THE BLUE RIDGE REVIEW

Southeastern Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society

Encouragement of the culture of Rhododendrons

April-May 2010

Bloom time is Almost Here!

Don't Miss Any of Our Special Events!

Hooper Bald Restoration work party - Fri., Sat., & Sun., April 9, 10, 11

A group from the Mid Atlantic Chapter, ARS is working in cooperation with the US Forest Service to free up the native azaleas on Hooper Bald. They have invited our chapter to join in to help and will meet Friday evening, April 9th at the Robbinsville, NC, Microtel. Contact John Brown for times and other details.

Annual Flower Show

Sat. & Sun. May 1 & 2, NC Arboretum

"Come one, come all to the 51st Annual SE-ARS Flower Show," says Glenn O'Sheal, Flower Show chairman and SE-ARS board member.



"Bring your friends and neighbors. Anyone can enter the show, even if you're not a member."

The plant sale is back by popular demand! Don Johnson will be acquiring some fabulous plants from Transplant Nursery, plus there may be a few more from other sources. So be sure to tell your friends.. (Continued.. See Flower Show on page 2)

Tour Haag's RhodoGarden, Sun., May 9, 2:00-6:00 PM, Brevard, NC

"Displaying almost 1,100 of the best of Russ and Velma Haag's hybrids the Haag RhodoGarden each springtime is a feast for the eyes of any true rhododendron lover." This once spectacular garden

is now a bit overgrown since Russ's passing, but the Rhodies are still there in all their splendor.



Here's some background

information taken from the www.rhodogardens.com web site. (Continued... See Haag on Page 3)

Convention Planning Meeting, Sun., April 18, 2:00 PM, Solutions in Wood, Hendersonville, NC.

Here's a great opportunity for everyone to provide input for the planning of the 2012 ARS-ASA Convention in Asheville, NC. We have been offered a wonderful opportunity to actually promote our convention at this year's ARS Convention in Long Island, **May 14-17**, 2010, because it will be the next <u>Eastern</u> ARS convention. 2011 will be in..

(Continued...See Convention on page 5)

Flower Show, (Continued from page 1)

...and neighbors that beautiful healthy rhododendron plants will be available for very reasonable prices at the NC Arboretum, while our flower show is going on, Saturday and Sunday, May 1 and 2.



April Sanborn with her entries at last year's Flower Show.

We've added a new category to the show line-up this year. It's "Miniature Truss or Spray" and is for stems that are no more than 4" out of the container. Don Haynes is making some tiny new

containers to match the standard ones, and we hope to get some entries. These will add a new dimension to our already popular show.

Set up will be on Friday, April 30, from 2:00 till 5:00, although we're usually done by 4:00. Bring your trusses, sprays or other entries Saturday morning from 7:30 till 9:00 AM, or if you don't want to get up that early, you may bring them on Friday, 2:00 to 5:00 PM. Your Show Schedule is enclosed with this newsletter.

Biltmore Estate Azalea Garden Tour, Thursday, May 6, 2:30 PM

Parker Andes, Director of Horticluture at the

Biltmore Estate in Asheville, NC, has graciously invited SE-ARS members



and Vaseyi Chapter, Azalea Society of America, Members to tour their spectacular Azalea Garden on Thursday, May 6, at 2:30 PM. What a fabulous opportunity to spend an afternoon in paradise! We will meet at the Biltmore Estate Ticket Center and either carpool or Aaron Cook may bring a van or bus from Caldwell Community



Biltmore Azalea Garden in 2008

College to transport people from the ticket center. "We would have Estate access for the group at no charge," said Parker in his e-mail to Aaron. "Sorry, no house visit included. There would be a few of us staff members there to lead a walk / talk," he added.



This spring "is the 70th anniversary of Edith Vanderbilt Gerry honoring Beadle by accepting his azalea and renaming the garden the 'Azalea Garden'."



Miss Cornelia's Garden at Biltmore Estate in 2008

"Even the most beautiful weather will not allay the gardener's notion that he is somehow too late, too soon, or that he has too much stuff going on or not enough. For the garden is the stage on which the gardener exults and agonizes out every crest and chasm of the heart."

(from Henry Mitchell, "Essential Earthman")

Haag Garden, (Continued from page 1)

"Russ and Velma Haag's initial interest in rhododendrons dates back to 1952 and blossomed into a love affair that has spanned more than half a

century.

Although Russ passed away in 1995 at age 85, Velma actively continues their legacy, working in the garden every day – weather permitting.



"While they were living in New Jersey. Russ, a chemical engineer for Exxon (then Standard Oil of New Jersey) and Velma, a mother of four and homemaker, were enticed by the opportunity to get some free rhododendrons from Pennsylvania to landscape the yard of their recently-purchased home. Little did they imagine at the time where that initial spark of interest might lead them.

"After retirement in 1968 the couple embarked upon a search for the perfect location to spend the rest of their lives continuing the pursuit of their passion for rhododendrons. In 1971 they finally chose the mountains of Western North Carolina as



Haag - Bed 2, Row 2, Photo by Ed Collins

the ideal place. They brought with them on that 600-plus mile relocation over 4,000 of their new hybrids, a figure which would eventually grow to almost 16,000 during their years in North Carolina. Today, with almost 1,100 of the best of those unique

but unregistered, mature hybrids flourishing on their property, the Haag RhodoGardens each springtime is a once-in-a-lifetime feast for the eyes of any true rhododendron lover.

"In 1981 the American Rhododendron Society awarded Russ and Velma Haag the Silver Medal in

recognition of their contributions. That award, in part, mentions their active involvement at all levels of the Society, their key roles in establishing a 5,000-plant public



Haag Gigantic Janet Blair Hardy Giant, Photo by Ed Collins

display garden and their extensive work as hybridizers which resulted in a number of their crosses becoming registered and unselfishly made available to the membership."

The web site, <u>www.rhodogardens.com</u>, provides a glimpse into their amazing journey, and takes you on a digital tour through their wonderful garden. Come to the tour in person on Sunday, May 9!

The sign pictured below reflects her sentiments:



Take nothing but photographs, Leave nothing but footprints, Kill nothing but time.

DIRECTIONS: Haag RhodoGardens is located at 8100 Greenville Highway, Brevard, NC, which is Rt. 276. Go north on 276 out of Cleveland, SC, 7-8 mi. past the state line or south on 276 out of Brevard, apx. 8-9 mi. You'll see a small, white farm house on the west side of the road close to the highway. Turn in the driveway (officially, Casey Lane) and a large area immediately left of the drive is cleared for parking. Walk up the driveway's right fork (which you passed as you drove in), past the barn to the house. Curt (Velma's son) says, "for anyone with mobility challenges, you can drive up to the house, but there's only a limited amount of space to park and turn a couple of cars around."

Spring Awards Banquet a Marvelous Event!

There were about 35 people at the Spring Awards Banquet and Silent Auction at the Chariot in

Hendersonville on March 20. Everyone had a marvelous time placing their bids on the many available plants, and deciding



which of the 5 raffle items to place their tickets on.

Bob Head eloquently spoke about his work hybridizing an extraordinary new series of re-blooming evergreen azaleas that add color to

gardens in spring, summer and fall each year, and keep their leaves through winter. They offer better cold hardiness, a wider range of distinctive colors and large





or double flowers that deliver a greater value for today's smaller landscapes. He left us in awe of all the work he has accomplished, as well as expressing opportunities for a lot more research to be done.

Our President Doley Bell conducted a short business meeting in which we took a new vote on selling plants at the Hendersonville Garden Jubilee, since the free nonprofit spaces are in obscure locations this year. It was decided that we would pay for a vendor booth and sell plants, with the hope that Don Johnson can acquire some from Transplant Nursery. Perhaps some other sources could be tapped, also.

VIVIAN ABNEY BRONZE MEDAL WINNER FOR 2010

Vivian lives in Sevierville, TN, on the farm where she was born. She owns and operates East Fork Nursery, which she started in 1987. She specializes in native azaleas, and grows a wide variety of plants including hardy camellias, dwarf conifers, hollies, crepe myrtles and more.

Vivian had a native azalea named after her in September of 2006. The plant, discovered by Earl Sommerville in the mid 1980's, was originally grown from seed, but the exact location of the collected seed was never written down. Thus the parentage of the "Vivian Abney" plant is unknown. The azalea, "Vivian Abney," has grown 4 1/2 ft. tall and 6 ft.

wide in 15 years. The flowers are a strong purple-pink with a yellow blotch. The flowers form in trusses and open early in the spring season. The plant is hardy to -6'.

Azalea is the photo used in this Bronze Medal Award. The text says, "Vivian Abney Is Hereby Presented The Bronze Medal In Recognition Of Your Contributions.

The "Vivian Abney"



Vivian Abney is presented the Bronze Medal on March 20, 2010.

"Vivian, you have done much to increase the interest in native azaleas by making them available to our members and the public in general. You have spent much time and money in identifying and propagating superior cultivars. Many times this is an ongoing process that takes many years before results are realized. This process requires someone who loves the plants more than turning a profit. And for your generosity over the years, growing and providing plant material for The Southeastern Chapter.

"The Southeastern Chapter bestows this, its Highest Honor, March 20, 2010. The Southeastern Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society."

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY Welcome! ...and Thank you for joining the... Southeastern Chapter

Membership Sign-up Form RHODODENDRON Southeastern Chapter

Telephone City/State Address Name_ E-mail

MEMBERSHIPS ARE ON A CALENDAR YEAR BASIS. 18 months for new members joining Renewal New after April 1st.

Membership dues include chapter and national membership, plus the quarterly ARS Journal.

Commercial..... Regular..

.....\$40.00

00.06....

Sustaining.....

....75.00

....1,000.00

Commit for Life (Individual)....

Commit for Life (Family)......1,500.00

Send this form with your check payable to "SE-ARS" to:

Sponsoring.....

Commit for Life, Individual, is payable over a 3 year period in one increment of \$400 & two of \$300. Commit for Life, Family, is payable over a 3 year period in increments of \$500. ♥ Encourage a friend to join!

opportunity to "Encourage the culture of Rhododendrons and Azaleas."

The hours are 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM each day, and we'll set up around 8:30 AM on Saturday. Let Marilyn know if you want to help. We still need a few more people. Come by our booth to see us anyway. Be sure to tell your friends to come too. For more information about the festival, go to www.historichendersonville.org/garden_jubilee.htm.

Hendersonville Garden Jubilee Festival, Sat. & Sun., May 29 & 30

This Memorial Day weekend event is an enormous amount of fun and a great opportunity to actually sell top quality rhododendron and azalea plants in

addition to



Our booth last year

having our educational display. It is well known that the nearly 35,000 garden enthusiasts and flower lovers in attendance are ready, willing and able to buy. And anyone who joins our Association at this event will receive a free plant!

We're at booth #111 on Main Street between Allen and First Streets on the west side, in front of First Citizens' Bank. This is another outstanding

Convention (Continued from page 1)

...Portland, Oregon. This year's committee will allow us to have a flyer or brochure about our convention in the registration packet for each person there, plus we can make a short presentation at the banquet. So y'all come and bring your great ideas for garden tours, speakers, events and meals.

Directions: Solutions in Wood is located at 422 South Whitted St. in Hendersonville, NC. Take Allen St. west from King, Main or Church Streets and go to the end. Turn left on S. Whitted Street and go 1/10 mile to the first commercial building on the left. Sorry to make you bring your own chair, but it's free, complements of Don Haynes.

Southeastern Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society

Officers and Directors

President: Doley Bell Treasurer: John Brown

Vice President: Georgia Burson Secretary/Editor: Marilyn Haynes

Past President: Don Johnson Directors 'til 2010: Aaron Cook,

Ray Head, April Sanborn

Directors 'til 2011: Don Haynes, Glenn O'Sheal. Leon Pace



Haag-Carolina Rose

Membership Directory Changes

(Changes are in Bold)

Reinstated member - Welcome Back! Burlingame, Wes

Deadline for the June-July Blue Ridge Review is <u>May 20</u>. Please send copy to

For a **color** copy of the *Blue Ridge Review*,

Mark Your Calendar, Now!

Fri., Sat., Sun., April 9, 10, 11 - Hooper Bald Project, Microtel, Robbinsville, NC.

Sunday, April 18, 2:00 PM - 2012 ARS-ASA Convention Planning meeting, Solutions in Wood, Hendersonville, NC. Bring chair!

May 1-2, Flower Show and Plant Sale, NC Arboretum, Bent Creek, NC.

May 6, 2:30 PM - Tour of Biltmore Azalea Garden, Asheville, NC.

Sunday, May 9 -2:00-6:00 - Tour of Haag RhodoGarden, Brevard, NC.

May 14th – 17th, ARS National Convention, Long Island, NY. "The Eastern Challenge" Register by April 15, 2010.

May 29-30, 10:00-6:00 - Garden Jubilee Festival, Main St. Hendersonville, NC.

June - Hikes to the Balds to see the native Rhododendrons and Azaleas. Dates TBD.

July 18, Sun., 2:00 PM, Annual Meeting and Picnic- Home of Melody and Doley Bell, Hendersonville, NC