

California Chapter

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

CAL CHAPTER NEWS

Members' Meeting
Thursday, January 18, 2007
Lakeside Park Garden Center
666 Bellevue, Oakland
Meeting Time: 7:30pm

Happy New Year!

Topic: *Plant Hunting in China*

Bill McNamara of Quarryhill Botanical Garden, will be presenting this month's program. Quarryhill is a private research garden in Glen Ellen, California.

In company with horticulturists from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Windsor Great Park, and the Howick Arboretum, Bill McNamara has botanized extensively in the wilds of Asia. For the past nineteen years each fall he has ventured into the mountains of China, Japan, and India in search of plants. Working closely with Chinese and Japanese botanists, Bill and his colleagues are pursuing their mutual goals of research and conservation.

Bill first read about British plant hunters while he was in high school. He remembers telling friends that he wished he had been born a century earlier, as the days of exploration were over. To help with college expenses, Bill worked at various nurseries in the bay area and became a California Certified Nurseryman in 1973. After graduating from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1975, he left for Asia. For just under a year he traveled around the world visiting gardens and remote areas. He settled in Sonoma, California where he started Con Mara Gardens, a landscaping business, in 1980.

In 1987 Bill began working with Quarryhill and was promoted to Director in 1994. Bill was made a Field Associate of the Department of Botany, California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, and an Honorary Researcher of the Scientific Information Center of Resources and Environment of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in 2000. In 2001 he became an Associate Member of the joint Chinese-American Committee for the Flora of China. Bill has a Master's degree in Conservation Biology and is also a member of the San Francisco

Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum Plant Collections Committee.

Quarryhill maintains and displays a large collection of plants from temperate regions of Asia, many of which are endangered in the wild. The garden provides docent-led tours, lectures, and workshops to the general public, garden clubs, universities and schools. Quarryhill is a major source of plants from Asia for botanic gardens in North America, which they distribute freely. They also provide plant samples for DNA studies to various researchers and universities. Quarryhill has recently begun a conservation project in China for the extremely rare and endangered maple *Acer pentaphyllum*.

Please join us for an exciting program at our January Member's Meeting.

Dinner: Please join the speaker for dinner at **5:30pm** at The Grand Oak Restaurant (3701 Grand Ave, in Piedmont, just over the Oakland border, near Mandana, on the West side of Grand) the evening of the meeting. All members are invited – it's a great opportunity to meet the speaker and ask questions. Please make reservations by phoning Marilynne Mellander at (510) 223-0443 by Wednesday night, January 17th.

Last Month's Meeting – *Sierra Wildflowers*
Don Selcer gave us a wonderful program on Sierra Wildflowers at our November meeting. His pictures revived great memories in many of us who have backpacked in the Sierras. We thank you, Don, for the wonderful presentation.

Meeting Plant Sale: There will be a special selection of rhododendrons, azaleas, and companion plants available at the meeting.



(R. 'Tropic Glow' x *R. saxifragoides*) x *R. saxifragoides*
 Picture by Marilynne Mellander

The above picture is of a compact plant in the Vireya Garden at the Lakeside Garden Center. Member Bill Moyles will discuss vireyas in a future newsletter.



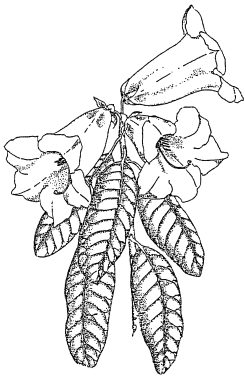
R. 'Karen Morebeck' – *R. konori* x *R. leucogigas*
 Picture by John Oliver Koelsch

In February, it will be 8 years since Karen Morebeck's passing. We remember her for her love of vireyas (particularly her fragrant *konori* x *leucogigas* hybrids that she has given us), her help at shows and potlucks, and especially her love of people. Karen was our Newsletter Editor for 6 years in the 1990's.

Thank you, Karen, for the wonderful memories.

Mark your calendar for future Cal Chapter events!

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| February 15, 2007 | Program – Polo de Lorenzo, Sonoma Horticultural Nursery |
| March 15, 2007 | Program – Paul Anderson, Down Under 2006 |
| April 12-18, 2007 | ARS Annual Convention, San Francisco, Hosted by District 5 |
| May 17, 2007 | Cal Chapter Meeting and Program |
| June 21, 2007 | Cal Chapter Potluck Dinner |



Cal Chapter News
 Marvin Larsen, Editor
 45 Hazel Road
 Berkeley, CA 94705

2007 ARS
Annual
Convention

Rhododendrons at the Golden Gate

April 12 – 15, 2007,
South San Francisco, Calif.



The Northern California Chapters of the American Rhododendron Society invite you to attend the 2007 annual ARS convention, "Rhododendrons at the Golden Gate," April 12 through 15, with an optional post-conference tour April 16 through 18.

The convention will take place at the Embassy Suites Hotel in South San Francisco and the host committee has planned a variety of activities.

The Schedule

Thursday, April 12:

- ♦ ARS Board of Directors meeting, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- ♦ Golden Gate Park tour, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- ♦ Dinner, Michael McKechnie, executive director, San Francisco Botanical Garden 6:30 p.m.

Friday, April 13:

- ♦ East Bay Garden tour, 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- ♦ South Bay Garden tour, 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- ♦ Dinner, Dr. George Argent, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh; Dr. Robert Raabe, UC Berkeley, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 14:

- ♦ North Bay tour, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- ♦ Santa Cruz tour, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- ♦ Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet, Doug Thomson, curator, Dunedin Botanic Garden, 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 15:

- ♦ Hybridizers' Roundtable, 8 – 10 a.m.
- ♦ Executive Director's Open Forum, 10 a.m. – noon.
- ♦ Beach Blanket Babylon and dinner, 3:30 – 10 p.m.

The Details

Thursday

Officers, directors and committee chairs of the ARS will begin their semi-annual meeting at 9 a.m. Thursday, with a break for lunch. The luncheon – as well as the board meeting – is open to all members.

While the board is meeting, other convention goers will have the opportunity to tour San Francisco's famed Golden Gate Park. Stops during the tour include the Conservatory of Flowers, where docents will lead tours of the newly renovated and reopened Victorian jewel. ARS DeAnza Chapter members volunteer here and Nan Ray was instrumental in helping to acquire and place the many vireya rhododendrons. The Japanese Tea Garden, where manicured azaleas, pines and flowering cherries will be at their Spring best, is a short walk away. The world renowned San Francisco Botanical Gardens at Strybing Arboretum showcases more than 7,500 plants from around the world. The Rhododendron section has been renovated with many newly acquired species in the last two years. For those who want to make a side visit, the new deYoung Museum is a short walk from the Japanese Tea Garden. A box lunch is included.

The evening program includes dinner at the Embassy Suites Hotel, followed by an after-dinner talk by Michael McKechnie, executive director of the San Francisco Botanical Gardens at Strybing Arboretum. He will discuss the history of the botanical garden and the city.

Friday

Two tours are on tap for Friday. Both will leave the hotel at 8:30 a.m. and expect to return about 4 p.m. Box lunches will be provided.

A highlight of the East Bay tour will be the visit to the University of California Botanic Garden to see the large collection of Asian and Himalayan rhododendrons, some of which date from 1932 from collections in China. The tour also will visit Oakland's Lake Merritt to see the outstanding vireya and bonsai collections. Stops also are planned at the private gardens of Cal Chapter members Don Selcer and Fred Cummings. Selcer's Oakland garden is a woodland setting featuring vireyas and plants from the

Arborea, Maddenia and Grandia sections, along with many companion plants and maples. The Cummings garden in Orinda is over 40 years old and features a collection of rhododendron species and hybrids, many hybridized by Fred Cummings.

The South Bay tour will feature a visit to Filoli House and Gardens and to several private gardens on the San Francisco Peninsula. The 16 acres of formal gardens at Filoli House should be a riot of color as the Spring bulbs and many other plants will be in flower. The gardens, established in 1917, were vastly enriched in 1937 to include rhododendrons, magnolias and camellias. The tour includes stops in three private gardens in the Portola Valley. These unusual gardens were described in the Fall *Journal ARS* feature. You'll eat your box lunch in one of these gardens.

Friday evening's dinner will be at the hotel and will be followed by presentations by Dr. George Argent of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and Dr. Robert Raabe, retired professor of plant pathology at UC Berkeley. Dr. Argent, an ARS Gold Medal recipient, will talk about the joys and travails of plant hunting around the world. Dr. Raabe will talk about rhododendron diseases.

Saturday

You'll be able to choose from two tours today. Both depart the hotel about 8 a.m.

The North Bay tour includes a stop at the viewpoint at the north end of the Golden Gate Bridge for an unforgettable view of the San Francisco skyline. The tour also will visit a private garden in Ross that has a unique canopy of palms and a middlestory of rhododendrons and bamboo — a complex but intimate garden. The bus will stop at a winery where you can eat your box lunch. There will time to taste wines for an optional fee. The afternoon will be spent at Sonoma Horticultural Nursery. In addition to the vast array of rhododendrons and azaleas, there are companion plants and trees.

The second tour heads south to Santa Cruz and Monterey Bay. En route, the bus will stop at Bay Laurel Nursery, begun by Pete and Laurie Moerdyke in 1977. Rhododendrons (including big leaf varieties), azaleas, magnolias, kalmias and other companion plants are featured. You'll have time at the nursery to eat your box lunch, then tour a mystery garden before heading

to the University of California at Santa Cruz and a tour of the arboretum. Located on an ancient marine terrace overlooking Monterey Bay, the arboretum has the largest collection of southern hemisphere plants in the northern hemisphere. Dan Harder, arboretum director, and his staff will personally conduct the tour.

The ARS Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet is scheduled for Saturday evening. Doug Thomson, curator of the Dunedin Botanic Garden in New Zealand, will be the speaker for the evening. He will discuss companion and woodland plants for the rhododendron garden.

Sunday

The Hybridizers' Round Table on Sunday morning will be moderated by Frank Fujioka and Don Wallace. It will give ARS members an opportunity to explore what hybridizers are doing today in terms of color, fragrance and hardiness.

ARS Executive Director Laura Grant's Open Forum meeting will feature a discussion of Society issues and Webmaster Bob Weissman will talk about ways to develop newsletter and Website skills for the chapters and members.

Extras

The plant sale, photo show and truss show will be open Friday, Saturday and Sunday before and after the evening events. Hotel guests will enjoy breakfast each morning between 6 and 9:30 a.m., as well as the nightly Manager's Reception from 5 to 7 p.m. Registered members not staying at the hotel may purchase vouchers for both breakfast and the reception.

For those staying on in the Bay Area, the conference has organized a visit to Beach Blanket Babylon, a zany musical spoof which has been showing to sold-out audiences for 30 years. Expect song and dance numbers that leave you laughing, BIG hats, funny costumes and parodies of people in the news. The limos leave at 3:30 p.m. followed by dinner and a night on the town in San Francisco's North Beach.

Post-Conference Tour

This three-day tour of Northern California will include visits to Quarryhill Botanical Garden in Sonoma County, which has sent plant hunting expeditions to China, India, Nepal, Japan and other

Continued on the back of the Registration Form

American Rhododendron Society

2007 Annual Convention

Registration Form

**Rhododendrons
at the
Golden Gate**



April 12 – 15, 2007

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ E-mail: _____

City: _____ State/Prov: _____ ZIP/Postal Code _____

Country: _____ Chapter: _____ May we include your name on the registration list? Yes No

Please print your name(s) below as you want them to appear on your badge, along with your position if you are an ARS officer, board member, district director or Chapter president. Place a check in the columns at left for those events you wish to attend. All tours will last all day, so select only one tour for each day. **You may register on the Internet at www.ars2007conf.org.**

Name:		ARS/Chapter Position:				
Name:		ARS/Chapter Position:				
		Date	Description	Number	Price	Total
			Early Registration		\$45.00	
			Late Registration (After March 1, 2007)		\$60.00	
		Thu, April 12	Board of Directors Luncheon		\$35.00	
		Thu, April 12	Tour A: Golden Gate Park (Japanese Tea Garden, Conservatory of Flowers, San Francisco Botanical Garden)		\$55.00	
		Thu, April 12	Buffet Dinner (Talk by Michael McKechnie, San Francisco Botanical Garden executive director)		\$48.00	
		Fri, April 13	Tour B: UC Berkeley Botanical Garden, Lake Merritt, East Bay private gardens		\$58.00	
		Fri, April 13	Tour C: Filoli House & Garden, San Francisco Peninsula private gardens		\$55.00	
<input type="checkbox"/> Pork <input type="checkbox"/> Salmon <input type="checkbox"/> Veg	<input type="checkbox"/> Pork <input type="checkbox"/> Salmon <input type="checkbox"/> Veg	Fri, April 13	Dinner (Talks by Dr. George Argent, Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, Scotland; Dr. Robert Raabe, UC Berkeley)		\$48.00	
		Sat, April 14	Tour D: Sonoma Horticultural Nursery, a winery, Ross private gardens		\$60.00	
		Sat, April 14	Tour E: UC Santa Cruz Botanical Garden, Bay Laurel Nursery, Santa Cruz private garden		\$50.00	
<input type="checkbox"/> Chicken <input type="checkbox"/> Swdfish <input type="checkbox"/> Veg	<input type="checkbox"/> Chicken <input type="checkbox"/> Swdfish <input type="checkbox"/> Veg	Sat, April 14	Awards Banquet & Annual Meeting (Doug Thomson, curator, Dunedin Botanical Garden)		\$50.00	
		Sun, April 15	A Night Out on the Town: Beach Blanket Babylon Theater and Dinner in North Beach		\$125.00	
		Apr 16 - 18	Post-Conference Tour (Quarryhill & Mendocino Botanical Gardens, private gardens in Fort Bragg, winery tours)	<input type="checkbox"/> Double <input type="checkbox"/> Single	\$295.00 \$345.00	
					Total	

Payments may be made by check (preferred) or credit card. Please make checks payable to ARS Convention 2007. All checks must be in \$US. Please send photo show information.

Master Card Number: _____ 3-digit Security Code: _____ Exp: _____

Visa: _____
Cardholder Name: _____

Tours require a minimum of 35 registrants.
No refunds for requests postmarked after March 1, 2007.

Mail Registration to:
Bob Weissman, Registrar
3436 Shady Spring Lane
Mountain View, CA 94040
Telephone: (650) 964-6280
E-mail: weissman@arsoffice.org



Convention Hotel

Embassy Suites,

250 Gateway Boulevard,

South San Francisco, CA 94080

Telephone: 650-589-3400; Fax: 650-876-0305

Web: www.embassysuites.com

The newly-renovated Embassy Suites San Francisco- South San Francisco is located a mile and a half from the San Francisco International Airport and less than 9 miles south of Downtown San Francisco.

Guests stay in newly refurbished spacious two-room suites, receiving complimentary cooked-to-order breakfast and a nightly manager's reception. Hotel provides free shuttle service to and from the San Francisco Airport and free parking for guests who drive or rent a car.

From San Francisco International Airport

Take Highway 101 North to Grand Ave Exit, South San Francisco. Follow the road around (right hand side), Grand Ave Exit. Make a right on Grand Ave. Make a left at the first traffic light (Grand Avenue). The hotel is on the corner.

To obtain courtesy shuttle

Receive your baggage on lower floor/arrival level. Proceed to upper floor/ departure level. Pick up any white hotel courtesy phone and our operator will direct you where to stand as well as estimated time of pickup.

ARS Conference rate is \$139 plus local taxes and fees per room per night (single and double occupancy).

For reservations (cutoff date is March 21, 2007):

Telephone the hotel at 1-800-362-2779. Be sure to ask for the ARS Conference Rate.

On the Web:

1. Log onto www.sanfranciscoairportsouthsanfran.embassysuites.com
2. Put in check-in and check-out date under CHECK AVAILABILITY, Click "Go"
3. Type group code: ARS into the box right next to "Group/Convention Code" under Special Accounts (optional), then click "Continue" button.
4. Check the button under "ARS" and click "Continue".
5. Continue to made reservation as regular reservation process.

Asian areas. The bus will make its way through the Anderson Valley wine country to Fort Bragg for a visit to the Mendocino Botanical Garden with its extensive collection of rhododendrons, the picturesque town of Mendocino, and the private gardens of Noyo Chapter members. The tour includes two overnights in Fort Bragg. On Wednesday, the bus will cross Highway 20 and visit wineries in Sonoma County's Dry Creek area, arriving back at the Embassy Suites Wednesday evening. Cost of this tour is \$295 per person double occupancy, with an additional \$50 for singles.

The Speakers

Michael McKechnie is executive director of the San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum. He has 35 years experience managing non-profit organizations. He holds a bachelor's degree from DePauw University, a master's of regional planning from Cornell University and an MBA from Xavier University. He has held his current post since 2000.

Dr. George Argent is a tropical botanist at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, and is recognized as the world's leading authority on vireya rhododendrons. He is the author of the newly published "Rhododendrons of Subgenus Vireya."

Dr. Robert Raabe has been retired for 12 years from his post as professor of plant pathology at the University of California, Berkeley. His 37 years of teaching have included stints at Merritt College, UC Davis and the University of Hawaii. He served two years in the Navy, then did his undergraduate and graduate work at the University of Wisconsin. He gives 40 to 50 speeches a year, including master gardener programs, and writes a regular column for *Pacific Horticulture*. He still goes to the office every day, and spends his spare time photographing plants (healthy as well as sick), breeding glads, gardening and trying to keep up with his 7-year-old granddaughter.

Doug Thomson is originally from Scotland, where he trained and worked for a year at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. He has worked at Dunedin Botanic Garden in New Zealand for more than 20 years. In that time he has overseen an extensive reorganization of the Rhododendron collection into subsectional and theme groups. For the past 10 years, he has worked systematically around the 10-acre Rhododendron Dell renovating and developing the border areas to improve the displays. His talk will focus on the diversity of form and texture that rhododendrons offer us throughout the year.