THE OTTAWA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

OHS NEWS

Fall 2016

Coming Events

Unless otherwise indicated the following events take place at 7:30 p.m. at the **Tom Brown Arena**, 141 Bayview Road. Consult the 2016 yearbook for a complete list of events for the year.

September 27
Fall Show
Real Tough Guys! Hardy Cacti for Canadian Gardens, Albert Mondor

October 25
The Perennial Plant Collector's Corner, Kerry Ann Mendez

November 22
Seasonal Greenery: Creative Winter Containers, Wreaths, and Centerpieces, Cindy Cluett

December 6
Annual General Meeting & Potluck Supper

The mission of the OHS is to cultivate an interest in plants and gardening in order to create a beautiful community.

Fall Newsletter

Fall Rituals: Planting Fall Bulbs

by Jennifer Mix

When winter loosens its grip on the land in March and April, our need for evidence of rejuvenation, for delight in the return of life, is not easily satisfied by the slow-growing perennials in our gardens. True, some do an efficient job of announcing spring, like the hellebores and hepaticas, but the finest harbingers are surely those muscular little envoys buried in the soil - spring-flowering bulbs. And now is the time to plant them. This is also the time to plant a variety of other bulbs, such as lilies, that will bloom later during the summer but need to go through a winter period first.

Soil preparation
Bulbs need friable soil, good drainage, and nutrients to keep the bulbs growing and reproducing for years. Start early by digging your bed to a depth of at least 8 inches, loosening the soil well. Work in a couple of inches of composted leaves, composted manure, or peat moss - more than a couple of inches if your soil is sandy. If you garden on clay, consider as well adding coarse sand to the mixture of composts and peat moss, or even lay gravel in the bottom of the bed to provide extra drainage. Bulbs will rot if they sit in water, so make sure your bed has the best drainage possible.

Where to plant
As well as good drainage, bulbs need full exposure to spring sun, which is weaker than mid-summer sun. Happily, spring bulbs often appear long before the trees leaf out, so that they receive maximum exposure early in the year. The leaves feed the bulb for as long as the leaves are green, so don't cut or hide the leaves under mulch. You can clean up the bed after the leaves have withered.

Using planters on your sunny patio or deck is another great way to get sunlight to your bulbs – the same soil conditions apply but you might want to add water-preserving crystals to the soil to make watering less onerous.

When to plant
In our climate, the best time to plant most bulbs is in late fall, when days are cooler. This is because you want the bulbs to start making roots in the fall, but not to send up stems, which they will do if the soil is warm. The daffodil/narcissus family should be planted around the middle to end of September. For all of the other bulbs, Thanksgiving is an ideal time, and some bulbs, such as tulips, can be planted as late as November.

How to plant
Now that you have a sunny location and well-dug, loose, rich soil, dig out an area large enough to accommodate at least a dozen bulbs to a depth of at least three times the size of your bulbs. Large bulbs, like lilies, daffodils, or tulips should go down at least six, and preferably eight, inches. Burying bulbs deep helps avoid the hazards of too-early growth in the fall and during the nasty freeze/thaw cycles in spring that can destroy flower buds. Position your bulbs with the pointy end up and the flat root plate down – seems silly to say that but... The enormous fritillary bulbs are traditionally planted on their side, to improve drainage.

Distribution
Plant the bulbs quite close together (two to three inches apart) in large groups, not singly and not in single file, so that when they bloom next spring, the bed looks full and rich. New bulblets that may form on the mother bulb during the summer will still have lots of room to grow. Tiny bulbs, like grape hyacinths, can be interplanted with larger bulbs, or planted in a layer of soil above the larger bulbs. Grape hyacinths planted above narcissi (daffodils) are a nice combination.

Additives
Many gardeners like to scatter and work in bone meal when planting bulbs. It's a great idea to boost the nutrients for your future bulbs, but make sure you keep the bone meal deep in the soil as the smell attracts squirrels and skunks looking for a tasty treat - no need to encourage them. Some people add slow-release fertilizer to the bed at this time as well.

What to plant
Try to choose bulbs that will bloom over an extended period of time, selecting early-, mid-, and late-blooming varieties. As the early bulbs fade, they are replaced by the next set of bloomers. Tulips, narcissi, and lilies - all have a wide variety of bloom times. This means you need to spend some time with your nose in a catalogue, always time well spent, as these lovelies are going to be with you for years to come. Don't forget fall-flowering bulbs, which you can buy and plant right now; with a bit of luck, they may flower within five or six weeks (see below).

Tulips – Botanus (www.botanus.com/) is offering red-and-white tulips for Canada's sesquicentennial next year. But if you're not a fan of red or white, nearly the rest of the rainbow is available in all sizes and bloom periods, from enormous Darwin hybrids right down to tiny botanical, or species, tulips. I have about 8 varieties of botanicals in my garden and plant more every chance I get. They are generally short, sometimes not even erect, but they win my vote for most agreeable, naturalizing, and friendly tulips around.

Tulipa 'Canadian Celebration', a Triumph tulip
Photo: Botanus

But there are at least 16 different forms of tulips, so there is a tulip for every taste. And don't forget fragrance in tulips.

Tulipa pulchella 'Eastern Star'
Photo: Botanus

Narcissi – For sheer joy, nothing beats a narcissus. Again, there is endless variety in height, colour, and bloom time. My favourite is the ancient and classic *N. poeticus recurvus*,

Narcissus poeticus recurvus
Photo: Botanus

but the early 'King Alfred' narcissus is the go-to bulb for mass plantings by the National Capital Commission, and it's a traffic stopper in huge drifts. Many narcissi are also fragrant, and in general make great cut flowers, naturalize easily, and require little maintenance. What's not to love?

Allium – An onion by any other name would smell as sweet. This family has seen intensive breeding to develop exotic colours, shapes, and flowers ranging from the 5-inch-wide globe of an *Allium christophii* to the lemon-yellow spray of *Allium luteum.*

Giant Allium mix
Photo: Veseys Seeds

Galanthus – The earliest of spring bulbs is the lovely snow drop, pure white petals drooping from intense green stalks. The first flower of *Galanthus nivalis* in your garden is something you report excitedly to fellow gardeners on first sighting it in the spring.

Crocus – Crocuses are most often seen in the basic three colours of blue/purple, white, and yellow/orange. But there are also lovely ones that are striped or even tri-coloured, and their flowering season can be extended by planting early- and late-flowering varieties. Crocuses are still a spring fave, flowering in clumps in flower beds or scattered about in the lawn.

Muscari – Blue or white grape hyacinths are so cheery, especially when blooming among contrasting spring flowers. Plant them in multitudes, blue and white together. Don't be surprised, though, when the leaves come up in the fall, to wait for the flower spikes in spring.

Muscari armenaicum 'Blue'
Photo: Botanus

Lilies – What can one say about lilies and the red lily beetle? If you haven't given up on growing lilies, good for you! Neem oil spray works to kill the eggs and grubs, so I am told. The tallest Trumpet lilies can reach six feet and produce a dozen enormous trumpet-shaped flowers on each stalk that exude the sweetest spicy fragrance. Patio lilies are popular now for growing in pots; they come in many colours and reach up to 14 inches in height.

Asiatic Lily 'Barcelona'
Photo: Veseys Seeds

Other interesting bulbs:

Eremurus bungei, or foxtail lily, is viable here with some protection and is a spectacular back-of-the-bed plant.

Eremurus sp., Photo: Botanus

Camassia sp. is a tall native with spires of ice-blue blooms topping long slender leaves. It deserves to be better known and planted more widely in your urban garden.

Camassia quamash 'Blue Melody'
Photo: Botanus

Colchicum autumnale, often called the Autumn crocus, meadow saffron or naked ladies, should not be confused with the true fall crocus, *Crocus speciosus*. Colchicums are fall-flowering bulbs that produce leaves in the spring to feed the bulb. After the leaves die back in summer, the plants are virtually invisible until flower stalks emerge in fall with large, luminous, single or double flowers in pink/magenta or white. Stunning and unusual.

Colchicum 'Waterlily'
Photo : Botanus

Sources

The usual suspects (Canadian Tire, Walmart, Costco) have packaged bulbs at discount prices but limited choices. For wider variety, try Ritchie Feed and Seed locally www.richiefeed.com, Botanus in Richmond, B.C. www.botanus.com/ or Veseys in York, P.E.I. www.veseys.com

President's Message

by James Robertson

There are lots of books, call-in radio shows, and television shows about gardening, and you can learn a lot about gardening on the Internet, but nothing beats the wisdom and experience that gardeners can pass on to each other. One of the major advantages of belonging to a horticultural society like the OHS is that it gives you an opportunity to learn from other gardeners – to benefit from their experience and to get their advice, whether it is on which plants work in our area or what to do about a problem you are experiencing.

The monthly meetings of the OHS are designed to improve the knowledge of our members. We try to bring in a variety of speakers on different topics so that experts can share their expertise. Many of our members enjoy attending as the talks broaden their knowledge, even if they are not directly affected by the topic. In addition to the speakers, however, the meetings also provide an opportunity for people to mingle and socialize informally. Many of our members have specific interests or expertise, and this is an unparalleled opportunity to ask questions and benefit from their knowledge.

Recently, we have experimented with two initiatives intended to encourage the exchange of information and knowledge. First, we are encouraging new (and newer) members to identify themselves, and be assigned a "mentor." Joining a new group can be a bit daunting; unless you are particularly outgoing, it can be challenging to meet and talk to people. Our plan is to help ease the entry of new members, and to make them feel more welcome. This is a way for new members to meet existing members and start to feel part of the Society. We hope that new members will take advantage of this program, and that existing members will agree to mentor them.

The other initiative is to have a formal Help Desk at our meetings. If you have a gardening question or problem, let us know. We will try to put you in touch with an OHS member who can help. We want to make it easier for people to get advice and assistance from other people. If you have a problem or a question, bring it along and we will try to help you. We have started compiling a list of members with their interests and expertise – let us know if we can add your name!

One thing about gardening is that there is always something new to learn. The exchange of information and experiences is a fundamental part of the OHS mandate. We want to encourage new gardeners, and help them along. We all benefit and learn from this.

Tuck in your Garden for the Winter

by Nancy Seppala,
Retired Master Gardener

Reprinted with permission from Trowel Talk, Newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton. Edited to conform with the OHS newsletter format.

When heavy frosts settle on your garden causing some of the most beautiful plants to blacken, that is your warning. If you have procrastinated doing your fall chores, get busy now. It's time.

Miscanthus with light shining on it
Photo: *Monique Paré*

When cutting back perennials, be selective. Recently I saw goldfinches atop the cones of my purple coneflowers (*Echinacea*) that I had already decided to leave as birdseed for winter. Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia*), sea holly (*Eryngium*), and globe-thistle (*Echinops*) are in that same category. Avoid cutting back plants you believe will provide winter interest. Ornamental grasses, especially *Miscanthus* cultivars, can be spectacular when the winter sun backlights their silvery seed-heads and icy winds set them swaying. The taller sedums also have their place throughout winter as their heads poke through the snow.

Leave evergreen and semi-evergreen perennials as well. Bugleweed (*Ajuga*), coral bells (*Heuchera*), and elephant ears (*Bergenia*) should wait until spring for any trimming. You can cut other plants such as daylilies, Siberian iris, hostas and phlox now. This will clean up the garden considerably and spotlight the plants that are staying.

Evergreen leaves of Bergenia should not be cut back in the fall
Photo: Monique Paré

This fall, protect your small trees and shrubs from rodent and rabbit damage. Wrap a protective guard around them; white tubing and chicken wire come to mind. You can also paint repellent on the lower bark for added protection. Apparently it tastes terrible and should keep the pests away. Remember that majestic Siberian Crabapple you proudly brought home from the garden centre last spring and gave a place of honour in your front yard? It would be a shame to lose it because some hungry critter had nibbled the bark all around the trunk.

Lift and properly store your tender bulbs and tubers. It may be tempting to leave dahlias, gladioli and canna lilies deep in the ground over our Ottawa winter, but I guarantee you: next spring you'll find only mushy remains. I know. I've tried.

Check the depth to which you have planted your roses. If grafted, even our Ottawa-hardy Explorer and Parkland series roses need to have their bud unions (the bump at the base of the plant) at least 10 centimetres (4 inches) below the soil level to ensure they survive the vagaries of our winters. If necessary, hill them up with extra soil and replant more deeply in the spring.

Collect any seeds you want to save. Before storing them, ensure they are clean and dry. Don't bother taking seeds of a "hybrid" plant as they won't turn out like the parent. Continue watering your trees and shrubs, particularly evergreens, right up until the ground freezes.

Rain barrels should be drained and stored upside down. Extend the downspouts to direct water away from the house's foundation
Photo: Nancy Seppala

And don't forget to drain your water barrel completely. When even a few centimetres of water freeze, the ice could expand not only upwards but also sideways, splitting the barrel.

Fall days, especially bright sunny ones, are perfect for working outdoors. Seize the opportunity; complete these and other garden chores before the snow flies.

Did You Know?

The Spring 2016 issue of Canadian Gardener was the last one to be produced, as the magazine has ceased publication. Subscribers will receive Canadian Living as a replacement for double the number of issues remaining on the subscription.

October TO DO list

- It's not too late to plant spring bulbs but they should be planted ASAP to allow the roots to establish. Tulips are more forgiving than daffodils for late season planting.
- If there is a tree or shrub that you want to wrap for winter protection, hammer the supports in now before the ground freezes. Only add the burlap or perennial blanket (white felt-like cloth) after the ground has frozen and rodents have already found their winter home. Fall is a good time to pull up weeds so that you're off to a fresh start next spring.
- Clean and oil your tools before putting them away for the winter to prevent rust.
- Make sure you have any seed-starting supplies (such as pots) stored in the house or garage (so that you're not trying to shovel out your garden shed in March)

Fall Ritual – Harvesting Herbs

with contributions from
Lynn Armstrong, Sheila Burvill,
Richard Guerette, and Rebecca Last

While it's a delight to be able to walk out into the garden during the summer to pick fresh herbs for cooking, a little bit of preparation in the fall will let you use those same herbs through the winter and early spring months, until next year's crop makes its appearance. Here are some tips for specific herbs:

Basil
Basil is rather a delicate herb but it is possible to preserve it for later use.

I grow the spicy globe or fine leaf basil, both of which form round, ball-shaped plants. I trim them to garnish salads through the summer and to keep them from going to seed. Before there is threat of frost in the fall, I harvest the whole plant, cut off the root, and put the ball of leaves into a large zip lock bag in the freezer. Once it is frozen, crunching the whole bag will make the leaves fall off the stems. Then I quickly remove the stems from the bag and discard them, and return the bag, now containing only the leaves, to the freezer. The leaves can then be used in sauces, etc.

It is also possible to process basil into pesto, which can then be frozen for future use. Here is a recipe adapted from Marcella Hazan's 'The Classic Italian Cookbook'. It can be doubled or tripled if there is a lot of basil:

2 cups fresh basil leaves
½ cup olive oil
2 tablespoons pine nuts
2 cloves garlic, lightly crushed and peeled
1 teaspoon salt

Put all these ingredients into a blender or food processor and mix until a smooth paste results.

For freezing, first portion the pesto into jars or sturdy plastic bags. It's useful to write the volume of pesto on the container.

Later, to use the pesto, thaw out the appropriate amount and mix in some grated Parmesan cheese and, optionally, smaller amount of Pecorino Romano to taste. (A generous ¼ cup of cheese per cup of pesto works well.)

Italian Parsley
I chop off the entire plant and pick off each leaf. Then I wash the leaves and spin them dry in a salad spinner. I roll out a long length of waxed paper and place the leaves in one layer along the length and let them dry for another hour or so. Then I roll the paper up from one of the short ends until the entire length has been captured. I put the roll of waxed paper into a plastic bag, make sure it is well sealed, and put it into the freezer. When I need some parsley for a recipe, I open the bag, unroll the paper until I have as much parsley as I need, remove it, and re-roll the remainder before re-sealing it in the bag for returning it to the freezer. The parsley can be used for any cooked recipe. (It's no good as a garnish.)

Rosemary
Method 1 – cut off sprigs from your plants, trim off any dead needles, wash and dry the twigs, put them in sturdy zip-lock bags, and place them in the freezer. When you want to use the frozen rosemary, thaw out as much as you'll need for the recipe.

Method 2 – pot up the entire plant and place it in a sunny location in the house. You can then use it just as you did through the summer. Note, though, that you'll need to water the plant regularly, letting the soil dry out between waterings. Also note that as light levels decrease, the new growth will become spindly and the needles not as aromatic. Pruning such feeble twigs will help keep the plant more attractive and will promote a bushier specimen when it comes time to re-plant it in the garden. In my experience, you can bring in the same rosemary plant through two winters before the plant begins to lose its vigour.

Sage
Pick off individual leaves, and wash and dry them well. Dry them either by using a food dryer machine, or simply by laying them out on paper towels. Be sure no leaf is covered by another. It takes a week or even more for the sage leaves to become completely dry; a light covering with a dish towel or more paper towels will keep the dust off. Store the dried leaves in a dry, air-tight opaque glass, ceramic, or metal container.

Thyme
You can cut off the short twigs of thyme, wash and dry them, and then put them into a plastic bag to place in the freezer.
Alternatively, you can wash the twigs, leave them out to dry thoroughly, and then run your fingers along the twigs to remove the thyme leaves for storage in an opaque air-tight container. Use a spice grinder if you need to powder the thyme.

Another Method of Preserving Herbs

With some herbs, you can conserve them in a jelly. Here's a useful recipe from Rebecca Last and Richard Guerette using rosemary.

Ingredients:

- 750 mL red wine
- 4½ cups sugar
- 3-4 sprigs of fresh rosemary
- 1 pouch liquid CERTO
- ½ cup lemon juice
- Yield = 6 x 250 mL jars

Note:
Follow method in CERTO package insert. Recipe can be used for white wine jellies and a variety of herb diffusions.

Method:
Sterilize clean mason jars in oven at 250ºF for 20 minutes.

Simmer rosemary in red wine for 15-20 minutes (wine should fill less than half the pot because mixture will double in size when boiled)

Remove rosemary. Add sugar and lemon. Bring to a full, rolling boil and boil hard for 1 minute. Add CERTO, boil hard for another minute. Remove from heat, skim foam as required and can.

Fall Ritual - Taking Stock

by Sheila Burvill

Many gardeners start to lay out plans for next year's garden starting around January when plant and seed catalogues start arriving. But by then, the memories of what worked and what didn't during the past year have faded, and gazing at garden beds inches deep in snow doesn't much help to revive the memories.

A useful thing to do in the fall, then, is to note what needs to be done to improve the aesthetic appearance of the beds and to give some plants better growing conditions. In addition, it's a way of calculating just how much room you'll have for those tempting new plants you'd like to acquire. This year, noting which plants successfully survived the summer drought will be useful information for the future.

You might want to take a series of photos to give you a visual reference. Or if you have a garden plan already on paper, bring it up to date. Alternatively you might want to just prepare a "To Do" list for the coming year.

No matter what method you use, for sure you'll be grateful next spring that you took the time to take stock of your garden this fall.

The National Capital Commission's Botanical Plan

by the Editors

In June 2016, the National Capital Commission issued a draft of the plan for the capital region that will guide their decisions and actions over the period of 2017 to 2067. The plan will inevitably influence decisions and actions of other bodies in the national capital region.

Of particular interest to gardeners and horticulturalists is this item in section 8.3:

The National Botanical Garden
The NCC will support the establishment of a National Botanical Garden on the west side of the Rideau Canal to create a beautiful new national attraction, and to highlight innovation in the development of landscapes and plants in Canada.

Of course, this is still just a draft of the plan so changes may very likely be made before it is officially in force. Still, proponents of a botanical garden located in Ottawa must be heartened by its inclusion.

Elsewhere in the draft document are mentions of the Central Experimental Farm as a "National Institution" (section 4.3), and the Arboretum as "not presently used in an active scientific research program" (also in section 4.3).

Will the sections quoted above result in a national botanical garden being created sometime soon? Will NCC's planning dovetail with the business plan formulated by the Canadensis Botanical Garden Society? Will the Friends of the Farm and the folk who have established and maintained the Fletcher Wildlife Garden be involved?

Indeed, is the NCC envisioning the site for the garden as the same one for which Canadensis is actively planning?

We'll keep in touch with the NCC and Canadensis developments and report on progress as it happens in future newsletter articles.

Did You Know?

September 21 is National Tree Day in 2016. The Dominion Arboretum, which was founded in 1889, is celebrating this day by having a special tree tour at noon. The tour leaders want to welcome you, on behalf of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the Friends of the Farm, to a short demo on tree planting. They will also answer your questions about tree care and give some pointers on looking after their favorite trees. Approximate duration: 1 hr.

Leaders: Jacob Shepherd, Robert Glendinning
Starting time: 12 noon, at Building 72 in the Arboretum

Horticultural Courses at the University of Guelph

by Tuula Talvila

When September rolls around each year, many of us still get that old back-to-school feeling. Following the languid weeks of August, the cooler, crisper days carry in a desire for a refreshing start of something new. For some of us, it really will be time for going back to school.

For the past couple of years I have been taking online courses through the University of Guelph's Open Learning and Educational Support program. This September I'll be starting "Designing the Landscape", my fifth course towards the Horticulturist Certificate. The seven courses required for this certificate cover the topics of plant identification, soils, plant growth, insect pests and plant diseases, garden design, cultural practices for plants, and weed management.

The 12-week courses are offered with start dates in September, January, and May. As far as I can tell, enrolment is limited to fifty students and the courses often fill up. Some courses have a printed course manual which is mailed to students, but for many, if not most, the course learning material is available only online. Each week there is material to read, maybe some questions to research, and online discussion groups in which to participate with your classmates. Graded work consists of online quizzes or tests, written assignments to submit electronically, and participation in the discussions. This work is graded by the instructor, who also takes part in some of the discussions and, in theory, is always available to respond to students' questions about the material. Some instructors are terrific - very engaged with the students, supportive and kind - while some are less involved.

The students who comprise the courses live in a wide variety of locations, mostly, but not solely, in Canada, and come from diverse backgrounds. There is often a large cohort of retirees who have been lifelong gardeners or are just getting into gardening; usually also a group of municipal employees working in city parks; nursery owners and staff; and aspiring horticulturists. Some of the students are already extremely knowledgeable about horticulture and I have learned a lot from them; most are very helpful and friendly. One tends to start to see familiar names in the enrolment and it's always nice to share a course with someone I got to know in a previous course. For anyone with technological inexperience or insecurities, students and instructors are usually quick to lend a helping hand.

Tuition for each course is not exactly cheap at $545 (that's the early-bird price!), so one might be less inclined to register simply for casual interest rather than because of professional or academic pursuits. Tax receipts are issued and the tuition is income tax deductible.

Because three of the courses for the Horticulturist Certificate can be used to satisfy the educational requirement for becoming a Master Gardener, I have run into many OHS members who have taken at least some of these courses. Anyone I've talked to who has taken the "Cultural Practices for Plants" course seems to have fond memories of the kind soul who is that particular instructor.

In addition to the Horticulturist Certificate, there are further enticing opportunities for online studies. One option is to continue and obtain a Horticulturist Diploma; this requires an additional three courses after completion of the Certificate. Alternatively, there are other Certificates that sound appealing, such as "Creating Landscapes" and "Sustainable Urban Horticulture". Or for those pursuing something vocational, maybe "Growing Plants for Profit" or "Maintaining Golf Courses" might be more your thing. Most of the other Certificate programs require five or six courses and usually have some overlap with the Horticulturist Certificate course requirements.

One needn't be pursuing a Certificate to register for individual courses from any of the horticulture-related programs. With almost forty courses on offer, one could pick and choose from topics such as "Arboriculture", "Food Processing for Urban Gardeners", "Plant Propagation", "The Naturalized Landscape", or "Introduction to Landscape Construction". Very few of the courses have pre-requisites and so can be taken in any order, as many or as few as you like at one time. So far I have done only one course per term and, after taking one in the summer term and regretting being inside on the computer *reading* about plants instead of being outside in my garden *with* the plants, I intend always to take the summer term off.

These online courses are the latest format for the correspondence courses that were developed at the Ontario Agricultural College, starting in 1960. The College was one of the three founding colleges that came together to form the University of Guelph in 1964. At the time, the correspondence diploma program consisted of fifteen courses taken over three years. Courses were on such subjects as landscape contracting, parks management, nursery operation, and processing crop production. As the program developed, courses were added in urban forestry, in landscape design, and in various aspects of horticultural maintenance.

Online courses might not appeal to everyone and I wasn't sure how I would like them myself, but I have enjoyed them a lot and always look forward to the start of a new term. I tend not to like reading large amounts of material on a screen, and so I usually print it out and make notes on it as I read. I like the flexibility the course format affords in terms of when I do my work. I've enjoyed some interesting discussions with my classmates and instructors, and often learn a lot beyond the syllabus by pursuing a topic further for my own interest's sake.

There *is* some variability in the quality of the content and organization between courses (one course had so many errors in the quizzes that it became difficult to understand the questions), as well as in the level of involvement of the instructors. Overall, though, I'd say the courses provide a decent basic level of knowledge about many topics of horticulture.

Just prior to getting started writing this article, I was at my childhood home in

Toronto helping my mother prepare her house for sale. As I was looking through my late father's large collection of books, I moved aside some binders to get a better look at the shelves of gardening books. Peeking inside one of the binders, by happy coincidence I found what appears to be a complete set of materials for the Ontario Agricultural College's "Horticultural Correspondence Course for the Home Gardener" from 1966. I don't know whether or not my father actually did the course (there were no notes by him, just the printed reading materials), but I feel sure that he would be happy to know it's what I'm pursuing now. Like gardening, lifelong learning was natural for him and I'm happy to be carrying on the interests he instilled in me.

For more information, see:
Guelph online horticulture program website: https://www.guelphhort.com/
"The College on the Hill: New History of the Ontario Agricultural College, 1874-1999" Alexander M. Ross and Terry Crowley. Dundurn 1999. 224 pp. (can be accessed through Google books)

Movie Review: Painting the Modern Garden: Monet to Matisse

by Kathryn Mikoski

Just as summer was about to start in earnest, I attended a very inspirational film at my local cinema that was a feast for the eyes. It was part of the series "Exhibition on Screen" that brings major art exhibits from around the world to cinemas nearby. This one was based on an exhibition named 'Painting the Modern Garden: Monet to Matisse' at the Cleveland Museum of Art in late 2015 and at the Royal Academy of Arts in London this past January–April 2016. The exhibition examined the role gardens played in the evolution of art from the 1860's to the 1920's. Impressionists, Post Impressionists and Avante-garde artists such as Van Gogh, Matisse, Pissarro, Sargent, and especially Monet were represented.

The film flows seamlessly from contemporary photographs of flowers and gardens to paintings. Articulate curators, historians, and gardeners discuss how artists such as Monet developed their own gardens in order to create their paintings. Monet's garden grew out of his own interest in working with plants as a young man. As he grew older and his eyesight failed, his gardening and his painting became almost one. Although not the only garden in the film, Giverny is well represented – its still pools filled with waterlilies, its riotously colourful borders, and its bountiful arbours. The paintings in the exhibition run the gamut from realistic to wildly abstract reflections of the shapes, lines, perspectives, and colours. I have come away with some structural ideas I am planning to incorporate into my own garden over the next year!

I would encourage any garden lover to see this film. It may be repeated in the local theatres, or you may be able to download it or purchase a DVD. Keep your eye on your Cineplex website and www.exhibitiononscreen.com for your next chance to soak in the beauty.

A Superficial Appreciation of Gardens in Japan

by Sheila Burvill

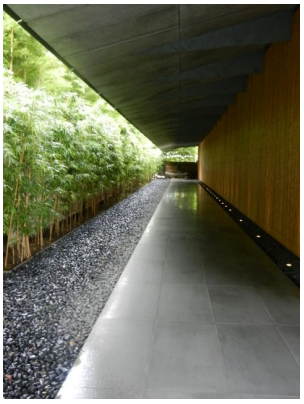
My interest in Japanese gardens was piqued in the first place by a backyard garden located up the street from where I live; it was designed along Japanese lines and was all carefully manicured and all green. Then I attended a fascinating presentation to the OHS given by Rob Brandon on the Zen gardens of Kyoto. Shortly afterwards, I found out that one can visit a Zen garden in the Ottawa area at the Canadian Museum of History in Hull. (Hint: it's at the back of the curatorial building, on the second level.) And then I had the opportunity to tour a wonderful Japanese stroll garden situated in cottage country in the hills north of Gatineau.

So, when I had the chance, in September 2014, to visit Japan myself, you can bet that Japanese gardens were at the top of my "to do" list. In fact, the first morning in Tokyo, my husband and I headed out to visit the east garden of the Imperial Palace, located in a vast walled green area right in the middle of town. We got there so early we had to wait until the guards slowly opened the old gates into the palace grounds.

The east garden is quite big, with vast swathes of grasses and terraced rows of low hedges, and so probably not at all typical of traditional Japanese gardens. It's more like Hyde Park in London, albeit with Asian plants and trees predominating.

The garden we visited in the afternoon, Koishikawa-Koraku-en, is an old traditional stroll garden. It is lovely and well used, with families, serious photographers, young couples and old ones (such as my husband and me) all enjoying the varied landscapes that emerged and then vanished as we followed the winding pathways around the extensive grounds. Beautiful bridges, varied water features, carefully placed and manicured groups of evergreens and other plants, clumps of grasses, small huts and shelters, old garden ornaments and memorials, groves of statuesque trees – all the elements of Japanese gardens were there. The garden, begun in 1629, was once in the domain of a powerful shogun, and is now only one-quarter of its original size. Though clearly designed to provide a pleasant respite from everyday pressures and to allow city-bound officials an opportunity to enjoy nature, today it has a large and noisy baseball stadium on one side and towering high-rises on the other. But perhaps that just underlines how the garden still carries out its original function. Even though you couldn't call the atmosphere peaceful, what with the boom-boom beats of music, loud cheers, and chants from the baseball crowd, the folk in the garden still strolled about to enjoy the beauty there and the quiet between innings.

Also in Tokyo is the Nezu Museum, a beautifully designed building whose bamboo-lined entrance path sets the tone for what you find behind it. The building sits above a shallow ravine whose slopes have been sensitively planted along the winding pathways, and with a stream dividing the garden area into various sections. Indeed, the entire garden space is not very large in area, but you can easily spend hours there without retracing your steps once. The museum building contains an important personal collection of pottery and other artifacts donated by a Japanese industrialist, but the garden also houses a unique collection – this one of teahouses, outdoor sculptures, and even a small riverboat of traditional design. Large trees provide shade and give a sense of being in a quiet backwater instead of a high-end commercial neighbourhood. Quite my favourite garden in Tokyo.



The ancient former capital of Nara is the home of two well-known stroll gardens, both of which perfectly illustrate the maxim that to be truly lovely, a garden should not reveal everything in it all at once. There should be a sense of mystery and subsequent discovery as you move about a garden. Isui-en and Yoshiki-en once were one garden, but the latter was divided out and redesigned around 1900. It has the charming characteristic of giving free entry to anyone with a foreign passport. If you've ever looked at a book about Japanese gardens, you've most likely seen pictures of Isui-en, so famous are

the views from the teahouse over a pond towards a small hillside where the roofs of an important ancient temple complex may be seen.

Well, I won't describe every garden we visited. Suffice it to say that they all impressed you with the harmonious proportions and symbolism inherent in Japanese garden design. Stones in a pond, for instance, clearly hadn't just tumbled in willy-nilly. They had been carefully chosen and sited very precisely, some having been shipped long distances, just to evoke a particular locality elsewhere in Japan. Or they might be of a specific shape to reference a far-off famous mountain. Indeed it was that combination of thoughtful aesthetic sensibility applied to plant material and other natural elements to achieve a rich and meaningful design which seemed to be the essence of a Japanese garden. All quite wonderful and enchanting.

And yet...

After a while it all got a bit much for me – the stylization of plants, views, landscaping techniques, and hardscaping components of gardens in Japan. I began to long for some wildness, some sense that plants had intrinsic beauty just the way they naturally grew, some use of the landscape as it was and not as man arranged it to be, some breaking away from reverence for the old. Impressive though ancient trees might be just because of their age or historical relevance, it seemed to me that at times the reverence went too far. For instance, look at these trees in the Kenroku-en garden, located in Kanazawa and reputed to be one of the three most beautiful gardens in Japan. These trees are very old and have been pruned through the ages to achieve an asymmetrical and horizontal shape. But look at the infrastructure required to hold up the long branches.

I leave it to you to decide whether they add to the beauty or detract from it. Then when I saw garden workers up on elegant ladders plucking off pine needles individually from trees, it brought home to me just how much human intervention went into changing natural plants into an idealization of the plant.

Member to Member

What's in a Name? Kalanchöe

by Robin Woods

Members of the genus *Kalanchöe* are common house plants here in Canada. Nearly half of the about 125 species come from Madagascar; including *K. blossfeldiana* (Flaming Katy), *K. daigromontiana* (Devil's Backbone), *K. kotomentosa* (Pussy Ears or Panda Plant), and *K. tubiflora* (Chandelier Plant). Many of them are succulent and grow vegetative plantlets on the leaf margins.

The origin of the name *Kalanchöe* is interesting. Sometime in the 1690s, Georg Joseph Kamel (a.k.a. Camellus), a Czech Jesuit missionary and naturalist in the Philippines, came across an unfamiliar plant. He asked the local Chinese what it was called and was told that its name was *jia lan cai*, which translates as "Buddhist temple herb". Kamel collected extensively in the Philippines and published an account of his work, *Herbs and Medicinal Plants of the Island of Luzon*, in 1697/8. It seems likely that *jia lan cai* was *Kalanchöe ceratophylla*, the Christmas Tree Plant, as Kamel apparently described it as having deeply divided leaves. In 1763, Michel Adanson, a French botanist, published his *Familles naturelles des plantes*, in which he included a description of the genus *Kalanchöe*. Adanson gave Kamel credit for the name and said that it came from the Chinese *Kalanchauhuy*, which is probably derived from *jia lan cai*. The accepted pronunciation of *Kalanchöe* is kal-un-koh-ee, rhyming with Chlöe.

Kamel died in Manila in 1706, and in 1753 Linnaeus named the genus *Camellia* in his honour. Beautiful.

Member to Member

On the Trail of Lasting Heucheras

by Gloria Sola

There are OHS members who have a special interest in particular groups of plants. For some time now, we've been asking such gardeners to share their expertise by telling us about their favourite varieties, so that we can look for them when shopping for plants.

In this installment of the series, we've asked Gloria Sola for her favourite heucheras. As you'll see, Gloria has also asked other heuchera afficionados to add to her recommendations.

Heucheras have become some of the most sought-after plants for our perennial gardens. This is not so much because of any stunning flowers, but rather because of their varied and colourful foliage, which provides colour throughout the seasons.

I was asked to recommend some heucheras. This is difficult because, even if they have been well-planted and at the correct depth, success with heucheras depends, I believe, on two important factors. First, that the particular cultivar is hardy for our area; reading labels carefully before buying will help, but heuchera hardiness is not always thoroughly tested by breeders and some heucheras, regardless of the rating on the label, will not prove hardy here. The second factor necessary for success with heucheras is siting them in the correct location. This means providing a location with the proper amount of shade and sunlight for that cultivar, in moist but well-draining soil. I've taken several heucheras to the brink of extinction, and saved them only by moving them to what has become "Heuchera Alley" in my garden. There they get between 3-4 hours of direct sun (11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.) and suitably well-drained soil.

Heucheras are native exclusively to North America. They can be found in middle to southern U.S. woodlands and in crevices in the Rockies, but no matter where they originate, heucheras need good drainage.

Here are a few hardy and relatively easily-sourced heucheras to look for. They are listed by leaf colour. Incidentally, our own OHS plant sales are good places to shop for heucheras, because it means that not only have the varieties on offer survived, but they are of sufficient size to be divided. That is how I obtained "Chocolate Ruffles," "Lime Rickey", and a replacement "Marmalade". (Thank you to the anonymous donors.)

Silver

- Silver Scrolls: very large silvery leaves and a large plant.

- Hollywood: a medium- to small-leaved burgundy-silver plant; outstanding because of its red spires of double flowers; needs good drainage and part-shade.

Purple/Brown/Black

- Chocolate Ruffles: an extremely hardy plant; forms a large mound of large, ruffled leaves with a purple underside; easily propagated; very floriferous; seems to do well wherever.

Chocolate Ruffles
Photo: Gloria Sola

- Palace Purple: one of the originals that set us on this coloured path; is easily found at a reasonable price; newer offerings are perhaps not as impressive as earlier ones; younger plants may have rounded leaves, but older plants have maple-like leaves that are bronze-green to purple in colour with magenta undersides.

- Obsidian: an almost black-leaved heuchera; needs good drainage; also needs good siting

Member to Member

to showoff its very shiny leaves; being surrounded by black mulch or compost does not help it stand out.

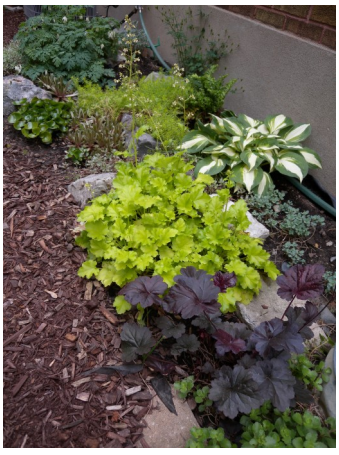
Green/Chartreuse

- Green Spice: a very hardy, medium-sized plant with slightly silvered leaves with maroon venation; grows quickly with insignificant flowers which are often cut off; seems to do well wherever.

Green Spice
Photo: Gloria Sola

- Apple Crisp: a beautiful, bright green small- to medium-sized plant with extremely frilly leaves.

- Lime Rickey: a very hardy, wide spreading plant with bright, chartreuse, scalloped leaves and white bells.



Lime Rickey and Obsidian
Photo: Gloria Sola

Orange/Yellow

- Caramel: one of the best golden, caramel-coloured heucheras; very hardy; is currently very popular and relatively easy to source.

- Ginger Ale: may be hard to source, but I include it because it is one of my favourites; it does change colours through the season, becoming brighter as summer progresses; has delicate, yellow bells and has been hardy for me

- Citronelle: a bright, yellow-leaved plant which really stands out, especially in the spring

Red

- Georgia Peach: possibly one of the nicest coloured heucheras with various shades of peach, deep pink and reddish large leaves; flowers with white bells; needs good drainage.

Georgia Peach
Photo: Gloria Sola

- Berry Smoothie: a striking burgundy-coloured plant with large leaves; in my North-facing front yard, gets about 6 hours of sun (10 a.m.-4 p.m.).

- Fire Alarm: a newer heuchera with very red leaves.

- Fire Chief: another newer heuchera with very red leaves.

I asked a few people which were their favourite heucheras and this was the response:

Robb Wainwright – Obsidian; Kristin Kendall – Crème Brulée (reliably found at Rideau Woodland Ramble); Nathalie Chaly - Autumn Bride (large, light green, fuzzy leaves with lots of plumes of white flowers in late summer), Petite Pearl Fairy (very small with lots of dark flower stems and white flowers, from Kiwi Gardens); and Sheila Burvill – Rio (large red-toned leaves, bought at Kiwi Gardens).

Heucheras are evergreen and, once the snow melts in the spring, you will see a bunch of tatty leaves. Wait until the new growth has produced sufficient leaves to provide nutrition to the plant; then cut off the old leaves and clean up the plant. Newly-planted heucheras may heave in the winter; some mulch will help keep them in their place.

Once your heucheras have been in the ground for a few years, you will notice they get woody stalks. There are two ways of dealing with this. One way is to divide the plant and get more plants. Another way is to lift the plant, dig its original hole wider and deeper, add some fresh soil and compost, and plunge the entire plant back into its renovated home, burying the woody stalks.

There are many, many more selections of heucheras, with new ones appearing every year; some are seen once, then never again. I was recently at one nursery and although I think I am familiar with many heucheras, of the twenty or so they had, I recognized about four.

Did You Know?

On May 18, 2016, OHS member and former President, Blaine Marchand, was presented with a very handsome metal peony sculpture by the Canadian Peony Society in recognition of his “outstanding contributions, leadership, and dedication” to the Society.

Member to Member

The War Against the Scillas: Report on the 2016 Campaign

by Sheila Burvill

In the April 2016 issue of the OHS newsletter, I wrote about my long-running, ongoing war against the scillas in my garden. I thought you might like to know how the battle went this year.

First of all, I must say the overall strategy of starving them out through a -step process, - removing spent flowers first, and then any foliage a week or two later - seems to be working. Not perfectly, because there were still areas where many scillas were intensively grouped together. But it was apparent that the parts of the garden that had been blitzkrieged the previous year now held many fewer plants.

However – the scillas seem to have enlisted two allies to help protect them from my ravages.

The ground underneath the back fences was rife with the little blue flowers. Since it's very difficult to get my fingers and trowels under the fence, for now at least, the scillas have found a secure retreat. But I am determined that they shall not escape again; they may have their shelter but they will not be allowed to leave it.

In addition, the periwinkle bed out front is betraying me. That periwinkle had already killed off two very nice hostas, and I had ceded the entire bed to periwinkles and periwinkles alone. So imagine my horror when I found quite a few scillas popping up all over among the periwinkle. This was most annoying as the scillas and periwinkle were in bloom at the same time, but in different shades of blue that did not look good together at all. Still, one or other of them will win out eventually.

The collateral damage in 2016 included some Crocosmia (Montbretia) 'Lucifer'. Who knew how similar their emerging shoots are to mature scilla leaves? A greater precision of attack will be exercised in 2017.

The Binomial Nomenclature of Plants

by Robin Woods

The majority of gardeners refer to plants in two ways: by their common and by their scientific names. Most of us recognise common names such as "peony" or "marigold" and can immediately picture the plants to which they refer. However, with respect to scientific names in Latin, many gardeners question the use of an archaic language that they have either never studied or did so many years ago. From earliest times, plants (and animals) were given names in Latin; each name was a description of physical characteristics of the plant or animal. The disadvantage of this polynomial system was that these Latin descriptions could be lengthy and cumbersome. The use of common names was even more problematic because plant names varied according to language and location.

These two problems prompted Carl von Linnaeus (1707 - 1778) to devise a simple naming system that we use to this day. In 1753, Linnaeus published his book *Species Plantarum*, a revolutionary work setting out his binomial system. He retained the use of Latin, the universal language of scholars, so that names could be translated and understood by naturalists from different countries.

In the Linnaean system, referred to now as binomial nomenclature, any plant (or animal) has just one name but with two parts. The first part identifies the organism as belonging to a particular genus, a grouping of plants that are closely related: for example, the genus *Rosa*. The second part, the specific epithet, assigns the plant to a species within that genus. The first letter of the genus is always capitalised and both the genus and the species names are italicised in print, or underlined in handwriting. The scientific name of the Dog Rose is *Rosa canina*; *Rosa* is the genus and *canina* is the specific epithet. Thus each species has a unique name without the need for a lengthy descriptor. These scientific names are universal and refer to the same plant irrespective of the locality in which it grows and the local language.

Linnaeus used genus and species names from the existing literature, and also created additional ones based on his own studies. In formal writing, we recognise the originator of a name by adding one or more initials after the name of a genus or species. For example, the genus *Camellia* is given as *Camellia* L. as it was first named by Linnaeus; similarly the Dog Rose is *Rosa canina* L. There is a wide range of options to choose from in applying generic names and specific epithets. They can refer to an individual: *Kalanchöe blossfeldiana* - named for Karl Blossfeld; they can name a location : *Iris sibirica*; they can be a descriptive term from Latin or Greek: *Kalanchöe arborescens* (Latin: tree-like); they can be a word from another language: *Zea mays* (from the Taino *mahiz* via Spanish); they may describe a particular habitat: *Senecio fluviatilis* (Latin: associated with rivers or streams); or they can draw attention to a feature of morphology/appearance: *Ranunculus repens* (Latin: creeping).

Some names are more whimsical than descriptive. For example, the genus name *Muilla* SW was given by Sereno Watson to three species found in Southern California. He thought the flowers of these species resembled those of onions, in the genus *Allium*, and he just reversed the spelling to *Muilla*!

There are many rules about the formulation of plant names in Latin, but as most of us are unlikely to name a plant they need not concern us and we can leave it to the International Code of Nomenclature (ICN) for Algae, Fungi and Plants to provide new names correctly.

Member to Member

Plants We Hate

by Margaret Scratch

This is not one plant but an entire category of plants that, with a very few exceptions, will have no place in my garden. I dislike variegated leaves, especially ones with white or (gag) beige variegations.

All those hostas with raggedy light stripes down the leaf are banned. So are striped irises and grasses. It isn't that I don't appreciate stripes. I own several striped t-shirts and love wearing them. In leaves, it looks to me as though the juice has been sucked right out of them. As if Bunnicula (the vampire rabbit that sucked everything out of the vegetables in her family's fridge) had been at work out of doors.

But there are exceptions and these cannot be explained rationally. I have a huge *Hosta* 'Frances Williams' in a pot by my back door. I coddle her, covering her in a garbage bag filled with dry leaves and solicitously placing her in a spot in the garden for the winter. Why? Perhaps because she has no white or beige, but, instead, two lovely shades of green, one so tender and pale. I also allow a *Hakonechloa* to live in my garden. Probably because it, too, is two shades of green, one a gorgeous chartreuse.

And then there is my *Pulmonaria sp*. I shouldn't like it but I do. It has white but in spots! I do have a fondness for polka dots. I also had, courtesy of Nathalie Chaly, a *Podophyllum* "Spotty Dotty" (may apple) that I killed. Its dark spots on light green were stunning.

So there it is. A mostly monochromatic garden but one in which I can be tranquil, not having to look at the annoying stripes.

2016 OHS Shows

by Gillian Macdonnell

The OHS June Show was a bit of a departure from our usual style. This year, we featured native plants with a view to showcasing the Mary Bryant Award, a beautiful painting of native plants. In the past, this painting has been awarded to the garden nominated for the best use of native plants, but nominations had fallen off in recent years. A horticultural show focussed on native plants would seem to be consistent with Mary's wishes, hence the June Show. Nine classes in the Show included native plants, and a number of design entries actually included native plants.

There were nine ribbons awarded for entries that included native plants, and the Mary Bryant Award was presented to Emilie Henkelman. In all, there were twelve entries among the nine native plant classes.

While featuring native plants was interesting and fun, there were some issues with such an approach that might be avoided, perhaps, through a bit of education. Many of our native plants are ephemeral and had disappeared by the end of June when we held our Show. For instance, I had trillium leaves in my garden but no blooms, and was hesitant to cut a trillium leaf to put in the Show for fear of risking the plant for next year. I must bone up on that before next June.

Do we need additional general information on native plants throughout the year so that members are encouraged to grow more native plants and show them? These questions and more will come up at the annual Shows meeting in October as the Shows Committee makes plans for 2017.

I think it would be worthwhile to try a Show featuring native plants again. Before the Show evening ended, I polled a number of our members; most had found it fun and some had suggestions for improving it.

The next Show will be held at the September meeting, and includes a class for fairy gardens. To help you prepare your fairy garden entry, it might be useful to remember the talk presented at our meeting this past June. A fairy garden sounds like fun and I think I could get one together – how about you?

OHS Matters

Notes from OHS Board Meetings

by Rob Brandon

April Board meeting

An OHS letter of support in principle for the creation of the Garden Boulevard/Boulevard des Jardins was drafted by Rob Brandon, revised by Jamie Robertson, and sent to the Ottawa Garden Council. Other topics discussed included OHS participation in the Stephen Lewis Foundation event in April, in the Science Fair and in the Seed Library.

May Board Meeting

At the OHS District 2 Annual General Meeting, the Ottawa Horticultural Society was recognized for recruiting the largest number of new members. Other topics discussed included the Stephen Lewis Foundation event, the Science Fair, the Friends of the Farm sale report, the May OHS auction and plant sale report, and the official launch of the Ottawa Seed Lending Library, co-located with the Ottawa Tool Library.

June Board meeting

Topics discussed included the successful bus trip to the Montreal Botanical Gardens and the Mums sale report.

Did You Know?

In addition to its excellent monthly newsletter, 'Trowel Talk', Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton also distributes an electronic publication called 'The Edible Garden'. The July 2016 issue contains articles on harvesting wild delectables, foraging for food in eastern Ontario, the secret life of mason bees, and the herb, anise hyssop.
If you want to be put on the distribution list for either or both publications, please e-mail mgottawaeditor@gmail.com.

OHS Matters

Edibles Show

by Gloria Sola

This year's District 2 show was hosted by the Perth & District Horticultural Society.We were welcomed to beautiful, historical Perth by the town crier in full regalia, and then by the mayor. The show included edibles, as well as horticultural specimens and a large number of design arrangements. Some of the design exhibits looked to this untrained eye to be worthy of Canada Blooms. The OHS was well represented by winners, such as Emilie Henkelman, Iris Waung, and one of our new members, Olexiy Rusalovsky.

The design face-off was fun, with four competitors given a bucket of plant material, vases, and 45 minutes to complete a design. Arrangements were "judged" by the audience, who showed its choice by applauding. The arrangements were then auctioned off. Helen Halpenny, who spoke last year at the OHS, put together five very quick, different design arrangements with plant material from her garden. These were raffled off.

Approximately 100 people attended the show, coming and going during the afternoon, and there was also a silent auction for them to enjoy. The organizers, led by Madeleine Archer, have every reason to be proud of their efforts.

New OHS Members

Christine Abela
Allison Archambault
Caroline Avon, Martin Beaudry, and Justin & Thomas
Susan Braedley
Cristina and Martin Crochetière
Katie Dunlevie
Alan Etherington
Guy Gauthier and Christine Morehouse
Renata and Ted Grudzien
Catherine Hooker and Tom D'Ippolito
Marion Houle
Lindsay Kennedy and Stefan Wereszczynsky
Jaime Koebel and Steven Morse
Aileen Leo
Cindy Lyon
Leslie Mannion
Kathryn Marshall
Susan McLeod and Paul Williams
Margaret Meyer
Lauren Montpetit
Timothy Moore
Alain and Nicole Patenaude and Valerie
Krysia Pazdzior
Kevin Phillips
Olexiy Rusalovsky

Did You Know?

In 2012, a man trying to sell his house in Britain was unable to do so. The reason? Japanese knotweed. According to the September 8, 2012, issue of The Guardian, Japanese knotweed is "the UK's most aggressive, destructive and invasive plant". In this case, the specimen in question was a mere three centimetres tall but it was big enough to quash the deal to sell the house. Moreover, homeowners in Britain aren't allowed just to pull knotweed plants out with the roots. Because of the reproductive vigour of Japanese knotweed, it should be removed and disposed of by a licenced contractor, especially if you want to arrange a mortgage for the property on which it grows.

Did You Know?

Vertical farming, a technique developed in urban areas, may help remote First Nations communities to grow affordable fresh produce.

http://www.hortidaily.com/article/26686/Canada-Vertical-farming-provides-First-Nation-with-healthy-foo

Getting to Know Ann Frederking

How long have you been a member of the OHS and what prompted you to join?
I believe it was summer 2008 that a friend who was serving on the OHS Board asked me to share my garden for a garden tour. I've been a member since.

Have you been gardening for a long time or are you a novice?
When I was almost 10, my parents bought a house with a large side garden. They enjoyed puttering in the garden but were not particularly knowledgeable gardeners. Nevertheless, I got used to having flowers and veggies around in the yard. I've lived in the same Ottawa house since 1970 and the garden has evolved. Right from the beginning, I had a little vegetable garden, mostly for tomatoes. Over the years, the once sunny neighbourhood has become much shadier which has prompted my interest in hostas.

How would you describe your garden?
Most of my city lot is now devoted to hostas as they have become an addiction. There's very little lawn remaining in the front (south) as the trees have become quite mature. I'm lucky that we had only one ash tree, so while some of the yard is now sunnier, most of the hostas are still fine (and many like a lot more sun than people think). I do still try to grow tomatoes and some other veggies in the back yard though

Getting to Know Ann Frederking

it is more challenging to get them to ripen. I also have a variety of other plants - some day lilies, veronica, herbs, phlox and irises. In the sunny areas I have a few plants that like hot, sunny and dry. I do have the dubious distinction of having killed off three rhubarb plants in two years and the fourth one this year isn't doing overly well. My original rhubarb plants are being overrun with maple tree roots.

What do you like best about your garden? What least? Favourite plants?
The hosta vistas in the front are a favourite and the hostas, of course, are favourite plants. With their wide variety they are fascinating to grow. In the back yard, the veggie garden is getting full of maple tree roots and is increasingly hard to deal with. The area around the maple tree is probably my least favourite as the plants there are mired in tree roots and are there for the duration…weeds too!

Are you the main gardener or do you have help?
I'm the gardener but my husband mows what is left of the lawn. He helps with big jobs like emptying and screening the compost and rebuilding the sinking interlock sidewalk.

Do you have plans for your garden? Are there things in it you would do differently?
At my age, the plans are mostly maintenance. I would love to redesign my veggie garden into raised beds but know I can't do it myself, and the other half of the family isn't really interested in helping with that. I have too strong a Scottish streak in my background to want to pay someone to redesign it. I'd love space for more hostas too, but my back is telling me not to do too much really hard lifting.

Are there gardening web sites that you look at regularly?
I used to be a regular on Dave's Garden, but most of the real gardeners have left the forums so it's no longer worth the subscription fee. The Hallson garden forums (http://www.perennialnursery.com/forums/) are free and still have knowledgeable gardeners there and so is the National Gardening Association (formerly All Things Plants) site: http://garden.org/ Finally, there is a great deal of gardening discussion happening on Facebook, and the American Hosta Society site has over 4000 members.

Is there a garden you have seen that is a favourite and has given you inspiration?
I visit botanical gardens when I travel, but we are often at places outside of peak garden season. So for me, as a hosta grower, the best place I could recommend is the garden of Sandy Hanson at White Lake, just west of Ottawa. She has the space to grow many hostas as well as many other plants, and she has the vision and imagination to present them in an interesting way. If you ever have a chance to visit, do so. She has also had a hand in planning the gardens for Waba Cottage and Museum at White Lake. I've also enjoyed visits to the Montreal Botanical Garden and the VanDusen Botanical Garden in Vancouver as well as the Butchart Gardens in Victoria.

When you aren't in the garden, what activities and interests do you pursue?
I am a musician. I was a violist in the Ottawa Symphony for 40 seasons, retiring only a few years ago, and still playing viola in the Ottawa Chamber Orchestra. I'm mostly retired as a teacher, but still teach a few adults (usually violin). And it's my pleasure to direct the Emmanubells, a hand bell ensemble at Emmanuel United Church. (We welcome new members if anyone out there harbors a secret desire to play bells). I'm interested in social action issues. I'm a Raging Granny and still volunteer at the Gloucester Emergency Food Cupboard, an organization I helped start and for which I was Executive Director for quite a few years. I enjoy travel and have attended my husband's conferences or my viola events all over the world. And last, but not least, I have four grand-kids, fourteen year-old boy-girl twins in Ottawa and two younger granddaughters in Vancouver.

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We depend on our members for ideas, articles and information about what is going on in the gardening community. Please send your submissions to:

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