

THE NEW WESTMINSTER HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Club address: Suite 392, 104—1015 Columbia St., New Westminister, V3M 6V3

www.newwesthortsociety.org

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

March 2006

CLUB MEETING CALENDAR:

MARCH MEETING: Tonight, Tues, Mar 14th, 7:45, "BRAD JALBERT ON ROSES". Tonight we will learn how to take care of our roses from the expert. Enjoy his demonstration on planting and pruning. Besides generously donating 2 roses to our raffle (worth \$25 each), Brad will also be raffling off the plants he is using in his demonstration. Hold onto those raffle tickets for the draw after his presentation. Don't win tonight? Visit his Langley nursery, Select Roses, and indulge. The club's follow-up visit to the nursery is on March 25th. Details are in the club outings listing. *Also at this meeting, we will be voting on the Parlour Show motion.*

APRIL MEETING: Tues, April 11; 7:45; JOHN SCHOE-
DER, of Valleybrook Farms (Heritage Perennials) on "EXCITING NEW PERENNIALS". Even if you don't know the nursery, you must definitely know its plants—those great perennials in the blue pots. *Also at this meeting, pending outcome of the Parlour Show vote, we will have either the club's first ever "Show and Share" evening or the first Parlour Show of 2006.*

CLUB OUTINGS:

A Visit to Select Roses: Sat, March 25, 10:30am. Select Roses is *the* place to buy roses. Brad will be giving a (most interesting!) tour of the nursery & greenhouses and then you are set free to shop with a 10% discount (bring your membership card!). Maps are now available. It is recommended that you allow 45 minutes to drive from New Westminister. Please sign-up at the head table. Deadline to sign-up will be 5pm, Tues, March 19th (one week from tonight).

A visit to Dart's Hill Park: Sat, April 22nd, 10am to noon. 16th Ave & 170th St in Surrey. Logged in the 1800's, tilled for the first time in the 1940s by Edwin and Francisca Dart, their prize winning orchard slowly, but surely, turned into a park once Mrs. Dart caught the gardening bug. Donated by the Darts to the City of Surrey, the 7.5 acre site contains a variety of rare and unusual plants, shrubs and trees, including an outstanding collection of magnolias and rhododendrons, Mrs. Dart's favourites. We have signed up for the "Gardener's Tour" meaning we will *not* have a horticulturally challenged guide but someone who will know the answers to all our questions! There is a \$5 per person admission charge *but for club members, the club will be paying your admission.* Non-club friends are welcome to come along but they must pay the \$5. Because a limited number of visitors are permitted in the park at one time, you must sign up by our next meeting on Tues April 11 so that we reserve enough spaces. Sign up at non-meeting times by calling Carole Forsythe at 604-515-1927. Member's guests can give Carole \$5 on the day of the field trip. A map will be available next month.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER: by Audrey

What a month! As mentioned in the **Plant Sale** article, we had to cancel our emergency, pre-freeze potting up because everything was frozen on the Wednesday morning. When taking the garbage out, I accidentally knocked a clump of plants. Ooops! Guess that will have to wait awhile. Got on the phone and cancelled the crew. Thank you for offering to pot. And then the freeze continued...and continued...and continued! And then the thaw came—almost simultaneously with our car being totaled! I wasn't in it—Steve miraculously did not get hurt but.... A valuable week of time was spent checking out cars instead of getting those plants processed. This last week, some potting got done! It felt miraculous. Early yesterday morning, while I was reading the paper—snow! I put my head my hands and thought "Give us a break!" And it snowed a bit again this morning! We thought the cold March of last year was the worst case scenario. We now realize that that was just a warm-up (or as some of us, jokingly called it, "a cool-down") for this year. *The main message here is I'm already stressed out for the sale and it would be absolutely fantastic if some of you would put your name on that yard work calendar and give me a boost of optimism. Many thanks! Need I say, dress warm!*

New Westminister Quay Home and Garden Event: Thanks to members who helped put our very cheery display together: Monica Mowat, Joan Miller, Ann Paisley and Mary Barnard—and for Nes Berg for helping with the tear down. Thanks too, to GardenWorks for the loan of their Chafer poster. I am glad we participated, even though our booth looked pretty lonely. Due to lack of time, Glenys of Timeless Books, just wasn't able to line up as many community groups as she wished. I think we did a good job of collecting together many of the gardening/horticultural organizations of the city. Next month, we hope to have a couple of pictures of the display. Tonight we have for you some of the poster boards.

Member's survey: Many thanks to the members who have completed the survey that was sent out in the January Mailer. To date we have received 30 and are already working on your choices. The April trip to Dart's Hill is a prime example. We will be searching for good speakers for shade plants and flowering shrubs. None of the executive realized Tuscan Farms had been sold—just goes to show, your feedback is invaluable. There are additional blank surveys available at the head table tonight, if you would like to fill one out. It is handy having your name on the top—especially if you are interested in workshops or mini-tours.

PARLOUR SHOW PROPOSAL: by Lori Graham and Audrey Barnes

Tonight we vote. Hopefully, most of the discussion is in the past and the vote will be quick.

THE MOTION: *It is moved that the existing April to September Parlour Show be discontinued and replaced by 4 events during the year: a "Show & Share" at the April and September meetings; a "Closed Show" at the June meeting and an "Open Show" at the Queensborough Fair in late September. This format is to be implemented for 2006 and evaluated by the executive in January 2007.*

EXPLANATION OF TERMS: *The remainder of this section is a reprint from the February Newsletter.*

"Show & Share": Members will be invited to bring items from their gardens to exhibit, ranging from something of which they are proud to something they would like identified. Photos are welcome if members do not wish to cut their plants (or if they are too big to transport!). There is no judging. The idea is to show what each of you grow and share it with others. Tables will be set up around the perimeter of the room. All the items brought in by one member will be grouped together. Cards will be available for labeling (member's name and plant name). Teatime will be extended to enhance interaction. Each member who brings in items will be entered in a participation draw. There will be one draw entry per member (not one entry per exhibit). Three names will be drawn for awards of \$25, \$15 and \$10.

"Closed Show" in June: This will be a judged show for members only (i.e. "closed"). June was selected because it is the summer month in which members are most likely not to be on holiday. Exhibit classifications will be less structured than in the current Parlour Show. For example, instead of several classes of Hybrid Tea roses, there might be one class "Rose, single bloom on stalk". Judging will be within each class i.e. within each class a first, second and third placing will be awarded. Each exhibit will be individually judged on the point basis. Each "perfect 5" earns that exhibitor an award of \$5 cash. The "Best in Show" Award will be a people's choice award i.e. all members will have a vote for the exhibit deemed the best. To fine-tune as much as possible for weather conditions, the show schedule will not be finalized until the May meeting. In the May newsletter, there will be guidelines on "how to show" for each class. There will be some vegetable classes but because June is early for vegetables, the emphasis will be on flowers. There will also be decorative classes. The emphasis of the June meeting will be the show and it is anticipated to be quite an event!

"Open Show" at Queensborough Fair: The club is talking over the organization of the horticultural competition at the fall fair. This show will be open to people other than club members (i.e. "open") and will be a judged show. Classes will be relatively unstructured as in our June show. There will be flower, vegetable and decorative classes and first, second and third prizes will be awarded in each class.

PROPOSED APRIL 2006 SHOW & SHARE EVENT: by Lori Graham

The goals of the NWHS first "Show & Share" evening are:

1. to provide an opportunity for members to bring items from their garden to display
2. To provide an opportunity for members to share gardening information and techniques with colleagues
3. To promote interaction among club members.

How it works:

You can bring in things from your garden that you are proud of, things you want to know more about, things you want to warn others to be cautious of, or just something you find fascinating. Wondering how best to nurture a particular plant, flower or veggie? Bring in a sample and let your colleagues share their experience with you. Wondering about a bug? Bring in a sample in an closed container and see if someone can make a suggestion of how to deal with it. Feel free to bring anything that is easily portable but not too big as display space will be limited. Don't want to cut off your favorite bud? Bring in a photo. Got a landscaping or garden design dilemma? Bring in a photo and a description and ask for ideas. We will have plastic page protectors that you can borrow to protect your photos. There are years of gardening experience right within our own club...this event will help us to learn from each other. Get some great ideas for your garden from what others present.

Please arrive early to set up your items as everything for display should hopefully be in place by 7:30—time for you to check things out a bit before the meeting starts. Remember to bring suitable containers to display your items. Tables will be set up around the perimeter of the room for you to display your group of items. There will be "display slips" available for you to write your name, the plant's or item's name and any other details you would like to add. There is also room on the slip for others to add their comments. There will be some slips available tonight. The "best case scenario" is that we will have more items to display than we have room. To have fun at the Show & Share, participation will be the key. Consider that if every member just brings one item we will have a spectacular display! Besides the time before the meeting, viewing and discussing the exhibits will take place during an extended (30 minutes) refreshment break.

Please remember when you arrive at the meeting, report to the head table to record your name on the participant list so that you will be entered into the draw for the participation draw prizes of \$25, \$15 and \$10. Each participant will receive one entry to the draw no matter how many items brought to the meeting! What an easy way to win money to buy more plant material...and just in time for Spring!

EMAIL NOTIFICATION OF MEETINGS:

Just the reminder that if you want to get on this list or if you change your address, send Lesley an email: . Lesley sends out a great email every month. Help her out by keeping her email address list up-to-date. Thanks.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT: A review of last month's presentation: **Gwen Odermatt, of Petals & Butterflies Farm Nursery, on "Gardening to Attract Butterflies"**. Thank you, Gwen. Starting out with fantastic photos of butterflies from her garden, she talked about butterflies in general: they are insects (distinct head, thorax and abdomen, 6 jointed legs); the colour of their wings is due to them being completely covered in scales which reflect light; to differentiate between moths & butterflies, look at the antennae (moth's are like feathers). There are 12-14 species native to our area. Some over-winter here, others fly south. The current lack of butterflies stem from pesticide use and weather problems and lack of plants that supply the necessary nectar for food and those that act as hosts for their eggs. At first we cringed at the suggestion that we have stinging nettles (the ideal host plant for the eggs of many natives) in our gardens but she reassured us that nettles in the vicinity would do. Each type of caterpillar needs specific plants to eat. Just grow a few extra for them. Butterflies are cold-blooded. They need 25°C before they can fly. Ideal locations have all day sun for all seasons and shelter from the wind. Plant fragrant flowers in drifts. Don't plant multiple petaled plants. The butterflies cannot get through the petals to the nectar. Ideal flower colors are yellow, white and purple. If you want to know more about them, visit Gwen at her nursery in Langley at 121—210 St, just off Zero Ave (the Can-USA border). Beautiful gardens and great plants for sale too! (604-530-9205)

IN YOUR VEGE PATCH: by the Urban Gardener, also known as Roy Pegler who would love talk "grow'n veges" with you.

Hopefully the worst of the frosts are over and the soil is a wee bit warmer and dryer so we can get on with our sowing and planting this month. Assuming that everything is OK temperature wise, it's time to sow the green peas, broad beans, lettuce, broccoli, cabbage, Swiss chard, spinach and onions and later in the month to sow carrot seeds. It is advisable to have raised beds in the spring to avoid rotting. Also they will warm up quicker. As a reminder, it is preferable to use warm water on seedlings. Later in the month is early enough to plant early variety potatoes such as Norland and Warba.

I would like to say that gardening works like a magical elixer. It heals almost instantly. I personally agree that the best road to sound mental and physical health comes from a good diet based on fresh seasonal food and plenty of outdoor exercise. Gardening fulfills all these requirements and is consequently the healthiest of all pastimes. This is one of the reasons that I'm so passionate about growing good food. It does us good at every level, from the exercise needed throughout the changing seasons, to growing the veges and to the pleasure and health giving properties when we are eating them—and also sharing it with others. Hopefully this will inspire all you gardeners to grow a few veges.

GardenWorks Appreciation Day: March 16th.

PLANT A ROW, GROW A ROW

GARDENERS' PARTY: Join in the fun that is the annual kick-off for the Plant a Row, Grow a Row season. This very worthwhile program collects excess produce grown by home gardeners and redistributes it to organizations for the needy such as the Food Bank and Monarch Place. Last year they distributed over 2 tons of produce!!! Want to get involved or just learn more about growing vegetables? Come to the party. Sign up to help as a grower, harvester or sorter of the produce. The success of the program depends on the supply of keen volunteers. For more info, talk to Joan Miller tonight or call her at 604-540-1929.

Thurs, March 23, doors open at 6 and event starting at 6:30. At St. Aidan's Church (14th St & 7th Ave). Impressive line-up of speakers: Conway Lum, Alan Reid, Mary Ballon and Brian Minter. Prizes!!! Admission is a donation to the Food Bank.

NOT ORGANIZED NWHs OUTINGS BUT

GOOD IDEAS: Note that some of these are listed here because those clubs reciprocate by advertising our sale within their clubs.

Denman Island Home and Garden Tour: This has the potential of being a organized club outing. Is there any interest in visiting ten of the top private gardens on Denman Island? Sign up on the "interested in Denman Island Tour" sheet or phone Carole Forsythe at 604-515-1927. If numbers warrant, she'll do the legwork required. The gardens are open to the public on June 17 & 18 for \$15. Additional information: denmanisland.com/denman/home-and-garden-tour.htm The deadline to show interest is the April meeting as it is anticipated that the tour will probably sell out.

Vancouver Orchid Society Annual Orchid Show & Sale: Sat, April 29, 9am-5pm; Sun April 30, 9am-4pm.

At the Richmond Winter Sports Club (Curling Club), 5540 Hollybridge Way. Admission \$7. Show your club membership card at the door and get \$1 off. Orchids are always fascinating and here's a chance to drool over the blooms—and buy one (or two) for yourself. For more details:

www.vancouverorchidsociety.ca

BRAGS sale: The Burnaby Rhododendron and Gardens Society sale of perennials and shrubs is on Sunday, April 23, 9-1pm in the parking lot at the Burnaby Village Museum (corner of Canada Way & Sperling Ave). BRAGS members have propagated treasures from their own gardens. BRAGS is also pleased to announce that the Burnaby Beautiful Gardens Contest is back again for 2006. The clubs website: www.brag.ca.

Limbert Mountain Farm: If you are out Agassiz way, check out this Herb Nursery at 5493 Limbert Road. It's only about an hour from New West. They have all sorts of Events and Workshops. Their season runs from March 25th to Thanksgiving. If you do visit the nursery, report back to the executive to see if we should include it in an outing. Their website: www.limbertmountainfarm.com.

FRAGRANCE AT THE MEETINGS: Some members, including Audrey, have a sensitivity to fragrance please be conscientious regarding personal products. Thx.

THIS 'N' THAT:

■At our inaugural meeting of 2006 not only did 97 members renew, we added 4 new members to our flock: **Marianne Brown, Tracey Keighley, Bob Santarossa and Kathy Wilford**. We hope you enjoy your participation in club activities to the fullest. If you have any suggestions or queries, please feel free to approach Audrey or any executive member—or the person sitting next to you at the meeting. Welcome.

■Audrey Barnes & Lori Jenvey both attended the **Queensborough Fair** organizing meeting in February—and (surprise! surprise!) are now on the committee in charge of different areas of responsibility. Audrey heads “adult competitions” (which includes the horticultural competition and anything else such as baking and crafts) and Lori is in charge of “child entertainment”. If you have suggestions, both would welcome the input.

■Did you purchase a Corning Ware teapot at the silent auction? Lesia found the missing lid and it is now in Audrey's possession. See her tonight.

■Remember those great “**Down to Earth**” shovels that we sold last year? Well, they have become available again. The price depends on the number ordered. They must be shipped from Vernon. If we order only one it would be \$32 plus shipping; order 10, \$27.50 plus shipping. We will not be ordering them unless there is sufficient interest. Talk to Mary or Audrey if you are interested.

■Believe it or not, it is *almost* **Hanging Basket Season at the New Westminster Greenhouses**. Those of you who have made the baskets before will have received notification in the mail regarding the classes for you (All the redo classes filled within 48 hours except the super-large class). If you want to get onto the bandwagon and attend a novice class (no re-dos allowed!), the detailed schedule is available. Copies are on the foyer table with one on the bulletin board. Available dates: April 13, 15, 17, 19, 24, 26 and 29. Some are day classes, some evening. Call the arena office 604-777-5111 to register. The classes fill quickly so act promptly.

■Once again Dawn Dutrizac-Larose is collecting a keen crew to help out at the **Ballet BC Home Tour**, May 27/28. Last year 12-14 signed up (Thank you very much!) to act as tour guides for a house. This year she is looking for the same number of volunteers. The organizers of the event have reserved a smallish house with extensive garden with “exquisite garden rooms” for our club members to man. Small house means fewer people needed per day. The same number of volunteers as last year should cover the house for the two days. Same deal as last year: volunteer for 1 day, get a free tour ticket (about \$50 value) for the other day. See Dawn tonight or call her at 604-522-5907.

■Buff O'Shaughnessy isn't here tonight but the **seed exchange** is. A fairly good supply of seeds to select from. When you are eyeballing your personal seed stock-pile at home, why not donate those impulse-buys, that you now know you will never plant, to the exchange. It is a great way to ease the pressure of “gotta plant those things”. Buff's dog (a Nova Scotta Duck Troller) has pups: Handel, Mozart & Beethoven—now 5 ½ weeks old. See Audrey for photos.

PLANT SALE NEWS:

Sale day is May 7th—approaching fast!

Location once again Royal Square Mall.

PLANT PREPARATION: It is an understatement that we are behind in the plant preparation. What a month! We didn't have the panic pot-up on the Wednesday following the February meeting because the clumps of plants were already frozen as solid as rocks. It is estimated that we have about 5% of the normal plant supply into pots. Not very good. Downright intimidating when you consider the last day to drop plants off to the yard is a mite over one month away. ***Final day to drop off plant material to the carport is Sunday, April 16th***. We realize that many of you are waiting for the thaw, but when you can, get them over. ***Bodies are drastically needed to help pot up the plants:*** Please help. The prime reason why our club is so active is because of the success of our plant sale. Like that Christmas dinner price? Like that speaker we had last month? Enjoy a subsidized outing? Most of the work for the sale is done far in advance of sale day. *Please help in the yard if you can*. The calendar is on the head table. Tonight, it will be moved to the fireplace end during tea. Many, many thanks.

PUBLICITY IS STARTING NOW. At the head table there are small and large posters available. Small are for you to hand out to friends, neighbours and even casual acquaintances. We call them our “fridge posters”. The large posters are for posting in public spaces such as bulletin boards and, just before the sale, on telephone poles. Take several small and distribute them. Take a large one if you have a spot. We would like to record where the large posters will be located so that we have some idea of the areas covered. Probably best to hold off posting those for exterior locations until 2-3 weeks prior the sale.

GROWING FROM SEED: Two members, Patti Kemp and Audrey Barnes, are the main “from seed” growers.

There are some other members also growing minor amounts—*who are you?* We have yet to get any confirmations from anyone. It would be great if more members take on some of the seed growing responsibilities.

TO BE, OR NOT TO BE—AN “ARDENT GARDENER”.

As you are probably aware, GardenWorks offers members a 10% discount on most items when your NWHS membership card is presented before things are rung into the till. They are now offering club members the choice of the 10% off or a 1 year free enrollment (renewal next year, \$20) in their Ardent Gardener program. The benefits of being an Ardent Gardener: No discount, but you accumulate cashable points for every dollar spent, free registration for workshops, great monthly deals and a slew of valuable coupons. You cannot reap the benefits of both deals—it must be 10% off or Ardent Gardener membership!