

# PARS News

## Coming Events

Nov 25	<b>General Meeting</b>
19:30	Speaker: Colleen Boyczuk (Forster) of Aldergrove Nurseries Topic: Plants of Winter Interest
Dec 15	<b>Christmas Do (Cancelled)</b>
Jan 27	<b>General Meeting</b>
19:30	Speaker: Graham Lane Topic: Dart's Hill
Feb 24	<b>General Meeting</b>
19:30	Workshop
Mar 24	<b>General Meeting</b>
19:30	Speaker: Harold Fearing Topic: Species Rhodos
Apr 04	<b>Annual Plant Sale</b> Elgin Hall



[www.PeaceArchRhodo.ca](http://www.PeaceArchRhodo.ca)

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### President's Report— **Kenneth Parker**

Now the night of goblins and ghosts has passed, Christmas decorations have miraculously appeared in the stores. People have now started to shop for gifts to bring their loved ones pleasure. But please, take a moment to remember those less fortunate who are having hard times in these tough economic times.

We are going to have a twoonie table in March. We have also started a plant swap or seek request in the newsletter where you can tell the members about any plants, that you are happy to give away, or any that you may be looking for, just pass the information along for Mike to publish.

We are looking to know who is expecting to attend the Christmas meeting, because if there are insufficient people planning to attend we may do something during Jan instead.

Based on the survey that was circulated at the last meeting there was quite a positive response to the enquiry about garden tours. So Chris has put together a programme of suggested garden tours and activities away from the meeting hall. Without going into details and stealing Chris's thunder I can say that it looks very good and interesting. He will explain in time as things are reviewed and organised.

## Book Review – Margaret Hodgson

### *Seeds of Adventure* by Peter Cox and Peter Hutchison

Garden Art Press, The Antique Collectors' Club, Suffolk, England, copyright 2008. \$53.98 Cdn. 415 pages, approx. 700 colour photos, and four pages of coloured maps outlining the various trips of the adventurers. Appendix of place names, glossary and bibliography is followed first by a plant index and then by a very good general index. Hardbound, ISBN 978-1-870673-58-7 (hardcover)

**Peter Cox** VMH was brought up with plant hunting in his blood and with its influences all around him. He is a world authority on rhododendrons, has run the famous Glendoick Nursery near Perth, Scotland, and with his son has written more books on rhododendrons than anyone else. These include *Encyclopedia of Rhododendron Species* and *Cox's Guide to Choosing Rhododendrons*. For his achievements in horticulture, Peter Cox has been awarded the Victoria Medal of Honour, the Gold Medal of the American Rhododendron Society, The Nurseryman and Garden Centre Lifetime achievement award, awards from the Institute of Horticulture and Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society. In June 2005 he was awarded an honorary doctorate of Science from St Andrews University.

Peter Cox's early life was much influenced by his father, Euan H.M. Cox, a prominent botanist and famous plant collector in the early 1900s. Among his father's colleagues were such famous names as Joseph Rock, Frank Kingdom Ward and Reginald Farrer. Peter was also fortunate to have friends such as H.H. Davidian and Dr. John Cowan at the Royal Botanic Garden.

**Sir Peter Hutchison** is a keen gardener and plantsman who became the first Chairman of Trustees at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and was later Chairman of the Forestry Commission. His particular enthusiasms are rare trees and primulas. Both Peters come from the East of Scotland but share a wild garden, Baravalla, in Argyll on the mild western coast where they grow plants they have collected. Peter Hutchison claims that although he did not grow up surrounded by the famous names of Peter Cox's background, his main influence in his path to a love of gardening and plant collecting came from growing up with a Victorian walled garden. The head gardener was a kindly man who was not in the least disturbed by having a small child tag along after him, watching him do everything in the greenhouses or the vast gardens. Also his mother was a keen gardener who passed on this enthusiasm to her son. She had a wide knowledge of plants and an instinctive eye for putting them together.

*Seeds of Adventure* tells the story of extensive travels made by Peter Cox and Peter Hutchison in search of hardy plants. They describe sixteen journeys – often arduous, sometimes dangerous and occasionally funny - that resulted in the collection of seeds from plants high in the peaks of the Himalaya, western China and Turkey. On many of these trips they travelled to places so remote and rough that no western explorers had ever been before to botanise the plants.

The two Peters, as a result of their work, introduced many plants, especially rhododendrons, new or lost to cultivation, often saving them from extinction by growing seeds in the temperate climate Scotland following their trips and introducing their finds to Europe, New Zealand, Australia and Temperate zones of North America.

After their first trips in 1962 to Turkey and 1965 to India, they suffered a long gap before their next trip in 1981 to China because of many setbacks to their plans caused by political difficulties in so many countries during the intervening years. In 1967 they tried to get back into North-east India without success, in 1973, no success for a trip to Bhutan. They received discouraging reports against going into Chile during the 1970s, nothing came of their attempts to get into Burma (Myanmar), but they never stopped planning, turning their focus towards China in 1978 and this

came to fruition in 1981. From the year 1981, the trips quickly multiplied and they managed a total of sixteen trips, finally getting to Bhutan in 1988, Tibet in 1998 and Arunachal Pradesh in 2001. The last trip described is to Subansiri, India, 2002. The organization of the book basically follows one chapter to one trip. A very interesting book to read. The pictures are superior.

**Plant Swap** – Let people know of valuable and interesting plants you are willing to part with or are interested in finding. Just drop a note to the [editor@peacearchrhodo.ca](mailto:editor@peacearchrhodo.ca)

3 large clumps of feather reed grass – *Calamagrostis arundinacea* ‘Karl Foerster’ – (2001 perennial plant of the year)

Free – but need to be picked up from our home. – Sandra Bryson

Several large clumps of giant Solomon’s Seal – *Polygonatum* *hyb.* ; *Schitzostylis* spp (a gladiolus relative blooming now); pink *Anemone japonica*

Free – but need to be picked up from our home. – Mike Richards

Plants available free to a good home (just come and pick up) – Chris Hodgson (541 2382):

- Siberian iris – sorry, it was shy and hiding this summer behind other perennials so can’t recall the colour
- Penstemon – perennial - purple
- Sedum spectabile - Carmen
- Hydrangea macrophylla: red mopheads, 1m tall at maturity.

Also on the lookout for:

- Hosta: Sum and Substance, Hadspen Blue (or similar heavily-veined blue hosta)
- Alstroemeria – OK, I know it’s invasive, but I’ll beat it into submission. I fell in love with it in the hedgerows of southern Chile.

### PARS CHRISTMAS PARTY

Due to our members’ busy schedules prior to Christmas, we have decided to cancel our Christmas party on December 15<sup>th</sup>.

We will plan to have a few Christmas goodies at the November meeting and postpone a festive event until the New Year.

PARS Executive

## Upcoming Garden Tours Chris Hodgson

Three weeks ago at the PARS October meeting members were polled as to their interest in each of about half a dozen possible garden tours starting next spring. The poll also asked members if they would be interested in participating in field trips through the summer months. The response was overwhelmingly positive on both counts, although not all members responded to the question on extending the field trip season as I'm told they had not spotted the question at the bottom of the page (I hope this was the reason).

With that in mind, I have gone ahead and organized four trips over the period March through June (see attached table). All garden-owners have given us the thumbs up, although the tour date may be adjusted slightly in some cases as we get closer to the tour date to accommodate the owners and avoid other conflicts. **So print the attached table and stick it on your fridge NOW.**

The trips are spaced about a month apart over the period March through June. Additional trips over the period July through September of next year will be announced in the spring depending on response to these first trips. I would guess at present we have a stock of superb tours sufficient to last about five years without repeats. Thanks to Anna Burian, Joan Bengough, Sandra Bryson, Garth Wedemire and others for the great suggestions.

We kick off the tour season with a one-day trip to the Species Foundation on Saturday, March 21. We'll leave at the crack of dawn to avoid border delays and arrive at the Species Foundation by 10 am. Rick Peterson or Steve Hootman will greet and guide us through the grounds. There's no food on the premises but lots of restaurants nearby. We should be home by 7 pm.

On April 9 we have a tour planned to Harold and Ginny Fearing's mature species rhodo garden and greenhouses on their 30 acre property in Abbotsford. This will be the Thursday following our own PARS plant sale on April 4. Perhaps we'll be super-saturated with rhodos by then, but my idea was to make the trip mid-week (Harold will be tied up on all Saturdays in April with plant sale events) and early enough to allow us an opportunity to scoop up the best of Harold's plants before they're sold off. Following, we'll visit Anna Burian's parents' property in nearby Aldergrove to see their collection of rare and unusual trees and other botanical wonders.

On Saturday, May 2 we have a triple header: a tour of the Free Spirit Nursery in Langley followed by a visit to John and Gail Dodd's Wingswept (rhodo) Garden, also in Langley, and ending at the Hodgsons place in Crescent Park. Margaret and I visited the Free Spirit Nursery in October and were very impressed by the variety of perennials offered, the well-organized layout and the quietly professional nature of owner Lambert. I think you will be too. The tour will also include the owners' private gardens. Finally, we return to the Hodgson home in South Surrey for a pot-luck lunch. Margaret says only by forcing the issue and volunteering an open house will I get the garden in shape by next year. Don't get your hopes up.

Finally, the Ryder Lake Ramble tour is an annual 2-day event in mid-June organized by private gardens and nurseries in the Ryder Lake area near Chilliwack. The idea is that you register as an individual or by the car-full, and drive from one to the other. The garden selection is quite eclectic. There are 10 gardens in all, each with its specialty: English country, irises, Celtic carvings (?), llamas, a native plant nursery, and of course rhodos. You can Google "Ryder Lake Ramble" for details. I've not done this tour but it sounds like fun. With a picnic lunch and a bottle of wine the tour will be complete.

More details will be announced on each trip as its date approaches. We hope to see you there!

<b>Proposed Trip</b>	<b>What's to see?</b>	<b>Timing (exact dates to be confirmed)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Rhodo Species Foundation and Botanical Garden, Federal Way, Wa.	The authority on species rhodos	Mar 21/ 2009 (Sat)	We make a long day of it, travelling there and back in one day. Car pool. Restaurants nearby.
Fearing's Farm Nursery, Abbotsford	Mature species rhodos and nursery	April 9/09 (Thurs)	A mid-week trip so as not to interfere with Harold's rhodo sale venues on weekends. Combine with trip to Anna Burian's parents place in Aldergrove - several acres with rare trees and many unusual plants.
(1) Free Spirit Nursery, Langley; (2) Wingswept Garden, Langley; (3) pot-luck lunch at the Hodgson's, Crescent Park	(1) Superior collection of mature and for-sale perennials and private garden tour (2) Excellent 3 acre rhodo garden beside a spring-fed stream; .	May 2 / 2009 (Sat)	Free Spirit grow 90% of what they sell. Many species plants in natural setting. Start at 9 am sharp and allow 2 hrs. Proceed to Wingswept Garden then to Hodgson's place in Crescent Park for late pot-luck lunch.
Ryder Lake Ramble	Tour of 10 unique gardens (English country, irises, orchids, llamas, blueberries, native plants, and of course rhodos)	June 13 (Sat), 2009	In 2008, fee was \$5 pp or \$15 per car load. This is a full day tour. Car pool and pack a picnic lunch.

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