



"THE CREVICE"

In memory of Eswyn

Journal of the
Alpine Gardeners of Central Vancouver Island

<http://alpinegardenersofcvi.wordpress.com/>

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FROM THE EDITOR: Everyone has been so busy during this beautiful summer, so I am especially grateful to Ger van den Beuken and Malcolm McGregor for making the time to write and send in reports for this issue. I hope when the weather turns (shhh!, not yet, touch wood!) and you have a chance to process your photos, dry your seeds, and catch up your notes on your summer explorations and garden adventures, you will think of "The Crevice". Please share your photos, tips & tricks, sources, portraits of favourite plants, reviews of useful books, etc. Contributions are gratefully received at Melanson.valerie@gmail.com.

Deadlines for rest of 2016, Early 2017:

October 15th for Fall issue, January 15th for Winter issue

INTERESTED IN A HARRY JANS TOUR TO IRAN?

Judy Millicheap, jmillicheap@hotmail.com, is thinking seriously of going on Harry Jan's tour to Iran and is wondering whether anyone would be interested in going? <http://www.jansalpines.com/en/28/upcoming-tours.html>

UPCOMING AGCVI SPECIAL EVENT



Welcome

Mike Kintgen from the Denver Botanic Gardens
to speak on the
Great Rock Gardens of Europe



Monday, September 12th, 2016

1 - 3 pm

(doors open 12:30)

Qualicum Beach Civic Centre

747 Jones, QB

**\$10 at door includes entry in
plant prize draw and coffee /
tea & goodies.**

This will be a tour of the public rock gardens Mike has visited in Northern Europe over the years, a bit about the cities they are in, the history and what part of the collections really stood out for him - the talk mainly covers Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, France.

Mike is Curator of the Alpine Collections at Denver Botanic Gardens, and an active member of the North American Rock Garden Society.

Info? Valerie: 250-594-4423 or Meianson.valerie@gmail.com



OTHER EVENTS TO NOTE

John Deniseger

presents:



*Eaglecrest Garden Club meets on
Wednesday, September 21st, 2016
Qualicum Beach Civic Centre
7:00 pm.*

*All welcome. Non-members: \$3.
Contact person: Susan 594-7468*

"Why I Garden"

**a look at gardening
from a
different perspective.**

**John is a retired biologist,
avid gardener, outdoor
enthusiast and long time
member and past
president of the Nanaimo
Rhododendron Society.**

AGCVI EVENTS: TROUGH / DISH GARDEN WORKSHOP

Photos from June Strandberg

On July 25th, another very successful trough / dish garden workshop was led by Mike Miller, this time at June Strandberg's.



Colly Cat Strandberg guarded the extra plants available to participants for a donation to the Speaker Fund.

Here is a sampling of some of the finished treasures:



L: Mary Taylor's, R: Mike Miller's



L: Vel Rhodes' & Dan Schwarz' and more ...



PLANT PORTRAIT - *Campanula peshmenii*
by Ger van den Beuken, The Netherlands



Campanula peshmenii is an awesome introduction, arising a few years ago from a collection in Turkey made by some Czech seed collectors. It's a very rare species with leafy stems 10-15cm long and scabrous leaves. It was found on Boz Dag near Izmir in the South West of Turkey, growing on limestone rocks. The flowers, bell-shaped in a very nice, soft blue colour, appear in the axels of the leaves.

I have had it in my collection since 2015, propagated from seeds and then cultivated as a plant in a deep pot in the alpine house. The young plants flowered in the first year in spring and a second time the same year during summer. The same happened this year which means that we have a very welcome, new *Campanula* species in cultivation.

The substrate I use is a well drained mix of course sand, pumice, seramis and a small part of fine peat. To raise the pH, I add a small part of lime powder. Winter hardiness is no problem but the plants seem to suffer in wetness, hence the alpine house. As soon as possible I will make a try outside on tufa to check its suitability as a rock garden plant.

CONFERENCE AT STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

Report and photos by Malcolm McGregor, East Yorkshire

One of the joys of belonging to the North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS) is that you get the chance to go to meetings every year that are spread far and wide across North America. In the last few years there have been meetings in the southern Appalachians of North Carolina; the far southern Rockies in Santa Fe; the Pacific Northwest in Everett; Ann Arbor and the Upper Peninsula in Michigan last year; and this year it was the Rockies of northern Colorado. This is a land of penstemons and paintbrushes; phlox and phacelia; delphiniums, dodecatheons and eriogonums - pretty much the epitome of the North American rock garden flora.

The multi-day meeting started with a tour of Denver Botanic Gardens led by Curator Mike Kintgen with lectures in the evening, after a great reception, by Mike and Kenton Seth who has now been responsible for more than two dozen crevice gardens in Colorado.

From Denver the 4-hour journey to Steamboat Springs at around 6700 feet in far northern Colorado was intriguing, with various people choosing different routes.



Northern Colorado landscape

In our case there were few flowers but an encounter in the snow with another vehicle which had strayed just too far.



Back on the road we headed farther north for a lunch stop at Betty Ford Alpine Gardens in Vail where we had a chance to see their great garden and the alpine house with its tufa crevice bed and spectacular diorama background. We were also lucky to have the chance to talk to Nick Courtens, another of the speakers.

The three days in Steamboat Springs were filled for attendees with public gardens such as Yampa River Botanic Park:



and private garden visits, wildflower tours, meetings for functionaries such as myself, and evening talks. With around 250 NARGS attendees this is a major event in the NARGS calendar and gives many the chance to catch up with old friends and make new ones.

A feature of this year's event was that 5 of the 6 speakers were in their 20s or 30s a great sign that rock gardening has an exciting future. Apart from those already mentioned the speakers were Johan Nilson from Gothenburg Botanic Gardens and Kelly Norris from Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden and Marcela Ferreyra who travelled from Bariloche in Argentina to speak at the meeting despite having a fall just ten days earlier and having to use two sticks to get around. But the speakers were by no means the only young people present at the meeting.



Two younger members Charlotte Reynolds (UK) and Kenton Seth (CO) with older members in the background

Denver provides an exciting milieu for young people and it attracted attendees from England, Scotland, Sweden, and Germany. Walks and outings took people to a wide variety of habitats in the Rabbit Ears Range, Park Range, North Park and other local ecosystems.



Guide (and Conference Organizer) Mike Kintgen with group in North Park

These varied between aspen woodland, steppe and subalpine habitats with individuals having great experiences, some being left breathless by the altitude and most still leaving wishing they had time for more!



North Park landscape

Some got exactly that chance with an extension trip to northern Wyoming to visit the Bighorn Mountains and the Beartooth Pass from an Episcopal

Retreat in Cody. These trips recruited so well that the original 10-20 planned vacancies were extended to 40 and the trip will be repeated for NARGS members in 2017. Members will also get the chance of visiting the Dolomites on a private NARGS trip in July 2017. This is a really good time to join NARGS.

Enormous credit is due to the organizers of the Annual Meeting with Mike Kintgen at the center of a great team.

Some lovely flowers seen on tours around Steamboat Springs:



L: *Cypripedium fasciculatum*, R: *Dodecatheon pulchellum*



L: *Eriogonum ovalifolium*, R: *Lewisia rediviva*

"In a rock garden we foster a little patch of the wilderness
that stands to us for freedom."

- Jason Hill