



Carleton Place & District Horticultural Society

December 2024

President's Message

Once again, I'm sitting here reminiscing about the past year and how things went for us as a society and wondering what the new year will bring. You may not know me well, but I have been the president of this society since I went to my first meeting over fifteen years ago, and at that AGM, I became president. As much as I enjoy this, it is way too long for one person to be in this position. With the new rules from ONCA, the governing body for charitable organizations, my role as president will likely change. This length of tenure will no longer be allowed as a limit has been established. At our December AGM, board members will be voted in as required. The executive, (president, secretary and treasurer) will not be acclaimed but voted to the positions at the first board meeting, probably in January. I can see possible problems in trying to fill these positions. We will see!

I am also the speaker coordinator for our monthly meetings. As much as I find this a bit stressful, I have enjoyed arranging for the speakers. There are definitely things that don't always go right, but this is all part of that job. Most of the speakers have been above average..... quite good, really. And once in a while, it's not so good. Once again, if you have a contact number for a prospective speaker, please let me know. Or better yet, if you would like to be the speaker coordinator, please let the board know.

Over the years, actually, since Covid, our society has grown and become quite vibrant. Thank you to all the volunteers, especially the board members, for making us such a success. We have many activities going on, and volunteers are always welcome. I know I am going to forget to mention activities and the volunteers involved, but..... Right from the beginning, in March, I want to thank Dianne Elliot, who is the hospitality organizer. Thank you, Dianne, and your helpers for this. Doreen Harris and Rick Roberts make the Plant Sale easy for the rest of us. The plant sale helps fund many of our society's activities. This year, with the help of these two, we also had a fall plant sale which turned out quite well. We had two flower shows again organized by Doreen and her volunteers. Doreen has been with the society for many more years than any of us. Sadly, she has decided to step down from the board. Thank you so much Doreen. Your leadership and volunteering are greatly appreciated. Irene Tobis, Heather Lebeau and Daniel Brumar are a part of the Climate Change Group. In December, Brianna Logan and a few volunteers will be at Rona, showing twenty kids how to plant amaryllis. This activity is new for us. Thank you to Irene Tobis, Wanda Leclerc, Anita Russ, Sheila Gibson, Jeniffer Butler, Debby O'Malley, and Mary Beach for the great work done at Victoria School Museum Gardens. They are beautiful. Debbie Guthro is our secretary. Debbie does a great job with the minutes. Linda Bartlett, our treasurer is indispensable. She also made sense of the new rules of the Constitution. Thank you. We now have over a hundred members. Thank you, Laura Cupper, for being the coordinator. A lot of work was done there! We all work well together.

So! December 4 will be our AGM. We will have a potluck at this meeting with a ham and turkey donated by Carol Tomaszewski. Thank you for your generosity, Carol. Anita Ruus is cooking the ham, and I am cooking the turkey. Come one! Come all! We will have an election for a new board and be inducted by the D2 representative, Cindy Zorgel. Again! If you would like to be on the board, you can nominate yourself at the meeting. Cindy will also give a demonstration on Christmas floral arrangements. These will be given away as door prizes. This is our most important meeting of the year.

Paul Pietsch

Winter Activities for Zone 5 Gardeners

By Rick Roberts

Our harsh winters bring both disappointment and rejuvenation for avid gardeners. Disappointment comes because our cherished time in the garden is interrupted for a few months. However, it's also rejuvenating because we can take a break from routine garden chores and prepare for the busy gardening season ahead. Here are a few winter activities to get you started:

Plan Ornamental Gardens & Borders

Winter is the perfect time to reflect on the successes of the past growing season and plan improvements. Digital photography makes it so much easier. Refer to the photos that you took all season. You'll notice what worked well and what you would like to change. Some weeks there may have been very little in bloom or the combinations of colours, textures and heights weren't what you'd hoped for. Draw a plan and make a list of the plants you need to add and to where. Oftentimes you will find many of the plants on your list at the CPDHS plant sale in May.

Plan Vegetable Garden

I grew too many hot peppers this year and not enough tomatoes, garlic or first-early potatoes. Winter is the time to draw up plans for next season's vegetable beds and decide on quantities of each, which beds they will be planted in, and planting dates. Don't forget about succession planting so you can harvest all season. There is an excellent Planting Calendar on the Almanac website: <https://www.almanac.com/gardening/planting-calendar/on/ottawa>.

Source Seeds & Spring Bulbs

If you plan to start plants indoors this spring, check out online and printed seed catalogues to see what is of interest to you. Local nurseries had exceptional seed selection this year, perfect for direct sowing in the garden. Think about hosting a 'seed swap party'. Most of us get carried away, buying or harvesting more seed than we need. Also check the CP library for their annual seed swap event. Before planting, Google: 'Test seeds for viability' to avoid disappointment.

Grow Indoor Herbs

Herbs can be grown from seed indoors. A more immediate option is to pot-up and bring in herbs that you've grown in the garden. Purchased potted herbs will fit the bill but most should be split and repotted to ensure success.

Winter Sowing

Winter sowing involves beginning the germination of hardy plant seeds and those requiring cold stratification outdoors in covered containers, such as plastic jugs. This method exposes seeds to natural weather conditions, promoting robust growth. Google: winter sowing. Also chat with Irene Tobis... she's an enthusiastic winter sower.

Start Plants Indoors

Many plants benefit from an early start indoors (peppers and tomatoes for example). It seems to make very little difference for some plants, and sets back others which do better when direct planted in the garden (peas for example). Refer to the planting calendar mentioned in 'Plan Vegetable Garden' (above)

Start a Garden Diary

We all make mental gardening notes throughout the summer that we soon forget. Those ideas could be tapped into if jotted down in a Garden Diary. Nothing fancy... just a ring bound steno pad is effective. As you have those thoughts, observations and ideas next year, enter the date and a brief note. During the winter months and beyond, you can go back through it to see what you had in mind.

I hope these few ideas are helpful. There are many more activities for gardeners to fill winter days than space allows.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and Joyful Gardening in the New Year!

Victoria School Garden Summary 2024

By Irene Tobis

Maintaining Victoria School Garden is a big job every year, but this year our volunteers also took on some major improvements, making 2024 especially enjoyable and satisfying.

In early spring, they tackled the challenge of removing a large patch of invasive goutweed in front of the chain link fence. Brittny LePage then graciously planted her dahlias there. which, after blooming in summer and fall, were dug up to allow another round of gout removal early next spring. Then, in late November, the Town repaired the chain link fence. The volunteers look forward to planting clematis, donated by former member Debby Lytle, on that fence in mid-May to become a beautiful backdrop for that area.



They then decided to take down the dilapidated pergola gate and the hedge that was separating the east and west sections of the garden. Town workers removed the hedge with heavy equipment. While they were there, the volunteers asked them to also take out the large patch of invasive false spirea shrubs that had become increasingly difficult to control. That was a great help, but there was still a lot of heavy work to do by hand, removing those huge roots! The Town delivered topsoil, as the soil level had gotten quite low. With the space liberated (350 sq ft), they planted three dozen new perennials (on sale at the end of the season) plus three native serviceberry trees that had been donated to the society. With that foundation laid in, the new "Heritage Museum Garden" will be ready for more planting in 2025.

Our volunteers also assisted volunteers from the adjacent labyrinth garden in supporting improvements there this year. Sheila Gibson and Barbara Fowler improved the museum entrance garden. Anita Ruus continued cost-effective sourcing of new perennials for the east garden and throughout the planted areas to reduce our annual costs in future years.

Many thanks to volunteers Anita Ruus, Irene Tobis, Sheila Gibson, Wanda LeClerc, Debby O'Malley, Jennifer Butler, Mary Beach, Barbara Fowler, Rob Drapeau, Kilby McCann, and our Master Gardener Paul Pietsch!

The Flower Show Committee appreciates the participation of the members in the Spring and Fall Flower Shows. Your blooms, foliage, plants, fruits, vegetables and designs at the Shows delighted us all. Many of you also participated in and/or volunteered at the D2 Show in August.

With the aid of many volunteers, the room was set up and taken down for the Shows. Many willing hands created floral arrangements for the Fall Plant Sale, for the pot-luck supper and for the patrons of the Hunger Stop. We value all who gave of their time and creativity.

As the Members of the Committee meet to plan for 2025, we thank you for your support and participation in 2024.

Barbara Fowler

Green Christmas Ideas 2024

By Kilby McCann, Member of Climate Change Group

Services Instead of Goods:

We live in a vibrant community full of services that a family member or friend may not think to treat themselves to. People love a gift of a service, especially your time. It can be a months' worth of frozen homemade soups for a person living on their own, lawncare or a day of cleaning.

Experiences:

Tickets to a show, a concert or even sign up a friend to the community garden. You can invite a neighbour over for tea, cookies and a walk at the Mill of Kintail. These lovely experiences will create wonderful memories. Experiences also take the need to buy, buy, buy out of our collective consciousness. Giving someone your afternoon for a walk and a bird count at a local nature trail helps you lessen the stress of finding the right gift. Time and friendship are the right gifts ...

Example: The Mill of Kintail Country Christmas is December 14th noon to 6 p.m.

Homemade Goodies and Consumables

Gifts from the kitchen are greatly appreciated. Especially with this year's grocery prices. Items such as oranges, pomegranates, organic apples and a pineapple are frugal luxuries and make a great gift in a bowl from the thrift store. Simple baked goods are great treats. Jams and jellies are wonderful and often sold at local craft markets.

If a family member does not want foodie gifts you can make a donation in their name to the Food Bank. You can also drop off food to the Cheerful Giver in downtown CP, the owner has a fridge for people to come in and grab a dozen eggs etc.

This area has many wonderful coffee roasters and what's better than locally roasted coffee which makes great compost too!

Example: Candy Cane Bazar and Craft Show, Carleton Place Legion, Dec 7 & 8 – 10:00-4:00

Used Gifts:

This is a new era of enjoying someone else's gently used clothing, electronics, toys, bikes and the list goes on. For example, used musical instruments hold their value and use for a long time.

A gift that is recycled or re-used can come with a lovely note. "We know how you love nature.

This Gift comes at no expense to Mother Nature".

Examples: Carousel gently used clothing downtown CP.

The Cheerful Giver clothing and household items downtown CP

Good As New clothing and household items downtown CP

Apple Cheeks children's clothing and toys downtown CP

Millwards Consignment Furnishings and Décor

Enjoy our holidays with family and friends.

A Green Christmas is good for the environment and for your well being too.

Merry Green Christmas and Happy New Year

From the CPDHS

Climate Change and Biodiversity Interest Group

This newsletter is published by the Carleton Place and District Horticultural Society and is distributed to its members free of charge.

We depend on our members for its content. If you would like to contribute, please send your submissions to:

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