

FRhodo



The newsletter magazine of the Fraser Valley Rhododendron Society

See us on the web at - www.FVRS.rhodos.ca

From The Boss (or A Message from your President)

Here it is, February, and the frost is hanging on the trees, sparkling like pendant crystal jewels in the early morning sun. The grass should be glistening with dew, not covered in frost. But it is still winter, & we have to wait a little longer for spring to arrive.

Some of the first flowers of spring are Primulas and Crocus

Primulas are native to the Himalayas and the cool regions of Southeast Asia and Europe. The flowers are circular, sometimes fragrant with five petals rising above the rosette of leaves. Flowers are on single stems, in clusters at the ends or in tiered, candelabra-like clusters along the stem. Primulas like chilly winters and regions, especially if foggy or overcast but they can also take full sun in hot sunnier areas with filtered light. Primulas prefer damp to boggy areas. They should be very happy here in BC.

Crocus, Are low growers from the Mediterranean region. They all have grass like leaves often with silvery midribs, foliage appears before, with, or after flowers, depending on the species. Most crocuses bloom in winter or earliest spring but some bloom in the fall (Speciosus Crocus) They are very attractive in rock gardens, between stepping stones & in containers. On the prairies the crocus were refereed to as the ears of spring.

Sativus crocus (saffron crocus) are grown for the saffron used in many cooking dishes. The stigma are plucked and dried.

Both these plants grow well with our rhododendrons, appearing early; they add color and beauty without disturbing the roots of the rhodos.

I hope to see you all at our next meeting on 23rd Feb. Come along and enjoy our speaker Bill Bischoff who will be sharing his extensive knowledge on Hardy Cyclamen & Cypripedium (Lady's slipper orchids)

Jill Futros -President

Next Meeting
MONDAY FEBRUARY 23rd, 7:30 PM
St. Andrew's Heritage Hall
22279 116th Avenue
Maple Ridge
(Just off the Haney by-Pass)



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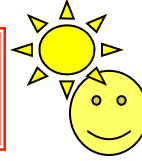


*Happy Valentine's Day to
all our readers!*

(psst! It's Feb 14th Guys!)

FRhodo's Chat

David H Kretzschmar - Editor



*Keep Smiling!...
It'll soon be Spring*

Wow! Has your snow gone yet? We still have patches of it left around our garden & it now resembles concrete! A lot of clean up work to do soon with lots of trees & shrubs damaged by the snow. I'm told that many of our local garden centers have suffered severe losses this year, both in plant stock & greenhouses etc.

I'm somewhat surprised how little input I'm receiving for this publication & I'm wondering, "does anyone actually read it?" Do me a favor please, if you do read this, please drop me an e-mail to say so, "read it" will do (FRhodo@shaw.ca). but it would help me to know which (if any) parts you find interesting & which you don't. On page 5, you'll find a flyer for our upcoming plant show & sale, please tell your friends, family & neighbours, print it off, ask around the end of March if you can display it in your local store, on your office notice board, anywhere really in & around Maple Ridge, Mission & Coquitlam. We really need the support of our communities, especially this year. The time leading up to our annual show & sale in April is an extremely busy one for your Board, lots to be organized, our show & sale doesn't just "happen!" Please offer to "do your bit" & lighten the load for others. Thank you!

Next month I hope to have some more information & ideas on organizing a few "members' gardens" visits. Garth & Art will be asking who is prepared to get involved & Anne will organize it, so... stay tuned.

... *Editor*

FRhodo's Club News ...

- Those who missed the January meeting missed a great night of members' slides some with music.. A big thanks to all those who contributed, Rosemary, Garth, Art & Scott (see Scott's article on page 3)
- Our regular plant raffle raised a total of \$49.00 for club funds.
- Those of you with internet access, please keep an eye on our website, www.fvrs.rhodos.ca we are trying to update it & add new items of interest as they become available. Recent additions are details of our April 26th Plant show (see our ad later in this issue) & details of the ARS Rendezvous in Everett, WA. from April 29th to May 3rd. Thanks to Art Prufer for his work in updating the website.
- Another item of interest is an upcoming Garden tour to Washington in May, Organized by the Cowichan Chapter, it sounds like a really well organized multi day tour.

Anyone interested should contact W E (Bill) Dumont, 1753 Peerless Rd, Cobble Hill, BC V0R 1L6

Office: 250-743-9882. Cell: 250-709-5542 Fax: 250-743-1639

Places are limited & Bill advises it's strictly a first come first served basis.

FRhodo's News from the Board.

Membership Structure & Fees. For some time now our club's membership structure & fees have not reflected those of the ARS in either category or cost. The cost discrepancy has previously been made up by the club, but we regrettably can no longer afford to do this, therefore the following changes have been made by your board.

Effectively immediately, FVRS membership structure & fees shall be modified to reflect the categories & costs associated with ARS affiliation. Fees for 2009/2010 membership year shall be:

Individual Membership: \$45.00/ year. (*individual membership applies to one person only not a couple. Ed*)

Family membership: \$50.00/ year. (*applies to 2 persons residing at the same address. Ed*)

Associate membership \$15.00/ year. (*an FVRS associate must be a full ARS member of another chapter*)

As has been past practice, Membership Fees will be reviewed annually by the Board at their September meeting prior to the new membership year



FRhoda

This Month's meeting ...

- This month Bill Bischoff will give a talk entitled "Hardy Cyclamen for your Garden" (& after this winter we need Hardy plants!) He'll also have slides of *Cypripedium* (Lady's Slipper Orchid)
- Garth will present a 15 minute slideshow of "Caron Gardens". This should have been shown last month but somehow the presentation went walkabout & couldn't be found! Caron Garden's was just part of the fabulous day trip some of us made last year to Mount Elphinstone on the Sunshine Coast. In my opinion a must see!



A Call for Volunteers ...

- As you are all aware, our Annual Plant Show & Sale will take place on Sunday, April 26th. **We need volunteers**, please don't wait to be "press ganged" into helping. We need assistance with set up & take-down, cash, plant sales, membership information, the truss show will also need setting up & taking apart. The sale & show cannot work without volunteers, so please contact Anne 1-604-826-8601 or e mail her at aebone@shaw.ca & indicate what tasks you can assist with. Please don't leave it all to the board of directors.
- On the same theme, Saturday 25th April, the day before our show & sale, we would like to organize a team to visit & collect Flower trusses from some of our local growers & gardeners. Garth will provide a list of who is contributing trusses for the show, we need people to visit them on the Saturday to collect the displays. Most of the gardens are in Maple Ridge, Hey! You get a chance to snoop in someone else's garden too! Please contact Garth who will co-ordinate this fun task.



Spring at the Lodge, Bembridge. *by Scot Henney*

Hobbled in the grip of winter, looking out on roadsides banked five feet high with snow, my thoughts turn to spring and the picture that comes to mind is one from a book. The book is "Shrubs and trees for the Garden" by A. Osborn, published by Ward-Lock. I bought my copy more than 40 years ago.

The title page conveys the information that A. Osborn was in charge of the arboretum at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew. It is still an excellent reference book, and one of its eight colour plates is "Spring at the Lodge, Bembridge".

The artist was Beatrice Parsons who produced many watercolours of garden scenes. Bembridge is a small town on the east coast of The Isle of Wight in the English Channel. Googling "The Lodge" produced no results but one can imagine that the Lodge was a subsidiary house attached to a larger mansion, perhaps at a gated entrance to an estate.

The picture in the book is taller than it is wide, an excerpt from the original which might have had a wider perspective. The vertical emphasis is marked by leafless trees in the background and a Grecian style statue of a standing woman on a tall pillar in the foreground. To the right of the statue and set back to near middle distance is a Japanese cherry tree in full bloom. The

floor of the picture is of grassy spaces, close mown where the statue stands and of rougher texture beyond. Clusters of yellow daffodils are set in the grass, separately spaced nearby and merging to drifts beneath the trees. The colours of the picture are predominantly the pinks and purples of the cherry blossoms and the distant trees, and the greens and golds of the grass and the daffodils. The white marble of the statue draws the eye in contrast to the softer tones in the rest of the garden..

The woman is discarding her last garment and preparing to step into the wonderful scene about her. Is she aware that she has to leap six feet down and three feet across to leave the pillar and clear the circular bird bath at its base?

The title of the picture and its associations are lodged so firmly in my mind that whenever, in a garden I come upon a particularly pleasing vista I am inclined to say aloud the words, "Spring at the Lodge, Bembridge".



FRhodo's Gardening Tips

What would you like to see here? Any tips you'd like to pass on? It can be Rhodo specific or something that you think is a good idea, or that you do in your garden. Something to help beginners or that you've seen others do. Mail your tip me at FRhodo@shaw.ca (or give it to my friend David (the editor) & he'll pass it on!)

- Rhododendrons need to be kept moist (note, not wet) they may survive without water but they will never flourish & be their best. Test your planting area to ensure that you have good drainage & that water doesn't pool. A hole filled with water should drain away in a few minutes.
- Roots must have a supply of oxygen, therefore a fibrous, breathable planting medium is preferable. Heavy clay type soils that will compact should be avoided & drainage must always be good. Plants will not do well in soggy soils.
- Growing medium for rhododendrons should be acidic, with a ph around 5 to 6. Typically 1/3 garden soil, 1/3 coarse sawdust or composted bark & 1/3 Peat moss. Ensure there is plenty of air in the mix & do not compact the roots too much. Remember organic material should be slow to break down as fast decomposition robs the plant of nitrogen & oxygen.



FRhodo's Seasonal Recipes

Come on people! I know there are some wonderful bakers & cooks out there! Will you share your recipes with an eager public? (not to mention a hungry FRhodo!) mail your recipe to me at FRhodo@shaw.ca (or give it to my friend David (the editor) & he'll pass it on!). Food!.. anything from artichokes to zucchini, seasonal lads, refreshing drinks, the list is endless!

Anne Morrison's Apricot Bars

INGREDIENTS: (should yield 16 BARS)

2/3 cup Dried Apricots
 1/2 cup Butter/margarine
 1/4 cup Granulated White Sugar
 1 1/3 cups all purpose Flour
 2 Eggs
 1 cup Brown Sugar (packed)
 1/2 tsp Baking Powder
 1/4 tsp Salt
 1/2 tsp Vanilla
 1/2 cup Chopped Walnuts or Pecans
 1/3 cup Finely chopped Walnuts or Pecans (optional)
 1/2 cup Shredded Coconut

*Thanks to
Art Pearson for
this one!*

Pre-heat oven to 350°F. Grease 8 x 8 inch (20 x 20 cm) baking pan. Rinse apricots, Place in a heavy saucepan, cover with water and boil for 10 minutes, then drain, cool and chop.

Combine butter/margarine, granulated sugar, and 1 cup of the flour (and opt. 1/3 cup nuts if desired) blend until crumbly.

Pack evenly into the bottom of the greased pan and bake for approx. 15-18 minutes (top should be golden colour)

While base is baking, beat together the eggs and vanilla and gradually beat in the brown sugar.

Sift remaining 1/3 cup of flour with the baking powder and salt and beat into the egg mixture.

Add the Apricots, nuts and coconut and mix well.

When the base has baked, spread the mixture evenly on top and return to the oven for about 30 minutes. (at 350°F).

Remove from oven, cool and cut into bars.

Lover's Delight

3/4 oz Cointreau

3/4 oz Forbidden Fruit

3/4 oz Brandy

Fill mixing glass with ice

Add Cointreau, forbidden fruit & Brandy

Shake

Strain into a rocks glass filled with ice

Or you could try a

Lube Job! (I'm guessing not for the car though!.. Ed)

1 oz Bailey's Irish cream

1 oz Vodka

Fill rocks glass with ice

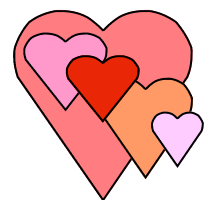
Add Bailey's & vodka

Stir

...Enjoy!

... Cheers!

& Happy Valentine's Day!





Fraser Valley Rhododendron Society

Annual Plant sale & Show

Our 2009 Sale & Show will take place

on

Sunday April 26th

11am to 3pm

at

Whonnock Lake Centre

Maple Ridge

(113th Ave, East of 272nd St.)

(Follow signs to Whonnock Lake from 272nd St.)

Bigger & Better - New Vendors - More Plants

A new feature this year will be the attendance of “**Master Gardeners**” who will be pleased to answer your gardening & plant queries.

Come along & check out our first class

Rhododendrons & Companion Plants

Azaleas

Maples

Native Plants

Garden Crafts

Concession & Refreshments

Those who have attended our sale & show in previous years know that this is an event not to be missed.

Come early to avoid disappointment!

Whonnock Lake makes a great day out at any time...

this is our main fundraising event of the year so please come along, support us, bring your friends & family have a snack & grab some great bargains too!



Photo credit: ARS Database by Chris Klapwijk

Rhododendron—PJM

Quote from Greer's Guidebook to Available Rhododendrons

(minus var. *Carolinianum* Group x *dauricum*)

4', -25°F, E, 4/4/4

"This Hybrid is cold hardy as well as tolerant of heat & sun. Its small, rounded leaves are green during summer & mahogany coloured in winter. PJM's early, bright lavender pink flowers are beautiful against its dark coloured winter foliage".

This is a versatile & apparently very easy to grow variety. PJM forms a "group" rather than being just an individual plant. Other forms of PJM can be compact & flower colours vary from pale pink through to deeper lavender pink.

Consider Checkmate, Compact, Elite, PJM-K, Regal & Victor.

... Ed.

FRhodo has available a limited number of copies of

"Greer's Guidebook to Available Rhododendrons"

The definitive book on Rhodos

Don't miss out! Get one early!

Current Price: only \$25.00

E-mail your order to: FRhodo@shaw.ca

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