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UPCOMING PROGRAM EVENTS

🌀 **Thursday January 21, 2021**

1 pm on Zoom

Gardening from a Hammock:

A Guide to Low-maintenance Gardening

Dan Cooper

🌀 **Thursday February 18, 2021**

1 pm on Zoom

Gardening Through the Seasons

Marilyn Light

🌀 **Thursday March 18, 2021**

1 pm on Zoom

Your Cottage Garden: Best Results with the Least Effort

Lana Doss

🌀 **Thursday April 15, 2021**

A Tour Through the Historic Gardens of South Carolina

Christine Edwards

🌀 **Thursday May 20, 2021**

1 pm on Zoom

Annual General Meeting

WELCOME TO THE OTTAWA GARDEN CLUB

We look forward to meeting the following new members of the Garden Club once we are able to get together in person again, post-pandemic:

Miho Kawamura - Japan

Mary McGillis-McKee - Ireland

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

When the pandemic hit last March, none of us would have believed that we would still be shut down almost a year later. But here we are. And while it has been a difficult year for us all, it has also been a year of learning new things and learning how to do things differently.

In the spring, we learned how to stay connected through sharing garden photos. Kelly Noel expanded her technical expertise by organizing our photos on YouTube, allowing us to take a peek inside many of our members' emerging gardens. The series provided a real boost to our spirits.

In the fall, we all learned how to Zoom! I don't think any of us had even heard of Zoom before the lockdown, but now we are meeting friends and family, taking yoga and art classes, and holding our regular meetings, all on the Zoom platform. Sincere thanks to Ann Goldsmith and Peggy Morgan who have stepped outside their usual roles to host our OGC Zoom meetings, gently guiding us through the various techniques and features, especially how to mute ourselves! And thanks to Pat Sylvester for booking our excellent Zoom speakers for the Winter/Spring program.



Some of us have learned how to make videos. Chris Edwards led the project to encourage members to create videos to showcase their gardens. We have now enjoyed Sylvie Marsan's stunning city oasis; Neva Bruce's lush perennial garden; and still to come, Sonia Rajani's beautiful small garden with its profusion of colour. Felicity Garrard also went beyond her usual editor role to create a wonderful virtual tour of the Central Experimental Farm through the seasons. (The Friends of the Farm were so impressed by her video they have asked to have it included on their website).

Mary Pratte learned how to blog! Last April, Mary offered to share her considerable garden knowledge "accumulated over many, many years out in the mud, sun and wind," by writing a small garden blog for the OGC. Since then, she has written more than 30 informative and enlightening posts, all accompanied by her exquisite photos. Mary will be taking a break over the winter months, but will launch a new series in the spring. Thank you, Mary, for generously sharing your garden wisdom.

And gardeners have become writers! This issue of the Blooming News includes a special feature called "Garden Stories", written by five talented members. June Norgaard, Victoria Hutton, and Cathy Stapleton recount the development of their beautiful country gardens, while Donna Chan and Pauline Yelle tell us about the joys of their city gardens. These are wonderful stories. Thanks to all for taking the time to share your words and photos with us.

It has been a pleasure being your Pandemic President, made so much easier because of the generosity and creativity of our members as we all joined together to learn new things.

I wish you a healthy, happy and hopeful 2021!

Heather Brown

PROGRAM SPRING 2021

Thursday January 21, 2021
1 pm on Zoom

Gardening from a Hammock: A Guide to Low-maintenance Gardening

Dan Cooper

Dan will reveal the garden secrets of 17 well known Ontario gardening experts, including Paul Zammit, Marjorie Mason and Frank Kershaw, as shown in his recent book *Gardening from a Hammock*. He will also give us tips on how to cut down the time spent on gardening chores, so that we can have more leisure to enjoy our gardens. As well, he will discuss interesting drought and low-maintenance plant combinations. Enjoy Dan's beautiful garden photography on a snowy January day! More information about Dan's book can be found at www.gardeningfromahammock.com



Dan Cooper has been a Master Gardener for over 20 years. He is also a landscape designer and the owner of Green Gardens and Tours, a company that provides garden design and advice, as well as tours to exotic gardens. An avid world traveller, Dan is a published travel writer and photographer. His work has appeared in the *Toronto Star* and many travel and gardening publications.

Thursday February 18, 2021
1 pm on Zoom

Gardening Through the Seasons **Marilyn Light**

Garden Club consultant Marilyn Light will talk to us about how to plan your ideal garden, the one you see in your imagination. She will advise us that it is important to start with a vision, and then, taking into account climate, space, soil, exposure, and budget, to choose your favourite colours, preferred shapes and sizes, and to use these elements to develop a plan. With vision and a plan, you will have the best chance to fulfil your expectations.

Marilyn's presentation will discuss planning for continuity of colour and texture through the seasons. She will advise on garden elements for each season and where various plants might find a place in your garden. Winter is a time for observing views created by trees, shrubs, and grasses, all coated with snow, and a time for dreaming of what you might plant to achieve such an effect through the seasons.



Marilyn studied agriculture and microbiology at Macdonald College, McGill University. While teaching in the West Indies, she learned about orchids and tropical gardening, co-authoring *Gardening in the*

Caribbean, and *Growing Orchids in the Caribbean*. Editor of the *Orchid Conservation*

News, and a life member of the Ottawa Horticultural Society, Marilyn is the recipient of several gardening awards. She gardens in Gatineau, QC, where she presents her garden with seed choices, observes which plants perform best and where, then fashions a view for all to enjoy.

Thursday March 18, 2021
1 pm on Zoom

**Your Cottage Garden: Best Results
with the Least Effort**

Lana Doss

Creating a garden can be tough in cottage country, but working with nature can save gardeners a great deal of time, money and frustration. By using native plants, sourcing material for drought resistance, as well as critter resistance, we can harness the power of nature to work with us in our gardening efforts. Attracting pollinators, birds, butterflies and a friendly army of beneficial insects is easier than many of us realize, and has huge payoffs for us and for the environment.



Lana has relished playing in the dirt since she was a child, and continues to share that thrill with others. She has spent 30 years of her career in a leadership role in horticulture, mainly for reputable garden centres. She takes great joy in educating people and

helping gardens reach their full potential with her company, The Fine Gardener. During the winter you can find her teaching horticulture at Algonquin College and delivering gardening workshops, seminars and talks. Her company specializes in garden maintenance, horticultural consultations, small space design and installation, garden renovations, container gardening and edible landscapes as well as live plant workshops.

Thursday April 15, 2021

Glorious, Magical Charleston!
Christine Edwards

Take a scenic walk along the beautiful streets of Charleston, South Carolina, with Chris as your guide. View some of the spectacular, hidden gardens while wandering along the cobbled streets in the old Historic District. Admire lush, overflowing window boxes filled with vibrant colours, and glimpse through wrought iron gates a hidden gem gently tucked away. Enjoy the magic of this truly picturesque city!

Chris is a retired teacher who joined the OGC in 2010 and is currently Vice President. She has volunteered with many organizations over the years, including May Court, the Y Fair, Rockcliffe



Book Fair, Ashbury Antique Fair and Homes for the Holidays. Chris loves to cook, garden and read. She is a keen traveller, and has spent the last few winters in South Carolina, enjoying its Southern hospitality, and in particular the picturesque city of Charleston.

HIGHLIGHTS OF WINTER EVENTS

Fall Urns and Centrepieces – Cynthia Hoisak



Our first virtual event of the season featured Garden Club member and talented designer Cynthia Hoisak, who demonstrated how to create fall floral arrangements.

As most of you know, Cynthia is passionate about flowers and design. Her talent was discovered by the club about 10 years ago, when she repeatedly won the flower arranging competitions at our fall outings. Since then, Cynthia has been asked to make arrangements and centrepieces for all our special events, including fall luncheons and Christmas parties. So we were delighted when she agreed to give us a demonstration on creating fall urns and centrepieces.

On a beautiful day in September, three of us gathered in Cynthia's garage/studio to film her doing her magic with flowers, gourds, found

items, and even lentils from Costco! Don Sylvester (Pat's husband) was behind the camera and skillfully and patiently filmed and edited the demonstration.

First, Cynthia demonstrated a beautiful outdoor arrangement for an urn or planter, which contained grasses, mums and other fresh autumn offerings. She then went on to create several centrepieces. For one, she glued a variety of succulents on top of a blue Hubbard pumpkin, and went on to show us how to keep the succulents fresh. She also used succulents (and red lentils) in a glass centrepiece, which included four glass place-setting arrangements for guests to take home. And finally, she demonstrated a fresh flower arrangement that included beautiful cut flowers and dahlias from Pauline Yelle's garden. She then arranged the remaining cut flowers in a basket along with some seasonal items such as dried corn and small gourds.



In less than an hour, Cynthia created five unique and beautiful arrangements to celebrate the fall season. After the filming, her creations were delivered to several Garden Club members to thank them for their ongoing contributions to the club: Mary Pratte for her wonderful blog; Kelly Noel for her unstinting technical support; Pauline Yelle for donating flowers and for always adding special enhancements to our meetings; Felicity Garrard for her expertise in editing the *Blooming News*; and finally Pat Sylvester, who organized the workshop. See "Lockdown Links" on page 17 for a link to the video.

Heather Brown

Culinary Delights with Herbs and Edible Flowers - Nancy McDonald

On October 15, 2020, about 40 Garden Club members Zoomed in on a virtual feast of herbs and edible flowers presented by Ottawa Master Gardener, Nancy McDonald. Those of us who had not had lunch found our mouths watering as we watched Nancy's excellent slide show, complete with her own charming photos. Born in PEI, Nancy grew up on a farm, and although her career involved nursing, her interest in homegrown food persisted. Her three rules for growing edible plants and flowers are: **grow your own organic plants; make sure children ask you before eating them; and be sure to check which parts of your plants are edible.**



Nancy McDonald

Herbs and flowers have been used in food for millennia to increase flavour (decreasing the need for salt, sugar and fat), and to add nutrients. Nancy grows and cooks with a large variety of fresh, frozen and dried herbs and flowers, from petals to seeds, including lemon balm, sage, borage, calendula, lavender, nasturtiums and even peonies! Her presentation gave us many tips. For example, pesto made with basil, but also with almost any edible greens, seeds or nuts, can be used to whip up a quick dinner, or as a spread or dip. Nasturtium leaves, borage flowers and daylilies (genus *Hemerocallis*, not true lilies of genus *Lilium*) are delicious and colourful additions to salads. Interesting vinegars are easy to infuse from rosemary or lemon verbena. Soothing tisanes can be made from a wide variety of herbs and flowers, including mint leaves and lilac flowers. Lavender is a particularly versatile plant with the buds, flowers and leaves flavouring scones, teacakes and ice cream. As a



Maritimer, Nancy mentioned that she always uses summer savory (an ancient herb that Virgil grew for his bees) for seasoning stuffing and meat pies, unlike the sage traditionally used in the rest of Canada. Nancy has experimented successfully with basil, lemon verbena, and even peony petals to make delicate and tasty jellies, particular favourites of hers. And your grandchildren may enjoy using lovage stems as drinking straws!

Nancy's wonderful presentation certainly inspired watching members to rush out and harvest the last herbs and flowers from their gardens, and to plant more varieties next year! Kudos must also go to Peggy Morgan for her excellent Zoom moderating skills and Ann Goldsmith for technical support!

Helen Clark



*OGC member and Diplomatic Representative Kathleen Billen of Belgium so enjoyed Nancy's presentation that she wanted to share a unique edible flower recipe from her book, **Be Our Guest**. Kathleen, along with colleague Kristin Van de Voorde-Heidbuchel, co-authored the beautifully illustrated coffee table book, which highlights Belgian hospitality and gastronomic heritage. In it, 13 chefs share their culinary passion by offering 55 delicious recipes. **Scroll down to the next page to see an example...***

Nasturtium leaves with shrimp milk

Ingredients:

100 g shrimp heads//1 bay leaf//1 sprig thyme//
5 lovage leaves//½ clove garlic//200 ml milk//
1 sheet gelatine//8 nasturtium leaves with stalk//
pinch of salt

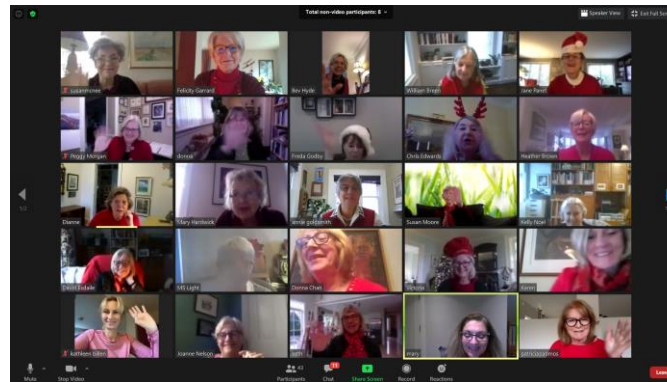
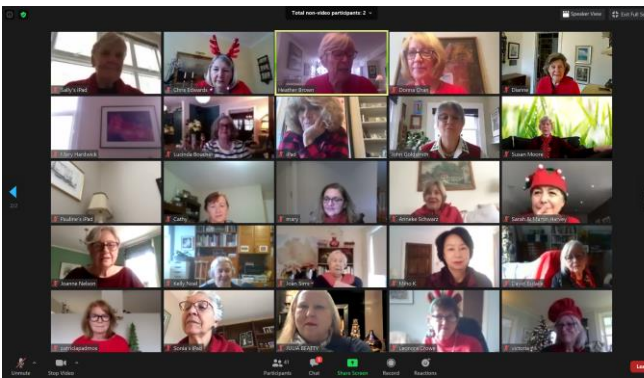
Bring all the ingredients, except the gelatine, to the boil and allow to simmer for 15 minutes. Strain and mix with the previously soaked gelatine. Allow to cool and blend until smooth. Fill the nasturtium leaves with the shrimp milk, cover them with another leaf (with stem) and float them in a dish filled with water and pebbles.



Be our Guest

Christmas Magic

The holiday season got off to a festive start at our Christmas Floral Workshop on December 3. More than 50 of our members gathered on Zoom, most wearing Christmas red and some sporting hats and antlers!



As seems to be the way with Zoom, it was a bit chaotic but lots of fun. Before the presentation began, Bev Hyde brought us some joy of the season by playing carols from her home (and on her iPhone!) as we all hummed along. Bev has traditionally led the carol singing at our annual Christmas gatherings and we felt a little nostalgic to have her play for us again.



Elizabeth Young outside her store, Flowers Talk Tivoli.

Our floral presentation featured Elizabeth Young of Flowers Talk Tivoli, an Ottawa store known across the city for creating stunning and unique floral arrangements. At our workshop she created three arrangements before our very eyes. The first was a long-lasting holiday centrepiece, made of pine, cedar, cotton, Carolina sapphire, Ilex berries and oregonia. Her outdoor hanging basket was made from similar items but very effective as the greens hung gracefully, firmly anchored in an attractive triangular frame. Her third was a simple arrangement of Paperwhite bulbs. It was a pleasure to watch her swiftly and expertly make her creations, all the while answering our questions sent to her on chat.

Elizabeth's obvious expertise in online presentations is derived in part from her quick adaptation to the virtual world. When the pandemic hit in March, she closed her walk-in store and moved all her business to telephone and online purchases with curbside pickup. She also moved her weekly floral workshops online and now offers flower arranging presentations on Zoom right across the country. More information can be found on her website at www.flowerstalk.ca



And there was more Christmas magic the following week...

Knowing that the pandemic has been particularly isolating for those living alone or in a retirement residence, some elves on the Executive decided to bring them a little holiday cheer. Our own in-house designer *extraordinaire*, Cynthia Hoisak, created 15 lovely Christmas arrangements featuring pine and cedar, cones, berries, ornaments and twinkle lights. Victoria Hutton offered her creative talents to make hand-painted cards. Then the elves swung into action, delivering the arrangements across the city and being greeted with bright smiles and warm appreciation.

Heather Brown

On a final, hopeful, Christmas note...

The Heads of Mission Spouses Association (HOMSA) delivered a 'candle of hope' to all its members, and invited them to light the candle at the same moment on December 18 as a symbol of international solidarity and friendship. A photo gallery of members lighting the candles was posted on the HOMSA Facebook page.



Wrapped Christmas gift arrangement with card

Heather Brown (right) also received a candle as a small token of HOMSA's appreciation for all that the Garden Club is doing for the diplomatic community. The Candle of Hope initiative was a fundraiser for the Caldwell Family Centre, a charity that works with the most vulnerable in Ottawa.



Christmas arrangement by Cynthia Hoisak



Heather lighting her candle

*"However vast the darkness, we must supply our own light."
Stanley Kubrick*

UPDATE ON THE GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE CANADIAN WAR MUSEUM

In June 2020, the Ottawa Garden Club signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Canadian War Museum (CWM), formalizing our relationship with them as we develop and complete our project at the Beaumont Hamel site there.

Subsequently, due to Covid-19 restrictions, our volunteers were unable to resume their intermittent on-site activities in 2020. I was, however, able to stop by occasionally over the summer to see Mother Nature's progress.

In June, I found that the daisies planted in the three designated areas we had previously concentrated on had dominated (see photo). By mid-August, the daisies had receded and had been replaced by an equal density of Black-eyed Susan. The CWM maintenance crew had resumed cutting the wandering access paths by that time. It was nice to see the surrounding grassed areas much improved due to the cancellation of the summertime concerts.



Our spring intentions include additional over-seeding of the designated areas with fresh wildflower seeds, including more poppies. We are looking forward to gathering our volunteers again!

Victoria Hutton



COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Bernadette Lee-Wo, Rachel Stoparczyk and Pat Padmos

The Perley Rideau Veterans' Health Centre honours its large group of volunteers each spring at a Volunteer reception, when pins and awards are distributed for years of service and in recognition of special contributions. This year, of course, the celebration had to be cancelled because of Covid, but that did not mean that the pins and awards were forgotten! Instead, Coordinator of Volunteer Services, Rachel Stoparczyk, and her colleague, Bernadette Lee-Wo, went out and delivered the awards to the recipients in their own homes.

Here they are visiting Pat Padmos in her garden. Rachel said that they had a lovely visit and didn't want to leave! Pat has volunteered for five years as a member of our Garden Club Gardening group, which maintains the Rideau Courtyard gardens.

Congratulations, Pat, and thank you!

Sally Hutchison

GARDEN STORIES

Gardeners and garden-lovers always enjoy hearing about other people's gardens! We love to compare notes, share useful tips, swap plants, applaud triumphs or sympathize with failures. In the following series of articles, five Garden Club members invite us to join them as they tell us their individual stories. They will describe how their gardens came into being, how they evolved, what was learned on the journey, happy or not-so-happy experiments, favourite plants and colour combinations, and last but not least, the special part their gardens have played in creating memories and bringing family and friends together over the years.

Thoughts on our Kemptville Garden – by June Norgaard

Arriving at our “new” 150-year old home in 1984 - a stately, serene-looking Georgian stone house with 3.5 acres of property concealed at the back - the thought of maintaining the recently created, rather large, flower bed, vegetable garden and grounds was a bit daunting to say the least! We were the third owners to take over this property after the farm land had been sold in 1965. Until then, not much time had been spent on the aesthetics of gardening. The previous owners, however, did an admirable job of starting to develop the gardens and I love them for it! They also shared that there was a resident ghost, “Gertie”, watching over the place. I did feel compelled to “get in touch” occasionally to remain in her good books.



In the beginning, I worked with the existing plant material (white and magenta phlox and fiery red bee balm, or *Monarda*), dividing it, and moving it to more sparsely planted areas. Soon there were drifts of these colours around the flowerbeds in midsummer - the perfect, and economical - solution on a large back lawn! It turned out to be a lovely backdrop eventually for the garden wedding



receptions that came along for our two sons. A clump of Jacob's ladder (*Polemonium caeruleum*) came with me when we moved there, and the first year I chopped this clump into six pieces; I kept on chopping, and within very few years we had dozens of mounds of periwinkle-blue flowers on their ferny base blooming in the spring next to tulips and fresh new hosta leaves.





The gardens evolved as time passed. Phlox became labour-intensive, requiring spraying every two weeks to prevent mildew. Then the nasty spider mites arrived, causing more misery to my beautiful phlox. The bee balm - part of the mint family - was typically a "Happy Wanderer" in the flower bed and sent roots out in all directions. UGH! This is when belonging to the OGC became a valuable help! Larry Hodgson, garden writer, author and self-described laid-back gardener from Quebec, spoke to the OGC in 2004 when Jane Panet was president. A very entertaining speaker, Larry emphasized the fact that there were many easy-care plants, and that we would have much more free time by getting rid

of any garden plant with invasive tendencies or prone to infestations. Well, it did not take me long to swing into action! Onto the discard pile flew the bee balm, lilies with their lily beetles, and many phlox, in favour of new, more resistant varieties. My new best friends became daylilies, *Rudbeckia*, grasses, cranesbill, sedums and more hostas!

More inspiration came from my annual treks to Canada Blooms in the gray days of March - *Persicaria polymorpha*, our ornamental vegetable garden - so many ideas! We never stopped creating on this beautiful and historic property. We loved sharing the gardens with many folks on fund-raising tours, one of our favourites being "Jazz in the Garden", three years in a row, which raised needed funds for our new library in Kemptville. What great memories!

Before we pulled out of the driveway for the last time one quiet spring day 34 years after our arrival, I did ask the question: "Well, Gertie, how did we do?". I looked up at the bedroom window, and ... distinctly saw the curtains give a flutter. Gertie was pleased.

My Garden – by Donna Chan

Gardening is a journey. When we returned from overseas fifteen years ago, I started to take more care of our garden. When I retired eight years ago, I promised myself



that I would work to improve and enlarge the flower beds. Things were going along well until two years ago when the neighbour cut down three trees. What was once full shade is now full sun. In the meantime the trees have grown larger in other areas. Things must change when the flowers are straining away from the tree toward the sun. And so the evolution continues.



My favourite plants are the ones that thrive and have a special meaning. A tree peony, a Mother's Day gift, has the most magnificent blooms and is the thriller of the spring. The Mexican sunflowers I grow from seed each spring blossom from mid-July until a hard frost in the autumn. The

seeds were purchased on a whim at Butchart Gardens, and the resulting masses of bright orange blooms attract hummingbirds and butterflies. The goatsbeard donated by a neighbour becomes a literal hive of activity as it fills with insects devouring the pollen in spring.

Last year I ordered tulips to commemorate the liberation of the Netherlands. They are a tribute to my Dad's war service. In each plant there is a special memory.

I also have a favourite tree. Twenty-four years ago I ordered a Japanese maple from a mail order source. When it arrived, a small root and a branch, I thought I had thrown my money away. I should not have been a doubting Thomas. It survived and thrived despite total neglect by renters for six years. It now stands ten feet tall and its rich colours give us joy from spring to fall.

My most rewarding garden moment came this spring when our nine-year-old grandson helped out with some spring chores. He decided gardening was fun and that he should have his own garden. A week later I was invited to see his creation, a miniature version of my garden along with donations from his other grandmother. He weeds it with pride and anxiously awaits the blossoming of each flower.

The autumn clean-up of the garden is an opportunity to plan for spring. I make a few notes to move a few plants around to better spots, and take some photos to jog my memory in the spring. I particularly like the sedum and grass combination in the front bed so I will add more. And it is time to add a vegetable plot. Removing some lawn will make the head mower happy! Each year I am happier with the results.

Forever a work in progress, this is not a garden that is ready for the cover of *Fine Gardening*, but as we find ways to survive the pandemic I am so grateful to have a garden which provides challenges, joy, peace and beauty.

A Wander through WillowStone Farm – by Victoria Hutton

Sitting down to write these notes about our garden caused me to pause, and remember how it all started. Creating a garden is a gradual process; we dig in with one plan in mind, and before long that plan has evolved and become another one. That evolution continues to this day.



When we bought the old stone homestead, and its accompanying 100 acres, it served as a quaint weekend getaway, with a woodstove and little else. We filled it with old Ontario antiques and relished our rubber-booted walks through overgrown fields and forest.

Little did we know that first summer in 1986, that we would soon be married in the nearby little stone church and find ourselves convening friends and family there for farewells as we left for our first posting in London. There, we found ourselves living a few blocks from the Chelsea Physic Gardens, and after a time, I enrolled at the English Gardening School, where I dared to dream and created a garden plan for our wild, untamed and overgrown Ontario farmstead. It was so unlike the venerable garden masterpieces that we visited throughout the UK over the next four years.

Not long ago, some thirty years later, I was looking through old files and came upon that early plan. I was shocked to see, without ever having referred to it, that together David and I had recreated the 'bones' of our present-day garden with astonishing fidelity to that original plan.

There was the long driveway entrance, and the gates to the now reclaimed and restored barns and outbuildings; the cedar windbreaks and rail fences delineating the inner acre and the transitional fence lines; the paths mowed through the stream-side meadows; the four raised beds built from old barn timbers; and finally, the walled garden, created from the foundations of a partially demolished barn. These beds all now house and protect the herb and vegetable bounties that we have delighted in growing, particularly this year. The old silo foundation houses peonies and delphinium in spring and pumpkins and squash in autumn. Forty acres of the fields now rotate crops of wheat and soya beans, to David's great satisfaction.



The pond, once a marshy area with an overflowing artesian well, reflects the sunsets through the foliage of our willows, which we planted there as saplings and for which we named our farm.

However, before the reflections, there came a three-year process of trying to eradicate the bulrushes that had overtaken the pond when we were living abroad. We drained, cut, and finally burned the roots out. Even then they grew through the liner and we found ourselves repeating the process, re-covering the liner and finally 'rocking the pond'. Success!

We raked and planted grasses and encircled the pond with walkways of flagstone, the recurring connector throughout the farm.

Meanwhile, we continually cleared the underbrush, creating sight lines, and developed beds, in part with rooted gifts from gardener friends.

June Norgaard and Anstace Esmonde-White were particularly generous in the early days - much of their legacy remains and has become integral to the garden structure. Since then, Jane Panet has kept up a steady flow of grassy cousins from her garden as well.



Our cottage-style garden has bloomed and grown, and I find myself transitioning from that gay profusion to a more loosely structured and less demanding combination of ornamental shrubs and grasses, dahlia, anemone and phlox. I love the quiet colour shifts from summer to autumn and the graceful bending of the icy grasses in our winter views.

And when the wood stove has stopped its quiet crackling, dearest welcome spring rejoins us with its fleeting ephemerals and the ensuing riot of bulbs and luscious shades from lupine, iris and

peonies, proceeding recklessly and relentlessly - a joy to behold!

The OGC has been a continual source of friendship, warmth and support, and over the past years I have been delighted to welcome so many friends to the garden. Just a year ago last September, we enjoyed an autumn picnic together. In the meantime, let us keep up our spirits by staying in touch and enjoying all that our living gardens and green spaces can give. I look forward to welcoming you all again!

Welcome to Cathy's Garden – by Cathy Stapleton

Greetings from the countryside outside Perth, Ontario!

In 1998, my husband and I purchased 180 acres of land on a dead-end road to the west of Perth. It had been farmed many years before and also been logged, but it was a beautiful treed property with water and mixed bush.

The front ten acres were already cleared and we built a house in 1999. Raised beds were put in at the side for a vegetable garden. In 2000, I hired Kiwi Landscapes to complete a landscape plan, and the work was done that fall. Major rock walls and walkways were installed to bridge and break up the distance between the house and grounds. Kiwi did initial plantings of linden trees, burning bush and blue spruce. It looked very sparse at the beginning and has taken years to fill out, with successes and failures along the way.



Over the years I have added many perennials, including my favourites:

peonies, *Echinacea*, Stargazer lilies, grasses, daylilies, *Baptisia australis*, golden sumac, delphinium, Russian sage, *Salvia nemerosa*, hellebores, *Heuchera*, hostas, *Platycodon* and shrub roses. Blue and pink dominate in the garden and there is colour in three seasons. I am what I would call a laissez-faire gardener,

as I tend to let things grow where they want within reason, in the style of an English country garden.

I do plant annuals in the spring in the front garden and in pots on the patio. The vegetable garden produces potatoes, tomatoes, beets, carrots, beans, rhubarb and herbs.

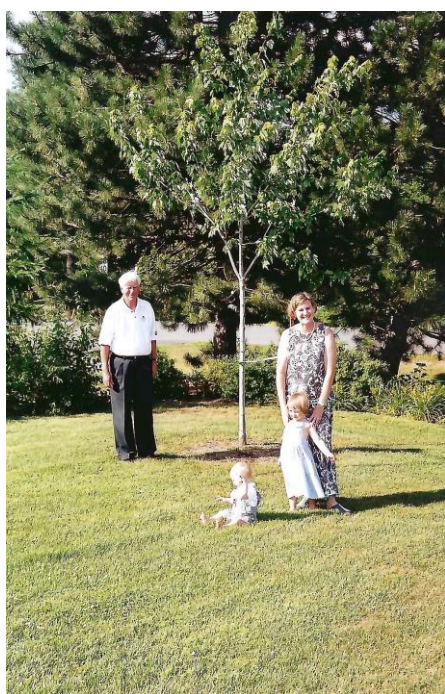


My garden is now mature and takes some work to keep things under control, so I use a hand-held electric chainsaw for trimming the bushes and trees. There are great walking trails through the property and they require maintenance, including bush-hogging and trimming. My current project is the forest immediately behind the house, which I am trying to make into a small park-like setting for a short stroll. It has large flat stones that I am uncovering and I have been trimming branches and clearing the undergrowth. This winter, I will create paths and have some of the trees thinned. It has been wonderful to see the property change over time and to see my efforts rewarded.

The Yelle-Steacy Garden – by Pauline Yelle

I inherited my love of gardening from my grandmother when I was very young. She had a large garden in a village south of Ottawa called Enniskerry. Everyone loved Grandma Veronica's Garden!

When I moved into our Rothwell Heights home in the fall of 1998, I saw lots of opportunity for the garden – a blank canvas. On our half-acre property there were three Austrian pines and a lovely lilac tree from when the house was built in 1978. That winter, we hired a landscape architect friend to draw up a master plan, and the following spring, I began putting it in place. Being pregnant, and with the summer so hot, I could only putter away. I visited as many garden centres as I could manage, buying all kinds of plants and trees. I also re-planted many plants I inherited from my Aunt Linda, my Mom, and my sister. I remember planting 1,000 tulip bulbs that October while being 10 days overdue! Well, it turned out I was in labour, and our daughter Miranda was born the following morning. The following May those tulips were magnificent!



In 2002, we planted a sugar maple to honour our fathers, which we christened the 'Grandfather Tree'. The grandfathers have since passed on, but it reminds us of them, and we have watched it flourish into one of the largest trees in our back yard.

As our family grew, we needed more space, so in 2006, we renovated our home. This included a bigger house, a pool and pool house, and a new landscape plan! To save as much of my garden as possible, in the fall of 2005 our landscaper created temporary planting beds and I transplanted all my plants, relocated the lilac and fenced off the Grandfather Tree to make sure they were out of harm's way. The plan worked; everything was successfully replanted in new beds, and the Grandfather, lilac and one original Austrian pine are still alive and thriving.

Over the years, we have further refined the back-yard plan, installing an outdoor kitchen, and enlarging the patio and planting beds. I thank Pat Sylvester and Kelly Noel for their contributions to my garden. 2020 brought out my love of dahlias! I now have over 70 different varieties, and it was fun during Covid to watch them grow in my kitchen (my makeshift greenhouse). I used them in many lovely flower arrangements, which were much appreciated by the friends and family members I gave them to.

Fall has arrived and I am in the garden, putting it to bed for the winter. I try to get as much done as possible in the fall, because in the spring, I'm too busy shopping for new finds!



Neva's Path – by Neva Bruce



There is a path between Lakeview Avenue and Juliana Road that belongs to the City. I complained about its condition for a few years, and they finally sent someone to clean it up. Then I laid layers of newspaper on the whole area to kill the weeds. The City brought mulch and spread it and I started to plant leftover flowers from my garden along the path. I had no plan – just filled up the area with the assistance of a handyman who helped me every Monday. I would sacrifice an hour at the end of my scheduled day and take him to the path. One year, girls from Elmwood School worked on it to help obtain their volunteer

credits. Unfortunately, they didn't follow up in later years! I did it all myself and am very proud of the end result. I have received many thanks and congratulations and rave reviews from the hundreds who have discovered and enjoyed this path to the lake. Unbeknownst to me, a neighbour who uses the path every day put up a plaque to thank me. It's been sheer enjoyment to do this. People who don't appreciate it probably think I'm crazy. What idiot would do all this work? That's me!!



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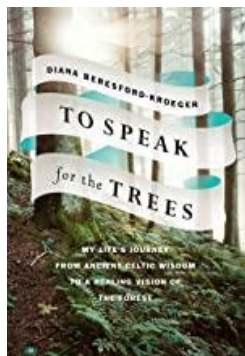
## BOOKWORM

When the garden is fast asleep in winter, there's nothing better than curling up indoors with a nice cup of hot tea or coffee and a great gardening book. Here are a couple of suggestions, as recommended by *Fifty-Five Plus* magazine:

### **Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants**

By Douglas W. Tallamy, Timber Press, 2019

Tallamy reminds us that many bird, butterfly and insect species are dwindling. However, there is hope, as North Americans reshape their outside space by using more native plants and reducing their use of turf grass. Feeding birds can move beyond the bird feeder to include gardens full of fruits, seeds, nesting space and juicy caterpillars for nestlings.



### **To Speak for the Trees**

By Diana Beresford-Kroeger, Random House, 2019

This local author, a respected botanist and medical biochemist, spent her early years in Ireland where she heard many ancient Celtic legends and stories about the forest. In recounting her often troubled youth, Beresford-Kroeger also provides her readers with a better appreciation of trees, including ways that forest can help curb global climate change.





# LOCKDOWN LINKS

During this ongoing pandemic, Heather Brown and her executive team have worked hard to come up with new ways to ensure that OGC members would still have access to interesting, informative (and fun!) virtual content to compensate for the lack of face-to-face meetings. *Blooming Updates* continues to be sent out every week by email, providing club information, newly created content and useful links. Thanks to every one who has contributed ideas to keep us all connected during a challenging time, and a big thank you to our technical wizard Kelly Noel for helping with members' presentations and distributing the *Blooming Updates*. In case you missed any of the emails, or would like to browse through some of these links again, a list is provided below.

## **Mary Pratte's Blog – "How Does Your Garden Grow?"** [www.ogc.website/blog](http://www.ogc.website/blog)

Mary continues to write informatively and entertainingly about her garden, including photos of certain plants with details on maintenance and design ideas. Remember to scroll down through the blogs to see any previous postings you may have missed. And don't forget to 'like' each blog!

## **Summer gardens in all their glory:** <https://youtu.be/IXvRELOKp6M>

Over the summer months, Kelly Noel collected members' garden photos and put them together in a slide show called "Midsummer Magic".

## **Sylvie Marsan's Garden:** [https://youtu.be/DiTHpwnw\\_EI](https://youtu.be/DiTHpwnw_EI)

Sylvie welcomes you to a virtual tour of her beautiful city garden. As you enter through an elegant garden gate, you find yourself in a calm and sheltered oasis, surrounded by an ever-changing succession of blooms. The serenity of the garden invites you to sit awhile and enjoy the peaceful scene.

## **Fall Urns and Centrepieces by Cynthia Hoisak:** <https://youtu.be/3BPRCbZZA0U>

Our first presentation of the Fall season. Watch Cynthia do her magic with flowers, gourds and found items as she creates five different floral arrangements.

## **In Praise of Ottawa's Experimental Farm – by Felicity Garrard:** [https://youtu.be/-csDQ\\_hEkPs](https://youtu.be/-csDQ_hEkPs)

Felicity takes us on a photographic stroll through this wonderful green oasis in the centre of our city. The main focus of her presentation is the glory of the Ornamental Gardens through the seasons, but her photographs also celebrate other attractions of the Farm, including the museum, the broad open fields and walkable roads, the magnificent trees of the Arboretum, and the Fletcher wildlife garden. The show lasts for about 14 minutes.

## **Neva's Garden:** <https://youtu.be/1zUrxK1Hu5A>

Take a tour of Neva's beautiful English-style country garden in Rockcliffe Park. Neva has lived on Juliana Road since the early 1970s, and over the past 50 years has developed a woodland paradise with an astonishing variety of perennials. She took all the photos herself on her iPad and, with the help of her brother Richard, produced the video. Another labour of love.

## **Other interesting links:**

Pebble Mosaic Artist Jeffrey Bale uses his work to connect with Nature:

[https://www.youtube.be/6hoW\\_J1E\\_yk](https://www.youtube.be/6hoW_J1E_yk)

Tour a stunning secret garden in downtown Toronto: <https://www.youtube.be/pRt0q6JUw4g>

Perennial Grasses for our zone and new ways to use them: <https://www.youtube.be/GP9brCW6Yfw>

# NEW BYLAWS FOR THE OGC

One significant outcome of the shutdown is that we learned early on that our existing policies were not sufficient to provide guidance through uncertain times. In April, the Executive agreed to embark on a project to develop new governance guidelines. This was a big undertaking, but thanks to the hard work of Dianne Breton, Karen Junke and Heather Brown, we are pleased to announce that new Bylaws, as well as clear definitions of the roles and responsibilities of all executive positions, were approved by the Executive at our October meeting.

This important new policy document clearly outlines who we are, how we are governed, and how we welcome new members. The Bylaws are divided into seven sections:

- ❖ **Officers of the Ottawa Garden Club**
- ❖ **Composition and Role of the Executive**
- ❖ **Standing Committee and Activity Coordinators**
- ❖ **Composition of Membership**
- ❖ **Process for Admitting New Members**
- ❖ **Role of the Annual General Meeting**
- ❖ **Role of the Nominating Committee**

The new Bylaws are now posted on our website at [www.ogc.website/documents](http://www.ogc.website/documents), and will be discussed at our virtual AGM in May. We all owe a big debt of gratitude to the team for taking this on and providing a clear policy framework to help the Club move forward with confidence.



## OGC NOTE CARDS

The Ottawa Garden Club's beautiful note cards, featuring an original wildflower painting by OGC member Victoria Hutton, are now on sale. The cards are approximately 5½" X 4". They are sold in packages of four, with envelopes, for \$12, including shipping. If you are interested, please email Victoria at: [Victoria.Hutton@willowstonefarm.ca](mailto:Victoria.Hutton@willowstonefarm.ca). Victoria will mail the cards to your home.



### THE BLOOMING NEWS

Newsletter of  
The Ottawa Garden Club  
is published semi-annually  
in January and in August.  
Volume 22, #1, January 2021

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