

MID-ATLANTIC RHODODENDRON NEWS AND NOTES

A Publication of the Middle Atlantic Chapter of the American
Rhododendron Society

Vol. XXXX No.2

May 2013

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING MAC MEETINGS

October 25-27, 2013

Virginia Beach, VA

Spring 2016

National Convention, Norfolk area, VA

Rhododendron Web Site Addresses:

American Rhododendron Society	http://www.rhododendron.org/
MAC Website (UPDATED REGULARLY)	http://www.macars.org/
U VA Science & Engineering Libraries	http://www.lib.virginia.edu/science/guides/s-rhodo.htm
UVA Special Collections	http://www.lib.virginia.edu/small/
Henry Skinner Website	http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/collections/projects/rhodo/skinner/
Old Quarterly Bulletins ARS	http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JARS/
Rhododendron Blog	www.rhododendron.org/blog/
Friends of the National Arboretum	http://savetheazaleas.org/
FONA's Save the Azaleas and Boxwood site	

SPRING MEETING AT THE HAMPTON & COMFORT INNS IN GLOUCESTER, VA

About 41 people attended the MAC Spring Meeting at the Hampton Inn in Gloucester on May 10-12, 2013. Rain was threatening at times, but we were fortunate that the tours did not get rained out.

A chapter business meeting was held Friday evening at which officers and three directors were elected.

President Theresa Brents
Vice president Dr. Jay Gillenwater
Secretary Doug Jolley
Treasurer Debby Sauer

Directors 2016:

Dave Banks, Sharon Horn, Jim Brant
Director 2015: Glenn Kauffman to replace Jay Gillenwater.

District Director Don Hyatt gave a report on the recent ARS Board Meeting in Seattle.

Our Friday evening speaker was quite an enjoyable surprise. Historian Dick Cheatham portrayed the great Gloucester botanist and Clerk of Courts John Clayton (1693-1773) in costume of the period. He gave a very energetic and informational performance telling about his correspondence with Mark Catesby, John Bartram, Linnaeus, Benjamin Franklin, and Jon Gronovius and the first flora of Virginia. Gronovius had translated John Clayton's English from his notes and herbarium specimens into Latin for the Flora. Clayton didn't even know

this was being done and that it was eventually published without his permission. The character did seem pleased that he received so much attention even though he had not authorised the work. We were celebrating the publication of the new *Flora of Virginia*, a monumental work just published in 2012, which is only the second of our state's floras, the first one being the 1758 flora with much of John Clayton's work in it.

Benjamin Franklin (the Deputy Post Master) had seen that John Clayton's plant material was transported to European botanists at no expense to



Dick Cheatham as John Clayton. Photo by S. McDonald

Clayton. The expensive shipping would have been an extremely valuable service in colonial times.

Our Book Sale was in place thanks to Theresa Brents, and thanks to Jay Gillenwater Our Plants for Members (P4M) sale took place following the speaker; then we moved on to the hospitality suite.

There was some rain on Saturday, but luckily not while we were touring the two gardens. The first garden was at Providence, the estate of Bill Cawthorn in Deltaville. Providence is one of the oldest brick homes in Middlesex County, the oldest part dating back to the 1760s. It faces a wide expanse of the Piankatank River. Providence is a beautiful house and garden on the water with sun and shade gardens, many bulbs, a yellow garden, and many other notable features.

The second garden was Belle Terre, the garden of Sue and Bill Perrin. Sue had been a landscape designer in Connecticut before retiring back home in Virginia. Their house is on the water also.

We had a delicious box lunch back at Brent and Becky's Bulbs, then a tour of Becky's rock garden by the shop followed by a tour of Brent's garden.

After the tours the group met back at the Hampton Inn for the social hour and plant auction with Doug Jolley acting as auctioneer, followed by a buffet dinner at Brent and Becky's. Brent Heath then gave a PowerPoint presentation on The Shady Lady's Bulb Garden featuring the many bulbs which can be grown in the shady conditions in our own gardens with rhododendrons.

FLOWER SHOW RESULTS

Sharon Horn, chairman

Best in Show, D.D. Wither's Best Rhododendron and

Best Elepidote *Rhododendron* 'Polaris'

Bob & Rosa McWhorter

Best Elepidote Species: *R. minus*

S. McDonald

Kennell Best Deciduous Azalea Species: *R japonicum*

Glenn Kauffman

Best Evergreen Azalea: unknown double pink

Ben Dukes

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

The May 2013 *Friends of Blackwater* has an article about Mike Breiding on page 7.

<http://www.saveblackwater.org/documents/may2013.pdf>

DEATH Frederick (Frits) Morsink of Chesapeake a long time MAC member died on March 23rd. There seems to be no obituary available for him yet, but from personal conversation I recall that Frits told of living in Sumatra as a boy during WWII during the Japanese occupation. He later went to the Netherlands and then came to the U.S. Frits was quite active in the Camellia Society. He had a brother Willem Morsink in Canada who died in 2010 who had been active in the Toronto Chapter of the ARS.

DONATION IN HONOR OF CELIA DOLLARHIDE

The Soroptimist International of Washington, D.C. made a \$1000 donation to ARS Endowment Fund in honor of Celia Dollarhide. Roberta Duffy wrote, "As was true with your organization and ours, Celia exemplified the true meaning of service, sincerely, with passion and commitment."

IN THE CROZET GARDEN by Lloyd Willis

While we were gone to the Spring MAC Meeting in Gloucester about 10 to 12 pickup loads of dead plant materials were removed from our side lot. The brush pile from the February snow storms had reached six to seven feet tall by six feet wide and 20 plus feet long. Things are looking neater in the garden!

The next items to be removed from the side lot are the downed tree trunks and limbs. Maybe four to six pick up loads of wood left to be removed. Once again the plan is for either son-in-law to get this wood for the wood pile. (We have two sons-in-law to get this wood and they both have wood burning stoves.)

The first rhodo to bloom for us this year was Taurus, what a double treat. First were the beautiful red flowers followed by the protective red coverings of the leaves.

Another recent treat in the garden has been the blooming of the deciduous azaleas-- orange and yellow blooms underneath the red Japanese maples.

One fairly new project is the mulching of our exercise paths in the side yard. One 100 foot section of the pathway was already down to bare dirt. We have added



Lloyd Willis

periwinkle down one side of that path to be mulched later. Another 50 foot section of the pathway had been reduced by the ground cover to a width of 6 inches— that was weeded to a width of 18-24 inches and covered with aged pine bark mulch.

The last time I got to work on this pathway mulching project was from 7:30pm to 9:00pm on Mother's Day. And on Mother's Day plus one at 8:00am I am planning on calling for the delivery of the next truck load of aged pine bark mulch.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER:

Todd Dickinson & Robert Atkins,
Washington, D.C. 20016

WINDBEAM WAY WANDERINGS, MAY 2013

by Doug Jolley

This spring has been one of the most prolific in terms of blooms and activities in memory. We avoided the snowstorms which hit our mountain counties and had continuous cold weather, plenty of precipitation in the form of light snows and rains. As the witch hazel season concluded, the *R. dauricum* and *R. 'Cornell Pink'* started the rhododendron season. This progression of flowering is still in full swing and looks to continue into June.



Doug Jolley

One new set of seedlings to bloom for the first time is a cross of *R. calendulaceum* 'Bolt Mountain' × (*R. calendulaceum* × *R. austrinum*). The Bolt Mountain flame is a seedling from a mountain top located in the coalfields of southern West Virginia. While I attended the MAC meeting in Gloucester C.H., Davetta attended the Mason-Dixon plant sale and flower show in Westminster, MD. Her entry of the Bolt Mountain flame won that chapter's 'Rhododendron of the Year' award.

In April, the WV Master Gardener state meeting was held in Flatwoods. Our garden was on the garden tour and the tour was well attended. That meeting also provided an opportunity to visit with friends with whom we had become acquainted through Harry Wise. Our final outing for May will be at Wintergreen Resort. It was fitting to meet "John Clayton" at the Gloucester meeting. The authors of

the new *Flora of Virginia* will be in attendance and I will be giving a talk on "Virginia's Native Orchids: From Tidewater to the high Appalachians." Hopefully the summer season will be superb, too.

GARDEN DEDICATION AT NORFOLK BOTANICAL GARDEN

Sunday morning, April 28, some MAC members from southeast Virginia and up to the middle of the state gathered at Norfolk Botanical Garden for a dedication of the area for McDonald Hybrid Azaleas. A grant had been obtained from the ARS Endowment Fund through work by Jim Brant and MAC for Norfolk Botanical Garden to have really nice signs made. One was for this garden and another for the Glenn Dale azalea area.

Lloyd Willis gave a short speech: "I bring greetings from the Middle Atlantic Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society. The Middle Atlantic Chapter is highly pleased that two of its most distinguished members are being honored today. Sandra and Ken McDonald are both appreciated and loved for their service to the MAC Chapter. Congratulations to the two of them for this new honor."

Also present at the ceremony were Director of Horticulture Brian O'Neil, Curator of Woody Plants Matthew Gobla, Propagator Vickie Pepper, and Plant Recorder David Foss. Jim Brant unveiled the beautiful sign. Refreshments were served after the official ceremony. Then the group had a tour around the Norfolk Botanical Garden in a tram and carts.

Jeff Miller MAC member and Executive Director of Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association includes a short article about the event in the April/May/June VNLA Newsletter on page 23.

WEBSITE OF MAC LIFE MEMBER MIKE BREIDING by Sandra McDonald. *Thanks to Mike for the extensive amount of information on his website and permission to print parts and pictures in our newsletter.*

Longtime MAC members probably remember Mike Breiding of Morgantown, West Virginia, who used to come to our meetings, but does so much less frequently these days. Mike is retired now and has become quite a traveler. He sends emails alerting some of us about the progress of his trips on his website www.EpicRoadTrips.us. We can then check out the link he sends and go see what he has been doing on his current trip.

Mike loves the outdoors and botanizing. He comes by his interests naturally. His father George Breiding was a naturalist, writer, and teacher who died in 2007 at age 89. Mike's father was interested in nature study, wildlife, resource conservation and ornithology all his life. He had been a Technical Sergeant in the Army Air Force in WWII from 1941-1943 at Lowry Field, Colorado. He attended the University of Denver and graduated from Ohio State University in 1948 with a BS in Wildlife Conservation. He worked for the Ohio Division of Conservation and the National Park Service, was Director of Nature Education and Naturalist at Oglebay Institute Nature Department, A.B. Brooks Nature Center in Wheeling, WV, and was State Program Leader for Outdoor Recreation with the West Virginia University Extension Service in Morgantown. He wrote a weekly nature column and did local radio broadcasts, published in ornithology journals, and *Wonderful West Virginia Magazine*. George Breiding also traveled extensively, exploring 49 of the 50 states as well as Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii, Canada, Trinidad, Fiji Islands, Ecuador, Colombia, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Galapagos Islands, England, and Scotland.

With a father like George Breiding it is easy to see where Mike gets his love of nature and travel. Mike's travel reports started about 2003 although he has a few items up before that, one dated 1968 from a newspaper article when he was still a youngster followed by his 1982 honeymoon with photos and a lengthy diary article. The name Mike's Epic Road Trips came in January 2005 when he made his first solo road trip lasting two months and covering nearly 7,000 miles and 13 states. He now has a website www.EpicRoadTrips.us where he maintains his online trip collection.

During his childhood Mike and the family lived in rural West Virginia, then in the town of Morgantown for six years. In 1968 Mike's mom, along with his siblings, lived in San Francisco for four years. In 1972 he returned to West Virginia where he has resided since.

Mike has a special interest in ferns dating back to 1974 when he found a small book and asked his Dad "What does this word mean?" That word was "Pteridophytes" and the book title was *The Pteridophytes of West Virginia* by Maurice Brooks and A.S. Margolin, published by West Virginia University in 1938. His Dad pronounced the word and told him a Pteridophyte was another name for a fern. And with that - a fern lover was born. Of course Mike likes

rhododendrons, too, having seen so many *R. maximum* and native azaleas in the West Virginia mountains on his travels.

In 1978 Mike made a trip to Minnesota to the University of Minnesota Biological Station at Lake Itasca. He was an unofficial teaching assistant for a graduate level class taught by Warren H (Herb) and Florence Wagner of U. Michigan, Ann Arbor. What led to this experience was the fact that he had made contact with Herb around 1974 when Mike discovered a new fern and was trying to identify it. Mike had built up a large collection of ferns and a collection of fern books. He thought it was a hybrid *Dryopteris*, specifically *Dryopteris x triploidia*, a hybrid between *D. intermedia* and *D. spinulosa*. Herb must have realized he had someone quite interested in ferns at that point. Then in 1975 Mike found another *Dryopteris* hybrid new to the state of West Virginia - *Dryopteris neo-wherryi*. Later, with John Laitch (and again in the 1980s with R. Bartgis) they rediscovered the disjunct population of *Cryptogramma stelleri*.

Mike has many, many trips on his website. Here is a partial listing of trips and events: **2012-2013** Snowbirding in Arizona, Great Smoky Mountains NP, 3 Weeks in Minnesota,, Escape From Morgantown, Mike and Betsy's Big 30; **2011** Green Valley or Bust, Road Trip to San Francisco; **2010** Spain - 10 Days in Segovia, San Francisco, Alaska, Three Weeks in Michigan; **2009** Three weeks in San Francisco, Four Weeks in Texas;. **2008** Mexico, The Grounds of Hornbeck; **2007** Coopers Rock State Forest, WV, Central California, MD and WV Mountains; **2006** Florida: Oklawaha Trail, Southern New Jersey, Hostas at Hornbeck; **2005** My First Solo ERT, Digging, Dividing and Planting Hosta, Joe's Run Loop - WV, Potomac Highlands Cycling Tour; **2004** Dunkard Creek Float Trip - WV; **2003** Jamestown - New York, New Orleans, North Bend Rail-Trail: WV, Cycling the New York Canals; **2002** WV: West Fork Rail-Trail. **2001** Ohio and Erie Canal Towpath Trail, Niagra Falls. **1999** Lindy Point - WV. **1982** Mike and Betsy's Honeymoon. **1968** The Original Epic Road Trip.

Other links on Mike's site are "The Life and Times of George H. Breiding" which contains his dad's war journal and one of his trip reports and poetry of his brother G. Sutton Breiding.

Mike can be contacted by email at Mike@EpicRoadTrips.us if you would like to be added to his list of people to receive notification when he has new material about his trips on his website.



Rhododendron 'Polaris'



Brent Heath. Photo by S. McDonald.



Sue Perrin and Glenn Kauffman at Belle Terre. Photo S.McD.



MAC members at Brent & Becky's rock garden. Photo S.McD.



"John Clayton" with new *Flora of Virginia*. Photo by S. McD.



Sue Perrin in her garden. Photo S. McD.



Mary, Hubert Barb with granddaughter Sarah. Photo S.McD



Out going MAC President Lloyd Willis. Photo S.McD.



Ben Dukes and George McLellan at Providence. Photo S.McD.



Scene at Providence. Photo by S. McD.



Joe Miller & Bob Singleton. Photo by S.McD.



Bill Cawthorn & MAC visitors at his garden. Photo S.McD.



Ken and Sandra McDonald at their garden dedication at Norfolk Botanical Garden. Photo by Jeff Miller.



Lloyd Willis giving speech.



Jim Brant and Sandra McDonald at garden dedication. Photo by Jeff Miller.



Allen & Cheryl McDonald, Amy McDonald Blow, Ken & Sandra McDonald. Photo by Bill Bedwell.



Mr & Mrs Rick Bauer.



Margaret Willis, Sandra, Debby Sauer, Theresa Brents. Photo by Bill Bedwell.



New sign for the garden. Photo by Bill Bedwell.



Director of Horticulture Brian O'Neil



Part of the McDonald garden and refreshments. Photo by Bill Bedwell.

The following photos are grabbed from Mike Breiding's website.



Reelig Glen in Scotland.



Mike Breiding at Carter State Park.



Betsy Breiding & *R. maximum*

MAC WORKDAYS AT JMU ARBORETUM

<http://www.jmu.edu/arboretum/contact-the-arboretum-staff.shtml>

by Sharon Horn

During the past month, a “large handful” of MAC members spent three days working in the rhododendron and azalea collections at the JMU Edith J. Carrier Arboretum in Harrisonburg,



Margaret and Lloyd Willis and Glenn Kauffman with a pile of plant debris they have collected at JMU Arboretum. Photo by Sharon Horn.

Virginia. Many of the garden areas were still covered with debris from last June's derecho [a widespread, long-lived, straight-line windstorm that is associated with a fast-moving band of severe thunderstorms], while other areas were suffering from the effects of rampant “intruder” plants in the garden. We didn't have the best co-operation from Mother Nature in planning our days to work – the first two days were overcast with a light drizzle (but not enough to keep us from our appointed tasks!), and the third day was very warm and humid with swirling clouds of pollen (at least that is what our noses told us!). At the end of the third day, however, we could begin to really see the results of our work.

Day 1: Rhododendron Discovery. Who knew that large specimens of elepidote rhodies could hide? We started our clean-up in the garden area to the left of the main entrance gate with the Glenn Dale azaleas, and were able to pull sticks and limbs from most plants, as well as do some pruning of broken branches. As we moved back through the garden areas from the parking area, we decided to concentrate our efforts on the rhodos. The further we moved back through the gardens, the more storm debris we encountered, with entire plants pinned to the ground by limbs and leaves. Especially in the

last section of plants in the Wheeldon garden area, we were saying, “Found another rhodo!” on a regular basis. When we stopped working in the late afternoon, we thought that we had checked on and uncovered all of the elepidote rhodos at the Arboretum. Well, we were mistaken.

Day 2: Clearing the Sheucheuko Garden Room. Did you know that deciduous native azaleas can be



Glenn Kauffman with his working tools in the McDonald Garden at JMU Arboretum. Photo by Sharon Horn.

camouflaged as dead sticks? Jan Mahon, Arboretum Director, wanted us to concentrate our efforts on selecting the site and clearing the space for a garden



The Terry Scheuchenko bench in the future garden room at JMU Arboretum. Photo by Sharon Horn.

room in the middle of the native azalea collection (the original area to which MAC contributed plants). The large plants with many buds on the verge of opening were easy to spot, but smaller plants that were added to the area in the last several years were waiting to be uncovered. As we dug out and cut trees, pulled invasives such as honeysuckle and poison ivy, and cleared large dead limbs, quite a few

plants were tagged with green survey tape to aid the future clearing in the area.

While working in this area, the MAC members were able to verify a number of important laws of science – several of which had not previously been tested. MAC Law #1: Standing on honeysuckle that you are trying to pull makes the removal exponentially more difficult. MAC Law #2: Very small trees and shrubs can have very extensive roots that are never in the area that you dig first. MAC Law #3: Tools



Arboretum Director Jan Mahon. Photo by S.McD.

dropped into green vegetation can be very difficult to retrieve, regardless of the handle color. And we solved a mystery that has plagued horticultural science for years. What makes that “whoosh-thump” noise in the midst of native azaleas? Well, upon investigation and actually witnessing the phenomenon, the answer is Lloyd Willis as he flies through the air and lands while removing a dead standing tree. To cap off the day of science discovery, as we walked back through the garden to check on our efforts from the first workday, our team discovered an extensive area of large, mature plants that had completely escaped our attentions on the first day. Obviously the JMU Arboretum had been

able to quickly acquire and open to the public a large area between our first two workdays.

Day 3: Getting Side-Tracked in the Garden. After consulting with Arboretum Director Jan Mahon, we decided to concentrate our efforts on the third workday in the areas of elepidote rhodos that we had missed on our first workday. And we started with really good intentions, but the McDonald Garden kept calling our names. So we gravitated uphill and began our serious work. Again we removed sapling trees, both shrub and vine honeysuckle, perennials that were crowding the specimen plants, and fallen limbs. And again, we kept uncovering plants that were “keepers”! An unintended side effect of the move to the McDonald Garden was that our trips to deposit armloads on the vegetation debris pile took longer and longer. The work team also became very proficient at holding a Kleenex in one hand while wielding pruners or a shovel in the other hand (see previously noted swarms of pollen).

The MAC work team included, on various days, Margaret and Lloyd Willis, Theresa Brents, Glenn Kauffman, and Dave and Sharon Horn. We hope that you will make plans to join us for our Fall 2013 Days of Discovery (and clean-up) at the JMU Arboretum.

ARS DISTRICT 9 DIRECTOR'S REPORT

by Don Hyatt

May 17, 2013

The American Rhododendron Society held its spring board meeting on May 2 at the start of the 2013 Convention in Seattle. Of prime importance to District 9 is that the board unanimously approved our offer to host a joint ARS/ASA convention in the Norfolk / Williamsburg area in mid April of 2016. In recent years, chapters have been reluctant to host national meetings. The reality is that each District should be responsible for hosting a convention about once every 10 years. Since we hosted the 2006 Convention in Rockville, MD, it was our turn again. As your Director, I truly appreciate the support expressed by all three ARS chapters in District 9, as well as the Northern Virginia Chapter ASA. It will be hard work, but if we all work together, we can have fun hosting a “party” for our friends.

Other Districts have been stepping up to the plate, too. The 2014 ARS Convention will return to the Cleveland, OH, area. The dates are May 16-18. Our overseas partners will then host a tour to gardens in Holland, Germany, Denmark, and Sweden from May 20 to June 3. The 2015 Convention will be back in the Victoria area where the 2005 Convention was held. The 2017 Convention will return to California, but will

be in Eureka rather than San Francisco, the site of the 2007 Convention.

One innovative change is that the board approved a new Student Membership category. The cost will be only \$10, half of which stays with the local chapter. The chapter must validate student status and age (under 25). Student members will not receive a hard copy of the Journal but must access the online version instead. All ARS members have access to the online Journal but it is rarely used.

Much time was spent discussing the budget. Treasurer Bill Mangels reported that due to generous contributions to the general fund, the ARS met last year's projected shortfall which was on the order of \$13,000. He said 403 members gave a total of \$25,000 to that fund. We do not have excess reserves in the operating budget and will again be working with a slight deficit for the coming year, on the order of \$3000. We need to continue to look for ways to reduce expenses while at the same time find ways to raise income. The big problem is that our membership has dropped severely. At present, we have only 3058 members whereas we had well over 5000 members a decade ago. Many of the society's expenses are fixed costs, and primarily related to the Journal. Publication costs have actually increased.

Escalation in postage fees is a major problem, especially with international memberships. Laura Grant reported that a single Journal can cost as much as \$12 to mail to Germany. Overseas members still pay the same membership fees as those in the US, so this may have to change.

There was discussion regarding secure ways to invest ARS funds to increase income, but that will require more study. Potomac Valley Chapter member Sam Burd has agreed to take over as ARS Treasurer in May of 2015. We expect he will be working with Bill Mangels prior to the transition.

There were three Endowment Fund grants approved including a request by the Mason-Dixon Plant Development Committee. Amounts requested exceeded available funds, so awards were set at 75%. The Research Committee awarded several grants but they did not need board approval. Both grant programs will be continued since those independent funds, unrelated to operating expenses.

A number of other items were discussed and will become topics for future review, including a need for better educational materials, website modernization, and shifting some Journal content to electronic distribution methods. There has been confusion as to the roles of the Journal Editor and the Editorial

Committee due to inconsistent Policies of the Board. A decision was tabled pending review.

There was a suggestion that the official name of the American Rhododendron Society be changed to something that would better reflect its international stature. Currently, 877 of our 3058 members are from other countries. One suggestion was just "The Rhododendron Society." A committee headed by retiring Director Mary Parker from Canada will investigate costs and ramifications of a name change. At the annual meeting, Bruce Feller took over as our new President, and Ann Mangels is our new Eastern Vice President. No Gold Medals were awarded, but Jay and Bob Murray did receive the Pioneer Achievement Award to honor their many years of service related to rhododendron registration.



Remember all photos can be seen in color and ENLARGED at MACARS.ORG. Click on 'Newsletter on left panel.



Frits Morsink in center in 2011 photo at Camellia meeting. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Doug Jolley's (*R. calendulaceum* × *austrinum*) × *calendulaceum*. Photo by Doug Jolley.