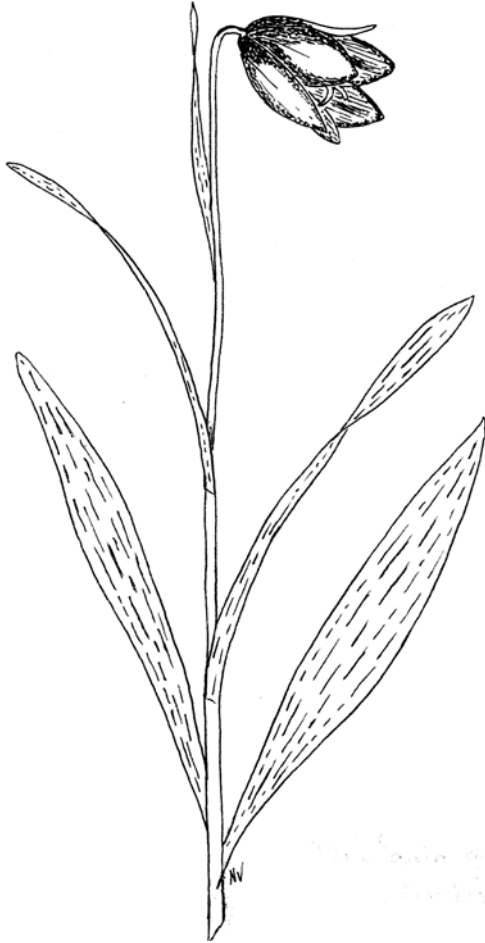


Alpine Garden Club of B.C.





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Mark Demers, Len Gardiner, Sara Jones, Joe Keller, Jason Nehring,
Stuart Scholefield

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Rosemary Burnham, Margaret Charlton, Grace Conboy,
Francisca Darts, Frank Dorsey, Pam Frost, Daphne Guernsey, Bodil Leamy,
Jim MacPhail, Vera Peck, Geoff Williams, Bob Woodward

Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month except July & August, in the Floral Hall, VanDusen Botanical Garden. Doors and Library open at 7:00pm and Meetings start at 7:30pm sharp with the educational talk. Don't forget to bring a prize for the raffle which goes a long way to paying for the hall rental.

Cover: *Fritillaria grayana* drawn by Nico Verbeek cf. article by Linda Verbeek
"Report from the Spring Sale" p.61

AGC PROGRAM

Sept. 9th 2005 – We have been invited, along with the UBC FOGS to an open garden at Valleybrook wholesale nursery in Abbotsford. The bus will leave at around 9:30am from UBC Botanical Garden parking lot and return around 3pm. Cost is estimated at \$23 for the bus. Please let Moya know a.s.a.p. if you are interested.

Sept. 14th 2005 *The New Planter Hunter's Garden* – Bobby Ward, past president of NARGS, will talk about his researches for his new book which profiles the modern generation of plant hunters and their contributions to our gardens. (Book review on page 78).

September 25th, Sunday, Fall Plant Sale at VanDusen

Oct. 12th 2005 *Cypripediums and Their Culture* – Steve Doonan is the well known and acknowledged superb plantsman of Grand Ridge Nursery fame who has the world wide respect of those who are fortunate to know him.

October 21st 2005 – DEADLINE FOR RECEIVING SEEDS FOR THE SEED EXCHANGE

Nov. 9th 2005 *South African Plants for North West Gardens*. Jim Fox, Manager of Wells Medina Nursery in Seattle will base his talk on his January 2004 botanizing trip to this treasure trove of plants.

Dec.14th 2005 Christmas Plant Auction and Pot Luck Supper. It's never too soon to plan your plant contributions to our fund raiser for the orphans.

Jan.11th 2006 Richie Steffen, Coordinator of Horticulture of the Miller Botanic Garden, Seattle. (Topic TBA)

Feb.8th 2006 Members' Slides – It's not too soon to think about taking photos during your summer holidays and trips for this popular meeting. We can also accommodate computer based photos from your digital camera, just let us know ahead of time

March 8th 2006 *Araucariana – Plants of the Chilean Andes*. Philip MacDougall has recently returned from a hunt for rosulate violets in Chile and will share his experiences.

April 8th/9th Spring Show (Date to be confirmed)

April 12th 2006 Dave Demers, Seed Collecting in Mongolia

May 6th 2006 Spring Sale at St. David's Church, W. Vancouver

May 10th 2006 Tour of the UBC Alpine Garden

June 14th 2006 Sue Milliken and Kelly Dodson From Far Reaches Farm will give us one of their very amusing talks – probably on “Where the heck is Nagaland?”



SPRING SALE 2005

~ by Linda Verbeek, Burnaby, British Columbia

Every year it is again astonishing how many plants can be crammed into the hall at St David's. By the time all the plants have been brought in and tallied, a tropical greenhouse isn't a patch on the lush greenery displayed everywhere.

We had a very strange spring with mild, sunny weather in February that made us all fear for our plants if the frost should return, and then something like four weeks of wet, cold, gloomy weather that felt like November. All the plants sulked and it looked like flowering was going to be much delayed, as indeed it was for the spring show early in April. Then the second half of April was like midsummer and as a result everything got mixed up together. The plants I am going to mention don't necessarily demonstrate that, but on the other hand if something seems to have been out of season, that may be the reason. Also, the set-up time is quite hectic with everyone trying to get done in time and we are sellers ourselves, so I request your indulgence for my omissions. I am quite sure I have forgotten plants – probably overlooked more than I saw – but I hope I didn't leave any of the sellers out.

Our first surprise came with Don Martyn. We had gone to the Rhododendron Society sale the week before looking for species Rhodos – preferably small ones – and hadn't had much luck. But Don had quite a range of them, like the tiny, small-flowered *Rh. trichostomum* and the small, new *Rh. yungigense*, apparently like *Rh. impeditum*, only better. Or the various forms of *Rh. campylogynum*, which is also quite small, or the mid-sized *Rh. quinquefolium*.

The reliable providers of rhododendrons are the Klapwijks and they came through with *Rh. nakaharae*, *R. saluenense*, and *R. augustinii*. *R. saluenense* is also a small shrub, with very deep purple flowers. *R. augustinii* is much bigger, I have seen it at least 3 - 4m (10 - 13ft) tall. It is late blooming and has quite blue flowers. They also had various hybrids.

Perennial Gardens, the nursery belonging to Ken and Elke Knechtel, had quite a display. My eye was caught by *Lathyrus vernus* in both the purple and the pink-and-white form. I hadn't remembered seeing it in a sale before and had understood that it was rather fussy about disturbance. But my clump (grown from a door prize in one of the study weekends) had outreached its welcome and was elbowing out other treasures so I had taken the plunge and cut it up. It actually seemed to

tolerate this quite well when I did this at a time when the young shoots were 5 - 10cm (2 - 5in) tall. But I found out that you have to be careful to plant it exactly to the same depth again, as one piece that had got heeled in too deeply nearly died. They also had *Scilla litardierei*. According to the books this makes a dense, short spike of rather small flowers in a clear blue in early summer. A plant I'd never heard of before was *Chaerophyllum hirsutum* 'Roseum'. This is in the carrot family, with a rosette of ferny leaves and umbels of dusky rose flowers on very short stalks – the whole plant wasn't 20cm (8in) tall I think. It looks like a dwarf version of *Pimpinella major* 'Rosea', which I've had in the garden for a long time. That makes a mound of 50cm (20in) wide by about the same height. It is quite well behaved until you decide it's too big and try to take it out, because then every bit of root you left behind will come up as a new plant and go on doing so for ever. It is still worth having. But the *Chaerophyllum* might be better! Actually, I've just seen it now in someone's garden and it does grow taller than that. It is still nice for being so much earlier than the *Pimpinella*.

The Coomeys had some nice pots of maidenhair fern *Adiantum venustum*. It is smaller and daintier than our native *A. pedatum*, but it doesn't have the graceful architecture. They also had *Maurandya barclayana* (*Asarina barclayana*), a climber with large, open, trumpet-shaped flowers. The picture they showed with the plant suggested that they would be mid-purple with a white heart. It makes tubers for over-wintering, and I've had one for a couple of years. However, it must be marginally hardy for it doesn't seem to want to come back this year.

Phoenix Perennials proudly showed a number of *Cypripedium calceolus*, the yellow lady-slipper. We've got almost blasé about *C. formosanum*, although this year there weren't as many in the sale as last year, but *C. calceolus* is pretty special. They looked very healthy too. Doug Murray in Hope gave me one a few years ago in exchange for something else and we have tried to reproduce his setting where they thrive. This is a river bank with gravelly sand mixed with clay. We just have sand, but we've gone and dug some clay in the Pitt Polder, and I give it a watering with clay slurry once a year. It seems



Maurandya barclayana (*Asarina barclayana*)

to like it. I was also very pleased to see *Jovellana violacea*. This little scroph from Chile makes pale violet flowers that seem to be trying to become *Calceolaria* pouches. Very charming, but not hardy here and I have found it hard to keep even in a pot.

Pat and Paige Woodward had various *Arisaemas*, including *A. si-kokianum* in its full glory with the purple-brown spathe that is pure white on the inside. The spadix is also pure white. I am pleased to report that the *Lithophragma parviflorum* which I bought from them three springs ago (and which they had for sale this year as well), is blooming in the garden after being very sulky for the previous two springs. Also they had *Fritillaria bucharica*, which grows almost like an *Iris bucharica*, but then makes a number of typical *Fritillaria* flowers on top. The flowers are white.

Iris bucharica itself was also represented. Jason Nehring had several. I was also charmed by his plants of *Disporum flavescens* (formerly *D. unifolium*). The flowers in this plant are huge, more like *Uvularia*, if perhaps not quite so bright yellow. I didn't get back there in time to buy one though.

I did manage to get one of the treasures from Cusheon Creek nursery, though, namely *Fritillaria grayana*. This is one of the California fritillarias, perhaps not one of the most spectacular ones, but very charming. The flower is a fat bell in an almost indescribable colour somewhere between pale green, pale pink and pale gray, with vertical purple stripes. The inside is heavily striped with purple. I find the California fritillarias even harder to grow than the ones from the Old World, even though I have been trying for years. I also bought one of the two *Phlox stolonifera* they had. It is a named variety ('Blue Ridge'), with very deep purple flowers. I had it for years, but it is now several years since it disappeared. The peculiar thing is that for a while you could get it in the standard nurseries, but now it seems to be quite rare again. And it is such a charmer. The leaves are on the ground on creeping stems, and the umbels of wide-open flowers are carried on upright stems of 15 or 20cm (6 or 8in). It is a woodlander from the east and presumably prefers dappled shade. I seem to have picked out mostly plants from the western hemisphere from their selection as I also noticed *Aquilegia flavescens*, quite a nice yellow, which comes from the Rocky Mountains, and *Sisyrinchium macrocarpum* from South America. This must be the showiest *Sisyrinchium* of them all, with butter yellow flowers that are about an inch across, marked by dark lines around the center.

Daphne Guernsey had several pots of *Raoulia eximia*, one of the New Zealand creeping daisies. I don't know whether this one classifies as a 'vegetable sheep', but it is in the same group. They make wonderful silvery carpets but I have never yet been able to over-winter one. Daphne was also into southern hemisphere plants (or I was, when I looked at her table), because the other one I spotted was *Orthrosanthus multiflorus*. *Orthrosanthus* is a southern hemisphere genus in the Iris family, with blue flowers. They are not like irises, though, they look more

like the flowers of *Schizostylis*. I am not familiar with this particular species, otherwise. It comes from Australia.

Fragrant Flora had a spectacular plant of *Paeonia suffruticosa* v. *rockii*. It wasn't even all that big yet but it had a perfect flower which must have been more than 10cm (4in) across with at least a double row of white somewhat fringed petals, each marked with a central blotch in the deepest possible purple. It is very sweetly scented. They also had several healthy looking plants of *Trillium luteum*.



Paeonia suffruticosa v. *rockii*

Vera Peck had lots of treasures but I'll only mention *Carduncellus pinnatus*, which is a kind of thistle that makes a rosette flat on the ground, and then has a large blue flowerhead sitting smack in the middle of it with no stem at all. It

has done well in my scree, but I found that if the fat root emerges above the gravel covering it gets damaged. I almost lost it that way, but this year it is flowering again. The other plant I can't pass over was *Daphne arbuscula*. They were quite small cuttings, but looking very healthy and even proudly displayed one truss of flowers. *D. arbuscula* is a very desirable *Daphne*. It is a small shrub, with very dark, evergreen leaves and clear pink flowers. It grows very slowly – I had one in a trough for years, and after ten years or so it still was only maybe 30 x 40cm (12 x 16in). But that was too big for the trough and I took it out and planted it in a pot by itself, after which it proceeded to die in stages. So the moral is: don't ever move it if it is established!

Dan Szierzega had, as always, a great collection of carnivorous plants, but unfortunately most of them are not really hardy. He also had bulbs of a cultivar of *Crinum* (I saw at least one go by in someone's basket). *Crinum* is supposed to be hardy here but I haven't risked it yet. They make a huge bulb with a long neck (up to 20cm (8in)) and long strap-shaped leaves. In full leaf my plant can have a canopy of nearly a meter across which makes quite a show on the patio. Apparently if you plant them in the garden they'll bloom in summer, but mine will bloom in winter. A bud emerges very low down on the neck, and then elongates till the stem is over a metre tall. Then the elegant, slender pink trumpets will open in succession. It has a sweet scent too!

Kaz Pelka had a table full of sedums and sempervivums, making quite a neat display with the various colours in the leaves. They don't bloom this early.

Anna Burian had two true alpines, by which I mean plants which really do come from the Alps. One was *Primula halleri*, a small plant with an umbel of pink flowers. The distinguishing characteristic is that it has a very long flower tube. The other one was *Anemone trifolia*, which is closely related to the wood anemone (*A. nemorosa*), but the leaves are not so divided. It struck me as being very compact. And then she had something which made me do a double take. A pot with oval, pointed, spotted leaves just coming up out of the ground, and I immediately thought *Erythronium dens-canis*. But the label said *Scilla paucifolia*. And indeed, when I peered closely enough, what had looked like a single flower bud turned out to be a little truss of buds like a grape hyacinth. I couldn't resist it. I have since found out that it is not hardy, comes from S. Africa, and the flowers are greenish, so we'll have to see.

The Club table had *Calanthe discolor*, a terrestrial orchid from Japan. I think last year I wrote about another *Calanthe* with yellow flowers. This one was less spectacular. The flowers more greenish, but it is still an attractive plant. Then they had *Anthyllis vulneraria*. In some way to me this is not a spectacular plant – you could find it wild around my home town in Holland. On the other hand, the very woolly flowerheads with yellow, orange, or even red pea flowers sticking out of the wool are very attractive. I haven't found it easy to keep here. I've grown it from seed, and even had some self-sown seedlings, but it only lasted a few years and has disappeared again. It grows way up into the alpine too.

Janray nurseries had quite a display of *Helleborus x hybridus*, including some very dark ones. It is a bit unfortunate that the season for them is mostly over as the colours are so much brighter when they are still in full bloom.

We also had a visitor this year, Marilyn Allen, who gave a splendid talk on Gesneriads just a few weeks earlier. She was now selling quite a few of them. Unfortunately, most of them aren't hardy, and I don't know whether the ones I picked are any hardier than the others. There was a saucerful of *Chirita taneana*, a whole patch of small, somewhat hairy leaves, like some of the dwarf African violets but not so clearly arranged in rosettes, studded all over with foxglove like flowers on short stems. The flowers were white with purple spotting, just gorgeous. *Kohleria warsewiczii* had purple bells with a clearly marked edge that was striped with white. And *Chirita longganensis* had very fat stems with tufts of leaves on top, somewhat like a miniature palm. I think the flowers were greenish.

As always, I leave Roger Barlow till last. There are cross-connections in this story. Roger also had a *Carduncellus*, this one was *C. mitissimus*. I assume it will do something similar to *C. pinnatus*. He also had both of the high altitude ranunculus from the Alps: *R. parnassi-*

folius and *R. glacialis*. *R. parnassifolius* has entire kidney-shaped leaves, whereas *R. glacialis* has divided leaves, more like an ordinary buttercup although they are glaucous. Both have large white flowers flushed with pink and I would like to know if anyone can grow them in the Lower Mainland. I've tried *R. parnassifolius* at least twice from seed, even had a flower once, but they just don't last. I think it is the winter damp that gets them, for I don't let them sit in the rain over the winter. *R. parnassifolius* likes lime, the other one grows on acid rocks. I bought *Penstemon debilis* last year too, but it died over the winter. However, I think the pale glaucous leaves and the even paler pink flowers are pretty enough to try again. In habit it looks quite a bit like *P. davidsonii*. I didn't even discover till much later (which should give you an idea of how much I missed) that he also had a special form of *Tropaeolum polyphyllum*. This is one of the most spectacular tropaeolums with its silvery foliage and long sprays of bright yellow flowers, but this form seemed to be even more dainty. It makes a fitting finish to this report of special treasures.

(Many thanks to Linda for this excellent and detailed report on what must have been a very busy day ~ Ed.)



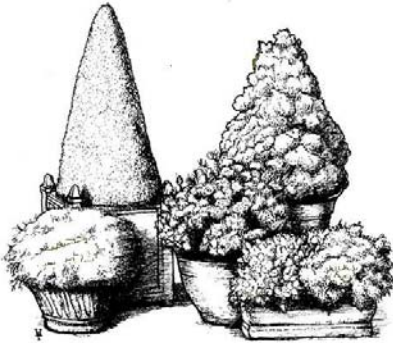
President Doug Smith watering and Mark Demers setting up our display at the Cloverdale Rodeo & Plant Show, May 2005



DWARF EVERGREENS FOR THE SCREE GARDEN

by Jo Bridge ~ Vancouver

Setting up a scree area in a city garden to provide a home for those choice, irresistible alpine plants that we see at club sales and shows, immaculately grown by Vera Peck, Roger Barlow and others, presents problems. Obviously soil type and choice of rocks come first. Then, to add structure, dwarf evergreens give year-round interest in addition to providing protection for plants that need it, shade where necessary or perhaps a background to highlight plants that are too reclusive and deserve more attention.



Suitable dwarf evergreens are not easy to find. They should be snapped up when available. Propagation from cuttings is an option but not an easy one. One of my favourites is *Cryptomeria japonica* 'Knaptonensis' – an attractive variegated shrub with light gold tips. It is elegant and feathery in appearance. After fifteen years or so it stands about eighteen inches (46cm) high. *Cryptomeria japonica* 'Elegans Nana' is a similar charmer. At approximately the same height but shaped like a little dark green dumpling is a dwarf form of the Balsam Fir or 'Balm of Gilead', *Abies balsamea* 'Nana'. The branches are densely packed. In January and February it gives some of the smaller species of galanthus a perfect background when they are planted in front and around it. After blooming, the galanthus disappear leaving room for the later bloomers, and the shape and deep green of the fir's foliage continues to add interest to the scree.

For draping over a rock the 'Cole's Prostrate' form of *Tsuga canadensis* produces cascades of green foliage. The effect is less dense than that of the previous dwarf evergreens. The branches show to advantage with careful pruning and shaping. Neither the *Cryptomeria j.* 'Knaptonensis' nor *Abies balsamea* 'Nana' have needed any pruning.

Pines are always elegant and respond well to pruning. Most are too large for a scree garden but there are several dwarf forms of *Pinus mugho* which fit in well. 'Paul's Dwarf', 'Mops' and 'Gnom' (not a spelling error) are choice examples. *Chamaecyparis obtusa*, the Hinoki Cypress of Japan, in addition to its full sized beauty, can be found in dwarf forms suitable for the rock garden such as 'Cooper's Gem' and 'Chabo-yadori'. Where a touch of gold is called for *C. obtusa* 'Nana

Aurea' is one of the very best. It was introduced from Japan in 1875. For an "exclamation mark" or shrub of conical habit C.o. 'Nana Pyramidalis' produces short sprays of deep green foliage which contrast well with a scree background.

Picea sitchensis 'Papoose' and *Abies lasiocarpa* 'Duflon' are both good dwarf evergreens and like those already mentioned will add permanent interest to the scree garden. They all, combined with interesting rocks, show alpine flowers and foliage to great advantage. The dwarf evergreen shrubs suggested here have all been available in Vancouver from time to time but represent a mere handful of many possibilities – searching for them can be a fascinating quest.



CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW 2005 ~ Ian Plenderleith

The 2005 Royal Horticultural Society Chelsea Flower Show was hot, crowded and quite wonderful. At least it was on the day we attended. Phyllis was fortunate in winning two tickets in the raffle at the Eastern Winter Study Weekend in Toronto. Unfortunately, the prize did not include flights or the cost of London hotels! However, we were overdue a visit to see cousins in Scotland, so off we went.

The weather in Scotland was much the same as what we had left in Vancouver – cool and unsettled – so it was quite a shock to find London sweltering in 90°F (32°C).

We arrived early before the worst of the heat and crowds, but it was warmer still in the Great Pavilion, where there were booths for all sorts of garden related products and persuasions. Some very interesting and innovative things there were too. A variety of organizations produce elegant display gardens varying from ultra-modern living space to the prize-winning "A Soldier's Dream of Blighty", a pre-war English country garden. The ingenuity, work and expense which go into developing these display gardens for a five-day show is very great indeed.

The most impressive floral displays were those in the Great Pavilion where various nurseries and organizations show off their best. The variety, quality and sheer number of plants is staggering – from roses to carnivorous plants, clematis and sweet peas like none I had ever seen. I was impressed with the many varieties of verbascum and digitalis which make outstanding garden features. Displays of Exhibition Auriculas were very striking having been grown to perfection just in time for the show. (Why are mine always not quite ready or just over?)

AH! Then there were the alpines. The AGS, as was to be expected, had a large, elegant and prize-winning display – again with everything just at peak perfection for the show. How many circuits did we make of the display? Each time exclaiming at something not previously noticed. A nice conversation with some of the members at the display was a bonus.

By mid-afternoon the heat and the six-deep crowds around each exhibit drove us from the show for a pint in the shade and dreams of wonderful things to grow. You should go too!



STYROFOAM UPDATE RECENT ADVANCES IN STYROFOAM TROUGHES

*Report on a demonstration
given by Mark Demers*



Mark Demers is a talented and successful grower of alpine plants in his Vancouver garden. For several years he has been developing a method of making troughs to display them. His containers have been made from polystyrene foam boxes, widely used for shipping foodstuffs, notably fish and vegetables. In a presentation at the Club's April meeting Mark showed how to convert a plain white foam container into an attractive simulated stone trough. The starting container in this case was a box used for shipping grapes and had a number of ventilating slots in the sides. Mark showed how these can be plugged with spare pieces of styrofoam and the excess trimmed off with a saw. A couple of holes, in this case about 5 - 7cm (2 - 3in) in diameter, are cut in the bottom of the box for drainage.

Mark noted that the very light particles of foam that are released are often electrically charged and that the charge is the opposite of that on fur. Recommendation: keep your cat or dog away when trimming styrofoam. It is also a good idea to work outdoors. This becomes essential in the next stage.

The boxes have straight sides and are clearly industrial. To simulate hand-hewn stone, the outline must be roughened. Rather than simply attack it with a blunt tool Mark uses a heat gun, designed for stripping paint, which produces a stream of very hot air. Played on the surface of the styrofoam the heat gun quickly but controllably begins to melt the surface and collapse the foam. The aim is to distort the regular outline of the box to make it look more natural, and to create a more solid plastic surface capable of better withstanding minor knocks. (This heat treatment must be done outdoors as there is the possibility of fire and the vapours given off are undoubtedly noxious. Avoid breathing the fumes.) The whole exterior and the upper parts of the interior are treated in this way.

The next step is to choose an exterior grade paint. Oil-based paint seems to attack the foam's surface, binding to it and further strengthening it perhaps more effectively than latex paints. The actual colour of the paint is not very critical as it tends to be hidden by the next

coating. (If not too choosy about colour, a suitable paint at bargain price can be found among the mis-tints at a paint store.) Having painted the external sides, the tops and a band around the tops of the inner walls, dry sand is sprinkled heavily onto the still wet paint using a sieve. This provides texture and determines much of the final colour of the trough. Mark prefers to apply three coats of paint, each followed by sand sprinkling. The final effect is to provide a hardened surface with the texture of rough stone. A careless blow can still damage the exterior to reveal the underlying white foam but such blemishes can easily be touched up with paint and sand.

Mark has had troughs of this type in use outdoors for three years, so far with little sign of deterioration. He believes they should last for some years more. Thus they may even last as long as some hypertufa constructions that can suffer damage by frosts. The styrofoam containers are much lighter and once planted can be still be moved, for example, to a more sheltered situation for winter. It is essential in moving and re-siting them that they are well supported and not subjected to any bending strain lest they break.

A recent development is the revelation of a cement for patching and joining styrofoam. This foam expands and then sets when squirted from its canister. It is readily available and intended as a draft seal for cracks around door frames and windows. It sticks very effectively to most materials, sets slowly and is waterproof. When dry it takes paint and can be used for repairs to damaged troughs. Its use also opens up possibilities for making styrofoam planters in shapes and sizes not available from preformed containers. Mark showed the unfinished form of a D-shaped trough built from pieces of blue styrofoam sheet insulation (used in house construction) glued together in this way. As the cementing foam takes some time to set, the pieces being cemented must be secured in place during the process. Tape, string or even skewers can be used. Once assembled, such troughs are heat treated, painted and sanded as before. Single pieces of styrofoam can be painted and sanded like the boxes to make "rocks" for crevice gardens.

Mark suggested using perlite as the drainage material in the compost for planting in order to keep the whole as light as possible and permit easier moving. There was some discussion of the now discredited system of putting a layer of drainage material below the actual compost, but that is for another article. So far there have been no indications that, once dried, either paint or foam cement have had any effects on the growth of plants in contact with them. ~Jan Gillam

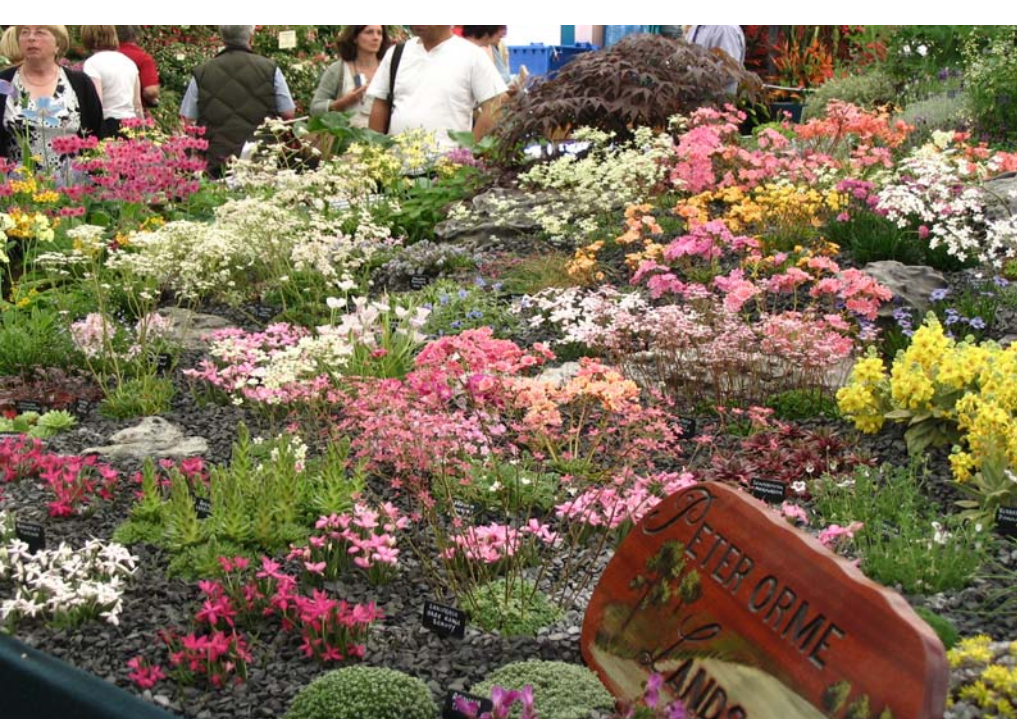
(Our Vancouver-area members recently used troughs made using this method to create displays at the Cloverdale Rodeo & Flower Show and at the Vancouver Flower & Garden Show. The pictures in the centre of this issue will give you some idea of how good they look ~ Ed.)



Cloverdale Rodeo & Flower Show, May, 2005



*Alpine Garden Club of BC display "Art in the Garden"
Vancouver Flower & Garden show, 2005*



*Alpines at Chelsea Flower Show, May 2005
~ Photos: Ian Plenderleith*



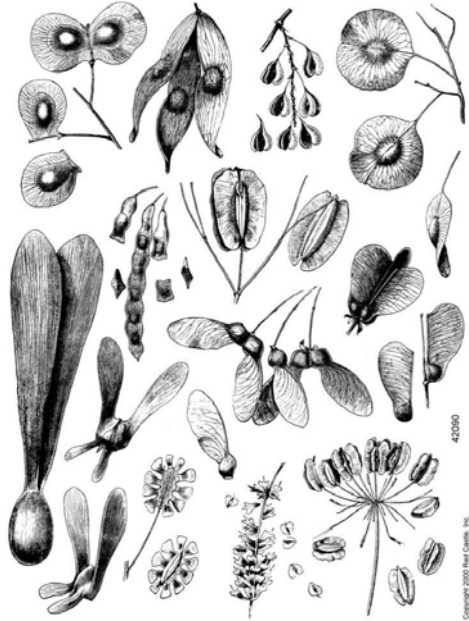
The Alpine Garden Society display, Chelsea, London, England, May 2005



Seed Exchange 2005

With the new quarterly Bulletin, it is necessary to put the seed exchange information into this summer issue. Although it is quite early, please keep this information in a safe place for reference.

Seed Donors: The deadline for receipt of seeds this year for inclusion in the Seed List is **Friday, October 21st**. Last year seeds from the USA and overseas were delayed for an unreasonably long time at Canada Customs. If it is not possible to send your seeds to reach us by October 21st, please **send a list** of the seeds you plan to send as soon as possible by regular post or email. The seed list and order form will be sent out as soon as possible in November.



In the case of wild-collected seed, please include **detailed** information about the location where it was collected. If the species identity of a plant is uncertain, information about the size, flower colour, habit, etc., is very helpful. This information about **any** not-commonly-known plant will be appreciated by us and will be helpful to members ordering seeds. An alphabetical list of the seeds you donate would be a great help (please print clearly).

Please be certain that your donated seed is clean and free of any insects or other contaminants. Also please do not send seed of invasive or otherwise undesirable plants.

Mark your seed envelopes "Flower seeds of no commercial value" and mail to:

**Alpine Garden Club of BC
c/o 2237 McBain Avenue
Vancouver, BC, Canada, V6L 3B2**

Thank you very much for your effort which makes our seed exchange possible.

Seed Ordering: Only Club members are eligible to take part in the seed exchange. Seed donors have first priority in first choice of scarce seeds. All members may order up to 30 packages of seed. Members who donate **a minimum of five (5) different species** will be eligible to

receive up to 60 packages in return. North American members should donate this number of seeds of plants native to North or South America – additional native or non-native seeds are, of course, very welcome. Overseas members receive donor privileges for seed from any country.

Our seed exchange is remarkable for its variety and quality; however, it is only possible through the generous donation of seeds from our members. Do please get out there and start collecting!

If there are any questions or comments, please contact us.

~Ian and Phyllis Plenderleith, Vancouver



Seeking Alpines in the Mountain West ~ Ev Whittemore, North Carolina

In 2004 we made two trips from North Carolina to Montana and Wyoming to see alpine plants. The first, in early July, was to photograph *Aquilegia jonesii* in flower, not accomplished in previous years as side roads in the Bighorn Mountains were not open in time. An early spring this year favoured us by melting the accumulated snows and we found plentiful flowers across the limestone scree.

Our second trip was a month later in order to collect seeds. In the areas where we had seen so much colour there was a lack of stems bearing seed pods. What had become of all those flowers? Some cattle graze the area and there is some wildlife but surely they couldn't have eaten all the stems. We did find an area where about fifty large plants were growing and collected seeds for distribution to various exchanges.

Early July found plentiful *Eritrichium nanum*, with many buns loaded with flowers. A month later most seeds had already ripened and been blown away by the strong mountain winds. It was unexpected that only three weeks would see the flowers develop, ripen and disperse the seeds.

Another goal was to see *Eritrichium howardii* in the wild. Driving towards the Little Snowy Mountains near Roundup in Montana we came across a woman changing a flat tire and stopped to chat. She lived on the last ranch on the "improved" gravel road, twenty-five miles from paved highway. Inquiring about the eritrichium we were told "the little blue-flowered bun is everywhere!" We drove on to where the road became "unimproved", a trail cut through the soil of the woods by the Forest Service. At that point we camped overnight and were awakened three times by heavy rain, thunder and lightning. By morning it was clear that even if we had had four-wheel drive the chance of getting stuck miles from anywhere was high so we headed back down the gravel road. Perhaps next season?

At the White Sulphur Springs ranger station in Montana we talked with a ranger who was a plant enthusiast. He told us of finding *Kelseya uniflora* while hiking in the Tongue River Canyon area in Wyo-

ming, so there we went and duly located the kelseya though we were actually more excited by *Petrophytum caespitosum* flowering on the same rock.

Collecting *Kelseya uniflora* seeds

From our home in North Carolina it usually takes us four days driving to reach Helena, Montana, where we make our base for exploring the mountain West. From Helena we drive across the Missouri River at Canyon Ferry and on to the town of York, small enough not to appear on our road map. This road has two conditions, wash-boarded, dusty, curving and narrow, or in the short wet season, slippery, rutted and even more miserable to drive. A four-wheel drive vehicle is really necessary. Higher up the mountain the road becomes a single lane with steep drop-offs and no guard rail.

Kelseya uniflora is a member of the rose family that grows on dramatic limestone cliffs and canyon walls. Small terraces offer crevices supporting the growth of such fortunate seeds as are blown there by the canyon's winds. Seedlings develop into slow-growing sub-shrubs to form dense and compact cushions of rosettes bearing stemless flowers of medium pink. This restricted habitat is not easy to reproduce in cultivation for kelseya needs excellent drainage and a free flow of cool air with exposure to sunlight, all on a base of limestone rock. In winter, of course, it is safely dormant. The region receives about 20in (50cm) of rainfall a year. At an altitude around 7000ft (2100m) kelseya usually flowers in May, depending on the spring season.

Ample seed is usually produced but collecting it can be trying. Sometimes one must cross a rushing stream of snowmelt then scramble through briars and brush to reach the base of the cliff. Then it is a question of clambering up to the plants and finding a secure foothold before trying to open the small seed envelope and struggling to coax the seeds into it, hoping that a strong gust doesn't blow the lot away. (It's not a good place for the collector to be blown off the cliff as any help is many miles distant.)

The collection usually contains as much chaff as seed and cleaning it requires the aid of a magnifying glass and a lot of patience. Treasure your seeds of *Kelseya uniflora* should you be fortunate enough to receive some from the seed list!

~~~~~

*On every stem, on every leaf... and at the root of everything that grew,  
was a professional specialist in the shape of grub, caterpillar, aphid, or  
other expert, whose business it was to devour that particular part.*

*~Oliver Wendell Holmes*



**THIEVES AT THE UBC ALPINE GARDEN ~ by Brent A. Hine**  
**Curator, E.H. Lohbrunner Alpine Garden**  
**University of British Columbia Botanical Garden and Centre for**  
**Plant Research**

June is a lovely month in Vancouver, though this year the weather was dull. However, I was kept on edge due to some extremely unfortunate events. For those who may not have heard, several plant thefts occurred from the E.H. Lohbrunner Alpine garden at the University of BC. Some may remember I wrote about this happening once before, about one year ago. In particular, it felt dreadful to realize that one of the thefts took place within 24 hours (possibly just after?) my annual Alpine Garden Club members' tour, on the evening of June 8th.

So round two is over: Thieves - 2 .... Alpine plant collection - 0.

Some of the material is completely irreplaceable, so it is difficult to fix a monetary value, but after taking a couple of points off my blood pressure and calculating the several hundreds of dollars in lost material, I am left to try to decide what can be done about this recurring problem.

The Director and Curators of the Garden are very concerned and have discussed various options, including installing a security system around the trough courtyard area which has been hit hardest. Discussions have also been held with campus security to determine the most effective actions to be taken throughout the entire botanical garden. We realize we need to tighten our security perimeter as the campus community has grown enormously.

In the meantime, the garden continues to improve in spite of the thoughtless actions of a few. Wondering about the mindset of the perpetrators, I imagine that he/she/they feel this is a "victimless crime". After all, a big university can easily afford these "small" losses, right? Wrong! The thieves must realize that we rely on volunteers such as the Friends of the Garden and the Alpine Garden Club itself, in order to exist. That's right, exist. Without their aid and cheerleading, this alpine garden would cease to exist in short order. While many people continue to work tirelessly to contribute to something they believe in, others tear away at their effort, attempting to destroy it through their selfishness. I'm sure most of you reading this share my sense of shock and disbelief, especially when the available evidence points to thieves within our membership!

Does this perpetrator know that, if I have enough to share, I am happy (yes, happy) to give away plants to anyone who asks me? Please know, here and now, that I am willing to share with you one and all, my plants, my effort, knowledge and companionship, gardener to gardener, if you will only stop attempting to ruin this garden's collections and perhaps the Club's longstanding good name. Now let's all move on together, shall we? Happy growing to all!

## LOOKING BACK ~ Grace Conboy, Burnaby, BC

I have before me a membership list dated May 15<sup>th</sup> 1961 listing 261 members. This was only six years after the Club's inception so it would appear that someone had certainly worked hard in developing a club interesting enough to attract such a following. I thoroughly enjoyed working with the early members of the club. George Boving and Don Angerman were most knowledgeable and expertly guided the first steps of our club. We had many of our first meetings at the home of Don and Iva Angerman. Lance Taylor was a keen primula grower and brought his friend Vic Costly who was also an active grower. Margaret and Roy Boyse, a talented photographer, soon joined. Nan Sherlock was a welcome new member with her expertise in growing rare ferns, and exceptional horticulturists Francisca and Ed Darts were early members. I'm not sure when Bob Woodward and Jim MacPhail joined the Club, but I know that they were definitely live wires in guiding the Club's activities. Harry Carter and Mr. Archibald were active members, and Geoff and Audrey Williams were wonderful alpine growers and competent organizers. The Guppy's were early members and one pleasant memory is of a beach party at Long Beach when Peggy Guppy served her guests with the most delectable razor clam chowder I have ever tasted.

Our members always enjoyed visiting the Victoria Rock and Alpine Garden Show in the spring. Wonderful plants were exhibited especially by Vern and Iris Ayers, and Ed Lohbrunner was a marvelous alpine grower and was an occasional speaker at our meetings.

Most memorable of our spring trips were those to beautiful Botanie Valley with it's beautiful meadows of erythroniums, Paint Brush, etc. One trip I particularly enjoyed was to the Siskiyou near Medford, Oregon. To find a patch of blooming *Phlox adsurgens* was exciting. We later enjoyed a special visit to the Siskiyou Nursery of Boyd Kline and Lawrence Crocker, who later visited us in Vancouver. We had many trips to Manning Park. And one year at a camp out near Oliver we were treated to many beautiful blooms of *Lewisia rediviva*.

I remember many hours spent working with our group setting up displays at the Pacific National Exhibition. I believe that these were instrumental in attracting new members. Bodil Leamy for one told me she became interested when she saw and admired the lovely *Cyclamen hederifolium* in our display. It was her introduction to alpine plants.

I regret not having had time to be an active member over the years. Through the 70's I returned to the University as well as working in my husband's office and attended meetings when time allowed. After my husband passed away in the 80's I decided to explore many parts of the world as an amateur naturalist and photographer. I have enjoyed telling you some of my experiences in the Bulletin.

(See page 79 for Grace's article – "First Navigation of S. Georgia Island")

## LETTER FROM LYN NOBLE ~ VANCOUVER

Dear fellow members,

Having a great time, wish you all were here. We made a reservation for M.V. Uchuck III, and then left Horseshoe Bay at 8:30am en route to Nanaimo on Vancouver Island. Had a fine lunch and amble around old Courtenay, then proceeded to Gold River. The roads are vastly improved. We reached Gold River with hours to spare before checking into the motel. It was pure luck that we learned the Upana Caves were 17kms away. In mid-June our short walk in from the road was a botanical delight! Never have I walked such a lovely trail, edged with thousands of *Cornus canadensis*, *Linnaea borealis*, *Veratrum viride*, *Phyllodoce empetriformis*, *Oploplanax horridus*, *Streptopus roseus*, *Rubus pedatus*, *Vaccinium ovalifolium*, and ever so much more. The caves were fascinating. Directions can be picked up at Ridgeview Motel, Gold River. Next morning at 6:45 A.M. we boarded the 136 foot working vessel Uchuck III, which takes cargo and passengers up to Kyoquot Sound and Zeballos - a fascinating adventure. We were about twenty passengers, of whom eight stayed up in Kyoquot. Those returning enjoyed Bed and Breakfast and the following morning reboarded the Uchuck for our return trip to Gold River. It was a reasonably priced, highly recommended adventure. Yes, we did see sea otters and Luna the killer whale. Sincerely Lyn (for info: [www.mvuchuck.com](http://www.mvuchuck.com))



## LETTER FROM ANDREE CONNELL ~ GALIANO ISLAND, BC

Dear Editor & Members,

Greetings from Galiano Island – where things are growing as never before after the last ten months of fairly consistent rainfall. This is not necessarily a good thing; notably one of the mature *Cytisus battandieri* has gone as flat as a 15ft pancake. On the plus side, it would seem that a *Dactylorhiza foliosa* has self seeded. *Salvia chamaedryoides* has survived its seventh winter and looks positively lush. Several *Lilium washingtonianum* are finally blooming and hopefully will set and mature seed. Two calochortus have resurrected themselves, likewise an unidentified orchid from Alaska funny things orchids ... finicky, yet with elements of great grit!

A topic of conversation here is what to do with thirty years of RHS journals. It seems a shame just to send them to re-cycling, and we wonder if there might be a new/young member who would like to look through them. Since we are on the Gulf Islands we could reasonably deliver them to either the Lower Mainland or Victoria areas – or host a visit here for pick-up if preferable (it's about two boxes). They cover 1972 to 2002 and there are a few missing.

For more information: Andree Connell, (250-539-3312)

**BOOK REVIEW – “The Plant Hunter’s Garden: The New Explorers and Their Discoveries”, by Bobby J. Ward. Timber Press, Portland, Oregon & Cambridge, UK., US\$39.95. 340pp. Hardcover.**



There have been plant collectors since there were gardens and gardeners with an eye for something new and different. New types of plants have led to new styles of gardens and gardening techniques. For growing in open gardens in temperate climates, the greatest flood of new of new plants came in what continues to be celebrated as the Golden Age of plant collecting. In the earlier part of the twentieth century a relatively few individuals introduced plants that have had an important impact. These intrepid collectors worked largely in the mountains running eastwards from the Himalayas into China, an area of great plant diversity. This era came to a close with the start of the Second World War and the subsequent upheavals.

Relaxation of international tensions beginning around the late 1980's has allowed new exploration of this area as well as a revived interest in plants from other regions which are likely to prove hardy in our gardens. We are living in a new Silver Age for we have been experiencing a steady flow of exciting plants new to cultivation or perhaps earlier lost. With modern methods for rapid propagation and distribution, some of these plants have already appeared in local garden centers *Corydalis flexuosa* for example.

Bobby Ward, a former president of NARGS, gardens in North Carolina. In this book he celebrates some of the more prolific recent plant hunters and their introductions. Each of twenty-five chapters covers one person or a partnership, often running a nursery of seed distribution company. All subjects are very much alive and the author has visited them all: in the Czech Republic, UK, Chile, South Africa, various regions of the US and Canada. There is a portrait of each person with a brief biographical summary and descriptions of their outstanding plant introductions, usually illustrated with good colour photographs. Areas of collection include China, central Asia, South Africa, Mexico, Chile, Argentina, Japan, Korea and the US. Plants range from magnolias and camellias through woodland plants to high alpiners.

Some areas of the world likely to yield interesting new plants remain too hazardous for exploration due to political instability and some collectors report difficulties with disbelieving border security guards, rapacious local officials and even bandits. However, not all of the hunters profiled have found their new introductions in such intrepid circumstances; new plants reported here have also come from the garden of a collector's mother, from Tokyo department stores or from an outstanding seedling raised from Thompson & Morgan seed.

The book is well printed on heavy, glossy stock that shows the photographs of the new plants well. If the style of each short chapter is a little repetitive, one doesn't have to read the book from cover to cover, but rather browse it at leisure. Further details can be found on the publisher's website.

~ Ian Gillam, Vancouver



## FIRST CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF SOUTH GEORGIA ISLAND ~ by Grace Conboy, Burnaby, BC

As passengers aboard the *Society Explorer* we were on the first passenger vessel to circumnavigate and land on South Georgia Island, something I never dreamed I would achieve at the age of seventy-five! South Georgia is but a speck in the South Scotia Sea in the far South Atlantic. Only a hundred miles long by thirty miles wide it is a thousand miles from Tierra del Fuego and only about nine hundred from the Antarctic mainland. It is five hundred miles east-south-east of the Falkland Islands and governed as part of them. It is a long, long way from Vancouver, British Columbia. To join the ship necessitated flying to Toronto, on to Miami, an overnight flight to Santiago in Chile, south to Punta Arenas and then to the Falklands. From Punta Arenas it took only an hour and a half to the Falklands.

### Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands

We landed at the military airport about ten miles from Port Stanley. The military presence is conspicuous with a township of military structures. We were bussed to Port Stanley over a fair gravel road. The surroundings are miles of rolling or flat landscape, broken occasionally by a rocky outcrop. We had a brief afternoon in Port Stanley to look around the town. The people seemed to be retiring and only mildly interested in our presence. The few small shops had only basic necessities. The town looked quite tidy with the houses well painted if unpretentious. During our wait to proceed to the ship we were invited to a local pub where we were served tea, coffee and cookies.

The latitude of the Falklands is 54 to 55° south. South Georgia is about 55° south. In the northern hemisphere this corresponds to the latitudes of London, England or Prince Rupert, B.C. The climates differ considerably. London benefits from the warm Gulf Stream as does Prince Rupert from the Japan current from the south. The Falklands and South Georgia by contrast receive the sweep of icy currents and chilling gales from Antarctica. South Georgia's summer daily maximum temperatures average 5.2° C/41° F (Dec. to Feb.) with winter average daily maximum of -2.0° C/28° F. The Falklanders live with the almost constant winds and frequent showers characteristic of these islands.

**November 27<sup>th</sup>.** We boarded the *Society Explorer*, were assigned our cabins and settled in. The congenial officers and crew welcomed us aboard and we got to know our shipmates, our companions for the next

fourteen days. We watched the Falkland Islands slowly sink from view as we headed for new shores. It would be two days before we sighted land again. The grey-green waters of the Scotia Sea soon got quite rough and many took to their bunks.

**Thanksgiving at sea - November 28<sup>th</sup>.** American Thanksgiving dawned a pleasant day though with a heavy swell. Going to the upper deck I found it exciting to see the beautiful Wandering Albatross, so graceful as it glided in the ship's wake. Smaller Black-browed Albatross joined it, equally graceful in their tireless flight. Giant Petrels also scanned the wake's turbulence for morsels. Small black Storm Petrels and the larger Cape Petrels or Pintadas - my favourites - so attractive in their black and white plumage, they remind me of large butterflies

**November 29<sup>th</sup>** One passenger was pleased to win a bottle of champagne for sighting our first iceberg. Flat topped, it was a break-away from the eastern side of the Weddell Sea, off Antarctica.

**South Georgia - November 30<sup>th</sup>.** Clouds were very low and we passed quite close to a number of icebergs, some very large. Then through the mists and a snow flurry we saw a rugged coastline. Huge glaciers and cloud enshrouded mountains were glimpsed as we made our way into Cumberland East Bay and anchored off King Edward Point. A launch came out from the old whaling station of Grytviken with customs officials to clear us for landing on South Georgia, where there is now a British military post. As the ship anchored quite far from shore we had some distance to travel by Zodiac.

We were landed on a shingle beach not far from the whaling station. Elephant seals lay about, but of special interest was our first pair of King Penguins. They were rather tatty looking as they were moulting. However, they still were beautiful with their dignified posture. Beside them in a pool was a pair of the only Antarctic duck, Antarctic Pintails, modest in patterned brown. An enormous bull Elephant Seal lay at the edge of the pool. Females grow to 9-12 feet and weigh between 900-1800 pounds. Males grow to 14-16 feet long and weigh in at 3000-5000 pounds or more. As the breeding season was long past all was peaceful except for the occasional pair of young bulls challenging one another.

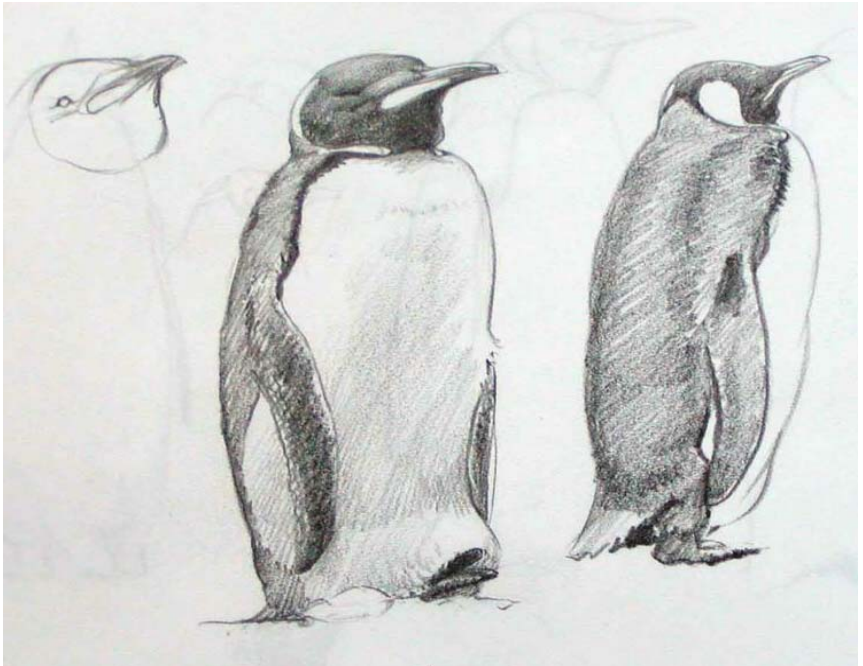
We all walked up to a small white-fenced graveyard on the hillside. Sir Ernest Shackleton's grave is here among those of numerous casualties of whaling. Our captain had come ashore and said a prayer on behalf of all of us over the grave of this intrepid and brave explorer beset by misfortune. It was on Shackleton's fourth trip to the Antarctic that he died of a heart attack aboard the *Quest* at Grytviken.

**Penguins in variety - December 1<sup>st</sup>.** We sailed into Gold Harbour, five miles SSE of Cape Charlotte. Bertrab Glacier lies at its head along the east side of South Georgia. It is a lovely harbour with snowy peaks and glaciers all around. From the ship many penguins were visible on the long shingle beach. We landed among hundreds of young Elephant Seals and thousands of King Penguins. Here we saw our first King chicks, rotund and amusing brown teddy bears. They would approach



us flapping their flippers and squeaking to be fed. Adult Kings are about three and a half feet tall and weigh up to thirty or forty pounds. The chicks ranged from smallish fur balls to two feet tall. Unlike Emperors, the largest of penguins which nest on the barren ice shelves of Antarctica, the Kings gather on the muddy flats of sub-Antarctic islands.

Walking along the beach and crossing a large stream we found quite a number of Gentoo Penguins on the shoreline. We were cautious not to go too far as fur seal bulls reposed among the tussock grass and might attack with little provocation. Retreating, we returned to a lagoon where hundreds of baby Kings were gathered, while the adults stood by. It was a photographer's dream to shoot such fascinating subjects so close at hand and capture their various antics.



Returning to the ship we moved on to Cooper Bay and dropped anchor. There was a heavy swell so disembarking was rather tricky but we landed safely to see our first Macaroni Penguins. These prefer steep stony slopes for nesting and the main colony was at the top of a tussock covered slope. However, I found a group at the foot of the slope enough to satisfy me. These saucy looking birds have orange whiskers streaming from above their eyebrows. They have quite pugnacious and quarrelsome characters, braying like donkeys as they lunged at one another. On the beach nearby a number of Elephant Seal pups lounged like fat slugs. Icicles hung from the tussock grass on the cliffside and a frozen waterfall sparkled in the cool summer atmosphere.

We were ferried around the point to visit a Chinstrap Penguin colony. Many were on the beach, coming and going in the surf. Elephant

Seals were here also in abundance. Beyond a wide protective area of tussock grass the main colony contained hundreds of birds in all stages from those sitting on eggs to others feeding ravenous young. This was the noisiest, muddiest and smelliest colony we encountered.

**December 2<sup>nd</sup>**. A grey, stormy morning dawned as we anchored off the front of an enormous glacier lying between jagged mountains. Heavy cloud engulfed all the upper levels. This was Undine South Harbour. The Zodiac operators ran inshore to check for suitable locations for landing. Snow was flying and the choppy sea was uninviting. Despite the conditions the Zodiacs returned to take us out for a scenic look close to the face of the glacier. There the sea was thick with ice tossed about by waves. Flocks of Snow Petrels soared about. They are birds of the ice for most of their food is small creatures that cling to the ice. Prions, Blue-eyed King Cormorants and Arctic Terns flew around us as we motored through pack ice. That evening we entered the Drygalski Fjord running up its six miles to admire the glaciers and magnificent scenery. Unfortunately it was rather too dark for photography.

**Shackleton's epic journey - December 3<sup>rd</sup>**. We moved into King Haakon Bay on the east side of the island. It was here that Captain Ernest Shackleton and five of his crew made landfall in 1916 after sailing eight hundred miles in a battered lifeboat from Elephant Island off the Antarctic Peninsula. Their ship *Endurance* had been crushed by ice in the Weddell Sea. The entire crew had made it to Elephant Island, where Shackleton and five crew members left the balance of twenty-two men to shelter while they attempted to reach help at Stromness whaling station, South Georgia. After coming ashore here at King Haakon Bay on the wrong side of the island, they first sought better shelter at Peggotty Bluff, where three of the men remained while Shackleton and two companions attempted to walk across the rugged and treacherous mountains and glaciers to Stromness on the west of the island. They succeeded in reaching their goal and the three crew members at Peggotty Bluff were rescued while a Chilean steamer went to pick up the remainder of the crew at Elephant Island. Not a man was lost.

At Shackleton's initial landing place we went ashore to the cove and visited the small cave where the six men had sheltered. Six of our group found it uncomfortably cramped. Beyond this cove we scrambled up a steep slope of tussock grass where Prions were nesting in holes. The plateau above contained the nests of incubating Wandering Albatross, unconcerned by our presence. Giant Petrels were also nesting. It was unwise to approach them too closely as they tended to repel visitors with a jet of oily regurgitation. Among the tussock grass we came across numbers of skeletons of Prions and the rare little Blue Petrels. As both nest in burrows this looked like a massacre and we suspected the work of Antarctic Skuas which were also present.

Before returning aboard ship our guide took us by Zodiac to small outer islands to see a Leopard Seal on the beach. This was a juvenile of

pale colour with streaked blotches and elongated head and neck. This seal's preferred diet is penguin, usually taken near the beach.

**December 4<sup>th</sup>.** We anchored off Salisbury Plains between the Grace and Lucas Glaciers on the north coast. The beach here is very wide with hills behind. Thousands of King Penguins with many, many of their brown offspring stood on the beach. Elephant seals lay about as well as a few pugnacious Fur Seals. It was hard to know where to start with a camera among such an assemblage of wildlife. The flock stretched like a wall-to-wall carpet from the beach to far up the hillside. The chicks were most endearing as they approached us, cheeping hopefully for food and waving their furry flippers.

King Penguins mate for life and seemed to stand around in pairs content with their mate's company as moulting approached. It was amusing to see how they relaxed or dozed-off standing on their heels with feet raised in front and resting on their bristly tails. While lying breast down for a nap their feet would often be spread soles upward. There was a lack of activity in the colony apart from the fussing of the young and a few that dived in and out of the waves. Most were calmly awaiting the change of their present plumage for a new suit.

The ship moved on to Prion Island, a rocky upland island covered in tussock grass. Here Wandering as well as Sooty Albatross nested. We were watched by a number of Gentoo Penguins nesting on top of tussock humps. Less welcoming among the tussock were Fur Seals. The bulls were belligerent and our guides guarded our trail to ward them off. On the plateau above more Wandering Albatross were nesting.

**December 5<sup>th</sup>.** We moored off Elsehul on the north-west tip of South Georgia and then continued to Right Whale Bay, an open bay before a wide plain rimmed by snow covered peaks and glaciers. Landing on the sharply sloping beach in a swell was a little precarious and there was a large colony of Fur Seals which had to be chased off a pathway to allow us to reach the King Penguin colony beyond.

**Abandoned whaling stations - December 6<sup>th</sup>.** We awoke to a brilliantly clear day in a truly scenic area, Stromness Bay. The crumbling buildings of the old whaling station were softened by a fresh fall of snow. Stromness Bay was first visited by Captain Cook in 1775, when it was quite unspoiled, and this was the destination of Shackleton's epic journey for help for his shipwrecked crew.

**Unexpected wildlife-** When we went ashore we were greeted by the large, bright eyes of young Elephant Seals, framed by elegant lashes. Many of these youngsters lay among piles of rusting chains and cables abandoned on the beach. Near at hand and beyond the buildings Gentoo Penguins were nesting in the snow and a small flock of Kings was present. The most unexpected creatures were two reindeer, browsing just beyond the penguins. Further up the hillside a herd of fifteen more was feeding. Whalers from Scandinavia brought their progenitors here early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as an addition to their supplies. Clearly they

have made themselves at home. Photographs of nesting penguins with reindeer must surely make unusual Christmas cards!

**Return to the Falklands - December 9<sup>th</sup>.** Arriving back in the Falklands it was a long run to the shore over choppy seas. We walked miles over the grassy rolling fields where little English daisies studded the grass though few other flowers were yet out.

**December 10<sup>th</sup>.** Our last day aboard started bright and early as all had to be ready for the next group of travelers due to arrive on the airplane we would take to leave. We retraced our route to Punta Arenas, Santiago, Miami and finally home in time to get ready for Christmas. It had been a wonderful and memorable experience.



### THE WILLY DICKENSON BEQUEST

The Executive has had several discussions about the best use for this generous bequest from Willy who was a very long-standing and loyal supporter of the Club. In general terms it was felt that the funds should be applied to a specific project or projects in his memory. **We need your ideas and suggestions** and below are just some ideas to get things rolling. We could fund:

- *Scholarships/grants for students in horticultural programs with the condition that they write articles for the Bulletin – a “Best Essay” competition?*
- *Contribute to seed collecting expeditions hoping to benefit our exchange;*
- *Sponsor a series of speakers or even a symposium locally;*
- *Sponsor a miniature alpine garden demonstration and competition for children to be held and judged at the Spring Show.*
- 

**Suggestions to Mark Demers**

The Alpine Garden Club of B.C. brings together people interested in alpine, native and other hardy plants both in cultivation and in the wild here and abroad. Monthly meetings are held at VanDusen Garden on the second Wednesday of the month and feature a speaker, show of pot-grown plants and discussions. Garden visits, field trips and hikes are planned during the spring and summer. Members participate in the seed exchange, spring show and displays at various events. Our Bulletin distributed to members is also available on our website [www.agc-bc.ca](http://www.agc-bc.ca).

Student memberships at a reduced rate of \$10 per year are available to those studying horticulture, ecology and related topics at recognized colleges and universities. The Club offers an introduction to a wide range of interesting plants, many of which are not commonly found in commerce.