



# the gardener

May 2016

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

*70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dutch Canadian Friendship Tulip Garden*



## SDHS May Meeting

Want to attract birds and butterflies to your garden? You can find out how at Monday's meeting of the Stratford and District Horticultural Society. Our speaker will be **Brenda Gallagher**.

Brenda works for the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA), and conducts interpretive tours of many natural areas in the London area for various groups. She has been studying medicinal plants for over 20 years, is an organic vegetable and herb gardener, as well as a nature photographer. Gallagher's presentation replaces previously announced demonstrations that were cancelled. She is a graduate of both Sault College and the University of Guelph, including programs in Forestry, Fish and Wildlife, Horticulture and Agriculture. She is a forestry technician and vegetation specialist within the UTRCA.

In addition to the usual door prizes we will be selling raffle tickets for the potting bench that was used as part of the Green Week display. These raffle tickets will also be sold at the plant sale which is on Saturday May 28 from 8:00 am to 2:00pm at the LOCAL

## Share your Creativity at the May Meeting

Once again at the May General Meeting, we will have the usual business and program but prior to the meeting we ask members to bring in something you have created for your garden or home. It could be in the form of an arrangement, design of your choice, a garden photo, a painting, pottery, wood carving, terrarium, wall hanging, wreath, to name a few ideas. Anything you would like to share with us.

There will be no judging. Without the judging process hopefully this will encourage you to enter. To determine the number of tables to set up, we ask that you enter a maximum of 3 items - give me a call if you'd like to sign up.

It would be great to look around the meeting room at a wonderful display of many designs and creations.

Mary Hoffman / (519) 271-2246 / email: marihoffman@cyg.net



*Heeman's Nursey, April 30, 2016*

*Photo by Bruce Wilkinson*

## President's Message

Now that spring has arrived and the threat of frost has passed there is a flurry of activity as seen at the various nurseries and garden centres. The teams of the public gardens have also been getting their respective gardens prepared for the season. Churchill Circle has a team for each quadrant and they coordinate their activities and share plans. Quadrants 3 & 4 are the last to be developed and they are well on their way. We have been working with the city to have water available there and it is now functioning. This will allow us to water as we plant new material and during the season as we deem necessary.

The teams of the other gardens are also getting them ready for the season. All the teams are to be commended for committing their time for the whole growing season. The results of their efforts are the most visible sign of our presence in the community and there have been many favourable comments from the community. It is most gratifying when you are working in a garden and someone from the neighbourhood stops to tell you how much they enjoy the garden and offer their thanks.

The plant sale is on Saturday May 28, the bus trip to the RGB is June 18, and the Garden Tour is July 3. With these activities and working in our own gardens will be a full summer.

As we look to the future the most concerning issue is the continuance of the society. Our future members have different demands of their time and they communicate using the latest technologies. This issue has been discussed at the District level and articles have been written on the subject. The solution for one society may not be successful in another because the makeup of the people in each community can be different. This is a long term problem and will require a long term solution. Our society has had membership as high as 2,064 and a low as 56. Each time it prevailed by recognising the problem and having the determination to find a solution. I am confident that we have the willingness and expertise to ensure success.

I hope you have a successful gardening season and take the time to relax and enjoy the beauty that is around you.

Mike Matthews



*Clematis from 2014 Garden Tour garden, Photo credit unknown.*

*Image used for 2106 Garden Tour publicity.*

## SDHS 'operations': Volunteer time

*(Editor's note: In an ongoing effort to provide information about the operations of the Society, I asked Mike to write about the volunteer contributions of members.)*

Volunteers are the backbone of any non-profit organization and ours is no exception. Our members volunteer for public gardening, garden festival, green week, plant sale, garden tour, organizing member activities, membership, newsletter, the board and various ad-hoc committees and annual events. We currently have 56 members recorded as volunteering their time. The list is incomplete at this time for planting the annuals, plant sale, garden tour and some annual activities. If we get 24 members when the tally is complete then we would have 80 member volunteers. Last year we reported 2,792.5 volunteer hours to the Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA) as part of our annual report to them. So why are the numbers important? If the volunteer hours are the same this year and you divide the hours, 2,792.5 by 80 volunteers you get an average of 34.9 hours per volunteer a year. The optimum situation is to have our volunteer hours increase and our average hours reduce. This only way this can happen is if we increase our number of member volunteers. If we can increase our membership then there would be more volunteers available. This is information that the board can use to make decisions on what we can reasonably do as a society. It is much easier to make decisions when there are facts to work with. We will keep you informed of the average as the year progresses.

I would like to express my gratitude to all of you who have generously volunteered your time. You improve the quality of life in our community.

Mike Matthews

## SDHS Appreciated by Library

The Stratford Public library held its annual volunteer recognition and presentation lunch on April 13<sup>th</sup>. Over 40 of the 95 active volunteers heard an impressive list of achievements with kudos from CEO Julia Merritt. Stratford Horticultural Society was praised for its contribution in caring for the library gardens and urns.

Awards were recorded for the volunteers, recognising the service from one year to over eighteen years of those who diligently delivered books, repaired books, read books, and many other activities -- including gardening.

No major changes are envisioned for the library this year. The Library has included the S&DHS in a summer programme of talks. We are scheduled for 20th July and Dennis Rawe has planned a demonstration (a talk, with handouts) of shrub planting. He has three small shrubs in pots, which are intended for a confined spot in the mixed garden at the library, and which he will use to demonstrate elementary shrub planting to an unknown audience.

## District 10 AGM Report

On April 30, 2016, The Belmont and Area Horticulture Society welcomed us warmly with a beautifully decorated entrance of planters of pansies. Each society had a display table. Our Stratford table was the potting bench, constructed by Mike Matthews and it garnered a great deal of positive attention.

Three excellent speakers informed and entertained us. The keynote speaker, Mitchell Hewson, the first person in Canada qualified to practice Horticultural Psychotherapy, reviewed his 30 year career as a therapist using plants to heal patients at Homewood in Guelph. His practice is one more illustration of reasons for promoting horticulture as a health benefit.

After lunch we were entertained by a very exuberant magician, Steve Wilson.

The third speaker was Duncan Sinclair, a teacher at East Elgin High School, who has developed an award winning course for senior students. The Environmental Leadership Program is a 4 credit course requiring a 1 year commitment. Most of the course is hands on experience and involves alliances with several Conservation Clubs, Parks and A Wildlife Reserve. The course is self-funded. Where was he when we were in high school?



*Crabapple blossoms.*  
*Photo by Anu MacIntosh-Murray.*

The cultural specimens and floral design show was amazing considering the cool weather we've been experiencing. Bernice Barratt represented our society with 3 entries in the design division and came home with 3 ribbons. Congratulations Bernice!

Anna Peterson, from St. Marys, received a well-deserved award for her dedicated work with youth.

There were several draws for generous prizes, a delicious hot lunch buffet, a demonstration of an unconventional method of filling a planter by the OHA past President, James Graham, intermittent stretch breaks and of course a buzz of happy conversation of all things regarding horticulture.

The organizing committee focussed on "going green" and to that end the paper work was diminished as reports were all online.

It was my very first district AGM but hopefully it won't be my last.

Marg O'Reilly

## SDHS Gardens - The Iris Bed

Since the dawn of recorded history Irises have appeared in royalty, religion, tapestries, magic, and medicine. In Stratford, the Iris was chosen as the Civic Flower in January 1925, hybridized by Bill Miles and registered as the "City of Stratford" in the Iris Registry. Thanks to the generosity of Reverend W.T. Corcoran (1889- 1970) an avid, gardener, Iris grower and hybridizer, and his bequest of his Iris collection to the Horticulture Society, as well as the efforts of many volunteers we still have the Memorial Garden to Monsignor Corcoran on McLagan Drive, filled with many varieties of Irises.



This year our committee of five have ambitious and exciting plans for the development of a new bed, still on McLagan Drive, but across the street and closer to St Vincent St. We have been busy weeding the existing bed and are excited to see the emerging blooms. You may be wondering why go to all the work of building a new bed? The present bed has been infested with Iris Borer. We plan to identify what we have, and salvage what we can to move them to the new bed. The city has agreed to remove the sod for the new bed and we are committed to removing the twitch and other deep roots, then put down newspapers and black landscape cloth until planting time in late August. We are organizing a hands on seminar, planning and planting an Iris bed to be held in August. Further information will be given at the May meeting.

We are working on having an Iris named for the SDHS in honour of our 140th Anniversary in 2018. We are brainstorming to choose a name. Since there are lots of creative members in our organization we invite you to share your ideas on this project.



*A portion of the Iris Garden. Photo by Michael Murray*

Three members of our committee are travelling to the Trail's End to view the gardens and order some Iris for the new bed. There are several varieties of Iris which bloom at different times throughout the season from April until mid-July and beyond. Our goal is to have blooms throughout the summer.

I am fortunate to have 4 enthusiastic, creative, and dedicated volunteers. We have fun learning together and doing our bit to make a little corner of our beautiful city even better. Please feel free to join us if you have a few hours to spare. I can be contacted by e-mail: [dandm.oreilly@sympatico.ca](mailto:dandm.oreilly@sympatico.ca)

Marg O'Reilly

## SDHS Bus Trip to RBG!

### Royal Botanical Gardens

June 18, 8 am to 5:30-6:00 pm

We will be going to RBG for a tour of the new Rock Garden. Lunch may be purchased (\$12 to \$15 range); you may bring a bagged lunch if you wish. After lunch we will go to the main building to see Rose Show, Hendrie Park and wander through the main building. There may be a surprise location if we have time to stop on the way or on the way back.

Price per person \$40 per member; Non Member \$55, includes a membership. This includes: Entrance to RBG, Tour of Rock Gardens, Refreshments, Prizes, and a Tip for Driver.

Please pay at May Meeting – May 30<sup>th</sup>. Seats are limited. Once you pay your seats are secured.

Any questions or registration for bus trip call me 519-271-2739 or email [nancy.lupton@wightman.ca](mailto:nancy.lupton@wightman.ca)

Nancy Lupton

## Getting Ready for Spring

Heeman's Nursey, Thorndale

Photo by Bruce Wilkinson, April 30, 2016



## Society Funding: HST Rebates

*(Editor's note: in the past two newsletters, Glen Querengesser, the Society's Treasurer, has written about the importance of membership and Society activities to its finances. I asked Glen to write another article to continue our learning about this.)*

I remember well a comment my maternal grandmother made frequently years ago. "If you look after the pennies, the dollars will look after themselves." It would seem that comment no longer applies today since we no longer use pennies in Canada. Yet, it is still true in regard to one aspect of my bookkeeping as your Hort. Society treasurer.

Each time we make a purchase, there are at least a few cents (or a large amount of HST) added to our purchase as tax. Often it may only be 20 or 30 cents, but there is value in tracking these costs. Just recently I received the HST rebate from the federal and provincial governments for 2015 year. It totalled \$900.60. Part of my bookkeeping task is to extract the HST amount from every purchase we make as a Society, sometimes it might be large amount, but often it is only a very small amount. Nevertheless, when you total it up at the end of the year, it can be a large amount. In 2015 we paid \$1,292.25 in HST. Since 8% is provincial tax and 5% is federal tax, I make two separate applications to the government. The federal give us 50% of our tax back and the province gives us 82% back.



*Bleeding Heart. Photo by Anu MacIntosh-Murray*

So my purpose in writing this article, is to impress on anyone who spends money on behalf of the Hort. Society and then submits the invoice to me for re-imburements, that it is important that we track the tax. Occasionally someone will only give me a credit card slip for re-imburement. That will not work to get the tax back. It does not tell what you purchased and the amount of tax. What I require is either an invoice which shows the HST paid or a cash register tape that shows the amount of tax charged to us. While you might think that the tax is only 20 or 30 cents, when many small amounts are tracked and added together, it can result in a fairly large rebate for our Society. Thus I encourage you to track the HST we pay.

Most of you do a great job in providing me the correct paper work, but hopefully this will encourage everyone to take care when making a purchase to keep the proper paper work so I can apply for the HST rebate.

Glen Querengesser, Treasurer



## SDHS Plant Sale

Saturday, May 28 at The Local, 8 am to 2 pm

The Local is at 612 Erie St., a few buildings before Lorne Ave. Parking is off Jarvis St. which is *before* the Local's buildings. Please see map below.

It's hard to believe but this year's plant sale is days away! We are INDOORS at the Local, so come, rain or shine.

This year there is an especially fine selection of mature perennials, dug up by member volunteers, from three gardens. These include peonies, Solomon's seal, iris, pulmonaria, crocosmia, sedum, grasses, and lilies. You will find special-ordered scented geraniums including 'Mabel Grey', 'Mrs. Taylor', 'Peacock' and variegated 'Nutmeg'. As well, look for special-ordered, hard-to-find herbs, including savory 'Winter Lemon'; *Monarda citriodora* or lemon bergamot; oregano ('Zorba Red' and golden); 'Marilyn's Salad' mint; French tarragon; and tri-colour sage. Thyme varieties include 'Lemon Carpet', silver, 'Cleopatra Za'atar' and rose-mint. The selection of pollinator seeds and plants is excellent. Once again there will be a varied selection of vegetables, including member grown tomato plants for sale. However, free tomato seedlings planted by the Local will be given away, one per person.

Experienced members and Master Gardeners will be on hand to provide transplant demonstrations and planting advice.

Members are asked to offer any spare seeds, especially vegetable seeds, to the Local for the seed exchange. Extra seeds will be planted by the Local members in the raised beds.

For those members donating plants - please drop off your potted up plants at The Local Friday May 2 after 3 pm until 8 pm. 612 Erie St.

If you are able to provide the name, flower color, height and sun requirement it is appreciated. Please identify unique cultivars to a volunteer when you drop off the plants.

# Plant Sale!



### Member Grown Plants

Perennials  
Annuals Herbs  
Pollinator plants  
Free Seeds (The Local)  
Demonstrations  
Free advice from Master Gardeners

**May 28 2016**

8 A.M. – Noon

**Contact:**

[sdhs1878@outlook.com](mailto:sdhs1878@outlook.com) / [Facebook](#)

[Online](#)

<http://www.gardenontario.org/site.php/stratford>

**Location: The Local**

612 Erie St  
Stratford N5A2P1



If you can't make it Friday, you can drop off on Thursday from 3 pm – to right side of the porch, NOT blocking the ramp or main doors!

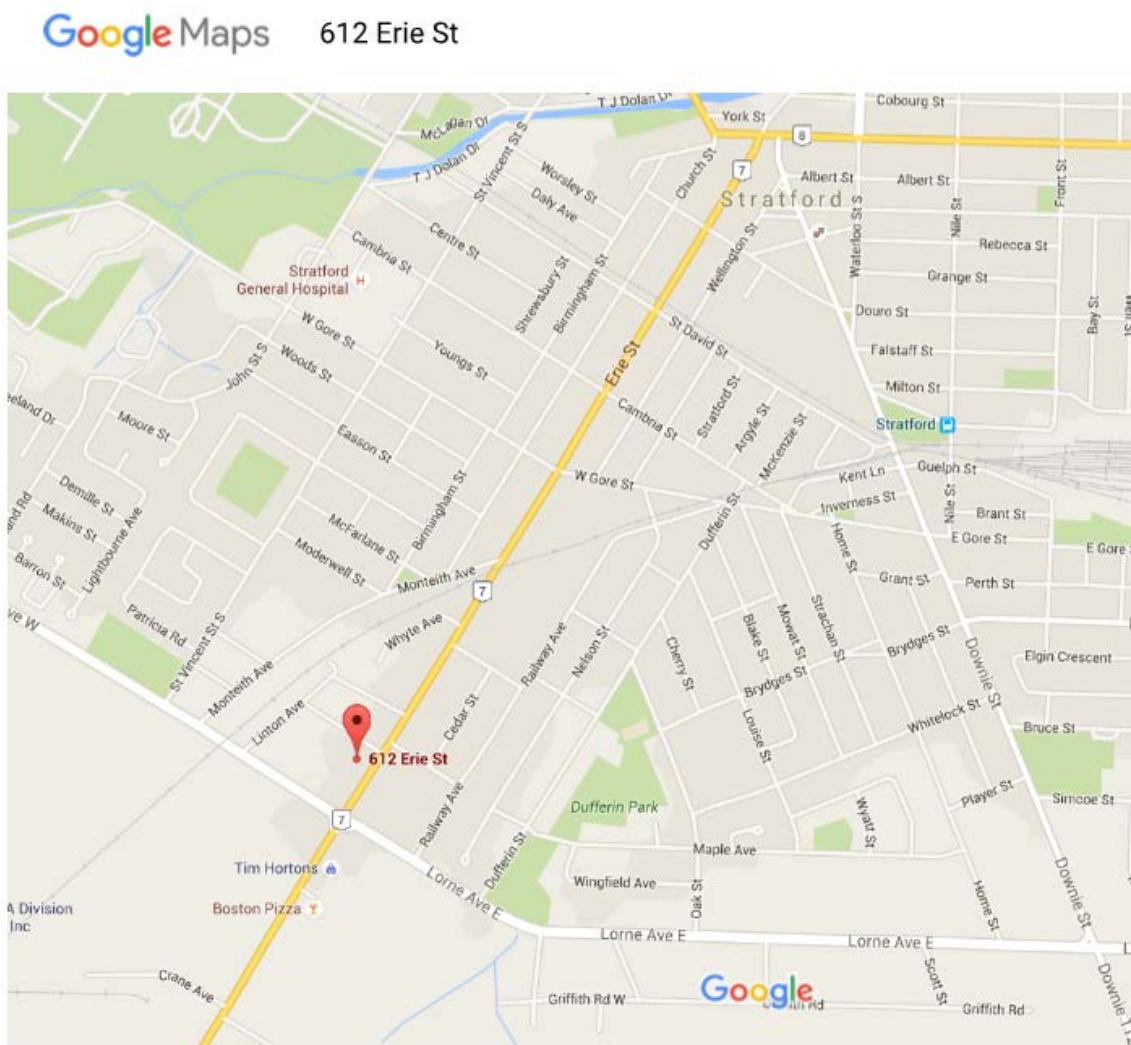
Volunteers are always welcome the day of the Plant Sale. If you can only come for an hour or two, that's great, the more the merrier.

\*Urgently needed on Friday May 27, mid- day, are two vans with drivers to pick up and transport a large quantity of potted plants from west Perth to the Local.\*

BTW, The Local will be selling breakfast burritos at the plant sale, so early bird buyers don't need to skip breakfast!

Maureen Cocksedge / 226 921 0885

The Local's location



## Science Corner: Nuts Are Fruits (*but not all fruits are nuts*)

Leslye Glover, Master Gardener (Stratford Master Gardeners)

*(Editor's Note: I commissioned this article by Leslye because I was confused by the fruits, nuts, etc. issues related to food allergies, and thought some of the botanical science of plants related to this would also be interesting to gardeners.)*

A fruit is defined, botanically, as a seed-bearing structure which develops from the ovaries of a flowering plant. The sole purpose of the flower is to reproduce. The fruit is a fortunate by-product for herbivores. Simple fruits develop from a single ovary of a flowering plant.

Botanists love classification, and it's a good way to keep track of families of plants. Like all families, the relationships are complex and sometimes confusing.

Drupes are a type of simple fruit in which an outer, fleshy part surrounds a shell or pit. Inside the pit is the fruit's seed. Peaches, olives and cherries are drupes.

The endocarp protects the seed and can even pass through the gastrointestinal tract of predators and still germinate when expelled.

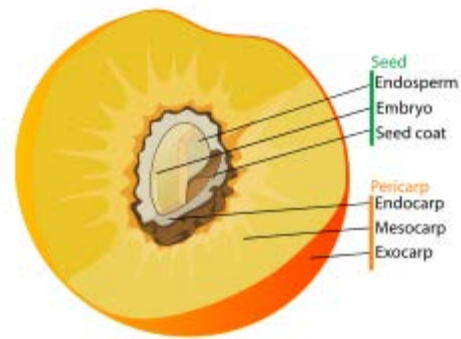
There are other drupes which we commonly think of as nuts: pecans, almonds, walnuts, cashews and pistachios to name a few. Some botanists break down this category of fruit with a thick, protective endocarp into "drupe-like", "drupaceous nuts" and such. It can make your head spin.

True nuts are defined hard shell dry fruit or seeds with a separable rind and interior kernel. The fruit of true nuts is "indehiscent", which means it does not open at maturity, like milkweed. Indehiscent fruit rely on predators or decay to spread the seeds.

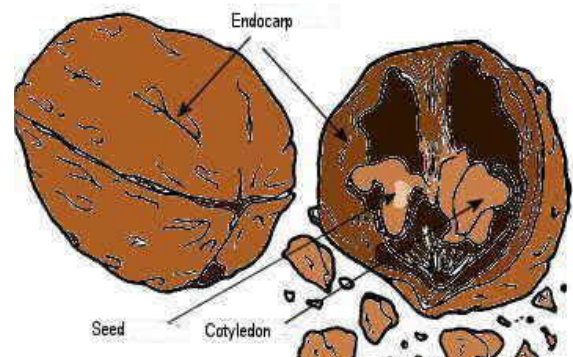
Allergies to tree nuts, whether drupes or true nuts, and to peanuts (a legume), are very common. Reactions to ingestion by sensitive people can range from a mild rash to life-threatening anaphylactic shock. This can include swelling, hives, and lowered blood pressure among other nasty things.

### Interesting Facts

- Brazil Nuts are seeds
- Tomatoes are berries
- Cucumbers are berries, too
- Nutmeg and coconut are not strictly considered nuts, but people can be allergic to them
- Almonds and peaches are part of the Rose family (Rosaceae)
- Maple seeds with wings – those cool helicopters kids love- are technically samaras



Source: [en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org)



Source: [botanical-online.com](http://botanical-online.com)

# Raised Garden Beds

Denis Rawe

There are several very good reasons why you would consider building a raised bed in your garden. Raised beds are sometimes the only way to have a successful garden in areas where the topsoil has been removed to facilitate construction, or in areas with highly compacted, unusable clay soil.

Individual planting beds give the gardener the option of creating different environments, enabling them to grow a wider variety of plants. Each bed can be filled with soil which has been chosen and prepared to suit the requirements of a certain category of plants. (Plants which require a drastically different soil pH, succulents which require extra drainage, a raised "bog" garden, sun, shade...)

Garden access for disabled persons, possibly with back problems or other disabilities or confined to a wheelchair, which may otherwise prevent them from working in the garden, they will find it much easier and more enjoyable to tend a well-designed raised bed.

Raised planting beds can be designed so that they are convertible to a cold frame in the spring, allowing you to get a jump on all the other gardeners in the neighbourhood. Mount permanent supports for framing poles directly to the frame of the bed. In early spring, add a frame of PVC pipe, cover with poly film, and you will be able to start your plants directly into the ground, as soon as a month earlier!

## Growing Vegetables in Raised Beds

By rotating your crops, you will ensure a longer useable life for the soil. Different vegies take different nutrients and minerals from the soil.

A raised bed can be just a mound of soil, soil which may have been imported from another area of the garden or delivered from a nursery, a landscape supplier or a topsoil merchant. The practical and adaptable bed is a simple wooden wall only 6 inches high, taller beds take a large quantity of soil to fill. A little more permanent structure usually employs landscape timbers or stone, concrete blocks, logs....etc.

Before you fill your frame, till and cultivate the soil as well as you can, adding organic compost to loosen it up. When you use 'new' soil mix it with mature compost. If you buy 'Triple mix' be sure of the mixture and the quality. It is convenient to build the walls as much as two feet high and fit a top board as a seat. For a normal reach of two feet the width should be little more than 4 feet. The best time to build a raised bed is during the fall or winter, while your primary gardening projects are on hold. By the time spring arrives, the soil will be settled into place and you'll be ready for planting.

Raised beds should be set up in north/south orientation to allow the maximum direct sunlight to both sides.



*A not-very-pretty but functional steel raised bed in the Editor's late June Stratford garden*

## 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.

**You will also be able to buy them at Saturday's SHSC Plant Sale at The Local.**

Mary Hoffman / Membership Convenor / 519-271-2246 / email: [marihoffman@cyg.net](mailto:marihoffman@cyg.net)

## St. Mary's 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Garden Fair

St. Marys 19th Annual Garden Fair - Saturday June 4, 2016,

8:30 AM to 1 PM. Milt Dunnell Field (The Flats), St. Marys, Ontario.

Over 20 garden-related vendors as well as our popular heirloom tomatoes will be for sale.

Ann Pedley

## Newsletter Notes

- The next newsletter is scheduled to be published just before the Oct. 2016 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".
- You can reach me, Michael Murray, at the *newsletter's* email address: [SDHSthegardener@gmail.com](mailto:SDHSthegardener@gmail.com) Or by phone: 519-271-3937. Or talk to me at any of our meetings.

## Social Media



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

