



the gardener Fall 2011

“To plant a garden,
is to believe in tomorrow.”

P.O. Box 21032, Stratford, ON, N5A 7V4
<http://www.gardenontario.org/site.php/stratford>

Wanted: You... (and a few of your friends)!!

If you enjoy your membership, the speakers, the Garden Chats, the workshops, the gardening, the flower shows, the many interesting opportunities the Hort. Society offers, then please join the team, a.k.a. the Board, that allows it all to happen.

We are facing a very serious issue. There is no 1st or 2nd Vice President as of November 28th. Which means no one will take over as President in 2013.

Two other societies that I know of have faced this situation, and continue to operate with innovative solutions that work for them. In one instance, there are two co-Presidents; in the other, members of the Board take turns handling the responsibilities of President.

I mention these alternatives to point out that volunteer job descriptions are necessarily flexible – we are volunteers, after all. If you can see yourself becoming involved, but with fresh, new terms of reference, it would be wonderful and you would have over 240 members who would be very appreciative!



I am very much enjoying my term as President. The opportunity came at the right time in my life and I was ready to simply '*take my turn*'. I did not do a stint as 2nd Vice, or a full two years as 1st Vice, but I had previous experience with many committees and on the Board. There is such a supportive, enthusiastic, energetic team on the Board, that being President is a pleasure. Like all good things, this pleasure will end – in November 2012, to be precise. What will happen then is up to you, the members. For a while, you can let 'someone else' step up, but sometimes, you have to do it yourself.

If you have any thoughts on this matter, please bring them to someone on the Nominating Committee (Penny Keegan, Heather MacDonald, Henry McVey, Jinny Macdonald, Darlene Irwin).

Darlene Irwin, President.

Support for Goderich



London-Fanshawe Horticultural Society had challenged every society in District 10 to help Goderich. At our September meeting, which had attendance of 86, our members gave donations totalling \$250 to help "Canada's prettiest town" re-plant their parks after the devastating tornado in August. What a fantastic response! Subsequently, the Board voted to match members' generosity, and a cheque for \$500 was mailed to the Goderich Horticultural Society. This was just one gift.

It feels really good to help when we have a chance, and it will feel even better to see the new green plantings in Goderich, and know for years that we were part of it.

City of Stratford Mystery Flowers

Visitors to the city often stop at the tourism office to ask for an identification of plants in city flower beds. Sometimes, these questions get sent to the hort society. Luckily, in addition to a good relationship with the Parks Department, we have Ryan Bedford, a city employee and a Board member to ask. The most popular flower, based on i.d. queries is *gomphrena* 'Fireworks'. Planted at the Memorial Gardens near Pazzo, and at Waterloo and Veterans' Way, it's a tall slender-stemmed plant with round flower heads in mauve and pink. I have an idea many gardens throughout Ontario will be growing this next year. Seed collectors abound!

Open Gardens

The Garden Tour this year was outstanding – yet again! Congratulations to the committee for discovering so many garden jewels. Later in the summer, Don & Stella Farwell and Barbara & Jim LaFlamme opened their gardens to a group from Seaforth for a private tour.

In addition, Gardens Central arranged to do photo shoots at the LaFlamme garden and at the gardens of Tom & Diane Kydd and Margery Leggott. Yikes! It's interesting to talk to these gardeners about the photography process – an experience most of us will never have. Apparently, the best time for garden shots is very, very early in the morning, or in the evening when you have all day to fuss. We look forward to opening an upcoming issue and boasting that we've been in these gardens! Visit <http://www.gardenswest.com>

Youth Club

The United Nations has designated 2011 as *The International Year of the Forest*. With the help of a Tree Planting grant from The Ontario Horticultural Association our Youth Group, led by Nancy Lupton, instructed John Drummond of Greenbelt Farms to plant a Dawn Redwood, *metasequoia glyptostroboides* cv "Goldrush", at the Catharine East Memorial Garden. Look for it to the right of the large circle of shrubs that make up the main part of the garden. It will have a golden green Summer colour changing to red to pink in the Fall.

Metasequoia was first described as a fossil from the Mesozoic Era (The Dinosaur Age!) by Shigeru Miki in 1941, but in 1944 a small stand of unidentified trees was discovered in China by Zhan Wang. Due to World War II, these were not studied further until 1946 and only finally described as a new living species of *Metasequoia* in 1948 by Wan Chun Cheng and Hu Hsen Hsu. In 1948 the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University sent an expedition to collect seeds and, soon after, seedling trees were distributed to various universities and arboreta worldwide for growth trials including the Royal Botanical Gardens at Hamilton ON.

All the trees living today came from those seeds!!



" Dawn " at Catharine East Garden

Have Your Say!



A membership survey is being distributed this month. It is brief, and in a format that makes it easy for you to give us feedback. We want to meet your needs; we need you to tell us what they are. A simple formula for a successful Hort Society? We certainly hope so!

Many thanks to Margery Leggott for developing this forum!

Workshops

Anna Peterson (below, left) lead a well attended workshop on the making of *Hypertufa* containers. Cement was mixed, moulded, & finished – ready for next Spring's plants.



Basic Design Course

A six week basic design course is in the works for the Spring. This is “Floral Design 101” where you will learn traditional designs & have the opportunity to learn by doing.

Call Bub Kelly about this at 519-347-2946.

Autumn Recipe

Beet & Fennel Salad	Peel both beets and grate into a bowl.
	Trim the fennel and grate into the same bowl
1 medium red beet	Peel and trim the onion and slice thinly
1 golden (yellow) beet	and add to the bowl
1/2 fennel bulb	Drizzle the vegetables with the vinegar,
1/2 small red onion	& the oil and toss. Season with salt &
15 mL Balsamic vinegar, red or white	pepper and toss again. This makes a very crisp and colourful slaw.
45 mL olive oil, extra virgin salt & pepper	You may serve it as a mound on dressed salad greens for a light meal.

Exhibit & Floral Design

The September Flower Show was an opportunity to exclaim at the exhibitors' great creativity and brilliant green thumbs!



"Nature's Bounty" by Linda Murray

Giant Starfish Cactus, Bernice Barratt



Nasturtium, Bernice Barratt

The Catharine East Memorial Garden

It's the Tuesday following that spectacular Thanksgiving weekend and we're stretching out yet another day of sunshine. This was the perfect morning to spend an hour at Catharine East Memorial Garden with **Harry Brightwell** who has been tending this large property for many years, rescuing it from an overgrown tangle to an organized and restful park -- a respite from the traffic a few yards away.

Catharine East Garden is 20 years old and yet is unknown to many of Stratford's residents. So, this is a good time to give you some background, and perhaps even introduce you to this spot.



In 1989, Mr. Laurence East left a bequest "to the Stratford Horticultural Society for the establishment of Catharine East Memorial Garden Area(s)" in memory of his late wife. This was a generous gift to the Society, and I imagine it was received with both excitement and trepidation. The responsibility to create a suitable memorial imposes many sleepless nights! But in true Stratford style, there were offers of help on all sides.

The Memorial Garden Committee comprised Fran Culliton (chair), John Worden, Joan Dickson, Marg Pike, Bill Little, Lester Wilker, Susan Patterson and Ken Wilmot. The city allocated land on John Street opposite the gates to Avondale Cemetery. To prepare the site for planting, Danny Martin of the Parks Board supervised a city donation of labour and equipment. Lester Wilker, a society member and a National Parks Commission School graduate, donated his expertise to design a shrub garden -- 30 species chosen for interest and hardiness. The selections would give colour from early spring to late fall, and the garden "could be a test area for homeowners to come and see a collection of flowering and ornamental shrubs". The bed is laid out in a 'C' pattern, with specimens visible from both sides. A granite field stone was donated by the Gibb family, two benches were placed in the sheltered centre of the garden, plant material was purchased at wholesale prices through the city and planted over 1990 and 1991.

For some years, maintenance of the Garden was done by contractors. Later, the work was done sometimes by volunteers and sometimes by contractors. Eventually, the upkeep became the monumental task Harry Brightwell saw on his daily walk through the park. Only Harry knows why he offered to take on the care of this garden! And, are we grateful!

If you haven't parked your car, and taken a walk through the Garden, you are missing a treat. And, if Harry is there, he may give you a tour.

Donation from Tom's Eldon Landscape & Garden Centre

Tom Stott has generously donated a sh*t load of



for the SDHS flower beds. Two+ skids of a sterile manure & mulch combination, this will be a huge help next year keeping out new weeds and retaining moisture. Thanks Tom! Visit <http://nincompoop.ca/index.php>

Coming Events

Just for Fun Flower Shows

At our General meetings. Please bring your design

October 24, 7:30pm, *A Time to Remember* - a design for a door or wall

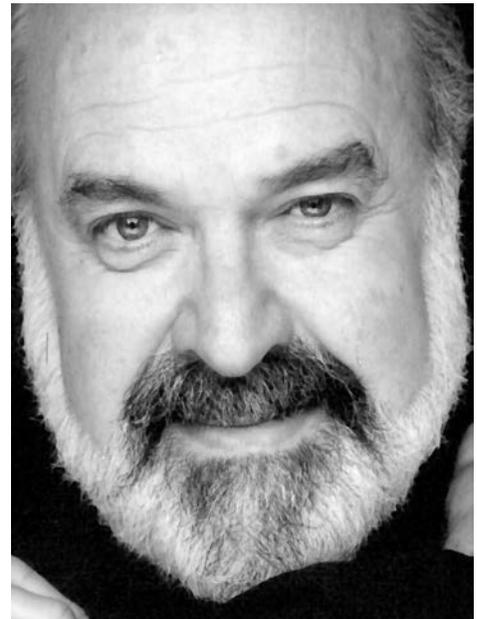
November 28, 6:00pm, *Celebrate!* - a design for a door or wall

Perennial Plant Exchange

If you have been thinning out your garden, we invite you to bring a plant to the October meeting . In return, you can take another one home! Starting at 6:30pm, in the Conference Room where the Garden Chats are usually held, members' perennials will be available.

Annual General Meeting

Will be held Nov 28, 2011 at Griffith Auditorium, Spruce Lodge. Social time/find your seats is from 6:00 to 6:25pm. Welcome and Grace at 6:27pm. Dinner service begins at 6:30pm. Roast Beef dinner with dessert, includes tax and gratuities for \$17.00 (same as last year!). Tickets will be on sale at the October meeting. If you cannot make this meeting please **call Louise Spandler at 519 305 0104** from Oct 24th to 30th, (I will be away until Nov 12th) and from November 13th until the 20th for your ticket reservations. Numbers have to be in to the Lodge by the 21st. Members who wish to come only for the meeting and the entertainment should be at the Auditorium about 7:30 to 7:45p.m. after the tables have been cleared.



Our speaker will be Kelly Walker, naming just a few of his roles, author, therapist, musician. Learn more at <http://www.kwalker.com>

Stratford & District Horticultural Society Board of Directors 2011

<u>Executive</u>		
President	Darlene Irwin	271-5232
Past President	Penny Keegan	271-6625
1 st Vice:	Louise Spandler	305-0104
2 nd Vice	Vacant	
Secretary	Jinny Macdonald	273-5028
Treasurer	Heather MacDonald	273-7525
<u>Board Members</u>		
	Laurie Ash	273-7848
	Ryan Bedford	271-2703
	Dorell Brightwell	271-6195
	Vivien Harding	273-1053
	Franklin Hinz	273-1633
	Margery Leggott	273-4164
	Henry McVey	273-6404
	Catherine Quinlan	271-1612
	Dennis Rawe	273-6798
	Mildred Rose	271-0759
	Nancy Schneider	273-3715
	Larke Turnbull	273-3144

-----Detach Here-----

Membership Renewal and/or Request to E-mail "the gardener"
I hereby give my permission for the Stratford & District Horticultural Society to send the newsletter with full colour photos and other information of horticultural interest to my e-mail address. It is clearly understood that this address will not be shared or used for any other purpose.
Name:
Address:
E-mail address:
Signature:

Please clip and mail this to the Society or bring to a general meeting and give to a Board member.
You may also **RENEW** by mailing this form with your payment (\$15) to the address on page 1.