

# MID-ATLANTIC RHODODENDRON NEWS AND NOTES

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

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## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING MAC MEETINGS

April 20–22, 2001

Comfort Inn, Gloucester, VA

### 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>

### FALL MEETING AT ELKINS, WEST VIRGINIA

by Debby Sauer  
After a panoramic drive from Richmond, watching the spectacular display of leaves, we arrived at “The Mansion” - Graceland - on the campus of Elkins/Davis college.

The West Virginia folks really know how to put on a meeting. Doug Jolley and Frank Pelurie picked the absolute BEST possible place for “digs and grub.” The Mansion had several suites, elegantly furnished in the Victorian style for those wanting a little something elegant, and the conference



Debby Sauer

center, next door, provided very spacious rooms for the rest of us country folk. Dinner was on your own and was wonderful!

The Friday night speaker was Frank, with a brief history, slides and description of Saturday’s activities: Dolly’s Sod, or Cheat Bridge. Frank’s slides were stunning - vistas of outrageously beautiful scenery. I almost sold our house in Chester. The rest of the evening was spent visiting with old friends Harry and Betty Wise, Paul James, Bill Bedwell, Al and Barbara Hall, Ray and Betty Brush, just to name a few.

Saturday morning began with a complimentary continental breakfast, served in “The Mansion”, which consisted of fresh fruit, pastries, breads, cereals, beverages and juices of your choice. After waddling out of breakfast, we car-pooled to the tour of choice.

We selected Dolly Sods and the Cranberry Bogs. We had been before, several years ago, and wanted to get back to that beautiful spot. (Several sections of Dolly Sods has been declared as off limits to large groups of people, but we knew that Frank would be on top of this, and we were directed to the appropriate areas.) The *Vaccinium* was flame red, as promised. Beautiful, sweeping panoramic views, just as we remembered from the last time. Once again, out with the



View of *Vaccinium* on Dolly Sods. Photo by David Sauer.



Field trip at MAC Fall meeting. Photo by Walt Przypek.



Waiting for the program. Photo by Walter Przypek.



food for a grand box lunch, prepared by the “Mansion” staff. (I could get used to this!)

Back at the hotel for Happy Hour, plant auction, and the featured speaker, our own George McLellan, who took us through the England and Ireland gardens on his Spring Tour. Then we had the banquet dinner. We couldn’t believe the buffet table! The food was simply fabulous. Once again, we waddled over to the conference center for the P4M plant and book sales.

Sunday morning was the business meeting and then home for us. On the way back, Paul James suggested we stop at the Beartown State Park near Lewisburg. That is an indescribable place: huge outcropping of rocks, with ferns everywhere. In order to preserve the environment, walkways have been built through the rocks. A must-see for anyone in that area.

If you missed this meeting, then beat yourself with a stick. It was simply one of the best meetings. Many thanks to the West Virginia crew for a memorable weekend!

## TWO BRONZE MEDALS GIVEN AT FALL MEETING

**Theresa H. Brents** was presented the Bronze Medal Award in recognition of her active participation and service to the Chapter for many years.

Theresa has been an active member who opened her garden to members on several occasions.

She has been the Book Sale Committee for a number of years. She increased the number and variety of books, gloves, and other items available for sale to members at reduced prices. The ordering, handling of inventory and transportation



Theresa Brents receiving the Bronze Medal. Photo by Walter Przypek.

to and from meetings is a major and not a light task.

For this and her many other contributions to our meetings and Society, we give her this, our chapter's highest honor.

**Sharon R. Collins** was presented the Bronze Medal Award in recognition of her active participation and service to the Chapter for many



Sharon Collins receiving the Bronze Medal from MAC president Alton Hall. Photo by Walter Przypek.

years.

Sharon has organized and run our Spring and Fall

Flower and Foliage Shows since the death of Terry Sheuchenko. This formidable task includes many facets from scheduling, ordering ribbons and trophies, recruiting volunteers and judges, setting up and categorizing the many entries, and recording the winners.

For this and her overall willingness to help when needed, we present with sincere appreciation this bronze medal, our chapter's highest honor.

#### DECEASED MEMBERS

**Albert J. (Bert) Shoosmith** 93, died August 14, 2000. He was a nurseryman, landscape architect and grower of unusual cultivars of rhododendron and broadleaf evergreens. He was part owner of Southside Nurseries, Inc. and later established Hillside Gardens in Chester, Virginia. Bert was a past president of the Richmond and Virginia Nurserymen's Association. Bert was a

Charter member of the Middle Atlantic Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society. He was instrumental in organizing the Virginia Society of Landscape Designers and was active in the legislature to protect landscape nurserymen.

**James Logan** of Pulaski, Virginia, died on September 12, 2000.

#### MAC SPECIES STUDY GROUP by Sandra McDonald

The study group managed to arrange another get together on Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend at the McDonalds' home. We had several topics, the first of which was natural hybrids of the native azaleas and the possible origins of the new species *Rhododendron eastmanii*. Some theories were tossed around. Some of the group are planning to make a trip in mid-May well after the MAC Spring Meeting to a location or two where *R. eastmanii* grows. We



Front, left to right: Don Hyatt, David Sauer, Sandra McDonald, Ken McDonald. Back, left to right: Debby Sauer, George McLellan, Walter Przypek. Photo by Sybil Przypek.

may also visit some suspicious native azaleas in southern Alabama which do not totally fit a species description.

We viewed slides of the natives and also visited the Potomac Valley Chapter Web site that Don Hyatt has put up that features many photos of the natives, including some of *R. eastmanii* from Mike Creel. We were able to learn a lot about technology since Don brought a digital projector



George McLellan, Sybil Przypek, and Don Hyatt setting up digital projector. Photo by Walter Przypek.

which he runs with his laptop computer.

David Sauer brought his laptop computer also, and we went on-line with it and visited the PVC Web site, a trial model MAC Web site, and the



David Sauer and George McLellan. Photo by Walter Przypek.

ARS Web site. Don Hyatt has done a clone of the PVC Web site for a mock up site for MAC. A few of us have been working on things we would like to add to the site. This meeting was a helpful in that it got together several of the interested parties for further ideas and input.

#### NEWS OF MEMBERS

**Walter Przypek** is recuperating from his November 27<sup>th</sup> hip replacement surgery. He was able to go home on December 1.

**Lorraine Chappell** is moving from her home and hopes someone will purchase her home and garden.

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

Thanksgiving is past and we are still putting the garden to rest. Compost bins are full, but the perennials still have to be cut down. Yesterday we covered the few azaleas outside the fence with netting and today will spray the rhododendrons with Deer Away. So far the heavy acorn crop is keeping the deer busy and will also keep us busy next spring pulling oak seedlings.

The Charlottesville area broke a record for the most days without measurable precipitation this fall. In our garden we did not see rain from September 20 until near election day and then less than half an inch. Finally, on November 25, an inch of rain fell. Other than the drought we had a wonderful fall weather-wise, no hard freeze until November 16.

Several azaleas were outstanding. Georg Ring's 'August to Frost' did just that, continuously opening flowers (white with an occasional purple streak) right up to the November 16 freeze. The Linwood azalea, double pink flowered 'Opal', bloomed from early September until the November freeze.

We have three varieties of Encore azaleas. 'Amethyst' bloomed for two months this fall, 'Ember' for at least a month, and 'Royalty' not at all. Of course the Encore azaleas here in our garden are very small so not a real test but worth trying.

Happy Holidays to all.

**WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:**

Henry G. Carter, ., Easton,  
MD 21601  
Deidre Halley, ., Charleston,  
WV 25311

**FALL FOLIAGE SHOW**

Detailed Fall Foliage Show results are not available at this time. Doug Jolley had Best Species, *R. minus*, and Theresa Brents had Best Elepidote, unknown.



Theresa Brents and winning foliage. Photo by Walter Przypek.



Doug Jolley and winning foliage. Photo by Walter Przypek.

**A MOMENT IN MAC HISTORY** by Sandra McDonald

The passing of Bert Shoosmith caused me to find and read old minutes. I thought the minutes of the formative meeting and those attending would be of interest to current MAC members.

The following is quoted from the records.

**A Meeting of the Prospective Members and Guests of the Middle Atlantic Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society, Honoring Mr. Peter N. Barber, Exbury Estate, Southampton, England, March 23-25, 1952.**

Minutes of Meeting, March 24, 1952

On Monday, March 24, 1952 an organizational meeting of the Middle Atlantic Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society was held at the Commonwealth Club, Richmond, Virginia.

The meeting served two purposes: Mr. Peter N. Barber of Exbury Estate, Southampton, England, was present and following a dinner, made an address upon the Exbury hybrids, illustrating his subject with colored slides of several of the rhododendron series, including azaleas. Mr Barber was not only interesting, but extremely constructive.

Copies of the proposed By-laws of the new Chapter were given to each person present at the dinner. Each member will be asked to write in suggestions in regard the By-laws and to make up a write-in ballot for his choice of those whom he wishes to fill the various offices. When this material is in hand, it will be compiled and the structure of the Middle Atlantic Chapter set up.

This meeting was a portion of a three day outing for the group. On Sunday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, open house was held at "Gladsgay Gardens", the home of Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Wheeldon. On Monday morning the group visited Williamsburg, Virginia, and its historical places. On Tuesday, after informal discussion a great many of the group proceeded to Washington to attend the evening meeting of the Azalea Symposium.

Thirty-two members of ARS were present.

Thomas Wheeldon, M.D.  
Acting Chairman

Between the meeting of the Middle Atlantic Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society on March 24, 1952 and the meeting on December 12, 1952 a write-in ballot was held and the following officers and directors elected for this year:

- President** Dr. Thomas Wheeldon
- Vice-President** Mr. Frederic P. Lee
- Secretary-Treasurer** Mr. H. M. Van Wormer

## Directors

Dr. Fred Coe  
Dr. Edgar McPeak  
Mrs. Powell Glass  
Dr. W. N. Fortescue  
Mr. Kenneth McDonald

## ARS Members who signed:

Rudolf Anderson  
W. D. Campbell, Jr.  
Fred Coe, M.D.  
M. G. Coplen  
Herman Fletcher, M.D.  
W. N. Fortescue, M.D.  
Joseph Gable  
Anne C. Glass  
Hoyt S. Haddock  
Harry P. Holt  
Mrs. R. O. Horton  
Austin D. Kilham  
David Laird  
Frederick P. Lee  
Thomas Martin  
Kenneth McDonald  
Frank Phillips  
A. J. Shoosmith  
Merritt I. Taylor  
H. M. VanWormer  
Thomas Wheeldon, M.D.  
D. D. Withers  
Mrs. N. H. Turbeville  
Mrs. Sam E. Hardwick, Jr.  
Mr. N. H. Turbeville  
Mr. Sam E. Hardwicke, Jr.

## NEWS ITEMS FROM WEEKLY NMPRO

*From e-mail Issues Nov 7, Nov 14, Nov 21, and Nov 21.*

\* Phorid flies, the ones whose larvae cause imported fire ants' heads to fall off, will be released on a large scale by USDA in Southeastern states next spring. USDA hopes the biological controls will become naturalized enemies of the ants. Other predator species being researched are a smaller phorid species that prefers cooler climates, a parasitic ant and

*Thelohania solenopsae*, a disease-causing pathogen.  
rbrenner@gainesville.usda.ufl.edu

\* Here's an update on the national champion smoke tree (*Cotinus obovatus*) on the Purdue campus in West Lafayette, Ind.: The 40-foot, 60-ton tree was successfully moved in October, marking the first time a national champion tree had been transplanted. The tree would have been destroyed to make way for a new building, but the Purdue Foundation raised money to fund its move. The tree's health and water and nutrient needs will be monitored for several years until its root system becomes re-established.  
gsternberg@dnrmail.state.il.us

\* A new strain of *Beauveria bassiana* fungus known as BB-1200 appears to be even more effective at controlling caterpillar pests than the currently available strain on the market, GHA. The new strain could be developed into mycoinsecticides or fungal sprays that attach to and penetrate caterpillars' bodies. The GHA strain is the active ingredient in 2 products, Mycotrol and BotaniGard. (607) 255-2458.

\* New research suggests that long-term exposure to a pesticide called rotenone kills brain cells and triggers debilitating physical symptoms associated with Parkinson's disease. Rotenone, made from extracts of tropical plants, is widely used as an agricultural pesticide. The study was published in the Dec. issue of *Nature Neuroscience*.

\* If you're an allergy sufferer, this may be the worst news you hear all day: Scientists determined that increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere greatly increases the amount of pollen produced by ragweed. They estimate that higher carbon dioxide levels could lead to a doubling of pollen produced by ragweed in the next 100 years. (301) 504-6639.

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.

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