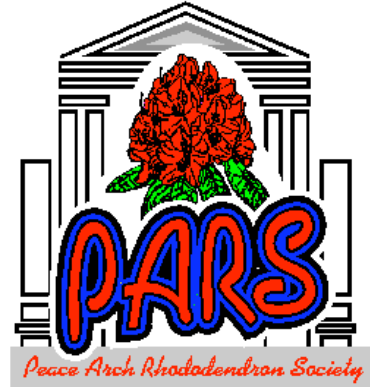


# PARS News

## Coming Events

- Mar 21     **Species Foundation Trip**  
07:00     Meet at: South Surrey Park and Ride  
King George Hwy at Hwy 99
- Mar 24     **General Meeting**  
19:30     Speaker: Harold Fearing  
Topic: Species Rhodos
- Apr 04     **Annual Plant Sale**  
Elgin Hall
- Apr 18     **Trip 2**  
Fearing's Farm, Bradner Daffodil Fest.,  
Burian's Gdn, Rain Forest Nursery
- Apr 28     **General Meeting**  
19:30     Speaker: Harold Fearing  
Topic: Species Rhodos



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

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

Now that we are into March, the AGM will take place at the PARS general meeting on March 24 and we have the duty of electing a new executive for the forthcoming year. At the moment we are looking good, with most of the executive positions already filled. However, for the club to function a **Treasurer is urgently needed**. If you or someone you know is willing to take on this position please advise either Ken Parker or Chuck Floyd. Here is the list of proposed executive members for 2009/10:

- |                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| President:        | Chuck Floyd      |
| Vice President:   | Chris Hodgson    |
| Past President:   | Ken Parker       |
| Secretary:        | Margaret Hodgson |
| <b>Treasurer:</b> | <b>Vacant</b>    |

The club presently operates with two directors who with the above executive sit at monthly executive meetings. We need a second **director**, who could also chair one of the committees listed below.

- |                           |                  |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Newsletter and Webmaster: | Michael Richards |
| <b>Director:</b>          | <b>Vacant</b>    |

In addition to the above, we have committee chairs who carry out specific duties to keep our organization running smoothly but do not normally attend executive meetings. These are our true unsung heroes. We are looking for both **Plant Sale** and **Publicity Chairpersons**.

- |                                 |                    |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Membership:                     | Sandra Bryson      |
| Meeting Site Logistics:         | Sandra Bryson      |
| Program Speakers & Field Trips: | Chris Hodgson      |
| Promotions, Raffle:             | Bryan Williams     |
| Social:                         | Lynda Featherstone |

Librarian:	Margaret Hodgson
Sunshine:	Joan Bengough
Historian:	Elfriede DeWolf
<b>Plant Sale:</b>	<b>Vacant</b>
<b>Publicity:</b>	<b>Vacant</b>
Phone Committee:	Lois Williams
Nominations:	Ken Parker

As president I would sincerely like to thank everyone who has been, is currently or will be helping run this organisation we know as PARS.

Our Feb meeting was quite enjoyable with the Valentine theme. I hope that it was enjoyed by all of you. This month we are having a **Toonie table** so get splitting those plants and bring the extras for the table.

Don't forget the **Species Foundation trip** this coming weekend, 21 Mar. Full details are provided elsewhere in this Newsletter.

This will be followed by the PARS Plant Sale 9 am to 3 pm on April 4, at Elgin Hall. Handbills will be available at the March 24<sup>th</sup> meeting so that you can pass along the particulars to your friends.

Finally, the second field trip of the year is planned to **Fearing's Farm** Nursery on Saturday, April 18, and to other gardens in the Aldergrove area. This trip is described elsewhere in the Newsletter and on our [website](#).

#### Book Review – **Margaret Hodgson**

***Rhododendron Species 2009*** Edited by Prudence Hollinger and Steve Hootman, Associate Editor. Rhododendron Species Foundation and Botanical Garden, Federal Way, Washington, Allen Press Inc., Lawrence, Kansas, USA., copyright 2009.

126 pages, 13 plates of colour photos, black and white photos, three maps, index, ordering instructions from the Seed Foundation. (paperback).

Since we are going off on an adventure tour to the Rhododendron Species Foundation and Botanical Garden, Federal Way, Washington on March 21, 2009, I thought it would be interesting to review the Rhododendron Species 2009 Yearbook which we have just received.

The contributors for the articles are **Alleyn Cook**, retired Head Gardener and creator of the Ted and Mary Grieg Rhododendron Garden, Stanley Park, Vancouver, B.C.; **Ben Hall**, Professor of Botany (as well as of Genome Sciences) at the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington; **Steve Hootman**, Executive Director, Curator, and Garden Manager of the Rhododendron Species Foundation and Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden, Federal Way, Washington; **Akihito Okamoto**, formerly with the Kurume Vegetable and Flower Research Station National Agricultural Research Centre for the Kyushu-Okinawa Regional; currently Chief of the Planning Team, Planning and Promotion Section, Department, Department of Planning and General Administration, National Agricultural Research Centre for the Kyushu-Okinawa Region; **Mike Robinson**, Chairman of both the RHS Rhododendron and Camellia Committee, and their Rhododendron Camellia and Magnolia Group; lives in East Sussex, England; **Mike Snowden**, recently Head gardener at the famous garden Rowallane, in County Down, Northern Ireland.

**Alleyn Cook** was 27 years old in 1950 when he went to work at the famous Sunningdale Nurseries in England after having done a three-year apprenticeship at the equally famous Duncan and

Davies Nursery in his native New Zealand. He was 75 years old in 1998, when recovering from a heart attack, and having nothing better to do, he sat at the side of his hospital bed and wrote his memoirs of his English experience. And, he was 85 in 2008 when, at a dinner party at the home of Victor and Mary Comber Miles in Lions Bay, B.C., Cook handed over the manuscript of these memoirs, written in long-hand in the hospital. The resulting article, *Sunningdale Nurseries in the 1950s: A View from the Bottom*, is an extremely interesting account of a young lad who learned through hard work his vast knowledge of rhododendrons. As he grew in his knowledge, so did the expanse of Sunningdale Nurseries and orders continued to come in from Canada, particularly from one special customer, Mary Grieg of Royston Nursery, Vancouver Island.

The other articles of the 2009 yearbook are equally interesting and include Steve Hootman's description of his plant hunting expedition in 1997 to West Bengal and Sikkim, India, Mike Robinson's article on "Species Hybrids", and Wenyu Zhou, Hall et al, an article discussing genetic comparisons of eight *Rhododendron macrophyllum* populations in British Columbia, Washington and Oregon.

Chris Hodgson  
Ph.604 541 2382  
Updated 11 Mar/09

### **Species Foundation Tour**

As the snows recede and days lengthen, we are reminded that a new season of gardening and exciting PARS garden tours is almost upon us. Our first tour will be to the Rhododendron Species Foundation and Botanical Garden in Federal Way, Washington (about 35 kms south of Seattle) on Saturday, March 21. This will be an all-day event.

We have arranged minibus transportation for maximum 20 participants, departing South Surrey Park and Ride (off King George Highway near Highway 99) at 7 am sharp on Mar 21 (see map below for Park and Ride location and access). We will be met at the Foundation by Executive Director Rick Peterson who has personally guaranteed that almost all the species will be in full bloom for our visit! We tour the grounds in the am and lunch at a local restaurant. In the afternoon we tour the propagating facility and make our rhody purchases (see below), departing for home around 3 pm. Return e.t.a. at South Surrey Park and Ride is 6 pm. Individual cost is \$25 for the bus ride. Being ARS members, we have free admission to the grounds. Lunch of course will be extra. Don't forget your passport and out-of-province medical insurance!

We currently stand at 13 participants, so still have room on the bus for seven more. Phone me (Chris Hodgson) if you wish to join us on what promises to be a very interesting tour.

For those who wish to make plant purchases, in order to avoid any customs hassle at the border, I am advised that Steve Hootman of the Foundation will deliver any purchased plants to UBC on his next trip north, likely the week of April 20-24. Members will be notified by UBC of their arrival and pickup arrangements. More details during the tour.

## Fearings' Farm Nursery and More in the Abbotsford Area

Our second field trip is on Saturday, April 18. This will be another all-day blockbuster, a triple- or even quadruple-header event, starting at 9 am at Harold and Ginny Fearing's Farm Nursery near Abbotsford, specializing in species rhododendrons. For those who wish to carpool (or not get lost driving out to Fearing's Farm), Margaret and Chris will meet you at South Surrey Park and Ride at 8:00 am on the 18th.

Plan on a 45-60 minute drive to the Fearing Farm from White Rock. The most easily described route is along 16th Ave to Bradner Road (25 kms east of Hwy 99), up Bradner 7.2 kms to Haverman Rd, east for 1.6 km to Ross Rd and north for 0.4 kms to Fearing's Farm on the right hand (east) side. The house is about 0.5 kms off the road at the end of a long driveway. Directions to Fearing's Farm and the three other today's destinations are indicated on the attached map. Those travelling from Langley will probably want to take the freeway and turn off at 264 Street.

The next two destinations are both within a few kilometres of the Fearing Farm. We tour the Bradner Daffodil Festival and enjoy a sit-down lunch (about \$5 per person) at the Community Centre and perhaps even a private tour of organizer Audrey Satkin's daffodil farm. After lunch (2 pm-ish) we tour the five-acre garden of Anna Burian's parents on LeFeuvre Road in Aldergrove with rare and unusual tree and shrub specimens. Time permitting on the way home we can also visit Rain Forest Nursery, specializing in hostas and many old favourites. The nursery is located on 227 Street, one block south of 16th Avenue. Expect to be home by about 4 pm.

(Maps of the tours are to be found on the Proposed Tours page of our website.)

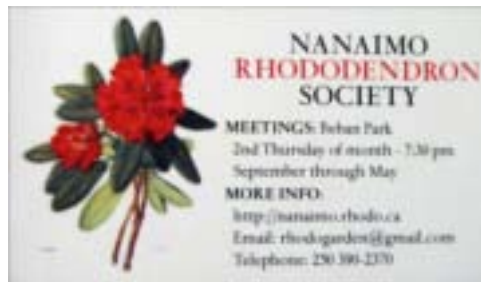
### **What's new in District 1?**

On March 3, the writer (Chris Hodgson) attended a District 1 meeting of ARS in Qualicum Beach as the PARS representative. District meetings are held twice a year. Fourteen members representing the nine District 1 chapters plus three District directors attended, with director Ron Knight in the chair. For those wondering (as I was) about the identity of the other chapters, they are NIRS (North Island – aka Comox-Courteney), CVRS (Comox Valley), VanRS, MARS (Mt. Arrowsmith – aka Qualicum-Parksville), NRS (Nanaimo), VicRS, FVRS (Fraser Valley) and FSRS (Fraser South).

This was my first exposure to District 1 and to the other chapters, and I was impressed by the experience, knowledge and general enthusiasm of the representatives and by the many good ideas they had for field trips, meetings, community involvement, fund-raising and attracting new members.

As you might guess, the number one concern of all was finding (and keeping) new members. Recruitment methods used by other chapters include:

- Being pro-active with the community newspaper and inviting its press photographer to the chapter's annual garden tour. NIRS says that this has resulted in 5-10 public guests at each meeting.
- Business cards, with club meeting dates, location, web and e-mail address and, on the reverse side, a list of nine advantages of membership.



- Holding combined meetings with companion-planting groups such as alpine or primula clubs to provide cross-club synergies. We're not just rhodo freaks, and neither are they just interested in alpines.
- Fraser South chapter awards medal annually for outstanding contributions to the chapter and to the propagation and culture of rhododendrons. Their seriousness of purpose and depth of experience is obvious and attractive to new members.
- Community involvement raises the chapter's public awareness and gives the chapter a focus. Last week NIRS produced a rhodo display in the Courteney post office coinciding with the issue on March 13 of two rhodo commemorative stamps by Canada Post: *R. yakushimanum* 'Mist Maiden' and 'Minas Maid' (See photo attached). Not a bad initiative, don't you think? A fun, imaginative effort by the members and great publicity for the chapter.



*Photo thanks to Dave Godfrey*

MARS is proposing a species study garden to be planted, hopefully in partnership with the Species Foundation, in a separate area of their very own Milner Gardens in Qualicum Beach, with room for about 300 species and 300 hybrids. What a great idea and a potential focal point for the club's communal efforts over the next few years! We wish them every success.

I found it quite instructive to view the websites of other District 1 chapters ([www.rhodos.ca/chapters.html](http://www.rhodos.ca/chapters.html)) to see what they're up to and how they operate. You should log on and see for yourself.

At the District 1 level, Ron Knight generously offered to host any chapter to a tour of the Sunshine Coast to visit the wild macrophyllums on Mt. Elphinstone, Caron Gardens (his own property) and the award-winning municipal gardens at Madeira Park. Those who subscribe to *Gardens West* will have already caught in this month's edition the featured seven-page article on Ron and Carla Knight's Caron Gardens near Pender Harbour. The Sunshine Coast will be a must-do future PARS tour!

The next District 1 meeting has been set for Tuesday, August 18th in North Vancouver. It will feature a presentation, "20 ways to encourage participation from members in chapter meetings". In preparation, and as soon as possible, Ron Knight ([rcknight@telus.net](mailto:rcknight@telus.net)) requests a maximum of 5 photos from your garden that have a theme and are instructive. For example, how I grow trilliums from seed; my five favourite dwarf rhodos; my composting system; kiwi pruning; my container garden; my rock garden design, etc. Ron asks that you briefly describe each photo in the text of the e-mail. If the party gets *really* boring I could provide a mildly humorous account of misadventures in our own compost pile.

At the ARS level, it occurs to me that we at PARS may not be taking full advantage of the resources available to us at ARS. We pay our annual fees and receive our quarterly ARS journal, but as a Yorkshireman, I want to see full value for my money. Naturally, this might also require some personal effort on our part, but one generally gets out of an experience equivalent to one's investment in it. Some of the issues raised at the Qualicum meeting included:

- ARS would like to publish on its website a list of public and private rhodo gardens and parks in each chapter area. Obviously this needs the consent of the owners, but we have many fine private gardens (mostly owned by shrinking violets) in our area. You know who you are, and your gardens are gorgeous! Ron asks that we send him a list with website addresses if available, or send directly to the ARS website operator.
- After the abominable winter we've just endured, ARS would like to update the "Proven Performer" lists on its website. I'm not aware that PARS ever had a proven performer list, but there's no time like the present. Please send your personal lists to PARS secretary Margaret Hodgson for compilation ([mmhodge@telus.net](mailto:mmhodge@telus.net), phone 604 541 2382).
- ARS Seed Exchange is another very useful benefit and is described on the ARS website [www.rhododendron.org](http://www.rhododendron.org). We can learn more about the seed exchange during the upcoming Species Foundation field trip on March 21.
- Glen Jamieson, the new ARS editor ([glen.ars@gmail.com](mailto:glen.ars@gmail.com)) is asking for "How-To" articles appearing in chapter newsletters to be forwarded to him.

- The annual ARS conference will be held this year in Everett, Washington on Apr 29-May 3. The five-day conference offers educational seminars, interesting speakers, and tours for both beginner and experienced rhododendron enthusiasts. More information can be found on the website.

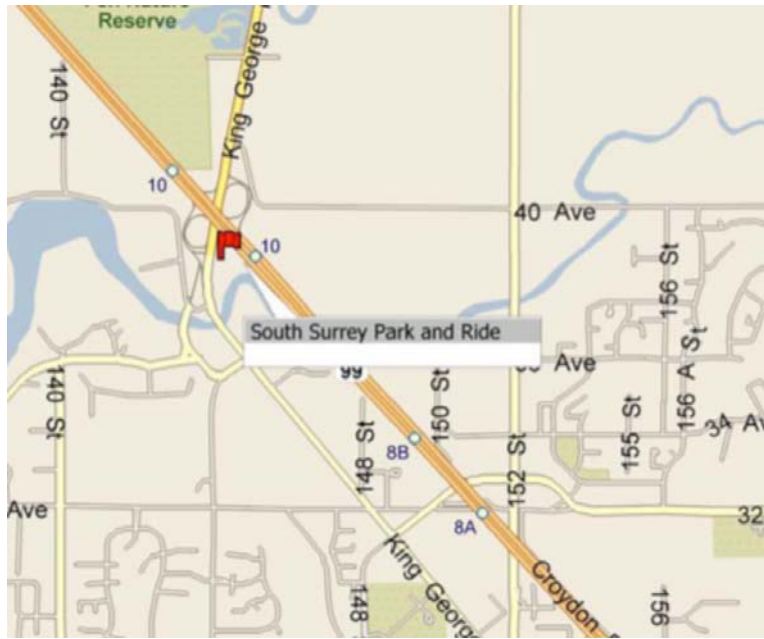
Following the March 3 meeting we visited the immaculate rhododendron garden of Art and Susan Lightburn near Parksville where Susan took the group photo below. Art will be our guest speaker at the PARS April meeting.

In summary, I went away feeling we at PARS should pay more attention to the interesting goings on at other District 1 chapters and at ARS. There are some very knowledgeable people out there doing exciting things with rhodo culture, propagation and landscaping. We could learn a lot, and, in the process, make the PARS experience more satisfying and enriching for us all.

Chris Hodgson

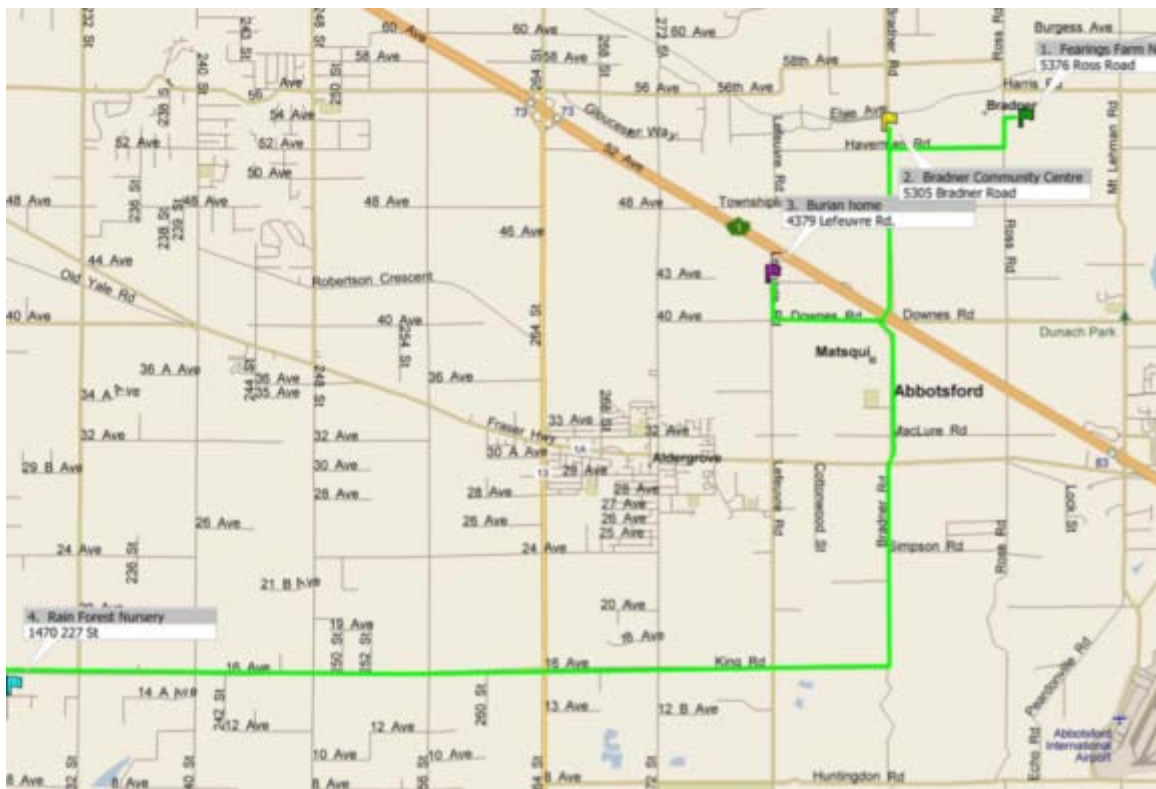


Chapter reps in the Lightburn's garden following District 1 mtg on March 3. Ron Knight kneeling at far left. Garth Wedemire standing at far right.



[\(link to top map\)](#)

[\(link to bottom map\)](#)



## Peace Arch Rhododendron Society Executive 2008-2009

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	May Jenkins	604-582-5964	Director2@PeaceArchRhodo.ca
	Michael Richards	604-542-0929	Director3@PeaceArchRhodo.ca

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Publicity	May Jenkins	604-582-5964	Director2@PeaceArchRhodo.ca
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Trips & Tours	Chris Hodgson	604-541-2382	Tours@PeaceArchRhodo.ca
Webmaster	Michael Richards	604-542-0929	webmaster@PeaceArchRhodo.ca

Website: [www.peacearchrhodo.ca](http://www.peacearchrhodo.ca)