



the gardener Winter 2012

**"To plant a garden,
is to believe in tomorrow."**

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

I'm still smiling after attending the Seedy Saturday hosted by Anything Grows. A very popular event in other communities, Allan Watts and Rick Weingarden have brought it to Stratford. Despite the first wintery day in weeks, people came to hear good speakers, and to satisfy that need to study seed packages, read the promises, and dream of all the bounty this summer. Wanda Tuer was there to sell pressed flower note cards, and I handed out brochures and sold gardening books which were donated to the Society through Anything Grows. We had a very pleasant day, raised some funds, and had a chance to do our own shopping. Thanks for inviting us, Allan!



Wanda Tuer

We warmly welcome Maureen Cocksedge to the Board. Maureen brings gardening experience, hort. society experience, and the fresh perspective of a 'new-to-town' member. In addition, she has that volunteer gene we love! At the same time, we miss Mildred Rose, Catherine Quinlan and Franklin Hinz who have been part of Board discussions for many years. Happily, their help and participation in the Society continues without the monthly meeting. On the topic of participation, sincere thanks to members who completed the survey. We value your input -- it lets the Board know we're not planning in a vacuum.

I'm excited with the program in place for this year, and I hope to see you at a meeting very soon. In the meantime, there are some items to note on your calendar. The May 12 plant sale -- when you are starting your seeds or rooting clippings, consider doing a few extra for the sale. It is always wonderful to go home with something grown by another member. The June 9 Flower Show on a new date and in a new venue. The June 24 Garden Tour, always a delightful summer event, also has a new date.

Happy seed starting! That's the topic for the Garden Chat before the meeting Feb. 27 if you're looking for tips. There may even be some seeds!

Darlene Irwin, President.

Support for Goderich

On behalf of the Goderich & District Horticultural Society I wish to thank everyone who donated in any way to the Town of Goderich or the Goderich Disaster Relief Fund. This was much appreciated.

Thank you - *Helen Sager* Past Pres.

N.B. The fund presently stands at \$5500.
Thanks to all, *Roland Craig*, Dist. 10 Director.



Plant Sale

On Saturday May 12th is our annual plant sale. Once again, it is being hosted by Wanda Tuer at her lovely country property at 4140 Quinlan Road (between O'Loane and Mornington). Please start thinking about your plants and what you can divide and donate. This event is an important fundraiser for the SDHS. I will keep you posted! Any questions, please phone me at [REDACTED], or talk to me at the next three meetings.

Vivien Harding, Plant Sale Chair

Commemorative 1812 Rose



Here's an opportunity to beautify our gardens in a 'once-every-200-years' way! This year's annual convention of the Ontario Horticultural Association will be held in August in Niagara. As a fundraiser, the Convention Committee is selling The 1812 Rose™ (KORcasima). It is a floribunda - old fashioned, scented, with large crimson red blooms, repeat bloomer, disease resistant, hardy -- what's not to like? Grown by Palatine Fruit & Roses (Niagara on the Lake, <http://palatineroses.com/>) and developed by Kordes Roses, Germany, this rose is available to us, bare root, at a cost of \$15. It is worth noting that our speaker for April 2012, Roland Craig, who is a rose judge and rose grower (also our District 10 Director), thinks that Palatine is the best source for roses in North America. We are very fortunate that Roland will pick up roses for our Society in mid-April, thus saving us an added shipping cost.

You can contact either Dorell Brightwell [REDACTED] or Maureen Cocksedge [REDACTED] to place an order. Our Society order must be placed by early March, so the cut-off date is our February meeting, Feb. 27th, 2012.

Exhibit and Floral Design Committee

In response to the survey the Committee will be hosting two flower shows this year. The first will be June 9th at the banquet hall at Knox Church. We are hopeful that the change in venue and possible increase in walk-in visitors will improve our success. The basic design course will also be a great starting point for new exhibitors (and if you're really lucky and fast you may still get into that course!) Our committee is poised and ready to get started on this year's schedule. If anyone has ideas for us please don't hesitate to drop a line in the suggestion box or call Bernice Barratt at [REDACTED] or E-mail [REDACTED]

Bernice Barratt, Committee Chair

Vertical Gardening



You've seen the picture and you understand how intriguing the concept is. Made with recycled eavestrough, no ground space is used. Way easy to irrigate and harvest.

Now you will have to phone ahead to reserve parking at **ReStore**

Garden Festival

This year we will once again be putting in a display garden at the Lung Association's Stratford Garden Festival. The theme of this year's Festival will be 'Celebrating our Roots'. Each garden will represent a song from a Canadian artist or band. We have chosen the song 'Photograph' by the band Nickelback. The chorus of the song is 'Every memory of looking out the back door'. Our garden will give the illusion of looking into a beautifully landscaped backyard full of spring flowers. The Festival runs from Thursday, March 1st to Sunday, March 4th at the Stratford Rotary Complex. For more information visit the Festival's website at www.stratfordgardenfestival.com We hope to see you there!

Ryan Bedford & Mary Hoffman, Committee Co-chairs

What's that blooming in the City Flowerbeds?

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 an SDHS Board member to ask. The most popular flower query, is *gomphrena* 'Fireworks'.



Plant Profile of

Fireworks Gomphrena

Are you looking to create some fireworks in your garden this year? Introduced in 2009 *Fireworks Gomphrena* is a new unique variety of gomphrena that is a must have in the garden. This drought tolerant, vigorous, low-maintenance plant is sure to please. This annual will need to be started indoors from seed approx. 12 weeks before planting out in the garden. Once in the garden it will quickly grow to 3-4' in height with a spread of 1-2'. Strong tall stems will branch out producing 100's of large 1" hot pink with

bright yellow blooms, perfect for the back of the border. Try mixing this plant with *Verbena bonariensis* for a truly spectacular show. This Gomphrena will also attract a variety of butterflies to your garden. This summer you can view this flower in some of the city's flowerbeds this year including in the "playpen" beds at the Erie St. Parking lot as well as many others.

Sources for seeds:

Dominion Seed House www.dominion-seed-house.com 1-800-784-3037
Stokes Seeds www.stokesseeds.com 1-800-396-9238

Ryan Bedford, Parkskeeper, City of Stratford

Basic Floral Design

A five-week course on basic floral design will be held in the evenings Wed. April 18th to Wed. May 16th, at the Kiwanis Community Center, 111 Lakeside Drive. The cost is \$65. The instructor will be Ann Diebel from the Garden Club of Kitchener-Waterloo. This hands-on course is an opportunity to learn what makes a good design work. You'll learn about traditional design types and the use of colour. Each class will have a demonstration and instruction, followed by time for you to create a design of your own. The techniques and skills that you learn will enhance your enjoyment of own garden's beauty. You can sign up at the February meeting, or call me at [REDACTED] or Darlene Irwin, [REDACTED].

Bub Kelly, Workshops Co-ordinator

Summer in Winter Soup

The outstanding colour and fresh taste of this soup will have you believing it came from the garden, today!



3 red peppers	2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
3 cloves garlic thinly sliced	1 cup diced sweet onion
1 tsp dried rosemary	1 28 oz. can of diced tomatoes
1 cup of water or vegetable stock	1 tsp salt & 1 tsp granulated sugar

Preheat oven to 375°F. Cut the tops from the peppers and discard the seeds & inner ribs.

Place the peppers cut side down on a baking sheet and roast 35 to 40 minutes until blistered and softened.

Place the peppers in a bowl, cover, and let steam 20 minutes until the skins loosen. Peel the peppers, and discard the skins.

Heat the oil in large pot at medium. Add garlic, onion, & rosemary and cook 10 minutes to soften.

Add the roasted peppers & their juice, tomatoes and their juice, water or stock, salt and sugar. Cook, covered, 20 minutes.

Purée the soup in the pot with a hand blender, until smooth, or use a food processor. Taste and adjust the sugar and salt. You want summer sweetness! Serve in bowls drizzled with olive oil. Enjoy!

(note: Before cooking, you may pass the tomatoes through a mouli or food mill to remove the seeds which will lessen the bitterness they would otherwise add. BW)

Know your gardeners - Capability Brown by Dennis Rawe, Board Member

There are many interests encompassed by the members of an horticultural society, we all have degrees of curiosity in them. This one concerns the historical development of the garden. But first I would like to be clear on what I understand by the key words on this topic.

These are

Culture - any activity by humans that is not essential to survival.

Horti - *Hortus lat. garden*

Landscape - view of the land around.

Garden - landscape that has been remodelled to express someone's imagination.



Capability Brown was born **Lancelot Brown** in the North of England 1716, just an ordinary guy with a lucky break, he was educated at Cambo village school, Northumberland and encouraged to work as a gardener's boy at nearby Sir William Loraine's seat at Kirkharle Hall. He must have done well here for he went on to work with Lord Cobham's gardening staff at Stowe, Buckinghamshire where he served under William Kent, one of the founders of the new English style of landscape garden. This new style of 'gardening' caught on with the well endowed and Capability went on to plan over 170 estate parks and gardens. He was severely criticised at the time but the 'observations' of

his critics only emphasized the strengths of his designs.

Richard Owen Cambridge, the English poet and satirical author, declared that he hoped to die before Brown so that he could "*see heaven before it was 'improved' "*".

His style of smooth undulating grass, which would run straight to the house, clumps, belts and scattering of trees and his serpentine lakes were a new style within the English landscape, a "gardenless" form of landscape gardening, which swept away almost all the remnants of previous formally patterned styles. A pastoral setting!



Stourhead Garden

Brown's popularity declined rapidly after his death, 6 Feb 1783, but most of his work survives and affords great pleasure, to thousands, to this day.

Please check this link for panoramic views of Stourhead Garden!

<http://www.360cities.net/image/stourhead-estate-view-wiltshire-england-uk#1.50,1.10,83.3>

My Top 5 seed catalogues for 2012 by Ryan Bedford, Board Member



While it may be still a couple more months until we can get out into our gardens. Seed catalogues offer you many varieties of vegetable and flower seeds that you will not find on the seed racks in stores. Why not consider starting some seeds indoors or get a jump start on planning your garden for the spring this year by requesting your free copies of the seed catalogues listed below. These are my top 5 favorite seed companies.

Lindenberg Seeds Ltd.

www.lindenbergseeds.ca

803 Princess Avenue, Brandon, MB, R7A 0P5 tel. 204-727-0575

Lindenberg seeds are celebrating their 76th year in business. While their catalogue may not be fancy and filled with glossy pictures, they do offer a very extensive selection of flower and vegetable seeds at very reasonable prices. They also have a great selection of gardening accessories as well as plants and bulbs. This is my favourite seed company to order from.

William Dam Seeds

www.damseeds.ca

279 Hwy 8, Dundas, ON, L9H 5E1

tel. 905-628-6641

Started in 1950, William Dam Seeds pride themselves in offering seed that has not been chemically treated. This year they have 32 new vegetable and 23 new flower varieties to offer the gardener. They have a very large selection of vegetables, many varieties not found elsewhere. They also have a good selection of annual and perennial seeds. They have a wonderful trial garden in Dundas open to the public during the summer months.

Thompson & Morgan

www.thompsonmorgan.ca

9353 Graham Road, West Lorne, ON, N0L 2P0

tel. 1-877-545-4386

Are you looking for something unique or rare? If so Thompson & Morgan seeds is the catalogue to get. This British seed company has been serving gardeners all over the world for over 150 years! Thompson & Morgan also has an extensive breeding program which results in many new cultivars only offered by them, including a new foxglove called 'candy mountain' the only variety of foxglove with upward facing flowers.

Stokes Seeds

www.stokesseeds.com

PO Box 10, Thorold, Ontario L2V 5E9

tel. 1-800-396-9238

Growing quality seed since 1881, Stokes Seeds is one of the largest seed companies in Canada. Catering to commercial growers as well as the home gardener, this catalogue is a great reference book with very detailed growing instructions and their selection of seed cannot be beat. They also offer a vast selection of gardening accessories and tools in a separate catalogue.

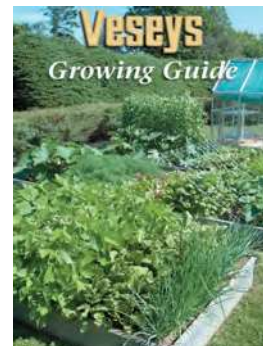
Vesey's Seeds

www.veseys.com

PO Box 9000, Charlottetown, PE, C0A 1P0

tel. 1-800-363-7333

Located in Prince Edward Island, Vesey's has been bringing the home gardener top quality vegetable and flower seeds for 73 years. Vesey's extensively tests their seed varieties making sure they are suitable for the cool, short growing seasons in Canada. A great source for tools and accessories as well. Along with their seed catalogue they also offer a plant and bulb catalogue for spring and fall.



SUMMARY OF SDHS 2011 SURVEY:

- Thanks to all who completed a survey and for all the very positive comments we received. Also thanks to those who provided critiques so politely phrased. Both were good to hear and allow the Board to consider.
- Section I:
 - Set out the objectives of the Society and asked how well we were doing on each element.
 - The overwhelming majority were either “very good” or “good”.
 - The need to improve our ways of encouraging youth was apparent and the board will keep this in mind as planning proceeds.
- Section II: CURRENT COMMITTEES AND ACTIVITIES
 - We were able to create a list of volunteers complete with the items of interest to each. As an example, Committee members, when planning an event, are able to peruse the list and identify a list of people interested in helping.
- Section III: MEETING TIMES
 - It was very clear that Saturday mornings are not an option .
 - There was a virtual toss-up between 7 and 7:30.
- Section IV: WORKSHOP AND PRESENTATION TOPICS
 - vegetable gardening).
 - We obtained a very interesting list of potential topics: organic gardening, container and indoor gardening, native species, garden structures, etc.
 - This list will be referred to when considering workshops and selecting speakers.
- Section V: OPINIONS AND IDEAS
 - Website, Email and/or phone reminders were considered important.
 - Meetings could be held either at the Griffith Auditorium or the Kiwanis Centre with a slight preference for Griffith.
 - Some interest in interactive workshops not at the expense of speakers (i.e. some meetings but not all).
 - Refreshments were not very important.
 - Social exchange is important but generally adequate.
 - Youth involvement is an issue that the board must deal with.
 - Sponsorships and discounts are important.
- Section VI: Comments and suggestions
 - There were quite a number of interesting suggestions – to be debated by the board at future meetings or given to Committees to consider during their planning of events.

Again, thanks to all who participated.

Margery Leggott

Coming Events

If you've always wanted to visit the **Montreal Botanical Gardens** this information will be of interest to you.

The Greater Toronto Rose and Garden Society has asked Margaret Dailey-Plouffe (www.hnatravel.com) to put together a tour for the dates Sunday, July 8th to Tuesday, July 10th (3 days/2 nights). Price \$399.00 per person/double occupancy plus HST

If you are interested please open the link below for the tour outline and contact the travel agent MARGARET at 1-877-672-3030 for details and reservations. You don't need to belong to any group to take part so pass it on to your friends who may wish to take advantage of this offer.

<http://www.hnatravel.com/docs/2012%20Montreal%20Botanical%20Garden%20tour.pdf>



JAPANESE FLORAL EXHIBITION

2012 Celebrating 550 Years

Sunday, March 25, 2012

1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre

6 Garamond Court, Don Mills

For further information, phone: 416-229-9950 or 416-467-4962 or email: ikenoboto@sympatico.ca

An Ecological Vegetable Garden

Friday, March 23, 2012 - 9:00 am - 4:00 pm - There are many new insights that make a vegetable garden more productive and easier to manage. We will see how digging, composting, and mulching practices contribute to a healthy soil as the basis for healthy plants and food. Seed buying, planting schedules through to post harvest cleanup and the reduction of even the "organic" or "safe" pest control products will also be discussed. Guest Instructor: Denise Jupp. Fee \$75.00. Registration deadline: Friday, March 16. *Maximum 16 adults.



Please visit the link below for a myriad of in depth courses.

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/arboretum/educationandevents/workshops.shtml>

Stratford & District Horticultural Society Board of Directors 2012

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

2012 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:	
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Signature:	Tel:

Please fill out & clip this form and bring it to a general meeting.
You may also **RENEW** by mailing this form with your payment (\$15)
to

Stratford & District Horticultural Society, P.O. Box 21032, Stratford, ON N5A 7V4