

*Alpine Garden Club*  
*of*  
*British Columbia*



*Vol 53 No 3*

*Bulletin*

*Summer 2010*



## *Alpine Garden Club of BC*

Internet Home Page: [www.agc-bc.ca](http://www.agc-bc.ca)

|                            |                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>President</b>           | Linda Verbeek                |
| <b>1<sup>st</sup> V.P.</b> | Philip MacDougall            |
| <b>2<sup>nd</sup> V.P.</b> | David Sellars                |
| <b>Past President</b>      | Doug Smith                   |
| <b>Secretary</b>           | Allison Carson               |
| <b>Treasurer</b>           | Amanda Offers                |
| <b>Membership</b>          | Ian Gillam                   |
| <b>Programs</b>            | Philip MacDougall            |
| <b>Pot Shows</b>           | Dana Cromie                  |
| <b>Library</b>             | Pam Frost                    |
| <b>Annual Show</b>         | Diana Hume<br>Karen Thirkell |
| <b>Plant Sales</b>         | Mark Demers                  |
| <b>Seed Reception</b>      | Marilyn Plant                |
| <b>Publicity</b>           | Joan Bunn                    |
| <b>Open Gardens</b>        | Lisa O'Donnell               |
| <b>Refreshments</b>        | Dorothy Yarema               |
| <b>Webmaster</b>           | Chris Klapwijk               |
| <b>Bulletin Editor</b>     | Alan Tracey                  |

### **Committee Members**

Margot Ketchum - Mark Demers  
Chris Klapwijk - Karen Thirkell - Lisa O'Donnell - Bob Tuckey

### **Honorary Life Members**

Margaret Charlton-Francisca Darts - Pam Frost  
Ian Gillam- Bodil Leamy  
Ian & Phyllis Plenderleith - Geof Williams – Bob Woodward

Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month except, July and August, in the Floral Hall, VanDusen Botanical Garden. Doors and Library open at 7:00 pm and the meetings start at 7:30 pm. Please bring plants for the plant draw; the proceeds of which go toward paying for the hall rental.

Front Cover: *Viola flettii*: Photograph by Paul Krystof

## **Club Business**

**Mark Demers**

On the matter of the conduct of our regular meetings I would like to propose the following change to our bylaws.

Insert after "Bylaws: 1. General and executive meetings shall be according to the constitution and Robert's Rules of Order." following sentence "The chairman may waive the use of Robert's Rules of Order for a regular meeting if no Club business is to be conducted at that meeting"

Our use of Robert's Rules is, at best, only a token presently and therefore this change will just bring our bylaws into agreement with current (and longstanding) practice. This phrasing allows the chair some latitude for experimentation and personal style.

## **Plant Finder**

In order for this section to be of value to all club members, those who submit enquiries should provide some details of the plant characteristics: size, shape, flowers, and other properties that make this a desirable plant. The native habitat of the plant would also be of interest. The request for information can be directed to [Alan Tracey](#) or [Chris Klapwijk](#) with **Plant Finder** in the Subject Line.

Thanks to Ray Deutsch for providing a source for Spanish Shawl (*Heterocentron elegans*) to David Hale who was looking for this plant.

## **Plant Sales**

**Mark Demers**

### **Alpine Garden Club of B.C. Fall Sale**

Date and time: Sunday, Sept. 19, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Location: VanDusen Garden Floral Hall, 37th Ave. at Oak St.,  
Vancouver, B.C.

Contact: [www.agc-bc.ca](http://www.agc-bc.ca)

Features: A diverse collection of fall-blooming and other specialty, native, and collectible plants of all sizes suited to our local climate zones. Expert growers will be on hand.

Free admission.

Further information regarding this and our Spring Sale is available from Mark Demers, [email](#) or 604 254-5479.

## Programs

### Philip MacDougall

**September 8:** Alan Tracey will give a presentation describing some regions visited during a recent trip to the Chilean Andes.

**October 6 (Note that this date is one week earlier than our regular meeting):** John Mitchell: John has worked at Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh for 26 years in the Herbaceous and Alpine area. He started out as seed and specimen collector and progressed to alpine supervisor 15 years ago. His focus now is to maintain and develop the alpine section which includes the rock garden, woodland garden, peat wall and alpine house and frame area. He has been on expeditions to China, Tibet, Alaska and Iran.

John will give his Three **C** lecture: **C**ollecting, **C**uration, and **C**ultivation. He will discuss collecting material in the wild in China, Georgia, Europe, and Iran. For curation he will describe the facilities at the botanical gardens. For cultivation he will provide a look at the outside garden and how the RBG tries to mimic the wild.

**November 10:** Philip MacDougall will speak on the flowers of the spring woodland in North Carolina with an aside on trilliums and gardens seen at the International Trillium Conference held in Philadelphia in 2008.

**December 10<sup>th</sup>.** Annual Christmas Potluck and Plant Auction.

## **SEED EXCHANGE 2010**

### **Marilyn Plant**

The deadline for receipt of seeds this year is FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22<sup>nd</sup>. Because of printing deadlines, seeds must reach us by that date. If for some reason your seeds might not reach us by that date you may send a list of your seeds, alphabetized if possible, by mail or [e-mail](#) to reach us by the deadline.

If seeds are wild collected please send information about where they were collected and any information about flower colour, height, etc especially for unusual plants or plants that cannot be completely identified. A description of a garden grown plant that exists in more than one form or again is not completely identified is also useful to us. If it is possible, please send an alphabetical list of your seeds. This helps enormously.

Seed donations should be sent in an envelope marked Flower Seeds Of No Commercial Value and mailed as early as possible to:

ALPINE GARDEN CLUB OF B. C.  
c/o 4049 West 36th AVE.  
Vancouver BC V6N 2T1  
Canada

No permit is needed to send non-commercial seeds to Canada.

Any club member may order seeds but donors get special privileges. To qualify as a Donor a minimum donation of five different species is required. North American members should donate this minimum in seeds native to North and South America. After that seeds from any region are welcome. Overseas members receive donor status for seeds from any country. The success of the exchange depends on the donors so they do get special privileges. They are able to order up to 60 packages (30 for non-donors) and get priority where seeds are in short supply so it does pay to make the effort to become a donor. Detailed ordering information will be sent out with the Seed List in the Fall Bulletin.

Many thanks to everyone who sent in seeds last year. It was exciting for me to have interesting seeds from all over pouring in through the mail and I had to resist looking up everything new to me. Our seed

exchange depends on all the members who take the time and trouble to collect whether from their gardens or from the wild and I hope that this will be a good season for collectors and collecting. The seeds should be mailed to me at the address above and I can be reached by [email](#).

Last year Pam Frost retired after many years of organizing the Seed Exchange but because she has a rich and unique store of information about the exchange she has agreed to be a resource person who will field general inquiries relating to the exchange. She may be reached by [email](#).

Happy collecting.

## **AGCBC Spring Plant Sale 2010**

### **Kathleen Leishman**

The AGCBC Spring Sale is the ultimate opportunity for the keenest of gardeners. And St. David's church hall was so full of treasures it must have been hard for members to choose, let alone the public who were lining up over half an hour before the scheduled opening time.

The club table had some lovely plants. *Cypripedium formosanum* was in full gorgeous flower, I certainly coveted that, but don't really have the conditions. It was too beautiful to condemn. There were some very shapely *Sorbus reducta* which would be perfect in a trough, *Androsace carnea* ssp. *laggeri*, rosy pink in Spring, could be another good addition, along with *Lewisia brachycalyx* in soft pink. The lewisia comes from southern California. Larger plants included *Asphodeline lutea* with grassy leaves and starry yellow flowers. It likes stony, dry conditions, very suitable for my garden! Also, there was *Ozothamnus rosmarinifolius*, a marvelous shrub for sunny well-drained soil, and it is proving to be deer-proof. Silvery heath-like leaves and very small flowers in dense corymbs, it comes from Tasmania and looks nice with purple leaved salvia. For moist conditions, there were sarracenias, all desirable, but needy in the water department. A fabulous *Larix kaempferi*, as a shallow bonsai - it was a show stopper! *Aconitum* species DJHC 98410, collected by Dan Hinkley, and to quote from his catalogue "from rich deciduous woods - this vigorous species possessed twining stems to 15 feet

cloaked with deeply lobed foliage to 4 inches across with large, violet-lavender flowers followed by extremely large fruit to 2 inches across. Cool, moist situations in partial shade.” Wow, and I didn't buy it, not having the 2000 Heronswood catalogue to prompt me.

Chris Klapwijk had *Rhododendron keleticum*, especially pretty in flower, but it was rhododendron 'Conroy' with smooth as satin, glaucous leaves, and dangling trumpets in soft orange which was a wonderful buy. However, overwhelmingly beautiful the larger rhododendron hybrids are, there is a very special elegance about plants like 'Conroy'.

Sylvia Mosterman showed us *Acer carpinifolium*, the hornbeam maple, with lovely new foliage. It will grow to 10 m., and made me wish I had researched tree possibilities before I planted the more run-of-the-mill acers. She also had *Halesia carolina* which a group of us had recently seen in the Leach Botanic Garden. The Silverbell Tree is more delicate in flower than styrax and seems to have a more open, graceful habit.

Other interesting plant goodies included an amazing selection of agaves, among them *Agave victoriae-reginae* 'Porcupine', and several small variegated varieties - all satisfyingly symmetrical and looking very photogenic. How nice to pair them with some of the sempervivums on sale. I was happy to see *Anomatheca laxa* for sale. A small South African iris relative, it has a cormous root and seems to appreciate a little moisture and sun. Barbara Durrant, a former AGC member, and a superb grower of all things beautiful, had a large and floriferous clump in her garden, and she was always happy to share a bit. I still have a small group, which I cosset with extra water. There were pots of *Romanzoffia tracyi*, which we had seen growing on moist, shady rock faces in Oregon; very prolific with white flowers, and rounded, dark green leaves. There was also a very beautiful *Aquilegia longissima* with deep yellow flowers. Interestingly, at the recent Hardy Plant Study Weekend, a form of this was being promoted by (I think) a representative of Monrovia. Other North American plants included *Streptopus amplexifolius*. Twisted stalk is native to many areas of the Northern hemisphere, *Viola adunca*, a very pretty little violet, and *Dryas octopetala* which I love seeing as great mats in the mountains.

The variety of plants for sale was wonderful. There was no need to think they would be confined to the very small cushions, or the very difficult and miffy. It brought home to me how valuable a source the AGC of BC sales are, and how remiss I have been in not being a better participant, not to mention buyer! On a last note, I was intrigued by the book sale table, and made two great purchases - the first being Dr. Gerald Straley's wonderful book on 'Trees of Vancouver' for a friend taking an arborist course, and secondly, a book on 'Iris', with paintings by Barbara Jeppe. That one was just plain lovely, with large pages and beautiful illustrations, which I just leave open on my table to admire.

## **Spring Plant Show 2010**

### **Diana Hume**

We had a lovely weekend for the show this year and there was a steady stream of visitors throughout both the Saturday and Sunday.

The judges were Brent Hine, Margaret Charlton, and Rex Murfitt for the general section, Roger Low for the bonsai section, and Jean Hausermann for the primulas. All felt that the caliber of the plants was excellent.

The displays also were fabulous. Ruth Anderson made a wonderful and humorous display depicting the making of trough gardens. Thank you also, to those of you who brought display plants in, Philip, especially. Some of the bonsai, too, and miniature gardens, were very artistically done and drew raves from the visitors.



In fact many of the visitors seemed to be quite intrigued and stayed for a good length of time, admiring the wonderful array of material. They bought seeds from our seed table and plants from our 3 sales tables, a primula table with Maedythe Martin, a table for Joe Keller, and one for Kaz Pelka.



We had more entries this year – 226 pots over last years 183, the best since 2006. The number of exhibitors was about the same as last year, about 20.



This show represents the preeminent face of our club that is presented to the general public. This is the last year that Karen Thirkell and I will be organizing the show. We hope that someone will step up to the plate to take on the organization of this show, starting next spring. It mainly involves one busy weekend and a bit of organization beforehand but is a very rewarding time.

**Best in Show: *Tropaeolum tricolor***

The trophies awarded at the May meeting were as follows:

Best in Show – Dana Cromie for his *Tropaeolum tricolor*

Best Woodland Plant – Ian Gillam for his *Trillium ovatum* – double

Best Alpine Plant – Joe Keller for his *Cistanthe (Lewisia) tweedyi*

Best Cushion Plant – Joe Keller for his *Silene acaulis* 'Pedunculata'

Best Fern – Joe Keller – for his *Gymnocarpa dryopteris*

Best Plant in Expert Class – Kaz Pelka for his *Cypripedium parviflorum*

Best Rhododendron – Ian Plenderleith for his *Rhododendron* 'Razorbill'

Best Dwarf Shrub – Mark Demers for his *Kalmiopsis fragrans* (syn. *K. leachiana*)

Best Bulb or Corm – Mark Demers for his *Pleone bulbocodioides f. alba*

Best Native Bulb or Corm – Ian Gillam for his *Trillium ovatum* – double

Best Native BC Alpine Plant – Joe Keller for his *Cistanthe (Lewisia) tweedyi*

Best Miniature Garden – Joe Keller for his New Zealand plants – 4 types of *Raoulia* beautifully displayed

Best Bonsai – Larry Wick for his *Pinus thunbergii*

Best Primula – Michael Plumb for his *Primula* 'Paris 90'

And Trophy for the Highest Aggregate Points – Joe Keller with 75 points

## The Spring Plant Show - 2010

Karen Thirkell

I would like to describe a few of the lovely, well-grown plants, which took my fancy at the annual show this year. The unanimous opinion of the public and participants was that of a very pretty and interesting collection of plants.



One could not fail to notice the huge pot of *Trillium ovatum* 'Double' shown by Ian Gillam. This is truly a spectacular plant, covered in approximately 30 large, pristine double flowers. It is widely recognized that double-flowers may be attributed to mutated floral organs, eg. stamens developing as petals. As well as normal genetic mutation it can be associated with a diseased state - either viral or mycoplasmal. The judges wisely ignored the origins of this lovely flower's 'doubleness' and awarded Ian a blue ribbon in the class and as well the Best Woodland Trophy.

A blue pot of *Aquilegia grahamii* next caught my eye.



This little charmer, a mere 8 cm high, was covered in nodding soft apricot blooms with paler yellow throats and a boss of brighter yellow stamens extending beyond the blades. This columbine is endemic to Uintah County, Utah and appears on the rare plant list of Utah as a plant to watch. Their typical habitat is a hanging garden, which refers to

wildflowers that occur in cracks, crevices or narrow ledges where water is readily available as seeps. Seed has been available in the past from our club seed exchange and I certainly hope to try my hand if it comes around again. A well-deserved first place went to Joe Keller for this sweet and beautifully grown plant.

The best miniature garden this year also went to Joe. His New Zealand Trough earned the judges accolades - Charming! Work of Art! The stone work alone was worth remark. The garden contained 4 types of raoulia, a *Scleranthus biflorus*, *Coprosma petrei* and a well pruned *Hebe buechananii*. The *Raoulia australis* formed an absolutely flat carpet of lead grey foliage that crept over the rocks. Its flowers are reported to be tiny and insignificant. The plant also goes by the name of Vegetable Sheep. Raoulic acid is a principal ingredient of the humble *R. australis* and has been shown to possess strong antiviral properties against human rhinovirus - in other words - the common cold! The bright green cushion of *Scleranthus biflorus* is often grown as a ground cover or rockery plant in N.Z. where it complements rock features well by clinging to rock and shaping itself in the artful crevices which Joe constructed. *Coprosma petrei* is another flat mat with tiny leaves and a fruit, that in photographs, looks rather like slug eggs to me. The *Hebe buechananii* created the perfectly scaled height in this magical garden from "down-under".

Kaz Pelka took the trophy for Best Plant in Expert Class for his pot of *Cypripedium parviflorum*. The plant had over a dozen blooms and proved again that Kaz is, indeed, an expert. This terrestrial hardy orchid grows in moist to slightly dry woodlands in the North-eastern

U.S. and Canada. They are becoming increasingly rare due to an ever-shrinking habitat. The bright yellow pouch and long (7 cm)



twisted greenish rays would be a welcome sight in any spring-time garden 'tho I doubt that one could achieve a clump of this size. As the young plants require the presence of the appropriate endomycorrhizal fungus in the soil to thrive if you attempt to grow this orchid in your garden be sure to include all of the potting medium in which the plant arrives.

Another ground orchid caught my attention as a large pan of *Pleione bulbocodioides* 'Alba' grown by Mark Demers. The 10 large, pure white blossoms with pinkish blotches in the throat of each flower were uncomplicated by foliage which appears after blooming. This pristine pan earned a trophy for Best Bulb or Corm.

A garden polyanthus took Best Primula in Show and a pretty flower it was. 'Paris 90' is a very colourful flower with a soft blue-violet picotee petal edge fading to white which leads to a lemon-yellow eye. The 3 stems held between 3 to 5 flowers each and were held above fresh green, well-groomed leaves. The plant is one of the Barnhaven strain and I would love to know the origin of the name as it conjures up all sorts of romantic ideas.

Not to be outdone by lots of glorious colourful blossoms, Jason Nehring entered a discreet little *Asarum kiusianum* with three beautifully marked heart-shaped leaves of dark glossy green and a very lovely flower tucked into the base of the plant. As with all asarums, the flower is well-worth inspection - a chocolate coloured urn, large for asarum, with a pale ivory throat randomly streaked with bright purple. This rock garden plant native to Asia took a blue ribbon.

This year's show held many treasures and, although not as large as some years, there was definitely something for everyone.

## **Spring Plant Show 2011**

**Ian Gillam**

Our Spring Show has been held on weekends around April 20<sup>th</sup> each year. Due to demand for bookings of the Floral Hall on April weekends we have been assigned the last weekend of March (26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>) for next year's Show, three weeks earlier than usual. Tables for our monthly pot show at the past March meeting were well filled and the Spring Show should be as good as usual though with slightly different plants.

A few changes have been made to the schedule for the Show. There are two new classes. One in the Bonsai section is for *seiki*, defined as miniature landscapes in containers less than 15cm/6in in depth, and the second for "Alpines as Art". The latter is not defined and is introduced to allow more specialized judging of entries such as some of the imaginative plantings we saw at the last Show. Let's see some wider representation in this area.

A new trophy donated by Nico and Linda Verbeek in memory of Vera Peck will be awarded for "Best alpine raised from seed by the exhibitor" with entries limited to that specific class. This area of particular interest to Vera is also shared by Linda. Many others participate in the Seed Exchange so let's see a little competition here to achieve the first name on the trophy.

## **Club Garden Tours-Spring 2010**

**Lisa O'Donnell**

### **Sechelt: May 29, 2010**

I'd like to say it was a beautiful sunny day when 20 of us ventured from as far away as Chilliwack, to the Sunshine Coast to tour a few gardens. But it wasn't! It was cool and rainy, but we all put on wet weather gear and soldiered on.

Our first stop was the 40 acre site of the new Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden, former tree farm for the now closed Murray's Nursery. We were met by Paddy Wales who toured us around the perimeter of the site, accompanied by Lexi Harrington. It was tough going - some people were smart and wore boots - I was not one of them!

The garden is in its infancy - volunteers have been and are busy clearing out the alders and other natives that have grown up around the rows of trees left from the tree farm - we saw examples of linden, pin oak, amur maple, and birch. The garden is now fenced but they are challenged by the presence of deer and elk and other wildlife that sneak in. There has even been a bullfight on the property when 2 bulls from neighbouring farms managed to escape and find each other in the garden much to the chagrin of their owners!

Wakefield Creek runs along one side of the property and is festooned with large ferns and many natives including a huge, awe inspiring maple covered in moss. Breathtaking! There are 3 ponds that will be used for irrigation and as features in the garden. A vegetable garden was grown last year and 1200 pounds of food donated to the local food bank!

The volunteers have been able to salvage 2 sheds on the grounds to use for potting up plants and storage of equipment. A new building will house a café, a boardroom, an events room (that may be rented out) and washrooms. It will be wheelchair accessible.

The Garden has received Government grants for infrastructure but none of this money may be used for plants. There are fundraisers planned – a Fall Festival (Sept 18 for locals who are interested!) and plant sales in spring and fall. Donations would be gratefully accepted to help further develop the garden.

From the Botanical Garden, we proceeded to Blue Heaven, the garden of Bill Terry, famous for the meconopsis he grows here. Bill has made use of the abundant rock on his property and kept many of the native plants, including a beautiful native honeysuckle vine that scrambles up a tree! There is a huge wisteria that was graciously in bloom for us across the back of the house. In the beds, Bill is growing many primulas including *Primula bullesiana* in yellow, pink and a





stunning orangey red. Also flowering was *Tulipa sprengeri* that Bill grew from seed 8 years ago- that's patience! These were all on the seaside of the property - behind the house there is a large rock face with a waterfall, which was dry, and a pond at the base. In the bed next to the pond there were *Meconopsis* 'Barney's Blue', Bill's favourite of the

hybrids, which opens purple and turns blue, making a



***Meconopsis* 'Barney's Blue'**



***Meconopsis* 'Mrs. Jebb'**

stunning, multi-hued cluster. This bed also contains *Meconopsis horridula*, and *Meconopsis* 'Mrs. Jebb'.

Bill has peeled back the moss on some of the rocks and added soil, planted bulbs and replaced the moss. That's making the most of your property! Photographs of meconopsis can be seen in Bill's book, "Blue Heaven", published last year.

After leaving Bill's garden in Sechelt we headed south to Roberts Creek to eat lunch in Paddy Wales' garden. There are swaths of

perennials in curving beds, divided by gravel paths. Paddy's artistic sense, photographer's eye and sense of humour are very evident! There is a birdbath overflowing with glass balls and pieces, a portion of the pathway is sprinkled with broken china, and there are artistically assembled collections of rusty metal! A hedge of hornbeam is being espaliered around the garden. A man made stream meanders around the gardens near the house and on the patio there is a long, rectangular cement water feature with water plants. Multicoloured pots are spotted around the patio, and treasures dot all the gardens. Truly inspirational!

We left Paddy's and headed even further south to the garden of Verity Goodier. We parked at the top of the property and walked down a long driveway under mature native trees that are under planted with rhododendrons, ferns and many other species. There are 2 houses near the end of the drive - the second, on the sea, belongs to Verity.



*Crinodendron hookeri*

Between the houses there are curved terraced beds with a mixture of self-seeding perennials intended to lessen the work for the gardener! The stand-out in these beds, divided by lawns, were the irises - large mop headed flowers of blues and other hues begging to be admired! The real treasure in the garden was on the sea side of

the house, a crinodendron dripping with red waxen bells - quite a sight against the dark water of the ocean. The hardscaping is very handsome and features a pond in one corner, with 2 metal herons. A new bed installed below the patio is empty but for sand, and awaiting a plan! It is sure to be spectacular.

Our final garden was that of Karen Tigges - this is a garden FULL of plants from the road to the sea! There is a woodland garden as you enter the driveway with many ferns and hostas and other shade loving plants. The entire front yard is lawn free with beds divided by gravel paths and edged in stones. There are conifers dotted amongst the other perennials along the side of the house and a vegetable garden at the seaside on a cliff, with a pond below. Karen was explaining to



the group how the constant wind affects the growth of the plants and she showed us a honeysuckle vine with smaller leaves on the windy seaside than on the sheltered side. The rose bushes near the house didn't seem to mind the wind, however, and they were in full bloom, with not a blemish on the leaves! Back around the other side of the house there are asplenium self-seeding themselves, dwarf conifers and a beautiful clump of cypripedium. Karen also has a large greenhouse where she is able to over-winter tender plants and there are large aeoniums in pots that are placed around the garden in the summer. This is an incredible garden, and I am certain, in time there will be NO lawn!

A few members even managed to stop at a couple of nurseries after the tour - all in all it was a very exciting day, seeing beautiful gardens with some challenging conditions - perfect, really, even in the rain.

Many thanks to those who offered their gardens for us to see, and to those who traveled to see them.

### **A visit to Larry Wick's garden**

On a cloudy but relatively warm (for this year!) June 23, Larry Wick opened his eclectic garden for us to peruse. There are so many sights that it is difficult to know where to begin when describing this space!

Nestled at the base of the North Shore mountains in North Vancouver, Larry's garden includes a natural stream that runs off the mountains and is contained in a rocky bed through the property and right up to the side of the house where you must walk across stones to proceed! Fern, hosta and rhododendron dot the path of the water. A fantastic stone wall, which was a selling feature for Larry and his wife in the 1960's, holds the road bed in place above the property.



Several ponds, where Japanese glass floats dance, enhance the feeling of movement in the garden. There is a large *Cunninghamia lanceolata*, a beautiful *Camellia japonica* 'Kingyo-Tsubaki' with its

'fishtail' leaves and a rare Loquat, *Eriobotrya japonica*. There are several Japanese maples including a beautiful 'Shishigashira'. Many semi-hardy plants dot the garden - a spectacularly huge tree fern, bananas and palms - Larry had some babies potted up which he kindly offered to us. Several greenhouses are put to maximum use in the winter!

There is no lawn and each bed has a wall surrounding it - many bonsai, mostly conifers, are featured on the tops of these walls. And everywhere you look there are pieces of artwork - including a horse large enough to "ride", a bronze hippo, a teak arch, and a mural that Larry is working on...so many things to look at that it is difficult to absorb it in one visit!



Thanks so much Larry for inviting us to visit your fantastic space and for the refreshments!

## **COVERED WAGONS**

**Ian Gillam**

Our late member Frank Dorsey used and probably introduced this term for an outdoor plant stand protected from the weather by hoops supporting a cover of plastic film open at either end. Frank's was a free-standing affair with access all around and also, as I recall, had wheels, allowing it to be moved around. He used it both for display of particular plants and as a growing area giving protection similar to an alpine house, particularly useful in protecting his potted plants from the considerable rainfall of his North Shore garden.

In my garden I have a narrow space beside the house that is a little-visited dead-end. To fit such a stand against the house I chose to make it one-sided, a wagon split into two. This has proven useful in growing small alpine plants and particularly primulas of the subgenus *Auriculastrum*. With shelter from the rain and careful watering the farina on leaves, flowers and stems can be enjoyed in spotless

splendour. The illustration shows some details of the construction. No dimensions are given; the stand may be made to fit the situation and the owner's height.



Potted plants are plunged in medium contained in the box. As the plunge bed is constantly damp it's necessary to construct it of lumber treated to resist rotting. Industrially produced material is very effective though I'm cautious about using it as it is potentially toxic. Sawdust and cut-offs should be carefully disposed of. On no account should this material be used as firewood. With this and economy in mind, layout of the project should be planned to use the

available boards with minimal waste. The base of the box is made of short boards supported on rails attached to the long sides. Slight gaps are left to allow drainage. Treated lumber is said to accelerate the corrosion of galvanized fasteners and to avoid this I have used stainless steel nails.

The back legs continue upwards to support a top rail as well as the half-hoop on either side. These are of half-inch plastic pipe. ABS pipe used for plumbing (usually white) is said to weaken polyethylene film, as I have found on material used to cover tomatoes. Here I used flexible black PE tubing intended for irrigation systems in the garden. It is secured in place with cable clamps, nowadays supplied only in plastic and of limited life outdoors. Metal clamps might last longer. Failing these, it would not be difficult to improvise wooden ones.

The cover is a sheet of greenhouse grade PE film, UV-resistant, fairly heavy and long lasting. Along the top rail it is held beneath a thin wooden strip secured by four bolts. If the cover is to be removed in summer and further covered wagons are planned it's worthwhile to place these bolts with identical spacing on each unit. Interchangeable covers simplify fitting them in place. Covers are clipped onto the

supporting pipes with the light green clamps visible in the photograph. These clips are made for this function, holding film onto plastic pipe often used here to protect tomatoes from rain. (The local supplier now lists only the size for 3/4-inch pipe.) A substitute can be made from short lengths of the black PE pipe with a small lengthwise section cut out. These are not as secure as the green clips.

In summer it is desirable to avoid overheating by lifting or removing the cover. I replace it with shade cloth as the stand receives some sunshine when the sun gets high enough. A sheet of aluminized fabric, obtainable at hydroponics supply stores, is stapled to the rear uprights to provide more light in winter.



The box is used as a plunge bed for pots. The traditional material for filling is sand or fine gravel, heavy and awkward to transport in bulk without a truck and expensive to purchase in bags. As a substitute I have used white wood shavings sold for animal bedding and available at pet stores. The shavings hold some water yet allow drainage. They do deteriorate over time but last a few years. After that they can be used as mulch in the garden.

I have found such covered wagons valuable for growing potted primulas and other alpines, summer and winter. In an outbreak of arctic air in a recent winter we experienced a minimum temperature of  $-14^{\circ}\text{C}/+7^{\circ}\text{F}$  on the coldest night of a series. With no other protection, plants in the covered wagons were not damaged. In regions with much colder winters there may be concern that roots may suffer as the cold penetrates the box from the sides and below, an unnatural situation since roots well below ground are somewhat shielded from extreme cold. Under such circumstances plunging pots in the ground may be safer, perhaps with further insulation as required. Similar stands without a fill and kept in a shaded area may be used for germination and growth of seedlings of many hardy plants. For this use the base of the box may be replaced with wire mesh or screen to give perfect drainage. In that case the sides of the box need only be deep enough to provide a railing around the pots.



Stands following this design are a useful garden tool and can be fitted to available spaces. In the coldest climates they may only be of seasonal use but are likely to have their place, as many growers have surely discovered for themselves.

## **Lewisia of British Columbia**

### **Alan Tracey**

There are four species of *Lewisia* found in British Columbia. The most wide-ranging is *Lewisia pygmaea*, although some forms of this, at least in southern British Columbia, have characteristics of *L. nevadensis*. Within British Columbia, *L. columbiana* is found in two forms; var. *columbiana* of the eastern slopes of the Cascade Mountains and var. *rupicola* in the mountains of Vancouver Island. *Lewisia rediviva* is a plant of the dry parched areas of the interior of British Columbia where its wonderful flowers are on display by mid-May. The diminutive lewisia, *L. triphylla*, is perhaps more wide-ranging in British Columbia than presently believed, being known from only a couple of locations. The previously named *Lewisia tweedyi* has been put into a separate genus, *Cistanthe tweedyi*.



***Lewisia rediviva***



***Lewisia columbiana* var. *columbiana***



***Lewisia triphylla***



*Cistanthe tweedyi*

## IN MEMORIAM

### **A tribute to Daphne Guernsey Pam Frost**

Daphne was an Honorary Life Member and a past President of the Alpine Garden Club. During her thirty years of membership she contributed enormously to the activities of the Club, in particular organizing the Programme for many years. Although she did not travel much latterly, she kept in touch with her many friends, far and wide, arranging for a brilliant succession of exciting speakers, both for monthly meetings of the Club and for Study Weekends. While President she was also responsible for reinstating the Spring Show, tracking down and securing trophies in her inimitable way.

Daphne's West Vancouver garden, climbing a vertiginous cliff, was filled with exceptional and exceptionally well-grown plants. Her special interest and skill was in growing bulbs and, of these, fritillaries were very close to her heart; the difficult species flourished in a bulb frame

but seemed to spill over and seed themselves equally easily down the slope. The only level space was a small terrace, but this was largely filled with troughs, show pots and trays and trays of seedlings, leaving little space for humans. Two years ago she moved to Victoria where she was happily creating a new garden on level ground. She will be greatly missed.

## **Daphne – a Personal Recollection**

### **Barbara Cook**

Daphne, foremost to me was a very enjoyable conversationalist, especially during her settling-in time in Victoria, when we held frequent, long and often, very funny phone calls. She liked the quaint sayings of my grandchildren, rattling good jokes and book discussions.

Daphne had a compassionate and loyal side and she cared deeply for her friends and painfully for them, when they ailed. Her telephone became her social lifeline. When still in West Vancouver, walks around her hillside garden of precious alpines, followed by delicious dinners of roast lamb and well-laced trifles, were memorable occasions.

Daphne enriched my life and I valued her friendship. I felt privileged to have been there for her at her last.

---

Photo credits:

Page 8, 9, and 10: Diana Hume  
Page 11, 12: Karen Thirkell  
Page 15, 16: David Sellars  
Page 17, 18: Chris Klapwijk  
Page 19, 20: Ian Gillam  
Page 21, 22, and 23: Alan Tracey