



the gardener

April 2018

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

SDHS Garden Urn



April General Meeting

Master Gardeners' Chat at 6:30. April:
Soil testing - Come hear about a home gardener's experience trying three ways of testing soil from her garden. We'll talk about how to test soil (and, more importantly, why bother?).

General Meeting Program, at 7:30.
Growing Bearded Irises: Nature's Rainbow Flower, by Ann & Bob Granatier, Trails End Iris Garden. *See more about our speakers on the next page.*

Garden Urn

This urn was part of the SDHS garden at the March Garden Festival

The arrangement was bought at a reduced price at Flowers on York, a Hort Society sponsor, *where SDHS members can get a membership and a discount!*

After the show, it went to the library for all its patrons to enjoy.

Urn: Ryan Bedford

Photo: Susan Kurtz

April Program Speaker

Ann and Bob Granatier from Trails End Iris will be our speakers for April 30. Ann designed our beautifully renovated iris garden and she and Bob conducted a workshop on planting and growing iris when the new iris garden was planted. Their topic is "Growing Bearded Irises: Nature's Rainbow Flower". The iris is Stratford's civic flower and I know they will have glorious photos of this fantastic perennial. They developed the "Believe in Tomorrow" Iris, pictured later in the newsletter. Visit their website: http://www.trailsendiris.com/irises/iris_profile/believeintomorrow.htm

May General Meeting

Master Gardeners' Show and Tell. Bring a favourite houseplant for this open discussion. We'll talk about how to get your houseplants ready to go out on the deck or porch for the summer and bringing them back indoors in autumn.

How to Design a Garden, by Malcolm Shute. Malcolm is a new resident of our fair city as well as a new member of our Horticultural Society. He has been a landscaper in the Toronto area for the past 12 years and is hoping to get his business established here. His topic will be "How to Design a Garden" and with new housing boom surrounding us this will be a very timely and helpful evening. [Our scheduled speaker Jacqui Empson Laport has been re-scheduled to next year.]

Preliminary & Incomplete List of Future 140th Anniversary Events.

Iris Garden dedication with particular focus on our Believe in Tomorrow iris. Plan is for that to be a media event with the press, radio, maybe even TV coverage.

The plant sale will highlight the 140th with signs, banners, and bells and whistles. Membership have been invited to submit ideas for a special table of 140 plants. Our float for Canada Day parade will celebrate the 140th.

Hort Society is sponsoring an "edible forest" of 10 trees and plants near The Local's community gardens. We'll no doubt have a media event to celebrate that.

In July, Gallery Stratford will have a curated exhibition of botanical prints celebrating the 140th. An accompanying exhibit will be botanical wood engravings by Stratford's Gerard Brender à Brandis.

The Garden Tour in July will have lots of emphasis on the 140th, with new banners and "sail" signs announcing our presence and activities. Our Host Garden will be at a St. David St. house, which was the former home of J. Grayson Smith, the Hort Society's 1st president. It will also get a plaque installed.

Re-do walkway and add information sign at Dutch Memorial Garden.

Doug Reberg

2018 SDHS MEMBERSHIPS AVAILABLE

Two local flower shops have once again kindly agreed to sell our 2018 yearly memberships. Price remains at \$15.00 yearly.

FLOWERS ON YORK, 25-27 York St., Mon. - Sat. 9am to 5pm

STRATFORD BLOOMS, 52 Albert St., Mon. - Fri. 9am - 5pm/ Sat. 10am - 5pm

Mary Hoffman, Memberships Convenor, [REDACTED]

We currently have about 160 members in 2018; we need 200 to get OHA funding, discussed in several previous newsletters. And we would like more than that for numerous reasons. To that end, we are offering a member draw.

Membership Draw

At the end of our April General Meeting, the names of all 2018 members will be put into a draw for a Mike Matthew's potting bench, pictured below. Mike's benches have proved popular in the past and would be a great addition to someone's garden.



To be in the draw you need a 2018 membership; it is a yellow card this year. Remember, memberships are for a *calendar* year.

If you don't yet have a 2018 membership you can buy one at the door at the April meeting. Or a one of the flower shops listed above; just remember to get those well before the general meeting to allow processing time. If you do get one there, you might want to flash your card at the door to be sure it is recorded.

Of course if you don't personally want the bench, you can give it away, sell it, or refuse it, in which case it will be raffled off at some future SDHS event.

A Great Big Thanks

The SDHS would like to thank the many volunteers and contributors to their successful garden display at this year's Stratford Garden Festival. This includes Home Hardware, Sebringville Nursery, Klomps, Touch of Dutch, Eligh Feryn Designs, Flowers on York and the many members who gave of their time.



Stratford Garden at Festival. Photo by Anu MacIntosh-Murray

By the Way...

Bernice Barratt would like to encourage our members to investigate the OHA website at www.gardenontario in the Convention 2018 section. There are many competitions that run at conventions and it is a wonderful way to showcase members' talents. Some of the material is time sensitive so read carefully. Contact Bernice if you would like to send along an entry, or attend the event yourself! It is always a wonderful time and there is an amazing speaker line-up too. Check it out

Volunteer Opportunities - early 2018

| Position | Details |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Greeters | one hour before general meetings, last Mondays |
| Publicity Coordinator | Upload details of meetings and events to local websites |
| Event or Bus Tour Coordinator | Arrange an event or tour for the Society |

If interested, see any Director at the meetings, call Maureen Cocksedge at [REDACTED], or email Michael Murray at sdhs1878@outlook.com

Ontario Horticultural Society Membership Benefits

As a member of an Ontario Horticultural Society you are in good company. The Stratford Society belongs to District 10, which serves 24 societies in Thames Valley. You are welcome at their events. Contact the other societies and connect with those who love gardens and gardening. Online:

<http://www.gardenontario.org/site.php/district10>

Consider attending the Annual Conference in Kingston this July..

There will be Speakers & Seminars: Dry Stone Walls, Gardening for Nature, Indigenous Medicinal Plants, Tree Pruning; Silent Auction, Vendors Market and Competitions. Register online: <http://www.gardenontario.org/index.php> We will car pool. See any Board member for information.

Maureen Cocksedge

Reminder about Seed Purchase 'Deal'

SDHS is a member of the Ontario Horticultural Association. OHA members qualify for a 10% discount on some Seed Catalogue orders. To receive that discount, the member would have to fill in the area asking for the OHA code. The OHA assigned code is #4633. This code may be used for discounts on phone orders, internet orders and those orders sent in by mail.

Dona Birtwistle, Secretary / OHA District 10, SecOHAD10@gmail.com

SDHS Interest Groups

Did you know that there are several special interest groups in the SDHS?

The "Seedy Sowers" exchange seedlings every spring.

The "Plant Rescue" group digs mature gardens (on request), using the plant material for the plant sale or public gardens. In autumn, this group holds workshops to collect seeds and cuttings from public gardens. The seeds are given to the Local or the public library "Seed Library".

The "informal" garden tour group arranges carpooling to visit gardens in the area.

To be added to the email list for any group, fill out an "interest form", email sdhd1878@outlook.com, or speak to Maureen (██████████).



SDHS Banner. Photo by Anu MacIntosh-Murray

Wanted: SDHS Plant Sale Recommendations



As part of SDHS 140th activities, we plan on having (at least) 140 plants available at the Plant Sale in May. This is your chance to recommend a plant. Plants will be purchased from a number of sources.

Recommendations will be accepted until the April 30 General Meeting. Please email your recommendations to sdhs1878@outlook.com. Questions to Maureen at ██████████

Please include as much information about the plant you are recommending as possible. We need more information than just 'peony' for example.

Pre Orders will be taken at the April meeting.

Believe in Tomorrow Iris

SDHS 2018 Plant Sale

Volunteers needed for SDHS Plant Sale in May

We are looking for help the month before, as well as the day before and day of the Plant Sale. We need many volunteers, indoors and out, at the Local Community Food Center, so come, rain or shine, for an hour or the day!

Here are some of the jobs we need volunteers to do:

- sow or care for seedlings
- re-pot, dig or divide plants
- publicity -online notices
- publicity - distribute posters and bookmarks
- collect and organize garden items for the “garage sale table”
- shovel compost into bags
- set up tables and plants on May 25
- with a truck or van, pick up plants on May 25 from three sites
- sales help, organizers, packers and parking attendants on May 26
- tear down May 26

Please consider donating plants – we absolutely rely on members to provide the bulk of the plant material available for sale. Please drop off your potted-up plants at The Local Friday May 25 after 3 pm until 7 pm. If you are able - please provide the name, flower color, height and sun need. This is much appreciated. Please point out rare or unique cultivars, when you drop off the plants.

This year members have recommended “140 favorite plants” for our 140th. There will be an especially fine selection of mature perennials, dug up last fall by member volunteers,

**STRATFORD & DISTRICT
HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY**

GARDEN STRATFORD PLANT SALE

SATURDAY MAY 26, 2018

8AM-2PM • THE LOCAL CFC, 612 ERIE ST., STRATFORD

**MEMBER GROWN PLANTS
EXCEPTIONAL CHOICE & VALUE**

PERENNIALS • ANNUALS • HERBS • POLLINATOR PLANTS •
PERENNIAL SEEDS • GARDEN “GARAGE SALE” ITEMS •
FREE ADVICE FROM MASTER GARDENERS

The Local
Community Food Centre

gardenstratford.org
gardenontario.org/site.php/stratford

from notable gardens. Also on offer will be hard-to-find native and pollinator plants, obtained from the St Williams Forestry and Ecology Center. We need experienced members on hand to provide planting advice.

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.

Contact: sdhs1878@outlook.com

Or: Dorothy, Cobe, Alice, Nancy at any meeting or Maureen ([REDACTED])

Compost available at SDHS Plant Sale in May

The Society is once again offering bags of locally produced compost. We had a very successful compost sale last year and thought it was a perfect accompaniment to the Plant Sale.

Compost is usually delivered in truck load quantities at prices in excess of \$100.00 per load. We bring it to you in a size suitable for the home gardener.

The product is composted manure and straw; It is light weight and suitable for compost or mulch. Most gardening references recommend spreading it on top of the soil and letting the worms carry it down to plant roots – no need to dig!

Orders will be taken at the April Meeting. Available on a pre-paid basis. Cash or check. Pick up at the Plant Sale May 26 at the Local, Erie St from 8 until 2.

We rely on volunteers to bag the compost. Please let any Board member, or Maureen, Nancy, Dorothy or Cobe know if you can assist with this on Friday, May 25 (the afternoon/evening before the sale), any time from 3:00 to 8:00 pm.



Photo by Susan Kurtz

SDHS 2018 Garden Tour

Mark your calendars! This year's Garden Tour will take place on Sunday, July 1st.

The Garden Tour Committee has been busy since the 2017 Tour, viewing gardens, consulting supporters and working to make 2018 just a little bit special for our 140th. It is shaping up to be a fabulous peek into the secret oases of Stratford and area and will include private yards, a community garden and a 3-for-1 special. There will be a "refreshment garden", draw prize, and Plant Identification Challenge.

Tickets will be available to members at a modest discount during the SDHS May meeting (and only there); then go on sale to the public at 4 venues in Stratford in early June.

The Committee is looking for additional members. We run like a well-oiled machine, and would love to have new perspectives, new ideas, and fresh viewpoints. Please contact Marg O'Reilly or Leslye Glover if you are interested. The time commitment is modest. The fun level is greater.



**GARDEN STRATFORD
GARDEN TOUR**

SUNDAY JULY 1, 2018 • 10AM-4PM

EIGHT PRIVATE GARDENS
\$15 PASSES OR 2 FOR \$25 • AVAILABLE BEGINNING JUNE 4 AT:

FLOWERS ON YORK
COZYN'S GARDEN GALLERY
SEBRINGVILLE GARDEN CENTRE
TOM'S ELDON LANDSCAPING & GARDEN CENTRE
+ THE DAY OF THE GARDEN TOUR AT CITY HALL FROM 9AM-1PM

gardenontario.org/site.php/stratford gardenstratford.org 

What or who on earth is a Master Gardener?

That is a question which comes up frequently at Seedy Days, the Garden Festival and other venues where Master Gardeners congregate. Here is a quote from the MGOI (Master Gardeners of Ontario Inc) website:

“Master Gardeners (MGs) in the Province of Ontario are experienced gardeners who have studied horticulture extensively and continue to upgrade their skills through technical training. With this training and continuing education, Master Gardeners provide expert horticultural advice to the general public.”

That may sound a bit intimidating, because really, we are merely plant fanatics, as you are, who have taken on-line courses through Guelph or Dalhousie Universities. We have increased our knowledge about plants, soil, pests, diseases, planning of gardens, and pruning to name a few areas. Some MGs have opted for self-guided study, followed by a Certification Exam. People with extensive gardening knowledge and experience can opt to write the exam without taking courses.

We do our best to provide gardening advice to the public, but will be the first to acknowledge that we do not know everything. Each MG has his or her areas of interest and competence. While a candidate is taking courses, and putting in volunteer hours, she or he is a Master Gardener in Training (MGiT). MGITs must complete 2 years of volunteer commitment before being certified as an MG.

Continuing education and annual volunteer hours are a necessary facet of a Master Gardener's life, and mandatory to continue holding designation as an MG.

If you would like to find out more about MGOI, or how to become a Master Gardener, you can ask a member of the Stratford and District Master Gardeners group. We welcome you to attend one of our monthly meetings! We meet the second Wednesday of most months at Avondale United Church in Stratford, at 7 p.m. There are no meetings in December, July and August. We garden and socialize, instead. The MGOI website is available to everyone: www.mgoi.ca .

Leslye Glover, MG



1MG Banner, Photo by Anu MacIntosh-Murray



St. Mary's Hort Society Garden Fair

St. Marys Horticultural Society 21st Annual Garden Fair - Saturday June 2 from 8:30 AM to 1 PM. Location Milt Dunnell Field (The Flats) St. Marys, ON. There will be over 20 garden-related vendors, free admission and free parking. As well we will be selling 15 different varieties of our popular heirloom tomatoes, grown by our members. Master Gardeners will be in attendance to answer all your garden related questions.



Photo by Ann Pedley

Congratulations to Bernice

Photo of Bernice Barratt's design entry which she was awarded "Honourable Mention" at Canada Blooms in Toronto this year.

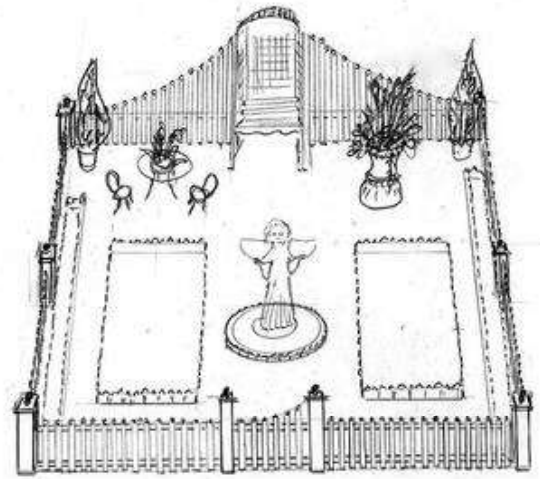


Photo by Bruce Wilkinson

The Victorian Garden: A Primer

It was appropriate to select a Victorian garden as the theme for our entry in the Lung Association's "Stratford Garden Festival" this year. The S&DHS was founded in 1878 during the reign of England's Queen Victoria. There has always been a strong connection between Ontario and Great Britain and vestiges of early Victorian gardens remain today in North America. Thus some research was called for to learn the distinguishing features. Most prominent was the fencing around the property or the garden and, as with most things Victorian, some simple ornamentation. An arbour, breaking through the fence, sometimes led on to another part of the garden.

Occasionally a garden seat placed in an alcove known as a bench arbour. It was important to the Victorians that paths or gardens were clearly defined. This was achieved by placing stone, brick, metal or tile edging around. Specially formed glazed tile were very popular.



Original layout by Dennis Rawe.



Photo by Doug Reberg

Early Victorian years showed a boom of interest in the horticulture world, travelling botanists brought new and strange plants back to Britain supplying universities and plant nurseries with interesting specimens. Horticultural Societies were forming and a new horticultural industry was developing.

At one time the prerogative of the well to do, the general public, in a growing industry, now had some income to indulge in gardening, if not landscaping. The industry produced wrought iron seats, gates & railings, urns, posts, post finials, pedestal

birdbaths, planters and other artifacts specifically aimed as gardenware. Statues and animal models on pedestals or plinths adorned many gardens both public and private.

Dennis Rawe

Following Nature's Lead: Old Farmer's Almanac

<https://www.almanac.com/blog/gardening/garden-journal/phenology-planting-natures-signs>

Owen Switzer, a SDHS Board member, receives articles from the Old Farmer's Almanac by email. [You could too, for free, <https://www.almanac.com/newsletters/subscribe>].

A recent article was about phenology; "this involves studying natural phenomena to know when to plant crops in the spring." They continued, "For centuries, farmers took their cues for spring planting times from observing what was happening in nature."

Here are some of their observations.

When the forsythia is in bloom, it is safe to plant peas, onion sets, and lettuce.

Look for dandelions to bloom before planting potatoes.

Perennials can be planted when the maple trees begin to leaf out.

Wait for apple trees to bloom before planting bush beans. When the apple blossoms fall, plant pole beans and cucumbers.

By the time the lilacs are in full bloom, it will be safe to plant tender annual flowers and squashes.

Transplant tomatoes when lily-of-the-valley is in full flower.

I am particularly interested in the last one about tomatoes; I will "check it out" this spring.

Michael Murray, Newsletter Editor



Tomatoes. Photo by M. Murray

Check out our new website: GardenStratford.org

Newsletter Notes

- The next newsletter is scheduled to be published in June 2018. 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 Or by phone: [REDACTED]. Or talk to me at any of our meetings.

INVITATION - 2018

There are many opportunities to get involved with your Society. Please check all your areas of interest.

Join the Board - 9 meetings a year, first Mondays of the month

Public Gardening - Which garden? _____

Help at Events / Workshops

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seedy Sunday – Feb 11 | <input type="checkbox"/> Iris Bed Dedication - June 9 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stratford Garden Festival -March 2017 | <input type="checkbox"/> Garden Tour -July 1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plant Sale - last Saturday in May | <input type="checkbox"/> Canada Day Parade |

Help at Meetings

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buy Plant of the Month-Society budget | <input type="checkbox"/> Set up |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shop for Door prizes | <input type="checkbox"/> Sell Draw Tickets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality | <input type="checkbox"/> Swap Table |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Welcoming | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity - place notices online |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Display boards | |

Join an Interest Group

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Floral Design Interest Group | <input type="checkbox"/> Plant Rescue / Seed Collection |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Design of the Month | |

Behind the Scenes - Join the team

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Social media / Website administration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photography | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archivist | <input type="checkbox"/> Posters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program/Education/Workshop Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Garden Design |

Do you have information or expertise to offer? Please explain.

What workshops / trips would you like to have?

What topic would you like at regular meetings or garden chats?

Can you recommend any speakers? Please give contact details

Would you like to car pool to nearby horticultural events? Yes / No

Any other suggestions?

Print Name: _____ Phone _____

Print Email _____

Please hand this in at a General Meeting, give to any Board member or email to sdhs1878@outlook.com
Thank you for taking the time to help us learn more about member wants and needs.