

The Victoria Rhododendron Society

Newsletter



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September 2008 Twenty-eighth Year of Publication

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Meeting

7:30 p.m. Monday, September 8, 2008

Garth Homer Centre, 811 Darwin Street, Victoria, B.C.

Speaker: Dr. Brian White “Plant Collecting in Vietnam with Peter Wharton”

SEPTEMBER REFRESHMENTS

Laurie Burlock, Norma and Gord Callow, Alan and Sandy Campbell, Michael and Sharon Challen, Etta and Ruth Cook, Jan Dammel and Carol and Bill Dancer are asked to bring wrapped refreshments to September's meeting. Please phone Nadine Minckler at 250-474-1429 to confirm contributions. Help for Joanna Massa and Heather Dickman is always welcome.

April Show and Sale location

At this September 8 meeting, members of our Rhododendron society will have a chance to discuss the location of our Show and Sale next April. For years, we have had the show at the Cadboro Bay United Church on Arbutus Road. Last April, it was at Glendale Gardens.

Advantages and disadvantages of each location will be discussed.

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Report on the Summer Picnic, June 22

By Theresa McMillan

The decision to have the picnic later in June this year worked very well; it was a glorious day. Tom and Ann Widdowson's garden on West Saanich road has many outstanding features. I enjoyed looking at Tom's lush vegetable garden, the lawns and pond, and Ann's many rhododendrons and perennials, several tucked away in beds along the creek, which has been enhanced by Tom's bridges and waterfalls.

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The Widdowsons' four cats live in a smaller garden, but they have their own trees, grass and flowers. There is an ingenious fence that keeps hungry deer at bay, and agile climbing cats confined and safe from speeding traffic on West Saanich Road.

Under a spreading green tree were many, many plants for the raffle. A table was set up with the VRS trophies, Margaret DeWeese's vase of lilies and paeonies, and Alan and Liz Murray's vase of colourful rhododendron hybrids.

The pot luck picnic was well attended, so we were treated to a wide variety of salads, and desserts. The tables and tea and coffee were set up by Joanna Massa. Heather Dickman made her traditional fruit punch. Savoury salmon fillets were barbecued by Archie Brown and Roy Blackmore.

After the lunch, Margaret DeWeese presented the club trophies for April's Show and Sale, and Bronze medals from the America Rhododendron Society to Dean Goard, Bill McMillan, and Ken Webb.

The raffle followed, and the attendees left.

New Member

Welcome to our new member Wang Tong Qi, who joined in May. She has a wonderful mature rhododendron garden in the Fernwood area.

In Memory of....

We are sorry to report the passing of long-time member Mary Boyd in February.

Unhappily, cancer claimed the life of well-known plant collector, Peter Wharton this summer. Brian White wrote to us that "We are all deeply in debt to him for his groundbreaking work in plant exploration and intro-

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duction , and I feel privileged that we were able to share some memorable times together on our last expeditions.". All are welcome to join his family on September 6th from 2 to 5pm at the UBC Botanical gardens to celebrate his life..

With sorrow we also report that James Fuller died on August 18. James along with his wife Pat, edited our VRS Newsletter from

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Club members enjoying the presentations



A bouquet of rhododendron hybrids grown by the Murrays



Our hosts, Tom and Ann, relaxing near the end of the picnic.

Margaret deWeese's white paeonia and lily bouquet



Margaret deWeese and bronze medal winner, Dean Goard



Bill McMillan, bronze medal winner



Ken Webb, bronze medal winner



DEAN'S FOLLIES

By Dean Goard

GOAL – To create a deeper yellow on caloxanthum

PROCEDURE: On April 21, 2001 I followed Joe's procedures by "condoming" caloxanthum flowers to prevent unwanted pollination. Took pollen from pollen from rhodo #3280 wardii at UVic and placed it on caloxanthum.



WARDII



CALOXANTHUM

Description of Rhododendron wardii var wardii

Predominate Flower Color: Yellow

Flower / Truss Description: Widely campanulate to saucer-shaped, various shades of yellow. Truss has 5-14 flowers

Foliage Description: Leaves orbicular or ovate to oblong-elliptic, up to 4 1/2" long, glabrous

Description of Rhododendron campylocarpum ssp. Caloxanthum

Predominate Flower Color: Yellow

Flower / Truss Description: Campanulate, pale to bright yellow, sometimes with basal blotch. Lax truss holds 3-10 flowers.

Bloom Time: Early Midseason

Foliage Description: Leaves orbicular with cordate base, up to 4" long, glabrous.

RESULTS: Two of the offspring bloomed this year (a photo of one of these follows).



To quote the Rolling Stones:

"You can't always get what you want

But if you try sometimes you might find

You get what you need"

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February 1999 to June 2006. Typical of James was his keen and irreverent sense of humour, as shown in excerpts from his self-written obituary which follow.

“JAMES CHESTER EEDY FULLER Died August 18, 2008 from heart/lung complications, but on no account 'after a courageous battle against lung disease.' Born Toronto June 5, 1927; raised in Winnipeg. Leaves his wife, Patricia (nee Honeyman). Predeceased by his late wife Shirley (nee Johnson). Survived by two lovelies, daughter Hilary and daughter-in-law, Cynthia, splendid son John, and grandchildren James and Sarah. Enriched by a host of nieces and nephews to the third generation, as well as Pat's fine brood from her earlier marriage. Attended the Ontario Agricultural College (BSA '48) and the University of Western Ontario (MBA `55). Retired in 1990 to Victoria BC from The Netherlands, where he completed his long career in the chemical industry as Executive Vice President of Akzo Chemicals. Claims to have lived a life of great privilege in so many dimensions: firstly in the incredible luck of marrying two marvelous women, Shirley Johnson and Pat Honeyman, both of whom encouraged his unhurried journey towards maturity; then, in all the places he lived ,

Winnipeg on the Canadian prairies, Stratford area farms, Guelph, Elmira and London in Southern Ontario; Toronto, Chicago, Yorkshire and The Netherlands, before retirement to Victoria, Canada's paradise.

He rejoiced in the company of his senior Dutch colleagues, who provided him with yet another experience of living in their attractively civilized country for his last three years of employment at Akzo. Chemical division.

He shared with them the belief in laughter as a valuable business solvent and in the philosophy of punishing company politicking. Upon retirement in 1990, James took up gardening, which is mandatory in Victoria.

As his lung disease advanced he decided to exchange the stairs of a large house for the elevator of a condominium, but continued as editor of the local rhododendron society's newsletter through 2006.

In 2005 he joined the Secular Humanists and happily combined his official status as a born-again atheist, with the richness of Victoria's music and theatre scenes.

There was an open house at his residence, on Sunday August 24th. There will also be a celebration of James' life in Winnipeg in October.

**ARS Western Regional Convention
Hilo, Hawaii,
September 25 – 28, 2008.**

The conference location in Hilo, on the Big Island of Hawaii, is near where the local volcano is constantly spewing lava into the sea. Also near Hilo is a very large and very beautiful tropical botanical garden; the orchid section alone is worth the price of admission. Moreover, many conference attendees in past years have reported that they have enjoyed the Western Regional conventions even more than the national ones.

Both Air Canada and Westjet have direct flights to Maui from Vancouver and from there it is easy to take any one of several daily inter-island flights to Hilo.

Conference details are posted on the ARS website at : www.rhododendron.org.

Ron Knight, ARS District 1 Director