month's *Indumentum* (page 6). I hope all will take advantage of this opportunity to visit and enjoy the work of our members. There are many good ideas for us to draw from, which can be applied to our own gardens. Our thanks to **Joe Ronsley** for organizing this.

The VanDusen Flower and Garden Show is offering local horticultural organizations the opportunity to purchase and re-sell tickets for the 2002 Garden Show. Depending on the response from members, this could be a good opportunity to raise funds. While the cost to members will be the regular price (\$12), a portion (\$2) will be returned to the VRS. Arrangements should be in place for tickets to be sold at the April and May meetings.

I look forward to this month's speaker, **Tony Kirkham**, Head of Horticultural Operations, Kew. I am most interested in knowing how a world-renowned garden has achieved such a high standard in so many specialized areas of horticulture. Please join us for an exciting and informative talk.

Ron Knight and **Karen Shuster** continue to work hard on making our annual Show and Sale a continuing success. Their efforts—and those of all who have volunteered their time and energy—are much appreciated. I encourage members to submit entries and make this year's show the most successful yet.

As the weather continues to warm, many of us are out in the garden working hard and bringing satisfaction for our efforts. Enjoy!

Gerry Gibbens



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April Program

Tony Kirkham, Head of the Arboretum and Horticultural Services at Royal Botanic Garden, Kew, will be our speaker at the meeting of April 18th. At Kew, in addition to many other responsibilities, Tony is responsible for the management of 10,000 trees in the arboretum, keeping horticultural and arboricultural records of the living collections, and overseeing a permanent staff of 28 people and four students. He was also Kew trained, in addition to working with a commercial tree surgeon in Germany, attending the Merrist Wood Agricultural College in Surrey, England, and, initially, serving a forestry apprenticeship.

I won't go into the various advisory boards on which Tony has served, the institutions for which he has acted as consultant, the conferences and workshops in which he has participated or organized, or the numerous organizations for which he has been a speaker. I must mention, however, that he has been on several plant collecting expeditions, often as leader, in Chile, South Korea, Taiwan, the Russian far east, central China and Hokkaido, the northernmost Japanese island. Tony has also published numerous articles, mainly on trees and other woody plants, in prestigious horticultural journals, several in collaboration with Mark Flanagan, who, many of you will remember, was our excellent April speaker last year.

Tony's lecture is entitled "**The Fall and Rise of the Arboretum at Kew: History and Development from 1759 to the Future.**" Kew is arguably the most distinguished botanical garden in the world, and contains many rhododendrons, on which there will be some emphasis in the lecture. The subject of this lecture, then, should be of considerable interest to all our VRS members. It is hard to imagine anyone more qualified to give it than Tony Kirkham.

Joe Ronsley

◆ **Contributions to the Raffle Table** help offset the rental of the Floral Hall. Plants, books, fresh eggs, etc. are always welcome!

◆ **For the Refreshment Table**, donations of cookies, cakes, cheese, and other snacks are greatly appreciated.



News & Notes

Peace Arch Rhododendron Society has invited VRS members to their open garden day, Sunday, May 5th.

1st Garden @ 1:00 pm - Dennis Kynaston
1812 - 184 Street, Surrey

Travel east on 16th Avenue. Turn left (north) on 184th Street and continue to 18th Avenue. Turn right (2nd house on road). It's all right to park on both sides of the street.

2nd Garden @ 2:00 pm - Hart Wellmeier & Tiina Turu
16651 - 20th Avenue, Surrey

Go back to 16th Avenue and turn right (west). Turn right at 168th Street. Go up the hill to 20th Avenue. Turn left onto 20th. The garden is located 5 houses along on the right. Park on the street.

3rd Garden @ 3:00 pm sharp - Francisca Darts
corner of 16th Avenue & 168th Street, Surrey

Travel back to 168th Street. Turn right. Go down to 16th Avenue. Turn left. Go past the Darts Hill Garden fence. The parking lot is on your left.

We are required to enter Darts Hill **as a group**. The gates will be opened for us. Refreshments and cookies will be provided by PARS in the parking lot. There are also washrooms available.

News & Notes continued on page 4



Annual Mother's Day Perennial Plant Sale

Sunday, May 12th
10:00 am to 4:00 pm

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GardenWorks
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Wrenhaven Nursery
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David Hunter
2084 West Broadway, Vancouver

Made in the Shade
4586 Saddlehorn Crescent, Langley

Murray Nurseries
31140 West 57th Avenue, Vancouver

The following VRS member-nurseries, specializing in rhodo-
dendrons, offer VRS members preferred prices.

Les Clay & Son
3666 - 224th Street, Langley

Gordon Finley
10476 - 125B Street, Surrey

David Shantz
32224 Dewdney Trunk Road, Mission

There are also other VRS member-growers who sell rhododen-
drons at preferred prices at our monthly meetings, and who
would be pleased to respond to inquiries by telephone.

Trevor Badminton
Lilli Anne Hemminger
Gifford Robb

Harold Fearing
Diane Kehoe
Margaret Charlton

Membership

Please make the following changes to your copy of the
Membership Directory:

Please add:

BARNES, Geraldine & Michael

1890 - 28th St., West Vancouver, BC V7V 4M1
Telephone: 604-922-0992 Email: 3barnes@msn.com

MULLER, Dr. Charles (Chip)

12540 - 8th Ave. NW, Seattle, WA 98177 USA
Telephone: 206-368-7868 Fax: 206-783-8372
Email: cmuller@seanet.com

MURDOCH, Brent & Patricia

PO Box 6459, Dunedin, New Zealand
Telephone: 03-476-4072 Fax 03-476-4081
Email: dalebrook@clear.net.nz

WEIGHTMAN, Delores

372 Moyne Dr., West Vancouver, BC V7S 1J5
Telephone: 604-925-2172

WILDHARBER, Homer & Gloria

7956 Ramsgate Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90045-4336, USA
Telephone: 310-670-1909

Please amend:

CHALLENGER, Rose – Email: rchallenger@shaw.ca

CLAY, Bev and Les – Add Email: lesbevclay@shaw.ca

DAVISON, Dr. Mary – Email: mdavisonvbc@telus.net

ROOT, Ann – Telephone: 360-671-2156

Carole Conlin, VRS Membership Chair

Telephone: 604-921-7260

Email: conlin@sfu.ca

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The following is a note from Joe and Joanne's daughter, **Jill Ronsley**, who lives in Himachel Pradesh, India. Joe suspects that she is describing *Rhododendron arboreum*. (The accompanying photo was taken with a digital camera by Jill's friend **Jannaca Chick**.)

"I have to tell you about my trip to the rhododendron forest in full bloom yesterday. I thought of you the whole time, of course, and took lots of pictures, which I will develop as soon as the roll is done and I get them developed and scanned. The rhododendron forest was in full bloom at about 8,000 feet and it was magnificent. Tree after tree, all dark green, with huge balls of crimson red blossoms and a select few with balls of



pink blossoms all over them. When we saw the first tree full of blossoms, it was astonishing, and then they went on and on, up the mountainside, down the mountain, and all around. I can see why you are so into rhododendrons! We walked through the forest until we reached the most magnificent view of mountain ranges stretching out into the distance, up over a Himalayan meadow, across the top of a grassy knoll, and down the other side, from where we could see the snow-covered (not just -capped) Deo Tibba, the highest mountain in the area, maybe more than 20,000 feet. It was a wonderful day out, and every cell in my body loved it—breathing the pure air, seeing the beautiful sights, and meeting some pure, innocent mountain people who live at those remote heights. The local people make chutney and rhododendron squash to mix with soda or water as a cold drink. I think I gave you some when you were here, but I made it too sweet. Anyway, it is so amazing this year that even the local people are amazed. They say they have never seen the flowers so abundant. The children run around with huge bunches of flowers in their hands—they must have fun collecting them. You would have loved it, so I saw it for you."

VRS members were saddened to learn of the death of **Yukiko Suzuki** last December, wife of VRS member **Hideo Suzuki**, and convey to him our deepest sympathy. We fondly remember their visit to Vancouver in the fall of 2000.

Bobby Ogdon's property has been sold to a developer (!) and all his garden plants must go. Here is a wonderful opportunity to purchase from Bobby's interesting collection of species and hybrids, large or small. Phone for a personal tour: 604 583 7434 (from Mike Trembath, Fraser South).

VRS Librarian **Louis Peterson** tells us that the Library has acquired a number of new books, and now is a good time to take out books for an extended period over the summer when there are no meetings at VanDusen!

Do not adjust your set. A number of members have communicated to us that they're having trouble downloading *Indumentum* using older computers and dial-up modems. In most cases, computers with modems slower than 56K (i.e., kilobits per second) or computers with less than 32 Megabytes of RAM (RAM is the kind of memory that your computer needs plenty of to view graphics files, surf the Internet easily or run sophisticated software, such as database programs and games) will make it difficult to download the admittedly large portable document format (.pdf) *Indumentum* files. Nevertheless, it is possible with most machines, though the operation may take considerable time. The solutions are (from least to most expensive): patience, additional memory (relatively inexpensive to purchase and have installed), connection to high-speed Internet access (a number of choices may be available in your area), a new, faster computer with high speed access.

Subscription Rates

VRS + ARS Membership (US & Overseas)	\$50.00 \$US 28.00
VRS Membership (no ARS Quarterly Journal)	\$25.00
Associate Membership (member of another ARS Chapter in Canada)	\$10.00
Associate Membership (member of another ARS Chapter outside of Canada)	\$US 10.00

Advertising Rates

	1 month	3 months	8 months
Business card	\$10.00	\$25.00	\$50.00
$\frac{1}{4}$ page	\$25.00	\$67.50	\$160.00
$\frac{1}{2}$ page	\$40.00	\$108.00	\$256.00
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jrjr@techwest.com Fax and Phone: 604.921.9444

Questions & Answers

VRS member **Penny Pearce** asks: What rhododendrons are suitable for planting in the Gulf Islands (without supplemental irrigation)?

Until we get comments from members who garden in that area—which includes the San Juan Islands, southern Vancouver Island and the area adjacent to Puget Sound (that's an invitation, by the way...), your co-editor Douglas Justice will take a stab at answering.

With few exceptions, rhododendrons are not particularly tolerant of summer drought. Unfortunately, summer drought is the typical pattern in the Pacific Northwest, and nowhere is this more pronounced than in rain-shadow areas, such as the southern Gulf Islands. Drought is exacerbated in these areas by thin, light soils that don't retain appreciable moisture and by significant competition from existing drought-adapted plants. This is often a hard lesson for those who garden without irrigation or are subject to summer watering bans in this area.

Pacific rhododendron, *R. macrophyllum* and western azalea, *R. occidentale* may be good bets, as they routinely put up with dry summers. Otherwise, I recommend rhodos that have moderately small, tough, waxy leaves. These are adaptations that help plants cope with low moisture. Plant in the autumn to take advantage of winter moisture and make sure the soil is reasonably deep. Use an organic mulch top-dressing, but don't overdo it ($\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch deep over the root zone is adequate), and keep mulch away from the stem. Don't plant on sunny, exposed hillsides or at the top of a mound (where soil dries out fast). Overhead shade moderates summer heat, but established tree roots are remarkably efficient at sopping up all of the available moisture, so try to plant outside of their influence.

Q & A continued next page

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Questions & Answers continued

Al Campbell, a member of the Cowichan Valley Chapter of the ARS, sends us the following request: "I have come across a name of a rhododendron hybrid called '**Dinty Moores**', which has been attributed to Dr. Bob Rhodes and to Milton Wildfong. The cross is *yakushimanum* × 'Purple Splendour'. Bob does not recognize the name but does recall doing the cross and giving the seed to Milton. I would like to canvass the members on the mainland to see if this plant still exists. Is anyone over there propagating this plant? Are plants available? May I take cuttings off of a mature plant? If I can get a line on this hybrid, I would like to get a plant to Bob, as well." Information, Anyone?



Photo: Southern Tasmanian Branch, Australian Rhododendron Soc.
www.key.org.au/tasrhodo

VRS Open Gardens, 2002



27 April, Saturday
Harold Fearing 12-5

28 April, Sunday
Margaret Charlton/Charlie Sale 1-5

11 May, Saturday
Bill and Suzanne Spohn 11-4
Ron Feicht/Derek Hoffman 11-4

12 May, Sunday
Gordon and Vern Finley 10-4

18 May, Saturday
Lies Ganske 12-4
Richard and Heather Mossakowski
10-3

Joe and Joanne Ronsley 10-2

19 May, Sunday
Francisca Darts 10-4

20 May, Monday, Victoria Day
Glenda Powroznik/Mark Lamont 12-5

25 May, Saturday
Fred Ganders/Helen Kennedy 12-5

26 May, Sunday
Michael and Pattie Bale 10-4

8 June, Saturday
Alan Turner (tree collection) Tours at
10 and 2

9 June, Sunday
Larry Wick (tropical) 10-4

Directions to BUCKETHILL, the Garden of
Margaret Charlton & Charlie Sale

1. Westbound on Hwy 1

Follow Hwy 1 across the 2nd Narrows Bridge.
Stay in the centre lane. (The highway becomes 2
lanes just before you exit.) Exit from Hwy 1 at
the sign for Mt. Seymour Prov. Park. This is the

3rd off-ramp after crossing the bridge. After
exiting turn right at the traffic light on to the Mt.
Seymour Parkway.

2. Eastbound on Hwy.1

Take the 1st exit at the bottom of "the cut"-the
very long hill leading to the 2nd Narrows Bridge.
Stay in the centre lane of the off-ramp, turning
left at the traffic light. Proceed around the curve
then turn right on to Mt. Seymour Parkway.

Follow the Parkway until you reach (on your
left) the Parkgate Shopping Mall. Turn left just
past the Mall at the sign for the Park (there is a
traffic light at this turn) and then turn right at
Indian River (just before the road curves). Take
the 2nd left at the sign for "Woodlands" and
drive almost 6km (4 miles) to Fire Lane 6 (The
Fire Lanes are not in complete sequence-Fire
lanes 7&8 come before 1 through 6). You will
know you are close when you come to a stop
sign at the top of a steep hill. Turn left at Fire
Lane 6. At the white gate it may be necessary to
open the gate. (Push the button on the left-hand
side.) You will see the garden on your left as you
proceed up the lane. Our driveway is the 1st on
the left and requires a 3 point turn to proceed up
it.

There is parking part way up the driveway and
also at the top. There is also room for two cars
beside the tie wall just inside the white gate.

‘The Language of Rhododendrons’

Dear Lady Stair,

I must write & thank you both so much for asking me to come to Lochinch. I did so enjoy my visit & you gave me such an *Agapetum* (delightful) time.

It was a great disappointment to me that my wife was unable to come too, & she is miserable at having missed the two *Formosum* (beautiful) days we had there. I'm glad to tell you that she is much better, though I found her looking *Microleucrum* (small and white).

It was nice of you to say that I deputised well for her on Saturday but I feel that she could have done everything much better, as she has the *Agastum* (charming) way of *Charidotus* (giving joy). As we had arranged our visit for her, she *Pothinum* (much

desired) to be there, & it was very sad for her to have missed it. However it is *Sperabile* (to be hoped for) *Timeteum* (to be honoured) with a future invitation.

As to my visit, I am overjoyed *Eclecteum* (to be chosen out) and *Aberrans* (wandering) *Cyclium* (round) so many *Erastum* (lovely) and *Arizelum* (notable) gardens in so short a time, has left me *Charitostreptum* (gracefully bent) with a *Recurvum* (bent back), & somewhat *Lasiopodium* (woolly footed). I must say I am filled *Coeloneurum* (with impressed nerves) at all the *Agetum* (wondrous) & *Aperantum* (limitless) beauties of the gardens *Cyclium* (round) Lochinch.

But despite being *Asperulum* (slightly roughened) & having had time to examine my feet, *Denudatum* (naked) and *Detersile* (clean) I am glad to find that they are neither *Hypoglaucum* (blue beneath) *Hypolepidotum* (scaly) nor *Hypophaeum* (grey) but merely *Russatum* (reddened). This *Rufuscens* (becoming reddish) will have *Comisteum* (to be taken care of) otherwise they will not be *Endoxom* (of good report) for *Clivicola* (living on hillsides) in August. As a diversion I much enjoyed our chase after those *Tephropeplum* (ashy grey colour) *Dumicola* (dwellers in thickets) which we were lucky enough to find *Telopeum* (conspicuous) *Lochmium* (from a coppice). Knowing you to be an *Ombrochares* (lover of rain) I hope you will soon get some to revive the Species of Rhododendron; which as we are told by one Wallace: ‘of course it is over’, and to make the snipe bogs *Paludosum* (marshy). It is too kind of you to have given me so many *Axium* (worthy) & *Eucallum* (beautiful) plants which will be *Eritimum* (highly prized) by me & are most *Apodectum* (acceptable).

After this I feel I cannot write English any more. It was really too kind of you to have had me to stay & I did so enjoy every moment of it. Thanking you both again so very much.

Yours very sincerely
Albert

From King George VI to the Countess of Stair,
after a visit to Lochinch Castle in the spring of
1935.

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Tours

VICTORIA & VANCOUVER ISLAND GARDEN TOUR

This year, the garden tour by the Vancouver and Lower Mainland Chapters of the ARS will take place on the weekend of **May 18th and 19th**.

As before, pick ups will take place at Abbotsford, Langley and VanDusen Gardens. The party will leave Vancouver at 5:00 am and arrive at Swartz Bay at 9:30. We are privileged to have obtained permission to visit five magnificent gardens on Saturday, to include the wonderful woodland garden of **Nick and Evelyn Weesjes** and also the **Abkhazi Garden**. In addition, we have obtained permission to visit three smaller private gardens, which include one garden dedicated to the smaller, compact rhododendrons, another exquisite private Japanese garden and the third, a delightful garden with a variety of plant material. In the early evening, we will be hosted by members of the Victoria Chapter. Participants may choose to spend part of the evening in downtown Victoria, as this particular weekend features a major band festival and there will be a lot of interesting activity.

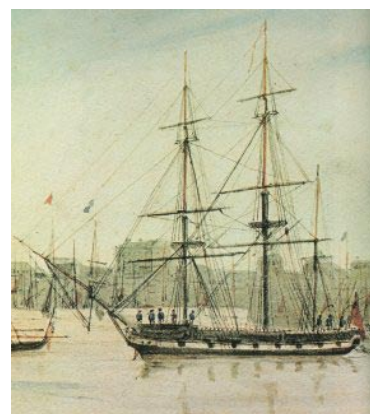
On Sunday our journey will take us from Victoria, traveling north along the Malahat Highway; and our first stop will be at the magnificent garden of **Dave Dugan**, located

on a rocky pinnacle overlooking the Gulf Islands and containing many magnificent hybrids and species. The journey will continue along the Island Highway to Cobble Hill and a visit to the large woodland garden of **Allan and Elizabeth Murray**, who have invited us to have our lunch there as guests of the Cowichan Chapter. We will then meander further north on our way to Nanaimo, visiting three other Chapter gardens, and catch the ferry from Nanaimo to Horseshoe Bay at 7:00 pm, arriving in Vancouver at about 9:00 pm.

Our thanks to **Bill Dale, Allan & Elizabeth Murray, Norma Senn** and **Norma Buckley** for their enthusiastic contribution.

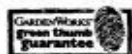
Please confirm as soon as possible. The estimated cost is \$145.00. Please forward a deposit in the amount of \$50.00, payable to "Rhodo Tour - Mike Bale" at the following address:

33623 Wildwood Drive
Abbotsford, BC V2S 1S2
604.853.4100



er·i·ca·ceous (ěri'kejes) **1.** of or relating to the Ericaceae, a family of plants with typically bell shaped flowers: includes heather, rhododendron & arbutus. **2.** often used in conjunction with *compulsion* to describe common affliction of rhododendron lovers. See also *ericaceous compulsion*.

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