

CUTTINGS

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE BOWEN ISLAND GARDEN CLUB

April 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.

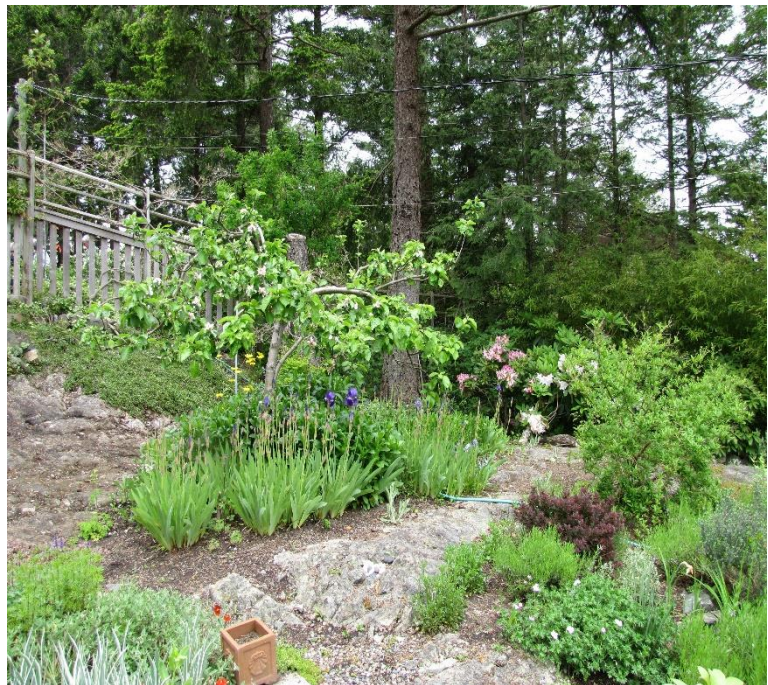
Upcoming Schedule:

Open Garden at the Home of David and Ainslie Manson, 1815 Vista Road Sunday, April 14th from 1:00-3:00 pm.

Please join us for the first Open Garden of the 2019 season.

Our host Ainslie writes:

"We've always considered our garden a Springtime Garden. But oh dear... this year it has really suffered! A fearful winter for all our members, and though we didn't have snow like The Other End of Bowen, we had fierce biting, hurricane force winds that did a lot of damage. For starters a large tree fell across Vista Road and through our fence knocking over Hydro poles. Sadly, it even finished off a few much loved rhodos. I thought we might have to renege on our promise to be the



1st Open Garden of the season – but I do believe with this sunshine we're now recovering!

I'm reminded of that Springtime song from Carousel, "It's coming by gum, you can feel it come, you can hear it in the trees, you can smell it in the breeze, look around, look around, look around!"

Our meadow (ok it's really the septic field) is now a mass of daffodils, except where Hydro boots obliterated them. And lots of other spring time bulbs are doing their darnedest to join in the fun. Flowering bushes and trees are showing promise too. We're hoping the magnolias will be in bloom when you visit, and my favourite cherry tree.

Our garden is pretty big and a lot of work, but fortunately our good friend of many years Erin Little makes it possible for us to cope. She does all the digging and hauling and most of the weeding in the flower garden sections.

My husband David tends raspberries and a rather complicated water system.

My biggest love is the potager. I've spent the last four sunny days mucking out the green house and starting this year's seeds. I think one of my greatest pleasures in life is growing my vegies all from seed and then watching each tiny seed become part of a sumptuous harvest!

The last time we had an Open Garden I think many members enjoyed the American Goldfinches maybe even more than the flowers. They have just returned! Hopefully they'll be part of our welcoming committee!"

We hope to see you at the Manson's for our first Open Garden of the year.

*Pam Miller and Anna-Marie Atherton
Open Garden Coordinators*

"Growing Apples and Pears in Coastal BC" with Jim and Mary Ann Rahe.

Monday, April 15th at 1 pm at the Legion.



Photo by Gerry Kahrman PNG

Northern Spy, Sweet Sixteen, Blue Pearmain, Karmijn de Sonnaville, Ashmead's Kernel, Rose du Kluj, Gloster 69, Wolf River, Reinette Simerinko, Cox's Orange Pippin, Belle de Boskoop..... Do some of these names make your mouth water? If yes, help is on it's way.

The Bowen Island Garden Club welcomes Jim and Mary Ann Rahe, owner's of Annie's Orchard in Langley. They have grown these rare and delicious apples and pears since 1985. They are coming to Bowen to offer their expertise and support to those of us caring for these tasty and sometimes troublesome fruit trees. All welcome, members are free, guests just \$3.

*Lyn van Lidth de Jeude
Speaker Coordinator*

Self Drive Tour to Linnaea Nursery, Langley Saturday, April 13th



This is a final reminder of our upcoming visit to Linnaea Nursery in Langley on Saturday, April 13th. If you have not already put your name on my list and want to go please contact me at pe7miller@gmail.com and I will send you trip details via e-mail.

Thank you,
Pam Miller

Open Garden May 26th, 2019

Please mark your calendars. Our second Open Garden of the season will be on Sunday, May 26th at the home of Janet and Bob Sims. Further information will be published in the May edition of Cuttings.

Thanks so much,
Pam Miller, Open Garden Coordinator

Su Rickett's Column

Best Foot Forward



I'd like a show of hands from anyone who has ever suffered an injury while out in the garden. It would seem that very few of us have escaped the wrath of the great outdoors. I like to think I always go out prepared: *Sturdy boots *Gloves *Eye protectors *Long sleeves and *pants when in among the roses and other pricklies.

I always have my cell phone in my pocket and a hat to protect me from the sun. Sometimes though, however hard I've tried to 'gear up', something seems to be out to get me. I want to feel safe when I go into my garden and blessed though we are not to have hungry wild beasts waiting in the woods, ready to savage us, there are many of aspects of safety we overlook.

Let's consider access around the garden. Few of us on Bowen have the luxury of a flat property and in many cases, the only way around the garden is via stairs and changes of level. I can't tell you how many gardens I have been in where the steps are slippery, uneven and downright treacherous. Wooden steps, after a dark and wet winter are notorious for being clad in a slimy green coating that is sometimes hard to see until you're in the wobbly, back churning, hip breaking throes of it. One false move and you're horizontal.

Stone steps are equally dangerous, especially those assembled from blasted or site rock. If they haven't been installed professionally, they can be a lethal combination of different heights and widths, slippery and with jagged edges. Trip down these, especially when wet and the only way back up or down is via a stretcher.

One very straightforward safety aspect of stair construction is that the riser, or height of the steps, must all be the same. A safe riser is 7 inches high and a tread is 10 inches deep. Even half an inch out and they become very unsafe. If the tread, the part that you put your foot on, isn't deep enough, slanted or not level, your foot is unstable.

I have heard lots of argument against handrails. 'They spoil the look of the garden.' You don't want your guests quivering with fear as they ascend the perilous staircase installed overlooking that steep ravine. Or, my favourite 'It makes it look like old people live here.' Obviously, they have no friends over the age of 30 and their parents or grandparents are long gone. One can only wonder if they perhaps perished on the stairs? Handrails need to be solid and smooth with no splintered wood and be between 34 and 38 inches in height. It should be placed on the right-hand side as you go down the steps.

With our lovely black skies at night, it is really important to have lighting in strategic areas of the garden. Stairways

and entrances and where there is any change of grade, or unexpected obstacles are good places to start. These can be motion-sensored and run by solar power so they don't need wiring. There are so many varieties available and all of them just add to the safety aspect of your garden.



Hardscaping can be quite costly and more so when you have large areas to deal with. One of the less expensive materials widely used is gravel. Sadly, it can often be hazardous. If used on a slope, round gravel has to be firmly tamped down with a machine made for the purpose, otherwise it's akin to walking on ball bearings. This can make your feet disappear from under you in a split second. Crushed gravel is preferable as this packs down into a nice hard, non moving surface. If the slope is really steep, then perhaps it is time to consider installing steps.

Not all hazards in the garden are lurking underfoot. I used to be very keen on large

clay pots. They suit every kind of planting and large ones look fabulous in the garden, even when empty. They look good with moss and algae artistically smudged onto the sides and they come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. I loved everything about them until one day I happened to brush my bare leg against one. I hadn't really noticed at first that the rim had split away from the main pot until I stepped away from it, looked down and saw my shoe was full of blood. It turns out that that little broken bit is like glass and had sliced a deep gash into my leg. A rush to emergency, five stitches and a back up tetanus shot showed me my love of all things terracotta had come to an earth shattering end. If you spy any terracotta pot starting to fragment or crack get rid of them before they bite.

If you haven't already done so, please make sure that you have your tetanus shot kept up to date. It lasts about ten years and even if all you do is potter about in a window box, it is important to keep it current. How often have you pricked your hand on a rose thorn, then grabbed some compost and gotten that into the broken skin? That's all it can take. Even cutting yourself with a rusty pair of pruners, heaven forbid that you have such a thing hanging about the place. It is so easy to get immunized and very conveniently, our lovely pharmacy offers this service.

Not every foray out to the garden has to be fraught with danger. Slippery steps, uneven ground and broken pots are just

some of the perils lurking but all avoidable with some forethought and planning. Gardening should be an exercise in fun and enjoyment not one that sends you to the emergency room.

Su

Member at Large

Plant Sale

We are now only a month away from the Plant Sale date of **4th May**.



Hopefully the plants you saved from the fall are now recovering from the late onslaught of winter and you have had time to pot up additional plants during the beautiful weather we have been having. There is soil available at the home of Dale Harding at 1050 Harding Road if you are still potting up, but please, don't leave it until the last minute!

Plants can be dropped off on the 4th from 8.30 am when there will be somebody to help unload. If you are unable to drop off your contribution please contact Sheila Webster, at sheilawebster@shaw.ca and I will try to make arrangements to help you. PLEASE LABEL YOUR PLANTS CLEARLY.

We still need volunteers to help on the day of the sale, it is only for a couple of hours and your time will be appreciated.

Sheila Webster - Plant Sale Co-ordinator



Garden Club Project at the Library



In case you haven't heard, for the past several months your executive has been working with Tina Nielsen (the Librarian) on a project to replace the ageing benches at the front of the main entrance to the Library and to refresh the plantings in the beds that border that area. Now that spring has arrived, we're planning a work party. That's where you can get involved.



On **Friday April 12** we need a crew in the morning (9 am – noon) to prepare the beds for planting and a second crew in the afternoon (1 – 3 pm) to plant.

The morning shift will be physically demanding because we need to cut back at least one of the flower beds, remove old soil and replace it with new, and dig out and move plants (including shrubs) between beds. The afternoon shift will weed, dig in plants and generally tidy up the beds.

If you have an interest in helping out, please contact Holly Cleator (hollytim2014@gmail.com; tel/text: 778-984-7124) for more details.

Membership



It's time to renew your membership for 2019 if you haven't done so already. The annual fee is \$20 for a family of two residing in the same household. 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: Diane Charette, Leslie Fenn, Irmi Hoppenrath, Richard Martin, Lloyd and Sally Purdy, Kim Steer, Danai and Lichen Tilley, Mark Topolnyski, and Ruth Wulf.

Holly Cleator, Membership Coordinator

Other News



Plant sale- Lynn Valley Garden Club

The Lynn Valley Garden Club will be holding its annual plant sale on Saturday, May 18 at St. Stephen's hall, 1360 East 24th St. off Mountain Highway in North Vancouver from 10 a.m-1 p.m. Thousands of plants including vegetables, herbs, shade-loving, sun-loving and more, will be on sale. Most plants cost from \$2-\$5. The club is celebrating its 75th anniversary and will be offering free coupons to meetings. Interesting information about the club's long history and how to join will be available. Free admission. Plant sales: cash only. Partial proceeds are donated to local garden projects and post-secondary scholarships for horticulture students. For more information: www.lynnvalleygardenclub.org

Join us!

Grafton Gardens

Help us Grow a New Community Garden

Bring your skills, bring your heart, bring the whole family!

Sat. April 6 - **Soil & Seed Prep**

Sat. April 13 - **Kids Area**
Blueberries, Strawberries ★

Sat. April 27— **Seed Planting**

Time: 10am @ Gardens

On Grafton Road across from Grafton Lake

Contact us - Join our newsletter!
Graftoncollective@gmail.com

Garden helpers wanted

Su Rickett still has openings for garden helpers. This is part time, casual labour. Flexible hours. Good remuneration. If you have gardening skills already, that's a plus, if not, be prepared to learn lots. Work includes: planting & installation, garden maintenance, watering and much more. Must have own vehicle. Come and join my team. If interested please text Su 604-828-3675

Spring on Bowen this month

Photos by Jen Ritchie



Cherry blossoms at Creek Road mailboxes



Lawn Daisy on Cates Hill

Stay in touch with us

Keep up to date with us by checking out our website on a regular basis,

www.bowenlandgardenclub.ca

Follow us on facebook:

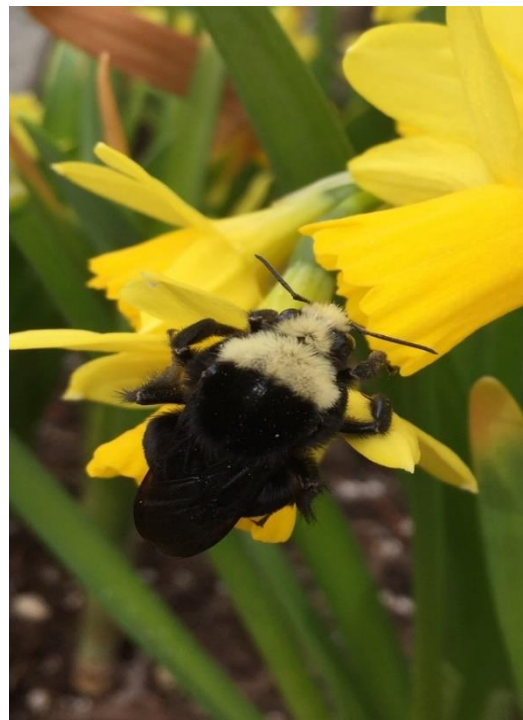
www.facebook.com/bowenlandgardenclub

Email us at:

bowenlandgardenclub@gmail.com



Glory of the Snow (*Chionodoxa forbesii*) on Cates Hill



Bee (name unknown) on a daffodil