

AUTUMN 2022

THE BLOOMING NEWS

2022 EXECUTIVE

President

Chris Edwards 613-749-7013

Past President

Heather Brown 613-697-1315

Vice President

Ann Goldsmith 613-234-4045

Secretary

Dianne Breton 613-567-6558

Treasurer

Mary Murphy 819-671-9721

Membership Secretary

Donna Chan 613-590-1767

Diplomatic Representative

Sarah Harvey

Diplomatic Liaison

Marianne Feaver 613-748-7528

Program Committee

Chair: Karen Junke 613-232-7514

Lee Crowe 613-830-2961

Freda Godby 613-825-3713

Keltie Mierins 613-746-6277

Sonja Rajani 613-229-9721

Linda Russell 613-744-6643

Mary Pratte (Consultant) 613-746-6070

Pauline Yelle 613-747-2896

Community Outreach

Sonja Rajani 613-229-9721

CWM Garden of Remembrance

Victoria Hutton 613-258-2822

Telephone Convenor

Elizabeth Dale-Harris 613-745-5950

Boutique Manager

Victoria Hutton 613-258-2822

Hospitality

Margo Ledoux 613-794-0940

Blooming News

Felicity Garrard 613-728-7710

Heather Brown 613-697-1315

Helen Clark 613-729-5571

Photographers

Cynthia Hoisak 613-837-7798

Barbara Brown 613-728-7520

Mary Murphy 819-671-9721

Zoom Host

Peggy Morgan 613-722-1619

Website

Heather Brown 613-697-1315

UPCOMING PROGRAM EVENTS

🌀 **Thursday, September 8, 2022 10:45 am**

A Visit to Roam Flora Flower Farm

Laura Langford

🌀 **Thursday, October 20, 2022 12:30 pm**

Rockcliffe Park CC

Grass with Class

Cindy Cluett

🌀 **Thursday, November 17, 2022 12:30 pm**

Rockcliffe Park CC

Arrangements for the Holiday Season

Lynette L. Deir Mullen

🌀 **Thursday, December 8th, 2022**

**Seasonal Celebration at the Residence
of the New Zealand High Commission**

🌀 **Thursday, January 19, 2023**

Royal Ottawa Golf Club, Aylmer Road

Annual Garden Club Luncheon

**Presentation by Fergus Garrett of
Great Dixter Gardens, UK.**

WELCOME TO THE OTTAWA GARDEN CLUB

We are delighted to welcome the following new members:

Diane Clairoux-Anido

Reesa Greenberg

Gail Joynt

Nina Lepage

Jeanette Rive

Lorraine Soucy

Sandra Taylor

Julie Wurtele

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What a year we have just experienced! Covid continued to be a concern, but we are now cautiously beginning to resume our pre-pandemic lives. I am reminded of a flower coming into bloom. Slowly we are opening up, seeing family, friends, beginning to travel and resuming many of our normal activities.

We have been able to enjoy many wonderful speakers from near and far. Looking back over the past year, I realize how fortunate we are in so many ways. We thoroughly enjoyed getting back outside last September and wandering through Lisa Cogan's magnificent garden with all its lovely areas and features. Then, unfortunately, we were in Zoom mode again but that did not stop us. C.L. Fornari gave us a great visual presentation called "Treasures Everywhere" that contained lots of ideas for places to visit along the Eastern Seaboard. Then who could forget our fabulous Land Gardeners presentation from the UK? It certainly makes one want to take a trip abroad to visit these gardens and more!



Zoom meetings continued throughout the winter. It was heartwarming to see so many members online. It showed me how flexible we can be when wanting to learn about new ideas and enjoying our gardens. Mary Pratte's very informative blogs, and the Blooming Updates I send out bi-monthly have hopefully kept you all engaged.

Fortunately, we were able to meet in person in May at the Royal Ottawa Golf Club for our AGM and luncheon. What a treat to see everyone! We were delighted to have Anne Breau from the Sogetsu Ottawa Branch of Ikebana International as our guest and watched with fascination as she put together several beautiful creations. Some lucky members even left with an arrangement! June was difficult, with plenty of rain, however a few courageous souls braved the elements at our talk by Gerry Lajeunesse on the future site of Canadensis. Then the following week we tried again and had a small but very upbeat gathering with Blaine Marchand, who guided us through the Experimental Farm's heritage peony collection at the ornamental gardens. How magnificent are these beautiful flowers! Such spectacular colours, sizes and scents.

Also in June, the Montreal Garden Club came for a visit and lunch. In between showers, the Montreal members were delighted to tour both Lisa Cogan's and Susan D'Aquino's magnificent gardens. After a quick lunch at the Royal Ottawa Golf Club, we went to the Experimental Farm and visited several of the gardens before the rain came down again. The club members were very appreciative and would like us to do a return visit to Montreal. As a follow-up to a talk by Laura Langford of Roam Flora at our April meeting, some of our members will be visiting her flower farm in September.

Hopefully, fingers crossed, we will finally be back at the Rockcliffe Community Centre in October. The Program Committee has been working hard to find interesting and diverse topics. I know they will all be wonderful.

Enjoy this bumper edition of the Blooming News that Felicity and her team have put together. My thanks to everyone who has guided me through the past year. Stay healthy and let's hope that we can be together sooner than later.

Christine Edwards

PROGRAM AUTUMN 2022

Thursday, September 8, 2022
10:45 am

**A Visit to Roam Flora Flower Farm,
followed by optional lunch in Carp**

With Laura Langford



In April, Laura Langford met with the Ottawa Garden Club on Zoom and described how Roam Flora, an off-the-grid flower farm in Carp, evolved from a small garden in her backyard to a two-acre fully sustainable flower farm west of Ottawa – see full article on page 10.

Our September event is a much-anticipated opportunity to visit Laura and husband Dawson's farm, and to take part in a tour guided by Laura, **beginning at 11 am**. As mentioned in previous announcements, however, Laura requested that we limit our numbers to 30 Club members for the tour, and as a result it is now filled.

Optional Lunch

Because none of the restaurants in the Carp area was able to accommodate a group of our size, we encourage you to make your own arrangements for lunch. The following are some suggestions. All offer bistro or pub fare.

The Cheshire Cat Pub in Carp
613-831-2183 www.cheshirecatpub.com

Alice's Village Café in Carp
613-470-2233 www.alicesvillagecafe.com

The Swan at Carp
613-839-7926 www.theswanatcarp.ca

The Ridge Rock Brewing Co. in Carp
613-470-2337 www.ridgerockbrewco.ca

**Directions to Roam Flora,
107 Mantil Side Road,
Carp, ON K0A 1L0**

**Allow 30-45 minutes from
downtown Ottawa.**

Take Hwy 417 west to Exit 163 Panmure Road. Turn left on Panmure Road. In 2.9 km turn left on Upper Dwyer Hill Road, Ottawa Rte #3. In 1.2 km turn right onto Mantil Side Road. In 750 metres arrive at Roam Flora.

Parking is limited. Please carpool if possible.

Remember – this is a farm! Wear appropriate footwear. Also, only basic toilet facilities are available.

"If you take any flower and look it over and turn it about and smell it and feel it and try to find out all its little secrets, not of flower only, but of leaf, bud and stem as well, you will discover many wonderful things. This is how you make friends with plants, and very good friends you will find them, to the ends of our lives."

Gertrude Jekyll

Thursday, October 20, 2022

12:30 pm

Rockcliffe Park CC

Grass with Class **Cindy Cluett**

Ornamental grasses offer a wide range of landscaping solutions. Like shrubs, they add structure to a garden, provide movement and attract birds. They can be categorized as cool-season grasses - those that grow early in the season and bloom in the spring or early summer, and warm-season grasses - those that grow later in the spring and bloom in late summer or early fall. Some grasses are perennial, whereas others are just annuals. Some like full sun, some are shade tolerant, and some smaller grasses do well in containers. Cindy will discuss all this, plus growing conditions and maintenance for optimal success.

Cindy's joy in gardening developed as a young girl working side by side with her Mom, and now this passion shines through all aspects of her work and personal life.



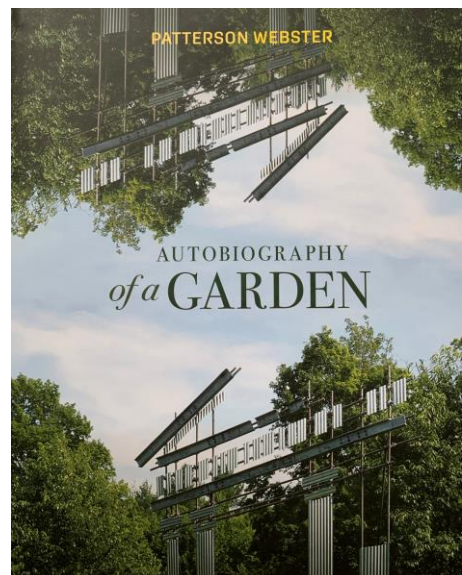
Cindy Cluett.

Cindy is the owner of Beyond the House (www.beyondthehouse.ca) – a full-service garden centre and landscape company located in Russell, Ontario, that specializes in rare and unique plants. She is a graduate of both Ottawa University and Algonquin College.

Also at this meeting....

We are delighted that **Patterson (Pat) Webster** will give a brief presentation of her new book about creating Glen Villa, a wonderful garden in the Eastern Townships that the OGC visited in 2017. The book will be available at the meeting for buying and signing, thanks to Books on Beechwood. The book is also available through McGill University Press, Amazon, and other bookstores.

Autobiography of a Garden details how Pat, a neophyte gardener, moved from copying the ideas of other people, to learning from them, to striking out on her own.



Combining traditions from French and English eighteenth-century gardens with contemporary perspectives, the author shares the concepts and ideas that underpin the garden's design, outlining a process that evolved over seasons and years. She explores the meaning of creating a garden and the meaning that a garden can create, linking ideas about aging and the passage of time to the reality of growth and death in the landscape, and thinking through how art in a garden can reframe questions of memory and our relationship to nature. With engaging personal anecdotes, she describes the thinking behind each part of the garden and the examples that guided her, the mishaps and successes she encountered, and her plans for the future.

Thursday, November 17, 2022

12:30 pm

Rockcliffe Park CC

Floral Arrangements for the Holidays

Lynette L. Deir Mullen

Lynette Deir Mullen, owner of Stoneblossom Floral Gallery, will launch us into the holiday season with style! It might be a wreath, a table arrangement, a door decoration or an outdoor pot, or any combination of the above. It will be part presentation and part demonstration. It will be creative, and it will be fun!



One of Lynette's dramatic arrangements.

Lynette is Ontario born, and from an early age aspired to be an artist. However, rather than pursuing a formal art education, her training was first in fashion, with the Richard Robinson Academy of Fashion Design (1998-2001), followed by studies in floral design at the Canadian Institute of Floral Design (2005). This background has allowed her to develop her own artistic style and methods. Her key skills are painting, mixed media, sculpting, textile design and of course floral design. She has been associated with galleries and florists both here in Ottawa and in British Columbia.

In 2010, Lynette opened Stoneblossom Floral Gallery in Ottawa (Orleans), enabling her to combine both artistic studio work and floral arranging for private and corporate clients. Those of you who have attended Homes for the Holidays for Hospice in the past will have seen her floral designs in one of the homes each year.

Thursday, December 8, 2022

Seasonal Celebration at the Residence of the New Zealand High Commission, hosted by our Diplomatic Representative, Sarah Harvey.

Thursday, January 19, 2023

Royal Ottawa Golf Club, Aylmer Road

Annual Garden Club Luncheon

Zoom Presentation by Fergus Garrett of Great Dixter Gardens, UK.

Great Dixter is a Grade 1 listed house in Northiam, East Sussex, England. The garden, widely known for its continuous tradition of sophisticated plantsmanship, is Grade 1 listed in the National Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. This tradition was lovingly maintained by Christopher Lloyd, a dedicated gardener and gardening writer, who lived at Great Dixter all his life. The garden is now under the capable stewardship of our speaker, renowned plantsman and horticulturalist Fergus Garrett.

Fergus Garrett joined the Great Dixter gardening team in 1992 and worked closely with Christopher Lloyd for many years, sharing his vision and becoming like a son and heir to the old man. After Lloyd died in 2006 Garrett took over management of the garden and became Chief Executive of the Great Dixter Charitable Trust, established by Christopher Lloyd to ensure the property was preserved after his death.

Garrett has received the Royal Horticultural Society Associate of Honour (2008), the Veitch Memorial Medal for his outstanding contribution to the practice of horticulture (2015) and the Victoria Medal of Honour (2019). He is a patron of the Beth Chatto Education Charity, and the President of the Northiam Horticultural Society. He is on the garden advisory board for RHS Wisley, and has held the role of judge at the Chelsea Flower Show.

HIGHLIGHTS OF WINTER MEETINGS

The Land Gardeners – January 20

For the second year in a row, Covid safety concerns prevented us from gathering in person for the OGC's traditional January luncheon at the Ottawa Golf Club. However, lured by a delightful-sounding talk by Bridget Elworthy of the Land Gardeners, a record number of participants - 78 in all, including diplomats and guests – mastered their Zoom technology and became happily immersed in Bridget's magical world of glorious gardens, cornucopias of cut flowers and the ancient golden stone of historic buildings.



Bridget speaking to us from her home office.

Bridget was introduced by Sarah Harvey, our Diplomatic Representative from New Zealand. "Bridgie", as she is known in the family, is Sarah's first cousin, and although they did not live close to each other in New Zealand (Bridget grew up on her father's farm in Timaru on South Island), they were often together at family gatherings. Bridget eventually became a journalist in New York, then married before studying landscape design in London, UK.



Wardington Manor.

using organic methods, and by planting a mixture of vegetables and flowers. With the bounty from these gardens, they established a thriving enterprise, supplying a wide variety of cut flowers for arrangements and for export both nationally and internationally.

In 2012 she founded the Land Gardeners with her friend, Henrietta "Henry" Courtauld, basing the business at Bridget's home, Wardington Manor, a beautiful Jacobean manor house in Oxfordshire, surrounded by Arts and Crafts gardens, which once provided cut flowers for London society. Bridget and Henrietta continued this tradition by reviving the old cutting garden as well as a neglected walled garden which they brought back into balance



The tulip "circus of colour".

This was amply illustrated by Bridget's charming photographs. We revelled in the beauty of her lush roses and peonies (often arranged in beautiful china vases), and her overflowing perennial borders full of foxgloves, nepeta, campanula, thalictrum, yellow scabious and sweet rocket – flowers that are loose and flowing, like her arrangements. Interesting, too, were the unusual plants she includes for their architectural quality, such as black salsify (*Scorzonera hispanica*), which has edible roots and soaring yellow flowers, parsnip, which, when gone to seed, has towering umbelliferous flowers, and dill, which Bridget loves for



Tulips and vases in the flower studio.

its feathery, ethereal quality. She gave us a useful tip - when picking long-stemmed flowers that tend to droop in the vase, sear the stems in boiling water first. Sounds cruel but it works!

Bridget and Henry's imaginative vision led to the restoration and re-design of many other areas of the Wardington Manor gardens: the dahlia and tulip borders, which they call their "circus" of colour, were created from an empty field, planted with thousands of tulips, and replaced by dahlias for autumn bloom; yew-hedged "rooms" were filled with old-fashioned roses; and the long grass of the orchard became home to an abundance of snowdrop, narcissus, camassia and cow parsley.

All this was left behind four years ago, however, when – due partly to a saturated market for flowers in the UK and the complications of Brexit - Bridget and her husband sold Wardington Manor and moved to northern France. She has successfully re-established her business there, selling flowers to the Paris market as well as international clients. She even transported all 120 of her beloved Wardington roses across the Channel by horse trailer!



A compost cake!

Lately, though, she has become more and more interested in that essential ingredient for healthy plants - soil. She believes passionately that it is key to plant, animal and planetary health, and that proper soil management can be a crucial factor in reducing CO₂ emissions. She explained that when soil contains aerobic microbe-rich compost, the microbes work with the soil, plants and atmosphere to sequester carbon, allowing the soil to act as a massive carbon sink. She now makes microbial compost, often in "cakes" – giant heaps of layered plant material – green and brown, plus clay, nettles, seaweed, whatever comes to hand.

After about six months, the resulting compost smells as good as it looks, and produces a high Brix (i.e., sugar) content in the sap of plants that are grown in it. For those interested in learning more about the crucial role that properly managed soil can play in slowing down climate change, she recommended two films: *Biggest Little Farm* and *Kiss the Ground*, both on Netflix. And her latest book, called *Soil to Table*, is coming out this year.

All too soon, it was time for Chris Edwards to thank Bridget for her fascinating talk, and to let us know that Bridget has kindly waived her honorarium, suggesting that it be donated to a charity of our choice. Given Bridget's interest in community gardens, it was decided that it would go towards planting a tree in the proposed Rockcliffe Village Centennial Garden. One final treat was a draw for the beautiful coffee table book "*The Land Gardeners: Cut Flowers*", signed by both authors. Sue McNee was the lucky winner. Thanks to everyone who made the arrangements, technical and otherwise, for this most successful Zoom meeting.



Harvesting dill.

Felicity Garrard

Bees and Pollinators – February 24

In anticipation of the coming garden season, many of our members Zoomed in on a fascinating presentation by Dr. Jessica Forrest about bees and pollinators. Dr. Forrest is an Associate Professor of Biology at the University of Ottawa, where she researches the ecology and evolution of wild pollinators, especially native bees, and their interactions with plants.

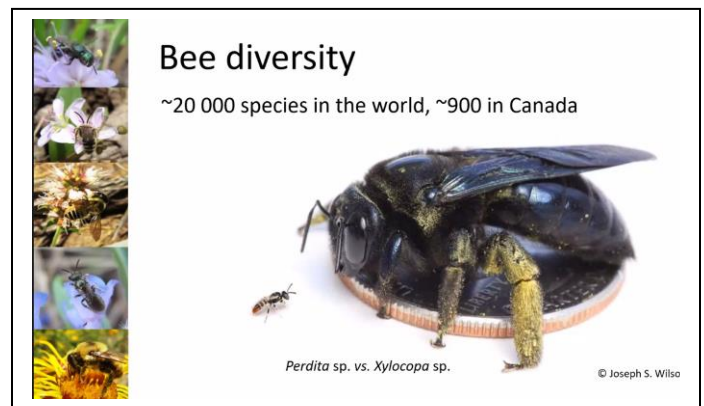


Beginning with some information about pollination and its importance to world ecology, Dr. Forrest then described various types of wild pollinators, with a particular focus on our native bees. Some of us were surprised to learn that there are over 20,000 bee species in the world; about 900 of those in Canada. Most bees are solitary, but (native) bumble bees and (non-native) honey bees are social. There are 27 species of bumble bees in eastern Ontario. The queens emerge from holes in the ground and other places in the spring, collect pollen, lay eggs and initiate a colony.

Workers hatch and emerge for the summer, but most die off in the fall, leaving some inseminated queens to hibernate in the soil. This explains why in spring we often see newly emerged bumble bees buzzing groggily low to the ground. Interestingly, their resonant buzzing can liberate pollen and generate body heat.

The life cycle of a solitary bee, however, is different, in that the bee makes a pollen ball and lays one egg in a nest excavated in soil or a hollow stem. The larva that emerges from the egg feeds on the pollen ball, pupates and digs itself out the following year. There are myriad solitary bees – mining bees, mason bees, sweat bees (not aggressive but they like to lick your sweat!), carpenter bees, leaf cutter bees (you may have seen the neat half-moons they cut into your rose leaves), squash bees and long-horned bees.

Bees are vegetarian wasps, nourished by pollen and nectar instead of insects. Unlike wasps, they have branched hairs, elbowed antennae, and many (but not all) females carry pollen, sometimes on a brush of hairs, sometimes in “pollen baskets” and sometimes in their mouths, to be regurgitated for their larvae. Male bees do not sting, and females do not sting as often as people think. They are only aggressive when defending themselves or their colony. Honeybees can only sting once because their barbed stinger stays in the stung (as it were).



Wasps are valuable pollinators as well. They need nectar for energy but many are predators and feed protein like aphids or spiders to their young. Although social wasps like ground hornets and paper wasps get a bad rap, most are solitary and not aggressive, but just want to be left in peace to hunt and make their nests in mud or dead wood (or even in the fuel connectors of boat engines, as we discovered at our cottage).

Dr. Forrest briefly discussed a few other native pollinators, the most important being flies. Again, there are many different types of flower-pollinating flies (e.g., syrphid, hover and flower flies), many resembling bees or wasps. Beetles, butterflies and moths are also pollinators, but often need very specific types of host plants, whereas bees are much better pollinators, depending on flowers throughout their lives.



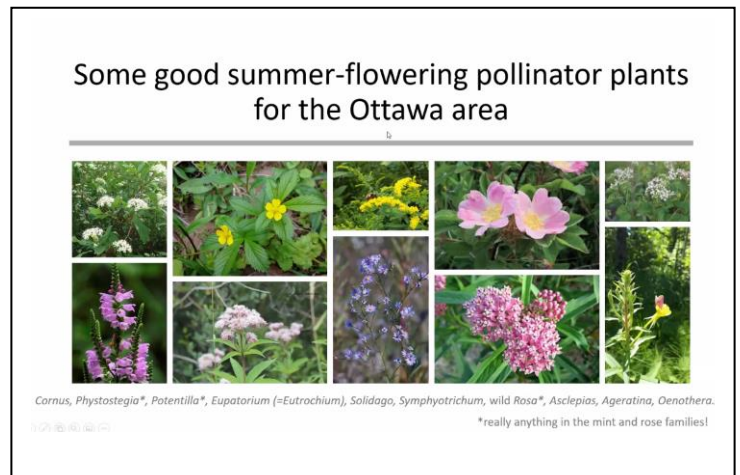
Surprising many of us, Dr. Forrest said that honeybees are definitely not endangered. The introduction of European mites caused a decline in the 1980s, but their world-wide population is rebounding. The demand for pollinators is, however, growing faster than the supply, and native bees can be better crop pollinators than honeybees. Native bees are endangered due to habitat loss, pesticides, pathogens and parasites, climate change and competition from honeybees. To help reverse this worrying trend, we should advocate for habitat preservation, and support small-scale agriculture, as well as ensuring that our

own gardens are stocked with native flowers that provide nectar and pollen and that flower at different times. And we should make sure to leave some undisturbed soil, hollow stems and nesting cavities for the wild pollinators.

Dr. Forrest's well-documented talk on the importance and variety of wild pollinators led to many questions from members and left us all mentally buzzing with ideas to encourage more native bees in our gardens this year.

More suggestions and ideas for pollinator gardens can be found at:

<https://wildpollinators-pollinisateurssauvages.ca/>
<https://cornerpollinatorgarden.net/>



Helen Clark

Dancing Dahlias – March 17

On March 17th we donned our green attire to celebrate St. Patrick's Day and watch a fascinating presentation aptly named Dancing Dahlias. Our speaker, Olivia Chuchryk, gave us a wealth of information, from how and where to purchase tubers, along with planting, pruning, and storing tips, as well as where to buy beautiful dahlia bouquets, right in her own home.



The optimum size for a tuber is about the length and width of your thumb to your wrist. At least one eye or sprout should be visible on each tuber. Olivia suggests buying from local garden centres instead of big box stores to ensure your tubers are able to overwinter in our harsh Ottawa climate. Tubers should be planted horizontally, with an eye or sprout facing up, in well drained soil, using a small amount of fertilizer mixed with soil, around the end of May. If however you are potting up a tuber that has been stored carefully from the previous year, this may be started in April. She advised removing all but one or two sprouts from the tuber and placing it in a pot lined with newspaper. When the danger of frost has passed, you simply lift the tuber and newspaper out of the temporary pot, and pop it into the prepared hole, newspaper and all, thus protecting the roots. Olivia shared many practical tips such as inserting heavy-duty rebar stakes into the soil prior to planting to lessen the possibility of piercing the tuber. She also suggested supporting the heavy maturing blooms with rolls of

inexpensive wire from the Dollar Store...who knew? Olivia plants her tubers in double rows from 12 to 18 inches apart depending on the size of blooms so that a drip irrigation line between can water both rows. She mulches with grass clippings to make the ground softer on the feet. She also advised placing tin cans with both ends removed over the emerging shoots to discourage nosy critters from helping themselves.

Olivia suggested storing tubers in either a garage or cold storage area. They should be covered with vermiculite in boxes placed two or three feet off the floor in order for them to stay dry and avoid rot over winter. She demonstrated how to divide them prior to storage, her preference being to do this in the fall as opposed to spring.

Olivia highly recommended neem oil as a pesticide. We have since learned that, although this has a long history of use in folk medicines and cultures, there are no formulations including neem oil that have been approved for use in Canada.

She shared a wealth of information regarding fertilizing her dahlias. She uses magnesium, which is simply Epsom Salts diluted, to keep bloom colour from fading. Ensuring dahlias are strong and pruned helps keep insects from becoming a problem. She recommends cutting blooms to enjoy indoors as they will last about three times longer than on the vine. Cutting also encourages many more gorgeous blooms to emerge. Olivia enjoys selling her magnificent dahlia bouquets in her driveway, from her attractively painted flower market cart.

We all came away from Olivia's delightful Dancing Dahlia presentation much more knowledgeable and comfortable in perhaps planting a garden of dahlias this summer.



Olivia surrounded by her dahlias, showing the use of heavy-duty rebar stakes.

Margo Ledoux

Roam Flora – April 21

"I feel there is so much magic and love in a local bloom," says Laura Langford. And at the April meeting of the Ottawa Garden Club, she treated us to magic aplenty.



Laura with a blazing bouquet of her glorious dahlias.

Laura, her husband Dawson Hamilton, and their new baby Noah are the proud owners of an off-grid, solar-powered flower farm off the Upper Dwyer Hill Road near Carp. Three acres of their property are planted with tulips, dahlias, cosmos, sunflowers, echinacea, peonies, zinnias, clematis and much more. In four short years, they have turned their love of flowers into a successful business. They sell cut flowers to florists as well as directly to the public, create floral arrangements for weddings, offer floral workshops, and open their garden to end-of-season pick-your-own. Laura's slides illustrating the various aspects of their business were lovely and the perfect antidote to a dark April day.

Her slides and her story were also pretty inspiring to the members of the Ottawa Garden Club, who probably have a good 30 years on this young family, provoking comments like "incredible journey," "courage," "hard work," "adventure," "faith."

Laura says she started out with a flat of cosmos and two bags of dahlias from Costco and a couple of flower beds in her back

yard. By the next year, she had taken over her front yard, and the following year her neighbour's front yard. She said her guest room looked like a grow-op, with hundreds of seed trays set out for transplanting. The first year they bought their farm they planted 1,800 dahlias, 600 peonies; year two - 10,000 dahlias. That year, they lost all their dahlias to an early kill frost. Laura seems to take it all in stride. The next year, they reduced the number of dahlias to 5,000, a number they have since maintained. And they do all this, and much more, with Laura, her husband, one full-time employee, and a co-op student. When they purchased their farm it consisted of a square timber house, a barn, no water, no electricity, no plumbing, and an acreage of sandy loam soil. They have added compost to the soil, solar panels that power the flower fridge and irrigation system, a pond, a processing hut and a greenhouse. Laura says she doesn't know where the project will take them. She does confess, however, to a full-blown addiction to producing flowers and doing it in an environmentally friendly way.

To really see what Roam Flora is all about, best to check out their web site at www.roamflora.ca where you will find lots of photos of beautiful floral arrangements. It is easy to order online - exotic tulip bulbs or unique dahlia tubers, cut flowers, or flower arrangements – all of which can be picked up at their Flower Hut just off Carling Ave. Also worth checking out is Floret Flowers' Erin Benzakein, who operates a flower farm in Washington's Skagit Valley (<https://www.floretflowers.com>). It specializes in growing unique, uncommon, and heirloom flowers and was an inspiration for Laura Langford's business model.

Jane Panet

BLOOMIN' ART SHOW

The month of April also saw a re-blooming of the Garden Club's ever-popular art show, thanks to the hard work of Beth Stikeman. She succeeded in persuading an impressively large number of the club's talented artists to submit their work as part of a virtual art exhibition, expressing the theme "Where I Find Joy". The vernissage took place (appropriately) on Earth Day, April 22, and the series of lovely images vividly illustrated the extent to which our joy springs from the natural world around us.

Here is Beth's letter of thanks to the artists. The full exhibition can be seen at <https://youtu.be/4xGI45WGiQQ>

Dear Artists of the Ottawa Garden Club,

*Thank you once again for jumping in and sharing your art with the Garden Club. The feedback I received confirms that club members were impressed with the variety and calibre of the work, and I think they appreciated the jolt of colour and humour as we wait for the warm weather to properly announce spring. The theme, "**Where I Find Joy**", inspired us all to reflect on our connection with nature, and to present a wide variety of images from dragonflies, children and chipmunks to flowers, beaches, cacti and forests. The work touched on all four seasons, all kinds of weather, and several continents.*

And I want to say a special thanks to Kelly for putting the slideshow together and getting all the titles and details correct. Kelly, I always appreciate your steady hand, and your keen eye on the details. And we always have a lot of laughs.

Thank you everyone so much for participating and sharing your personal thoughts and visions of Joy. Please let me know if you sell any of the work you exhibited, and we can arrange a donation of 20% to the Red Cross efforts in Ukraine.

*With great appreciation,
Beth*

FLOWERS OF HOPE

On an unseasonably hot Saturday in May, seven OGC members gathered in Cynthia Hoisak's garage to assemble flower arrangements for a very worthy cause. The occasion was the HOPE Gala for Refugee Women, sponsored by HOMSA (Heads of Mission Spouses Association) in partnership with the Canadian Federation of University Women, Ottawa.

Our dynamic Diplomatic Representative, Sarah Harvey, who is also President of HOMSA, had invited the Garden Club to support this Gala by providing the floral table centres. The Club readily agreed, and asked Cynthia to come up with a design suitable for this formal occasion. Her stunning design was itself like a beacon of hope, with yellow and fuchsia roses, chartreuse spider mums, and bright daisies.



Chris Edwards in creative flow.

The flower-power team, including Cynthia, Chris Edwards, Peggy Morgan, Heather Brown, Dianne Breton, and Lee Crowe, put together 30 of these beautiful flower arrangements in the stifling heat.

The Gala that night was a resounding success, raising over \$70,000 to be matched dollar-for-dollar by the University of Ottawa, Carleton University and Algonquin college. This was enough to set up three annual scholarships for refugee women to attend university in Ottawa, giving them hope for a brighter future. Sarah Harvey is extremely grateful to the Garden Club for their valuable support.



Cynthia Hoisak making sure the arrangements are up to her design specifications – and expectations!

Heather Brown



Peggy Morgan hard at work.



Our arrangements were chauffeured in style to the Shaw Centre by the driver for the United Arab Emirates. He had to make three trips, his Lincoln loaded to the brim!



A completed arrangement gracing one of the Hope Gala banquet tables.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND IKEBANA DEMONSTRATION

It was a happy group indeed that gathered at the Royal Ottawa Golf Club for our first in-person meeting in more than two years. The occasion was our Annual General Meeting on May 12. An action-packed day included the business meeting, followed by a wonderful presentation on Ikebana, then drinks and lunch in the dining room, and finally our ever popular 'Bring and Buy'. We were making up for lost time!

President Chris Edwards began the meeting with a very warm welcome to all, especially acknowledging diplomats and new members. She noted it was a great turnout with 52 in attendance. Chris then outlined the Covid restrictions for the day, which included some social distancing measures and mask-wearing when not eating and drinking. She said that the pandemic had been a difficult time for everyone, but there were some joys too. Once we had 'pivoted' our meetings to Zoom, we were able to invite outstanding international speakers to present to us in the comfort of our own homes. Chris thanked Program Chair Karen Junke and her fantastic committee for their tireless work in giving us wonderful presentations each month.



Chris Edwards welcomes us to the meeting.



Gilberte Leclerc, Lorraine Soucy and Donna Chan.

that she is delighted to put names to faces (as she collects fees) and reported that our financial situation was positive. Program

Chair Karen Junke then recounted the events of the past year, and outlined the program organized for next year, beginning with an outing to Roam Flora in September. Past President Heather Brown, who serves as Chair of the Nominating Committee, reported that there is only one change on the executive this year – although this is a big loss for us. Sally Hutchison, who has served on the executive in various capacities for many years, is stepping down from her position as Community Outreach Chair (see story on page 16). Heather was happy to report that Sonia Rajani, who has been very active since joining the club in 2019, has agreed to take over Sally's role.



Pauline Yelle, Victoria Hutton and Kelly Noel at Pauline's always-popular bring-and-buy table.



Julie Wurtele, Margo Ledoux and Sue Abbott.

The last-but-not-least item of business was the introduction of new members. Chris said that there were eight outstanding nominations this year, all keen to engage and contribute. She introduced them by name: Jeanette Rive, Diane Clairoux-Anido, Reesa Greenberg, Lorraine Soucy, Nina Lepage, Gail Joynt, Julie Wurtele, and Sandra Taylor. Welcome all!



Anne with one of her arrangements.

The Art of Ikebana with Anne Breau

Chris had the pleasure of introducing our guest speaker for the day, Anne Breau, President of the Ikebana International Ottawa Centennial Chapter. Before beginning her presentation, Anne took time to explain the art of Ikebana and the role of Ikebana International. She said that the organization was formed through a love of nature and "friendship through flowers". Miho Kawamura of Japan, a former Garden Club member, was the Honorary President of the Ottawa Chapter.

Ikebana is an art steeped in Japanese cultural traditions dating back to the sixth century. Anne explained that this discipline brings together nature and human creativity in an asymmetrical composition, with three main lines symbolizing heaven, earth and humankind. She said that "Ikebana is the art of space – the space between branches, the space between flowers and

leaves and the space between masses. Space allows movement and projects tension and power." Sogetsu Ikebana, the form that Anne practises, evolved out of the traditional discipline. It is more contemporary, more accessible, and more 'free-form'. "It is based on self-expression of the individual rather than any strict formulas," she says. "During the creative process, the artist becomes quiet and must be 'in the moment' to appreciate fully the natural plant materials. Over time, the creator of Ikebana becomes more patient and tolerant, and even appreciative of imperfections found in nature."

Anne then went on to create four beautiful Ikebana arrangements and has kindly provided us with detailed descriptions of each, including plant materials (see photos and captions on the next page). During her presentation, Anne displayed all the attributes of calm and focus as she continued making her arrangement while staff were standing on chairs trying to hang tablecloths behind her to block the sun! Afterwards, we adjourned for a lovely luncheon in the dining room. Chris was not only a congenial host for the day, but she was also responsible, along with Sylvie Marsan, for all the beautiful centrepieces on the tables. It was a wonderful occasion, and we were all grateful for the opportunity to gather in person.

Heather Brown



Chris Edwards, Anne Breau, Karen Junke and Heather Brown.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

Karen Junke, Program Committee Chair, is looking for volunteers to join her talented team of event planners. The Garden Club Program is right at the heart of what we do as a club, so if you have enjoyed the presentations reported above, and would like to help out, why not come and be involved in finding yet more fascinating topics and speakers to enlighten and entertain us. It's a fun group, and many hands make light work! Contact [kjunkte@rogers.com](mailto:kjunke@rogers.com) or call 613-232-7514.

FOUR IKEBANA ARRANGEMENTS CREATED BY ANNE BREAU



Basic upright Moribana arrangement using **waxflowers** and **parrot tulips**. This is the first lesson in the Sogetsu-Ikebana textbooks.



Freestyle arrangement in a rectangular **Iwata glass vase** using **irises**. Inspired by the method of separating the leaves from the irises in an Ikebana arrangement. This is to emphasize the beauty of the plant material.



Freestyle arrangement with two small circular vases using **spray roses**, **pittosporum** and **sword fern**. The small vases are given stronger presence by using sword ferns which provide movement and expand the size of the arrangement.



Freestyle in a **Nageire (tall) vase** using **weeping willow** and **bird of paradise**. Branches of willow are woven together, then shaped as a "nest" that sits on top of the vase with parts of it inserted. This design has a dual role. It adds texture and volume to the arrangements and serves as support in positioning stems of bird of paradise in the base.

Photos by Barbara Brown

A Visit to Canadensis, Ottawa's future Botanical Garden - Thursday June 9

Canadensis and the Peony Gardens– rain or shine! Alas, the rain was more than we anticipated. We proceeded with a presentation in the red barn at the Canadensis site – on Prince of Wales Drive south of the Arboretum and the Fletcher Wildlife Garden – but left a tour of the site to another day. Our visit to the Peony Gardens was moved to the following week (see below).

Thirteen hardy members of the Ottawa Garden Club and three of our diplomatic members were warmly received by Gerry Lajeunesse, President of the Board of Canadensis, Monique Oaks, Past President, Jean Carr, Vice Chair, and Steve Wilson, Membership Chair. Mr. Lajeunesse outlined the vision and the draft official plan for a botanical garden in the nation's capital, one that would seamlessly link the garden with the Hartwell Locks in the Rideau Canal System, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

We learned that the original plan for the Experimental Farm back in 1886 called for a botanical garden to supplement the Fletcher Wildlife Garden and the Arboretum. The Canadensis group remain passionate and ever hopeful that they will be the ones to generate enough public and private support and leadership locally and nationally to realize the vision. For more information or to become a member, go to their website at <https://jardincanadensisgarden.ca>

Below is an article that appeared in the Ottawa Citizen:

<https://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/columnists/denley-lets-finally-get-behind-a-botanical-garden-for-ottawa>



An artist's impression of the proposed site.

The Peony Gardens – Wednesday June 15



Chris Edwards, Blaine Marchand and Freda Godby.

Blaine Marchand, our guide at the Peony Gardens, was excellent. He is the former President of the Ottawa Horticultural Society, Past President of the Canadian Peony Society and currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Central Experimental Farm as Garden Director. In addition to being a peony lover and aficionado, Blaine is an award-winning writer of poetry and prose that has been published in magazines across Canada, the US, New Zealand, India and Pakistan.

He shared with us his deep historical appreciation of the evolution of the Farm, the Ornamental Gardens and the development of the peony gardens. He is expert on the varieties of peonies, the hybrids and the key horticulturists at the farm who developed the hybrids. He was a treasure trove of information, and we were so fortunate he made himself available to the Garden Club. Unfortunately, there were only 12 of us in attendance, but each of us thoroughly enjoyed it. Thank you to the members and the two diplomatic representatives who attended.



One of the many beauties on show.

Karen Junke

SALLY HUTCHISON - AN APPRECIATION

Sally Hutchison is unstoppable!

Since joining the OGC 20 years ago, she has been an integral player in almost every aspect of the club's operation, adding her organizational skills and calm competence to everything she does.

Sally became a member in 2002, nominated to the club by former honorary President Anstace Esmonde-White, who had been a close friend of Sally's mother. On one of her visits to her home, Anstace, in her quiet assertive voice said "Sally, you must join the Garden Club." And so she did! At that time, Jane Panet was president. Jane, who has a keen eye for talent, took no time in persuading Sally to join the executive. The rest is history. Sally served as Treasurer (2003-2005), Vice-President (2005-2007), President (2007-2009), Past President (2009-2011) and Community Outreach Chair (2013-2022).

She has also taken on a variety of other leadership roles, including 'Garden Tour Planner Extraordinaire'. Her involvement in garden tours began in our 50th anniversary year, when three past presidents – June Norgaard, Jane Panet, and



Sally with a magnificent azalea bonsai at the Montreal Botanical Garden.

Sally – organized our unforgettable trip to Les Jardins de Métis (The Reford Gardens), one of the most beautiful gardens in the world. Sally then teamed up with Peggy Morgan to plan equally wonderful garden tours to Toronto (2013); Prince Edward County (2015); Eastern Townships (2017); and Montreal and the Laurentians (2019). In all cases, she and Peggy scouted out the gardens, visiting many in advance, liaised with garden hosts, and ensured that all details were taken care of for us. In 2015, Margaret Dailey-Plouffe of HNA Travels joined the team, taking care of many of the travel logistics. Who can forget our tailgate parties at the side of the bus? Or filling the luggage compartment to overflowing with our plant purchases?

But tour planning wasn't enough for Sally. In 2013, she also assumed the role of Community Outreach Chair, following in Mary Hardwick's footsteps to look after the courtyard gardens at the Perley and Rideau Veteran's Health Centre, now known as Perley Health. Throughout the growing season, Sally and her team have enjoyed weeding, digging, deadheading, sweeping and socializing in the Perley gardens. Sally stepped down as Community Outreach Chair and from the executive in May, leaving the Perley gardens in the capable hands of our new Outreach Chair, Sonia Rajani.

But that hasn't stopped Sally. In June, Sally organized the visit of the Garden Club of Montreal to the Ottawa area, touring two member gardens as well as the Central Experimental Farm.

The Ottawa Garden Club owes a great debt of gratitude to Sally and can't thank her enough for her leadership and commitment!

Heather Brown

More talent in our Club....

Here is Mary Hardwick's beautifully written publishing debut in the Globe and Mail of April 25th – a personal essay on the subject of Alzheimer's. Congratulations, Mary.

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/first-person/article-how-can-love-endure-when-alzheimers-takes-him-away/>

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



The Outreach Group at Perley Health: a rebirth in progress

The Outreach Group grooms and maintains two courtyards at the Perley: Rideau North and South. We had a busy start this season after a year with several lockdowns and restrictions. Kudos to Peggy Morgan, Joan Sirrs and Pat Padmos, who

signed up for the first session of gardening in early May, paving the way for easier maintenance in the following weeks! They filled six big yard bags and that was just the Rideau South courtyard!

We work in the gardens every two weeks from May till October and look forward to every visit to see which species are in bloom. We have enjoyed the sight of the varied colours of tulips, the fragrance of lily of the valley and

Solomon's seal, the brightness of yellow and purple irises, the glorious tones of peonies and roses, just to mention a few. Nowadays, the blooms of hostas, hydrangeas, daylilies, daisies, and spurge are gracing the space. We will see what is next!



Before...

We take pleasure in our work in this oasis, which both residents and staff enjoy. It is a peaceful place where we can hear the birds singing, and occasionally volunteer musicians who come to play for the residents. We have been approached to

extend our "magic fingers" to two other courtyards, but those plans are on hold as we would need other members of the Garden Club to join our efforts.

For now, we are focused on keeping these two courtyards groomed, healthy and trimmed. But not everything is hard work; there is usually plenty of chatting and lots of laughter as we move through the paths, bushes, and flower beds, making them look as lovely as we possibly can.

Sonia Rajani



Intrepid gardeners Heather Brown, Karen Junke and Sonia Rajani.



...and after!

More Club Talent! Don't forget to visit and enjoy Mary Pratte's wonderful blog and beautiful photographs at: www.ogc.website/blog

Canadian War Museum - Beaumont Hamel Garden of Remembrance

2017 – 2022: Our Sesquicentennial Project Five Years On

After the long winter, we visited the Beaumont Hamel site on a beautiful day in mid-June and met with CWM officials there. We were joined by our loyal consultant Richard Rogers, and OGC President Christine Edwards. It turned out to be the perfect moment for us all to view the site, firstly because the bright shasta daisies were all in full bloom in the area near our OGC bench and secondly, it was only days before the Bluesfest fences went up, which would have made it impossible to have access for a time.

We discussed how the meandering paths should be trimmed using a smaller mower, with hand-trimming on the edges, to keep a natural look to the paths which follow the turns of the mounds and craters there. We

could see that the groundhogs were doing less damage, due to an ongoing maintenance export program. Repairs are being made to the mounds that had been damaged.

Interestingly, we realized that it was at times difficult to differentiate some of our fledgling wildflower seeds from the less-wanted invasive weeds. Richard was exceedingly helpful in this matter, and we were able to take photos of the main offenders that need to be controlled. They were then staked for CWM maintenance personnel to dig out over the summer period. The photos will also be used to create an online album to refer to as the summer progresses.



A sea of shasta daisies near the bench and plaque.

We were all delighted to see that the original 'peat bogs' which had been refilled with earth

and planted with native wildflower seeds last fall appeared to have taken. It is our hope that over time, these seed beds and the other areas that had been over-seeded will continue to help populate the area with native wildflowers amongst the grasses.

This is a very special place, one where each of us can find our own personal reflections that go back to the First World War. It is our hope that we will be able to visit as a group in the coming year.

Victoria Hutton

In Memoriam

Vivian Thompson, a long-time member of the Ottawa Garden Club, died in February this year at the age of 87 years. In her obituary she was remembered for her determination to live every day to the fullest, and as her family says "we all learned from her and are fortunate to have known her. She gave us honesty, liveliness and love". The full obituary can be seen at:

<https://ottawacitizen.remembering.ca/obituary/vivian-thompson-1084563694>

Roaming Wheelbarrows!

2022 was proclaimed the “Year of the Garden” in Canada, and Ottawa’s first-ever Garden Festival was part of the celebration. This new festival is a celebration of how gardens and gardening have helped us thrive during the pandemic and continue to do so.

From August 12 to 21, there were garden-themed activities and events all across Ottawa, highlighting and promoting the stunning gardens and garden culture of our city.

As part of this festival, Garden Club member Pauline Yelle was approached by *Canadensis* to participate in the delightfully named Roaming Garden Wheelbarrows project. Rising to the challenge, Pauline and Cynthia Hoisak together created a “Succulent Wheelbarrow” representing the Ottawa Garden Club. Our club was one of eight Horticultural Societies/Garden Clubs participating. The signature red wheelbarrows proceeded to roam from their starting point at the Canadensis site, on to the large *Ottawa* sign in Byward Market, then to the National Arts Centre and City Hall. They finally came to rest under the National Gallery’s Louise Bourgeois sculpture, *Maman*, where they would have been admired by many summer visitors.



We are delighted that the Ottawa Garden Club was represented across Ottawa in this creative way and are most grateful to Pauline and Cynthia for making such an imaginative contribution. We may never look at our humble wheelbarrows in the same way ever again!



“Flowers always make people better, happier and more helpful; they are sunshine, food and medicine to the mind”.

Luther Burbank

HOW TO SPONSOR A NEW MEMBER

If you have a friend who you think might be interested in joining our garden club, this is what to do:

1. Any member may sponsor one new candidate each year after being a full member for two full years.
2. Invite your friend to attend a meeting. Make sure you tell the President Christine Edwards (chrisee68@gmail.com or 613-749-7013) in advance so she can introduce your guest to the Garden Club members - this is important so that there is a record of her attendance. Prospective members must attend a minimum of two meetings as a guest before they can be nominated for membership. Remember there is a \$10.00 guest fee.
3. Be sure your nominee is aware that as a member of the club, she is agreeing to be actively involved - to participate in club meetings, activities and committees and to respond to requests from the Executive for assistance.
4. Obtain a **Nomination Form** from Membership Chair Donna Chan (chanrddj@gmail.com or 613-590-1767). This should be completed and submitted to Donna (1746 Windflower Way, Orléans, ON. K1C5Y5) **AFTER** a candidate has attended two meetings and **BEFORE** the end of March. Note, each Nomination Form requires the signature of the sponsor, co-sponsor and the candidate.
5. The Membership Chair brings forward nominations to the Executive. New members are admitted by the Executive at its April meeting each year, based both on available space and operational needs. The Membership Chair will advise the nominee of acceptance. The new members will be introduced at the AGM in May. They will be honoured at a special luncheon later in the year, usually October.
6. Nominations received after the end of March are held until the following year.
7. The number of new members admitted each year depends on the total number of members in the club.

Donna Chan

THE BLOOMING NEWS

Newsletter of
The Ottawa Garden Club
is published semi-annually
in January and in August.
Volume 23, #2, August 2022

Editor:	Felicity Garrard
Advisors:	Heather Brown Helen Clark
Photography:	Barbara Brown
Distribution:	Kelly Noel