

Brooklin Horticultural Society Newsletter

Volume 22 Issue 4 Nov/Dec 2020

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BHS meets the 4th Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at the Brooklin United Church; except January, July and December. The November meeting is at St. Thomas Anglican Church.

Visit us on the web at:

www.brooklinhorticulturalsociety.com

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<https://www.facebook.com/bhs1921/>



Keeping Ontario Beautiful



THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

There will be no clichés in this message. I'm exhausted from listening to them myself. So let's start with where we are.

First, the Board has changed with the resignations of Denise Carter (moved) and Lisa Ruck (work-life balance) and the loss of Leslie Tate in January. Bonny Langille has been appointed Treasurer, succeeding Denise, and Mary Thompson is our Secretary.

There will be no formal Annual General Meeting this fall, and the OHA has established modified requirements for holding an AGM, the annual reports and elections. The Board will continue as it is, but we need more Board Members.

Our application for an OMAFRA grant has already been approved. Our application to the Town of Whitby has also been submitted.

Membership fees paid by regular and Corporate Members for 2020 will be applied to 2021 with no additional charges. Those who were not able or had not renewed for 2020 can begin to do so now, through Eric Tuinman and Bonny Langille. The Bookmark will be printed new, but the Yearbook will likely be modified with an insert, for date changes, as a reprint or rework will cost many hundreds of dollars.

Our October General Meeting was done by ZOOM conferencing, with 50 participants signed on to listen to Ingrid Janssen's presentation. Great job and great meeting!

We would like to stay with the Brooklin United Church as our meeting home base, but meetings there will not begin until the Government of Ontario, the Town of Whitby, and the BUC have provided approval to do so.

We will continue to fund a Bursary for Durham College's Horticultural Program students. And, since we could not plant the gardens that we maintain, that amount of money was donated to food banks in Whitby in July. Faye Collins and her crew of guerilla gardeners did a superb job on the BHS Gardens, and Kathy Allam and team kept the Park of Reflections attractive and enjoyable.

The 100th Anniversary will be an important bench mark for us. Our proposal to modify the Society name to include the many residents of Whitby will be voted on by all eligible (paid) members of our Society, by email, this year. An updated logo is being developed to go along with the name change. Our speakers for 2021 have been lined up and are prepared to conference online if needed.

Let's move on. We'll use the technology available as needed, we'll continue to support our gardens and activities, and we will enjoy the talents of our guest speakers, our guests and friends, and our members, as part of the new **Brooklin-Whitby Garden Club**, 100 years old but still full of energy and doing well!

Oh, and get those memberships coming in.

Hans

From the Editors.....

Who would have predicted last year at this time, that our dreams of spending all our days in the garden would come true in 2020. That perceived idyllic world wasn't quite so perfect though. Due to the closing of nurseries early in the pandemic, many of us couldn't buy for our gardens and planters. When the nurseries opened, lineups to get in were in excess of 45 min and choices were limited. The demand for vegetable seeds and seedlings far exceeded available supplies. Here we are going through a 2nd wave of the pandemic with winter at our doorsteps. With that in mind, the editors wanted this edition of the newsletter to provide inspiration by offering the 2020 garden experiences of some of our BHS members and providing some ideas for a little garden therapy to help us get through the winter. We've also come up with a list of 'garden themed' books you might read.

On another note, Audrey Atkinson will be stepping down from the newsletter team to focus more of her energy on other ongoing interest, including more time volunteering at the Lynde House Museum. Lynde House will definitely benefit from her enthusiasm and dedication in all that she does. We will also miss the passion, warmth and kindness she brings to her work and those around us. Thank you so much Audrey, we will always welcome your input and ideas to future newsletters.



Barb, Mary, Sherry

A BHS First - October 28, 2020, A General Meeting Virtually

Forty three BHS members experienced a BHS first, by enjoying a modified version of our Pumpkins, Pies and Pictures night, virtually using ZOOM. BHS member and Master gardener Ingrid Janssen held our attention with her presentation on how to extend the garden season beyond September by planting and layering various trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals and bulbs to additionally provide fall interest in our gardens. Ingrid suggested the following resources where you might find more information: "Fallscaping: Extending Your Garden" by Nancy J Ondra and Stephanie Cohen (available as an eBook at the Whitby Public Library), Landscape Ontario website, and Fine Gardening website.



The BHS garden crew: Brian Gower, Deanna Weekes, Frances Anderson, Pat Lindsay, Faye Collins, Istvan Juhasz, Katy Francis

BHS Garden Park

Against all odds, including a late start, the usual weather challenges, and Town of Whitby staffing shortages due to COVID-19, the BHS work crew did our part - small but mighty. The gardens not only survived, but thrived once we got past the summer drought. As always, the surrounding community and park users were there cheering us on, lifting our spirits and sharing their gardening concerns, stories, pets, kids and praise for our efforts. A big thanks to the Carnwith-Montgomery community.

Beginning in May a few of us did some non-sanctioned guerilla gardening and then with the go ahead with appropriate social distancing we continued on Thursday evenings and some Saturday mornings through to October.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of BHS members Brian Gower, Deanna Weekes, Katy Francis, Istvan Juhasz, Pat Lindsay and Frances Anderson - masterful gardeners one and all. Thanks and much appreciation also to Katy's daughter, Gwyn and Deanna's granddaughters, Loreah and T'siyah, aka the twins. They contributed youth, strength and enthusiasm when we needed it the most - future gardeners all.

Hope you wandered by to see for yourself or checked out the BHS facebook postings. Our small but mighty BHS gardening crew has done our society proud. Consider joining us next season as we'll have much to celebrate: BHS at 100 years and BHS Gardens at 14 years.

Faye Collins, Coordinator BHS Garden

Wounded Warriors Park of Reflection

The Park of Reflection was put to bed for the 2020 season at the end of September. For all our volunteers, the Park was a source of pleasure this year, if only for the fact that it gave us all a chance to be together doing something we all enjoy while safely practicing social distancing. We lost a number of plants from the gardens this season including astilbes that had been part of the original plantings. They just couldn't tolerate the full hard-on sun. Wounded Warriors have been approached about funding for next season regarding new plantings. Consider coming out next spring and being a part of this gardening experience.



Kathy Allam

BHS Speakers 2021

Our roster of speakers has been booked for 2021 and to be perfectly honest, I think it will be one of our best years yet. Whitby in Bloom is once again sponsoring their speaker series which will include Paul Gellatly, Conrad Richter and Ben Cullen. As it's our Centennial year, we will feature speakers whose topics will include Edwardian Gardens of Whitby and Victory Gardens. Our final speaker of the year, Denis Flanagan will present "A Hundred Years of Horticulture in Ontario". All speakers have confirmed they are prepared to present at the Brooklin United Church or via ZOOM.

Kathy Allam

BHS-100 Years Young

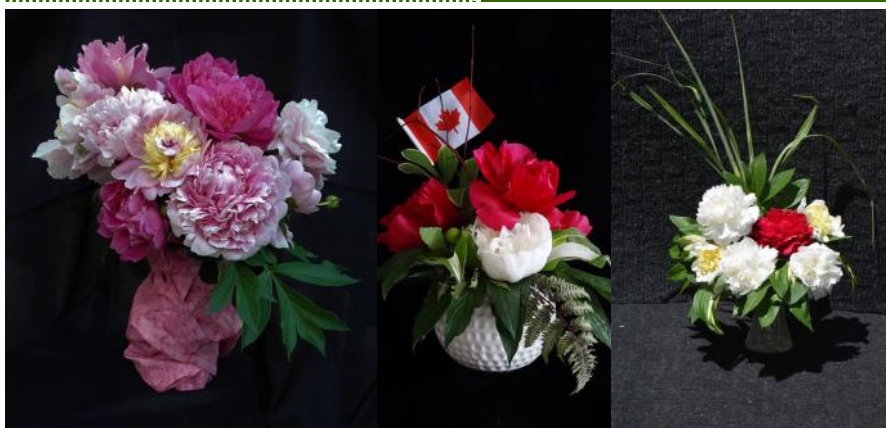
COVID-19 has thrown a big wrench in our 100th anniversary plans. Like many aspects of our lives, we've had to redraw our expectations yet remaining hopeful. Talks with the Town of Whitby are ongoing but decisions in many areas are being delayed due to uncertainty. Several members of Town Council have been very supportive and helpful with trying to have some of our plans move forward. With so much uncertainty it is difficult to solidify specific events or initiatives.

As 2020 winds down and we look forward to a better 2021 I do believe that there will be a way to celebrate our 100th anniversary. Perhaps it won't be quite as elaborate as we might have hoped but as one Town Councillor told me "the Town needs this positive story".

However we celebrate this event I look forward to the members of BHS/Brooklin - Whitby Garden Club participating to show our community what our last 100 years have looked like and what the community has to look forward to as we head into our second 100 years.

I look forward to being able to provide details in the near future.

Paul Cloutier



The **Canadian Peony Society** held their first ever Virtual Peony Festival. Some of our talented BHS designers were winners in the contests: from left to right, Debi Foster won 1st in the Monochromatic Madness class, Audrey Atkinson won 1st in the O Canada class while Shirley Papenbrock won 3rd in the same class. Congratulations!!

Gardening Fun Fact



Can you identify this gardening item?

Answer: 1912 Antique portable Water Pump

Garden Therapy Bookclub

So you've watered the plants, trimmed away the dead leaves and lovingly talked to them, now what? Perhaps some books can help pass the time during the winter months. The following books have some aspect of gardening, horticulture or the environment woven into the story. Enjoy! (All are available at the Whitby Public Library)

1. **The Golden Spruce** by John Vaillant, 2005 (Non-fiction) - It is subtitled A True Story of Myth, Madness and Greed. It won the Governor General's Literary Award for English-language non-fiction. Based on the true story of environmentalist Grant Hadwin who felled a huge golden spruce tree in British Columbia as a protest against the logging industry. It was a tree revered as a sacred object by the Haida Gwaii. It glowed a golden colour due to a genetic mutation and was a rare and celebrated sight.
2. **The Overstory** by Richard Powers, 2018 (Fiction) - Winner of Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 2019 and was shortlisted for the Man Booker prize. It has an environmental theme and spans many decades, interweaving the lives of nine characters who each love trees and nature and are passionate about the destruction of forests.
3. **The Language of Flowers** by Vanessa Diffenbaugh, 2011 (Fiction) - Victoria Jones has grown up in the child welfare system and uses her love and knowledge of flowers to help others. It is based on the Victorian meaning ascribed to flowers. It is also a love story that is both heartbreaking but ultimately triumphs.
4. **The Last Camellia** by Sarah Jio, 2013 (Fiction) - mystery, history and romance.
5. **Dearly Depotted** by Kate Collins, 2005 (Fiction) - part of the Flower Shop Mystery series.
6. **The Florist's Daughter** by Patricia Hampl, 2009 (Non-fiction) - memoir by author who reflects on her life as the daughter of a Czech born florist father and her Irish mother as her mother is dying.

Gardening in a Pandemic

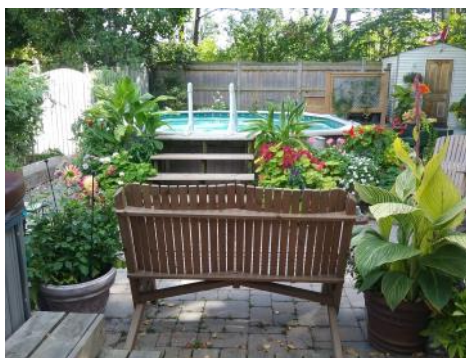
For many of us gardening has been a true saviour during the first wave of the pandemic. Here's how some of our BHS members passed their time in their gardens.

Lynda Chapman - "When life hands you a lemon; time to make lemonade!" When we downsized one year ago, our new garden consisted of 3 sick boxwoods and a scrawny spruce. Removal of a large above-ground pool was to be job one! Spring arrived and with it, COVID-19. We realized our eyesore might be our only source of recreation! So we worked around it with containers (40), raised vegetable beds, 2 perennial beds and other improvements. This gave us a creative project, swim fun for family and friends and a lot of satisfaction. We had so much fun with our 'eyesore', it may stay indefinitely!



Lynda's 'eyesore', above, to eye popping, below!

Jane Austin - I sat in my garden this year, actually sat! I have mobility issues presently and sitting was what I could do but I did it everywhere in the garden. I took my stool and tools to every corner. I planted, weeded and composted in an arc around me. My silence and lack of movement brought birds, chipmunks even a rabbit close enough for silent interaction. The birds and squirrels came to the feeder and the birdbaths and a cheeky curious chipmy to my toes. While in the front garden people stopped and chatted (keeping social distancing of course). Neighbours I rarely saw previously became friends over time because we had the 'time' to do just that.



Valerie Skinner - Gardening has been a saviour during COVID-19 and has replaced the activities that I have been prevented from doing or have chosen to avoid. As soon as the ground thawed in the spring I began dismantling a 500 square foot border along the north side of my backyard. Shrubs and perennials there were sorely in need of dividing. Lifting every single plant provided the chance to remove dog strangling vine lurking in roots and squish a number of grubs. The refreshed soil made a lovely home for a shipment of conifers and perennials that, along with some lofty annuals, provided a fabulous show all summer.



Valerie's new garden

When it came to the new patio I had planned the previous year, the lockdown created a better result. I spent many weeks redesigning the space, disassembling a pond and potting up plants to be reused in the new concept. After long days outside, I combed the internet for images and then enlisted my spouse to transfer my pencil diagrams into CAD printouts for the landscaper. Construction began late in September and the result is a tranquil oasis inspired by the trip we made to Japan in January.

Gardening as an almost full time pursuit is a journey that has just begun but it has been my solace whenever worries and fears about the future begin to overwhelm. I am so fortunate to have the space and wherewithal to indulge the passion.

Oh, and one more thing, it has been such a pleasure to mentor my young niece and several other young women taking up gardening for the first time. My heart glows.

Jone Webster - I kept wondering what to tell you about my gardening experience this year and it finally hit me last night. I have been trying to preserve my garden herbs for the first time in years. The lavender and rosemary dried out nicely on cookie sheets at room temperature. The parsley and mint have been more challenging. After many failed attempts at drying them in low heat in the oven, I discovered that my oven has a dehydration mode but even that was too hot for the mint. I ended up drying the mint also on cookie sheets at room temperature. The parsley is not cooperating. It's turning yellow at room temp. I'm going to try the dehydrate oven mode for a few minutes on a final batch of parsley before frost sets in. Wish me luck.

Marion Newans - We made the garden a bit larger because the government suggested to everyone to grow their own vegetables this year. We spent more time watering because of the dry summer, and lots, and lots, of weeding as well (they sure did love the sun). We had a very good crop of: yellow and green beans, cucumbers, Spanish onions, garlic, carrots, beets, six kinds of tomatoes and many herbs as well. My flowers did very well, and at this time of the year dahlias are a real show.

Colleen Ouimet - This year I tried to grow a few more vegetables. I had more time to just sit and enjoy my garden!

Gardening in a Pandemic - cont'd

Audrey Atkinson - In April I placed packages of Zinnia seeds I had saved from my 2019 gardens in front of my house for neighbours and friends to take. Twenty packages disappeared in 2 days. Later in the summer neighbours and friends gave me updates on how well their seeds had matured into healthy plants. It was a feel good moment to share my bounty of seeds and a bit of knowledge on how easy gardening can be, as well as, see the happy faces of the recipients.

My great nieces had planned to come in early spring to help plant dahlias in my garden, however the activity was cancelled due to COVID-19. In September it was safe for them to visit but because the planting stage was over we moved onto the picking and arranging stage. If all goes well they will help in the wintering stage. A warm feeling for me and 2 smiling faces under those masks.



Audrey with her great nieces.



Marion's front garden.

Marion Thomas - I am so grateful to have such a lovely front garden in which to spend time during the lockdown. My front garden is divided into 2 parts - one side is devoted to vegetables and herbs and the other side is primarily for pollinators such as bees and butterflies. The vegetables and herbs flourished in the summer sun, e.g., leeks, garlic, red onion, green beans, kale, tomatoes, ghost pumpkin, chives, basil, sage, parsley, lavender, rosemary, and dill. The pollinator garden was busy with bees of all sizes, beetles, hummingbirds occasionally and butterflies of all types (black swallowtails, monarchs, red

admiral, tiger swallowtail and cabbage white). Currently, the American Goldfinches are enjoying the flower seeds. It's been a pleasure to watch the changes and activities through the season. Gardening has been my life line this year.

Lisa Ruck - While many were staying home and social distancing, I got a job working at a big box store in the seasonal department right before lockdown hit. I was very excited to work in a garden centre (I should mention it was one of the few places where my association with the Brooklin Horticultural Society impressed management!), but was a bit nervous for what the future would hold. I learned that a garden centre is a dangerous place to work for a plant lover! I would be embarrassed to tell you the list of the plants I purchased over the course of the summer, but a few favourites were two beautiful Mandevillas for the deck, Supertunia Vista Bubblegum for my wall planters, succulents for my arrangements and wreaths, and a variety of plants for my fairy gardens. I also enjoyed cooking with veg from the garden this year - what a great feeling! When I wasn't working, I was in the garden. My family was very appreciative to have a beautiful place to escape to and so was I.



Greeting's from Lisa's garden, above, and her new birdbath, below, made with a taro leaf from a tuber given by Leslie Tate.

Helen Read - We grew our usual three tomato plants and again had a disappointing harvest. Our usual "salad patch" of lettuce and Arugula seeds were good though in big pots and I did a second sowing in late August. I also tried yellow peppers from the seeds of one I bought. Lots of green peppers and impressive looking foliage but they never turned colour and the green ones were so bitter we couldn't eat them. We also grew herbs in a big pot as we usually do. For the deck pots and baskets, I used mainly what I had - spider plants, mini hostas, ivy, lamium and heuchera with the addition of a couple of trailers I got at John's. They looked great and I may go that route again next year. The deck pots still look good and with the addition of a gifted mum, I expect the view will last a few more weeks. We did spend a lot of time in the garden and on the deck, admiring it. This year, more than ever, I am so grateful we had a garden to escape to, even though it's a postage stamp size. I think we would have gone nuts without our little piece of paradise to keep us sane.



Vivian Willerton - I grew a new variety of tomato plant in pots and to prevent damage from squirrels I would bag them overnight. My successfully overwintered cuttings of a Bill Granger rosebud geranium further flourished through the summer. I was also rewarded by the beautiful effect of my mandevilla growing up a metal structure rather than against the house as I had normally done.

Gardening in a Pandemic - cont'd

Barb Panowyk - knowing that I would be missing all of our fun and informative BHS activities due to COVID-19, I decided to try to grow a giant sunflower like the one in our logo. I planted 12 seeds but only one germinated and the resulting flower ended up being the highlight of my 2020 growing season! Neighbours and friendly walkers also delighted in the giant flower that grew so amazingly tall and beautiful!

Wilma Van Berkel - It has been a strange old year not just because of COVID-19 but in the garden too. Snow in May, major storm in June and heat and drought in July. But the story of this year has really been about the projects in May and June. I rebuilt the old fence around my veg garden (80x45x20 feet). I rescued and integrated most of the rocks and some of the plants from a nearby Whitby in Bloom winning garden being dismantled by the new owners. Two birches partially downed in the windstorm in the middle of June requiring rental of a dumpster to clean up and severe trimming into 'palm birches'. I spent a good week breaking up the 70 year old brick flower bed at the front of the house and replanted with shrubs and flowers.



Barb and granddaughter Elise beside her giant sunflower.



I repurposed an old aerial to replace the fallen grape trellis. By July with the heat I was very tired and so I coasted until harvesting began. This year I froze and preserved a fair amount. In absence of family visits I passed on a fair bit of produce to neighbours as well as eating my share of it too.

L to R, Wilma's new front bed, and her new fencing around the vegetable garden

Garden Therapy Activities For The Coming Winter



1. Use your harvest to make herbal teas, herb salts, bath teas, potpourri, hand scrubs, herb infused olive oils and other horticulture related gifts. If you've collected seeds, share and trade them with friends and family.
2. Garden planning - have fun trying your hand at garden layout/design, redesigning your own gardens or one that you have been hoping to create. Borrow library books on this topic or pick up some landscape design books at your local thrift store.
3. Engaging with tropical or other 'new to you' houseplants. Try growing an indoor herb garden or perhaps try a new growing method such as hydroponics.
4. Fresh flower arranging - buy an interesting bouquet of cut flowers at the grocery store and create a beautiful arrangement for your home or as a gift. Research different floral designs for inspiration!
5. Read books containing horticultural content - start a 'Book Club' with some members/friends, borrow books and DVD series from Whitby Public Library, including the British series "Rosemary and Thyme", a mystery/thriller series about two gardening detectives, Rosemary Boxer and Laura Thyme, who solve murder mysteries while providing gardening services. Use RB Digital, an 'app' that allows you to read a variety of gardening magazines from around the world.
6. Flower and Leaf Pressing - a year round activity lending itself to a variety of creative projects. Perhaps make some homemade pressed flower 'Covid Cards' to send to family and friends.
7. Inspire and teach someone about the joys of gardening with some simple activities like propagating plants by taking cuttings from begonias, coleus, etc. Use Zoom or FaceTime to stay safe.
8. Go to a Garden Centre or virtually tour some gardens....find some ways to immerse yourself in beautiful horticultural spaces!



Clockwise from top left, Barb Panowyk, Audrey Atkinson and Mary Kadey show us that Picking and Plunking can be therapeutic!

Shinrin-yoku or Forest Bathing

The therapeutic benefits of engaging with nature have long been intuited by those who enjoy the experience of being out-of-doors, especially when surrounded by trees in a forested area. Today, with medical experts worried about the uptick in mental health issues and increased stress levels due to the Coronavirus pandemic, it seems like a good time to get outside and spend some time forest bathing. The Japanese call it shinrin-yoku, which translates to “bathing in the atmosphere of the forest.” It has been practised in Japan since the 1980s by young and old alike, as a solo or small group activity.

But how exactly do you forest bathe? Is it the same as going for a hike? The idea behind forest bathing is to intimately connect with the forest environment through your senses. It is different from hiking because you are not purposefully walking along a trail with a pre-set destination. Instead, participating in forest bathing is more akin to meditation, where you block out distractions and take in the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and feel of the forest. It is best to unplug from your worries by leaving behind cell phones or other electronic distractions and just absorb the calm that comes from being surrounded by trees. The mental and physical health benefits of shinrin-yoku have been studied by scientists and health experts. Being surrounded by trees and opening your senses to experiencing nature can lower stress levels, which in turn can boost immune systems. Trees such as evergreens secrete phytoncides which are believed to improve immune functions. People often express that they feel better and their mood is improved after spending time in the forest.

We are fortunate in Durham and the GTA to have so many accessible forested areas to practice forest bathing. In September of 2018, GIFT (Global Institute of Forest Therapy) designated Markham's Springdale Park as Canada's first forest therapy trail. Guided experiences with trained Shinrin-yoku guides are also an alternative if you prefer a more formal introduction to forest bathing. Check out <https://shinrinyokuguru.ca> to find out about inexpensive guided walks through the Rouge Urban Park or Whitby's Cullen Central Park. However, you don't need an official therapy trail or guided walk to enjoy the benefits of shinrin-

yoku; all you need is access to the many ravines, conservation areas and provincial parks which are within easy reach of our suburban homes.

So next time you find the walls closing in and you need to turn off the news, why not head to the closest wooded area and bathe in the forest atmosphere?

Mary Kadey

Mary's mushroom finds while practicing a little Shinrin-yoku at the cottage.



Plan For Fall Colours



Clockwise from top left, shrub Fothergilla, Colchicum, Oakleaf Hydrangea, fall Aster

Crown Shyness - A Form of Social Distancing?

Crown shyness, a naturally occurring phenomenon in many types of trees around the world, is observed as gaps between the top branches of adjacent trees. Usually, but not always, this occurs between trees of the same species. There are several theories why this occurs: prevent damage in the event of wind; prevent insect and disease transmission; allow



Trees exhibiting crown shyness, above

more light penetration to facilitate photosynthesis. How this occurs is also hypothetical. One hypothesis suggests trees limit their branch and leaf growth in areas where branches have been wind damaged from banging into and rubbing up against neighbouring trees. Another hypothesis suggests that trees have light sensors to enable them to 'move' away from the shade of adjacent trees to optimize exposure to light. There are also many studies showing that transmission of compounds, called allelochemicals, between plants may allow trees to 'talk' to each other to let the other know they are getting close. It just goes to show that the natural world has much to teach us and that social distancing is an important practice to survive and stay healthy.

Sherry Howard

One Hundred Years (and More) of Gardening Influences and Influencers

Part One: Feeding the Nation

There are those that believe life began in a garden, but no matter your thoughts on the parable, gardening has been an ever-changing part of our lives for thousands of years. The trends and positive influences gardening and gardeners have had in Canada over the past hundred years plus are of significant interest.

Early, organized community gardening had 3 primary functions: providing food for those in need, education and beautification. The appearance of these programs has appeared in overlapping cycles over the years and was often initiated in response to concerns or crises.



Above, CPR garden in Regina

In the 1890's as railways made their way across Canada, the CPR wanted to promote settlement in the west so began using station gardens to represent the fertility of the land. Meanwhile in the eastern regions, people living in urban areas felt the need to establish "railway gardens" for purposes of beautification.

School Gardens were developed beginning in the 1900's to help "educate the spirit" by absorption of information in the students' surroundings as well as through rote learning. Growing food for consumption by the students was also nutritionally important to many. After rapid expansion, the movement was overwhelmed by the onset of World War I and interests shifted away from gardening at school. (As a personal aside, my great aunt was a teacher in the early 1900's and one of the text books in her library was about the school garden program.)

However, WWI itself had a huge affect on agriculture and gardening. The loss of the young male workforce from the farm as they enlisted, and feeding both those involved in the war and those at home were driving factors behind this. To take some of the pressure off the farms providing food for the troops, everyone was encouraged to grow their own fruit and vegetables where possible and are sometimes referred to as Relief Gardens (a precursor to the Victory Gardens of WWII). With the men overseas, women and children were called in to help with the vital planting and harvests through programs such as the Farmerettes and Soldiers of the Soil. At a time when women were not part of the workforce, they were now able to show their mettle.

The increased demand in food production because of the war also required higher yield crops and fruit that ripened more rapidly with greater resistance to disease and insects. Plant breeding research was carried out at the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph to help with that cause.

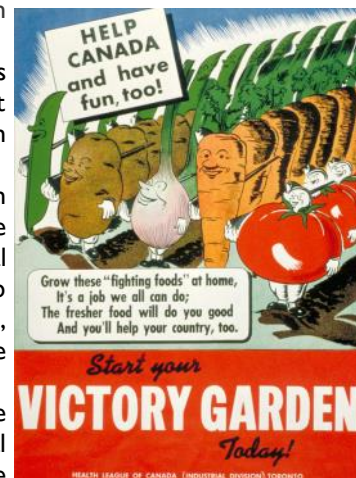
The years from 1900 to 1920 saw a flow of people from cities to rural properties with promotion by the CPR and the return of soldiers. This became known as the Country Life Movement. Rural life was regaled by many organizations including women's groups, agricultural colleges, universities, and agricultural clubs similar to 4H. The first Canadian agricultural club was established in Roland Manitoba in 1913 as an extension of the school gardening program, providing food and practical learning to the students. WWI had also brought to light the importance of the farmers and agriculture in the provision of food for the nation.

As the popularity of the agricultural clubs increased and spread across the country, the Federal Department of Agriculture and national agencies worked together to sponsor a national judging competition associated with the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. Coordination of the agricultural programs resulted in the formation of the Canadian Council on Boys and Girls Clubs in 1931. (In 1952 the "Boys and Girls Clubs" adopted the name 4-H as used in other countries.)

Following WWI, Canadians were still recovering from the after-effects of war, so vegetable gardens and orchards became an important source of food for the expanding population. The Great Depression exacerbated the need for food, and gardens sprang up in front yards and vacant lots, which led into the Victory Gardens of WWII. The Victory Gardens provided grass roots support for the war effort and acted as a diversion from the atrocities ever present in the headlines of the day. Therapeutic gardening, introduced in the 1800's, became part of the rehabilitation process for hospitalized war veterans from WWII.

The years between 1965 to 1979 saw an escalation in concerns about energy conservation, the environment and self-sufficiency leading to gardening as part of "The Counter-Culture Movement". Today's worries about food security and availability have developed into the ever-increasing popularity of Community Gardening as we know it, including what is now called "Guerilla gardening" on vacant properties. Today's community gardens not only help supply food, they are a place for social interaction and provide a way to be physically active. The onset of Covid-19 crisis this year has resulted in a substantial rise in the number of new gardeners playing in the soil.

So, as you can see, "plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose" (the more things change, the more they stay the same) applies to gardening as well as so many other things in life.



Above, WWII poster

Debi Foster

Collecting Seeds

How fun and rewarding it is to collect seeds from your garden but even more so when you can also share them. Collecting seeds is an economical means to filling in your garden spaces, perpetuating your favourite plants and in some cases preserving the gene pool of species plants or heirloom varieties. To get started, a few basics are required.

1. Firstly one needs to recognize different ways seeds are 'housed' or where they are formed. Here are some examples: seed pods - peas, columbines, lupines and love-in-a-mist; capsules - poppies; cones - pines; nuts; winged seeds - maples; dried flower head - zinnias, coneflowers; within fleshy fruit - tomatoes, berries, cucumbers.
2. Secondly, timing is important. When the growing season nears the end, allow flower heads, pods, etc, to shrivel, turn brown and become dried while still on the plant. Allow fleshy fruits and vegetables to ripen before scooping out the seeds. Seeds need to mature or ripen to become viable. Seed pods often let you know that seeds have ripened when a shake of the pod produces the sound of minute seeds rattling or if the dried pods start to split open. Timing can even be trickier if those seeds are a favourite of the birds and animals in your garden - you may have to keep a daily vigil so you don't miss out.
3. Collect seeds on a dry day. Further drying of seed heads and pods may still be required by simply leaving them on a paper towel in a warm dry space. Seeds from many flower heads like coneflowers, zinnias and marigolds are more easily visible once the dried petals crumble to release the seeds. Seeds from fleshy vegetables and fruits may be washed and dried on paper towel while the tiny gooey seeds from tomatoes can be smeared onto paper towel to dry.



L to R: lupin seed pods, marigold seeds



4. Once your seeds are dry, place them in paper envelopes that are labelled with the name of the plant and the year of harvest. These envelopes can in turn be stored in an air tight jar or ziplock bag in a cool dry place - moisture free is key. Once properly stored, seeds can last one, two three or more years depending on the source of the seeds.

Sherry Howard

L to R: seeds of sunflower and conflower

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Boat...

It started with a complaint. Old boats were being abandoned in the cottage park at public launch sites and contributing to high costs in cottager's fees to dispose of them at the municipal landfill. That piqued the interest of a fellow cottager who asked if we could strike a small committee to put these old boats to better use by turning them into planters. The plan is to start with one boat, and initially strategically place an old canoe at a community signpost where there has been a problem with speeding vehicles. The dual purpose of the canoe planter would be to slow traffic as drivers admired our horticultural efforts and also add a measure of natural beauty to this little corner of the park.

The canoe would be 'potted' up with plants native to the park, as well as other native perennials that would create visual interest throughout the three growing seasons. Wildflowers which are abundant in the park could include red trilliums, trout lilies, various ferns, milkweed, wild daisies, wild asters and fleabane, to name just a few. In addition, the intent is to supplement with other plants that are native pollinators, such as foxglove, beebalm, coneflowers, blackeyed Susans, speedwell, and blanketflower which all grow well in this northern climate in Zone 4a.

With a little elbow grease, creativity, and love of gardening, this project could have a positive environmental impact by repurposing materials which would otherwise end up in the landfill. In addition, using plants that are pollinators will encourage bees and butterflies to flourish in the park, yet another positive for the environment. So next summer, while some cottages may be singing "Row, row, row, your boat..." other cottages will be singing this same tune but adding the lyrics, "Grow, grow, grow your boat..."



Inspiration for a cottage park boat planter.

Mary Kadey

About the BHS Newsletter

This newsletter is published quarterly - February, May, August and October. **All photos courtesy of BHS members.** You are invited to submit articles, questions and comments about the newsletter to the **Editors: Audrey Atkinson** at 905-666-2178, audreyatkinson487@gmail.com, **Sherry Howard** at 905-668-7640, howard21@rogers.com, **Mary Kadey** at 416-388-0065, memkadey@gmail.com, **Barb Panowyk** at 905-430-2939, bpanowyk@rogers.com.