

The Oak

Newsletter of
the Fraser South
Rhododendron
Society

Volume 24 Number 6
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www.flounder.ca/FraserSouth

Fraser South Rhododendron Society
is a chapter of the
American Rhododendron Society

Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the
third Wednesday of each month
(except June, July and August) at:
United Church Hall
5673 - 200th Street
Langley BC

This Month's Meeting:

**THE FRASER SOUTH
RHODODENDRON SOCIETY'S
RENOWNED
ANNUAL PICNIC
SATURDAY, JUNE 12TH**

ANYTIME AFTER 2:00 PM

2010 Officers

President:	Bill Bischoff	604-589-6134
Past Pres:	Harold Fearing	604-857-4136
Vice Pres:	John Dodd	604-530-0153
Secretary:	Sandy Procter	604-857-0440
Treasurer:	Alan March	604-532-9062
Directors:	Arlene Darby	604-597-1849
	Lori Bayes	360-966-4596
	Matt Groves	604-856-2624
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Membership:	Wenonah March	604-532-9062
Newsletter:	Brenda Macdonald	604-990-5353
Librarian:	Joan McGiveron	604-538-9347
Website:	Chris Klapwijk	604-581-0925

Quick Hits



Time to celebrate the end of another successful FRS year. Come to the annual FRS picnic and auction at Karen Linton and Larry Morton's house, Saturday, June 12, any time after 2:00 pm. More information, and address and map inside.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Notes From the Chair

What is this talk about Global Warming? Of course, everywhere but here. Three more weeks and we are just about in summer - hopefully a warm summer.

What was good about this spring? Everything was good. It was not very dusty; we didn't need to water our gardens (lower water bills); especially the Rhododendron flowers lasted longer and the new growth is the best I have ever seen.

In our garden it was so wet, even the slugs had to learn how to swim. It has been decided that Carla and I live not in "Sunny Surrey", rather we are part of the "Lower Rain-Land" from now on.

Personally, I don't mind the weather we had this season. It was just like the weather I know from central Europe, where I grew up. The more arid areas of this continent are interesting to visit, but here is where I feel at home. At home in our garden amongst the plants from all parts of the globe. Plants from parts of the world that I likely will never get to visit. At home amongst all you Phytophils; ok Plant-Lovers.

Our next concern is the Picnic on Saturday, June 12th. Here I recall the enthusiasm of our members at our recent very wet plant sale. So let's do it again with the same fervor we demonstrated then. Therefore, rain or shine we will have a Picnic to remember. Not to forget: bring drink, food, things for the auction, a friend, a chair and a smile; in that order.

A step back now. A weekend ago our Chapter had an information booth at "Art's Nursery" in Port Kells, for Saturday and Sunday. The idea was to assist customers in their choices of Rhododendrons. Also to get new members for our club. We were made very welcome by the staff of Art's. In fact it looked like they kept a pot of fresh coffee ready, just for us. Several members of our society helped man our station. They were Sean Rafferty, Les Clay, Colleen Bojczuk, Carla Bischoff and myself. Everyone took their turn in talking to customers, sometimes about onions and tomatoes as well. This was a puzzle at first, until we discovered we had been settled into the "Information-Booth", because of the rather unpredictable weather. There was a large supply of well-grown plants to choose from. Colleen displayed some in front of our booth just to get the attention of the customers. Sean brought some Rhododendron species flowers and plant parts, just to show that these plants are well worth growing in any garden. Les came with some badly needed Rhododendron brochures. Several of our members also paid us a visit; a welcome diversion indeed.

We all took this opportunity to search for plant treasures. Sure enough everyone found some plants to take home. There too, Art's showed their appreciation when it came time to pay. Based on all this, we will consider making this a yearly event.

Later in September, Les Clay will hold his very informative Rhododendron grafting demonstration. He will also offer many Rhododendron plants for sale. At the same day, we will be able to buy Rhododendron and other plants at Colleen Bojczuk's nursery. We will arrange one event for the morning and the other after lunch. The date and times will be made available at our picnic. I hope to see you all there!

Happy growing

Bill Bischoff



Bill also sent along this photo of a grand old beauty located in downtown Ladysmith, on Vancouver Island.

Reputedly 125 years old (was anyone even planting rhododendrons in 1885? in Ladysmith?) it is clearly very old, very large - some 25 feet high and 30 feet wide, and very, very happy.



FROM THE EDITOR

Bring your treasures to the home of Karen Linton and Larry Morton, any time after 2:00 pm - tiny exquisite rockery specimens you have been clever enough to replicate, divisions of large robust perennial border plants that have begun to threaten your tiny exquisite rockery specimens, the occasional rhododendron that no longer fits into your planting scheme, any small John Deere tractors lurking about unused in your garage, decorative planters, bear-proof bird feeders ... you know, the usual stuff that somebody out there desperately needs and wants. Then you need to pick up a similar volume of goods and chattels to take back home with you by engaging in a spirited bidding war for the privilege of doing so. It's perfect, it's the steady state theory of home and garden maintenance. No carbon credits required. It is so green, it is blinding, and the club puts some money in the piggy-bank for next year. Come on, we are depending on you!

As for the picnic part, here is the cunning plan. Bring:

- a chair to sit upon
- a plate to eat off
- cutlery to eat with
- the adult beverage of your choice, if desired
- a mug for the adult beverage of your choice, or the tea and coffee that will be provided
- your potluck contribution, for sharing with others
- utensils to serve your potluck contribution, if necessary
- any friends, neighbours, or visiting relatives whom you think would enjoy meeting us and learning more about the FSRS

Next Month:

Next month we will all be enjoying a relaxing summer break from the dizzying social whirl that is the Fraser South Rhododendron Society. Our next official meeting will be Wednesday, September 15th.

A REPORT FROM CHRIS KLAPWIJK:

On Saturday morning, (May 22nd), as part of the 10th annual George Fraser Day & Heritage Fair ceremony, members of the George Fraser Committee cut the ribbon for the George Fraser Community Room in the recently completed Ucluelet Community Centre.

Wanda McAvoy, a member of the George Fraser Committee, recognized the late Bill Dale for his contributions to the George Fraser Memorial Project. Dale, who died May 4th, 2010 at the age of 93, was at one time a Ucluelet resident who kept Fraser's memory alive and helped start George Fraser Day.

All Vancouver Island Chapters of the ARS were recognized for their contributions, as were The Honourable Iona Campagnolo, British Columbia's 27th Lieutenant Governor, Ken and Dot Gibson and several other organizations.

After a very pleasant lunch with Iona Campagnolo, Harry and Mrs. Wright, Bernie Guyader, and David and Nino Godfrey I unfortunately had to leave to catch the ferry.

HIGHLIGHTS OF GEORGE FRASER'S LIFE IN UCLUELET:

1892: purchased 236 acres of Crown Land in the Village of Ucluelet for \$236.

1894: At age 40, moved to Ucluelet, hand cleared 4.5 acres and built a house.

1897: *Rhododendron canadense* arrived by way of a shipment of cranberry plants from Nova Scotia and he promptly crossed it with *Rhododendron japonicum*.

Last Month:

You may remember that it was noted in the April issue that Chris Klapwijk would be travelling to Ucluelet on Vancouver Island in May to participate in the annual 'George Fraser Day and Heritage Fair' More information follows below.

This Month:

It's picnic time!

Our annual picnic fulfills both a social and business function, providing the venue for the last great get-together of the Fraser South year as well as the opportunity for our other official fund-raising activity - the Auction!

1912: First bloom of the new hybrid, 15 years after the cross was made.

1915: Catalogue published entitled:

“List price of shrubs, etc. propagated and grown by George Fraser, Ucluelet, BC, Canada.”

1919: Plants shipped to Scotland and Boston, MA.

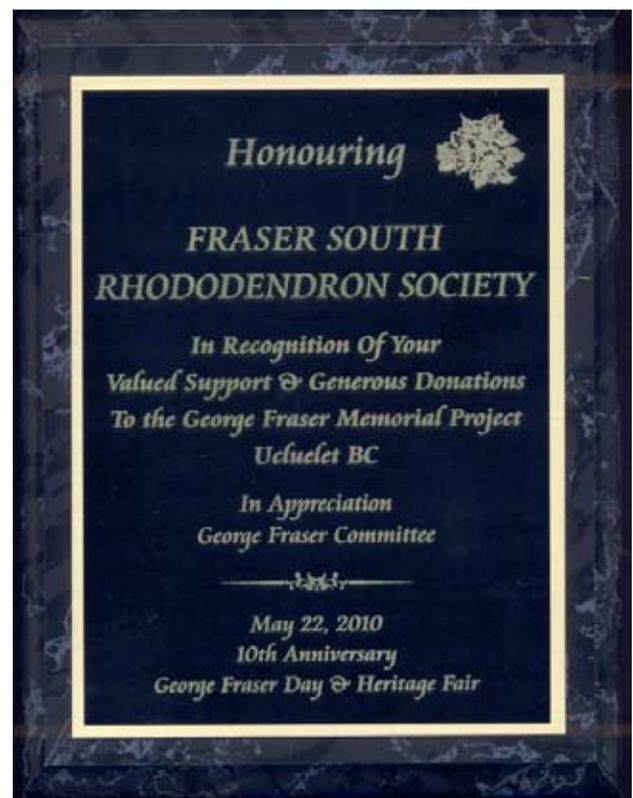
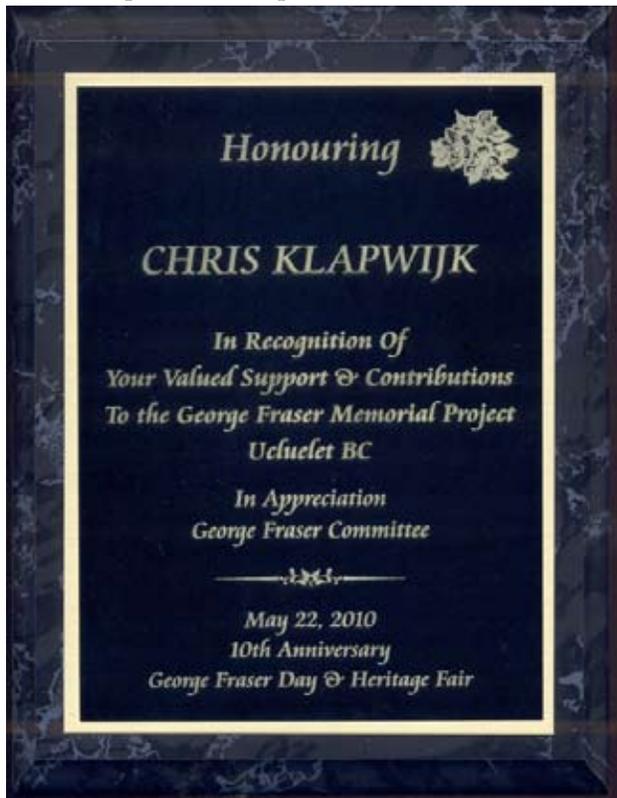
1920: New hybrid simultaneously named *Rhododendron* ‘Fraseri’ by Kew Gardens, England. and Arnold Arboretum, Boston, MA.

1924: Planted *R.* ‘John Waterer’ and *R.* ‘Mrs. Milner’ beside the St. Columba Church in Tofino.

1930: Prepared a paper noting crosses of Forget-me-nots, campanulas, gooseberries, and the rubus he had pollinated in 1918, *Rubus* ‘Fraseri’.

1944: Died on May 3rd of that year at age 90. Two days prior he had said: “I don’t know where I’m going to end up, but it doesn’t matter, I have had my heaven here on earth”. Interred at the Ucluelet Cemetery.

1991: Posthumously awarded the ARS Pioneer Award, the only person outside the USA to receive one. George Fraser was the 4th recipient of this special award.



Chris Klapwijk also sent along this photo of *R. macrophyllum*, a white form that blossomed for the first time this year. The seeds, of which all the others have turned out to be pink forms, were sewn in January 1998



And the winners are ...

Seventeenth Annual Fraser South Beer Bottle Truss Show,
held Wednesday, May 19, 2010

CLASSES **Division I**

Species Classes

- Class 1. Rhododendron (lepidotes)
[Garth Wedemire - R. *cephalanthum*](#)
Class 2. Azalea (deciduous and evergreen)
[Harold Fearing - R. *prinophyllum*](#)
Class 3. Hymenantha (elepidotes)
[G. Wedemire - R. *degronianum* ssp. yak. FCC form](#)

Division II

Hybrid Classes

- Class 4. Any lepidote hybrid
[nil](#)
Class 5. Any deciduous azalea hybrid
[Garth Wedemire - R. 'Golden Flare'](#)
Class 6. Any evergreen azalea hybrid
[Harold Fearing - R. 'Ben Morrison'](#)

Colour Classes

- Class 7a: Red - (small)
[Dixie Mueller - R. 'Skookum'](#)
7b: Red - (large)
[Sean Rafferty - R. 'Lem's Stormcloud'](#)
Class 8a: White - (small)
[Garth Wedemire - R. 'Tiara'](#)
8b: White - (large)
[Chris Kalpwijk - R. 'Diane Titcomb'](#)
Class 9a: Pink - (small)
[Wenonah March - R. 'Fantastica'](#)
9b: Pink - (large)
[Lori Bayes - R. 'Sun Valley Serenade'](#)
9c: Pink - (really, really, large)
[Dixie Mueller - R. 'Point Defiance'](#)
Class 10a: Yellow & Cream (small)
[Harold Fearing - R. *wardii*](#)
10b: Yellow & Cream (large)
[Lori Bayes - R. 'Horizon Lakeside'](#)
Class 11: Mauves & Purple
[Colleen Bojczuk - R. 'Edith Bosley'](#)

Class 12: Orange

[Sean Rafferty - R. 'Fabia'](#)

Class 13: Bi-colour

[Sean Rafferty - R. *cerasinum* 'Cherry Brandy'](#)

Division III

Special Classes

- Class 14: Non-registered hybrid
[Chris Kalpwijk - R. 'Midnight Magic'](#)
Class 15: Truss with the Best Fuzzy Foliage
[Sean Rafferty - R. 'Grosclaude'](#)
Class 16: Best Blotched
[Dixie Mueller - R. 'Hachmann's Charmant'](#)
Class 17: Best Speckled
[Bobby Ogdon - 'Wh's Orange' x *bureavii* x 'Fabia'](#)
Class 18: Most Lurid
[Lori Bayes - R. 'Midnight Mystique'](#)
Class 19: Best Last Year's Truss
[tie - Lori Bayes and Garth Wedemire](#)
Class 20: Most Elegantly Weevil-Notched
[Larry Morton - R. 'Purple Splendour'](#)
Class 21: Best Hammerhead
[Carla Bischoff - R. 'Nova Zembla'](#)
Class 22: Most Flaccid
[Larry Morton - R. 'Thor'](#)
Class 23: Best Miniature Truss - under 6"
[Harold Fearing - R. *trichostomum*](#)
Class 24: Most Fragrant (Az. or Rh.)
[Sean Rafferty - R. 'Loderi King George'](#)

Judged

Lionheart Award: best over-all yellow, any Class
[Harold Fearing - R. *wardii*](#)

Aggregate Winner - 3-way tie:

(ranked alphabetically, in order to maintain and display the absolute and complete rectitude and transparency that typify the governance of this event)

[Harold Fearing](#)

[Sean Rafferty](#)

[Garth Wedemire](#)

All winners were awarded the plant of their choice from the wonderful selection provided by Colleen Bojczuk (Aldergrove Nursery); and the Aggregate Winners each went home with a bag of M&M's..



Up the Garden Path

❧

New York Conference

I've attended several ARS conferences in various locations in the west, but this year for the first time I went east, to attend the conference on Long Island. It was one of those serendipitous occasions where I could combine visiting friends with seeing gardens. District One was fairly well represented with Vern Finley and Arlene Darby from FSRS, Ken and Madeleine Webb and myself from the Victoria Chapter, and Glen Jamieson from up Island. We were all warmly welcomed.

The conference consisted of seminars, after-dinner speakers and garden tours. As well, the New York chapter put on an excellent display of trusses and there were a lot of entrants in the photo gallery. The trusses primarily featured varieties from the Northeast with many being unknown to me. Local hybridizers have been working on developing good varieties for eastern North America, where growers have to contend with not only cold winters, but also hot humid summers. None of us from District One bought plants, but there were lots of tempting plants in the sale, and the "table favours" at the banquet created something of a feeding frenzy when people were invited to go and select something to take home.

There were several talks by local hybridizers outlining their hybridizing goals and schematics. It was amazing to hear about the complexity of their crosses and I don't think I'd be a good enough record keeper to keep all that parentage straight across the generations. In addition to developing tough plants for local growing conditions, there was a lot of interest in adding indumentum, and of course, good bright, clear flower colours. One local variety I particularly liked was *R.* 'Mrs Howard Phipps', a big, handsome plant with large, deep pink flowers. I admired it in full bloom at the Howard Phipps' estate and again in the truss show.



R. 'Mrs. Howard Phipps'

One of the talks I enjoyed was about improving our photos. I think it's helpful to have someone remind you of tricks and techniques that are available with even the simplest point and shoot type of camera. Later on, I tried using some of the suggestions during the garden tours, but often found I was trying too hard and not enjoying just taking pictures. So, I gave up and went back to just "pointing and clicking". With digital, it just doesn't matter if a bunch of pictures aren't any good. As the presenter said, that "delete picture" option is wonderful.

However, the other part of the slide show I liked was when

Don Hyatt, the presenter, used lots of his own photos to demonstrate his points, and most of his shots were from the Appalachian Mountains. He had wonderful shots of *R. vaseyi* and *R. calendulaceum*, both natives to the southeast. The ARS conference will be in North Carolina in 2012, and I think it would be a great chance to get to see these beautiful azaleas in their native habitat.

We had two days of garden tours, and all of the gardens were lovely. One of the chief differences I noticed was that the overstory was largely deciduous trees, although there was the occasional White Pine. Especially prominent were Sugar Maples, Beeches and lots of Robinia. Paulownia seems to be happy in the area with many seedling trees in bloom along the roadsides and in the gardens. There were also some oaks, and gardeners make extensive use of oak leaves for mulch. The terrain is gently rolling which helped with drainage issues, but I think every garden also had some sort of irrigation system in place. A nice plus were the great eastern birds, like the cardinals and Baltimore orioles we saw and heard throughout the tours. Like us, Long Island gardens have deer problems and prized plants and garden areas were surrounded by fences.



R. calendulaceum



'Two Grey Achers' - the Fellers' garden

My favourite garden was at the home of the Fellers, who have cheekily named their garden "Two Grey Achers". I liked this garden particularly because of the wonderful conifers included in the beds. This is the nicest collection of dwarf conifers I've seen in a private garden and since it had been hot, many of the rhodies were past, so it was nice to see other species. The Fellers also like coloured foliage, so had lots of reds (small maples), and golds (more small maples) and the blues of the conifers. This was the youngest garden visited on the tour, and the amount of work that has gone into it in the last dozen years is staggering. I believe the "achers" part of the garden name.



The Howard Phipps estate

One of the treats was getting to see the estate of the Howard Phipps family in Old Westbury. Wow! It's not often we can see mature specimens of large deciduous trees spaced out to show them to their greatest advantage. As well, the Phipps family hosted us at lunch... another "Wow" and we were certainly so spoiled that the next day's boxed lunch seemed pretty tame by comparison.

I have never seen good named varieties of *Calycanthus* before. These usually have small brownish-red flowers that are hidden amongst the foliage. However in the Waldman Garden at Dix Hills, we saw several named varieties that were simply outstanding. If anyone knows of a local source for any of these plants, please let me know.

If I went back to the area, I'd make a point of re-visiting the Coe's Planting Fields Arboretum in Oyster Bay. We didn't have enough time at this 400 acre estate/park. Among other things, it has a

traditional tropical conservatory, a camellia house, rose gardens, perennial beds, herb beds, shrubs and trees galore, and of course, rhododendrons. There is a fabulous arbour planted with two weeping cedars that must be 40 feet or more long. I would have happily taken lots of pictures, but guess whose camera was out of battery power? Too many pictures taken I guess.

I had a good time at the conference and I'm glad I went. I'd like to finish by mentioning that I discovered the light rail train system that runs from downtown Seattle to SeaTac Airport on this trip. This is a fabulous transportation option if you need to use public transit to get out to the Airport. It's just \$2.50 and takes 29 minutes one way, and it goes to within easy walking distance of all the airline terminal desks.

Norma Senn



R. 'Margolit'



Azalea 'Pocono Pink'



Calycanthus 'Heritage Wine'



an unregistered hybrid - 'TT11'

What's in Bloom ...

... five blotches and a Walloper.



top: *R.* 'A. Bedford'
middle: unnamed Finley cross, 'Sappho x 'Mrs. W. C. Williams' (dark)
bottom: unnamed Finley cross, 'Sappho x 'Mrs. W. C. Williams' (light)

top: *R.* 'Mrs. G. W. Leak'
middle: *R.* 'Blue Pacific'
bottom: *R.* 'Pink Walloper'