

# THE RHODOTELLER



*'Transit Gold' hybridized by Stuart Holland in the Victoria area. Photo: Garth Wedemire*

## Rhodo Theme: “Born on Vancouver Island”

The CVRG garden at the Courtenay Airpark now consists of 7 beds, containing over 130 varieties of rhododendrons. Our first bed was completed in April 1996. Through hard work and donated plants the seventh bed, known as the “BOVI” bed (Born On Vancouver Island), was built in October 2006 and officially opened in May 2007. This specialized bed contains only those rhododendrons which have been hybridized here on Vancouver Island.

## Meetings & Events

Sept 6	Executive Meeting
Sept 13	General Meeting 7:00 pm Comox United Church
Sept 15	CVRG work party 10:00 am
Oct 23	“Fall into Gardening” event at the Qualicum Civic Centre



*BOVI - 'Forbidden Plateau' is a Harry Wright hybrid. Photo: Garth Wedemire*

## Sunshine Lady

If you know of a member of our club who is experiencing an illness, surgery or bereavement please contact Joanne Williams to pass on a message on behalf of our Club.

## President's View

by Dave Godfrey

After a cool wet spring, things certainly turned around for a gorgeous summer. Thankfully, the fine warm weather came in time for our annual potluck picnic on Saturday, June 25<sup>th</sup>. Our thanks to Carolyn, Naomi, and Harris Chester for hosting us once again in their beautiful garden. There was a great selection of food for dinner, fun games to play for those who wished to participate and lots of social conversations. It was also our first opportunity to welcome our two newest memberships – Aleia Cukor of Comox and Lisa Bernard and her brother, James Vipond of Merville. It was great to see some 50-plus members enjoying the day.

On the evening of July 21<sup>st</sup>, members Aubrey Ferris, Dan Prain, Sheryl Murakami, and Trevor Strother-Stewart helped me install the shade cloth over the garden at the Smith's, just as the hot sunny weather was ramping up. We have had several heat warnings since, and without the shade cloth and the regular watering, we would have surely lost many of the plants.



A great team of helpers has kept our propagated rhododendrons watered and well cared for during this long dry spell.

Our thanks to Antje Guertler for taking over from Wolfgang and her vigilance of our plants; and to Diana Scott for organizing the watering crew schedule. We are grateful for all those of her crew who have contributed their time and efforts to ensure the survival of these valuable plants. Our plant care system and program are now being adopted by several other island chapters.

Once the plants are sorted and enough are set aside for the next public sale in April, we will hold another 'Members Only' sale in late September or early October (date to be announced!).

On Tuesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, Noni and I were accompanied by Vice President Naomi Chester and Past President Maureen Denny as we attended the District 1 Presidents' meeting at Milner Gardens in Qualicum Beach. All island chapters were represented and are reportedly thriving well both with membership and activities. Whereas the mainland chapters (Vancouver and Fraser South) are unfortunately still struggling.



The District will continue to provide the occasional programs via Zoom and have a couple of speakers in mind. The District is also investigating the possibility of hosting another ARS Spring Conference similar to the one held in Victoria in 2015. The hope is that facilities and accommodations in Nanaimo will make it possible to hold the 2026 conference there.

In the meantime, it has been announced that the 2024 ARS Convention will be held in Bellingham, WA. The organizing committee for this convention is seeking advice and assistance from chapters on Vancouver Island that have had great success with organizing in the past.

At the moment, the Mount Arrowsmith and Nanaimo chapters, along with the Vancouver Island Master Gardeners Association, will be hosting a one-day “Fall into Gardening” event at the Qualicum Civic Centre on Sunday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>. For those members who have not attended a rhododendron conference before, this is an ideal introduction. Further details will be announced in the coming weeks.

With the success of the island chapters to attract and retain members, the ARS is seeking information and ideas that can be passed along to the many other chapters that continue to struggle with membership. Each chapter has been asked to contribute ideas for ways that this can be presented. The main one our North Island chapter instigated and has had great success with is the garden centre discounts for our members. This and others will be put forward for consideration.

Speaking of success, we congratulate the Nanaimo chapter as they celebrate their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary as an ARS chapter. A potluck party is planned for Saturday, September 10<sup>th</sup> at incoming President Ron Sutton’s property on Cougar-Smith Road in Fanny Bay. All NIRS members are invited to attend. Let’s hope that this gorgeous summer weather continues for their special event.

Now that summer is winding down, it is time to get back to our monthly meetings. To begin our season with a much-anticipated program, on Tuesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, our guest speaker will be Lois Blackmore from the Victoria chapter with a topic she calls “**THE ART, RESEARCH AND SCIENCE OF HYBRIDIZING.**” Lois’ program will relate the story of world-renowned hybridizer, Jim Barlup. This informative and educational program is sure to be worthwhile for all our members.

September is also the meeting where membership chair Dan Ryan, and his able assistant Margaret, will begin collecting the 2023 membership fees. You won’t want to miss out on a chance at the Early-bird draw. So be sure to bring your chequebook or \$40 cash along with you.

I am looking forward to welcoming many of you to the meeting at the Comox United Church on Tuesday, September 13<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM. In the meantime, continue to enjoy what is left of this gorgeous summer. Take care and stay safe!



*BOVI bed and CVRG sign photos taken in past Springs by various Chapter members*

## September Program: Lois & Roy Blackmore



On Tuesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, we will welcome Lois & Roy Blackmore from the Victoria chapter to give a presentation on the late Jim Barlup's Hybrids.

The presentation will explore the **art, research, and science behind Jim Barlup's hybridizing history**. Jim was a world-renowned and recognized award-winning rhododendron hybridizer. His work is found in gardens around the world.

This complex subject will be presented through many photographs and simple explanations of how this occurred and the legacy he left behind.

Be sure to join us for this first meeting of the season and enjoy the presentation which begins at 7:30 PM. Guests are always welcome.

## Ways and Means: draw & door prizes

by Aubrey Ferris

### **R. yakushmanum "Exbury"**

The predominant flower colour is pink, fading to white, and may be spotted. Blooms early to mid-season. Compact and round and grows to 2 feet in 10 years. Hardy to -26 C. Easy to grow, with a year-round ornamental appeal. Tolerant of sun or shade.



### **Azalea Ben Morrison**

Light shade to full sun, an attention-getting **azalea** with bicolor blooms, and gorgeous white marginated petals with brilliant splashes of orange pinks that darken toward the center. With a tall open growth habit, this evergreen is sure to catch attention when it blooms early mid-season in the spring. (Note: Ben Morrison is one of the five featured hybridizers in the book "Hybrids and Hybridizers".



### **R. mekongense (Arboretum Milde Norway)**

Yellow flower. The truss is sometimes flushed or marked red or pink. Blooms in midseason. It is a broadly upright shrub that grows to about 3 feet in 10 years and has cold hardiness of - 21 degrees C.





**BOVI - 'Gwendolyn Wright' is a Harry Wright hybrid. Photo: Garth Wedemire**

## CVRG “The Rhodo Garden”

by Maureen Denny



Thanks to all the club members who volunteered for this summer's evening work parties to look after The Comox Valley Rhododendron Garden. Due to the cool wet spring, the rhodos are looking healthy this year. The irrigation system is managed by Courtenay Parks and has had a couple of adjustments to increase the length of watering time as the weather has warmed up and no rain has fallen. Starting in September the work parties will switch to mornings.

The next work party will be Thursday, September 15 at 10 am. Please bring your tools and a bucket. The work party is 1 hour long and then we meet for goodies.

We always have a good time so please join in!



*Photos by*

*Noni Godfrey*

## Membership

by Dan Ryan

The newest 2 memberships came from the National Garden Day event held at the Gardens on Anderton. We welcomed Aleia Cukor and Lisa Bernard / James Vipond at our annual picnic. We currently have 77 members including 5 associates.

With the return to regular meetings starting on September 13 we will start collecting for 2023 membership renewals. The dues for membership are regular \$40.00 and \$10.00 for an associate membership (must hold a regular membership with another ARS Chapter).

Once again we are offering the "Early Renewal Program." Register before November 30, 2022, and you will be entered into a draw to win your membership fee.



*BOVI - 'Paradise Meadows' is a Harry Wright hybrid. Photo: Garth Wedemire*





# 2022 Fall into Gardening

## *“Coping with Climate Instability in your Garden”*

**MARS** (Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society), **NRS** (Nanaimo Rhododendron Society), and **VIMGA** (Vancouver Island Master Gardeners Association) are pleased to offer a day of education and enjoyment with internationally recognized gardening experts.

**Tickets: \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door**

See NRS website for details about **how to register**: <http://nanaimorhodos.ca/>

- Date: **Sunday, October 23, 2022**
- Location: Qualicum Beach Civic Centre  
747 Jones St. Qualicum Beach, B.C. V9K 1S7
- Time: 10:00 AM to 3:30 PM

10:00 AM – 10:05 AM	Introductory Remarks
10:05 AM – 11:00 AM	<b>Douglas Justice:</b> UBC Botanical Garden Associate Director and Curator <b>“Planting Trees for a Drier and Hotter Future”</b>
11:00 AM – 11:20 AM	Break
11:20 AM – 12:15 PM	<b>Caroline Josefsson:</b> Vancouver Island University Biology Department <b>“Gardening with less water – learning from the Garry Oak Ecosystem”</b>
12:15 PM – 1:15 PM	Lunch
1:15 PM – 2:10 PM	<b>Des Kennedy:</b> writer, activist, celebrated speaker <b>“Weather or Not” a light hearted romp through the triumphs and travails of the weather-beaten gardener</b>
2:10 PM – 2:30 PM	Break
2:30 PM – 3:25 PM	<b>Bonnie Zand:</b> Entomologist and owner of Bonnie’s Bugs IPM <b>“Gardening for bees” supporting BC’s diverse native bees</b>
3:25 PM – 3:30 PM	Closing Remarks

**Refreshments:** coffee, tea, and treats will be provided. **Please bring your own bag lunch.**





*BOVI - 'Beaufort Gem' is a Harry Wright hybrid. Photo: Garth Wedemire*

## Board of Directors & Committee Chairs 2021/2022

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Antje Guertler 250-338-2306

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### Sunshine Lady

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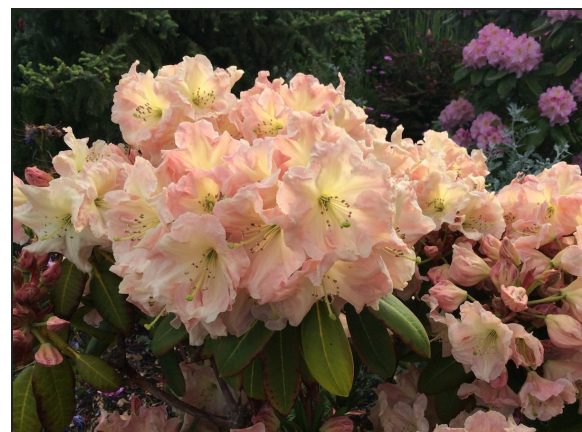
<http://www.nirsrhodos.ca>



*'Courtenay Duke'*



*'Courtenay Lady'*



*'Courtenay Queen'*

*All 3 of the above BOVI Rhodos are Harry Wright hybrids; photos taken by Diana Scott*