



The Victoria Rhododendron Society Newsletter

4821 Townsend Drive, Victoria, BC V8Z 5P2

December 2019
tkmcmillan@telus.net

Thirty-Ninth Year of Publication
<http://victoriarhodo.ca>



Christmas Potluck Dinner

MONDAY, December 2, 2019 starts at **5:30**
Couvelier Pavilion at the HCP Gardens
505 Quayle Road, VICTORIA, B. C.



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Jacq Bradbury

Is hosting the making of the
Christmas Centerpieces & swags
again this year,
@ 3132 Albina Street @ 9:30 -11:30 A.M.
Dec. 2,
same day of the Christmas Potluck Dinner
Please RSVP

Anyone wishing to come and help for an hour or two to make Swags, Centerpieces and creations for the dining tables and raffle would be greatly appreciated.

Dress warmly as we work outside and bring your own gloves and secateurs. Jacqueline does supply greens, cones, ribbons, wire and containers, but if you have something you would like to work with please bring it along. Even if you never have done this before but would like to give it a go - please come.

Upcoming Events

2019	Event	Place
Dec 2 5:30 pm	Christmas Potluck Dinner	Gardens at HCP 505 Quayle Road
Jan 6 7:30	General Meeting - Bernie Dinter - Spring Bulbs	Gardens at HCP 505 Quayle Road
Jan 20 Noon	Propagation Group Meeting Call Ken Webb 250-744-1745	TBA
Feb 3 7:30	General Meeting Margaret Cadwaladr – Dart’s Hill	Gardens at HCP 505 Quayle Road
Feb 17 7:30	Propagation Group Meeting Call Ken Webb 250-744-1745	TBA
Mar 9 7:30	General Meeting & AGM Doug Justice	Gardens at HCP 505 Quayle Road
Mar 23 7:30	Propagation Group Meeting Call Ken Webb 250-744-1745	TBA
SPRING	SPRING GARDEN TOURS If you would like to show your garden, please contact Brenda Macdonald	TBA
Apr 6 7:30	General Meeting Rosemary Prufer	Gardens at HCP 505 Quayle Road
Apr 19 10-2	PLANT SALE at the Webbs’	5008 Old W. Saanich Rd
Apr 20 7:30	Propagation Group Meeting Call Ken Webb 250-744-1745	TBA
Apr 29- May 3	<u>ARS Annual Convention - 75th Anniversary</u>	Portland, Vancouver, WA
May 4 7:30	General Meeting	TBD
May 9 10-2	PLANT SALE at the Marquardts’	4640 Cordova Bay Rd
May 18 7:30	Propagation Group Meeting Call Ken Webb 250-744-1745	TBA
June 28 Noon	Sunday VRS Summer BBQ Picnic at	TBA



Invitation

*The Victoria
Rhododendron Society's*

*Annual Potluck
Christmas Dinner
The Couvelier Pavilion
Monday, December 2nd
@ 5:30 p.m.*

*Members A to L, please bring a savory
or a salad*

Members M to Z, please bring a dessert

*The Club will provide a cooked ham & turkey,
punch, serviettes, tea, coffee, sugar, milk & cream.*

Please bring your own dishes, cutlery and cups.

*Raffle donations of crafts and plants would be
much appreciated, as well as a non-perishable
foods. All proceeds will be donated to
the Mustard Seed Food Bank.*



President's Remarks, December 2019

I must admit that somehow I have yet to achieve the level of “living in the moment” that current life-coaches deem necessary for a fulfilled life. Here we are, only in the middle of fall, and I am already looking forward to the great daffodil explosion, which occurs every year on a rocky outcropping close to where we live. I am not sure this is an effective way to live one's life. Surely, as one embraces the point in one's life when there are far fewer days to come than have already passed by, one should stop making the time pass even faster by always looking forward to what will come rather than what is now.

Be that as it may, and even if you all are able to realize a much better balance than I have, here are some things to look forward to...

The Annual Victoria Rhododendron Society Festive Christmas Potluck – Monday December 2, with an early start at 5:30 pm

This is a time to celebrate our club and the people in it, as well as a chance to give back to the community.

Bring something for the (extensive!) raffle table. Plants, handicrafts, homemade preserves, bottles of festive cheer, wee gifts of any sort – anything and everything someone else might like to find under the tree. All raffle proceeds are donated to a local charity. In addition, please consider bringing in foodstuffs and/or cash donations for the Food Bank.

There will be turkey! There will be ham! There will also be a yummy collection of potluck dishes brought by you, the participants. You will also need to bring your own plates and the cutlery needed to enjoy all this bounty.

Full Rules and Regs are outlined on page 3 of this newsletter.



Membership Renewal

Just a reminder that all those joining/renewing their 2020 membership before the end of November will be eligible for the draw for a free membership for 2021.

Our annual fees for 2020 remain the same as the past few years:

Full Membership (including ARS Journal)	\$35.00
Local Membership (without the ARS Journal)	\$25.00
Associate Membership (primary member of another ARS Chapter)	\$10.00

And of course, in the spirit of Christmas, we will extend that deadline to the end of the Christmas Potluck meeting on December 2nd.

Coda

After a delayed but most enjoyable Indian summer, the rains have reappeared with a vengeance. Hopefully everyone else's garden is far more “put to bed” than ours is. Why didn't I do more when the days were dry? Heave, sigh.

Hope to see everybody at the December potluck. It will be a swell time all around.

Happy gardening -

Brenda Macdonald

Editor's Notes

by Theresa McMillan

Our speaker on November 4 was Lois Blackmore, describing her and Roy's trip to Singapore in January of this year, before the troubles in Hong Kong.

Singapore in South-East Asia is a City-State, like Monaco in Europe. It is an independent city, which is self-governed and is completely separate from nearby countries. Singapore is considered South-East Asia's "Silicon Valley", and is very wealthy.



It is an enlightened city, a democracy with a woman president. The housing in Singapore is mostly concrete, often in tower form. It is 80% publicly owned and filled with people with varying incomes and occupations. This leads to a more harmonious mix of society.

Singapore is noted for being extremely neat, clean, and having numerous restrictions, such as chewing/disposing of gum and smoking. There are signs everywhere, which people seem to adhere to quite nicely. Roy had taken several pictures showing so many signs that the effect was comical. Many of the features, such as hydration stations, are very helpful. Singapore is on the equator and people can get dehydrated very quickly.

Throughout the city, decorative plantings soften the outlines of the concrete buildings and infrastructures, making it truly a city of gardens.

Of course, Lois and Roy visited the famous Raffles Hotel, part of Singapore's British past and sampled their Singapore Sling. As well, they visited the very large Singapore Zoo, one of the best in the world.

Throughout Singapore are statues and figurines of



Merlion

the city’s symbol, the Merlion; a creature with the head of a lion and the body of a fish.

The rhododendron gardeners and lovers were transported to another world, away from a cold dark night far to the North of Singapore.

PATTY CAKE PATTY CAKE A BAKER’S MAN BAKE ME A GINGERBREAD AS FAST AS YOU CAN

By Lois Blackmore

Did you know that our club’s rhododendron hybridizer is also baker, and for several years, he has made and then entered a gingerbread house at the [Parkside Hotel and Spa](#)? Yes... that is our current Vice-president of the VicRS, Lloyd Gilmore. The gingerbread house display is an annual event for Habitat for Humanity Victoria. This fundraiser is open to the public from November 16 until January 5. We invite you to come and view these edible creations and vote for your favourite one by making a donation to this wonderful event. All proceeds go towards supporting Habitat’s affordable homeownership.



2017



2019

Everyone, Please Welcome

Aaron Brice and Tyler Hartfield

Cassidy Ash

Amelia Barbin

Sean Bateman

Carmen Berlin

Lana Ellis

Nathalie Emond

Lisa Giles

Spencer Grant

Chris Head

Riley Kenler

Rachel Lavrisa

Stuart Maclean

Maddy Pauls

Darlene Rice

Gareth Richards

Fareeha Siddique

Ian Silbernagel

Alexandra Spalding

Erin Weckworth

Our newest members of the
Victoria Rhododendron Society

Announcement

On Friday, November 15th, **Ian Duncan** represented Victoria Rhododendron Society at the Pacific Horticulture College (PHC) students' graduation ceremony in the Couvelier Pavilion at HCP.

Our Society presented the nineteen Graduates with a one year local membership with the Victoria Rhododendron Society, along with a copy of '**Rhododendrons on a Western Shore**' and '**The Complete Wit and Wisdom of Norman Todd**'. Many of the students had had the opportunity to work in our Rhodo & Hosta Garden, along with Bill McMillan and Calvin Parsons during the student work experience periods in the various gardens at HCP. All of the students were involved in general garden maintenance though the year, so all had some experience of our garden. Our hope is that we may engender some new members.

American Rhododendron Society
 75th Anniversary
20/20
VISION
 ARS75.org
Looking forward, reflecting back
Portland-Vancouver, April 29-May 3, 2020



You're invited to the celebration!



World-renowned Keynote Speakers
 Kenneth Cox • Jens Nielsen • Steve Hootman • Juliana Medeiros
 Lionel de Rothschild • Steve Krebs • Valerie Soza • & more!

**Tours to the Northwest's
 Outstanding Gardens & Nurseries**

**April 29-May 3, 2020, Hosted by ARS District 4
 Heathman Lodge, Vancouver, WA.**

20/20 Vision international speakers to include:

- Kenneth Cox from Glendoick in Scotland
- Lionel de Rothschild from Exbury in England
- Jens Nielsen, plant explorer from Denmark
- Steve Krebs and Juliana Medeiros from the Holden Arboretum
- Steve Hootman from the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden
- Valerie Soza from the University of Washington
- and more.

Garden tours to include:

- Crystal Springs Botanical Garden
- Cecil & Molly Smith Garden
- Portland Japanese Garden
- Lan Su Chinese Garden
- Iseli Nursery
- Woodburn Nursery
- The Stewart Garden (formerly Dover Nursery)
- Sebright Gardens

Plant sale, photo contest, poster session, special clinics, plus:

Around the Sound pre-tour
Willamette Valley and Oregon Coast Excursion post-tour

ars75.org

Registration opens December 2, 2019

JOE'S JOTTINGS,

MISCELLANEOUS THOUGHTS FROM A LIFE WITH PLANTS

By Joe Harvey

#2 Eat Ice Cream – Root Cuttings

The leaves of plants are solar panels, absorbing energy and transferring it to energy-rich substances such as glucose, which the plant then uses to grow. But leaves differ from solar panels in that they have air conditioning to prevent overheating. The AC is a simple but effective evaporative system using water supplied by the roots.

So “taking a cutting” does not in itself damage the leaves but it does cut the water supply, risking overheating and death of the leaves. This is particularly a problem in plants with thin leaves. My particular worry is with deciduous trees.

Now, with some plants you can cut a shoot, stick it into a glass of water and it will root. I am not discussing these. My initial concern was a new cultivar of Magnolia I have bred and which I want to register under the name ‘Bella Bella’, but there is no point in registering a name unless you can propagate it. (The double name is chosen because I doubled the chromosome number). I find shade in my greenhouse results in few cuttings rooting; sunlight kills them rapidly. What to do?

One method is used by the Victoria Rhododendron Society Propagation Group. This is an enclosed mist system on a timer using fluorescent tubes to root Rhododendron cuttings. The fluorescent tubes give a medium light intensity and this system works well with tough evergreen leaves, which most Rhododendrons have. A particular development of this idea was displayed at a commercial nursery at an American Rhododendron Society conference in Scotland. Their only product was low-cost flowering plants for impulse purchases at supermarkets; they achieved a cutting-to-flowering plant in one year. For rooting they used high-pressure water to produce a fog (in Scotland!), and to amuse us they turned the system on; it was barely possible to see the person next to you, but your clothes were scarcely moistened.

So, bright light, 100% humidity, with no overheating – can you do this at home without expensive equipment? Here is my take:

The set-up

1. Obtain a plastic container. I use 4 litre ice cream tubs. Eat the ice cream, rinse.
2. Put a couple of inches of damp Perlite, or Perlite-peat mix into the container.
3. Stick the cuttings into the above rooting medium.
4. Spray with water from a mister bottle.
5. Cover the container tightly with transparent film (food wrap, such as Saran wrap), and secure with a rubber band.
6. Position an LED lamp an inch or two above the container.
7. Turn on the lamp.

Notes

1. Do not use garden soil as the rooting medium.
2. Select and prepare the cuttings at the propitious time; many plants will only root in a particular season, e.g. softwood deciduous azalea cuttings root well shortly after flowering – later, good luck. Trim leaves as required to fit, wound (shave a thin strip off) the stem and dip into the appropriate rooting compound.
3. The lamp I use is a 60-year old desk lamp with a flexible stem about 16 inches high, no springs, no angles - they still make them, I bought another recently from Walmart.

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

The Big Bang Tree – The Mount Etna Broom- cont'd

The LED bulbs, which have replaced the old 60-watt tungsten-filament ones, are now about \$2 each on sale in packages of five. They consume about 8 watts and hence get only slightly warm with most of the heat coming from the electronics in the base. This is the heart of my system and allows the bulb to be inches away from the cuttings without burning them. The package will say something like 'lasts 13 years with normal use'. I got about a year from my first LED with it on about 16 hours a day – that is good.

I am now trying hard-to-get rarities such as the Chinese quince, *Pseudocydonia sinensis*; a lovely improved version of *Styrax* with large pink bells, *Meliiodendron xylocarpum*; and the tiny evergreen shrub *Philesia magellanica* from Chile. But this set-up will work with most things you put into it, seedlings for example, give it a try. VIRAGS members may want, with lower humidity, to try to grow the high altitude rosulate violets from the Andes, the ones which look like *Sempervivum* until they flower.

Chocolate works really well.



VICTORIA RHODODENDRON SOCIETY BOARD

President

Brenda Macdonald 778-528-3647
victoriarhododendron@gmail.com

Vice President

Lloyd Gilmore 250-642-2256

Past President

Lois Blackmore 250-478-6615

Treasurer

Bill Gordon 250-479-0210

Secretary:

Sharon Joseph 250-383-1756

Members-at-Large

Carolyn Marquardt 250-477-8387
Carrie George 250-642-3176
Ian Duncan 250-479-0820
Lynne Ferrie 250-478-1100
Theresa McMillan 250-478-3515

KEY CONTRIBUTORS

**Audio & Video Equipment &
HCP Meeting Room Steward**

Ian Duncan 250-479-0820
Robert Burke

Membership

Brenda Macdonald 778-528-3647
Carrie George 250-642-3176

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Joyce Whittle 250-656-7313
Linda Gilmore, Production 250-642-2256
Madeleine Webb 250-744-1785
Bill McMillan 250-478-3515

Refreshments Organizer

Betty Gordon 250-479-0210

Website

Calvin Parsons 250-590-0489
<http://victoriarhodo.ca>

Victoria Rhododendron Society



www.victoriarhodo.ca

Key to Symbols and Activities

- 6 General Meetings
Gardens at HCP
- 20 Propagation Group
Meetings
(contact Ken Webb)
- 6 Flower Show -

- Plant Sale at Webbs' - April 19
- Plant Sale at Marquardt's - May 9
- ARS Annual Convention -
Apr 30 - May 3, Portland, Oregon
- ARS Regional Fall Conference -
Sept 25-27, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania
- Summer Picnic - June 28
- 7 Christmas Potluck Dinner - Dec. 7

2020

January

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February

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March

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April

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31						

June

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30						

SUMMER BREAK

September

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October

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November

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December

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MEMBERSHIPS

Mail to:
The Victoria Rhododendron Society
4821 Townsend Drive
Victoria, B.C. V8Z 5P2

Newsletters available by email only.

Full membership includes membership in the VicRS and the American Rhododendron Society of which we are an affiliated Chapter. This brings the ARS quarterly Journal with expert articles and colour photographs. Also included is the right to participate in the ARS annual conventions, and the ARS seed exchange and pollen bank. Members also receive the Newsletter of the VicRS.

Local Membership includes the newsletter and participation in local events, but does not include membership in the ARS.

Associate Membership enables members of other ARS Chapters to participate in the activities of the Victoria Chapter.

WHY JOIN VICRS?

- Meet others with like interests
- Learn about rhodos and more
- Have fun
- Rhodo raffle at each meeting
- Guest speakers at each meeting
- Informative Monthly Newsletter and quarterly ARS Journal
- Garden tours
- Annual June BBQ
- Discounts at many garden shops and nurseries

More information at: www.victoriarhodo.ca

All meetings of the society are open to the public and visitors are always welcome. Of particular interest to gardeners is our Annual Show and Sale, held in April or May. The show has spectacular displays of flowers, and there is a great variety of Rhododendrons and other plants for sale.

Monthly meetings are held on the first Monday of the month at 7:30 pm from September until May.

Meeting location:

HCP Glendale Gardens
505 Quayle Rd,
Victoria, B.C.

AIMS OF VICRS

VicRS aims to promote the cultivation, propagation and breeding of Rhododendrons, and to foster knowledge, fellowship, friendship and enthusiasm concerning Rhododendrons and allied plants. While the focus is on Rhododendrons, members' interests are wide. Talks on other shrubs, trees and herbs suitable for over or under planting are included, as are landscaping techniques and plant pathogens.

City _____ Postal Code _____
Telephone # _____

Email Address _____

I agree to have my info published in a Members Book.

Circle one of the following:

Regular Membership: \$35

Local Membership: \$25

Associate: \$10 Associate chapter _____

ARS Commercial-Corporate: \$90

ARS Sustaining: \$75

ARS Sponsoring: \$150

ARS Life, single: \$1,000 (Payable over 3 years)

ARS Life, family: \$1,500 (Payable over 3 years)

- Cash
- Cheque