



The Blue Ridge Review



SOUTHEASTERN CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

August/September 2015

Encouragement of the culture of Rhododendrons

Betty Montgomery Presents:

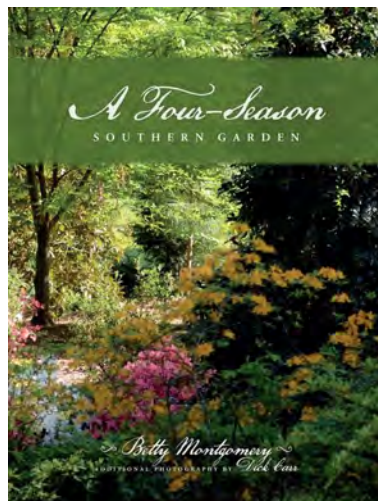
Betty Montgomery is a local celebrity and author and a member of Vaseyi/ASA and SE-ARS. Betty writes the monthly garden article in the Hendersonville Times News. She has two spectacular artistic gardens, one in South Carolina and one in North Carolina. She recently published a book called *A Four-Season Southern Garden* and will give us a presentation based on her book. Following is the book description: In *A Four-Season Southern Garden*, Betty Montgomery shares her gardening experience from forty years of love and labor in both of her zone 7 gardens in the Carolinas. A hands-on Master Gardener who derives great satisfaction from nurturing plants, bushes, and trees, Betty gives the reader tips and information on the most successful methods she has found for creating healthy and colorful gardens. Betty joined forces with photographer Dick Carr to put the lovely images of plants on the printed page. Dick has been behind the lens of a camera for much of his life, capturing the beauty of nature as it miraculously unfolds. Betty and Dick have chosen some of the plants that flourish in the zone 7 climate, focusing on the ones that Betty knows and grows. With Betty's extensive knowledge of plants and Dick's keen eye for photography, the two have created a charming book that will take you on a pleasurable journey through *A Four-Season Southern Garden*.

Copies of *A Four Season Southern Garden* will be available at the meeting, giving us a special opportunity to obtain autographed editions, at a discounted price of \$20.

This meeting, on September 27th at 2 PM at St. John's In the Wilderness in Flat Rock, is a combined meeting with the Vaseyi chapter of the Azalea Society. Guests are welcome; people new to the area will be interested in what grows well here.

PLANT AUCTION: A lively auction of plants contributed by our joint membership following Betty's talk is a great way to add highly desired plants to our gardens. Please bring any nice plants you are willing to donate to the auction. This will be like a plant exchange with a Live Auction. DOLEY BELL has volunteered to run the auction.

by Audrey Stelloh



Ray says:

"Members, check your plant inventories to see if you have extras of some of your good material to bring to the September meeting's Plant Auction! While our chapter does not necessarily need money, this is a way for our members to obtain some rare and unusual plant material."

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July Picnic and Plants for Members (P4M)



Audrey explains the P4M process.

The SE-ARS annual picnic was held on Sunday, July 19 at 2 p.m. at the home of Byron & Hazel Richards. Our President Ray Head welcomed 45 or so members and guests. There were so many people it was hard to get a definite count! Hazel asked new members and guests to introduce themselves – a couple from Knoxville, TN attended! Then, everyone feasted on delicious main courses and side dishes as well as yummy desserts – all brought by members. Hazel gave attendees a house tour. Members also strolled through the Richards' 2+ acre garden with its conifers, specimen trees, and pond.



Great Food.

After lunch, Ray thanked Audrey Stelloh, Leon Pace and Doley Bell for all their hard work for the P4M program. Audrey then announced that she and several other members brought seeds, cuttings and other items which were free for anyone who wanted them. P4M plants were listed and described in the June/July newsletter. In addition to the cuttings from the Ed Collins rhododendron garden, other donated plants were available. Audrey described how all plants would be distributed --- first to members who attended the June meeting which was an incentive to attend this meeting (in three groups of 7) and, then, to other picnic attendees (group #4). Everyone in each group selected one plant, then everyone in each group selected a second and a third plant. Lastly, all attendees could select any number of remaining plants. Plants were \$3/each. Pamela McCarter collected the proceeds.



Ray talks about borers.

Great food, friends, and plants equaled a great afternoon! Thanks to the Richards for their awesome hospitality.

by Susan Boland

July Picnic -- Additional Reflections

Ray commented, "I hope that our members appreciate how rare some of these plants were and handle them accordingly. They should also make an extra effort to keep good records of their names and parentages. I want to make sure we also give credit to Beasley's Nursery for rooting the cuttings."

Sieglinde added the following: "Audrey did a great job keeping everything straight and us organized to take turns for our choices. What an opportunity to get these beautiful rhododendrons and what a beautiful way to remember Ed Collins in all our member gardens. Since we could not take one of each, I sincerely hope that some will be inspired to not only grow them on to perfection, but will share either cuttings or rooted plants with us in the future. Thank you to Audrey and Leon for taking the cuttings last year."



So many plant choices!

Annual Meeting Notes - June 14, 2015

Ray called the meeting to order. He recognized Marilyn Haynes for completing eight years as secretary of SE-ARS. (He thanked Don Haynes too). Ray says he already has some jobs in mind for Marilyn.

The election results follow:

President - **Ray Head**

Vice President - **Sieglinde Anderson**

Secretary - **Frances Jones**

Board of Directors - **Audrey Stelloh; Wayne Hutchins; Chris Wetmore Jackson McCarter** is continuing as Treasurer; **April Sanborn, Byron Richards and Chuck Van Rens** will also continue as directors.

The by-law change was discussed before it was passed by majority vote.. The rationale for the change is that there are so many overlapping members between SE-ARS and Vaseyi; therefore the two groups have decided to share responsibility for arranging speakers. Cutting down on the amount of work necessary for our meetings is the reason Ray and Sieglinde agreed to stay on for another term.

Section B. Chapter Meetings

The Southeastern Chapter shall hold [as many meetings each year as deemed appropriate] with the other special events and activities scheduled at the pleasure of the President and/or the Board of Directors. Notice of meetings shall be mailed to the membership at least ten (10) days in advance of the meeting date. (continued on page 4)

Highlighting Ross Miller

At age 95 Ross Miller is our oldest member still showing Rhododendrons at our Annual Flower Shows with his wife Rose always at his side. He is also the oldest Eagle Scout in the USA.

From Ross: "I grew gladiolas in New Jersey. A mutual friend, who marketed gladiolas, recommended the Asheville area to me. We moved to Weaverville in August, 1986, and have shown flowers almost every year since that time. I graduated from the University of Iowa in 1940 and was hired as a chemist by the Du Pont Company at that time. I worked for Du Pont for forty years until I was sixty and then decided it was time to retire. Retirement years have been filled with garden activities and taking care of the six acres where we now live in Weaverville. My wife, Rose, was born and grew up in Iowa, and I met her at church where my father was the Pastor. The early part of the retirement years were spent helping our son raise his two sons. Our Lord has blessed both my wife and me with good health for our ages of 93 and 95".

Ross furnished the Rhododendrons for the tables at our 2012 Joint Convention. *Submitted by Jean Pace*



Something to Ponder -
Ray talked about having a plant sale at the end of April with discounts for new members.



Rose and Ross Miller

The new system:
Two meetings with speakers are joint with Vaseyi, one in fall and one in spring.
Garden tours, annual meetings, Flower Show, Garden Jubilee, and picnic will continue.

Annual Meeting Notes (cont.)

Vivian Abney donated a new species of deciduous azalea for attendees: *Rhododendron colemanii* "Flat Creek Tetra"
--white with yellow blotch -- blooms in June.

The meeting ended with a short discussion by experts on two topics:
1. How to root cuttings: the consensus was to root them outside with no direct sunlight -- choices of many mediums, many hormones, but always maintain 100% moisture.
2. Fertilizers for rhododendrons -- none, except for young plants in pots; then use a 14-14-14 slow release.
Augie Kehr used cottonseed meal, blood meal, triple phosphate.

Gloria Gilkey: We will miss her!

Gloria Reid Gilkey died on Wednesday, April 1, 2015 at Gwinnett Medical Center in Duluth, Georgia at the age of 92. Gloria and Russ joined the SE-ARS Chapter in 1972 where she was a very active member. Gloria served as Editor of the Newsletter, Treasurer and helped with staging the flower shows.

She was born in Flint, Michigan in 1923. She and her sister, Margreta, grew up in Fenton, Michigan. In high school, Gloria played flute in the band and was the valedictorian of her graduating class. She attended Brenau College in Gainesville, Georgia for two years. She then transferred to the University of Kentucky where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry with high distinction and was invited to join Phi Beta Kappa. She met her husband, Russell, during her undergraduate studies. They were married in October of 1944 and celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary in 2014.

After graduating, the couple moved to Akron, Ohio where she worked as a chemist at BF Goodrich. The pair then relocated to Texas where Russell was stationed with the Navy during World War II. Following the War, while he pursued a PhD at the University of Illinois, she worked as a chemist focused on coal analysis. After the birth of her first child Sandra, she became a full-time wife and mother. The family moved to Kingsport, Tennessee when Russell joined Tennessee Eastman as a research chemist. Her second child, Marilyn, was born in Kingsport.

Gloria sang alto with the Kingsport Symphony Orchestra Chorus for many years. She was a crossword expert, an accomplished baker and an astute investor. She and her husband enjoyed duplicate bridge and worked together growing rhododendrons. For more than three decades, they participated in the American Rhododendron Society both locally and nationally.

She is survived by her 94 year-old husband, Russell Gilkey, of Lawrenceville, Georgia, and two daughters, Sandra Miller of Atlanta, Georgia; and Marilyn Gilkey of Raymond, Maine. She is also survived by two grandchildren: Claire Miller of Atlanta, Georgia; and Andrew Miller of Brooklyn, New York.



Gloria Gilkey
1923-2015

Winter Care of Baby Cuttings

Here are suggestions from some of our experts about winter care for the rare and treasured cuttings you all acquired at the Plants for Members event at the July picnic:

Jackson McCarter says, "This fall, if liner plants are to be left outdoors during winter, transplant into 1 gallon pots with composted pine bark medium (Timberline "soil conditioner" from Home Depot or Walmart) or your favorite potting medium; place in >50% shade, north side of house or high overhead evergreen forest shade; put leaves, pine needles or bark between pots, and don't allow to dry out. Fertilize sparingly with slow release fertilizer of your choice in March. Plants will be ready to plant out or transplant to larger containers the following fall."



Doley Bell says, "Pot up to gallon containers and check for bound roots. Do not fertilize. Cold temps are fine, but protect from wind. Water during winter, but will not require as much as summer. Pray that they survive!"

Audrey Stelloh says, "I up-potted my rooted cuttings from the Plants For Members event into 1 gallon containers. For winter protection I put the pots directly on the ground on the shaded north side of the shed, where they won't experience major temperature swings that would happen if they were in a sunny place. I group all the pots close together and surround the group with either boards or bricks, and then stuff the spaces between pots with either leaves or mulch. I also surround the group of pots with a low fence with a piece of fence across the top to keep deer and squirrels out. I put the most vulnerable plants, like newly rooted cuttings, in the center of the group of potted plants.

One more thing. I'm not sure how others decide when the rooted cuttings are ready to plant. I think it usually takes 2-3 years in pots with good waterings, winter protection and at least 4-8 branches before they are ready. They need to have the terminal growth pinched off each spring for several (6-7) years. I'm still new (6 years a member) so I'd like to hear how others treat new plants."

April Sanborn says, "I do pretty much the same thing as Audrey. I repotted the plants into 1 gallon pots. I keep them in a sheltered area, out of the winter wind, on the ground, and with larger plants in pots around them. I haven't had problems with deer or squirrels so I don't take any precautions in that area. It is a good idea to follow Audrey's lead if critters are a problem. If we are due to have incredibly cold weather, zero or below, I put my smaller, most tender plants in an unheated garage or other covered shelter until the temps rise into the upper teens or lower twenties for nighttime lows."

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Winter Care of Baby Cuttings (cont.)

Leon Pace says, "I pot mine in gallon pots and place them on the ground in a 24-inch high pen built of landscape timbers. I put leaves around each pot then, because of deer and squirrels, I put chicken wire over the entire area. The pen is in an area protected from the wind by larger rhododendrons."



Sieglinde Anderson says, "I too potted the cuttings into 1 gallon containers. I make up a soil mix of composted pine bark, perlite, leaf mold and add a small amount of acidifier. I stand the pots into a container with water to thoroughly wet the mix from the bottom up. Then the pots go into my sand/peat frame for the next several years. Making sure they get watered with all my other containers in the frame is essential. I scatter oak leaves over my frames during the winter and

slowly remove the leaves in the spring. I stick bare branches all along the front of my frames (the back is against an existing timber low wall and garden and not accessed by deer so far). I will follow Audrey's advice on pinching new growth over the next several years to get spreading rather than lanky growth pattern.

My question to others "do you fertilize during the next several years?"

Ray Head says, "I repotted into one gallon containers immediately and set them in the shade. It is important not to let them dry out while they are in the containers. For winter protection I have frames built with 2" x 10", 5' wide and 12' long. Hoops are 1" black plastic pipes that hold shade cloth and white plastic up 4' in the middle. The 50% shade cloth goes on in mid November about the time that the deciduous trees are dropping their leaves. The 6mil white polyethylene is put in place but is not used to cover the bed until the temperature is going to be in the low 20's and stay there for several days. Some winters I never use the plastic but most winters I cover the plants for two or three weeks. I leave this in place until mid May just in case we have a late freeze which can damage the plants. This system allows my plants to go dormant and start growing in the spring close to normal. The three beds that I have were built 25 years ago and I'm still using the same material. Each spring I store the plastic and the shade cloth. This has proved to be a good system over a range of mild and severe winters. I plan to keep my plants in containers for several years and repot them as they need it. Be careful with fertilizer that you use because most rhododendrons are sensitive, especially while they are in containers. I would recommend growing them slowly."



2016 Membership Application Due Now!!



Membership Application (Print and Mail)

Print out, fill in the form below and mail along with a check to Southeastern Chapter ARS or SE-ARS (\$US) to:

**Southeastern Chapter ARS
c/o Jackson McCarter, M.D.
280 Trammell Road
Travelers Rest, S.C. 29690**

Name:	
Affiliation / Second Name:	
Street Address:	
City:	
State/Province:	Zip/Postal Code:
Telephone	
Fax:	
E-Mail Address:	
Membership Category, amount enclosed : (list below)	
Membership Category	Yearly Dues (\$US)
R Regular (one or two people in same household)	\$40.00
C Commercial-Corporate	\$90.00
S Sustaining	\$75.00
Sp Sponsoring	\$150.00
Ls Life, single	\$1,000.00 Payable over 3 year period (\$400, \$300, \$300)
Lf Life, family	\$1,500 Payable over 3 year period (\$500, \$500, \$500)
As Associate. Member of another ARS Chapter (which chapter?):	\$10.00
Note: Confidentiality - May we have permission to use this information in our membership roster and other Society publications? All members' addresses appear in our membership roster, but checking "No" will avoid showing your phone, fax and E-mail address. No	

Thank you for joining the American Rhododendron Society!

American Rhododendron Society

**Southeastern Chapter of
American Rhododendron
Society
Hendersonville, NC**

Officers and Directors

President: Ray Head

Treasurer: Jackson McCarter

Vice President: Sieglinde Anderson

Directors until 2016—April Sanborn,
Byron Richards and Chuck Van Rens

Secretary: Frances Jones

Directors until 2017—Wayne
Hutchins, Audrey Stelloh, and
Chris Wetmore

Editor: Judy Van Rens

Mark Your Calendar

**Sept. 27, Sunday, 2 p.m.- Betty
Montgomery Enlightens Us**
St. John in the Wilderness

**Nov. 8, Sunday. 1 p.m.—Lindy
Johnson—Growing Native
Azaleas from Seed.**
Pot Luck/Social
Bullington Gardens

April suggests checking out the
West Asheville Garden Stroll
on Saturday, Sept. 12th. This
year's stroll includes 18 gardens
located along a walkable and
bicycle-friendly route. Start at
the West Asheville Library, 942
Haywood Road, Asheville.

www.westashevillegardens.com

Visiting Mr. Maple

A visit to Mr. Maple Nursery on Memorial Day was an event not to be missed. In a shed the two sons took turns giving speeches about, of course, Japanese maples. They even set up a TV screen to show us the history of some of their present varieties and also new and future ones. Besides Japanese maples, I also saw ginkgo biloba trees and dogwoods as well. I was able to purchase two Japanese dogwoods that I had been looking for, and they were a fraction of the price that the big stores were asking.

I am so happy I did not miss the climax of the event, a guided tour of their personal Japanese Garden that included special and rare trees and exquisite rock walls built by a master. I came away with my mind spinning with ideas from the artful landscaping with its waterfalls, rock arches and stone steps, trees perched on top of rock overhangs, and other beautifully decorated corners of their garden.
by Buffy Wells

Deadline

Submit articles for the next newsletter by October 15. Share your expertise!