

## **Annual General Meeting for Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society**

Sept 2023-Aug 2024

7:30 pm, November 5, 2024, Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History and Zoom

### Agenda

1. Minutes of November 7, 2023 AGM
2. President's Report, Jim Sharpe
3. Financial Report, Prepared by Judy Estey and presented by Jim Sharpe
4. Election of Board for 2024-2025

### **President's Report to the Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society (ARHS) AGM**

November 5, 2024

Jim Sharpe, President

This past program year (Sept 1, 2023 to August 31, 2024) saw many successful events for our society. We had eight presentations, both in person and by Zoom, from Sept to April. We had successful seed exchange throughout the winter and plant sales in May. On June 10, 2024 we had a well attended visit to the Freeman Patterson's rhododendrons in peak bloom at Shampers Bluff, Kingston Peninsula, NB (over fifty for the garden tour) and two private gardens in the Saint John area, as well as gardens in Saint Andrews, Corn Hill and Sackville, New Brunswick.

The Dick Steele lecture was given by Sam Hoadley from Mount Cuba Center, a Dupont family endowed public garden in northern Delaware, on their native perennial trials program. Sam spent an extra few days in Nova Scotia visiting the staff and volunteers at Irving Centre, Acadia University and ARHS members' gardens in Morris Island and Annapolis Royal. Other fall programs included a September presentation by illustrator Diane Lucas on "Gardening for Butterflies", a November presentation by former ARHS program director Bob Howard on "New Plants and Fresh Ideas" and our popular December members' slide show which included a detailed presentation by Sharon Bryson on the impact of the February polar vortex on her Rhododendrons and Azaleas. This was followed by our December seasonal reception.

In the winter we had presentations on "Interesting Plants" by Roslyn Duffus who I had worked with hosting the North American Rock Garden Conference in June 2023, "Native Azaleas" by Tara Spears from Jenkins Arboretum in PA, "Namaqualand Superbloom" by landscape photographer Freeman Patterson, and a panel discussion on "Naturalization Strategies for Gardeners" with Anita Jackson and Nina Newington, local horticulturalists and ARHS members.

The ARHS board met five times during the year and made significant progress on membership, plant sales, communications and finances. For our membership, Lynn Brooks accepted over 160 members with almost 30 joining ARS as well. We remain one of the largest horticultural societies in Nova Scotia. For the plant sale we combined the pick-up for the pre-ordered plants with the member-to-member plant which we opened to the public. This Saturday morning event was held at a new location, the Atrium of

the McCain Building at Mount Saint Vincent University. Thank you to Jane Rostek and all the sellers and volunteers for such a successful plant sale. For Communications we still need a Newsletter Coordinator. Rebecca Lancaster continued to update the website and send out e-mail notices of the meetings and events. Our new ARHS Treasurer, Judy Estey, is now helping us move towards more web-based financial transactions.

We also made progress on the planning for the American Rhododendron Society (ARS) 2025 Convention in Wolfville Nova Scotia from June 5-8, 2025. The meeting will be based at the Devour Studio and will use the Wolfville Market for the plant sale and Acadia Irving Centre for a reception. It will include tours of valley gardens, international speakers and social events. Please consider volunteering or attending the convention.

Thanks to all for belonging to such an interesting association of plant enthusiasts. Through both the ARS and the Nova Scotia Association of Garden Clubs (NSAGC) I hear of many gardening clubs that are struggling for membership, leadership and activities. I think the ARHS presents a model for the promotion of rhododendrons and horticulture in Atlantic Canada.

#### **Nominations for ARHS Board for 2024-25**

Jim Sharpe

Rebecca Lancaster

Lynn Brooks

Judy Estey

Nancy Lewis

Carol Morrison

One more board member required by By-laws