

# MID-ATLANTIC RHODODENDRON

## NEWS AND NOTES

SPECIAL 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY EDITION

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

Vol. XXVIII No.1

February 2002

### CALENDAR OF UPCOMING MAC MEETINGS

May 3–5, 2002	The Mimslyn, Luray, VA , Our Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration
Oct 11–13, 2002	Holiday Inn, Bluefield, WV

**This special issue is dedicated to the memories of  
Dr. Thomas F. Wheeldon, founder of the Middle Atlantic Chapter, and  
Austin C. Kennell, the force who ensured its continuing vitality.**

### Rhododendron Web Site Addresses:

**R & A News** <http://members.aol.com/RandANews/news.html>

**American Rhododendron Society** <http://www.rhododendron.org/>

**U VA Science & Engineering Libraries** <http://www.lib.virginia.edu/science/guides/s-rhodo.htm>



The Mimslyn at Luray, Virginia.

### **SPRING MEETING 2002: SPECIAL 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION IN LURAY AND WASHINGTON, VIRGINIA** by Judy Tole

Our fiftieth anniversary meeting and celebration will take place May 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> at The Mimslyn in Luray, Virginia. You are all invited to the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Skyline Drive, and Shenandoah National Park for a wonderful weekend.

Our headquarters will be “The Grand Old Inn of Virginia,” The Mimslyn Inn in Luray. Since 1931, The Mimslyn Inn has been delighting its visitors with the grandeur of its colonial structure, reminiscent of the old south.

Luray is nestled in the western foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Our Saturday garden tours and lunch will be a few miles away on the east side

of the mountains in Washington, Virginia.

Festivities begin on Friday, May 3, 2002, when we’ll all meet for cocktails and camaraderie before dinner which will commence at 6:30 p.m. Afterwards we will enjoy a program on the formation of the Shenandoah National Park from the perspective of former park employee, Bob Johnson, whose family resided within the park boundaries until he was 19, at which time they were resettled into Rappahannock County to make way for the park.

Saturday promises to be a day of discovery with a tour of the Katherine Stark and Richard Clark Bull’s mountainside retreat, Killermont. Each room of the house sports its own view of one or more of the extensive gardens. At the beginning of the four-year garden project, the Bull’s, dedicated gardeners, found they needed more earth for landscaping. A neighbor offered them an unused hill on his farm and the Bull’s moved it up their mountain. Designed by Florence Everts, landscape architect and former George Washington professor, the extensive gardens include: a green garden, a woodland glen, a secret garden, and a water garden for your viewing pleasure.

A second tour will be Long Mountain Nursery, a 25 acre, mountaintop azalea nursery begun in the 1980s, selling more than 14,000 plants, wholesale and retail, per year. They have recently added hostas, perennials, and daylilies to their inventory.

Noteworthy is their “Rube Goldberg” homemade, hand built azalea potting machine that was built from an assortment of mostly used conveyor belts, washing machine motors, solenoids, relays, switches, lawn mower clutches, transmissions, pulleys, belts, chains, gears, cables and counter weights.

Lunch will be a leisurely event at Evergreen, Etc, the home and small rhododendron/evergreen/Xmas tree nursery (about 8 acres) of John and Judy Tole. Here you will be welcome to wander among the oak/pine groves under which grow rhododendron hybrids of varying sizes, hike around the pond, through the woods, or in the evergreen fields, fish, canoe, or even pull weeds.

After lunch, we will return to The Mimslyn to refresh our bodies, indulge in our own fancies, and be challenged with MAC/ARS history through the afternoon with a pause for a nap, libations and dinner. During the weekend, there will be the usual hospitality room, cash bar, plant auction, banquet, seedling and Delp sale, book sale, flower show, and information on the general area for those “come alongs” who prefer other forms of entertainment. Departure from the “usual” will be activities designed to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of MAC/ARS, which will remain a surprise to us all.

Since the weekend is a package deal with lodging, meals, tax and gratuities wrapped attractively, the only other cost will be the registration fee.

Please bring as many flower show entries as possible. It should be a great time for early trusses to be plentiful.

Checkbooks, or that green stuff, will be needed for the several opportunities to purchase plants.

In addition to Skyline Drive and the National Park, numerous scenic attractions in the area include Luray Caverns, Shenandoah Valley Civil War Sites, and arts, crafts, and antique shops in Rappahannock, Luray, and Shenandoah counties.

Plan to spend a beautiful weekend with your MAC friends this spring in the Valley of Virginia.

#### **WANTED BY JUDY TOLE**

For the 50<sup>th</sup> celebration: pictures of people, plants, and gardens from the past; any special persons to invite; any vendors among us or anyone who knows of rhododendron-specific items available, any artists among us who would share their talents. Please e-mail Judy Tole at

[johnrtole@alum.mit.edu](mailto:johnrtole@alum.mit.edu), or snailmail to 285 Rock Mills Rd, Woodville, VA 22749. All printed material will be returned intact.

#### **AUSTIN C. KENNELL, OUR SPECIAL ACE** by Sandra McDonald, Ph.D.

The Middle Atlantic Chapter lost its dear friend and beloved member Austin Clinton Kennell on December 30, 2001. Austin died at home surrounded by his family and friends.

Austin was born in Cumberland, Maryland, January 22, 1918. His wife of 62 years, Betty, survives him, as do his children, daughter Gloria K. Sanders and son Austin C. Kennell III. He leaves six grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. Austin brought many of his family members to MAC meetings over the years as he was a very proud and loving family man. He loved a good party and when he brought his family along there was always a good party.



Austin C. Kennell. 1998.

Austin had some special names given to him by family and friends. He was so proud of the name “Dandy” that his grandchildren gave him that he named a company he formed after retirement “Dandy Sales Inc.”. He had another name that most rhododendron people didn’t know about. He was called “Ace” by friends and family. Austin got this name in his teenage years when he was an “ace” basketball player on his high school team, a “scrawny” 5 foot 8 inch guard who was high scorer many times and later played semi-pro basketball. This nickname reveals much about Austin and his endurance, his pursuit of excellence, and his promotion of team work to get big jobs done and handle problems, all the while making those around him feel like they were special people.

Austin served two terms stateside in the Navy, serving during WWII, and then re-enlisting when the Korean War broke out.

In his professional career Austin was president of Copar Industries, president of Pennsylvania Products; owner of Dandy Sales Inc, and retired sales manager and personnel director of Virginia Metalcrafters. In his later years he volunteered at the Visitors Center

on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Austin was deeply involved with ARS on the chapter level and society level for many years. He was a member of the society for over 32 years. He was Middle Atlantic Chapter president from 1979 to 1981. He was active on the chapter board for many years. He spear-headed the MAC-sponsored 1988 ARS Convention in Williamsburg.

He became first District Nine Director in 1982 and rose to president of the society in 1989–1991. He chaired the Honors Committee from 1982 to 1991 and more recently the ARS Endowment Committee from 1992 to 1998. He served on the By-Laws Revision Committee from 1986 to 1989.

Austin had a vision for the ARS and he was dedicated to that vision. He worked to ensure the society's long-term survival both by building up the membership in his Middle Atlantic Chapter and membership on the societal and international level by working to encourage agreements with the Rhododendron Society of Canada and in building membership overseas. He worked to ensure the financial security of the society by encouraging work to create the ARS Endowment Fund which he hoped would keep the society solvent and reduce the need to frequently raise dues and still produce an outstanding *Journal*. He also worked with Harry Wise and the University of Virginia Library, initially for MAC and later for ARS, to have a *Rhododendron* manuscripts repository there.

Austin was an inspiration for us, encouraging us to greater things in the Middle Atlantic Chapter and in ARS.

#### **GEORGE RING** by Sandra McDonald

The ARS suffered another big loss on December 29, 2001. George Ring, a member of the Potomac Valley Chapter ARS and past president of ARS, died after about three months in the hospital. George had moved from Fairfax, Virginia, to Roanoke when he retired. He was an avid hybridizer and introduced several evergreen azalea hybrids, one being Fairfax, and some rhododendron hybrids, the best known probably being Helen Ring. George Ring welcomed MAC on a tour of his garden in 1999.

George had many talents. He also had many friends in the Middle Atlantic Chapter even though he was not a member of our chapter. In 1999 many of his seedling plants, which were potted and upgraded by Frank Pelurie, were sold at our P4M

sale. There were many special species in this group of plants. George was extremely generous with his plants and his knowledge.

#### **BYLAWS CHANGE TO BE VOTED AT SPRING MEETING:**

Change Article III -Membership to read:

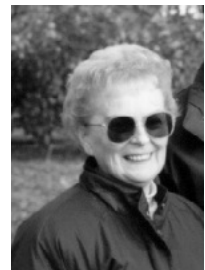
Membership in the Chapter shall be open to all persons interested in rhododendrons and azaleas. Membership shall be by written application accompanied by remittance of dues. All members of the Chapter shall be deemed to be members of The American Rhododendron Society and entitled to all privileges thereof. Membership classes shall be as provided in the Bylaws of The American Rhododendron Society. Members of the Chapter shall be entitled to Chapter privileges and benefits as outlined in the Middle Atlantic Chapter's Policies of the Board.

#### **FROM THE MIDDLE OF MAC** by Jane McKay

This coming spring the Middle Atlantic Chapter will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Last fall the New York Chapter celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the N.E. Regional Conference on Long Island, NY. Since Wally and I were the southernmost members from the East Coast to attend the NE Regional Conference I thought I'd share a few of the highlights with you. [By the way this is also an anniversary for us since we are members of the ARS (NY and MAC) for 40 years.]

Surprisingly, there was a larger crowd than I expected since it was so soon after the tragic events of September 11 that destroyed so many lives and the confidence of so many people in regard to travel.

Dick Murcott opened the meeting with a thought provoking talk. Among other things he suggested that the three most important people in any chapter are 1) Education Chairman: after all, the main reason people join the Rhododendron Society is to learn about rhododendrons, how to grow, fertilize, prune, water, etc. 2) Publicity Chairman: if they can't find us they can't join us. (I remember many years ago a man coming up to me at a flower show on Long Island and saying "I've been trying to find you for three years." At the time we were not listed in any phone book, newspaper or magazine.) 3) Propagation Chairman: nothing makes a new member happier than being able to obtain plants at reasonable prices. Even better is a free plant to every new member attending a meeting. And how about door prizes to keep everyone happy?



Jane McKay

Mike Stewart, ARS Western Vice President of the Portland Chapter, is a nurseryman who grows plants in the ground. His theory is how a plant roots tells you how it will grow. He theorizes that good roots and size of root ball mean good branching, good foliage, good budding.

Ed Reiley, President ARS, and Phil Waldman of Roslyn Nursery: Ed stressed soil testing and told us he has a new book out by Ortho. Phil uses a slow release fertilizer in both container plants in the nursery and in the home garden.

Margery Daughtery, Senior Extension Associate with the Dept. of Plant Pathology at Cornell University, discussed insects and diseases. She had great slides showing the damage caused by critters and disease. I recognized the damage I had on some of my rhododendrons and found it was caused by Asiatic garden beetle. This pest operates at night, and I should have know this was my problem since I had it in my garden on Long Island. You have to go out at night with a flashlight to find them. They look like cinnamon colored Japanese beetles.

There was a Hybridizers Roundtable on Sunday morning that I'm sure was interesting, but we did not attend. We had babysitting obligations with our grandchildren and that takes priority, doesn't it?

#### **ANNIVERSARY WISHES TO MAC FROM PETER BARBER**

Dear Mrs. McDonald,

Your letter of the 8<sup>th</sup> of Nov. arrived safely and I was delighted to receive it and to learn of your intended celebrations of the chapter's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

How I wish I could join you all in May but I am afraid my traveling days are over due to my health and also that of my wife — anyway I was glad to learn from your letter that I have outlived most or all of the chapter members who attended the first meeting.

I have been retired from Exbury for 20 or more years and spent my time growing trees for municipal centre planting.

However I can assure you that the gardens at Exbury are under the watchful eye of Mr. Edmund de Rothschild who spends most of his spare time working among the plants. He has assured the continuance of the gardens by passing the ownership into a charitable trust so all is well.

Forgive me for not being more helpful, but the only thing I remember in any detail is the fabulous entertainment that was piled upon me — this was such

it cannot be forgotten.

I send all the chapter members my wishes for a very successful anniversary.

Yours Sincerely,

Peter Barber

Parghelia, Italy

#### **MIDDLE ATLANTIC CHAPTER ARS: THE EARLY DAYS** by Gladys J. Wheeldon

My husband Tom had always had an interest in flowers, especially camellias, and wanted to grow them, but his office and our home at the corner of Monroe and Franklin Streets in Richmond did not have space for horticultural endeavors. He did enjoy planting and caring for camellias and other select plants at our summer cottage near Gloucester, Virginia.

In the spring of 1949 we purchased our home on a "piece of pie" shaped lot at 6311 Three Chopt Road in Richmond and after making renovations moved there in the fall of 1949. The grounds surrounding the house were practically a blank canvas horticulturally, and so Gresham Nursery was chosen to plant several hundred azaleas. We were delighted with them and anxious to expand the planting, but were disappointed to learn they would have to be more of the same as there were only about twenty varieties available.

Tom's curiosity was piqued, and he began inquiring about other azalea introductions. Kenneth McDonald, (Sr.), a good friend, of Le-Mac Nurseries in Hampton, Virginia, told him about the Glenn Dale azaleas hybridized by B.Y. Morrison at the Plant Introduction Section of the National Arboretum. Four hundred clones named and introduced by B. Y. Morrison were available. Tom immediately began collecting the Glenn Dale Hybrids as well as Gable Hybrids, Kurume Hybrids, *Rhododendron. kaempferi* hybrids, Pericat Hybrids, and Back Acre Hybrids. He also began propagating the various clones so none would be lost. He built a pit house at the rear of the garden near the carriage house and a slat house with propagation beds in the playground area. During the fall and spring months new areas of the garden were prepared and planted.

Tom also enjoyed sharing information with azalea enthusiasts and nurserymen in Richmond and surrounding areas. Through correspondence and small meetings in 1951, the idea of organizing a Middle Atlantic Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society evolved. The garden editions

for the newspapers were generous in giving excellent publicity to the venture, and the effort culminated in the formation and charter of the Middle Atlantic Chapter in March 1952. The New York Chapter of ARS, chartered in November 1951, was the only other chapter in existence east of the Mississippi.

At the first meeting of the Middle Atlantic Chapter of ARS, March 24, 1952, at the Commonwealth Club in Richmond, Virginia, forty-six members were enrolled; nineteen of these were already members of ARS, and twenty-seven others had joined since its inception in February. Rhododendron enthusiasts from all parts of Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., North Carolina, and South Carolina attended the meeting. The guest speaker was Major Peter Barber of the Exbury Estate in England, home of the Exbury Hybrid azaleas. Among the dignitaries attending were Dr. John Wister, director of the Arthur Hoyt Scott Foundation in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania; Dr. David Leach, *Rhododendron* authority from Brookville, Pennsylvania; Joseph Gable, originator of the Gable Hybrids; Dr. Albert Close, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture azalea expert; and Frederic P. Lee, *Rhododendron* specialist and author from Bethesda, Maryland. (The publication of *The Azalea Handbook* by Frederic P. Lee provided a wealth of information for enthusiasts.)

The 1953 Spring Meeting of the MAC was held in March at the Commonwealth Club in Richmond. The guest speaker was C. H. Pinckney, managing director of John Waterer Sons and Crisp Ltd. of Bagshot, Surrey, England, one of the leaders in the development of the Ghent hybrid azaleas.

In February 1954 a luncheon meeting was also held at the Commonwealth Club. The geographically widespread membership of MAC made meetings difficult to arrange at times, and the chapter officers were anxious to receive directions from the members regarding ideas and goals for the chapter. Dr. Henry Skinner conducted a discussion on "What the MAC can add to the Rhododendron Project in the East."

The 1954 Spring Meeting of MAC was held in Lynchburg, Virginia, on May 8, 1954. At 2:00 p.m. the group met at the home of Mrs. Powell Glass to tour Mrs. Glass' garden and four other Lynchburg gardens. Cocktails and dinner were at the Boonsboro Country Club, and speakers of the evening were: Mr. Frederic Huette, Norfolk,

Virginia, who spoke about his experiences with azaleas in the Norfolk, Virginia, area; Dr. W. N. Fortescue, Hendersonville, North Carolina, "Native Species found in Western North Carolina"; Dr. Henry Skinner, Washington, D.C., "Comments on Dexter Hybrids".

The 1956 Spring Meeting of MAC was held at Winterthur, Delaware. Mr. Henry F. du Pont hosted a cocktail party for members in the reception room at Longwood. He was made an honorary member.



Ann Glass, Dr. Wheeldon & Henry Francis du Pont. 1956.

The 1957 Spring Meeting of MAC was held in York, Pennsylvania, May 10–12, 1957. At 1:00 p.m. the group met at the historic Kingsville Inn in Kingsville, Maryland, for a buffet luncheon arranged by Mr. Henry Hohman of Kingsville Nurseries followed by a tour of Mr. Hohman's nursery with extensive plantings of rhododendron and azaleas and many Asiatic plants. The group continued on to York, Pennsylvania, and the York Hotel. David Leach of Brookville, Pennsylvania, who had recently toured the rhododendron areas of Europe was speaker of the evening. Joseph Gable was host to the members when they made a field trip to his rhododendron and azalea nursery at Stewartstown, Pennsylvania.

On January 26, 1958, a meeting of MAC was held at the Commonwealth Club in Richmond with thirty-eight members in attendance. The speaker of the evening was Mr. Frederic P. Lee who had recently written *The Azalea Book*. Those attending included Mrs. Powell Glass, Lynchburg, Virginia; Dr. Henry Skinner, director of the National Arboretum; and Dr. John Creech, director of the Plant Introduction Station at Glenn Dale, Maryland.

The 1958 Spring Meeting of MAC was held at

Old Point Comfort, Virginia, April 12–13, 1958. The group met at Le-Mac Nurseries, Hampton, Virginia, at 1:00 p.m. for luncheon followed by a tour of the nursery. The group then went to the Chamberlin Hotel at Old Point Comfort for registration and room assignments. Cocktails were in the Chamberlin Club, followed by dinner in the Continental Room. The speaker for the evening was Dr. Clement Gray Bowers. After breakfast Sunday morning the group went by bus for a tour of the Municipal Gardens of Norfolk, Virginia, followed by lunch at the Cavalier Hotel in Virginia Beach. Access to the Thermal Belt near Cape Henry was granted the group as a special privilege. This was a State Park not open to the public.

The 1959 Spring Meeting of MAC was held in Asheville, North Carolina, June 12–14, 1959, at the Battery Park Hotel. A newly designed invitation and program printed by the Deitz Press of Richmond was sent to all members. The meeting was also made available to all chapters in the East and to members of the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta.

Friday evening “Rhododendron Pops” was instituted — an opportunity for members to show and discuss slides or films of their own. After breakfast Saturday morning Dr. Henry Skinner gave an instructional talk on “Species” followed by an all day bus trip to the mountains to see native azaleas and rhododendrons. A 6:00 p.m. cocktail party courtesy of the Southeastern Chapter of ARS was followed by dinner and an address by B.Y. Morrison. Saturday after breakfast the group went by bus to Biltmore Estate for a morning tour of the gardens with Dr. Fred Nesbit. Lunch was on the picnic grounds; a tour of Biltmore House followed.

The 1960 Spring Meeting of MAC was held at the Kenwood Golf and Country Club, Bethesda, Maryland, May 6–8, 1960. Friday, May 6, Mr. Andrew Adams of Ten Oaks Nursery and Gardens was host to members to see his nursery and home garden collections of azaleas, rhododendrons, and hollies. At an informal meeting Friday evening, gardens to be visited during the meeting were reviewed with slides by Mr. Frederic P. Lee, Dr. Francis de Vos and others who brought slides for view and discussion. Saturday morning the group went by bus for a tour of the home gardens of Mr. & Mrs. Frederic Lee, Dr. & Mrs. Frederick Coe, Mr. & Mrs. William McCrillis, and the gardens at Landon School. After lunch at the Kenwood Club

the group boarded the bus for a tour of the home and gardens of Mr. & Mrs. Stuart Armstrong and Mr. & Mrs. Frank P. Cullanan. Cocktails and dinner were in the Dogwood Room followed by a report of the President and an address by Dr. John L. Creech, plant explorer, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, “Azaleas and Rhododendron of Japan”. After breakfast Sunday morning the group went by bus for a tour of the National Arboretum. Lunch at the Carriage House in Georgetown was followed by a tour of Dumbarton Oaks garden and house.

The 1961 Spring Meeting of MAC was held at the Thomas Jefferson Inn, Charlottesville, Virginia, April 28–30, 1961. After lunch Friday at the inn the group boarded a bus to tour the gardens of Mr. & Mrs. William Phillips; Mr. & Mrs. Whitney Stone’s old garden restored in 1930 and especially planted for spring bloom; and Monticello. After dinner in the Terrace Room of the Inn, Dr. Clement Gray Bowers addressed the group. At the evening “Pops” session Dr. Orland White and Mr. William Phillips commented on slides shown.

After breakfast on Saturday the group departed by bus for the University of Virginia for a guided tour of the Rare Book Room in the library and to see the gardens restored by the Garden Club of Virginia. We also visited the gardens of Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Lee and Mr. & Mrs. Emerson Spies. After enjoying a box lunch and coffee we continued by bus to visit “Cherry Hill”, the garden of Mrs. Alonza Rinehart and “Verulam” the garden of Mr. & Mrs. Courtland Van Clief. Cocktails and dinner at the Farmington Country Club were followed by an address by Frederic P. Lee.

Sunday morning the group left by cars to visit the garden of Mr. & Mrs. Austin Kilham—small gardens connected by woods and garden paths and featuring *Rhododendron*, 65 varieties of lilies, *Ilex*, and tree peonies. Dr. Russell Seibert addressed the group and exhibited new plant introductions, some of which had not been seen publically before.

The Eighteenth Annual Meeting of the American Rhododendron Society was held May 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, 1962, at Winterthur, Delaware, and Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. This meeting was a milestone for the Eastern Chapters as it was the first time the ARS held its annual meeting in the East. The meeting began the practice of alternating the annual meeting of ARS East and West. The newly completed Winterthur Gardens Pavilion was used for activities at Winterthur.

Sunday, May 6<sup>th</sup> from 5 to 6 p.m. was registration, flower show, and commercial exhibits. At 6 p.m. there was a reception and dinner hosted by Mr. & Mrs. Henry Francis du Pont. Dr. Thomas Wheeldon, President of MAC, presided and introduced the chapter presidents. The Annual meeting was at 7:30 p.m. with Dr. Harold Clark, president of ARS, presiding and introducing the speaker of the evening, Edward B. Dunn, vice-president of ARS, with his subject, "Rhododendron Growing in the Pacific Northwest."

Monday, May 7, at 10 a.m. the group assembled at Winterthur Garden Pavilion for a tour of the gardens with Henry Francis du Pont, Gordon Tyrell, Henry Chilcott, Walter Petroll, and Harold C. Bruce, Jr. At noon there was a luncheon at the Winterthur Gardens Pavillion. C. Gordon Tyrell, local chairman of the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of ARS, presided. Clement G. Bowers was moderator for a discussion of "Rhododendron Growing East and West" by a panel of Joseph Gable, John Henny, Rudolph Henny, David Leach, Henry Skinner and Paul Vossberg. The group departed at 2 p.m. for a tour of Longwood Gardens and a tour of the gardens and greenhouses with Dr. Russell Seibert, Everitt Miller, and staff. A reception from 6 to 7 p.m. was followed with the Annual Banquet. Dr. Russell Seibert presided and introduced Dr. John Creech, Ass't. Chief New Crops Research Branch, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Beltsville, Maryland, who spoke on "Exploring for Azaleas in Japan". A lovely fountain display followed.

On Tuesday, May 8, there was a special tour of Pennsylvania arboreta and gardens: Tyler Arboretum, Swarthmore College, garden of Mrs. Edward Wilson, and Morris Arboretum.

The 1963 Spring Meeting of MAC was held May 3-5 in Richmond at the Executive Motor Hotel. Following dinner Dr. Henry T. Skinner of the U.S. National Arboretum, Washington, D.C., led a discussion on slides presented by members of the group. On Saturday morning the group boarded a bus to tour the gardens of Mr. & Mrs. Wendell Powell, Mr. & Mrs. Charles A. Gregory, Jr., and "Raleigh", home of Mr. & Mrs. Franklin Robins. Following lunch on the lawn overlooking the lake at the Robins' the group continued by bus to the garden of Dr. & Mrs. Irving Roberts and then for Candlelight Tea at "Woodlawn", home of Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Kennedy. At 6:30 p.m. a cocktail party and dinner at The Commonwealth was

followed by an address by Mr. Gordon Jones, Director of Planting Fields Arboretum, Oyster Bay, Long Island, New York. On Sunday morning at Dr. & Mrs. Thomas Wheeldon's "Gladsgay Gardens" there was an exhibit of azaleas and rhododendrons, a tour of the garden, and several demonstrations at the propagating house. Monday morning at 10 a.m. Course One of a planned three course Rhododendron Judging School was given with Dr. Clement Bowers and Paul Vossburg as faculty.

The 1964 Spring Meeting was held May 8-11, at the International Inn and the National Arboretum, Washington, D.C. After registration on Friday members visited the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture at Beltsville, Maryland, and Glenn Dale Station at Glenn Dale, Maryland. Dinner at the Continental Inn was followed by a panel discussion led by S. L. Emsweller with panel members: Dr. Neil Stuart, Dr. Henry Cathey, Dr. Floyd Smith, Dr. Francis de Vos, and Dr. Curtis May. Refreshments were served at 9 p.m. and were followed by "Rhododendron Pops". Saturday morning the group left by bus to visit the gardens of Mr. & Mrs. William McCrillis and Mr. & Mrs. Granville Curry. Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Adams, Jr., and Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Adams hosted a luncheon for the group after which visits were made to the arboreta and azalea gardens of Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Adams, Jr., and Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Adams. At 6:30 p.m. a reception at the Intercontinental Inn was followed by dinner and an address by Dr. Francis de Vos "My Visit to Nepal".

Sunday morning members went to the National Arboretum where Dr. Henry Skinner led a tour that included some areas not open to the public. A rhododendron exhibit of plants and trusses brought by members had been set up. The Adams family provided prizes for Best Truss, Best Rhododendron Plant in Bloom, and Best Flowering Seedling on a Truss. The Second Course of the Rhododendron Judging School was held Monday, May 11, at 9 a.m. at the National Arboretum. The Third Course was planned for Philadelphia in 1965.

Reflecting back on these first dozen years or so of MAC brings to mind many happy memories and associations. It is a pleasure to know that MAC has flourished for fifty years and continues to bring together rhododendron enthusiasts and professionals to advance knowledge about the genus and its cultivation and propagation.

[Editor's note: It is interesting to see in Mrs. Wheeldon's article the origins of what has become

MAC's successful spring program format: the garden tours, Saturday cocktails, dinner, and speaker, the Friday evening "Rhododendron Pops", and the flower show.]

### **THE MIDDLE YEARS** by Theresa Brents

The MAC had an early history of innovative programs which it continued. In 1966 MAC and the Philadelphia Chapter held a joint meeting amidst a 5,000 square foot exhibit of rhododendrons at the Philadelphia Flower Show. The gardens at Swarthmore College were visited with Dr. John Wister, director of the Arthur Hoyt Scott Foundation.

In April 1969 MAC joined in sponsoring the ARS Annual Convention in Pine Mountain, Georgia. In 1970 MAC joined with the Tidewater Chapter ARS in sponsoring an Eastern Regional Meeting in Norfolk, Virginia, with eighteen chapters east of the Mississippi represented. In the fall of 1970 MAC agreed to cooperate with the Potomac Valley Chapter and Philadelphia Chapters in the East Coast Plant Ratings Project and the Glenn Dale Azalea Project which would make available plants and cuttings of rhododendrons and azaleas suitable for the climate in the MAC area.

At the 1973 Annual Convention, Dr. R. C. Lambe of VPI & SU received word that he was awarded \$500 per year for two years to study rhododendron "dieback".

The May 1976 meeting was held in Richmond at Maymont Park. A successful truss show was held with over 300 people attending the show. Dr. Lambe volunteered to prepare a simple publication on planting and growing healthy rhododendrons and azaleas.

Dr. Thomas Wheeldon died in July 1976.

In the fall of 1976 the MAC held a meeting at Poor Robert's Retreat in Staunton, Virginia, where host chapter member, Robert Coffey, grew many varieties of rhododendrons in a fairly secluded area near the George Washington National Forest. At this meeting various chapter members brought rhododendrons and azaleas from their gardens to be auctioned off, with the proceeds going to further the chapter's activities. This first Plant Auction was only the beginning of a tradition which continued to grow by leaps and bounds to become one of the most popular events of any annual chapter meeting.

MAC held its first judged rhododendron

competition in 1977. The show consisted of cut trusses and sprays. Trophies and other awards were presented to winners in several classes. The "Thomas F. Wheeldon, M.D., Perpetual Trophy for the Best in Show" was introduced at this meeting. During the fall of 1977, MAC celebrated its Silver Anniversary, again at Poor Robert's Retreat in Staunton with a meeting featuring slide presentations and another auction.

In the fall of 1978 MAC returned again to Poor Robert's Retreat. Nurseryman Andre Viette presented a talk on perennials.

The 1979 spring meeting featured tours of Mrs. Richard Clemmer's and Elmer Lapsley's gardens in Waynesboro. Dr. Henry Skinner gave an after dinner presentation on "Native Azaleas". The fall meeting that year was held in Norfolk, Virginia. Dr. August Kehr gave a presentation on rhododendron



Ron and Norma Brown, ca 2001. Photo by Ken McDonald.

hybridizing. Dr. Lamb from VPI told the group that he would be working on a petal blight project funded by the ARS. Austin Kennell reported on the ARS meeting held in Philadelphia and noted that MAC had agreed to host the 1988 ARS Convention.

Many special projects have been started by MAC members. In 1975, Sandra McDonald started putting out the first MAC newsletter and is still editing it, this year's being Volume XXVIII. It started as a newsletter typed on an old electric typewriter and was reproduced by Houston Printing in Hampton, Virginia, on colored paper. The addresses were hand-typed since self-stick labels that could be put into photo copy machines were not generally available at that time. Over the years the newsletter has metamorphosed into a newsletter done on computer with scanned photographs and self stick



labels which can be printed by computer without retyping the whole membership list for every issue. It is reproduced on photocopy machines at a copy center. At one point Terry Sheuchenko thought she might like to take over as editor after she finished her term as president. However, she died before she had a chance to do that.

Workshops were instigated in particular by John Buschmann of New Canton, Virginia, and David Lay, of Kilmarnock, Virginia. These workshops were for chapter members and other interested parties. Information about propagation and cultural practices was given out at these workshops.

A Rhododendron Manuscripts Collection was established at the University of Virginia Library. Some items housed in the collection include early MAC records, early ARS records, early Le-Mac Nurseries, Inc. correspondence from Kenneth McDonald, (Sr.) with Fred Lee, B.Y. Morrison, Joseph Gable, and Tony Shammerello, slides and photographs, a complete run of MAC newsletters, newsletters from many other chapters, papers of Austin Kennell, August Kehr, George Ring, Henry Skinner, and many others.

Harry Wise instituted an annual Seedling Sale with the proceeds benefitting the ARS Research Foundation. Members helped establish a rhododendron and azalea garden at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden.

Dr. Erik Nilsen of VPI & SU escorted MAC members through the eco-physiological research garden at the university. Dr. Nilsen had received research grants from the ARS Research Foundation supporting some of his research comparing certain selected physiological processes among different species and hybrids of rhododendrons.

MAC has a very popular Plants for Members (P4M) program in which rare or unusual plants are propagated for sale at a very reasonable cost to members. This program was initiated when Austin Kennell got the idea from the Massachusetts Chapter. At first Peter and Terry Sheuchenko started doing the propagating and growing of the plants. David Lay picked up the project where they left off and had many very successful sales until he recently retired from the project. New people are now enlisted for the project.

Some MAC members have been active hybridizers developing new plants. This list includes: the old timers Joseph Gable, Fred Galle,

and David Leach, as well as Harry Wise, Doug Jolley, John Buschmann, Sandra McDonald, Frank Pelurie, Walter Przypek, Terry Sheuchenko, and others.

A note of thanks is given to all those who so kindly contributed their time and records for this article. Mrs. Gladys Wheeldon provided the bulk of the material. Others contributing include Austin Kennell, Dr. Sandra McDonald, Terry Sheuchenko, and Harry Wise.



Sandra McDonald, Barbara Hall, Debby & David Sauer, & Al Hall. 1990.

**AUSTIN'S ERA** by Austin C. Kennell [title by the editor] (*Austin wrote this article shortly after I asked him late last summer. I am sorry he was not with us long enough to see it in print.*)

When Sandra McDonald asked if I had any interest in writing an article about my chapter experiences for the MAC's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary newsletter, I really agreed first of all because I can never refuse Sandra; secondly I welcomed the chance to write about my chapter and thirdly, I was pleased to feel that even at 83, I could make some contribution.

However, I may have been somewhat premature in my reaction. My age and the debilitating inroads of Parkinson's Disease has robbed me of the energy, the wisdom (if I ever had any) and most importantly the memory to recall the dates, places and names such an article entails. But having given my word, I am going to give it my best shot. It won't be a date filled factual account, but rather a kaleidoscope of memories, both real and faintly recollected.

I don't recall how, where, or when I joined the ARS and MAC. It seems so long ago. I didn't know much about rhodos. Harry Wise had always insisted that for the first ten years I treated rhodos as annual. This was absolutely untrue — it was only the first two years.

I remember clearly my first rhodo. At the time I grew hundreds of roses and mums. Then one day I spotted a beautiful green bush with fabulous pink blossoms at Behnke's Nursery, in Beltsville, Maryland. I bought that beauty. Out came the roses to be replaced by rhodos and the mums by azaleas. It was downhill ever since!

Although I didn't take interest in other chapter doings, I do recall Sandra was elected as one of the



Court Bessom, Fleur Long, & Walt Przypek. 1988.

last at-large directors of the ARS. Shortly thereafter the ARS underwent a radical reorganization based on districts.

I recall that my life was now completely rhodo oriented and I was destined to follow this road to this day. Despite the financial costs and other factors, I wouldn't have done it any other way. It started an association with fine individuals. People such as "Mr. MAC" D.D. Withers, and "Mr. One-of-a-kind" Bob Porter. People such as these two are rare and their like may not soon be seen again.

This article is a good place to pay special tribute to three great members: that do-all guy from West Virginia, Harry Wise; the society's true blue authority, Dr. Sandra McDonald; and my special buddy and the MAC's gift to the ARS, Barbara Hall. This chapter owes a lot to these three giants.

The roll call of MAC members, past and present has no equal. Look at the list: Harry Nash, Dr. Thomas Wheeldon, the Sheuchenkos, Bill Storm, Bill Stepka, Irving Roberts, and Bill Bradley. How about the present lineup of Paul James, who has amassed the finest collection of rhodos in the East, those wonderful Przypeks, the Watts, Ray Brush, Ken McDonald, Alton Hall, George McLellan, Bill Bedwell, the Sauers, Don Hyatt — the list is endless — the irrepressible John Buschmann, dependable David Lay, those incomparable Brits, Roy and Barbara Milne, Elmer Lapsley, Carl Adam Lehman to name just a few.

My various society involvements led to rewarding relationships with Joe Gable, Guy Nearing, George Harding, Peter Girard, Al Smith, Bob Bovee, and the Beasleys. I stayed with and enjoyed the hospitality of Jeanine Smith, Lori Gangsei, Clive Justice, James Ramsey, Bruce Briggs, and Sophia Maitland.

Though not the oldest nor the largest chapter, the MAC is one of the society's most dynamic and influential chapters. For most of its 50 year existence its members served in



Gloria Sanders. May 1988.

many advisory and leadership capacities. One became national president, one became the society's executive director. The MAC is rock solvent and has outstanding leadership. It hosted the first convention held in the East and also hosted one of the best conventions ever in 1988. It has always been one of the leaders in responding to national problems. It is a consistent contributor to the society's research fund, general fund supplements, and director financial assistance.

It is second to none in its service to its members. Two mini-convention meetings are held annually and its P4M program is a great benefit. Its fun auctions provide a lot of enjoyment and funds. Its newsletter is tops. The locations and dates of meetings are constantly varied to show the diversity of rhodos. Meetings have been held from Blacksburg to

Winchester, from Fairfax to Old Point Comfort. "How To" sessions provide hands on training. In addition to the society's well know speakers, related fields are aired by Andre Viette, Pamela Harper, Polly Hill, and Brent Heath. MAC pioneered joint meetings with other horticultural enthusiasts, such as the Azalea Society, Wild Flower Society, Garden Clubs and horticultural departments of universities. Its social hours enhance its reputation for friendliness and sociability.

MAC has consistently brought in great speakers: Leach, Kehr, Brooks, the Beasleys, and home-grown experts: James, Bedwell, Kellam, McDonald, Nachman. Bill Bedwell's pictorial records of garden tours are outstanding and he holds the record for buses missed or held up!

Meeting memories include Poor Robert's Retreat, Virginia Beach Seafood, an auction around a swimming pool at Harrisonburg were an unknown lady wandered in from the lobby and bought \$600 worth of plants, brown bagging it in



Nancy Swell, Bill Bedwell, Rosalie Nachman. 1982.

the Wheeldon garden, the safety belt garden of Jay Gillenwater, the auction in a Washington and Lee University building during a storm, Bill Bradley's aerie, the meeting at the Afton Mountain Motel where you bought a drink in one part of the motel, but local law wouldn't allow you to drink it elsewhere, the meeting in Richmond during a water contamination scare, the charm of Old Point Comfort; Windmill Point; the lottery-like atmosphere waiting for P4M plants; bus tours, those great co-rhodoites from the Potomac Valley Chapter; and the dragees.

MAC members have hybridized new varieties such as 'Williamsburg' by Dr. Sandra McDonald. Terry Sheuchenko received awards for her designs. We have the most dependable and helpful dragees,

including Betty Kennell (the original dragee) and the eternally young leader of shopping tours, Betty Wise.

Well, that's about it! The laughter, the friendships, the passing of friends and comrades, memories forever etched in my heart. In this high tech, fast food, HIV world my MAC years taught me that there is magic. . . . in rainbows, in the unfolding



Frank Pelurie, Ray Brush, Jeanne Hammer. 1999

of flowers, in falling in love and in a baby's smile.  
Thanks, my friends. Austin

#### **MAC: THE LATER YEARS** by Sandra McDonald

To pick up where Theresa left off, on May 5-6, 1979, the MAC met at the Red Carpet Inn, Waynesboro. There were tours of the Harry Nash, Jr. Memorial Garden, Mrs. Clemmer's garden, Elmer Lapsley's garden and Pratt's Woods, and Andre Viette's nursery. Dr. Henry Skinner talked on native azaleas. On June 24, 1979, MAC members Joan Winter and Ken and Sandra McDonald climbed Gregory Bald to see the hybrid azalea swarm.

The fall meeting on October 20, 1979, was held in Norfolk. There was a tour of Zelma Crockett's garden, an auction, and a talk by August Kehr. Austin Kennell announced that MAC would host the 1988 ARS convention. Sandra McDonald was nominated to be a national director in 1980.

The 1980 spring meeting was held at the Regency Inn Motel in Richmond on May 10-11. Tours were to the gardens of Jack Wyatt (formerly the Wheeldon's garden), Rosalie Nachman, Harvey Hudson, Mrs. Horace Gray, Virginia House, Irving Roberts, Luck's Stone Center, and Fan Garden Shop and Nursery. Fred Galle gave the after dinner talk on azaleas at Calloway Gardens.

The fall meeting on Oct 11-12, 1980, was held at the Sheraton Inn, Harrisonburg. Tours were to Ron Brown's garden, Sunnyside, and Charles

Shreckheise's dwarf conifer nursery. Dr. Norlyn Bodkin of JMU gave a slide talk about the native ericaceous plants before our Hawaiian Buffet. Harry Wise was auctioneer for the annual plant auction.

Austin Kennell announced the effort to start a P4M program with cuttings promised from many



Austin Kennell, Elmer Lapsley, John Withers, Sandra McDonald & Ken McDonald. May 1981. Photo by Temp Norris.

places. The first group of rooted cuttings would be available in the fall of 1981.

The May 9–10, 1981, meeting was at the Cavalier Inn in Charlottesville. Tours were to the gardens of Lucy & Charles Kilbourne, Mr. & Mrs. J. A. Kesler, Jean & Dietrich Bodenstein, UVA Pavillion Gardens, Warren Cloud, Worth & Gladys Peters, Montpelier, and Pete & Terry Sheuchenko's Lazy S'S Farm. George Beasley of Lavonia, Georgia, gave a humorous talk and slide presentation on native azaleas.

On October 3, 1981, the fall meeting was held at the Executive Motor Hotel in Richmond. Bill Bedwell gave a talk "Blooms of the Past" featuring past conventions. Sandra McDonald gave a talk "Blooms of the Future" featuring her hybridizing



Seated: Debby Sauer, Barbara Hall, David Sauer, George McLellan, Neil Jorgensen. Standing: Sandra McDonald, Bill Bedwell, Bill Stepka. Edinburgh, Scotland, 1996.

work. Bill Stepka gave a talk on his hybridizing efforts demonstrating his methods, and Harry Wise talked, focusing on using

recycled materials. There was an auction and the first Plants for Members (P4M) distribution.

On May 1–2, 1982, at the Executive Motor Hotel in Richmond there was a combined meeting with the Azalea Society of America. Henry Schannen of the Princeton Chapter spoke on "Hybrids of yakushmanum, keiskei and other new hybrids developed in the eastern U.S." Dr. Irving Roberts spoke on "Gardens of Japan and American Adaptations" and his personal experiences in Japan. Dewey Garrett spoke on "Satsuki Azaleas". Tours included the gardens of Bill Bedwell, Ladell Morgan, Mr. & Mrs. A. J. Shoosmith, Mr. & Mrs. J. H. Bickerstaff, Mrs. James Guy, Mr & Mrs. Robert Johnston, Mr & Mrs. Lawrence Nachman, and Mr & Mrs. Jack Wyatt.

On October 9, 1982, at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, the new library facilities were used for talks, slide presentations and the P4M sale. The plant auction area was outside and was one of our most famous since rains came and forced it indoors. Dr. Robert Lambe of VPI gave a slide presentation on common diseases of rhododendrons and azaleas. Dr. Peter Schultz of the Virginia Truck and Ornamentals Station at Virginia Beach gave a slide presentation on insect pests of azaleas and rhododendrons. Ron Brown talked on gardening under mountainous and hilly conditions, and Sandra

McDonald spoke on gardening by salt water. Bill

Bedwell gave a slide presentation about his garden. Our tour was to Dr. & Mrs. Robert Munger's home and garden, "Boxerwood", in Lexington which featured much modern sculpture in addition to plants. Elmer Lapsley showed slides of gardens of the world. The October newsletter had its first photos which were of gypsy moths.

A District Meeting was held May 20–22, 1983, at the General Wayne Motor Inn in Waynesboro. Tours: Gardens of Elmer Lapsley and neighbors and Andre Viettes's nursery. The Flower Show was held at Fishburne Military Academy. Slide presentations by many hybridizers took place on Friday night. Don Hyatt gave a slide presentation on landscaping with rhododendrons and azaleas. Martha Prince gave a slide show on English gardens. There were 159 attendees at this District Meeting.

November 5, 1983, MAC met at the Windmill Point Marine Resort in Kilmarnock with 156 people in attendance. Bill Bedwell showed slides of the ARS convention in Portland. David and Mary Lay had the group to a luncheon and garden tour at their home. Robert Kennedy and David Lay gave talks on propagation and culture. There was a panel discussion, an auction with Elmer Lapsley as auctioneer, and an after dinner talk by Austin Kennell.

In 1983, Dr. Lambe received a \$2000 ARS Research Foundation award.

In January 1984, the first MAC newsletter prepared on a computer rather than a typewriter, and printed with a dot matrix printer was published.

On May 11–13, 1984, a combined meeting of MAC and ASA was held in Fredericksburg. Attendance was 187. Rosalie Nachman gave a slide presentation on "Designing Shady Gardens"; Myron Shear spoke on winter hardiness; Dr. Robert Lambe gave a talk on his disease research; and Polly Hill talked on her North Tisbury plants. Barry Yinger gave the after dinner talk "Exploring for Azaleas and Rhododendrons in Japan and Korea." There were tours of the gardens of Mr & Mrs. Lawrence Moter and Mr. & Mrs. Robert Frackelton, Clyde & Leona Stewart, and London Town Publik House and Garden.

Sandra McDonald became chairman of the ARS Editorial Committee in 1984. Also in 1984, Austin gave up responsibility on P4M and David Lay chaired a committee of Terry Sheuchenko, Joan

Winter and Harry Wise to keep it going.

The fall meeting was held October 19–20, 1984, at the Holiday Inn Tanglewood in Roanoke with 81 people attending. Nancy Wimmatt spoke on Azalea



David Sauer, Bill Stepka, Bill Bedwell, & Al Hall. Scotland, 1996.

Bonsai Culture; Harry Wise gave a talk "How to with Seed"; David Sauer spoke on the Back Acre azaleas. The tour was to Walter and Barbara Bell's nursery. There was an auction. A buffet dinner was followed by Dr. Don Kellam speaking about "Touring the Native Rhododendron Country of Sikkim and



Don Hyatt, Bill Bedwell, Sandra McDonald, Frank & Mary Helen Pelurie on Species Study Group hike to Roan. 1995.

Nepal".

In the spring of 1985 MAC participated in the District Meeting on May 10–12 in Vienna, Virginia, at the West Park Hotel with Potomac Valley Chapter hosting. For MAC's part of the program, Ted Scott gave a slide presentation on wildflowers and insects, and David Sauer gave a photography demonstration. There was a tour to George Harding's garden. Dr. Franklin West gave a slide presentation on his trip to Japan after the Saturday dinner. Don Hyatt became District 9 Director in 1985.

The June newsletter had a drawing by Jean Buschmann of Bear Garden Farm. Austin Kennell was elected ARS Eastern Vice-President. Sandra McDonald participated in a panel discussion at a meeting of the Niagara region in Canada.

In 1985 Dr. Erik Nilsen received a \$1900 grant from the ARS Research Foundation. Harry Wise was active in getting a Pollen Bank started in MAC.

The fall meeting was held October 18–20, 1985, at the Hyatt House in Richmond with 135 people attending. An ARS board meeting was held in conjunction with our meeting, and we had district directors from all over the country. Bill Bedwell did a slide presentation about the Seattle convention, and Ed Collins gave a slide show of the Cowles seedlings at Heritage Plantation. There was a sick plant clinic on Saturday with many samples of diseases and insects and Don Hyatt, Don Kellam and Sandra McDonald discussing the problems. Fred Galle gave a slide presentation on the native azaleas and some of his hybrids. Robert Hebb gave an outline of the history and plans for Ginter Botanical Garden. Mary Beasley, Harold Greer, and Ken McDonald took part in a panel discussion on what to look for when buying plants.

On May 2–3, 1986, 112 MAC members



MAC members at District Meeting in Maryland. 1997.

attended the spring meeting at the Ramada Inn in Petersburg. There were tours to David & Debby Sauer's garden, Bill Bedwell's garden, and the Childers-Holman daylily garden. Dr. August Kehr talked about the famous "yeller" rhododendron, Jim Darden (*Great American Azaleas* author) spoke, as well as Mike Breiding and John Buschmann. A truss show with artistic flower arrangements and a seedling sale were held. There was a little excitement at the elevator when the late General Porter reprimanded a couple of soldiers for making a pass at Gloria Sanders. He really set them straight with his military voice of authority.

October 24–26, 1986, 110 MAC members attended the fall meeting at the Omni in Charlottesville. There was a wine and cheese party in Alderman Library with rare books on display. Harry Wise did a slide show on pollination, followed by a panel on hybridizing. John Buschmann, August Kehr, George Ring, and Sandra McDonald took part. A scientific talk on "jumping genes" was presented by UVA graduate student Gerry Hankins. Other speakers were Cheryl Borgman, Mike Henrietta, and Terry Sheuchenko. A P4M sale and an auction took place. Betty Wise and Jean Buschmann showed up in red and multi-colored wigs adding some



Ted Scott, Ray and Betty Brush. 1998.

excitement to the auction and cocktail party. Sunday several area gardens were open.

MAC took part in the District Meeting on May 8–10, 1987, at the Quality Inn in Frederick, Maryland, in place of its usual spring meeting. About 40 MAC members attended. In summer 1987 there were workshops at John Buschmann's and David Lay's gardens.

Seventy-three people attended the fall meeting in Blacksburg, October 23–24, 1987. There was a tour to Bill Bradley's wonderful mountaintop home and natural garden (later donated to the Nature Conservancy) where we went hiking to observe the wild plants. There were also tours to Myron Shear's rhododendron garden and Dr. Erik Nilsen's research area at VPI&SU. Programs were Paul James on Blue Ridge plants, Bill Bedwell on the gardens of the Eugene convention, and John Buschmann on propagation. A plant auction and a seedling sale were held.

After about ten years of preparation and hard work, the MAC hosted the 1988 ARS Convention in Williamsburg, May 11–15, with a post convention tour to the Blue Ridge. Austin Kennell was Chairman; Ken McDonald, Co-chairman; Barbara Hall, Convention Director and Registrar; Gloria Sanders, Finances; David Lay, Plant Sale; Terry Sheuchenko, Publicity; George McLellan, Logistics; Al Hall, Equipment; David Sauer, Non-plant Sale; Sandra McDonald, Breeders Roundtable; Betty Kennell, Menus; Harry Jordan, Special Services; John Williamson, Displays. Many other MAC members also took part staffing and helping on the planning and committees. There were tours to the gardens of Bill Bedwell, David Sauer, Bert Shoosmith, Dick Cole, David Peebles, Williamsburg Historic District, Bassett Hall grounds, Rosalie Nachman, Nancy Swell, Page Calisch, Joan Winter, Mrs. Zelma Crockett, Norfolk Botanical Gardens, and Ginter Botanical Garden, Le-Mac Nurseries, and McDonald Garden Center. There were talks too numerous to list, and a truss show and very large plant sale. Harry Wise became District 9 Director in 1988.

On November 12, 1988, MAC held its fall meeting at Windmill Point Marine Resort with 106 attendees. The Lay's and George McLellan's gardens were on tour. Talks, plant auction, and a P4M sale were highlights.

Canaan Valley Resort and Conference Center near Davis, West Virginia, was the site of the District 9 meeting on June 9–11, 1989. Tours of Dolly Sods with *R. prinophyllum* in bloom, Seneca Rocks, Blackwater Falls State Park, and Cathedral State Park were available to the members. Dolly Sods was the big tour. A slide show, free plants, and flower exhibition were other highlights. This was a wonderful get-away that many of us attended on a chartered bus.

The fall meeting for 1989 was held October 27–28 at Holiday Inn Conference Center at Koger Center South in Richmond. There was a tour to Page Calisch's garden and a P4M sale. Talks included Ted Scott on English gardens, Bill Bedwell with West Coast gardens, Don Kellam on the Dexters, and a panel discussion.

On January 20, 1990, an organizational meeting for the Species Study group was held in Charlottesville, following a board meeting. A second organizational meeting was held at Przypek's in Yorktown on February 24. The first

meeting with a slide program was held at the Sauer's in Richmond on March 24, 1990.

On May 18–20, 1990, MAC met in Roanoke at the Holiday Inn Tanglewood. Tours were to the garden of Paul James, the Bell's nursery, and the Blue Ridge.



Jeanne Hammer and Toby Zakin. May 2000.

*Rhododendron calendulaceum* and *R. catawbiense* were in bloom as well as many wild flowers. We had a seedling sale, flower show, and talk by J. C. Raulston.

September 1990 marked the change of the

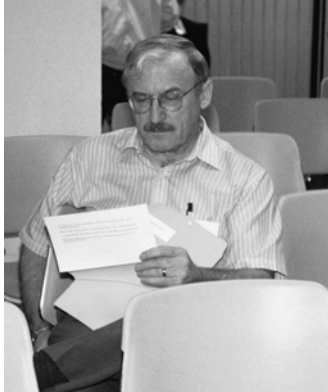


Kendon Stubbs. May 2000.

newsletter away from dot-matrix to good laser printer copy. The fall meeting was held at the Radisson in Hampton, November 2–4. There was a panel discussion, and talks by Jeff Beasley from Transplant Nursery in Georgia and David Sauer, and a P4M sale.

On May 3–5, 1991, 181 people attended the MAC meeting in Charlottesville. Tours included gardens of the Brents, Lapsley, Kennell, Plants Unlimited, and Dr. Jay Gillenwater. There was a truss show, and there were talks by Ted Scott, Kendon Stubbs, and Dr. David Leach. Austin Kennell became ARS President in 1991, and Barbara Hall became ARS Executive Director.

On October 4–6, 1991, the WV delegation hosted a return visit to Canaan Valley Resort for a District Meeting. Speakers were Dr. Ken Carvell,



Glenn Kauffman. 2000.

Ray Brush, and James Monroe. We had tours to see the wonderful fall color on Dolly Sods and other nearby areas and a good plant auction. During the meeting a racoon made a surreptitious visit to our room and ate our plums.

MAC celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary May 1–3, 1992, in Richmond, joined by the Richmond Chapter of the Azalea Society of America at the Holiday Inn Conference Center, Koger Center South. Garden tours included the Nachman, Robinson, Sauer, Bedwell, Swell gardens, and the Robins estate. Slide presentations were given by Paul James, Malcolm Clark, and Rosalie Nachman.

In 1992, the fall meeting was at Clarion Resort and Conference Center in Virginia Beach, November 13–15. We toured the Hampton Roads



Merl Aitken, Sharon Collins, Maggie Aitken. 2000.

Agricultural Experiment Station and its Arboretum, Seashore State Park, and Blackwater Ecologic Preserve. Speakers were Bill Bedwell, Doug Jolley, Austin Kennell, and Sandra McDonald.

On May 7–9, 1993, MAC met at the Windmill Point Resort. Speakers were Ed Reiley, Nancy Swell, and author Pamela Harper. Tours were to the gardens of David and Mary Lay and George McLellan.

On November 5–7, 1993, MAC hosted a District Conference in Winchester, Virginia, at the Lee-Jackson Convention Center. We had a tour of the

Orland E. White Arboretum. Speakers were Barbara Hall, Dr. Chris Sacci, and George Ring. A book sale, seedling sale, and plant auction were also held.

On April 22–24, 1994, in Culpeper, Virginia, 100 MAC members met for tours to the gardens of Mr. & Mrs. Wyatt Williams and Ted & Carolyn Scott. National President Dick Brooks spoke as did rock gardener and author, Sandra L adendorf.



Joanne Ortiz & Bill Saunders. 2000.

The usual activities of book sale, seedling sale, flower show and auction took place. In 1994 Jean Beaudry became District 9 Director. October 28–30, 1994, MAC met at the Holiday Inn in Staunton.



Bill Stepka, Sybil Przypek, Paul James, & George McLellan. 2000.

Speakers were Libbie Smith, Bonnie Hohn, Andre Viette, and Dick Jaynes. There was a tour to Viette's



Don Hyatt and Betty Wise. 2000.

nursery, and we had P4M, auction, and seedling sale. On December 17, 1994, MAC's president Terry



Sheuchenko died in office.

Potomac Valley Chapter hosted a District Meeting May 5–7, 1995, in Fairfax, Virginia. Gardens on tour included McCrillis, Ayers, Beaudry, Louer, and Meadow Lark Gardens. Speakers were Hank Schannen, and Dick Gustafson.

The Species Study Group made its first trek up Gregory Bald to see the swarm of native azaleas on June 21, 1995.

The fall meeting 1995 was held at Ramada Inn, in Newport News on November 10–12. We had a



MAC members at District Meeting in Maryland. 1997.

tour of Norfolk Botanical Gardens. Speakers were George McLellan on the Species Study Group N.C. mountain tour, Dick Mahone, and Dr. Clarence Towe on the natives. There was a propagation session and a foliage show.

From May 31–June 1, 1996, MAC met at the Brier Inn in Lewisburg, WV, where we did some touring and visited Greenbrier Nursery and another nursery with rare plants. We had our flower show, seedling sale, book sale, and plant auction. Paul James spoke on the Delp hybrids.

A joint meeting with the Azalea Society of America and CVC chapter of the Holly Society of America was held at the Richmond Historic District Hotel, September 27–29, 1996. There were tours of Colesville Nursery and Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. Speakers were Mike Andruczyk of Norfolk Botanical Garden, Bill Bedwell, ASA president Steve Brainerd, and Dr. Larry Mellichamp of UNC Charlotte.

The District Meeting was in Towson, Maryland, May 2–4, 1997. Speakers were Jeff Beasley and Jonathan Leonard. Tours were to Marshy Point Nursery, Valley Gardens, Ladew Topiary Gardens, Azalea Hortico Nursery, and Ed Reiley's garden. Sandra McDonald became District 9 Director.

The fall meeting was held in Fredericksburg on October 3–7, 1997. Speakers were Don Hyatt, Doug Jolley, Bill Harwood and Jane Warner of

Virginia Blueberry Farm, George McLellan, and Bryce Lance of J.C. Raulston Arboretum. Sandra McDonald became ARS Archives Committee Chairman.

In spring 1998, MAC held its meeting on May 15–17 at the Four Points Hotel in Harrisonburg. Tours included James Madison University Arboretum where the MAC Native Azalea Garden was dedicated, and Ron & Norma Brown's garden and Glenn & Mary Kauffman's garden. Talks were by Dr. Norlyn Bodkin, Dr. Doug Jolley, and Ed Collins. Usual activities included the flower show, book sale, seedling sale, and auction.

On November 20–22, 1998, the fall meeting was held at the Chamberlin Hotel in Hampton. There were tours of the Przypek's and McDonald's gardens and Sandy Bottom Park. Our speakers included Bill Bedwell, slide talks on some members gardens, and for dinner speaker, Dick Murcott from the New York Chapter. There was a P4M sale and foliage show and on Sunday morning the Species Study Group met for a slide show.

The May 14–16, 1999, meeting was at the Tanglewood Holiday Inn in Roanoke. Talks were by Doug Jesse of Greenbrier Nursery, George McLellan, and Sandra McDonald. Tours were to Greenbrier Nursery's Roanoke Horticultural Center, and Paul & Barbara James' garden. Sunday there was a tour to George & Helen Ring's garden.

MAC hosted the Eastern Regional Conference on November 5–7, 1999, at the Radisson Fort Magruder Inn in Williamsburg. Tours were to Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. Since this was a major meeting there was a long list of speakers, with Tony Avent as the banquet speaker. A Breeders Roundtable was held on Sunday morning. Attendance at the conference was 251.

The May 5–7, 2000, spring meeting was in Charlottesville at the Holiday Inn. There was a Friday evening program at Alderman Library with Kendon Stubbs, Sharon Difibaugh, and Jay and Bob Murray speaking. Tours were to the gardens of Dr. Martha Derthick, Ted Peters, Dr. Jay Gillenwater, and Don and Polly Hirsch. Lunch was in the garden of historic Pavilion VII at UVA. Maude Henne of the American Conifer Society was the dinner speaker. Flower show, book sale, plant auction, and seedling sales also took place.

In 2000 the fall meeting was held September 29–30, at the Graceland Inn in Elkins, WV. Speakers were Frank Pelurie and George McLellan. There

were tours to Dolly Sods and Cranberry Bogs and a plant auction.

On April 20–22, 2001, MAC hosted a District Meeting at the Comfort Inn in Gloucester. Tours were to the gardens of Dean & Cam Williams, Art & Betty White, David Peebles, Al & Barbara Hall, and George McLellan. Other gardens were open on Sunday morning. There was a barbeque at the Ware River Yacht Club and slide shows by George McLellan, Don Hyatt, Bill Bedwell, and Barbara Bullock. Other events were the plant auction, book auction, seedling sale, and flower show.

On November 2–4, 2001, MAC held its meeting at the Donaldson Brown Conference Center in Blacksburg. Talks were by Bill Bedwell, Paul James, Dr. Erik Nilsen, George McLellan, Dr. Robert McDuffie, and Frank Pelurie and Harry Wise. There was a P4M sale and book sale.

Over the years MAC has had many stellar meetings and speakers. Reading through the past newsletters to prepare a recapitulation of the meetings, programs, tours, sales, and projects readily shows the tremendous amount of work done by many of its members to accomplish these great educational and enjoyable meetings. Every name and project could not be reviewed due to space and time limitations, but we are all appreciative of everyone's hard work through the years. This 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary is indeed a time to celebrate the chapter's success.

**MAC AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH UVA LIBRARY: MANUSCRIPTS COLLECTION AND RHODODENDRON BOOK FUND** by Sandra McDonald

In late 1982 Dr. August Kehr, active in the Potomac Valley Chapter ARS and at one time president of ARS, and Harry Wise were talking. Dr. Kehr mentioned that it was such a shame that the old Potomac Valley Chapter ARS records had disappeared. No one knew where they were, probably having been discarded by someone who thought they were of no value. Dr. Kehr thought there must be a better way to care for the old records such as these.

Harry Wise agreed and later talked with MAC member Maurice Leach, librarian at Washington and Lee, at the same get-together. Maurice Leach said that Virginia has a fine library at Washington and Lee, but that the University of Virginia with its fine manuscript collection has the top library

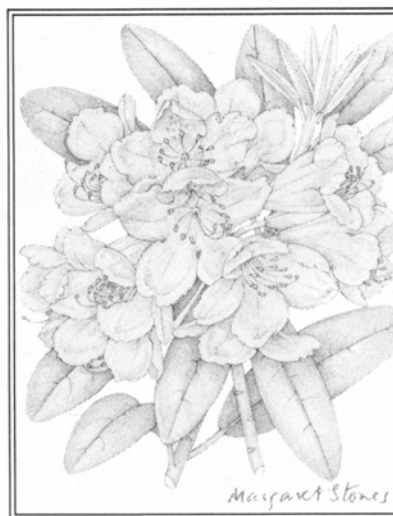
system in the state, and perhaps Harry might talk with them. Harry talked with UVA Librarian, Kendon Stubbs, and Kendon talked with others at the library. Eventually an agreement was worked out, and in May of 1983 the MAC Board signed the document making the University of Virginia's Library its official repository for the Middle Atlantic Chapter Rhododendron Manuscripts Collection. The materials are presently housed in the Special Collections at Alderman Library, a part of the University of Virginia Library System.

Later when Austin Kennell was president of ARS, he thought the ARS's records also should be placed somewhere for safekeeping, and an agreement was reached that old ARS records also reside in the Special Collections Department of the Library.

The manuscripts collection has attracted the papers of individuals such as recently deceased ARS members August Kehr, Austin Kennell, and George Ring. Papers can be given by living individuals or their heirs.

The Rhododendron Book Fund is another case of a mutually beneficial relationship between MAC and UVA. The book fund idea began in fall of 1982 when Harry Wise made a \$50 donation to start a Rhododendron Book Fund for the Library. This fund was to be increased by donations from MAC and its

**THE RHODODENDRON AND AZALEA FUND**



A Gift of the Middle Atlantic Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society in Memory of Dr. Thomas Foster Wheeldon, with Special Appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. E. Donald Hirsch; Mr. Kenneth and Dr. Sandra McDonald, Jr., and Mrs. Wheeldon

members. Over the years the MAC Board voted money for the fund when it had excess funds left from such things as its meetings and auctions. During 1990-91 the University of Virginia Library conducted a fund-raising drive on behalf of the Middle Atlantic Chapter to raise at least \$10,000 to elevate this fund to a library book endowment fund. The \$10,000 goal was reached in 1990. The campaign was successfully concluded with the establishment of the Rhododendron and Azalea Fund in the University Library.

Some MAC members over the years have made donations to the fund, often in memory of special people. Harry Wise recently made a gift in memory of Dr. August Kehr, who originally gave Harry the idea; Mrs. Gladys J. Wheeldon, who is the lead donor to the Middle Atlantic Chapter of the A.R.S. Rhododendron and Azalea Book Fund, has recently made another very generous gift to the Fund.

The current value of this endowment fund is \$65,200. A portion of the earnings from the endowment fund is used for rhododendron book purchases, annually. Many rhododendron books have been purchased with these earnings, including new books that are published and some rare old rhododendron books as they appear on the market. The University of Virginia Library now has an excellent rhododendron book collection as a result of this endowment fund.

#### **SPECIAL EDITION CREDITS**

Special thanks go to Frank Pelurie for working with digital copies of some very old faded photos using his photo editing program to make the photos clearer for printing. Frank also volunteered to do the color printing for this special edition which would have been quite expensive to have done by an outside printer.

Photo credits were omitted from the color photos section to save space and because the early photographers were not known. Most of the color photos and black and white photos were taken by Kenneth McDonald, Walter Przypek, and Sandra McDonald. A few in the color and/or black and white sections were taken by George Brubaker, Jean Beaudry and Temp Norris.

There are very few MAC photos available from the mid 1960s through most of the 1970s. If anyone has such photos and would not mind donating them to the University of Virginia Library Rhododendron Manuscripts Collection, the photos would have a good home.

#### **FROM TOKYO**

The Tokyo newspaper, *Mainichi Shimbun*, on December 7, 2001, had an article on the new princess born to the Japanese Crown Prince and Crown Princess. In an age-old ritual on December 7, the baby was named Aiko. After the ceremony, according to the *Mainichi Shimbun*, "Crown Prince Naruhito and Crown Princess Masako selected the *Rhododendron quinquefolium* - known as Cork Azalea, or white-flowered Asian azalea - as the symbol of their first child."

#### **NOTES FROM WEEKLY NMPRO E-MAIL NEWSLETTERS**

\* Growers may soon be able to have more confidence in compost products they purchase. With grant money from U.S. EPA, the U.S. Composting Council established the Seal of Testing Assurance Program, currently used by 55 facilities nationwide. To earn the seal, compost must be sampled regularly for pH, soluble salts, nutrients, particle size and pathogens. Composters must meet all state and federal public health regulations and provide a list of compost ingredients at the point of sale. <http://www.compostingcouncil.org>  
8-28-01

\* Elm trees genetically modified to resist Dutch elm disease have been developed at Univ. of Abertay in Dundee, Scotland. Anti-fungal genes have been transferred to English elms, making them immune to the disease. The project is likely to draw negative feedback from European environmentalists that have long protested against the release of genetically altered plants. The disease has killed more than 20 million trees in Great Britain since 1970 and about 70% of American elms in the U.S. since 1930.  
Sources: BBC, This is North Scotland.  
9-4-01

\* Kudzu was discovered in Oregon again this summer. This detection and 2 last year have Ore. Dept. of Ag. wondering if there may be more kudzu plants elsewhere in the state. The newest site is in Portland within 1 mile of a kudzu outbreak discovered last year. Experts guessed the new infestation, while relatively small, had been there more than a year. Last year's kudzu discovery in Aurora was the first time the weed had been detected west of Texas. Herbicide was reapplied to both the Aurora and the initial Portland site. (503) 986-4621.  
9-11-01





Peter Barber, Ann Glass, & Dr. Thomas Wheeldon.  
Richmond. 1952



Dr. Clement Bowers, Dr. Henry Skinner, Gordon Jones,  
Paul Vossburg. May 1963



John Schemenack, Kenneth McDonald (Sr.), Dr. Thomas  
Wheeldon. 1958



Dr. Thomas Wheeldon, Joe Gable, Henry Francis du Pont.  
1956



Dr. Henry Skinner and Dr. Thomas Wheeldon. 1960



Mr. & Mrs. Austin Kilham, Gladys Wheeldon, & Stuart  
Armstrong. 1960



Gladys and Tom Wheeldon with Mr. Hakes bending down and John Schemenack seated. Helen McDonald standing with pitcher. Picnic at Ten Oaks Nursery. 1964



Betty Shoosmith and Helen McDonald. 1964



Ann Glass and Maggie Smith. 1964



Bert Shoosmith, Fred Lee, John Creech, Tom Wheeldon, Stuart Armstrong. 1960



Ted Van Veen & Austin Kennell. 1983



Bill Bedwell & Sandra McDonald. 1984



Paul James, Harry Wise bending down, Merl Aitken, Sandra McDonald on plant expedition. 1986



Barbara Hall grooming Mrs Crockett's garden for the 1988 meeting. 1987



Al Hall grooming Mrs. Crockett's garden for 1988 meeting. 1987



Sybil Przypek grooming Mrs. Crockett's garden for 1988 meeting. 1987



Bill Tietjen, August Kehr, S. McDonald 1988 convention.



MAC at Peebles' garden, Dr. Mehlquist in center. 1988



Ray & Alice Doggett. 1988



George Ring & Sandra McDonald. 1988



Harold Greer & Sandra McDonald. 1988



Harry Wise & Walter Bell working at plant sale. 1988



Harry Wise, John Jenkins, Gen. Robert Porter. Nov 1992



Evelyn & Williamson Watts, Austin Kennell, David Lay. Nov 1992



MAC members at Seashore State Park, Nov. 14, 1992



MAC members at David & Mary Lay's garden. May 1993



Norman & Jean Beaudry. Nov 1993



Dr. Gustav Mehlquist. 1988



Gladys Wheeldon. Dec. 2001



Dr. & Mrs. Bill Constable & Wally & Jane McKay. April 2001



Dr. Doug Jolley auctioning Austin's books. April 2001



Terry Sheuchenko. Dec 1991



Pam Harper & Dr. Gustav Mehlquist. 1977



Ray Brush. 1990



Elmer Lapsley. 2001



Austin & Betty Kennell. Nov 1998



Margaret White & Jane Goodrich. Nov 1998



Rosa Carter, Ray Doggett, & Doug Jolley. 1996



George Ring hosting MAC at his Roanoke Garden. 1997



Don Hyatt at Species Study Group. 2001



Esther & Harry Jordan, Sandra McDonald, & Leroy Hauser. May 1992





George McLellan & Sandra McDonald. 2001



At table: Dr. John Neal, Sybil Przypek, John Buschmann, Austin Kennell. Behind: Harry Wise, Judy & John Tole. 2001



Clockwise from left: Austin Kennell, Theresa Brents, Sandra McDonald, David Sauer, Jeanne Hammer, Debby Sauer, Frank Pelurie, Alton Hall, Bill Bedwell. 2001



Harry Wise, Bill Bedwell, Frank Pelurie, Jeanne Hammer, Sybil Przypek. 2001



Gladys Wheeldon going over MAC scrapbook with Ken McDonald, Jr. Dec 2001



Unidentified person, David & Debby Sauer, Sandra McDonald, Dr. Gustav Mehlquist at Gable's. 1982



John Neal & Sharon Collins. 2001



Sybil Przypek, Terry Sheuchenko, & Pam Harper.

GARDENS OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS - New members are encouraged to visit members' gardens in their area. The officers and board members have agreed to show new members through their gardens if the member will call ahead and arrange a convenient time. Telephone numbers and towns are listed below.

MIDDLE ATLANTIC CHAPTER OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

**Memberships and renewals should be sent to Jane McKay, Membership Chairman, 3 Cobb's Ct., Palmyra, VA 22963.**

Annual membership dues are \$28 per year.

Miscellaneous inquiries may be sent to the editor (address below) for forwarding to proper individual.

Sandra McDonald, Ph.D., Editor  
Mid-Atlantic Rhododendron News and Notes  
P.O. Box 268  
Hampton, VA 23669