

Willie Campbell - President.

My role it's to chair the twice yearly committee meetings. Oversee the standing sub committees - Tours, Show, membership and publications.

In my work life past I was in the Merchant Navy, an Engineer with BP and it after retiring from BP in 1999 I set off on my career as a Gardener at Gargunock House, by Stirling. My wife Fiona and I lived in the Stables block on the Estate and both became interested in a the collection of 1950s hybrid rhododendrons. Fiona spent hours looking for labels, putting names to a huge collection of labels in a box in the workshops. One morning my boss Sir James Stirling turned up with Ian Douglas and John Hammond to look at the rhododendrons, John was writing an article on the connection between the Campbell's of Ardkinglass and Gargunock Campbell's. After walking round taking notes and naming many of the hybrids, Fiona and I were persuaded to join the SRS.

In a few months we visited the show in Oban and we must have shown so interest because a few weeks later Ian Douglas called and asked if I would become Society Secretary. This was a job I did until Katrina Clow took in 2013. I also did a spell as Treasurer around that time and was the first Treasurer to apply for Gift Aid.

In 2008 I took over as Seed Exchange manager from the late Stephen Fox and it's a job I still do today. The seed exchange has changed with no wild collected seed after 2013 as we comply with the Nagoya Protocol. The seed exchange has grown and we regularly have over 300 lots of different seed. As always thanks to those who have donated seed over the years.

When we talk of the seed exchange, I was one of the first to order seed each year from 2003 onwards, sowing and growing with a fair amount of success in my poly tunnel at Gargunock, growing from seed not only fills your own garden but you can give plants to friends or sell them at plants sales. We regulatory made several hundred pounds for the Garden Scheme at our open days selling rhododendrons. One of the most exciting part of my gardening journey has been on Botanical Expeditions. On these expeditions, I have been to Arunachal Pradesh 2006, Sichuan 2009 and 2012 with Ken Cox, then in 2016 to Sikkim. All these trips have been amazing and truly educational seeing plants in the wild. You make friends for life On these trips.

On retiring from Gargunock in 2017, I have been doing Gardening consultancy work and off course planting up our little Garden in Doune Central Scotland. We already have about 100 rhododendrons planted, Fiona keeps notes on them all and as always keep correcting my punctuation and spelling.

So that's a bit about myself, please do not hesitate to contact me regards any Society matters, or if you have ideas how we can grow the membership, just share it with us on your committee. Also if you think we are not doing as well as we should, tell us it's the only way.

The next three members of the committee are classed as Society Directors of our Charity, and as such are registered with OSCR or Office of Scotland's Charity Register. You may wish to look up OSCR SC008975. You will see details of our Aims and Principals as well as our recent account details.

Matt Heasman - Vice President

As well as member of the Show committee, Matt oversees the SRS website and member's page. Matt has been asked if we could create a digital and searchable library of rhododendron picture which would be available on the website. (If you can help contact Matt).

Matt and Diane live in the East Kilbride area in the Central Belt here in Scotland, has a small garden where he has many good dwarf rhododendrons and grows Meconopsis as well. Nobody can remember when Matt joined the SRS, but he was in short pants so it's a while ago (Aut 1988). He has been on the committee for over twenty years and is has the ARS Bronze medal for his services to the Society and the World of Rhododendrons.

Matt is one of our "go to" experts on Species Rhododendrons, you will see him at our shows advising new members where sprays and trusses should be exhibited. He has travelled to Bhutan (Glendoick still have MH plants of rhododendron kesangiae) and to Arunachal Pradesh.

Matt is also Garden Manager at the RSCG partnership at Baravalla, on the West Coast.

Katrina Clow - SRS Secretary

Our hard-working secretary is also a member of the Show Committee. She is our key person regards committee work, keeping minutes, and reminding the committee of what its objectives are in running your Society.

Katrina gardens in North Ayrshire, quite a hostile inland environment where she is creating a new garden full of many rhododendrons and companion plants. (Katrina's garden is open under Scotland's Garden Scheme). This is not the first garden she has created; the other is a wonderful woodland garden quite close to where she lives now.

You will see her running around on show weekends, making sure everything is running smoothly and according to our plan. Much of the success of our show at Garelochhead is down to Katrina.

Katrina is also a committee member of Plant Heritage and a member of the Baravalla maintenance team.

Colin Whitehead - SRS Treasurer

Colin accounts for the income and expenditure of the Society, a main committee member and sits in on the Tours committee.

Colin and his wife Dorothy live in Edinburgh where they have a town garden but full of rhododendrons. Colin still grows from seed, and I was privileged to see his garden a few years back, where he has quite a few flowering big leaved rhododendrons.

Due to Colin's careful eye on our financial position, the SRS subscriptions have remained constant throughout the last ten years.

Colin oversees the monies coming into our "Education Fund" where we are creating a set aside fund for funding places for Gardeners to our Conferences or on plant expeditions to the wild, to see plants in their natural habitat.

(If you feel you could add some small or large contribution, leave a legacy to the fund or want to make an application for funding contact Philp Rankin)

John Roy - Publications Editor.

John lives in the Glencoe area of Scotland, which can be justly proud as one of the wettest areas in the land. He has a riverside garden full of rare species and hybrid rhododendrons. John has been editor of our publications since 2001 and issues two Rhododendron Journals a news type format, which gives news of what is going on, show news, garden visits and other short interesting articles. The main publication "The World Of Rhododendrons" is his flagship publication that you our members supply the articles, these are usually in depth features of travel, your garden, full of colour and most of all interesting and educational to all.

John is a veteran of some 14 Botanical expeditions to the Sino-Himalayan region, along with many of the great plant exploration experts over the years. So John is the "go to" expert on these regions of the world, the highs and lows of trekking over mountain passes, steamy hot riverside walks in Arunachal Pradesh, bridges that you would never think possible to cross over. I personally have been with John on two trips, wonderful Northern India and then to Sikkim that little State between Nepal, Tibet and Bhutan. John was wonderful company, just the person to keep you going when the going gets tough.

John relies on you our members for articles for the publications, they can be on many formats even handwritten. So if you have a special plant, garden or just some news **Please send it to John for publication.**

As members of the SRS our website www.scottishrhododendronsociety.or.uk and the members area password you can view and read our news letters since 2009.

John is also a member of the show committee and can be seen at the end of the day with his chipper/shredder clearing away all the trusses and sprays from the show benches.

This year John will be helped by Barbara Anderson stuffing envelopes and licking stamps. Usually with the Publication mail you will get news of our Tours and Conferences.

Helen Kessell - membership Secretary.

Helen lives over in Ardrishaig in Argyll. She has been membership Secretary for what seems like forever. She receives the membership applications some on line others via the membership leaflet. It can be a complicated business sometimes with some details not completed correctly and others phone and email addresses not completed.

SRS Membership can include single or family and for a little extra membership to the American Rhododendron Society. Its a difficult job which Helen has mastered over the years and she would be very difficult to replace.

Now, you as members have to keep Helen updated with any changes to your address, telephone numbers or email address

Marion Kinns - Technical/Research Director

Also a member of the Show Committee. Marion lives on the Roseneath Peninsula in Argyll where she gardens with Roger her husband. Marion is new to the committee but has already produced reports on various plant problems. But like any job on the committee, She needs you our members to contact her to look into your problems, that's plant problems or diseases.

David and Gloria Starck - Tours Co-ordinators.

David and Gloria live and garden at Kilberry, almost as far west on the mainland as you can get. They arrived in Scotland from down south in the early 2000s to a Cottage with a woodland of conifers as a garden. Over the years they have created their own west coast garden full of rhododendrons and other interesting plants.

David is a past President of the SRS but they now are our Tours Co-ordinators. Personally I have not missed many tours since I joined the SRS and all have been excellently run, wonderful gardens and places to stay during the week you are away. Its all organised you just have to turn up.

Planning the Tours start 3 years in advance of the tour taking place. A sub committee discusses what might be new, interesting gardens and how would we get there. Its Then David and Gloria sit down to plan the tour, tours last between 5 to 7 days or 10 to 14 garden visits. Just remembers that this is 3 years in advance, the tour in 2 years is being firmed up, gardens, costs, guides. But wait for it this years tour has to be carried out, routes to gardens, owners contacted, if its NTS again bookings to be made, morning coffees, lunches, afternoon teas all to be organised and run like clockwork. Then hotels, who is sleeping with who, single beds or double beds, vegan or meat, menus in advance, I think I am painting the picture that Gloria and David have almost a full time job in preparing the tours.

The run up to the Tours is all about, preparing the costs, inviting members to join the tour and getting the monies in. Everyday on Tour, payments have to be made to Gardens/Meals on tour/Hotels.

Yet there is more work for them, every 2nd year the Autumn Conference to organise, (RSCG organise the other year) this year it is at Threave, by Castle Douglas, already some 40 members have booked to attend, with venue, speaker, garden visits and then meals for the delegates costings to be prepared, booking forms etc. I don't no how they do it?

I hope these few words give you an insight into how much work Gloria and David Starck do on behalf off the SRS membership.

David and Gloria received a ARS bronze Medal for their service to the Society, and well deserved it is. (Please note that a "Bronze" is the highest award to chapter members)

Philip Rankin – Advertising Manager

A long standing member of the SRS, Philip lives in Edinburgh. He is also involved with the Shows committee and is a regular attendee to the annual show where he helps setup and advise newcomers on how best to display their exhibits. His knowledge of plants and all things horticulture is second to none where his comments and advice is regularly sought after. Philip has been instrumental in the setup of the newly

launched Education Fund that it is hoped will help support many great projects in the future.