

# THE NEW WESTMINSTER HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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www.newwesthortsociety.org

Editor: Audrey Barnes, 604-526-8284 before 8pm;

June 2006

## **CLUB MEETING CALENDAR:**

**JUNE MEETING:** Tonight, Tues, June 13. Our JUNE SHOW plus ARCHIE MILLER, renowned New Westminister historian, on "GROWING EXCELLENCE: THE IMPORTANCE OF THE HORTICULTURAL & AGRICULTURAL DISPLAYS AT THE NEW WESTMINSTER PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION". Archie is always a delight! Get your exhibitor number and exhibit slips at the front of the room. Good luck with the show. May you be the worthy recipient of our "best in show" prize: a free garden design consultation from GardenWorks Landscape Design Services. Thanks, GardenWorks, for the donation.

**JULY MEETING:** Tues, July 11th, 7:45pm. RUDY PINKOWSKI on "EXOTIC PLANTS AND PLAMS". Yes, we can grow palms here! And with global warming, it is getting easier every year. Rudy is one of Vancouver's foremost palm enthusiasts—expect an enthusiastic, humorous and informative evening.

**AUGUST MEETING:** Tues, Aug 8th, 7:45pm. DR. ALAN REID, of GardenWorks, on "SOILS". After Alan talked last year on "Getting Rid of your Lawn", we had many requests to "get that guy back!". Well, come August, "he's back!" Healthy plants grow in healthy soil—and Alan will give us hints of how to get that basic good stuff.

## **CLUB OUTINGS:**

**Denman Island Tour:** June 17-18. Carole Forsythe (604-515-1927) will supply you with any further details you may need. See her tonight. From, all us stay-at-homes, "have a great time!" Take pictures! Say "hi" to Des.

**Inaugural Meeting of the NWHS Sketching Group:** Sat, June 24, 1-3pm at Audrey's (117 Seventh Ave)—please do not arrive after 1pm as we will have an instructor to kick off the group. Sign-up at the head table or with Audrey after tonight (604-526-8284 before 8pm). Deadline to sign-up is 5pm, Thurs, June 22nd. Friends of members welcome. See additional article.

**Annual NWHS Garden Tour & Pot Luck Picnic:** Sat., July 15th. One of our primary social events of the year: afternoon garden tour followed by a pot-luck dinner at Ellen & Nes Berg's. The tour will have a set map and itinerary. Out of respect for the members who invite us into their gardens, we ask that you do not bring small children on the tour. Adult friends are most welcome (and spouses too, of course). Although Ellen says that children are welcome to the picnic, it is mainly an adult affair for members and their spouses. Also, be warned, Ellen has a large dog. The event goes forward rain or shine. If you would like to offer your garden to be on tour, please talk to Audrey. There is no tour sign-up sheet, but if you will need a ride that day, please tell Audrey. The pot-luck sign-up sheet is at the head table.

**NW Parks Hike: Sapperton Landing plus Glenbrooke Ravine:** Sat, Aug 5th, 8am start. Naturalist guide (Carl Whitney) for the foreshore park and NW Parks guide (Joan Miller) for the ravine section. Sign-up at head table tonight or next month. Map with details next month.

**Valleybrooke (Heritage Perennials) Open House:** Fri, Sept 1.

## **PRESIDENT'S CORNER: by Audrey**

What a luxury! 5 weeks between meetings! Time to recover from the sale and get some gardening done. Does anyone have use for some extra heavy duty plastic edging? I enlarged a bed and had to settle for some edging of lower quality but can't bear throwing out the old stuff as it is still very useable.

Recently we had our **plant sale evaluation meeting**. One thing that came up was how the club is fortunate to have members who want to be involved in the sale and come out to help—but also, it is important to get some of these members to become involved on a different level. We need more involvement at the committee level and to reorganize the plant preparation so that not so much is on my shoulders—perhaps there should be a couple of lieutenants under me in the yard. Interested? A manual of procedures is being written so that experience and knowledge should be in an easily transferable form. I'm still in awe that the club pulled that sale off. I especially thank the members who came out to the yard to help and pushed me into action. The club did a great job.

We're into **preparing for next year's sale**. I think it is a little early to get people involved in committees but think about what you would like to do. Meanwhile, keep an eye on your gardens and record the data of the plants you think you would like to divide for our sale next year. I have some labels with me tonight—get some and when your plant is in full glory write down the details as we put them on the tags: Name, height, spread, color, specific details. No Sharpie pen? Soft pencil works well. Take a photo if you can. It will greatly help us when we make the final labels next spring. Don't forget to drop off your plant pots to the carport of 117 Seventh. Don't bother washing them. Just dump them in the carport and they will be sorted at my leisure.

Tonight marks the half way in our **Parlour Show Replacement**. Personally, I'm finding the range of activities much more interesting than "the same thing every month from April to Sept". Tonight you will be handed an evaluation sheet. Please fill it out—even if you fill in only part of it. In Sept we have our final two sections: the second show & share plus the competition at the Queensborough Fair. Since the fair competitions encompass other areas besides horticulture it is going to be tricky to balance things. Any advice you can give me (I'm in charge of adult & children competitions), I will welcome it. ASAP, as I must have the classes finalized within a week. Thanks. Good luck tonight!

**IN CASE YOU MISSED IT:** A review of last month's presentation: Last month CHRIS JENNINGS of the Vancouver Shade Garden Society introduced us to some shady friends of his—friends that many of us want to invite to abide in our gardens. An excellent presentation! Most useful reference list of plants—with their sun/shade requirements highlighted. Chris explained how to use the “petunia test” to determine the lighting situation in your garden. Plant a petunia and observe how it grows: If it grows well & flowers well, you have a “sun” location. If its growth is iffy and it has only a few flowers, you have “part sun” or “part shade” (really the same). If it develops into a pitiful specimen with no flowers, you have “shade”. If you want to learn more about shade plants, join the Vancouver Shade Garden Society. It meets on the third Friday of each month in the Classroom of the Floral Hall at the VanDusen Botanical Garden. Their upcoming show & sale happens in the Floral Hall on Sun, July 23rd. Plants are for sale starting at 10am. The show tables are open for viewing at 1pm.  
[www.vancouvershadegardensociety.ca](http://www.vancouvershadegardensociety.ca)

**NWHS SKETCHING GROUP:** With our hectic schedules, doing something as “almost passive” as sketching in the garden always gets postponed to “later, when I have more time”. If the formation of this group makes even one of us shift our priorities, it will be worthwhile. Ursula McNamara came up with the idea. In her words: “Doing art in a garden is a very stress relieving activity, it is a new way of appreciating a garden, it is a way of observing nature more closely and this group will also be a way of getting to know other members in a different setting.” Although we will be sketching, no artistic experience is necessary. We will begin with a workshop on the basics of sketching flowers and gardens. Diana Muttart, a professional artist and art instructor at the Centennial Community Centre, will give us guidance on observing nature and sketching techniques using different medium. All in attendance are asked to bring the following basic equipment: a 2B pencil (not a mechanical pencil), a pencil sharpener, a good eraser, a sketch book of at least 9” x 12” in dimension and a solid surface to sketch on. (Check dollar stores for inexpensive items) If you have conti crayons, charcoal or 4B pencils, feel free to bring them as well. The June 24th session at Audrey's (117 Seventh Ave backyard) will start at 1pm sharp. Please do not be late out of respect to Diana. Arrive early if you like. It will be on rain or shine. If rain is forecast, we will erect awnings. But it won't rain!!! It is planned that the group will meet on a regular basis. The next meeting will be by consensus of the group and will be mentioned in the next newsletter. Although it is an NWHS group, friends keen on sketching are most welcome. Sign-up tonight at head table. Deadline is 5pm, Thurs, June 22nd.

**IN YOUR VEGE PATCH:** by the Urban Gardener, also known as Roy Pegler (604-520-6467) who would love talk “grow'n veges” with you.

June is time to start getting the fall planting started. For example, Brussel sprouts, broccoli, turnips, carrots, Swiss chard & spinach. Looking after your tomato plants this month is essential if you want a good crop. Hopefully the plants are getting plenty of sun. For easier watering, make a water reservoir using a 4 L milk jug. Leave the top cap on but remove the bottom. Use a knife to cut holes around the sides. Bury the jug, top down. When filled with water, the jug will allow the water to seep through to get to the roots. For tomatoes in early stages of growth, I mix fish fertilizer to stimulate growth—stop using this when the plant is fully grown. Then limit nitrogen by using 4-10-10. A good idea is to add, when the fruits begin showing colour, a spoonful of sugar to the water. The tomatoes will be sweeter & juicier. But go easy, minimizing watering while ripening enhances their flavour. Do not let the tomatoes dry out—make sure you give a good watering at least once a week. My final warning is do NOT let water touch the leaves.

If you fancy salad, nothing beats freshly picked, crisp lettuce. Growing tips: With any lettuce crop, it is essential the soil is not allowed to get too dry, especially if the weather is hot, or else the crop will rapidly bolt. A tip, to inhibit bolting: wound the roots slightly to slow down leaf growth. Use a sharp bladed spade, piercing the soil and roots at an angle. Water well. Lettuce needs constant moisture for good growth. If too much water, it will wash away nutrients, turning leaves yellow. If that happens add 15-10-10 and a teaspoon of epsom salts per plant to green up the leaves.

**GardenWorks Appreciation Day:** June 15th. Dawn to Dusk sale (30% off), Sat June 17th. Ardent gardeners get to buy at the 30% on Fri June 16th.

### **PLANT SALE RAFFLE:**

**PLANT SALE RAFFLE:** As you probably know, the recipient of the plant sale raffle was not the BC Council of Garden Club's Scholarship Trust Fund as in past years. Trust funds are not classified as eligible recipients for licensed “gaming events”. Instead we selected the Richard McBride PAC Fundraising Drive for their Playground Renovation. From their May 10th newsletter: *“THANK YOU, NWHS. A big thank you to the New Westminster Horticultural Society. This group donated the proceeds from their raffle held at last Sunday's Society Plant sale to the McBride Playground fund, and then passed the hat around at their meeting to add to the donation. In all, the raffle earned \$426, and the members added \$174.40. Thank you so much for the \$599.40 donation!”* Once again, many thanks to the generous donors of the raffle prizes: Peter & Bonnie from the Frame Shop (NWHS members); Hong's Nursery, Leong's Nursery, GardenWorks and Jean List (another NWHS member). Many exclamations of admiration for the great prizes on sale day.

**NO SCENTS MAKES SENSE:** Please be considerate of fellow club members who have sensitivities to fragrance—leave fragrance to the flowers in your gardens. Many thanks.

## DONATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT:

As you probably know, due to the great success of our recent plant sales, NWHS is pretty wealthy. It has long been felt that we should spread some of our wealth.

For the last few months, under the guidance of Lesley Wood, a keen group of NWHS members worked on guidelines to assist the club in the selection of worthy recipients for donations from NWHS. At the last executive meeting a rough draft of the guidelines was presented. Currently we annually give to 2 programs: the BC Council of Garden Clubs Scholarship Trust Fund and to a local charity at Christmas. It is proposed that we continue giving to these two programs even though they do may not rigorously meet the proposed criteria. The following are from the draft presented:

*Objective: As a community-based group created to promote the knowledge of gardening, the New Westminster Horticultural Society (NWHS) looks for opportunities to support organizations, initiatives and programs that are related to gardening or horticulture. Part of this support may be financial, through the donation of funds to an organization, initiative or program that is nominated by a NWHS member, meets the NWHS donations criteria and is selected by a committee of NWHS members (the Donations Committee) and approved by the NWHS executive.*

*Criteria: Through the Donations Program, the NWHS will preferentially make donations to organizations, programs or initiatives that fall into one or more of the following categories:*

- Gardening/horticultural education (ie. Scholarships, bursaries)
- Horticultural research (eg the chafer project in New West)
- Native plant habitat restoration
- Gardening-related program that will benefit the community or a needy segment of the community.

*-Preference will be given to New Westminster-based organizations or initiatives*

*-The organization or initiative cannot be politically or religiously affiliated; nor can it be a lobby group*

*-The initiative cannot be designed to benefit one specific or known individual.*

The donations committee would be comprised of a chair (must be NWHS executive member), the NWHS treasurer and up to 4 additional NWHS members willing to volunteer their time. Many thanks to the committee that spent the many hours drafting the guidelines and nomination form. Its nice to have persons with this type of expertise amongst us. Under the leadership of Lesley Wood, the group (Lorna Cloutier, Carole Forsythe, Joan Miller, Anna Camporese and Mary Barnard) did a great job. Lesley has handed over the reins to Carole Forsythe. If you are interested in joining the committee (or staying on it), please confirm your interest with Carole.

The sequence of accountability is outlined in the next column.

## MONEY VOTES:

At our July meeting we will vote on two money related motions. We do not want to spend a lot of time tonight with discussion. If you have any questions, please talk to Carole or Audrey before the next meeting. Perhaps your query can be dealt with or your suggestion incorporated into the motion without using valuable meeting time.

### **BC COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS SCHOLARSHIP**

**TRUST FUND:** This fund is a capital fund from which BC Council uses the interest to award substantial scholarships to each of the post secondary institutions in British Columbia that offer horticultural programs. The money NWHS donates is added to the capital fund i.e. our money does not go directly to the scholarships but interest earned on our money does. The Council does not select the individual winners—it leaves that task to the selection committees of each college or university. It is money well invested as we all benefit from knowledgeable people in horticulture. Due to our great plant sale successes, we have donated substantially in recent years. This year, the executive puts forward the motion: ***NWHS donate \$2000 of plant sale proceeds to the BC Council of Garden Clubs Scholarship Trust Fund.*** This is a repeat of the money donated last year. However it is a larger donation with respect to the club's budget since last year the donation included roughly \$400 from the plant sale raffle.

**2006 NWHS DONATION BUDGET:** Just as with the annual voting for the speaker budget, this will be a vote for the maximum that can be donated in 2006 to support worthy programs & initiatives. Membership will be asked to vote for the total budget amount. They will not be voting for the individual donations if any are made. If no worthy recipients are found, the money would not be spent. The sequence for the money to be spent assures accountability and is as follows:

1. A NWHS member nominates a potential recipient by filling out a nomination form. We do not have a final draft of the form but Audrey has some copies tonight of the preliminary draft that can be used until it is fine-tuned. Nominations must be submitted to Carole Forsythe by September 30, 2006. Carole is the new head of the Donations Committee.
2. The Donations Committee will meet and review all nominations regarding worthiness and our criteria.
3. The Committee will present proposed donations to the NWHS executive who will vote on whether or not to donate the money.
4. The donations will be highlighted in the newsletter. The donation budget would not necessarily be the same from year to year. This year we had a very successful sale and thus the executive puts forward the motion: ***NWHS allots \$1000 to the Donations Committee to be distributed to worthy and eligible organizations, programs and initiatives in the year of 2006, following the chronological sequence of nomination by NWHS member, evaluation by the committee and finally approved by vote by the NWHS executive.***

## THIS 'N' THAT:

■With all the plant sale panic and exhaustion of recent months, we haven't formally welcomed our newest members. A fair number have joined since the March meeting: Judy Burgon, Susan Elbe, Sue McBurnie, Judith Roche, Elizabeth Vanos, Heidi Clarkson, Candace McGuire, Susan Ziebler, Trudy Findlay, Brion & Jane Bailey and Karen Low. Welcome to NWHS. NWHS is a gardening club but one with many facets—we hope you explore them all.

■**The revised roster is available**—on the table in the foyer. We distribute the roster twice a year to the membership: once in January with the club mailer and again in June after the non-renewals have been deleted. Our total membership is down a bit but that is OK since participation in club activities seems to be on the rise. *Please check your personal data. If changes are needed, please advise Mary, our treasurer.* Thanks.

■**Photo & Container Contests:** Now that things are finally happening in our gardens it is time to become alert with your cameras. You will find the detailed rules of the two contests on page 4 of the roster. A quick review of the photo contest categories:

Colour in the garden: must be your own garden.

Creatures enjoying the garden: living but not human, does not need to be your own garden.

Overall or partial view of a “non-commercial” (i.e. home) garden: does not need to be your own garden but a panorama of Minter Gardens is ineligible!

*Get snapping! Good luck!*

■All at once you are over run with mature produce—who do you call? **Plant a Row, Grow a Row!** Please drop off your produce at St. Aidan's Church (14th Street and 7th Ave) between 9:30 and 10:30 on Sundays. *Huh? What's this all about?* Plant a Row, Grow a Row is a program that collects excess produce grown by home gardeners (and others) and redirects them to agencies to help people in need such as the Food Bank and Monarch House. If you want to help but don't grow veges, no problem. Call 604-526-4914 or speak with Jean List (NWHS member) about volunteering. If you need help with harvesting (such as with a overwhelming pear crop) call that number. Don't wait until the last minute. Remember it takes time to get a crew of volunteers ready. The New Westminster Program has reaped nationwide attention with its great success in the past few years.

■**Chafers Update:** Brace yourselves! They are on the verge of flying. If you dig in your lawn you will find few chafers still in the larvae stage. Most are in transition to the beetle and some beetles are ready to fly. If you want to treat your lawn to kill the larvae (either with nematodes which kill only the chafers or with Merit which will kill other organisms as well), talk with experienced folk at a garden centre about the critical time period. Continuous good lawn maintenance is crucial for long term defence against the pest.

## E-MAIL NOTIFICATION OF MEETINGS:

Lesley sends out a great email every month announcing the upcoming meeting. Help her out by keeping her email address list up-to-date. Just send her an email.

## YOU ARE INVITED:

Although we will not be organizing NWHS outings to these events, the club has received notification of them and are passing it onto the membership. They all sound enticing.

**Sapperton Days:** This weekend, June 17-18, in Sapperton—that neighbourhood which has its centre on Columbia just west of Braid. On Sat, 11-4pm, it is the Street Festival—Columbia between Sherbrooke & Braid is closed to traffic. On Sun, the party is centered at Sapperton Park, the emphasis is on great family fun.

**Massey-Victory Heights Neighbourhood Party:** Sunday, June 25, noon-3, at FW Howay Elementary School on Cumberland. Look for the huge hot air balloon (perhaps get a ride!). Great family fun. See Carole Forsythe for further details.

**Strathcona & Cottonwood Community Gardens Open House:** (includes a plant sale!), Sun July 9, 10-4. At Prior St & Hawks in Vancouver.

**2006 Maple Ridge Fair: Blue skies & Butterflies Garden Show.** July 22-23 at Maple Ridge Fairgrounds (directions are on the bulletin board). Great day of family oriented fun with an agricultural emphasis. Huge competition component: wine, baking, sewing, all sorts of crafts! Enjoyed competing tonight at our show? Enter the Fair competitions. Categories for kids too. If Audrey can come home with 8 ribbons from the Cloverdale exhibition, you could probably do better at Maple Ridge. [www.mapleridgefair.com](http://www.mapleridgefair.com)

## QUEENSBOROUGH URBAN FARMERS

**FALL FAIR:** Sun, Sept 25th—coming up faster than we think! Our club has a huge presence at the fair. Not only do some of our more creative members reveal their talents doing major decorative displays on the site, but the club always puts on a display of our own. We have four huge tables in a prime site. We try to an education display on the fair's theme. With the theme being “chickens” this year, this is posing a challenge. We have played with “eggcentric flowers” and “fowl” smelling plants. Limited scope! The latest idea is to create some **topiary** (or, if you're up on the latest jargon, “eco-sculptures”) of chickens. We could expand from this to doing the whole display on how to do topiary. The inspiration for this was some bronze carex dropped off in the carport for next years plant sale—perfect for a red hen's feathers, or a nest. *Do you have experience with making topiaries from scratch? Or any topiary? Want to join in on the fun? We will have to get working on them soon, so they will look reasonable by September. At the moment, the chicken creating group consists of Audrey Barnes & Ann Paisley—both of which have creative ideas but no practical experience. We figure this will be a case where a fantastic hen & rooster (or brood!) would be great but weird might be even more eye-catching. Our display would show frames partially made and partially planted as well.*



