

CUTTINGS

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE BOWEN ISLAND GARDEN CLUB

January 2019

The Mission of the Bowen Island Garden Club is to promote the love of gardening, encourage sound horticultural practices through education, & enhance civic beautification.

President's Message

Happy New Year gardeners. So much to dream about for the garden when (at least for me) it's a little too cool to spend much time doing the post-storm or pre-spring clean-up. But the days are slowly getting longer....

The Club has had a full year with many events and successful garden-related endeavors. Thanks to all who have participated in large and small roles, from those who have hosted open gardens to, especially, regularly-available persons such as Dale Harding who keeps the coffee and tea pots ready for our enjoyment at our general meetings along with tempting goodies. It takes a village to raise a child; and in our case it takes an Island to keep the Club running smoothly.

YOUR GARDEN CLUB



The underpinning of all our activities is our cadre of volunteers. And it seems we are always looking for more. Some of the activities require ongoing work, and others need short spurts. The Club is very dynamic and there are a lot of moving parts. The Executive has been working hard at trying to find ways for involvement of individuals to be as easy as possible. **We are always trying to encourage engagement of as many of our members as possible and not let any of the tasks be onerous or burdensome.**

In recent months we have been proactive in trying to fill the need for replacements on the Executive. Alas, we are approaching our AGM in less than two weeks and we are still looking for a Vice President and one or two more Directors at Large. It is worth

noting that positions on the Executive have limited terms. Some, like the Vice President, are one year with only one renewal (maximum two consecutive years) while others, like Directors at Large, are one year with unlimited renewals.

With unlimited renewals a director can take on a role for several years and then groom a successor. For example, Linda Barratt, our Director for Speakers and Presentations, has been working with Lyn van Lidth de Jeude, who has been a Director at Large and is keen to succeed Linda. The Executive has developed a document with the description of each of the Executive roles so that new persons have some direction for their tasks. And the descriptions in the document are regularly updated as necessary.

If you don't have the time or inclination to volunteer for an executive position, there are many other club volunteer opportunities.

During the past year or two the Executive has tried to devise ways to make these activities more palatable for individuals and enable people to gain experience. For example, last year we had a Quartet to organize our Plant Sale. There is a manual describing what has to be done and the members of the Quartet each took responsibility for an assignment. Many hands make light work!

What I especially like about the Garden Club is getting to know more people on Bowen. There is nothing like a shift at the General Store in the spring to sell Plant Sale

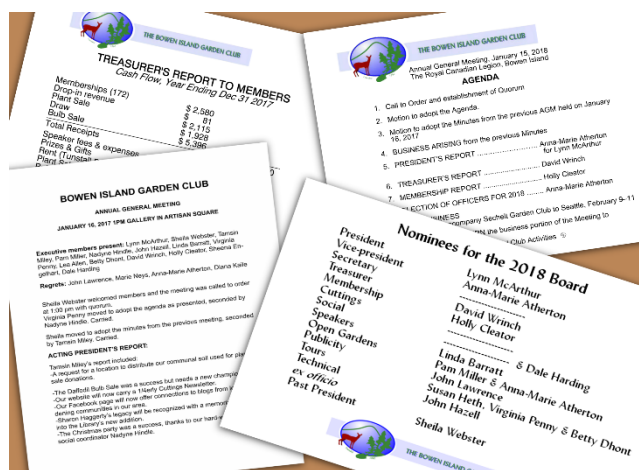
raffle tickets with someone previously not known and finish the shift with a new friend! We are currently planning for the upcoming plant sale and raffle in early May, and we need one or two club members who would be willing to work with one or two executive members to organize this event.

All of the above is to beseech you, our members, to come forward and contribute a bit of time and energy to the many Club activities.

Lynn McArthur
President

Upcoming Schedule:

Annual General Meeting on Monday, January 21st 1 pm at the Legion



Our AGM is fast approaching, and we hope to see many of you there.

Besides the business portion of the meeting, such as electing the Board, there

will be the first ever **Garden Star Award presentation.**

In addition, Linda Barratt will do a recap of the speakers and workshops we enjoyed last year and you will have an opportunity to suggest topics and events for 2019.

Anna-Marie Atherton will show us a slide show entitled "A year in review - 2018 " - activities on Bowen Island as well as off-island reminding us of the many wonderful Garden Club events of the last year.

As always tea, coffee and delicious treats will soothe the soul.

Please plan to join us at the Legion Monday January 21, 1pm.

Su Rickett's Column

"I Vow to Thee My Garden"

On cosy afternoons, when it's too cold and miserable to venture outside and the seed catalogues haven't yet arrived, this gardener's thoughts turn to the year ahead. Once the Christmas decorations are down, it's the green light to make a list of needs, musts and possibilities.

My first resolution is getting on top of the weeds. I have a few patches of horsetail and have learned to live with them. Keep pulling, ramp up the energy level in the soil and it keeps it manageable. The worst offender in my patch is Hairy Bittercress. Everyone has this in their garden, it actively grows throughout the Winter and just

loves all the rain we get. This little beast is best dealt with early, before it sets seed, when any movement nearby hurtles the seed around the garden.



My next and perhaps more urgent resolution is to get my garden ready for this summer's inevitable drought. Once my garden has had its Spring clean up, it's on with the mulch. I will be applying a few inches of finely shredded composted bark and mushroom manure around most things and for those plants that have a healthy appetite, like my Hellebores, I'll add Seasoil too.

I'm going to experiment with Coir – coconut fibre, which helps with moisture entrapment. Coir is a much more eco friendly and sustainable material than peat moss. I added it to my planters last Summer and it certainly seemed to help.

Mulch helps in many ways, used with a nice mixture of organic material, it feeds the soil, which in turn, feeds the plants. It also helps keeps the weeds down and is most helpful in keeping moisture in.

Next up, irrigation. Once the mulch is in place and before the garden bursts into action, I want to install some drip irrigation. When the Summer heat sets in, in July and August, it is almost impossible to keep the garden watered. By the end of summer, my always sunny and devilishly hot garden appears to have its own 'Crème Brulee' moment. Sadly, it goes from 'torched' to 'tortured' seemingly overnight and never really recovers.

On the subject of watering, I vow that no more will my neighbours hear me screaming at the leaking hose bib or the watering wand. I am making a pledge early to end all those damp frustrations. New washers, new hoses and all things watery will be attended to BEFORE the need for them. The days of squirting, squelching and shrieking are over.

One of those lovely late Winter days, where the sun beams down and makes going outside a pleasure, gives the opportunity to get the tools in order for Spring. After loitering in the shed all winter, our gardening gizmos often need attention. A blunt tool is as useless as a chocolate teapot.

We all have our favourites. For me, it's my Felco pruners, my Gardena Wire Hand rake (the perfect tool for combing grasses) and my Hori, Hori Knife from Lee Valley, fondly known as 'the Persuader', for reasons I will leave to your imagination. I also love my long handled

four-pronged claw rake – great for loosening soil, weeding and as an extended hand when your weeding bucket has toppled down the cliff. Cleaning, oiling and filing will all be attended to and anything that I can't do, like some of the sharpening, will be sent out to those who can.

Winter is a great time of year to get tools, such as the lawnmower serviced, sharpened and ready to make that first cut when the grass starts growing again. I will put it on my 'to do, early' list.

It's about this time of year that those seed catalogues start jostling for room along with the January bills. This year, I promise not to be beguiled by fifty different kinds of lettuce, or tall lilies, whose scent will knock my socks off, or mixed bags of lurid coloured dahlias. No, I will be strong and 'just look'.

I will also try my best to behave once the nurseries open up again. No more being spellbound in front of a tray of violet coloured double primulas. NO, I will just nod my head in appreciation and try and control my urges. The secret is, to keep your hands firmly pressed in your pockets. Once you've placed your hand on that little potted gem, it almost guarantees that temptress will be looking at you from the back of the car. Don't pick it up. Remember, possession is 9/10th's of the law!

Resolutions are a funny thing. We all seem to make them. Starting out the New Year fresh with new



resolve. I wonder how many cosy days I can expect before some nice weather beckons me outside and urges me to fulfill the promises I have made?

Happy New Year Everyone!
Su

Membership



It is time to renew your membership for 2019 if you haven't done so already. Renewing before the end of February costs only \$15; after that the regular annual fee of \$20 applies. You can renew in person at a monthly general meeting or by mail. To renew by mail, please complete the membership form available on the club website www.bowenlandgardenclub.ca, then follow the links) and include it with your cheque payable to the Bowen Island Garden Club. The club mailing address is P.O. Box 271, Bowen Island, V0N 1G0. Thanks to those members who have already renewed for 2019.

The garden club welcomes the following new members: David Hocking, Linda Hurlburt, Jessica Mitts and Heather Prittie.



*Holly Cleator,
Membership Coordinator*

Gardening Tip of the Month

Homemade salt scrub cleanser/moisturizer recipe:

Spring gardens equal cold hands ingrained with soil at the end of the day. A natural and relaxing way to scuff off soil is to keep a jar of homemade salt scrub at hand. Not only will this release both the surface and deep dirt from your hands and fingernails, its natural moisturizers will help prevent cracking of delicate skin and you will find the lavender fragrance very relaxing.

- A wide mouth shallow Mason jar
- 180 ml (3/4 cup) coarse sea salt
- 60 ml (1/4 cup) sesame or olive oil
- 30 ml (dry lavender blossoms
- And 5 ml (1tsp) baking soda

Add salt to Mason jar. Sprinkle baking soda and lavender and dry blend. Add oil, mix thoroughly. Once the mixture is blended store in the fridge for up to six weeks.

To use, remove jewelry, scoop a palm sized amount onto your hand and run the mixture over both hands gently for about 20 seconds to exfoliate the dirt. Rinse, using warm water. If you wish you can follow up with a quick soap rinse and your favourite moisturizer.

Enjoy!

*Sheila Webster
Past President*

In Other News:

Squamish Gardeners trip to the Northwest Flower and Garden Show February 22 – 24, 2019

The Squamish Gardeners and Enjoy Tour and Travel are once again excited to offer a 2-night trip to the Northwest Flower and Garden Show in Seattle February 22-24, 2019. We would be most pleased to have some Bowen Island garden club members join us. The trip is open to non-members of garden clubs as well.

You are encouraged to register early to secure a place by contacting Nairn Stewart at roseste@telus.net or (604) 892-9325. Details are as follows:

- **Date: February 22 - 24, 2019**

Cost: \$469 Per Person Double, \$669 Single (Canadian funds - cash or cheque payable to Enjoy the Life Experience Co.)

Package includes : Three day admission to Northwest Flower and Garden Show, Two nights accommodation at The Crowne Plaza Seattle, Two breakfasts in hotel, Dinner Outback Steakhouse or Olive Garden, Seattle free time options, 24 Passenger Coach Transportation, Charter service as directed in Seattle, Relief Driver, All applicable fees and taxes

- **Itinerary:**

Friday February 22

7:30 am - Depart Squamish (Brackendale Art Gallery); 9:30 am USA Border; 10:15

am Haggens (coffee, breakfast, shopping); 12:45 pm Northwest Flower and Garden Show; 4:45 pm Depart; 5:00 pm Hotel check in; 7:00 pm Dinner with group or on own (NWFG Show discounted restaurants TBC)

Saturday, February 23

Breakfast in hotel (included); Flower and Garden Show or Seattle free time / Pike Place Market / Seattle Art Museum - Seattle free time - Hotel free time

Sunday, February 24

6:00 am Breakfast in hotel (included); 10:00 am - Hotel check out; Flower and Garden Show or Seattle free time / Pike Place Market / Seattle Art Museum; 3:30 pm Depart; 5:00 pm Dinner Outback Steakhouse (included); 9:30 pm Squamish drop off at the Brackendale Art Gallery.

For those joining us from other garden clubs (e.g. Bowen Island, Gibsons), pickup and drop off will be at Horseshoe Bay ferry terminal.

We hope you will join us!

Nairn Stewart

roseste@telus.net or (604) 892-9325.