



NOVEMBER, 2014

EDITOR'S NOTES

The tools available and the skill set required to put together an on-line edition of The Indumentum over the past decade has rapidly evolved; as has the cost of photocopying and mailing out hard copies. The advantages afforded by an online edition are evidenced by these photos of macropyllum taken by Garth Wedemire on Mount Elphinstone outside of Gibsons. and in Manning Park. They are far superior to any reproductions of photographs that could have been provided in a photocopied edition of the Indumentum.



The logical and economically necessary consequence is that The Indumentum is only available online from www.rhodovan.org although we are exploring also sending it out to our VRS Members.

In future issues we intend to “lighten” the layout with some double column pages, add a calendar of up-coming events, examine such burning and controversial issues as to whether there was more “fall blooming” this year and if so why, and perhaps to add quick references to on-line resources on Rhodies that are available to you in the comfort of your own home.

As a teaser, click on this site for a 36 minute movie entitled “Discovery of Rhododendron Forest” made by Lovita J.R. Morang in Arunachal Pradesh: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tRTp2naGlo0&list=WL&index=1> (Just click anywhere after the words Arunachal Pradesh and then click “Go to Page”).

NOVEMBER’S BOUQUET

1. **Acer palmatum ‘Omato** Douglas observed that 2014 was not a good year for displaying the strong points of Japanese Maples, but that this cultivar is one of the best for the Lower Mainland climate. It is a large green leaved maple similar to ‘Osakazuki’, growing to 8 metres tall and almost as wide as tall. Fall colors are brilliant tones of rich red.



2. **Daphniphyllum macropodum** (I have also seen “Daphniphyllum himalaense subsp. macropodum”) Dense, rounded shrub or small tree with narrowly oval to oblong leathery, dark-green leaves, glaucous beneath; petioles pink; showy in spring with petal less flowers in axillary racemes of deep purple-pink males flowers or green female flowers; dioecious (separate male and female plants and Douglas recommends the male); and in the fall produces inedible fruit that looks similar to grapes. See illustrative photos on next page.



3. **Camellia sasanqua** upright to spreading small tree (to 6 metres). The UBCBG specimen was from wild collected seed. Douglas compared it to the common camellia or Camellia japonica which species flowers in winter and early spring. At UBC in early spring Camellia sasanqua bears single cup-shaped, fragrant flowers which regularly produces fruit that splits open into three portions.



4. **Callicarpa japonica**, bushy, deciduous shrub to 2 metres, tapered light to mid-green leaves, pink or white flowers in late summer followed by winter purple fruit.



5. **Viburnum x bodnantense** Upright, deciduous shrub with ovate to oblong, dark green leaves to 10 cm long, bronze when young. Heavily scented, tubular, rich rose-red to white pink flowers to 1.5 cm across borne in dense terminal and axillary clusters to 8 cm across on bare wood in late winter or early spring. Douglas showed the “Deben” cultivar which bears white faintly pink-flushed flowers in winter. Nurseries here often offer ‘Dawn’ which has dark pink flowers, aging to white but still strongly flushed pink.



6. **Osmanthus x fortunei** Upright shrub (to 2 metres) with holly-like, leathery, glossy, dark-green leaves. The cross has produced fragrant, tubular white flowers in axillary clusters from late summer to autumn.



7. **Sorbus macrantha** Douglas observed that birds have eaten all the orange berries produced by Sorbus specimens at the UBCBG, but the pink, white, and yellow berries remain on their trees uneaten. The *S. macrantha* specimen is right opposite the tunnel at UBCBG.



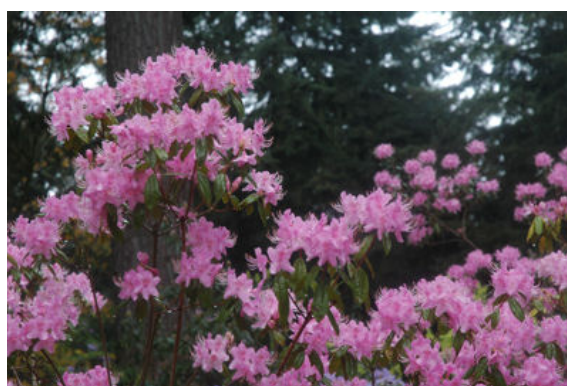
8. **R. thomsonii** Douglas Justice commented that there can be blossoms on this species almost any month of the year, even now when it is -below 2 degrees C at night, there are frozen blossoms in parts of the Asian Garden which were more exposed.



9. **R. cinnabarinum subsp. xanthocodon**
Concatenans Group (Peter and Ken Cox suggest that this is likely to be restated as “**var. concatenans**”) this species has been chosen by several of our members as a “Good Doer”. Douglas observed that it has “precocious” fall blooming if the weather is sufficiently chilly in the fall. It has waxy, bell-shaped yellow flowers and typically powder blue foliage.



10. **R. davidsonianum** (contained in Subsection Triflora, Yunnanense Alliance). Cox opines that it is “Very free-flowering from a young age, in its best forms R. davidsonianum rivals R. yunnanense as the showiest species in subsection Triflora. Douglas says it is flowering its head off right now at UBCBG with more than 30 trusses on a single specimen.



70th Annual American Rhododendron Society International Convention May 6th through May 10th, 2015 Hosted by District #1

Address: _____ City: _____ State/Province: _____ Zip/Postal Code: _____ Chapter: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Place a ✓ or "choice" letter(s) in the events selected for each registrant. Calculate the amount for each event and put the sum in the "Amount" column. Indicate the "Total Amount" at the bottom.

Print name for Registrant #1: _____

Print name for Registrant #2: _____

Reg. #2 Reg. #1 Price /
enter (✓) enter (✓) Event
Amount

Registration on or before April 1, 2015 \$50

Late Registration Fee after April 1, 2015 \$65

Thursday May 7, 2015

Continental Breakfast (C) \$10 or Full Breakfast (F) \$20.

\$10 / \$20

Bus Tours: 11:00 am – 4:00 pm. Indicate Tour (T1, T2, T3 or T4) and Lunch choice Meat (M), Chicken (C) or Vegetable (V)

\$50

Dinner - 'Retro' Dinner: Design your own Burger: Enter Beef (B), Chicken (C) or Veggie (V), (Speaker Only \$15)

\$26

Friday May 8, 2015

Continental Breakfast (C) \$10 or Full Breakfast (F) \$20.

\$10 / \$20

Bus Tours 8:15 am – 4:00 pm, Indicate Tour (F1, F2, or F3) and lunch choice Meat (M), Chicken (C) or Vegetable (V)

\$70

Bus Tours 8:00 am – 1:00 pm: Indicate (F4 or F5) \$50

Bus Tour 8:00 am – 1:00 pm: Tour F6 – Butchart Gardens \$100

Dinner - West Coast Buffet Dinner includes: Island Chicken, BC Salmon and Local Veggie Dishes. (Speaker Only \$15)

\$45

Saturday May 9, 2015

Continental Breakfast (C) \$10 or Full Breakfast (F) \$20.

\$10 / \$20

Bus Tours 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. Indicate Tour (S1, S2, S3 or S4) and lunch choice Meat (M), Chicken (C) or Vegetable (V)

\$50

Traditional Buffet Dinner includes: Roast Beef, Chicken Cordon Bleu and Local Veggie Dishes. (Speaker Only \$15)

\$50

Sunday May 10, 2015

Post Convention Bus Tours: - choose one

Tour PC1 Qualicum Beach Area Tour – 8 hours \$100

Tour PC2 Campbell River and Tofino – 4 days \$750

Total Amount (Canadian funds)

Special Dietary Considerations: Reg #1: _____ Reg #2 _____

Send completed form with cheque payable in Canadian funds to **The Victoria Rhododendron Society**, Box 5562, Postal Station B, Victoria, BC, Canada. V8R 6S4 **or** register on-line, **www.2015rhodo.ca** with a credit card or PayPal.

GARDEN TOURS FOR 2015 ARS CONVENTION

EXPLANATION OF REGISTRATION FORM

1. Print in address, chapter, phone & email. Print Name of first registrant, then second registrant. ***
Place a check or where there is a choice, enter the letter.

2. Breakfast: Continental or Full Breakfast

3. Bus Tours: only pick **ONE** tour; indicate tour number and lunch choice.

THURSDAY TOURS

Tour **T1**: 11am – 4pm – Goard, J&J Gordon, Morrison, Finnerty Gardens Tour **T2**: 11am – 4pm – B&B Gordon, HCP, Webb

Tour **T3**: 11am – 4pm – Abkhazi, Government House, Playfair Park Tour **T4**: 11am – 4pm – Harris, Hawkins, McKay, Weesjes

4. Retro Dinner: indicate choice of burger.

1. Breakfast: Continental or Full Breakfast

2. Bus Tours: only pick **ONE** tour; indicate tour number and lunch choice.

FRIDAY TOURS

Tour **F1**: 8:15am – 4pm – Campbell, Lewis, Morris, Murray

Tour **F2**: 8:15am – 4pm – Lewis, Murray, Squires, Stitts

Tour **F3**: 8:15am – 4pm – Blackmore, Massa, McMillan, Royal Roads Tour **F4**: 9am – 1pm – Abkhazi, Government House

Tour **F5**: 9am – 1pm – Brice, HCP, Webb

Tour **F6**: 9am – 1 pm – Butchart's Gardens with gourmet lunch.

3. West Coast Dinner buffet style

*** 1. Breakfast: Continental or Full Breakfast

2. Bus Tours: only pick **ONE** tour; indicate tour number and lunch choice. **SATURDAY TOURS**

Tour **S1**: 10am – 4pm – Brice, Morrison, Playfair Park, Finnerty Gardens

Tour **S2**: 10am – 4pm – Dominion Brook Park, Harris, Hawkins, McKay, Weesjes Tour **S3**: 10am – 4pm – Dominion Brook Park, B&B Gordon, HCP, Varcoe, Webb Tour **S4**: 10am – 4pm – Alkire, Dancer, Marquardt, Finnerty Gardens

3. Traditional Dinner: buffet style

SUNDAY TOURS: full itineraries on website

Post Convention Bus Tours: choose only **ONE**.

Tour **PC1**: Qualicum Beach Area Tour – 8 hours – 8am – 4pm Tour **PC2**: Campbell River & Tofino Tour – 4 days – 8am start. Enter the total amount.

2014 New Zealand Rhododendron Conference

Report by Margaret Charlton and Charlie Sale

The **70th Jubilee International Rhododendron Conference of the New Zealand Rhododendron Association** was held in Dunedin on the South Island October 20-24, 2014. The south island is the cooler of New Zealand's two main islands. Neither island gets the hard frosts that prevent us here on the west coast from growing many of the more tender rhododendrons that do so well in New Zealand. The conference offered an opportunity to see a wide range of these plants in cultivation. Charlie and I have been to New Zealand several times, enjoy it immensely, and were quick to sign up for this conference.



We began in **Auckland** on the north island with **the pre-conference tour** with an old friend, **Richard Nanson**, as leader. Our first day included a visit to a delightful town garden of **Robyn Bridgeman** followed by dinner in our host's home. This set the tone for the conference. We invariably received a warm welcome everywhere.

It was spring down under, roughly equivalent to April here in the northern hemisphere, and gardens were stunning masses of rhododendrons – both species and hybrids. We saw many maddenias in flower along with camellias, lilacs, tulips, peonies, cherries to name just a few. It was a staggering display, doubly enjoyable in the warm spring weather. In an Auckland suburb we visited '**Ayrlies**', a magnificent world class private garden, open by appointment to the

public. Gardens outside town cores tend to be much larger than those found here in Canada. With so much pasture in this land, what harm in converting a bit of sheep paddock into garden? New Zealand once had about 70,000,000 sheep but this is now closer to 35,000,000. Dairy cattle now predominate. The country is the world's largest exporter of milk products.

We next flew further south to **New Plymouth** on the west coast. Here, high up on massive volcano Mt. Taranaki, is **Pukeiti**, one of the world's great public rhododendron gardens. Its volcanic soil, high rainfall, and intense sunlight provide unparalleled growing conditions or a huge percentage of the world's rhododendrons. It is an immense public garden with a very strong volunteer organization. New Plymouth has been a major centre for wholesale nurseries. The well-known Jury's nursery is here.

From New Plymouth we motored east by comfortable bus over the spine of the North Island to **Rotorua** and an eerie steam belching landscape of bubbling lakes and hot streams. Following our visit we flew to Queenstown on the South Island, with a stop on the way in windy **Wellington**, complete with great views from the air. Here we saw the city from high up Mt. Victoria, took a cable car to the **Botanical Garden** where Richard has previously been director, and then a very scenic drive back to the airport.

At beautiful **Queenstown**, a major tourist destination high up in the South Island lake district, we visited '**Chantecler**'. a private garden. This relatively new garden of large proportions is beautifully landscaped, has rhododendrons in profusion, pools, streams, large vegetable and fruit gardens, chickens, olives, and a paddock of alpacas. Amongst the vast number of rhododendrons are a very large number of hybrids of that are being enjoyed for their beauty and scent. while being tested for their hardiness at this high elevation. Their hardiness is doubtful in our part of the world. Our visit concluded with drinks and snacks and a thoroughly delightful time with the owners.

No trip to New Zealand is complete without visiting **Milford Sound**. We had brilliant sunshine for our boat tour, a rarity given that it rains 200 days a year here. It had rained shortly before we arrived so we were treated to a marvellous display of innumerable waterfalls cascading down the mountain slopes of this fiord.

From Milford Sound we travelled to Te Anau for our always much needed sleep. The following day at **Wyndham** we visited '**Maple Glen**', the superb garden of Muriel and Bob Davison. The garden is on a rise of land and the views down the hill are spectacular. The elderly Davisons, with the help of their son Rob, keep this very large garden in immaculate condition. Muriel did all the planning. We were thrilled during our walk around by the constantly changing scenes of beauty. Our last stop on our pre-conference tour was **Blue Mountain Nursery**. It was delightful to see such a variety of named stock. Then on to Dunedin and the star of the conference.

The conference began with a welcoming reception Monday evening. Tuesday morning **Hartwig Schepker**, Scientific Director of the Botanic garden and Rhododendron Park, Bremen, Germany spoke. His topic – '**The Mysteries of Arunchal Pradesh** – Exploring unknown rhododendron territory in northeast India.'... We were treated to dramatic pictures of

this exceedingly difficult terrain to traverse – extremely steep, very wet, and leech infested. His discomfort was not in vain for there were many species of rhododendron as well as primula, and a new arisaema.

Steve Hootman followed with a presentation of some **twenty years of exploration** highlights. An exciting example was finding a hardier *R. macabeanum* (NAPE#052) in Nagaland, south of Arunchal Pradesh, and in Vietnam on Mt. Frangipan exciting high elevation rhododendrons hardier than those found further north in China. We are so fortunate to have Steve as a regular speaker here on the West Coast.

We started the afternoon with a visit to beautiful **Tannock Glen** featuring a superb rhododendron collection as well as two echiums (see below) we had last seen in Cornwall.

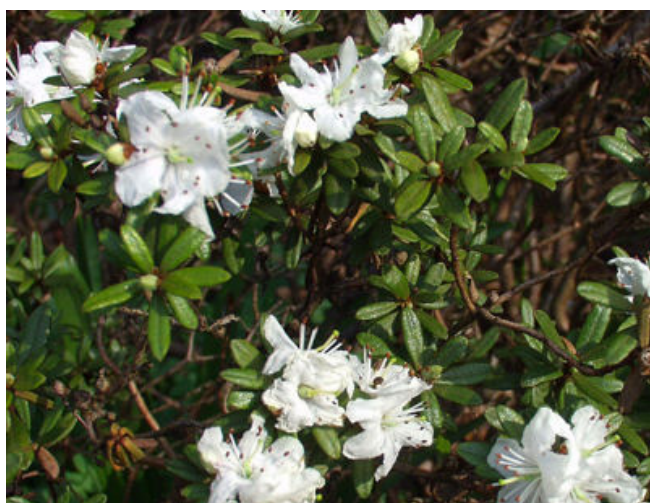


Then off to the **Dunedin Botanical Garden**. Its rolling hillside made a great garden. Starting in the native section it was nice to now be familiar with many of the vast number of shrubs and trees that are so dissimilar to our own native flora. The rhododendron collections are divided by species, hybrids, and azaleas as well as by geographic origin. Much clearing of overgrown sections was in evidence and there were many newly planted areas. We had a very knowledgeable staff member leading us. The rhododendron species collection contained many large plants of *RR.sinogrande*, *macabeanum*, *griffithianum* including a double form, the highly scented *nutallii*, and *mallotum*. Among the many hybrids were RR 'Baron de Rothschild', 'Charlotte de Rothschild' (photo at right), and the pink flowered 'Michaels Pride'. Under planting of primulas were very effective and a group of Cornus 'Eddies White Wonder' was displayed at its best. A few of the New Zealand rhododendron hybrids that we admired were the good red 'Rubicon', the floral pink 'Floral Gift', 'Ilam cream', 'Ilam Pink', 'Lemmon Lodge', and pale yellow 'Eric's Triumph'. There are an amazing number of lovely hybrids that are unknown to us and not likely to reach B.C...Regrettably there was not near enough time to take in the entire garden.



The following morning **Denis Hughes**, the owner of Blue Mountain Nursery, spoke about his hybridizing methods. At his nursery earlier on the trip we had greatly admired his cream double azalea creation Hartwig Schepker followed with a pictorial visit of parks, private gardens, and nurseries in Germany. He commented too on cultivation practices as well as efforts to preserve outstanding gardens and cultivars.

We then set off for “**Lindenfield**”, the garden of Bron Medlicott-Fitchett and **Tony Fitchett**. This is a large deep rhododendron garden with a long avenue of *Prunus serrulata* ‘Shimidsu Sakura’. This white flowered cherry and the pink Kwanzan Cherry are very popular in New Zealand. The Fitchett’s have a particular interest in large leaved and the maddenia subsection of rhododendrons as well as conifers oak species. We admired R. ‘Helen Schiffner’ and the other extreme white *R. orthocladum* var. *microleucum* (below) for the rock garden.



In the afternoon the garden in Kanuka Ridge of old friends, **Gretchen and John Henderson**, was our first stop. Now ten years old, their new garden belied its youth. The Henderson had the gift of time while their new home was being remodelled and moved many mature plants from their sheep farm where they had lived for many years. The new garden was looking very mature and extremely well planted. In this climate it doesn’t take much time to produce the well furnished look. Rhododendron ‘Hincki, peach coloured, was admired. Our next garden, that of **Patti and John Matheson**, filled a narrow valley. Hugh redwoods had been planted in early times giving a sense of age. There were many huge rhododendrons, particularly yellow flowering ones; the views from the house to the gardens below were beautiful. The planting around the house featured roses and a great display of delphiniums.

On Thursday morning we journeyed up a very steep winding road to **Larnack Castle** on the Otago peninsula. Here extensive gardens and sheep pasture sit high above the inlet to Dunedin harbour. The castle site, 4000’ above water, has commanding views to the sea and Dunedin City. In 1875 William Larnack, an Australian banker, made a fortune in New Zealand from banking for the gold rush miners. He spent a great deal of this acquiring a vast tract of land and building an extremely well furnished, smallish, “castle’. Acquired by the Barker family in the 1930’s, the gardens and castle have been extensively restored. The gardens are extremely well planted and contain many rarities. They take full advantage of the magnificent views. The castle also provides handsome accommodation for paying guests. Our lunch here was a delight.

In the afternoon then visited ‘**Glenfallock**’, gaelic for hidden valley’. This beautiful tranquil woodland garden was a garden for all seasons now lush with rhododendrons and bulbs. Here

cardiocrinums,(below) on their way to bloom, are so prolific they are considered a weed. Their



tree ferns give a marvellous exotic dimension. We then pushed on to twin gardens on Portobello Road. These two small gardens on a hillside with a stream flowing through were a delight in spite of much new plantings. The newer garden had some remarkable stone work.

That evening **Lynn Bublitz**, a major force at Pukiet, gave an interesting talk on **maddenias, both species and hybrids, in New Zealand**. Just as here, they need extremely good soil and air drainage. Such temptations are really unfair for us where they are very marginally hardy.

On Friday we concluded the conference with a visit to **Ashburn Garden**. An old garden established in 1880, it had many stone walls and trees dating back to early times in the 1950s and 60s rhododendron garden was established... then in 1995 new owners took over and were faced with a jungle of blackberries and other horrors. This cleared garden was extended and many new plants introduced. It was a lovely garden with many open vistas that flowed into one another. Heavy rain failed to diminish our pleasure but the blessedly the following garden had a marvellous dry barn filled with horse drawn carriages. This concluded the conference.

The post conference tour, lead by **Joy O'Keefe**, began Saturday, Oct.25. At our first garden we met the remarkable **Anne-Marie Sim**. A women of slight and small build. with hands of a 'pick and shovel' man, she does the work of an army of gardeners. Her garden, '**Ireland Glen**', is amazing. This very large garden sits above a cascading stream. The land is very rocky. The soil thin and hard packed Water is limited. Planting is done with a crowbar and pick. In spite of all these handicaps, her garden is spacious, well planted, and immaculately kept as a first class park. Azaleas and rhododendrons do well. Anne has many trees planted for fall colour. She continues to plant out of love for her garden and to continue what her grandfather started 100 years ago. From here we journeyed to Oamaru and the Wilson family's **Parkside Garden**. The garden is adjacent to the family's highly mechanized oamaru stone quarry business. Oamaru stone is prized as the best building stone in the country. Linda Wilson, a landscape designer, has created with her husband's help a very compartmentalized garden with superb view lines and avenues. A creamy *Pandorea jasminoides* vine, an orange clematis, and a rose cascade from a trellis. The overall design is tight, clean, and pleasing resulting in the garden appearing much larger than it really is. A short distance away was '**Glenfalloch**', another 'hidden glen'. It is a delight. Set in spectacular surrounding dairy country, this newish garden and nursery has a large rhododendron enclosure. It also has a particularly fine and



comprehensive collection of woodland plants. Close to the house the huge stunning trillium collection is growing under tree protection. There is a superb selection of rock garden plants, alpine bulbs, pacific coast iris in dazzling colours, and peonies. That evening we stayed in Omarama on our way to Mt. Cook.

On Sunday we travelled the long and very scenic wide valley (**McKenzie Country**) leading up to Mount Cook. We passed beautiful turquoise lakes, a large hydro installation, and very large dairy farms as well as a few sheep stations. When last here in 1996 this was all brown native grasses. Irrigation has turned it into a vast lush pasture. It was a day of sun, cloud, and wind. From the hotel at road's end we were able to hike a variety of trails. Being early spring we were too early for the spectacular wild flowers of these mountains. On our way back we stopped at Airies Station, the farm of Lucy and Alistair Munro. On this cold and windy day high up in McKenzie Country 500m above sea level they were dressed for a warm day while we shivered. Tea in the garden helped. Despite plenty of snow in winter, their large garden was well planted. That evening we stayed in the small town of Geraldine.

The next morning we visited tour leader **Joy O'Keefe** and husband Bernie's garden and nursery, **Woodbury Rhododendrons**. A spacious area was filled with rhododendrons that included the American hybrids R.Seatac, the yellow dwarf R.Curlew and the dwarf pink R.Wee Bee. Also seen was an outstanding *Viburnum sargentii*. 'Onondaga' (see to right). Both the garden and nursery plants were all very well labelled. This had been a problem for us elsewhere with so many unfamiliar plants. We then drove to **Orari Gorge Station**, the garden of **Rosa and Graham Peacock**. This mature garden was established by Rosa's grandfather in the 1860s is an excellent example of merging of the very old with modern day plantings. It has a very spacious layout featuring a tranquil stream.



This can apparently turn into a monster. In the past it ripped out rhododendron trees and only a huge Copper Beech tree planted in 1905 saved the house from a tangle of debris. From here we proceeded to the beautiful garden of Sara and Paul Grigg., **Surrey Hills**. The garden was first planted in the 1950s and has since extensively extended and re-planted. There are good examples of *RR.macabeanum*, *aberconwayi*, *argyrophthllum*, *falconeri*, *mallotum*, and *lindleyi*. A very attractive pale yellow **Rosa banksias** climbs the house wall.

Our last garden was in Ashburton, **Trott's Garden**, the nursery garden of Catherine and Alan Trott. Our garden walk began in a very formal area... boxwood clipped into patterns and masses of lawn. This eventually led to extensive rhododendron plantings and to a tall border hedge with buttress-like projections with perennials planted between. Various large whimsical sculptures were dotted about. You name it, it was there. A very old small chapel had been moved from town for weddings. It was all quite over the top and apparently the nursery did a great business.

From here we drove to Christchurch for a farewell dinner before flying out next day.

Margaret Charlton and Charlie Sale

Photo of Canadian attendees at the recent NZ conference. Names from left to right are:



Glen Jamieson, Ginny Fearing, Bob Ramik, Dorothy Jamieson, Garth Wedemire, Laura Grant, Norma Senn, Elaine Derkach, Linda Derkach, Sue Grant, Harold Fearing, Margaret Charlton, and Charles Sale.