

MID-ATLANTIC RHODODENDRON NEWS AND NOTES

A Publication of the Middle Atlantic Chapter of the American
Rhododendron Society

Vol. XXXXII No.1

February 2015

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING MEETINGS

April 24-26, 2015

Hilton Garden Inn Southport: Chapel Hill-
Raleigh-Greensboro, N.C.

Proposed: Fall, 2015

Roslyn Center, Richmond, VA

April 20-24, 2016

ARS ASA Convention, Williamsburg, Virginia

Rhododendron Web Site Addresses:

American Rhododendron Society

<http://www.rhododendron.org/>

ARS Store Order from Amazon thru this site

<http://arsstore.org/>

MAC Website (UPDATED REGULARLY)

<http://www.macars.org/>

UVA Special Collections

<http://www.lib.virginia.edu/small/>

Old Quarterly Bulletins & JARS

<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JARS/>

Rhododendron Blog

www.rhododendron.org/blog/

Friends of the National Arboretum

<http://savetheazaleas.org/>

FONA's Save the Azaleas and Boxwood site

SPRING MEETING 2015

Reserve the dates April 24-26 for the MAC Spring Meeting which is being planned for the Chapel Hill-Raleigh-Greensboro area of North Carolina. Several public and private garden visits are being planned as well as two keynote speakers on rhododendrons and azaleas.

AMAZONSMILE PROGRAM

AmazonSmile is a program where Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to charitable organizations selected by the members of the ARS. The MAC Board encourages its members who shop at Amazon on-line to take advantage of this program by ordering products at the ARS store: <http://arsstore.org>. Amazon will automatically donate 0.5% of these purchases directly to the ARS. Thank you for your support! (See second listing in Web Site addresses in above list.)

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Samuel Edmund Coffey,

Bedford, VA 2332

John Larsen, Phoenix, MD

21131

DEATHS

Dr. Charles W. McComb, a long-time MAC member passed away on January 1, 2015. Charles organized and was a founding member of the Colonial Virginia Chapter of the Holly Society of America. In recent years declining health kept him from attending MAC and other meetings.



Dr. Charles McComb. Photo by W. Przypek.

Charles received his PhD from the University of Maryland. He worked for the Maryland Dept. of Agriculture as an Entomologist. He and his wife Peggy lived in College Park, MD where they raised their three children. He was in charge of the Gypsy Moth Program for the State of Maryland and was also very active in the Mosquito Control Program there.

Among Charles' interests were gardening and birding, especially raptor watching. Before a professional raptor station was set up at Kiptopeak State Park on the Eastern Shore, Charles volunteered there and recorded sightings of hawks and eagles.

Charles and Peggy would spend a couple of days there on a regular basis.

Since retiring he has lived in Bena, VA and served for many years as a member of the Gloucester County Mosquito Control Commission. Charles wrote *A Field Guide to Insect Pests of Holly*.

The date of the memorial service for Charles is March 14, 2015 at Hogg Funeral Home in Gloucester Point, VA.

Dr. Martha Derthick, passed away on January 12, 2015. She was a long-time MAC member and had retired from the University of Virginia where she had been in the government and foreign affairs faculty. She graduated from Hiram College and had a Master's Degree and Ph.D. from Radcliffe. She had published numerous books and articles.



Martha Derthick

Previously she had been with the Brookings Institution's governmental Studies Program for 12 years.

She purchased the property of old-time MAC member Warren Cloud who had a large collection of Dexters, Gables, Glenn Dales and other plants. Martha did a lot of research on the collection and built a contemporary architect-designed house on the property. The top floor had a glass wall that looked out over the garden! At one time she opened her house and garden for a MAC tour

Martha was fond of her cats. She was very interested in the history of *Rhododendron* hybridizers and traveled to many nurseries in the U.S. and even in Germany seeking plants and information. On June 21, 2002, Martha made the hike out Roan with our MAC Species Study Group and our German friend Dr. Hartwig Schepker from the Rhododendron Park in Bremen, Germany, and his film crew. (See photo in online edition.) She wrote an article for our newsletter some years ago about the Leach rhododendrons. She had an article in *The Azalean* for Summer 2014 which just came out about Beatrix Farrand and her gardens.

Anne Massie, wife of MAC member Dr. William Massie of Lynchburg, Virginia, died on February 8, 2015. She had been an English teacher early in her career. She was active in the art world

and had received several honors and national recognition for her water color paintings.

SOME MEMORIES OF THE GLENN DALE AZALEAS IN CHARLOTTESVILLE AND VIRGINIA by Sandra McDonald and Kendon Stubbs

Our Middle Atlantic Chapter has had a cluster of members in the Charlottesville area for many years. The recent passing of retired UVA professor Dr. Martha Derthick brought forth some old connections between the Charlottesville area and the



Kendon Stubbs

Glenn Dale azaleas of Ben Y. Morrison, who was a horticulturist and plant breeder, as well as a Chief of the Plant Introduction Section and Director of the National Arboretum, United States Department of Agriculture.

Martha Derthick purchased the property of long ago deceased MAC member Warren Cloud, who had a great garden of rhododendrons and azaleas on Meadowbrook Heights Road in the Charlottesville area. Mr. Cloud began developing his garden before World War II, when the Meadowbrook Heights area was still in "the country." (Today, it's part of the city of Charlottesville, with a bypass on one side and a shopping area on another.) Mr. Cloud was what would today be called an "early adopter" of Glenn Dale azaleas (as later he was an early adopter of Robin Hills). He started growing Glenn Dales when they were still under development, and he had an area of his garden where he rooted cuttings. He was a generous proselytizer for azaleas and rhododendrons. To neighbors he gave away unknown numbers of azaleas that he had propagated. If you dropped in for a visit with him, you would almost be certain to leave with an azalea or two for your own garden. He was like Johnny Appleseed, moving through the Meadowbrook Heights neighborhood dropping azaleas wherever he went.

One of Warren Cloud's neighbors (about eight minutes walking distance away) was Dr. Robert Kellogg, also a MAC member, who passed away on January 3, 2004. Dr. Kellogg was a former English professor and Dean of the University of Virginia's College of Arts and Sciences. He had been a professor at UVA for 42 years. He began teaching

there in 1957 and retired in 1999. He became friends with Warren Cloud soon after his arrival in Charlottesville. In one of those “small world” moments, the two of them must have discovered that they shared a love of the then new Glenn Dale azaleas. How did Dr. Kellogg come by his attachment to azaleas?

His obituary mentioned that he took after his soil scientist father in his devotion to gardening. It turns out that Robert Kellogg’s father was Dr. Charles E. Kellogg, Head Soil Scientist and third Chief of USDA’s Bureau of Chemistry and Soils. A Google search for Charles turned up this interesting record:

[https://archive.org/stream/directoryofactiv645unit/directoryofactiv645unit_djvu.txt]

Soil Survey

Charles E. Kellogg, head soil scientist, chief. Room 326, North Building, Plant Industry Station. Telephone, TO- 6400, extension 261

The Division of Soil Survey carries on a Nation-wide program of classifying and mapping the soils of the United States. In this program, known as the Soil Survey, the soils of the entire country will eventually be mapped in such detail that anyone who is interested in them - farmer, land buyer, agronomist, horticulturist, appraiser, tax assessor, or highway engineer - can locate the kinds found on each farm, know their characteristics, and compare them directly with the soils on any other farm. Such a survey tells the farmer whether his soils are like those on other farms in his county, State, or region or on the experimental plots or fields of his State experiment station where new crops, tillage methods, fertilizer practices, or drainage or irrigation practices are being tried or have proved successful. It enables him, therefore, to tell with more certainty whether the ' introduction of a new crop, variety, or farm practice is likely to succeed on his farm...

Dr. Charles E. Kellogg passed away on March 9, 1980. For more information about Dr. Charles Kellogg see:

<http://www.arscse.org/qannounA.htm>

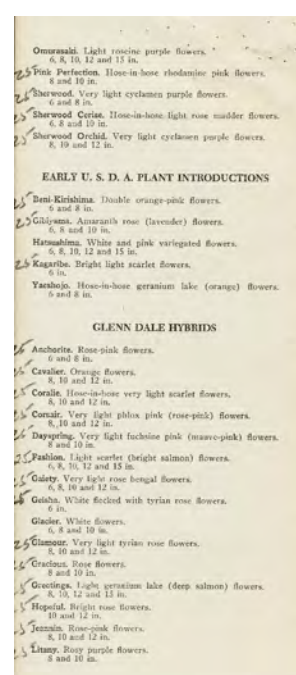
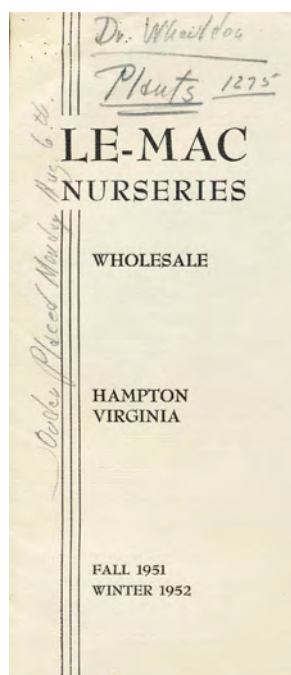
In another “small world” discovery, Bill Miller, who has done much research on Ben Morrison, his associates, and azaleas at the USDA, said that the two men were both heads of departments and would, of course have known each other. They both had offices in the same North Building, according to Bill, but were on different floors. From the archives on Ben Morrison and the Glenn Dale project, Bill has found no direct tie to Charles Kellogg. But it seems reasonable to suppose that Charles Kellogg’s son Robert must have been delighted to move to Charlottesville and find that his neighbor Warren Cloud had been actively growing Glenn Dales.

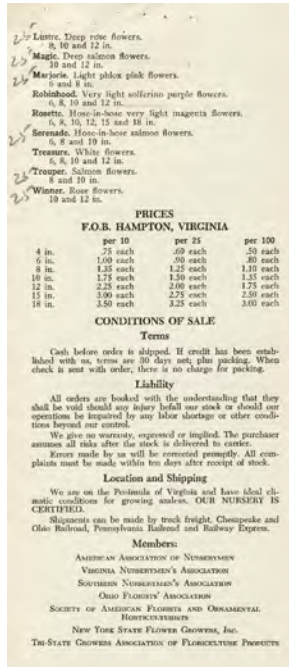
B. Y. Morrison’s Agriculture Monograph No. 20 USDA *The Glenn Dale Azaleas* was issued October 1953 with names, parentage, Plant Introduction Numbers and descriptions of the Glenn Dales. On

the page 1 footnote Morrison states, “Nearly every person who has worked at the station, in one way or another, has assisted in the life of the plants.”

In the 1960s and 1970s, and later, the English Department at the University of Virginia was a hotbed of azalea and rhododendron growers. Their activities were centered along the elegant residential street of Rugby Road. Rugby Road starts at Jefferson’s Rotunda at the University and proceeds for a few miles to the Charlottesville bypass. Cross the bypass, and you are in the Meadowbrook Heights area. Proceeding from the Rotunda, one of the side streets that you came to included the home of Cecil and Violette Lang. Cecil Lang was an English Professor and a fervent collector of azaleas and rhododendron, who thought nothing of buying truckloads of plants from Van Veen and other dealers for his urban garden. Another mile or two on another side street was the beautiful rhododendron and azalea garden of Don and Polly Hirsch. Don Hirsch was also an English professor, and the author of the famous book *Cultural Literacy*. A little farther along on Rugby Road was (and is) the splendid city garden of the Sedgwicks, Charlene of the English Department and Alex of History. And then over the bypass to Meadowbrook Heights for the Glenn Dales of Robert and Joan Kellogg and the crowning glory of Warren Cloud’s garden.

There are also some fairly early links to the Glenn Dale azaleas in Hampton and Richmond.





The Le-Mac Nurseries wholesale price list for Fall 1951-Winter 1952 lists five varieties under Early U.S.D.A. Plant Introductions, and 24 varieties under Glenn Dale Hybrids. From the sizes of the plants offered they would have been about two to three years old at the time they were listed in the price list. In the file is a September 1951 order from MAC Charter Member Dr. Thomas Wheeldon for groups of 25 each of 20 of the Glenn Dales in addition to other varieties. (The organizational meeting for MAC was March 24, 1952.)

IN THE CROZET GARDEN by Lloyd Willis

It is January 22, 2015, as I sit down to write this. Most days recently have not recorded much above 40°. I have been wanting to dig in the dirt for weeks but most days the frozen ground has prevented that activity.



Lloyd Willis

However, in the past week the temperature one day recorded 45°. I went outside and pushed the shovel downwards and instant joy – the shovel went in the soil 6 inches - (workable soil). This let me dig up the Japanese maples that were 8 to 10 feet in height. They were too tall for their current plant bed. These were given new homes. The transplanting took about two hours.

Having removed the three Japanese maples gave me room for adding nine rhodos that are about 12 to 18 inches tall. The nine rhodos were all plants that have been obtained at the MAC plant sales and were selected from a nursery bed of about 20 rhodos. The new plant bed in my mind looks great and also in my mind totally free of all costs (any plant on the

property in pots for over a year becomes cost free in my mind.)

So where is the humor in this article? Yesterday was my weekly work session with my helper and good friend, Mr. Huff. We usually start at 4:30 PM and work in the yard until very close to 6 PM, which is also very close to total darkness. If the ground is frozen we start visiting at 4:30 PM and stops visiting at very close to 6 PM. If we are visiting inside we are joined by Mrs. Willis who is very kind to smile and laugh at the stories of Mr. Willis and Mr. Huff.

So last night we(Mr. Huff and I) were mulching a pathway and we decided close to 6PM to do two more garden carts of mulch -- we each loaded up one cart of mulch. We stand about 10 feet apart and throw mulch towards each other on the pathway. One cannot see the path but we know or think we know where it is. So this morning I go to see where the newly mulched pathways is. Try to see in your mind small waves of mulch with one area completely missing mulch. (I did not ask Mrs. Willis to inspect our newly mulch pathway).

MAC ARS SPECIES STUDY GROUP 2014 ACTIVITIES PART I by George K. McLellan

As usual our species study group 2014 activities were influenced by the weather and other events. The first trip in April, usually a workday on Hooper Bald, turned into a planting day on Oak Knob of Huckleberry Ridge because of the Congressional shut down of the government in the fall of 2013. Since we could not plant in the fall our planting was done in early spring. Next because of unusual late spring and early summer weather, the usual bloom dates were altered.

Our work trip on April 3rd and 4th took us first to Mountain City in east Tennessee to pick up 200 plus Rhododendron calendulaceum in pots (started from seed of Hooper Bald selections) which J and Lindy Jackson of Appalachian Native Plants grew for us. We then drove for 3 ½ hours to Huckleberry Ridge just off the Cherohala Skyway in North Carolina. The Forest Service Ranger from the Nantahala National Forest had unlocked the Forest Services gate at the road up to Oak Knob where we were to plant the azaleas. After driving the truck up to the knob and unloading the crates of azaleas, we were hit by a thunderstorm with 50 plus miles per hour winds and driving rain. Needless to say, we quickly exited the mountain and retreated to our hotel



MAC Species Study Group hike on Roan with German camera crew, June 21, 2002. Left to right: Doug Burke, Ken McDonald, Jim Barant, Hartwig Schepker, Anita Burke, George McLellan, Paul James, Martha Derthick, Sandra McDonald.



R. calendulaceum in the summer after early spring planting. Photo by G. McLellan.



R. calendulaceum on Roan. Photo by G. McLellan.



Karel Bernady at Oak Knob on Huckleberry Ridge looking at the planting area. Photo by G. McLellan..



Karel Bernady on Round Bald. Photo by G. McLellan.

rooms in Robbinsville. Jim Brant and I had hoped to do some work on the third, but the weather forced us to do all the work on April 4. Arriving at the gate on the fourth we found that we had to walk



Azalea in 4 inch pot and fiber mulch ring. Photo G. McLellan.



Jim cleaning up for planting. Photo G. McLellan.

the tools up to the knob because of water running down the road and fallen trees. I felt like a salmon swimming upstream but when we arrived on the bald we found all was fine and sunny, if a bit cold and windy, but our work would keep us warm. We began to plant and were able to finish in about 6 3/4 hours, a hard days work. We had a volunteer from Tennessee come by later in the day to help us which was very much appreciated. We developed a good procedure for planting the seedlings in the wild which I will detail at the end of the article.

The trip in June to observe the plants in bloom occurred from June 18 to June 23, usually peak bloom time, but weather-wise this was a very unusual year. About 10 days before, we had made calls to friends in the area and learned that all was in tight bud especially the *Rhododendron catawbiense* on Roan. Then the South suddenly experienced a period of very hot, dry, sunny days that advanced



George with string trimmer clearing off the vegetation before digging hole.

the bloom very quickly. On June 18, I was on Mount Jefferson at 4683 feet and all the *R. catawbiense* was way past bloom. On the 19th after joining Don Hyatt and Carl Bernady we started to explore Roan Mountain and found that *R. catawbiense* was past but *R. calendulaceum* was still in bloom. We did find a patch of azaleas that were new to us on the south to southeast slope of Round Ball which contained shrubs with nice large flowers in a good color range from yellow to golds and oranges. I was particularly taken by one plant with a nice pink-tinted orange flower that had a deep rose red throat. It seems that even when we visit old familiar sites we can usually find something new and stunning.



R. calendulaceum with rose throat. Photo by G. McLellan

(To be continued in the May issue. See our MACARS Web Site online edition for bonus photos in color.)



Remember all photos can be seen in color and ENLARGED at MACARS.ORG. Click on Newsletter on left panel.

GARDENS OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS - New members are encouraged to visit members' gardens in their area. The officers and board members have agreed to show new members through their gardens if the member will call ahead and arrange a convenient time. Telephone numbers and towns are listed below.

Memberships and renewals should be sent to our Membership Chairman Jeanne Hammer at 815 Porter St. Apt 301, Richmond, VA 23224.

Annual membership dues are \$40 per year.

Miscellaneous inquiries may be sent to the editor (address below) for forwarding to proper individual.

Sandra McDonald, Ph.D., Editor
Mid-Atlantic Rhododendron News and Notes
4302 Chesapeake Ave
Hampton, VA 23669