



# The Rhodomentum

## Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Newsletter



MAY 2020



### President's Message

What a blessing it is, in this worrisome Coronavirus time, to have our gardens to delight our hearts! As I write this, the cherry trees are in full bloom, the Orchard Mason bees are abuzz; and so many, many rhododendrons are abloom – what a splendid show!

Our Propagating Heroes are still waiting to regain access to the Paine Centre greenhouses, but luckily, Christine Quist has added watering our cuttings to her other obligations. Is she not a sweetheart? Christine even made a video showing Linn the dog guarding our ready-to-be-repotted cuttings. Thank you, Christine! (Ed. Note: see link to video on p.15)

As previously reported, the Hailey Rhododendron Grove work party as well as our May Truss show had to be postponed due to the virus quarantine. But Chris Southwick and Ron Sutton recently picked up about 24 rhododendrons from Perennial Ridge Farms for our own needs. Ron Sutton generously offered to look after the plants until needed. To Art (who arranged the order), to Chris and to the Suttons, our warmest thanks! Deborah Francis, our new Webmaster, successfully uploaded the April newsletter to our [www.nanaimorhodos.ca](http://www.nanaimorhodos.ca) website. Thank you, Deborah!

Congratulations to the April Virtual Truss Show winners! (Ed. Note: See pp. 7-9 for full details) A great thank-you to Jan, Chris, and John for organizing it! Please send your May photos to Jan at [NRSTrussShow@gmail.com](mailto:NRSTrussShow@gmail.com)

Come September, we will be voting for a new Executive team, so please consider which office you would prefer to take.

Enjoy your splendid gardens and your “gemuetlich” home too. Stay in! Stay safe!

Rosina

### OUR EXECUTIVE

President	Rosina Schmidt	751-3386
Vice President	Chris Southwick	390-3415
Past President	Allen McRae	758-7589
Secretary	Jan Moles	758-2574
Treasurer	Liz Higgins	390-9340
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	Art Lightburn	468-7516
	Susan Lightburn	468-7516
	Gayle McRae	758 7589
	Don Noakes	778 441-4783
	Ron Sutton	905 331 5527

### COMMITTEES:

Advertising	Allen McRae
Library	Ann Beamish / Sandra Dorman
Newsletter	June Bouchard / John Deniseger
Membership	Krystyna Sosulski
Program	Committee
Raffle	Ann Davey & Val Harvey
Social	Deborah Francis
Bargain Table	Reinhold Gorgosolich/Don Noakes
Website	Deborah Francis
Bus Tour	David & Joyce Mitchell
Sunshine	Ann Beamish
Propagation	Rosina Schmidt

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**All NRS activities suspended!**  
**Due to concerns surrounding the Covid-19 virus, all NRS meetings and events are cancelled or postponed until further notice.**

## Our Program for May: Humour as therapy...



As we mentioned in the April newsletter, we are living in difficult times and have no idea how long it will last. Stress and anxiety are normal reactions to what's happening. We suggested that we were fortunate to have in our gardens one of the best hobbies/passions for stress relief. This month, we would like to add humour to the list of stress relief options.

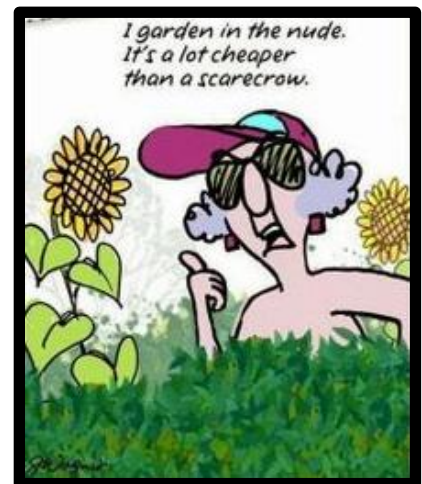
"It's true: laughter is strong medicine. It draws people together in ways that trigger healthy physical and emotional changes in the body. Laughter strengthens your immune system, boosts mood, diminishes pain, and protects you from the damaging effects of stress. Nothing

works faster or more dependably to bring your mind and body back into balance than a good laugh. Humor lightens your burdens, inspires hope, connects you to others, and keeps you grounded, focused, and alert. It also helps you release anger and forgive sooner." (From <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-health/laughter-is-the-best-medicine.htm> )



I think most of us have been receiving emails with jokes, cartoons or funny stories since this whole situation started - remember the health benefits of laughter next time you get one!

Remember to reach out to others, check in with



family and friends to see how they are doing. We can email, text, phone, video call, send photos, share positive stories and support one another, while following the recommended precautions such as social distancing. Together, we will get through this! Keep on smiling! 😊

John and June

P.S. Let's remember that the less fortunate in our community still need our support. Loaves and Fishes and so many other charities could use a little help!

## Vancouver Island Rhododendron Hybrids

by Rosina T. Schmidt

It is true that Canadians have an amazing ability to be unassuming. Self-promotion? Never heard of it! What is true for Canadians in general is specifically true for those of us who call this verdant island our home.

There were quite a few noteworthy rhododendron hybridizers before and during our time on this Island, like **George Fraser, Evelyn and Nick Weesjes, Albert de Mezey, Dr. Joe Harvey, Fred Collins, Dr. Stuart Holland, Norm Todd**, and many others – but today, we shall devote our attention to two well-known rhododendron hybridizers who are closely related to our NRS club: **Mary and Ted Greig of Royston Nursery** and **Dr. Bob Rhodes** and his lovely wife, **Jean**.

### Mary and Ted Greig of Royston Nursery:

When Mary and Ted Greig started their Royston Nursery back in 1936, they first purchased Buchanan Simpsons *Cowichan Lake's Alpine Nursery*. Ted loved the Alpines but had no interest in the Rhododendron species that the Simpsons also sold.

At that time, species seed growers thought that all seedlings would be true to the packet label. It was Mary who constantly changed and updated the only species book that was then available: *The Species of Rhododendron*, edited by *J. B. Stevenson*. Through her "correspondence friendship" with Jim Russell, manager of the Sunningdale Nurseries in England, rare and unusual species were added to her orders. Mary used a variety of crosses that developed the ability to bud up younger but also many of her crosses flower much later, in June and July.

Even though the Royston Nursery did not concentrate solely on rhododendrons, through Mary's efforts, there is quite a list of Royston rhododendron hybrids and selected forms:



R. 'Harry Carter' (Photo by Chris Southwick)

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| R. 'Buchanan Simpson'  | R. 'Royston Red'                  |
| R. 'Harry Carter'  | R. 'Royston Copper'               |
| R. <i>auriculatum</i> (actually a species but one of her favourites for hybridizing) | R. 'Royston Rose'                 |
| R. 'Regency'   | R. 'Royston Opaline'              |
| R. 'Royston Radiance'  | R. 'Royston Festival'             |
| R. 'Royston Frost'   | R. <i>bureavii</i> , (Greig Form) |
| R. 'Royston Peach' (same cross as Royston Orange and Royston Yellow)                 | R. ' <i>bureavii</i> x Fabia'     |
| R. 'Royston Reverie'   | R. 'Chancellor's Choice'          |
|  | R. 'Last Rose'                    |
|  | R. 'Len Living'                   |
|  | R. 'Cutie'                        |
|  | R. 'Butterball'                   |

It is no wonder that Mary became one of North America's leading rhododendron experts. In 1966, the ARS jointly awarded a gold medal to Ted and Mary Greig. That year, the Greigs sold their nursery stock to the city of Vancouver. Their rhododendrons were planted mainly in Stanley Park and Queen Elizabeth Arboretum. In the winters of 1981 and 1982, some 3,000 species were moved from Stanley Park to Van Dusen Botanical Gardens, where they form the core of the Sino-Himalayan section. In 1989, during a very special occasion, the gardens in Stanley Park were dedicated as "The Ted and Mary Greig Rhododendron Garden" with the unveiling of a bronze plaque in the presence of many dignitaries.



In April 2018, “*The Greig Rhododendron Species Garden*” was officially opened to the public in honour of Ted and Mary Greig, pioneers in their field, at Milner Gardens & Woodland in Qualicum Beach. It was created in partnership between Milner Gardens & Woodland, Vancouver Island University and the five Vancouver Island chapters of the American Rhododendron Society: North Island, Mount Arrowsmith, Nanaimo, Cowichan Valley and Victoria.

Our Chris Southwick is Mary’s granddaughter and so many of Mary’s hybrids can be admired in Chris’ beautiful garden: ‘Royston Reverie’, ‘Royston Red’, ‘Royston Peach’, ‘Royston Orange’, ‘Royston Copper’, ‘Len Living’, ‘Harry Carter’ (see photo above), ‘Cutie’, ‘Buchanan Simpson’, and ‘Butterball’. There is a *R. auriculatum* in Art Lightburn’s and my own garden, as well as *R. ‘bureavii x Fabia’*.

### Dr. Bob and Jean Rhodes Hybrids:

The rhododendron community cannot be oblivious to the hybrids coming from Vancouver Island, especially when they discover the hybrids of Dr. Bob and Jean Rhodes. Their ‘Haida Gold’ and ‘Bob’s Blue’ are widely available and prized plants. ‘Jean’s Favourite’, an *augustinii* hybrid, (see photo below) is a favorite of many, as well as ‘Captain Bob’ with its distinctive foliage.

In 1995, the American Rhododendron Society awarded Dr. Bob Rhodes a well-deserved silver medal for his efforts over the years on behalf of the genus Rhododendron.

Bob and Jean began their hybridizing work on the mainland in Maple Ridge and continued when they moved to Gabriola Island. They named their beautiful new garden “Steepsides”. They both became NRS members and after Bob’s passing, we are honored to have Jean attending our meetings. Jean graciously went through their files to give us more information on their individual crosses. Thank you, Jean, from all of us at NRS.

R. ‘Haida Gold’ - (*wardii* x ‘Goldfort’) – this was seed from Bovee Mayo Seed Co. grown and selected by Bob in 1961. Shipped to Britain as ‘Bob’s Yellow’ - the plant’s name was changed for commercial reasons. It was a hardy yellow, much needed at the time.

R. ‘Bob’s Blue’ - (‘Ilam Violet’ x ‘Blue Diamond’) - Crossed in 1967, registered in 1977.

R. ‘Captain Bob’ - (‘Red Cloud’ x ‘Gypsy King’) - Seed from Merle Cisney.

R. ‘Lillian Hodgson’ - (‘Angelo’ x ‘Solant Queen’) - Registered in 1978.

R. ‘Nathaniel’ and R. ‘Arlene Trustham’ (both R. ‘Humming Bird’ x R. ‘Elizabeth’)

R. ‘Jean Rhodes’ - (‘Mrs. Horace Fogg’ x ‘Naomi’) - Crossed and raised by Bob and given to a very active member of

the Vancouver Rhodo Society who liked it so much that she registered it in 1966.

R. ‘Jean’s Favourite’ – (*augustinii* hybrid)

R. ‘Norma Hodge’ - (McKee hybrid x ‘Fabia’)

R. ‘Sierra Treasure’ – (*lacteum* x ‘Crest’) - seed from Jack Lofthouse, selected by Bob.

R. ‘Camflo’ - (‘Cameo’ x ‘Pink petticoats’)

R.  *davidsonianum* - Rhodes form - a seedling of R. ‘Serenade’

R.  *russatum*, Rhodes form.



R. ‘Jean’s Favourite’ (Photo by John Deniseger)

There we have it, such a variety of rhododendrons just from two of Vancouver Island’s well-known growers. Let’s proudly promote them more. Let’s propagate and plant those varieties in our own gardens with our own NRS connections.

## NRS Virtual Truss Show Information

The NRS Virtual Truss Show is a relatively low-key affair with the aim of encouraging and educating members and sharing our gardening accomplishments during this period of self-isolation! Generally, the judging categories are for size, colour, form and foliage. The April show had a lot of spectacular entries. Now we move on to the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase for those rhodos that flower in May (submission cut-off is midnight, May 31). Winning entries will be put on the NRS website, but no trophies or ribbons will be awarded, only bragging rights! Rationalizations by the judges on the merits of any submission will be confidential and their award decisions will be final!

### Simple Instructions

1) We hope that every NRS member will participate, even if they only submit one truss! Each submission should be a photo of a flowerhead (truss) or leaf on the plant, i.e., do not cut the truss or leaf off and then photograph it. A photo can be taken with either a cellphone or camera. Each photo image should be submitted in its **original** file size as a “jpg” (don’t reduce this size when you send your email as that can affect image quality) and be given a file name of the plant name (use “unknown” if not sure) and the date it was taken (e.g., 2020-04-01 for April 1, 2020). E.g. Karen Triplett 2020-04-01.jpg and tell us in the email what Truss show category you want it to go into, 2 pictures per category for each photographer.

Note: if you are having trouble downloading images from your cellphone or camera or creating files to email and sending them, contact John Deniseger and he will help. His phone is 1-778-424-3605 or email him at [JuneandJohn@shaw.ca](mailto:JuneandJohn@shaw.ca).

- 2) No Photo shop or other technical treatment to improve photos. This is not a photo contest. The true image is what we want to see.
- 3) Finally, all submissions should be sent to Jan Moles at her new email address for this event: [NRSTrussShow@gmail.com](mailto:NRSTrussShow@gmail.com). Jan will assign images to their proper category for judging, issue an acknowledgement to you with an entry number. If you don’t receive an acknowledgement within 3 days please re-submit.
- 4) Let’s make this a fun event, and I hope all Nanaimo Rhodo club members will participate!

### Categories for Judging, see below:

- a) Seven flower categories:
    - Three of Hardy Species - small, medium, large (based on leaf size)
    - Three of Hardy Hybrids - small, medium, large (based on leaf size)
    - Tender
  - b) three Foliage categories: small, medium, large (based on leaf size), tomentum, indumentum or rugosity.
  - c) three Full plant categories: small, medium, large (based on leaf size)
- 2) There will be no novice, scented, or hammerhead categories.

*We’re having a truss show, despite COVID 19! It’s an opportunity for all club members to enter photos of their favourites, without having to get up at 6 am to gather trusses for the show. In fact, you don’t have to cut them at all – leave them on the plant!*

*The photos can also be used to:*

- *Build a photo catalogue for the club in support of future plants sales*
- *Create your own wish list for future plant sales*
- *Help you identify unknown rhodos in your own garden*

*We can also compare our entries to those entered in the MARS virtual truss show, as they’re using a similar format.*

**Note 1:** What is the definition of small, medium, large.  
(Small leaf is no more than 2", Large leaf is greater than 8", medium in between)

**Note2:** If you're having trouble deciding which category to enter, there is a document on the website called 'the 2019 list of plants in entry classes' – the entry classes no longer apply, but if you know the name of your rhodo, it will tell you whether it is hybrid or species (species are in italics), then you must choose which of the above classes to put it in. Chris Southwick has volunteered to help should someone need it. (email: [csouthwick@shaw.ca](mailto:csouthwick@shaw.ca), Phone: (250)-390-3415)

**Judging Considerations:**

Size: Is the apparent size close to what's expected of the individual variety?

Colour: Is it typical for the variety and the right colour for the category?

Form: Is the truss free of torn flowers or damaged leaves? (In this show, one or two unopened flowers in a truss photo are acceptable).

Foliage: Are the leaves healthy, undamaged and representative of the variety?

**Photographic Advice for NRS members re submissions:**

Some simple guidance for taking photos is the following:

- a) Pixels are free, so feel free to take a number of pictures of the same truss or another truss or leaf on the plant, say from different angles or at different times of the day, etc., to change the lighting of the object, then choose what you think is the best one to submit, and discard the rest.
- b) Think about image composition – make sure there are no obstructing leaves, twigs, etc., that the main item is in focus, and that it is not too small in the overall image!
- c) The entry should be cleaned of all extraneous bits such as loose bracts when possible, and chewed leaves, if present, should not be included in the image.

\*\*\*\*\*

**WANTED!!!!**

Our great propagators will need to transplant the rhodo cuttings into larger pots. They would appreciate any 4-6" pots that you might have. Please set them aside as they'll be needed.



Chris sent us this photo of the lineup to get free soil at the Milner Group on Biggs Road in Nanaimo. They wanted to encourage people to grow veggies!!!

*What do you call it when worms take over the world?  
Global Worming.*

## Winners of the Virtual April Truss Show:

The results of our first ever “virtual truss show” are in: we had 127 entries from 14 different members. It was a pretty amazing collection of beautiful rhododendrons of all shapes and sizes, once again highlighting the tremendous diversity in the genus Rhododendron. Let’s see if we can’t get even more entries in phase 2 of this year’s show! **A few changes and suggestions from our truss show co-ordinator Jan Moles: please label each photo that you submit with the species/hybrid name, entry class and date; failing that, please submit only 1 photo with necessary information per email; we’re limiting the number of entries to 20 per household/member/garden; also, to give Jan a break, please don’t send in your May submissions until after May 15<sup>th</sup>.**

We’ve included the complete list of winners and photos of each of the 1<sup>st</sup> place winning trusses. Congratulations to all of the winners – you’ve earned “bragging rights” for this year! Thank you to our judges, Marilyn Dawson and Glen Jamieson, members of the Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society.

### Hybrid – small



### Hybrid – medium



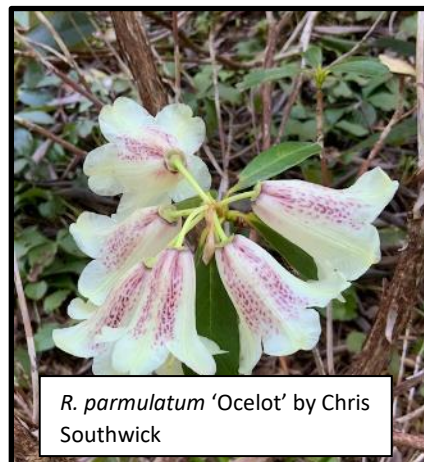
### Hybrid - Large



### Species -small



### Species – medium



### Species - large





**Foliage – small**



*R. quinquefolium* by Alan & Sandy Campbell

**Foliage – medium**



R. 'Carol Amelia' by Alan & Sandy Campbell

**Foliage - large**



*R. macabeaenum* by Art & Susan Lightburn

**Full Plant – small**



*R. hanceanum* 'nanum' - Art & Susan Lightburn

**Full Plant – medium**



*R. spinuliferum* by Art & Susan Lightburn

**Full Plant - Large**



*R. morii* by Art & Susan Lightburn

**Azalea**



*R. albrechtii* by Art & Susan Lightburn

There are many more beautiful truss photos. We'll be keeping them as a permanent record of what's in bloom.

**If you want to see the complete set of photos that were submitted, please contact Jan Moles at:**

[jan.moles@btinternet.com](mailto:jan.moles@btinternet.com)

Meanwhile, our list of "must haves" for next year's plant

sale is getting longer and longer.....



A special THANK YOU to Jan Moles for taking on the task of managing our 1<sup>st</sup> ever virtual truss show. Remember, there was no template to follow. She's worked hard and done an outstanding job! Thank you, Jan!!!



## Here's the complete list of winners from the April "Virtual Truss Show"

(Entry + Rhodo name + Date Taken)	Class	1st/2nd/3rd	Name of Winner
E63 R. <i>albrechtii</i> 2020-04-18	Azalea	1st	Art&Susan Lightburn
E71 R. <i>schlippenbachii</i> 2020-04-22	Azalea	2nd	Art&Susan Lightburn
E39 R. <i>wadanum</i> 2020-04-28	Azalea	3rd	Chris Southwick
E78 R. <i>macabeum</i> 2020-04-26	Foliage Large	1st	Art&Susan Lightburn
E79 R. <i>asterochnoum</i> 2020-04-26	Foliage Large	2nd	Art&Susan Lightburn
E86 R. <i>rex ssp fictolacteam</i> 2020-04-29	Foliage Large	3rd	Art&Susan Lightburn
E92 R. 'Carol Amelia' 2020-04-29	Foliage medium	1st	Alan&Sandy Campbell
E77 R. <i>mallotum</i> 2020-04-26	Foliage medium	2nd	Art&Susan Lightburn
E93R. 'Carol Amelia' New Growth 2020-04-29	Foliage medium	3rd	Alan&Sandy Campbell
E91 R. <i>quinquefolium</i> 2020-04-29	Foliage Small	1st	Alan&Sandy Campbell
E111 R. <i>tsariense var tsariense</i> 2020-04-28	Foliage Small	2nd	Art&Susan Lightburn
E100 R. <i>morii</i> 2020-04-26	Full Plant Large	1st	Art&Susan Lightburn
E105 R. <i>spinuliferum</i> 2020-04-21	Full Plant Medium	1st	Art&Susan Lightburn
E85 R. 'President Roosevelt' 2020-04-23	Full Plant Medium	2nd	Burkhard Dressler
E23 R. 'Yaku Angel' 2020-04-27	Full Plant Medium	3rd	Rosina Schmidt
E120 R. <i>hanceanum 'Nanum'</i> 2020-04-28	Full Plant small	1st	Art&Susan Lightburn
E80 R. <i>rigidum 'bodineiri</i> 2020-04-26	Full Plant Small	2nd	Art&Susan Lightburn
E55 R. 'Ginny Gee' 2020-04-27	Full Plant Small	3rd	Val Harvey
E76 R. 'Etta Burrows' 2020-04-26	Hybrid Large	1st	Art&Susan Lightburn
E118 R. 'Taurus' 2020-04-16	Hybrid Large	2nd	Art&Susan Lightburn
E36 R. 'Etta Burrows' 2020-04-28	Hybrid Large	3rd	Chris Southwick
E123 R. 'Horizon Lakeside' 2020-04-30 v2	Hybrid medium	1st	Elaine Hutchison
E87 R. 'Muncaster Mist' 2020-04-04	Hybrid medium	2nd	Alan&Sandy Campbell
E64 R. 'Golfer' 2020-04-28	Hybrid medium	3rd	Debbie Gaboury
E46 R. 'Merganser' 2020-04-28	Hybrid Small	1st	Chris Southwick
E14 R. 'Crater Lake' 2020-04-23	hybrid small	2nd	J. Bouchard & J. Deniseger
E50 R. 'Egret' 2020-04-28	Hybrid Small	3rd	Chris Southwick
E106 R. <i>niveum</i> 2020-04-10	Species Large	1st	Art&Susan Lightburn
E17 R. <i>macabeum</i> 2020-04-28	Species Large	2nd	Doug & Deb Blenkarn
E98 R. <i>asterochnoum</i> 2020-04-08	Species large	3rd	Art&Susan Lightburn
E4 R. <i>parmulatum 'Ocelot'</i>	Species Medium	1st	Chris Southwick
E72 R. <i>racemosum</i> 2020-04-18	Species Medium	2nd	Art&Susan Lightburn
E34 R. <i>thompsonii</i> 2020-04-28	Species Medium	3rd	Chris Southwick
E108 R. <i>spinuliferum</i> 2020-04-21	Species small	1st	Art&Susan Lightburn
E30 R. <i>primulaflorum 'Doker La'</i> 2020-04-28	Species Small	2nd	Chris Southwick
E81 R. <i>trichostomum</i> 2020-04-26	Species Small	3rd	Art&Susan Lightburn
E95 R. <i>edgworthii</i> 2020-04-30	Tender	1st	Kathryn Grant
E43 R. <i>edgworthii</i> 2020-04-28	Tender	2nd	Chris Southwick
E90 R. 'Elsie Frye' 2020-04-30	Tender	3rd	Chris Southwick

**An Update on Milner Gardens and Woodlands, and the Greig Rhododendron Species Garden – from Milner’s Director, Geoff Ball** (photos courtesy of Milner – all photos taken on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020)

Hello Greig Rhododendron Species Garden Advisory Group,

I hope you and your loved ones are all safe and healthy as we ride out the impacts of the corona virus. I wanted to send along a quick update on Milner and the Greig Rhodo Species Garden.

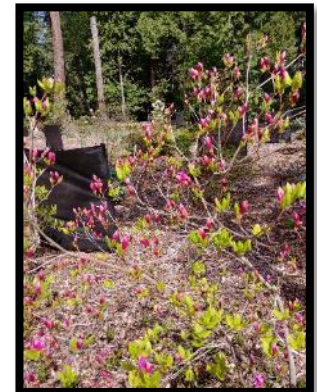
Milner Gardens is closed to public and volunteers until further notice. Many of my team, including myself, are working from home as much as possible. Even though we know many folks would love to come help take care of the gardens right now, we are not able to have you on site at this point.

Kim Hammond (our head gardener) is continuing to work on the grounds although she is set to retire on May 8th. Unfortunately, we are not able to hire a replacement for Kim until we are much further into a recovery from impacts of the virus. In the meantime, we will be training some of our other staff on how to take care of the essentials such as watering. We will also likely be bringing in other staff from across the university to help out. We will be focusing efforts on keeping plants alive and not on keeping the grounds pretty. There will be lots of work to weed, prune, and tidy once things ease up but the main priority at this point is to keep the plants alive, including all of those that so many of you have donated, helped to collect, and tended.

When Kim retires, I will be asking Kristi who is on staff, to do a good weekly inspection of the species garden and take care of any needed hand watering. Kristi knows the collection very well, is a skilled horticulturist and will take good care of the plants.



Last week we turned on the irrigation to the species garden and it seems to be working properly. Just before things started to shut down, I did order four benches to go into the garden and they arrived at the beginning of the month. They are waiting inside the cottage to be stained and then installed. As well, Kristi has put together another order of companion plants which we'll send in so that they are here, ready to be planted when the time is right.



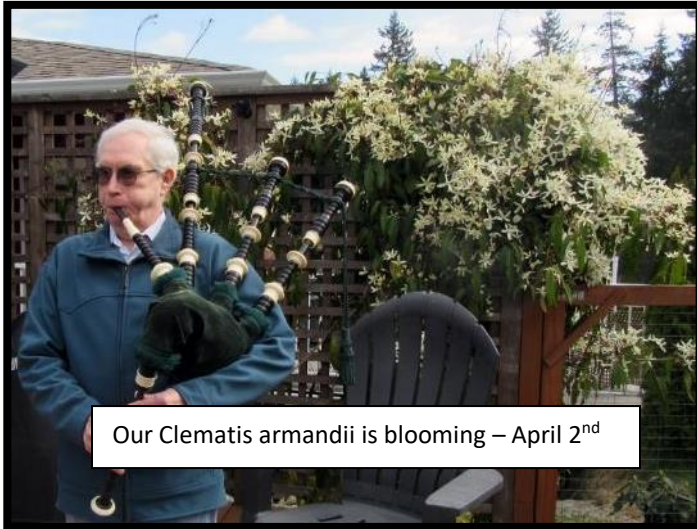
We will certainly be looking to hold a few work parties once it is safe to do so, but we can't say when that will be.

Let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Take care,  
Geoff

## Photos from our members

### From Don Noakes:



### From Val Harvey:



*Editor's note: This one has a story - in the late 90's, Gord Galloway was our club's president. A recent convert to growing rhododendrons, he began growing rhododendrons from open pollinated seed that he collected. Unfortunately, Gord passed away in 2000. Many of his seedlings have been grown on by NRS members. We have several in our garden too. Val and Glyn had to use a ladder to take this photo!!*

*What do you get if you cross a four-leaf clover with poison ivy?  
A rash of good luck.*



From Chris Southwick:





From Liz and Alan Murray:



Lovely photos from their garden "Misty View" ...

*What do you call a sheep who likes to tell jokes?  
..... A EWE-MORIST!*



### **Fall into Gardening is Back – or at least we hope so!**

In October 2018, the Nanaimo and Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Societies co-hosted a very successful one day fall gardening workshop in Parksville. The event was called "Fall into Gardening" and had the theme of "Navigating Garden Myths". The organizing committee continues to be hard at work putting together a special day for the gardeners of central Vancouver Island.

Of course, we are living in uncertain times, but after a year off, "Fall into Gardening" hopes to be back in October 2020! The NRS and MARS have added a new partner: the Vancouver Island Master Gardeners Association. This year's theme will be "Gardening from the Ground Up". The program includes Linda Chalker-Scott, Richard Hebda, Shannon Berch and Scott Wiskerke. **We plan on holding it on Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup>, at the Parksville Community and Conference Center.** Details will follow in upcoming newsletters. Let's hope that we will be able to go ahead!

## Cooking Time by June Bouchard

Well, one of the positive side effects of the current situation is that, in addition to spending more time in our garden, we're also spending more time in our kitchen. Last month, we were very excited to see the beginning of the herb garden and the annual big batch of French Sorrel which we love turning into soup. Right now, the star of the food garden seems to be the rhubarb! We brought a couple of clumps from our old garden and had to move it to a new location 2 years ago as it wasn't producing much. After much compost and seaweed, it has finally taken off and we're having a bumper crop – see photo! Check your garden and re-discover an old classic – rhubarb! This recipe comes from a book we've had for years – it has been made many times and often altered: use brown sugar instead of honey, use regular milk or yogurt instead of buttermilk, add other nuts or dried fruit – be creative! Bon Appetit!

### Spring Tonic Muffins – what else but rhubarb!!!!

5 c. flour of your choice (I use whole wheat)  
2 tsp each, baking powder and baking soda  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
½ tsp. each, nutmeg and allspice  
½ c. finely chopped walnuts (optional)  
3 c. chopped fresh rhubarb  
2 c. buttermilk  
1 c. liquid honey  
½ c. oil or unsweetened applesauce  
1 tbsp. vanilla

Preheat oven to 375F. Mix dry ingredients. Stir in walnuts, if using, and chopped rhubarb. Mix other ingredients and add to dry mixture, stirring only until blended. Fill prepared muffin tins and bake approximately 25 minutes, depending on size of muffins.

\*\*\* (From *Muffins from the Heart* by Shirley M. Hartung, 1993)



“One of the main reasons why people cultivate and eat rhubarb is for its astounding nutritional value. It is packed with minerals, vitamins, organic compounds, and other nutrients that make it ideal for keeping our bodies healthy. According to the USDA National Nutrient Database, these precious components are dietary fiber, protein, vitamin C, vitamin K, B complex vitamins, calcium, potassium, and magnesium. In terms of organic compounds, the plant is a rich source of beta-carotene (which can be enzymatically converted to Vitamin A), polyphenols (which can act as antioxidants), lutein, and zeaxanthin.”

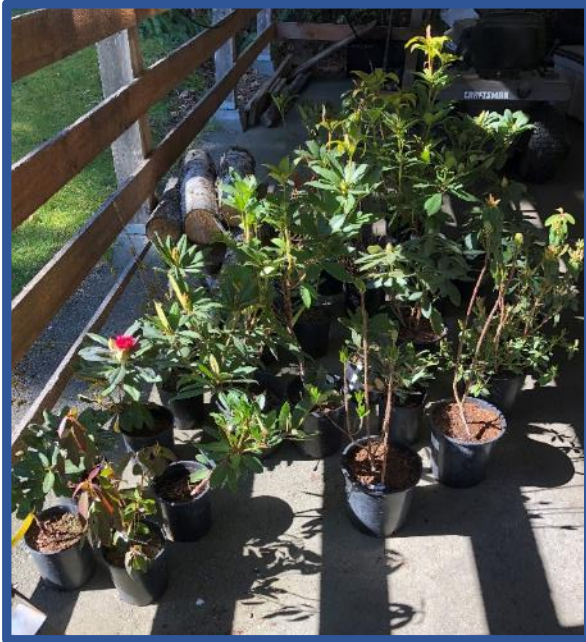
<https://www.organicfacts.net/health-benefits/fruit/rhubarb.html>

*What do you get if you divide the circumference  
of a pumpkin by its diameter?*

*Pumpkin pi.  $\pi$*



## Planning ahead for when we get back together again....



Our club's executive purchased 27 rhodos from Rose Rogan at Perennial Ridge Nursery. Many of you will remember Rose's plants at our annual plant sale. Given the current COVID 19 situation, Rose has had difficulty selling her plants. Chris Southwick and Ron Sutton went down in separate vehicles to pick up the rhodos in mid-April. The plants are being held by Ron and will be for raffle prizes, auction items, etc., once we're able to meet again. Thank you, Chris and Ron, for making the trip down to the Cowichan Valley on behalf of the club.

Remember all of those rhododendron cuttings that our propagation group took last fall? They're doing just fine. Here's a video that Christine from VIU (she's also an NRS member!) took in mid April. Check it out!

If you would like to see how our cuttings are doing - [Click here](#) - don't they look great!!!

Hurrah, we now have the long awaited "What's Blooming" photo pages in works, thanks to our Webmaster Deborah Francis with a helping hand of Garth Wedemire.

Please see: <http://nanaimorhodos.ca/rhododendron-flowering-seasons/>

Thank you, Deborah, and thank you Garth, as well as a grand thank-you to all those gardening photographers, who contributed those splendid photos.

Rosina

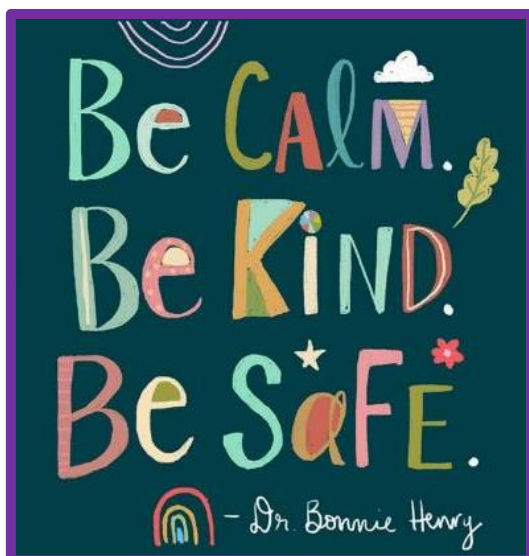
# RESCHEDULED!



Our intention is to duplicate all elements of the 2020 convention, including the Pre-Tour (new dates: April 25-26) and Post-Tour (new dates: May 1-3), while including even more enhancements to the original features. Registration will open again on December 1, 2021. For convention updates, sign up at ARS75.org.

Meanwhile, we hope the Fall Regional Conference in Gettysburg, PA, (Sept. 25-27, 2020) will proceed unaffected. And we'll see you all again at the ARS 2021 Spring International Convention in Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia (June 3-6, 2021).

The 2020 ARS Convention Committee



*To echo the words of Dr. Bonnie Henry, "Be kind, be calm and be safe!"*

*And enjoy your garden!*



*(Please note, the June Newsletter will come out in early June, so we can publish the winners of the May Virtual Truss Show)*