



the gardener

February 2016

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

One winter's morning in Stratford



Photo by Michael Murray

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President's Message

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the definition of horticultural is "the science and art of growing fruits, vegetables, flowers, or ornamental plants." While the definition says what horticultural is, it does not define why people participate in the activity. If we each have our own reasons which culminate in a sense of wellbeing then practicing horticulture is simply a tool used to improve our physical and mental health. Regarding the garden or harvest as a by-product of maintaining our health doesn't sound like a selling point for horticulture but it is important that we recognize the health benefits of practicing horticulture. The following is a synopsis of an article found on the internet at <http://gardeninggonewild.com/?p=27941>.

13 Reasons Why Gardening Is Good For Your Health

1. Gardening can reduce your risk of stroke
2. Gardening burns calories.
3. Heavy gardening is not only helpful in weight maintenance but also in reducing the risk of heart disease and other life threatening diseases
4. Gardening decreases the likelihood of osteoporosis
5. Gardening is a stress buster.
6. Being surrounded by flowers improves one's health.
7. Gardening is a way of making meaning out of our lives.
8. The act of gardening enables us to enter the 'zone', also known as an altered state of consciousness – similar to what a jogger or one who practices yoga or mediation can experience.
9. It is likely that gardening and flowers serve as a means for survival; or in Darwinian terms, 'survival of the fittest'.
10. Digging in the soil has actual health and 'mood boosting' benefits.
11. Gardening Improves Relationships and Compassion
12. Gardening may lower the risk of dementia
13. Gardening strengthens your immune system.



Photo by Anu MacIntosh-Murray

So as you see practicing horticulture can be grounding (pun intended) and provide a quiet oasis in the busy world we live in. I believe that this is a selling point for horticulture that we have not yet exploited. We will take every opportunity to convey the message that horticulture is an important and rewarding activity that promotes a healthy lifestyle.

We have several ideas that we are exploring which we will share with you when we complete the details. The 140th committee has created the framework in which the committee will work but it has to be discussed and approved by the board. The approved version will be published for the March meeting. In the meantime, please feel free to send us your suggestions for 140th events or projects using our email address sdhs1878@outlook.com or you can place it in the suggestion box a meeting. The 140th is in 2018, which isn't that far off.

Mike Matthews

SDHS Meeting Programs

It's only February, but we've already felt spring in the air – several times, in fact, as our winter temperatures continue to fluctuate. One of these days, the snow will be gone for good and we'll be more than ready to hit the garden.

While we wait for spring to arrive, at our Stratford and District Horticultural Society we'll hear from some interesting speakers who will talk about something close to our hearts – the natural world around us.

On **Feb. 29**, we'll hear from Barb Hacking, a retired local teacher who has shared her passion for monarch butterflies with her students and the community. When she speaks to us, she will be just back from Mexico, where she has made a pilgrimage several times to the monarchs' winter grounds. Over the years she has seen the numbers decline, and then recently start to rise again as farmers and gardeners here in the butterflies' summer home start to recognize that some of our pesticides and herbicides are harming these beautiful insects.

Bees – and their honey – will be in the spotlight on **March 28**, when Elaine Ferrier, founder of Tallgrass Mead in Thorndale, talks about the ancient wine. The honey used to make the beverage is locally sourced, from suppliers from Sebringville to Kincardine, but is becoming harder to find as bee numbers continue to decline. Ferrier, like many apiarists, attributes that decline to the use of pesticides, in particular neonicotinoids.

Ferrier will talk about both the history of mead and her own operation.

Another topic always in the news, and of particular interest to gardeners and farmers, is, of course, the weather. This winter, in particular, we've seen spring bulbs pushing through the ground already and buds about to burst on some shrubs.

Our speaker in **April** will be Jay Campbell, well known in the area as the very popular meteorologist for CFPL TV in London. Now retired from his television career, Campbell is in demand as a speaker for both his genial nature and his weather expertise.

Larke Turnbull



Swiss chard
photographed at Organic
Oasis open house, Feb.
20, 2016.

*Photo by Anu MacIntosh-
Murray*

Winter?

Snowdrops in full bloom in South Perth. Feb. 4, 2016.

Jacquelynne Iarocci, who took the picture, reports that she has not had a blooming snowdrop in February in 23 years in her house.



Hellebores in bloom in Creemore, Ontario. Photo by Catherine Sumner, Dec. 26, 2015



2016 Membership Renewal Reminder

It is time to renew your yearly memberships if you haven't already. The fee remains the same at \$15.00. Memberships can be purchased at General Meetings, at Catherine Wright Designs on Wellington, or by Mail, cheques payable to: SDHS c/o P.O. Box 21032, Stratford, N5A 7V4. Memberships are a great extra gift for family and friends.

Mary Hoffman / Membership Convenor / [REDACTED]

Society Membership Numbers

As of Feb. 16, 2016 we have sold 110 memberships. Of those, 11 are new members. Last year we sold 231 memberships in total; in 2014, 238. If only for financial reasons, and there are other reasons, it is really important for the Society to sell at least 200 memberships every year. Membership numbers are higher than last year at this time, but we have a ways to go.

Why is 200 the 'magic' number? The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food gives us a grant based on our membership. If we have fewer than 200 members we receive \$750.00. If we have more than 200 members, we receive \$1,500.00.

2016 Sponsor Discounts

- Catherine Wright Designs by Laura Barker (regular priced products)
- Cozyn's Garden Gallery (regular priced products)
 - Flowers on York (regular priced products)
- Klomp's Landscaping Inc. (bulk soil/mulch)
- Klomp's Home and Garden (regular priced products)
 - Quality Fertilizers Inc.

114 Sackville Street, Shakespeare

- Sebringville Garden Centre (regular priced plant material)
- Tom's Eldon Landscaping & Garden Centre (regular priced plant material)
- Tri-County Brick Company (landscaping material)

MUST PRESENT CARD BEFORE PAYING!

Social Media



Find us on

Facebook

Please visit the Society's Facebook page and 'like' us!



Ryan Bedford and Shelly Meyers are regular posters and have added some great stuff.

Society Funding: the Importance our Plant Sale and Garden Tour

(Editor's note: in the Spring 2015 newsletter Glen Querengesser, the Society's Treasurer, wrote about the importance of membership numbers to the Society finances and some of the other benefits of membership. I asked Glen to write a follow-up piece about some other important sources of funds for our activities.)

If you were able to attend our January General meeting, you had a chance to learn a great deal about the location of our gardens throughout the city. Our president, Mike Matthews did a terrific power point presentation showing where our gardens are located. We had an opportunity to find out which member is captaining each of these gardens as well as some of the names of persons who will assist.

Library Urn



Photo by Anu MacIntosh-Murray

When the Board executive worked out this system of having captains and helpers look after each of our public gardens and our annual beds, they were quite aware that the tasks could not be carried out without providing monies for plants and plant materials. For the summer of 2016 we have made available \$10,000.00 for the captains to maintain their beds. The Catherine East Garden and the Richardson Garden are not included in this money because they have their own funds.

As a member of our Society, you can assist us in reaching our financial goal. In 2016 the Society Revenue was slightly more than \$24,000.00. We are fortunate that the three levels of government provide us with almost 46% of our budget, but that means we need to raise 54% ourselves. The three main ways we acquire these funds are Garden Tour, Plant Sale and Memberships. In 2016 sales at the May plant sale were \$2,307.55 (9.5% of total revenue). In July, the Garden tour income was \$4,790.00 (19.6% of total revenue). When you

couple these amounts with over 200 members each paying a \$15.00 membership \$3,440.00 (14.1%) we have over \$10,000.00 or around 43% of the funds required. We do need help from members in order to meet our yearly obligations.

We hope that many of you are physically able to assist us with the work in our public gardens, but if that is not possible, just by being a member and supporting our two major fund raisers each year you are still doing your part to make our Society a profitable endeavour.

Glen Querengesser, Treasurer

SDHS Bursary

The Stratford and District Horticultural Society is offering a \$500 award for a student planning a career in horticulture, landscaping, or agriculture.

The recipient must be a Grade 12 graduate who plans post-secondary studies in horticulture, landscaping, agriculture or a related field. The award will take place at the graduation ceremony.

Recipients will be chosen by three members of the horticultural society in May of each academic year. Applicants will be required to write a 250-500-word essay which describes the reliability, diligence and commitment they have demonstrated in extracurricular activities, volunteer hours or part-time employment related to horticulture, landscaping or agriculture. The essay should also make reference to the applicant's future plans and should include the name of one reference.

The essay does not have to be scholarly, but it does have to reflect the applicant's sincere desire to follow a career in a horticulture-related field.

This year's deadline for the essay is May 16.

The selection committee will also consider applicants who may have completed Grade 12 more than a year ago but who have now decided to pursue a career in a horticulture-related field. To be eligible, the applicant must be enrolled in a post-secondary program the year the award is presented.

Entries should be mailed to the Stratford and District Horticultural Society, P.O. Box 21032, Stratford ON, N5A 7V4 or [REDACTED]

Amaryllis



Photo by B. Wilkinson

SDHS Plant Sale

The Society's annual plant sale will be held on Saturday, May 28 at The Local on Erie Street where it was held last year.

It is not too early to start thinking about what you might be able to dig up, pot up, or plant up for the Society's May plant sale.

As one of our major fundraisers, we rely on members to supply us with product. Over the years, the people of Stratford have come to rely on our members' "tried and true" perennials. *(Tomatoes also seem to sell well. Editor)*

The Public gardens that we maintain also benefit from members' contributions to the plant sale, as the plants that do not sell make their way to these public gardens and, other local charitable organizations to beautify our community.

There's always room for one more volunteer at the Plant Sale, so set aside some time late afternoon or evening of May 27 for preparations and May 28 for sale day to lend your expertise and energy to this worthy cause.

Maureen Cocksedge

A New Winter Plant?

A 'bloom' you might have noticed this winter? Perhaps it should be named "snow coneflower"!



Photo by Anu MacIntosh-Murray

It would be a shame to waste plant seedlings

Have you noticed the recent exponential increase in costs of many seeds and plants? Over the past few years, I believe prices have shot up and the selections available at nurseries have narrowed. Some seeds are fifty cents to \$1.00 each, some seed packages contain only 5 or ten seeds....bulbs and perennials are at premium prices. Very few nurseries offer "four packs" for \$1.00 anymore...it is more common to pay \$2.50 to \$4.00 for one choice annual in a 4" pot!

So why not get some seedlings for free? This can stretch your garden budget and introduce you to other like-minded gardeners.



Photo by Michael Murray

There is an informal group of gardeners in the Society who share extra seedlings and cuttings on an ongoing basis in spring. Everyone is welcome to be part of the group, whether you are looking to receive seedlings or you have extra to give away. This is an inexpensive way to get unusual plants as well as the more common offerings. It's an easy way to diversify your annuals and try some new perennials.

The "rules" are simple....you add your name to an email list. When someone has seedlings of a size to be transplanted, they email the group. Anyone who wants the seedlings goes to get them at that person's home, taking their own pots and planting medium and doing their own transplanting. First come, first served.

This is not an exchange. It's a way to ensure that every seed planted has the best chance of survival, with no seeds wasted!

To add your name to the list, call or email Maureen.

Maureen Cocksedge



Appeal for Demonstration Ideas

As a gardener, what do you want to learn?

At the May meeting of the Stratford and District Horticultural Society, we have promised demonstrations. These meetings have been popular in the past. We've talked about garden art and container gardening. Now we're looking for new ideas.

In May, we'll be well into spring gardening mode, working in flowerbeds and containers. Is there an area where you need some guidance, some expertise that could be provided by one of your fellow horticulturalists or the Stratford Master Gardeners?

We want to hear from you. We're hoping to offer three demonstrations, lasting about 20 minutes each, and they need to be carried out at our regular meeting place, Griffith Auditorium at Spruce Lodge. The meeting is Monday, May 30.

Please contact Larke Turnbull with your ideas. Phone [REDACTED] or e-mail [REDACTED] if you have an idea for a demonstration.

Upcoming and Nearby Seedy Saturdays

London

Saturday March 5, 2016, 10 to 3
Carling Heights Optimist Community Centre
656 Elizabeth Street
London, ON

Guelph Seedy Saturday

Saturday March 19, 2016, 10 to 4
St. George's Church, Mitchell Hall
99 Woolwich St
Guelph, ON

Carpooling

Are any members interested in carpooling to go to any of the following?

Seedy Saturday, London Mar 5
Richter Herbs in Markham, in April or May
Northland Nursery, Dundas - wholesale perennials, in April or May
Orchid Show, in either Toronto or Hamilton
Cuddy Gardens Open house, in June

Let Maureen know at the next general meeting or call her at [REDACTED]

Winter 'Gardening' Activity

Has anyone started gardening outside yet? No, of course not. So aside from planning for gardening, buying and starting some seeds, or tending houseplants, what is a gardener to do?

Donna Sobura sent along a note about a potentially enjoyable activity to pass some time in winter that relates to gardening.

A few weeks ago on a SATURDAY morning I wrote down the following information to eventually give to the executive of SDHS. I have ROGERS Communication.

When I have time on Saturday Mornings, I watch the following garden shows on PBS from Buffalo (Public Broadcasting Station). I am sure there might be more TV shows but these are very good and helpful.

9:30am P. Allen Smith's Garden to Table

10:00am Garden Smart

10:30am The Victory Garden

They are very interesting and I am sure everyone will enjoy them.

Donna Sobura

In the Victory Garden timeslot, there has been a series called "Edible Feast"; the PBS website calls it a 're-launch' of the 'classic' show. Each episode profiles a particular city or region, mostly in the US but Vancouver has been shown too, and includes useful garden tips, cooking, and community programs. Check it out online at EdibleFeast.Com. Also available on that website is a series of podcasts about gardening, including such things as dealing with spider mites, drought-resistant plants, and much, much more.

<http://www.ediblefeast.com>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BxxknxQuwrM>

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/victorygarden/ask/index.html>

If you have access to access to Youtube on a computer, there is an endless amount of gardening content available. I recommend "Kew on a Plate", a four episode BBC series, which follows gardeners and chefs as they plant vegetables at Kew Gardens and then cook from what they collect. A tremendous show!

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/food/programmes/b05n91p4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wGsgs7QMY>

Any other suggestions to TV programs that might interest gardeners? How about some entertaining gardening books? Any favourite websites or podcasts? Please let me (MM) know and I'll include them in the next newsletter.



Stratford Garden Festival

Thursday, March 3 thru Sunday, March 6 at the Stratford Rotary Complex.

The SDHS garden is staffed by Society volunteers, and there are still a few slots open. Mary or Ryan will give a brief update at Monday's meeting; please think about volunteering.

Among the many presentations will be some SDHS members:

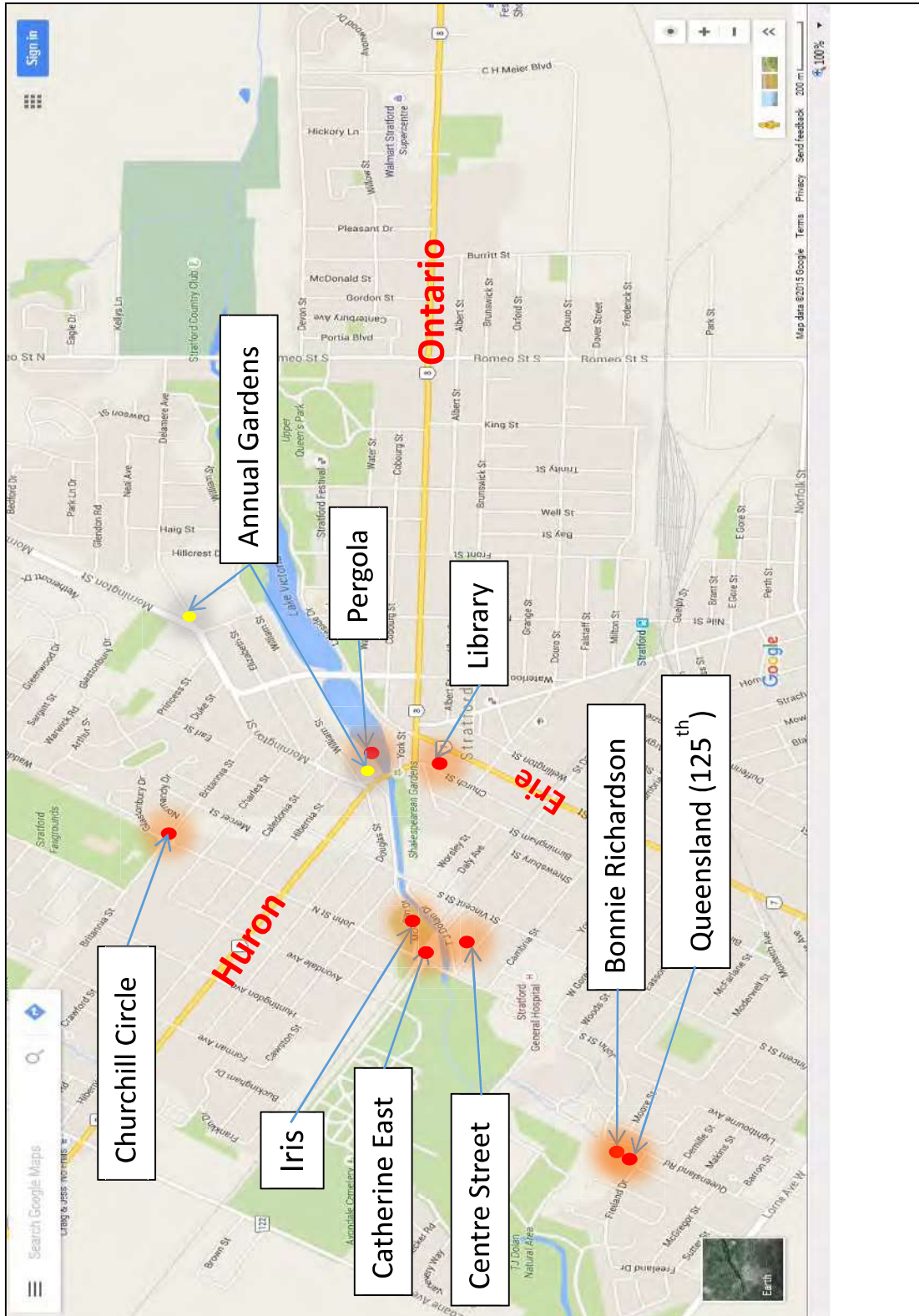
- Anna Peterson
- Anu MacIntosh-Murray
- Bernice Barratt
- Jim Fitzgerald

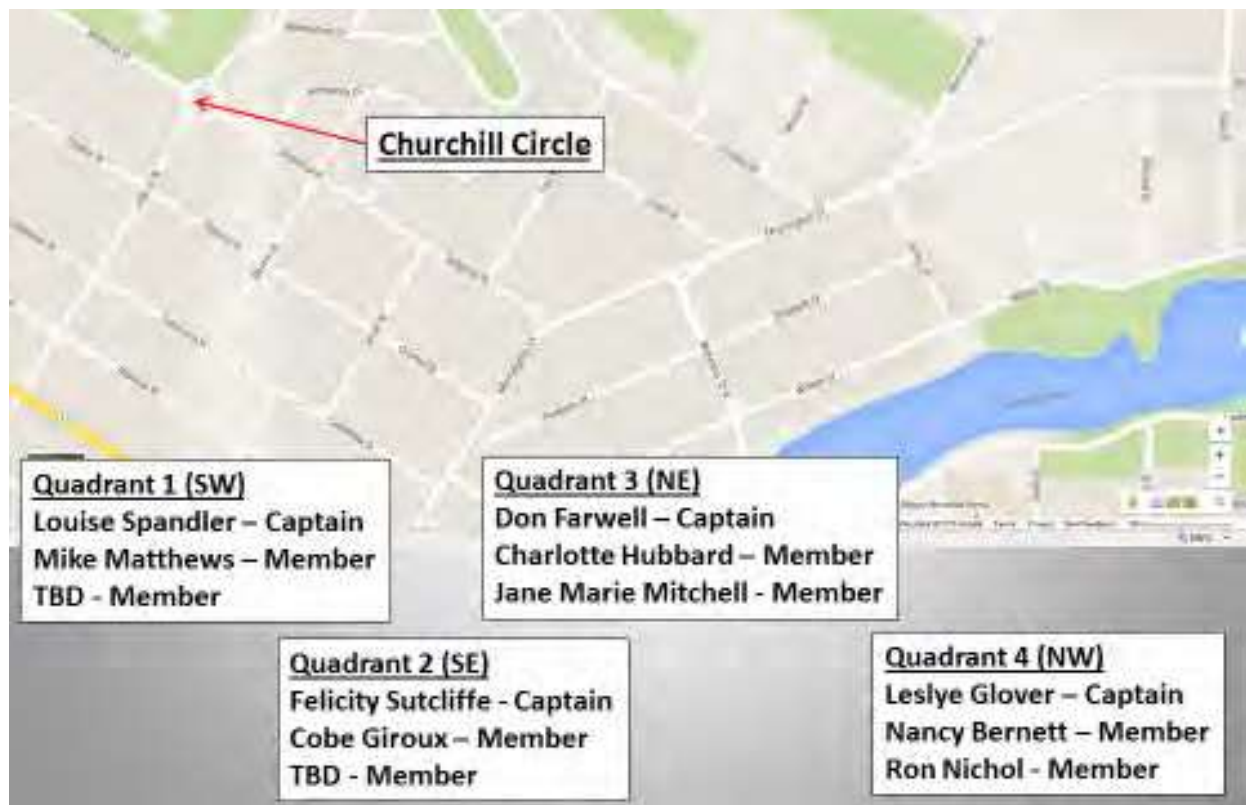
Newsletter Notes

- The next newsletter is scheduled to be published just before the May meeting. Please send me anything you think would add to it...especially pictures (current or past), articles of interest to our members, plans for our gardens, announcements, requests, etc. The addition of content from you will help us reach the newsletter as being "about us, for us, by us".
- In the past, editors have attempted to produce newsletters with 4, 8, 12, or 16 pages to optimize printing. We have not always been successful. Starting with this newsletter, there will be two versions: the print version will be constrained as in the past (by removing content or pictures) and an electronic one where page numbers will **not** be constrained.
- You can reach me, Michael Murray, at the *newsletter's* email address: SDHSthegardener@gmail.com. Or by phone: [REDACTED]. Or talk to me at any of our meetings.

Stratford Public Gardens by SDHS

All maps courtesy of Mike Mathews (with a little help from Google); any errors by the Editor.



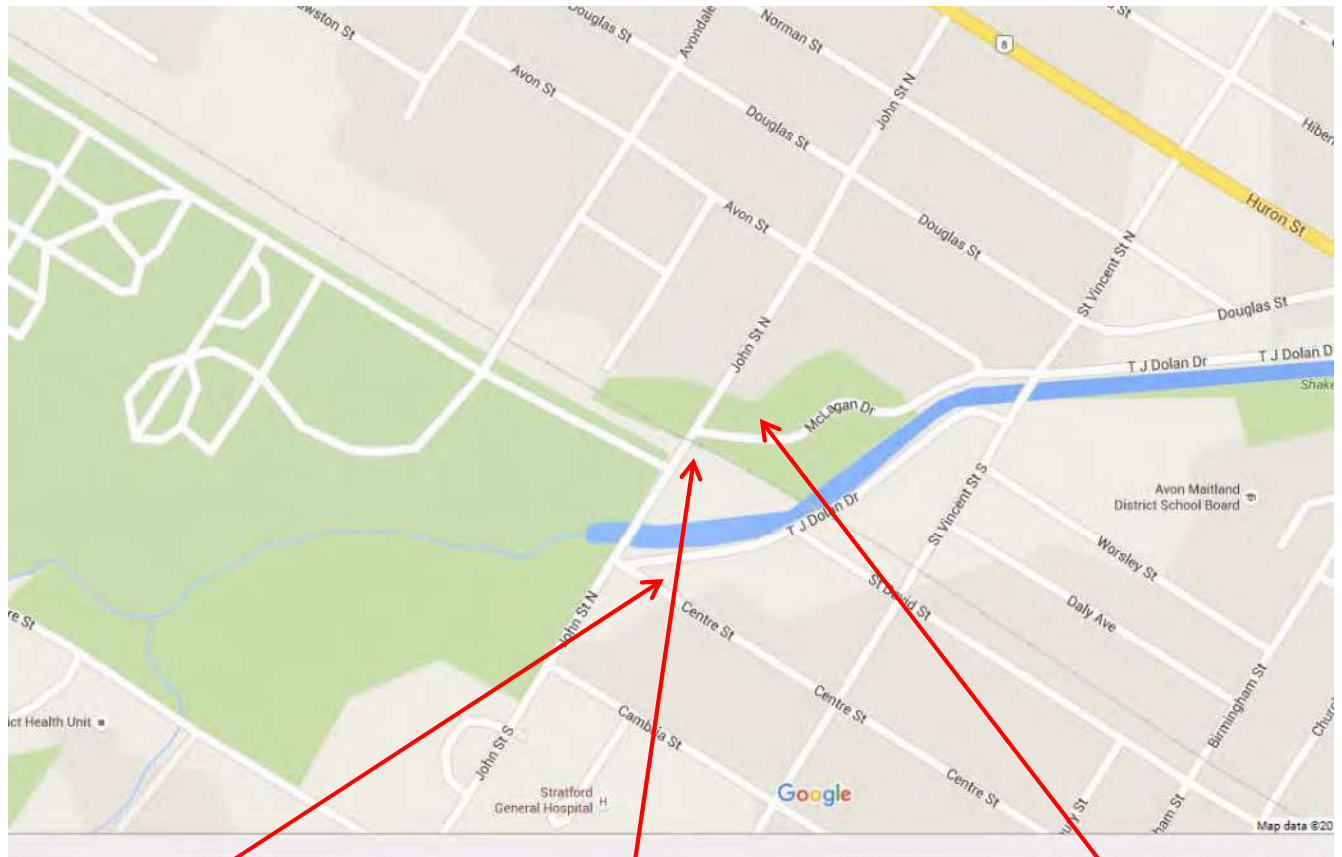


Plant Wish for Churchill Circle

Plants from Festival Gardens that we need to procurehonestly. [Reproduced from Jan. meeting]

- Bats in the Belfry – *Campanula trachelium*
- Hyssop – *Hyssopus officinalis*
- Harebell – *Campanula rotundifolia*
- Oregano – *Origanum vulgare*
- Devil's Plaything - *Achillea millefeuille*
- Vervain – *Verbena officianalis*
- Siberian bugloss – *Brunnera macrophylla* variegata
- Hillside Black Beauty – *Cimifuga simplex*
- Eared Lady Fern – *Athyrium otophorum* Okanum
- Speckled Lenten Rose - *Helleborus argutifolius* 'Janet Starnes'
- Golden Dewdrop – *Duranta erecta* 'Golden Edge'
- Amethyst (or Bush) Violet – *Browallia speciose major* 'Blue Bell'
- Spiderwort, *Tradescantia Blue and Gold*
- Dwarf Astilbe – *Astilbe simplicifolia* 'Key West'
- Bugbane – *Cimifuga simplex* 'Brunette'
- Sedge – *Carex muskigumensis*
- Gold Fountain Sedge – *Carex dolichostachya* 'Kaga nishiki'
- Leatherleaf Sedge – *Carex buchananii*
- Variegated Feather Reed Grass – *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Avalanche'
- Butterfly Gaura – *Gaura lindheimeri* 'Rosy Jane'
- Southern Belle Hibiscus – *Hibiscus moscheutos*

Louise Spandler



Centre Street

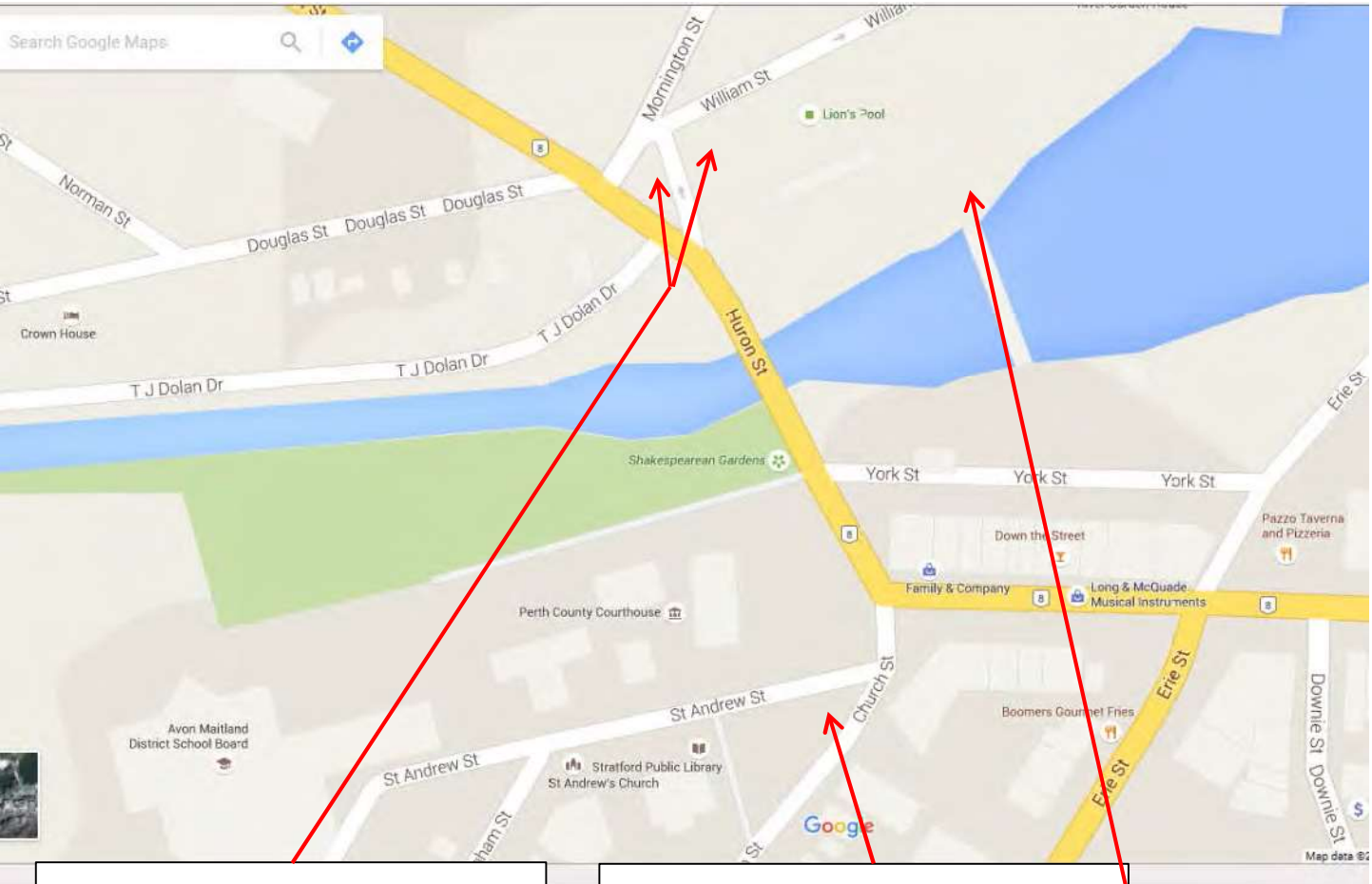
Dennis Rawe – Captain
Mike Matthews - Member
TBD – Member

Catherine East

TBD– Captain

Iris

Marg O’Reilly– Captain
Jinny Macdonald – Member
Doreen Zurbrigg - Member

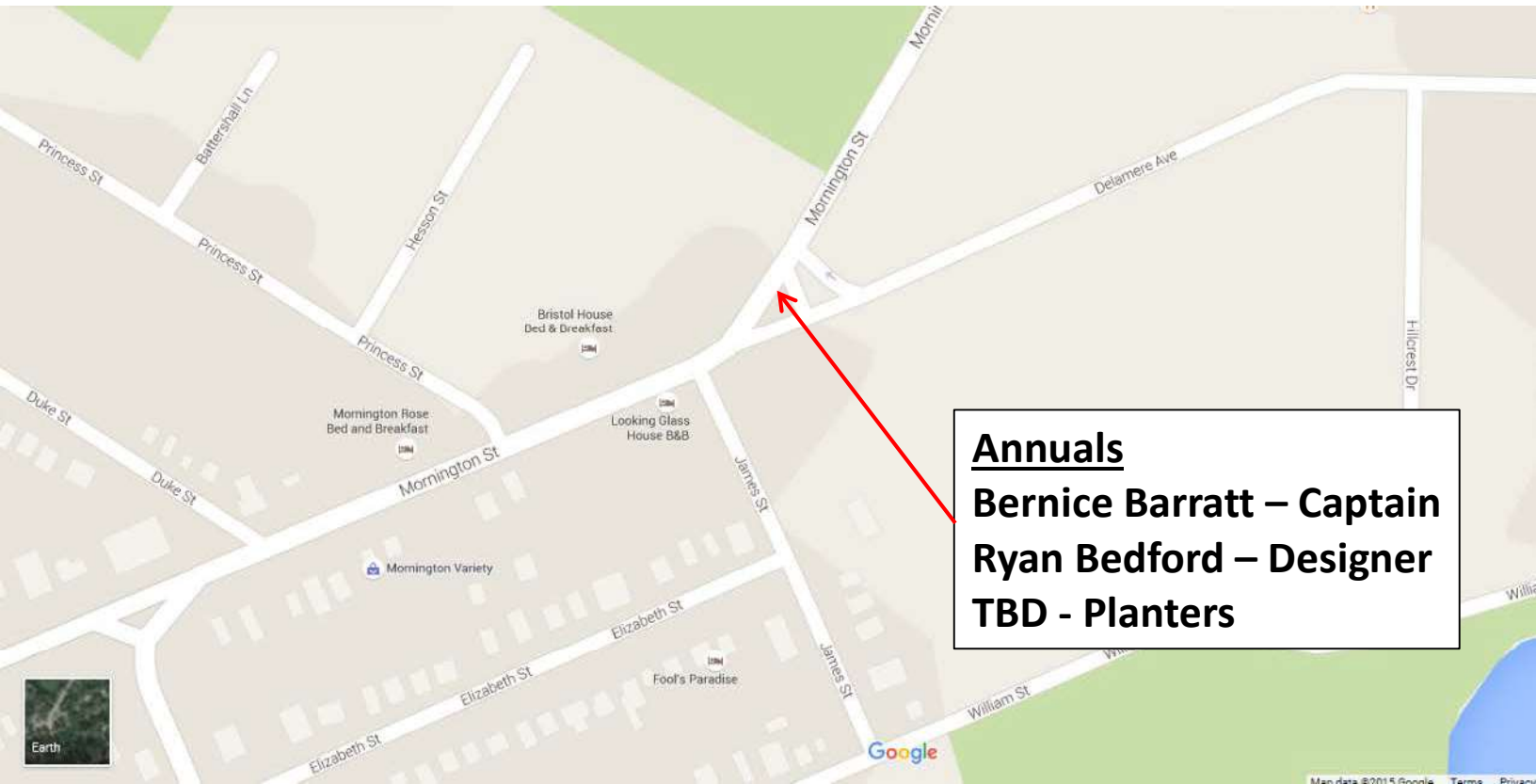


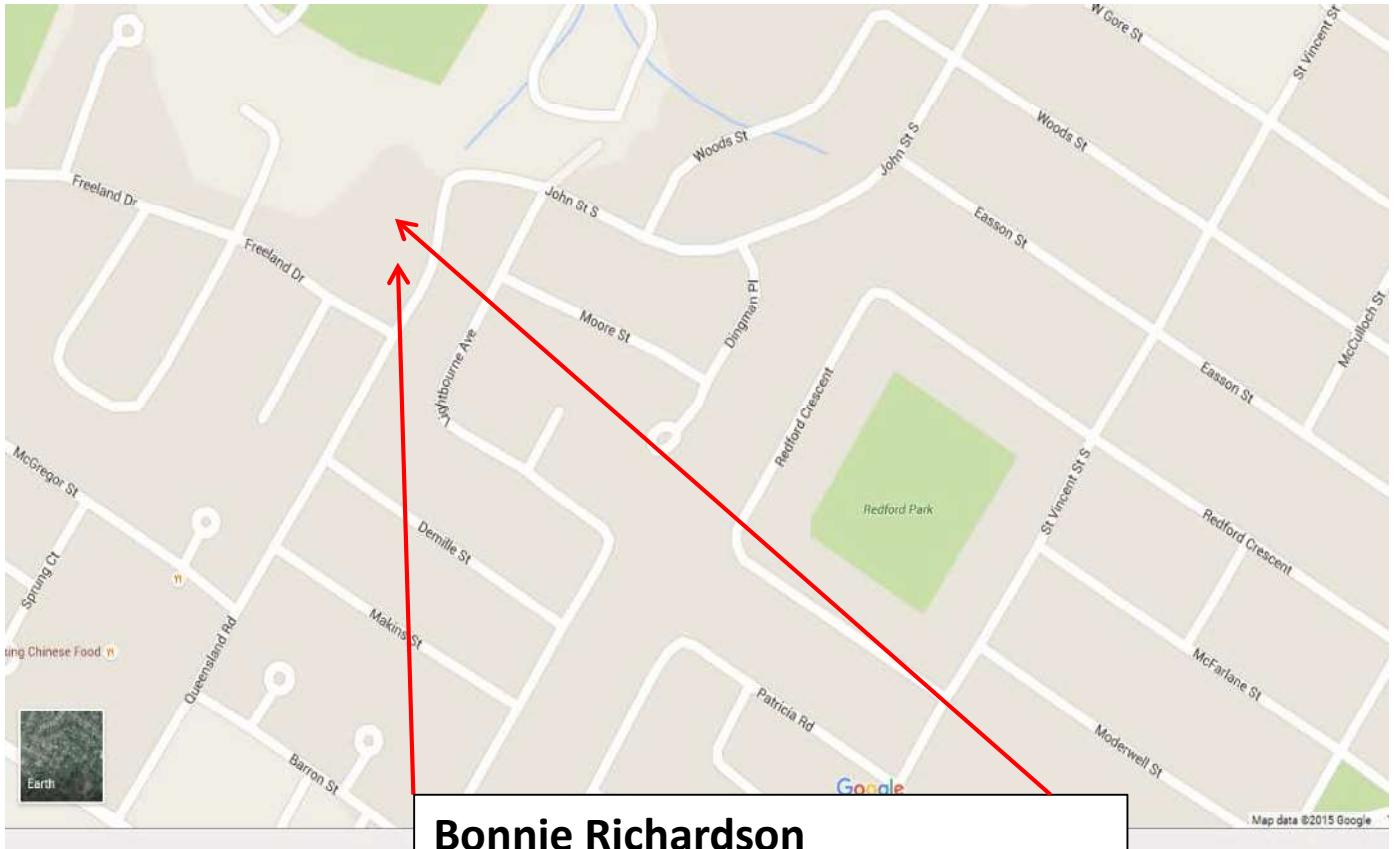
Annuals
Bernice Barratt – Captain
Ryan Bedford – Designer
TBD - Planters

Library
Dennis Rawe - Captain
Bernice Barratt – Member
TBD - Member

Pergola
Henry McVey - Captain
Dennis Rawe - Member
Bernice Barratt – Member
Nancy Lupton - Member







Bonnie Richardson

Queensland (125th)

Darlene Irwin– Captain

Bruce Wilkinson – Member

Henry McVey - Member

Ilona Querengesser - Member

Glen Querengesser - Member