

The Yak

Newsletter of
The Fraser South
Rhododendron
Society

Volume 27 Number 7
September, 2013



www.flounder.ca/FraserSouth

Fraser South Rhododendron Society
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

Date: Wednesday, September 18th, 2013
Topic: Travels in Guizhou and Guangxi pt. 2
Speaker: Sean Rafferty
Plant Sales: Sue Klapwijk

2013 Officers

President:	Brenda Macdonald	604-990-5353
Past Pres:	Bill Bischoff	604-589-6134
Vice Pres:	Chris Hodgson	604-541-2382
Secretary:	Margaret Hodgson	604-541-2382
Treasurer:	Harold Fearing	604-857-4136
Directors:	Chuck Floyd	604-541-2884
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	Nancy Moore	604-859-3690
Programme:	Sean Rafferty	604-990-5353
Membership:	Evelyn Jensen	604-857-5663
Newsletter:	Sean Rafferty	604-990-5353
Librarian:	Joan McGiveron	604-538-9347
Website:	Chris Klapwijk	604-581-0925
Social Convenor:	Karen Linton	604-888-6564
Refreshments:	Arlene Darby	604-597-1849
BCCGC Liaison:	Bill Bischoff	604-589-6134

Quick Hits

It is registration time again.
Please print the membership
form on page 13, fill it out and
bring it to the next meeting,
along with your membership
dues.



Notes From the Chair

ALL ABOUT YELLOW ...

First a word from our sponsor ... And we're back! I have been saying that each September for just short of 11 years now, and it feels just as good now as it did then. It is always such a pleasure to see everyone again after the summer and catch up on what everyone has been doing, both in the garden and outside of it. Welcome back to the 2013/2014 FSRS year!



Some of the most spectacular rhododendrons in the world are yellow. Well, maybe not yellow yellow, but certainly of the deep cream/pale yellow family. Just think of the big-leaves such

FROM THE PRESIDENT

as *R.s macabeanum*, *arizelum*, *basilicum*, *sinofalconeri*, and the big daddy of them all, *sinogrande*. These are all magnificent, tree-like plants, with blossom trusses as impressive as their height and leaf size. They are also, however, rarely suitable for the suburban garden, and more likely to blossom for one's heirs than oneself.



R. wardii



R. 'Crest'



R. sinogrande - leaves

So we must look to some of the less statuesque species for the parentage of the many yellow hybrids available, and clearly the parentage winner is *R. wardii*, with progeny almost beyond measure. I stopped counting at 60 direct hybrids, and I was only up to 'Inamorata'. The indirect hybrids must run into the hundreds. And it is easy to see why. *Wardii* had many valuable characteristics that hybridizers were looking for: clear lemon, open, cup-shaped blossoms, sometimes with a lovely claret basal blotch, shiny, dark-green, somewhat rounded leaves, and reasonable hardiness, even if somewhat fussy about its growing conditions.

Notable progeny from *wardii* are *R. 'Cowslip'*, a *williamsianum* x *wardii* cross which looks like nothing so much as a cream/pale primrose *williamsianum*, and of course *R. 'Crest'* (*wardii* x 'Lady Bessborough Group'), a hybrid that is difficult to propagate, but once acquired is like having a not-so-fussy *wardii*.

Yellows, particularly small yellows, seem to have been a popular goal for hybridizers. One need only look at the flock of birds from the Coxs - 'Chikor', 'Teal', 'Wren', 'Chiff Chaff', 'Curlew', and 'Merganser', and the swarm of hybrids from Warren Berg - the well-known 'Patty Bee', the lesser known 'Peter Bee', and even 'Golden Bee'. Most of these have involved crosses with either *R. fletcherianum*, a fairly hardy Maddenii with lemon yellow flowers and somewhat bristly foliage, or *R. keiskei* (often the 'Yaku Fairy' clone), an extremely hardy, low-growing Triflorum from Japan.



R. 'Patty Bee'



R. 'Merganser'



R. 'Yellow Hammer'

One of Cox's hybrids is the particularly fetching 'Merganser', a *campylogynum* x *luteiflorum* cross, that is, basically, as cute as a bug's ear.

R. 'Yellow Hammer', a *sulfureum* x *flavidum* cross, is one of those sort of genetic anomalies that has a new father checking to see what the milkman looks like. Both species parents have low stature and distinctly open-faced blossoms, with *R. sulfureum*'s having a bit of substance, but *R. flavidum*'s looking distinctly gauzy. How 'Yellow Hammer', with its somewhat tall, upright habit, and narrow tubular-campanulate, waxy blossoms could be the progeny of such a union is beyond any Punnett square I could imagine. Be that as it may, 'Yellow Hammer' is a stalwart for any garden. It is not a sprawler, it easily

accepts being shortened to a more acceptable height, and although it rarely covers itself with blossoms there is hardly a month that you cannot go outside and find at least several blooms to bring into the house.

And then there is *R. 'Hotei'*. At one time I felt about this complex *wardii* cross the same way I felt about *R. 'Unique'* - the neat mounded habit, the colour, the solid upright truss, the very popularity of the plant made it seem suitable only for gas stations and apartment complexes. Even the fleshy calyces bothered me. I have, however, (vigorously assisted by the Head Gardener) mellowed in my opinion, now appreciating it for its sturdy blossoms and the warm glow it brings to a shady area.

Brenda Macdonald



R. 'Hotei'

(all photos courtesy of Hirsutum at www.hirsutum.info)



FROM THE EDITOR

Chris spells out the details below.

“Minter Gardens have recently announced their intention to close permanently by mid-October of this year. To enjoy a farewell visit, FSRS is planning a tour of the gardens on Saturday, September 21. This will be an all-day bus tour leaving the parking lot of our meeting hall at the United Church on 200th Street at 10 am and returning by about 4-5 pm. Bring your camera and pack a lunch, or plan to eat at the on-site cafe. Following the garden visit, we will make a stop at the Minter Nursery in Chilliwack.”

Cost per person is \$30. Please advise Chris Hodgson at chodgson@telus.net if you plan to attend, and bring money or a cheque payable to the FSRS to our first meeting of the season on September 18th. This bus tour will only be possible if we have a minimum of 25 participants. The price includes bus fare, entry to the gardens and accompaniment of a paid guide. If we have a minimum of 30 participants, we’ll request Brian Minter himself as tour guide. So please don’t try to save \$5 by car pooling. We need all of us on the bus to make this work”.

This month’s speaker will be me, speaking on a trip last spring to Guizhou and Guangxi in southwest China.

Next month:

Plant hunter and plantsman extraordinaire, Philip MacDougall, will visit us next month to tell us of his recent visit to Yunnan, China, this past May and June. Philip is an extremely engaging speaker and I am looking forward to his views on a part of the world sometimes known as Shangri-la.

This Month:

Yes, the rumour has legs, and the ancient-yet-able omnibus has again been de-mothballed, swabbed inside and out and had its booties replenished with new air in preparation for yet another thrill-a-minute adventure on the garden tour trajectory. Take off will occur on Saturday, September 21st, from the church hall parking lot at 10:00 am precisely and we shall wing our way to the far reaches of the Fraser Valley. After landing in Chilliwack we shall proceed to Minter Gardens.

For those interested in joining the tour please let Chris Hodgson know **immediately** in order that we may secure the bus.



R. yunnanense, Yunnan, China

Image: S. Rafferty

The Business

Stuff:

The Western Regional Rhododendron Conference September 27-29, 2013,

is at the Best Western Agate Beach Hotel in Newport, Oregon. The Chapters of Portland, Tualatin, Willamette, Siuslaw, Southwestern, and Eugene invite you to attend this excellent conference. You will experience a wide selection of clinics on Saturday and Sunday mornings and two banquets with evening speakers from different corners of the world. Eighteen speakers, a big plant sale, lower room prices than in 2007! Start planning now to attend this great conference in your own backyard. The beautiful Pacific Ocean beckons to you in the warm days of September.



Duplicate Library Books

I have earlier sent out by email the complete list and descriptions of duplicate library books which has been curated by Harold. There are some marvellous selections on offer and this is a reminder to those interested to please contact Harold before they are disposed of elsewhere. Part of Harold's message is reprinted below.

When the Peace Arch Rhododendron Society merged with Fraser South, the libraries were merged also, and we ended up with duplicate copies of some very nice rhododendron books. They have library stamps but generally have been very lightly used and are in very good condition.

The executive decided to try to sell them on ebay, but to give our Fraser South members, and then members of other District One chapters the opportunity to buy them before posting on ebay.

To buy contact: Harold Fearing, fearing@fearing.ca, 604 857 4136

Other Duties as Assigned:

There have been reports that our baristi for this month, Margaret and Chris Hodgson together with Jo Wright, have been combing Europe and the Americas this summer in order to study preparation and brewing techniques, to produce only the finest of beverages for our intermission pleasures. Please assist them by bringing a treat or two for the goodies table. Also, I should imagine that this glorious summer of ours has allowed for many garden treasures to have been harvested to deposit upon our glorious raffle table.

THE CALENDAR:

Wednesday, September 18 7:30 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society: Sean Rafferty, "Travels in Guizhou and Guangxi part 2"
Thursday, September 19 7:30 pm	Vancouver Rhododendron Society: Roy Forster, "George Forrest - Prince of Plant Explorers." Van Dusen, Floral Hall
Sunday, Sep 22 10:00 am - 5:00 pm	FSRS Fun Filled Bus Tour to Minter Gardens, Chilliwack and back Leaves from the church parking lot 10:00 am sharp
Sunday, Sep 22 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Alpine Garden Club of BC Fall Sale Van Dusen, Floral Hall
September 27-29	The ARS Western Regional Rhododendron Conference, Newport, Oregon (click here for details)
Wednesday, Oct 9 7:30 pm	Alpine Garden Club of BC: Alan Bradshaw, "Flora of the North American West" Van Dusen Floral Hall
Wednesday, October 16, 7:30 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society: Philip MacDougall, "The Flora Yunnan"
Thursday, October 17, 7:30 pm	Vancouver Rhododendron Society: Judith I. Jones of "Fancy Fronds" with "Enhancing your Rhododendrons with Ferny Furbelows"

Mimpish Squinnies

A short while ago, Madam President, sent me a link to an appealing website depicting images of unusual botanical art. At first glance I was reminded of illustrations from childhood books of elves and fairies. However, information near the bottom of the page revealed that the artist's inspiration rose from plant descriptions given by no less an eminence than [Reginald Farrer](#), author of the much acclaimed book "The English Rock Garden". The artist, [Abigail Rorer](#), utilised the descriptive prose of Farrer, "whose wit and outlandish dismissals of certain plants tickled" her fancy, as the basis for her work. Her paintings, based on Farrer's distainful, rococo descriptions of certain species, together with his captions below them may be found [here](#).

I might just mention that Madam President's alerting me to this delightful site was actually a shot across my digital bow, as Farrer's characterisation of *Cypripedium tibeticum*, found on the website, aligns completely with her view and is decidedly counter to mine.



Cypripedium tibeticum
Sichuan, China

Sean Rafferty

Incredible Edibles

Gluten-free Biscotti

3/4 cup ground almonds
3/4 cup cornmeal
1/2 cup sugar (plus 1 tbsp for top)
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon coarse salt
1 tsp anise seeds (optional)
1 large egg
finely grated zest of half lemon
3 tablespoons softened butter (unsalted)
3 tbsp sliced almonds



1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C.) Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the ground almonds, cornmeal, baking powder, and salt.
3. In a separate bowl, using beater cream together the butter, sugar, egg and lemon zest. Use beater to mix butter/egg with almond/cornmeal – it will look soft and crumbly.
4. Turn the dough out onto the baking sheet and flatten to about ¼ inch thickness. (I use a pizza pan for 1 batch of the recipe – if I double it, I use a large cookie sheet.) Press sliced almonds onto surface. (If you wish you can sprinkle with additional 1 tablespoon of sugar on top of almonds.)
5. Bake for about 20- 25 minutes, or until golden brown. Cool on wire rack (in pan) then break into pieces.
Store in an airtight container, these biscotti will keep for at least two weeks.

Pumpkin Soup (Indian Vegetarian)

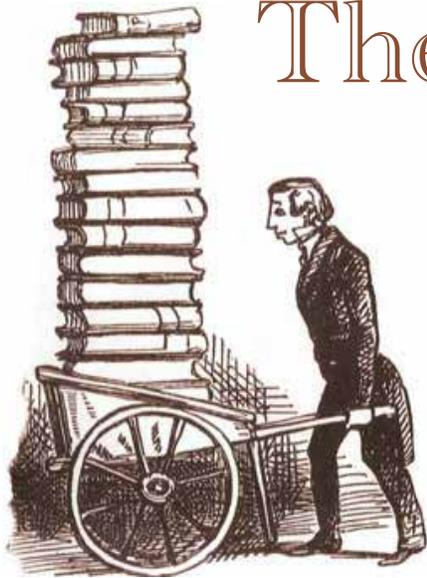
Preparation method:

1 Small Pumpkin – seeded, unpeeled
2 Tablespoons Oil
½ Teaspoon Cumin Seed
1 Teaspoon Cardamon
½ Teaspoon Cumin Powder
½ Teaspoon Coriander – ground
¼ Teaspoon Ginger – ground
¼ Teaspoon Chili Powder
1 Teaspoon Garlic – minced, heaping
2 Cups Onion –chopped
1 Cup Cauliflower Flowerets
½ Cup Carrot – sliced
11 Ounces Corn – can, undrained
Salt and Pepper – to taste
½ Teaspoon Turmeric

Put oil in large pot or kettle. Heat until quite warm. Add cardamon, and cumin seeds. Cook until seeds crackle. Add Onions, garlic and powders. Sauté until onions are browned. Add cut up pumpkin and water until not quite covered. Cover and simmer until pumpkin is tender. Mash or puree. Return to pot and add your choice of vegetables. Cook until desired tenderness. You can add powdered broth if desired. You can also add greens and can substitute acorn or butternut squash.



With thanks to *Margaret Hodgson* for the above recipes



The Book Cart

The Rhododendron Species Vol 1 by H.H. Davidian, B.A., B.Sc. (Hons.)
Timber Press, Portland, Oregon, 1982.
431 pages, approx. 95 colour photos, 9 pages black and white
photographs, 40 line drawings. General index and Index of
Rhododendrons. Hardbound,
ISBN 0-917304-71-3 (hardcover)

H.H. Davidian is widely recognized internationally as one of the leading authorities on the genus Rhododendron. He has been associated for 40 years with the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh, and has devoted his time principally to the study of this group of plants. Edinburgh has, since the first introduction of Rhododendron species from China and the Himalayas, been a principal centre for the study and taxonomy of the species.

The author's acknowledged expertise in identifying species and varieties of rhododendrons is the outcome of this lifelong devotion to the plant. He has described and named many species.

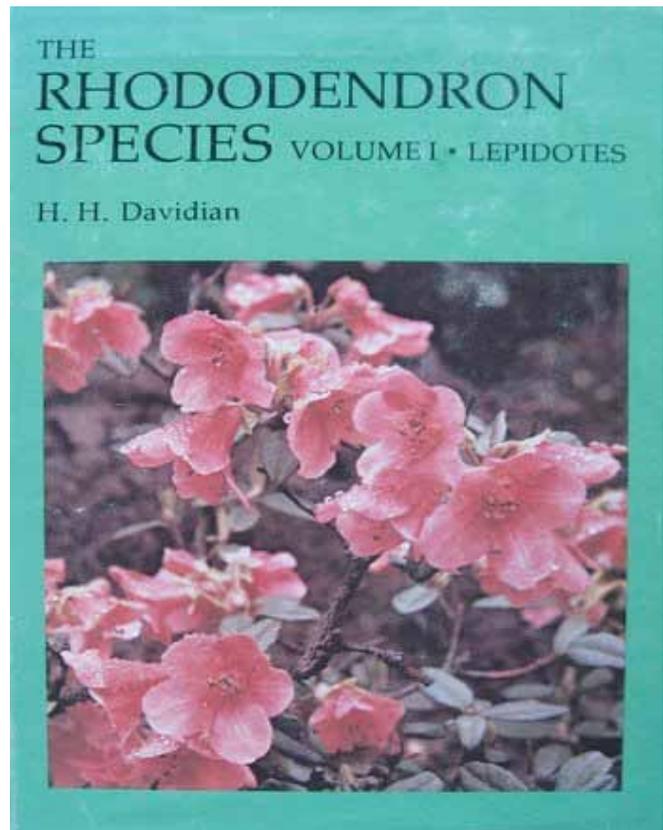
The Rhododendron Species Volume 1 – Lepidotes is distinguished by its breadth and thoroughness in a most complete and detailed taxonomic treatment of the genus since the earlier, now outdated classic 1947 edition *The Species of Rhododendrons*.

In this volume, devoted to Lepidote Rhododendrons, there are sections on the hardiness of species rhododendrons, award systems, and the history of rhododendron introductions, expeditions and collections.

The core of the book consists of a list of Lepidote Rhododendrons in their Series, a key to the Series and subseries, and full descriptions of each Series. The keys provided in the book should make it possible for any grower, professional or amateur, to identify with reasonable accuracy every species in cultivation.

Also of primary importance is Mr. Davidian's synopsis of Lepidote Rhododendron species and some of their characteristics along with new taxa.

This important and lavishly illustrated study will be welcomed by every botanist, plantsman and gardener with a serious interest in rhododendrons.



Margaret Hodgson

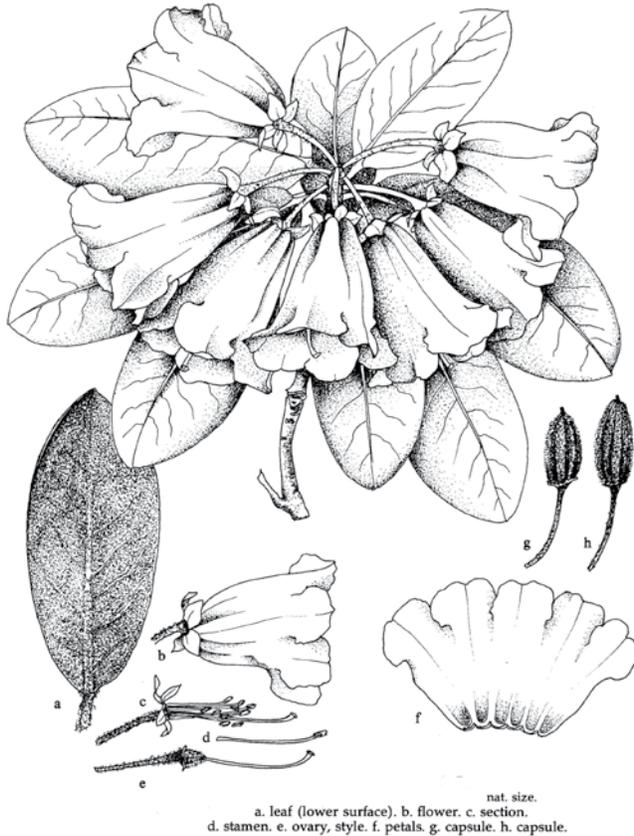
R. hamaetodes ssp. haematodes

(Epithet: blood-like)

This species was discovered by [Père Jean Marie Delavay](#) in 1885 on Mount Tsang chan (Cangshan) in the Tali range, Yunnan, China. The plant was rediscovered and then introduced by George Forrest in 1910. It is found in west and northwest Yunnan, growing at elevations of 11,000-13,000 feet in rocky open situations on mountain meadows, in moist, stony pasture, and in *Abies* forests.

The leaves of this species are dark green on top and covered on their lower surface with a thick orange indumentum. The flowers are a

Species and their Hybrids		pollen ♂	
		B	b
pistil ♀	B	BB	Bb
	b	Bb	bb



R. haematodes ssp. chaetomallum
Line drawing by Mrs. Rodella A. Purves

beautiful crimson, fleshy, waxen, tubular-bell shape with 5 nectar pouches at the base and with calyces from 0.10 - 0.55 inches.

R. haematodes ssp. haematodes is a low growing, dense and compact shrub (1 - 4 feet or occasionally 6 - 10 feet), with tomentose young shoots and petioles and flowers later in the season (mid May) than most of its relatives in Subsection Neriiflora. The literature suggests that *ssp. haematodes* is a bit fussy and requires excellent drainage, prefers a shady spot and is probably best treated as an alpine plant. In our garden it thrives with shade, benign neglect, depleted soil, and being planted underneath a cedar, which is arguably in compliance with its necessary culture

Haematodes ssp. chaetomallum differs from *ssp. haematodes* in its usually larger, more open growth, and its



bristly young shoots and petioles. The upper surface of the leaves have impressed veins and a persistent rough silvery indumentum, while the indumentum on the lower surface is less dense than on *ssp. haematodes*. It also flowers earlier in the season (mid February) than *ssp. haematodes*. The range of *ssp. chaetomallum* exceeds that of *ssp. haematodes* by extending into Burma and southeast Tibet, and has a greater altitudinal range than *ssp. haematodes* as it has been collected from 10,000 - 15,000 feet. Interestingly, this greater range in altitude fails to make *ssp. chaetomallum* hardier than *ssp. haematodes*, as one might expect, and *ssp. chaetomallum* appears, as we found in our garden, to be often short lived. Benign neglect notwithstanding.

Should *R. haematodes ssp. haematodes* be absent from your collection, you may wish to remedy that. It would make a lovely addition. You may also wish to add any hybrids of *ssp. haematodes* to your shopping cart whenever their paths cross yours as I am sure you will not be disappointed.

Sean Rafferty



R. 'May Day'
image: Garth Wedemire

R. 'May Day'

R. haematodes ssp haematodes x *R. griersonianum*
A. Williams, 1932

R. "Phyllis Rees"

R. 'Thor' x 'Loder's White'
C. Mugridge, 1989





R. 'Thor'

R. haematodes ssp haematodes x *R. 'Felis'*
Lester E. Brandt, 1961



R. 'Whistle Punk'

R. degronianum ssp. yakushimanum x
R. 'Gipsy King Group'
H. L. Larson, pre-1988



R. 'Dexter's Harlequin'

(*R. 'Pygmalion'* x *R. haematodes*) x
R. 'Wellfleet'
C.O. Dexter, 1943

R. 'Debbie Dane'

R. degronianum ssp. yakushimanum x
R. haematodes ssp. haematodes
Henning Pedersen, unregistered,



images courtesy of
hirsutum.info



R. 'Grosclaude'

R. haematodes ssp. haematodes x
R. facetum
L. de Rothschild, 1941



R. 'Dexter's Cream'

R. decorum ssp. decorum x
R. haematodes ssp. haematodes
C.O. Dexter, 1943

R. 'Fred Peste'

(*R. degronium ssp. yakushimanum*
x *R. 'Corona'*) x *R. haematodes ssp.*
haematodes
F. Peste, 1971



R. 'Peach Brandy'

R. 'Scintillation' x *R. haematodes ssp.*
haematodes
Scott Arboretum, 1958





Membership

As in previous years it continues to be the intent of the Chapter officers to ensure that membership fees be kept as low as feasible in order to make our club accessible to all who wish to join.

It is through the ARS umbrella that many of the educational activities and sharing of information and resources is made possible. A strong ARS, supported by Full Memberships all across the continent, is what makes our rhododendron community possible.

All membership questions should be addressed to our Membership Chair, Evelyn Jensen at 604-857-5663, or to any other of the FSRS officers.

Fraser South Rhododendron Society 2014 Membership

New Membership - Have never belonged to an ARS chapter. \$15.00

Renewal Membership - see below

Date _____

Name _____

Partner or Spouse's Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Province (State), Postal (Zip) Code _____

Telephone Number, Fax Number _____

Email Address _____

All personal information collected by FSRS is for Society use only. Chapter members who DO NOT want this information to be included in the FSRS Member List - to be distributed to FSRS members only - should check the appropriate spaces here. Please DO NOT include my ___Address, ___Phone, ___Email in the directory.

DO YOU REQUIRE A MAILED COPY OF THE YAK? FEE \$10.00

Please indicate the type of membership below, and enclose your payment with this registration form. All cheques should be made out to: **Fraser South Rhododendron Society**

If mailing, send to: c/o 4614 Saddlehorn Cres., Langley, BC V2Z 2L7

Full Member (includes ARS membership and quarterly ARS Journal) \$35.00

Associate (full member of other ARS chapter) \$10.00

Please indicate name of primary membership chapter

Do you require a Membership Card _____ Yes