



The Blue Ridge Review



SOUTHEASTERN CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

April, 2021

Encouragement of the culture of Rhododendrons

BETTY MONTGOMERY WANTS TO SHARE HER FABULOUS GARDEN WITH YOU ON APRIL 10TH!!

Betty Montgomery has graciously invited us to tour her wonderful garden on Saturday, April 10th from 2 to 6. As you read the following, I'm sure you will want to come and enjoy this beautiful creation.

Forty Oaks Garden was a garden started by Betty Montgomery in 2002. She started building this garden in the woods so that she could grow some camellias that she could not grow around the house where it was too windy and exposed. This was an area where the undergrowth was full of briars, privet and underbrush.

She started with just a semi-circle of camellias, and then each year cleared more land to make the garden larger. After 6 years, she convinced her husband that they needed a pond. There was a good spring



down in the woods, and she thought it would support a small pond. She planted and developed the side of the pond closest to the house, and then, after about 10 years, she started planting on the other side of the pond where she built a gazebo.

Now the garden encircles the entire 2-acre pond.

Betty was a collector at first. She loved to find unusual plants to add to the garden. Then, after visiting a garden in the Chapel Hill area that was a collection of fabulous plants, she realized she needed to make sure it was a garden and not just a collection. Betty asked George Betsill, a good friend, to come give her some suggestions on what to do to give the garden more structure. George was most helpful and returned a number of times to give her advice until his death. Betty gives George credit for how lovely it is today.

The garden is about 5 acres and contains many azaleas,

THE RETURN OF GARDEN TOURS!!

MARK YOUR CALENDERS:::

TOUR BETTY MONTGOMERY'S GARDEN ON APRIL 10TH.

TOUR MELODY BELL'S GARDEN ON APRIL 24!!

Inside This Issue

Tour the Bell's Garden 2

Tour the Montgomery Garden (cont.) 3

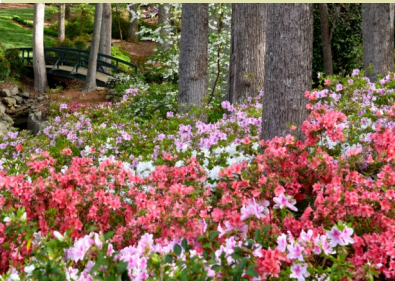
Greenhouse Donation 4

Greenhouse Future Plans 4

The Blue Ridge Review



A 2016 pic from the Bell Garden



Views of Betty's Garden



COME AND ENJOY THE SPLENDOR OF THE BELLS' GARDEN

Melody Bell has graciously invited us to tour her garden on Saturday, April 24 from 10 to 2 (rain date -- Sunday, April 25 from 1 to 3). This wonderful garden was started in the '70's by David and Naoma Dean, and the Bells bought it in June of 2000. Their loving care has made this a treasured place embracing nature's bounty. The garden is about 8 acres, with a 'few' thousand Azaleas and Rhododendrons, along with other accent ground-cover and special plants such as Japanese maples, camellias, and Franklinia; hybrid groups include Dexter, Haag, Glen Dale, Gilkey, Kehr and others. Doley used to say: "Our favorite flower is the one we are looking at now!"

Here's a glimpse of our last visit to this amazing garden in 2016: "We got our first hint of the splendor when we came upon a deep purple R. Jonathan Shaw, and then shortly after a beauty called Big Red. As we moved on we found a pink rhodi with a deep red eye call Sphinx close to a yellow cultivar called Golden Star. The diversity of the Bells' collection amazed us."

So mark your calendar, and come and enjoy the fruits of the Bells' years of creative care. The address is 64 Lands End Drive, Hendersonville, NC. It's off Rugby Rd., which can be reached off Hwy. 191 near Mountain Home or off Hwy. 64 near Horseshoe. You can easily find directions on Google Maps. Please contact Melody at melodybell@att.net to let her know you will be coming.

VISIT BETTY MONTGOMERY'S WONDERFUL GARDEN (cont.)

rhododendron, bulbs, Japanese maples and other plant material. Betty has made it a fall, winter and spring garden. There are some spring perennials but it is mainly a garden of trees and shrubs.

Betty spends many hours in her garden, and it is changing each year. This past October 29, a tornado came through the property and took down about 50 trees and completely destroyed 1/3 of her stream. She has been working this winter with heavy equipment to build the garden back. For those who have never seen the garden, it is hard to tell how much damage was done.

We hope you will visit the garden and enjoy the many different views.

Here's the location: 100 Forty Oaks Farm, Campobello, SC. 29322. You can find directions on Google maps. Here are a few details that Betty provided: there is white fencing along Walnut Hill Church road. You turn into the driveway of 985 Walnut hill Church Road and follow the road to the top of the hill. Our driveway is Forty Oaks Farm Road.

April, 2021

THE FRUITS OF OUR DONATION TO THE GREENHOUSE AT BRCC

On March 5th Ray Head, Chuck and Judy Van Rens, and Aaron Cook met at the Blue Ridge Community College greenhouse. Aaron gave us a detailed tour, showing us the improvements and telling us about the programs that are evolving because of our \$20,000 donation. Ray brought some of Dole Bell's propagations to live in the Greenhouse. Aaron said that there will eventually be room to nourish other propagations from our group.

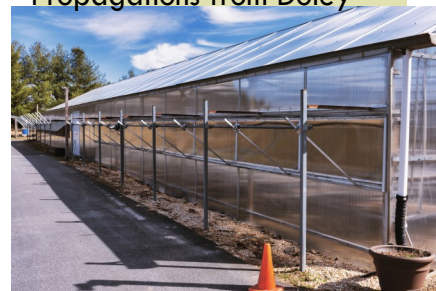
Aaron gave us background information about the Horticulture Program. He told us the following: "Fifteen years ago this was a good program, but interest by administrators disappeared at some point. During the previous president's tenure, the Horticulture Program moved from department to department as she reorganized the college's divisions. The last home for this program was in Career and Technical Education under former Dean Chris English. Chris came up through that program as an automotive person, and automotive programs were his 'pet projects'. He channeled most of his department's money into those areas. When I took over, the Horticulture Program did not have a yearly operating budget. Now it does. The current faculty for this program consist of four adjuncts (part-time). Now we are in the process of hiring a full-time director of the Horticulture Program. We aim to have 20 students in the program next year. Our program is a standard Horticulture Technology AAS Degree (Associate of Applied Science). All of the required courses include use of the greenhouse." The college is extremely grateful for the SE-ARS donation (notice the 'thank you' note at the bottom). The money has made the following upgrades possible:

- Replaced the glazing panes on the entire greenhouse
- Replaced doors
- Replaced the cooling system with a swamp cooler which pumps water into slats of cardboard; a fan cools the slats creating cool, moist air
- Replaced screening and shade cloth
- Serviced motors on fans and replaced belts
- Replaced all window-opening-arms
- Replaced the furnace and plumbing

Aaron mentioned that one of the hardest parts of the renovation has been getting materials; the poly window panes for the greenhouse are made by the same company that has been making face shields and poly separators to help control covid. He also explained how important our donation is. "The total project is at a cost of \$60,000. When you hit a 50% point with fundraising on a project like this, others will chip in more willingly. The \$20,000 from SE-ARS was a tremendous help in reaching the initial 50% point. We now have commitments for the entire \$60,000."



Propagations from Doley



Greenhouse with new glazing



Aaron Cook explains new features

BlueRidge
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Office of the President | Laura B. Leatherwood, Ed.D.

Dear Dr. McCaulee: July 5, 2020
Shape this note finds you & the Southeastern Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society staying healthy & well! I wanted to say a special "Thank you" for the generous gift to Blue Ridge for the renovation of our greenhouse. We are so excited for the future possibilities of our horticulture program with our soon-to-be updated greenhouse. We could not do this work without this great support. Have a great day & we sincerely thank you to everyone. We are forever grateful. Mikea T. Leonard

**Southeastern Chapter of
American Rhododendron Society
280 Trammell Rd.
Travelers Rest, SC 29690**

WEBSITE - WWW.SE-ARS.ORG

Officers and Directors

(beginning July 1, 2019)

President: Ray Head

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Directors until 2020—Leon Pace,
April Sanborn, Chuck Van Rens

Directors until 2021—
John Kendall, Alan Mizeras,
Buffy Wells

Secretary: Pamela McCarter

Editor: Judy Van Rens

Mark your Calendar

**April 10 — Tour the
Montgomery Garden
Address—
100 Forty Oaks Farm
Campobello, SC
Time— 2—6**

**April 24 — Tour the Bell's
Garden
Address—
64 Lands End Drive
Hendersonville, NC
Time — 10—2**

**Make Sure to Check Out the
SE-ARS Website —
www.se-ars.org**

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE AT THE BRCC GREENHOUSE

--Make sure this is a teaching greenhouse
--Support 2 sides to the greenhouse -- curriculum and community-ed
--A propagation house (a heater and double poly windows , a fan)
--Start growing annuals for the grounds of BRCC -- work with the
new groundskeeper.
--Aim toward certifications -- like for native plants
--Continue making a cold frame (it looks like a small brown house)
it heats fluids in the beds for propagation.
--Continue working on getting an Associates Degree that will lead
to a four-year degree at a 4-year school.
--Long-term - have a classroom building near the greenhouse.
--In the fall -- we'll have an open house for all.
--Take out the old apple trees behind the greenhouse -- reposition
the heirloom apples drawing from the rootstock of these old trees.

The department has established a pot-in-pot tree planting
area for ease of transplanting (10-gallon pot in pot). (hopefully to
provide new trees for the grounds)

It looks like our donation was a wise choice!!