

# THE NEW WESTMINSTER HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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

[www.newwesthortsociety.org](http://www.newwesthortsociety.org)

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August 2007

## **CLUB MEETING CALENDAR:**

**AUGUST MEETING:** Tonight, Tues, Aug 14th, 7:45: Teri Cantin, of Sharp & Diamond Landscape Architecture and Planning, on "GARDENS IN THE SKY". She will be mainly talking about roof-top gardens and will be touching briefly on living walls.

**SEPTEMBER MEETING:** Tues, Sept 11, 7:45 Patricia Fleming, of Delta Recycling Earthwise Garden, on "XERISCAPING". It is also the night of our fall "BRING TO SHARE" event.

**OCTOBER MEETING:** Tues, Oct 9. No speaker as the evening is devoted to our ANNUAL SILENT AUCTION. All Container Contest and Photo Contest entries are due at this meeting. Tickets for the Christmas party go on sale.

**NOVEMBER MEETING:** Tues, Nov 13. Annual General Meeting (election of 2008 executive, member votes). Speaker: Jennifer Ryan on "FLOWERING SHRUBS"

**DECEMBER MEETING:** Tues, Dec 11. No regular meeting. The evening is reserved for our Seasonal Celebrations. Tickets must be purchased for this event.

**CLUB OUTINGS:** *Carole Forsythe (604-515-1927; [carole.forsythe@shaw.ca](mailto:carole.forsythe@shaw.ca)) is the person in charge of outings unless otherwise stated with a specific outing.*

### **VALLEYBROOK GARDENS OPEN HOUSE &**

**DEVAN GREENHOUSES:** Fri, Sept 7th. These two nurseries are both in Abbotsford. Valleybrook is the home of Heritage Perennials (the plants in the blue pots). It is a huge wholesale nursery which once a year holds an Open House: lectures, nursery tours and fantastic deals on plants! Devan Greenhouses are also growers who sell retail out of their greenhouses all summer. Very good plants at very good prices. Both of these nurseries have websites and accompanying newsletters. [www.perennials.com](http://www.perennials.com) is the web-home of Valleybrook. It has great data base for their plants. Sign-up for their electronic newsletter. For Devan Greenhouses go to [www.devangreenhouses.ca](http://www.devangreenhouses.ca). If you sign-up for their newsletter, every Monday morning at about 7:30 you will receive an email notification of the "deals of the week". Most enticing. We do not have the itinerary or the map ready for tonight but we are taking names as this outing will be *before* our Sept meeting. We will be carpooling (hint: the cheapest place to get gas is the Abbotsford Costco, near the Sumas border) When details of the open-house are available, you will be contacted. The map will be posted on our web-site.

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

Wasn't it nice for the hot weather to break just in time for our tour & picnic? A beautiful day to stroll through gorgeous gardens and then end up smoozing with friends at the picnic. Many thanks, again, to members who made that special effort and invited us to their gardens: **Jean List, Tania Worker, Joan Miller & Carl Whitney, Dawn Dutrizac-Larose & Paul Larose, Silvana McNulty, Marya McLellan and Ellen & Nes Berg.** (Nes is not actually a NWHS member but is often mistaken as such because she gets involved in so many club projects. Thanks, Nes.) Lots of great ideas! We look forward to re-visiting the gardens in the future. Downright amazing how quickly Joan & Carl's and Dawn & Paul's gardens have matured! I hope you all have had time to sit back and enjoy your gardens since the tour. Or did you jump into the next gardening projects? Congratulations to **Sharon Seki**, our new Garden Stumps Champ! Her score: 12 out of 20 correct! Wow!

## **CLUB OUTINGS CONT.**

**DELTA RECYCLING EARTHWISE GARDEN:** Sat, Sept 15, 10am. As a follow-up to our Sept meeting, we have arranged a one-hour guided tour (hosted by our Sept speaker). Details and sign-up sheet at Sept meeting.

**QUEENSBOROUGH URBAN FARMER'S FALL FAIR:** Sun, Sept 23, 10am-4pm. The theme of this year's fair is "Cows" and a good time is guaranteed for all. Our club is very involved with this event. In fact, we are a supporting sponsor. *See article elsewhere in the newsletter outlining NWHS's involvement—and opportunities for your involvement.* The competitions schedule has been published. Pick one up tonight. It and the entry form are posted on our website ([www.newwesthortsociety.org](http://www.newwesthortsociety.org)). We hope to see a good NWHS representation on the showbench. As we consider the Fair competition to be part of our club competitions (our in-club June show, being the other half), *all NWHS members do not pay the entry fee.* The club will pay it on your behalf.

**NO SCENTS MAKES SENSE:** It seems that once again, members need to be reminded. Recently several people have requested that we re-iterate the policy that our general meetings are "NO FRAGRANCE" events. *Please do not use scented personal care products.* This includes not only perfumes and colognes but scented fabric softeners and soaps. Many of our members have adverse reactions to scent. In fact, at the last two meetings, people had to leave during the presentation because of such reactions. It can be a life-threatening reaction. Leave scent in the garden where it belongs.

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

August is the most rewarding and busiest month in the vege garden. Besides harvesting, don’t forget you can plant Swiss chard, lettuce, broccoli, cabbage, spinach and carrots. Hopefully, the Brussel sprouts are planted by now because they need more time to mature. If you have a small garden, harvesting potatoes early can open up valuable space as early as July thus enabling the planting of these winter crops. A midsummer harvest can also end insect worries and early blight.

This month, it is very important to keep an eye on the tomato plants. Undoubtedly the main reason tomatoes are so wildly grown is that home grown tomatoes taste so much better than store bought counterparts. The rapid growth of a healthy tomato plant can also lead to problems. Like all plants, a tomato is a solar powered sugar factory. For the first month or so it is in the garden, all of the sugar it produces is directed toward new leaf growth. During this stage tomato plants grow very rapidly, doubling their size every 12 to 15 days. Eventually, the plants make more sugar than the single growing tip can use which signals the plant to make new branches to flower. This usually happens after 10 to 13 leaves have expanded, at which time the plant is 12 to 18 inches tall. It is imperative that each plant be staked. That is to ensure that each leaf has plenty of room and is supported up off the ground. When the tomato plant lies on the ground or when it’s growth is extremely dense, many of its leaves are forced into permanent shade, greatly reducing the amount of sugar they produce. When a leaf uses more sugar than it makes, the leaf yellows and then drops. A properly pruned and supported single-stem tomato plant presents all of its leaves to the sun. Most of the sugar produced is directed to the developing fruit, since the only competition is a single growing tip. The result is large fruits that are steadily produced until frost.

Pruning also affects the tomato plant’s health. The leaves of a pruned and supported plant dry off faster so bacterial and fungal diseases have less opportunity to spread. Soil is less liable to splash up onto staked plants. The bottom line: Upright plants have fewer problems with leaf spots and fruit rots because their leaves stay drier and free from disease-laden soil. Once flowering commences, all tomato vines must be tied to their supports. Although vigorous, the plants are also easily damaged, so take care in how you tie them and what you use. Cloth strips work well as long as they’re not too old. Twine should be at least 1/8” thick or else it can cut into the tomato stem. Later in the season, about 30 days before first frost, there is one last pruning chore. The plants must be topped. The fruit that has set must be given every opportunity to mature. To summarize: Rule 1: Get plants off the ground. Rule 2: give plants room. Rule 3: Never prune or tie plants when the leaves are wet. Also, don’t forget that lime is very important in growing tomatoes. Also, when the flowering starts, a teaspoon of sugar added to the water will help sweeten the tomatoes. Good luck in your tomato growing!

**GardenWorks Appreciation Day:** Thurs, Aug 16th

**IN CASE YOU MISSED IT:**

Boy, what a hot night it was! Even in the heat wave, approximately 80 members turned out to hear a first class account of the Devastation and Restoration of Stanley Park. Eric Meagher (Supervisor of Stanley Park Maintenance) after a few technological scares, first briefly reviewed the park’s majesty and importance. Then he got into the slides of the storm damage. And then, he discussed just how carefully they are approaching the restoration. It is an extremely complex project in which steps have been taken carefully to ensure regrettable irreversible mistakes are not made. The scientific personnel involved is a “who’s who” of experts. Definitely not a Mickey Mouse approach! The whole effort is mind-boggling. We all came away with the feeling that it will be a better park in the end. What an enthusiastic speaker—a great story teller. If you want to go into the park to watch the worker’s remove debris and such, it is OK as long as you do not get in their way. The club plans to investigate when they are having their “removal of that invasive ivy” work-bees and perhaps organize a club outing to participate.

*Regarding the work on the restoration, it is ongoing despite the City of Vancouver workers strike.*

**BRING TO SHARE:** Next month, at our Sept meeting, we will be once again enjoy the opportunity to share ideas, questions, successes and failures with other members. It is a great opportunity to exchange knowledge and expertise—don’t miss out! To further entice you to bring something to display, we will be doing 3 participation draws for hard cash: Each member who brings in one or more exhibits (no limit on the number you can bring) will get his/her name entered in the participation draw. There will be 3 draws: \$10, \$15, \$25.

**Easy steps to participate:**

1. Think! We all have things we would like to share, questions we would like answered. If something is too big, take a photo (we will have protective sleeves). Draw a diagram. Bring in a pest attacked leaf (preferably enclosed in a zip-lock, to prevent spread of something evil).
2. Fill out a slip for each exhibit. They will be available at the far end of the head table. Briefly describe your exhibit and why you brought it in. The tables will be arranged around the room, in the same formation as for the June Show.
3. Register for the draw. We can all use a few extra dollars, so don’t miss out. Sharon, or a sidekick, will take your name.
4. Leave feedback for the exhibits: This rates right up there in importance with bringing in your exhibits. The event is to exchange knowledge—so write down your opinions on the exhibit slip! Talk to the person who brought in the item! There should be ample opportunity before the meeting and during refreshments.

**QUEENSBOROUGH FAIR:** As mentioned on the first page, our club is very involved in the fair. In fact, 3 members (Lori Jenvey, Judy Knight and Audrey Barnes) are on the overall organizing committee. *It is only one and half months away!!!*

1. **The club itself has a major booth.** Once again we are sited on the deck (This year it faces the new bandstand which will be the centre of entertainment!). Traditionally, we have made the theme of our booth a derivation of the overall theme of the fair. At this point, nothing has been really decided upon. The only suggestion put forth so far, "Buttercups and their domesticated cousins" (meaning ranunculus), seems to have a lukewarm reception. (Can you eat buttercups?) Another idea, was a discussion of the pros & cons of different manures. What do you think? Can you expand on either of these ideas? Do you have another idea? Ideally, it would be nice to be able to put on a display that is not just posters.
2. **Display?** did someone mention "display"? Every year some of our artistic members create fantastic displays of "autumn & harvest themes" at the fair entrances and key locations such as the stage (this year, it will be the bandstand). This will be done predominantly the day before the fair, with just brush-up on the Sunday morning.
3. These displays (the fair's and the NWHS booth's displays) **require materials**, If you have produce, fall colored foliage, flowers, plants or farm props such tools or containers that we could borrow, please tell Audrey. Cornstalks, sunflowers... How about rustic birdhouses? Of course, anything in "cow" would be great. If you plan on doing fall pruning, why not do it just before the fair?
4. **Competitions:** We urge all to plan to enter. Audrey (who is actually in charge of the competitions) will gladly receive your non-perishable entries in advance. If you plan to enter perishable entries, why not plan to come to the fair early and help receive the exhibits. A huge number of people will be required for this. Anticipate a couple of hours of intense work Sunday morning.

*At the September meeting, we will have sign-up sheets for participation with the Fair. Until then, if you have any ideas, or offerings of help or materials, please see Audrey or another executive.*

## **STARTING OUR GENERAL MEETINGS AT 7:00PM????**

This suggestion was put forward by one of our membership. It has been lurking in many minds for quite awhile. Our meetings often go late. People, who have to get up early or have to catch public transit, are forced to leave early. **WHAT DO YOU THINK?** There are a lot of facts to consider. One, of course, is "can we book the room from 6:00?" At least an hour is needed for set-up. We will investigate. A motion will be put to the membership at our Nov AGM.

**NWHS DONATIONS:** The Donations Committee has a maximum of \$2000 to donate to worthy causes this year (2007). The committee doesn't just, out of the air, decide to give money here, money there. There is a set protocol of how it is done. The first step is nominations must be made by the membership. *Recipients must be in one or more of these fields: gardening/horticultural education; horticultural research; native plant habitat restoration; gardening-related programs that will benefit the community or a needy segment of the community. Preference will be given to New Westminster-based organizations or initiatives. The recipient cannot be politically or religiously affiliated. It cannot be a lobby group. Nor can it award one specific individual.* The newly revamped nomination forms will be available at the Sept general meeting. Nominations must be submitted to Carole Forsythe, committee chair, by Sept 30, 2007. She and the committee will evaluate all nominees and propose the donations to the executive. The executive, on behalf of the membership, has the final say on how the money will be distributed. Last year a budget of \$1000 was split evenly between 4 of the 5 nominees. If you are interested in being on the committee or have any other questions, please talk to Carole (604-515-1927). *Two annual club donations are outside the money involved in this motion: the club's annual donation to the BC Council of Garden Club's Scholarship Trust fund and our Christmas charity donation. Also, we have \$250 slated for a scholarship for a student graduating from New West Sec going into a horticultural program. There was no suitable applicants this year, so the award has been held over for next year's graduating class.*

**www.newwesthortsociety.org** If you haven't visited our website for awhile, check out—if you have visited it recently, check it out! It seems that there is something new almost daily. Bob Santarossa, our webmaster, is showing all his tricks. Besides, updating the photo albums extensively, he has started the "message board". To understand how it works and how to use it, click on "web pages" where he outlines the procedure. We hope the message board will encourage communication between club members outside "official" club events. It all depends on *you* posting questions or opinions and *you* commenting on other postings. As this is the season to get keen on taking the photos necessary for your October entries into the photo and container contests, check under "competitions" for the rules and also to view what won the last two years. Reading the comments and suggestions by our judge, Steve Grover, on past winners gives definite hints on taking good photos. Well done, Bob! Many thanks. There is lots of information on the site. Bob is always talking about ways to enhance it further. Why not email him and tell him what you think?

## **GVRD SPRINKLING REGULATIONS:**

At the moment, the sprinkling regulations *apply to lawns only*. The hours for lawn sprinkling are 4am to 9am and 7pm to 10pm. Odd numbered houses on Thur & Sun; even numbered houses Wed & Sat.

## **NOT A ORGANIZED CLUB OUTING BUT A GREAT IDEA:**

**CANWEST HORT SHOW:** Wed & Thurs, Sept 12-13, 11:30am to 6:00pm, Vancouver Trade & Convention Centre, Canada Place. Put on by the BC Landscape and Nursery Association, this is the premier horticultural *trade* show in Western Canada. It is a *trade* show!—it is aimed at industry. Don't expect vendors selling to the public. Excepting a bookstore (new innovation this year), virtually no selling to the public takes place. The enticement for us is to see the new innovations, to get a sneak preview of what retail outfits could be selling next year. If you see something you really think is great, take the literature and visit your local garden centre and tell them your opinion and they would probably be able to order it for you. Until Aug 24th, you can pre-register for \$12. At the door admission is \$15. Seminars and tours are extra (and sell-out early!). Visit [www.canwesthortshow.com](http://www.canwesthortshow.com) for details.

## **GARDENING CLASSES WITH NEW WEST CONTINUING EDUCATION:**

A great line-up of gardening courses offered this fall/winter, many are given by Conway Lum. "Landscape Principles", "Putting your Garden to Bed", "Rejuvenate your Lawn", "Winter Vegetable Garden", "Colour from the Bones of the Garden", "Keeping the Beast at Bay" (The latter is not about the chafer but on how to prune). Pick up a continuing education flyer at the New West Library. Registration starts Sept 4.

## **POINT GREY CHRYSANTHEMUM ASSOC SUMMER SHOW OF BLOOMS AND IKEBANA EXHIBIT USING**

**MUMS:** Sat, Sept 8 noon to 4pm and Sun, Sept 9 10am to 4pm at Southlands Nursery.

**SKETCHING GROUP:** Only two scheduled meetings of the group remaining for this year (contact Debra for more details, 604-618-8648 or [halbig@shaw.ca](mailto:halbig@shaw.ca))

Aug 18: Silina Nakatsu's

Aug 25: Wrap-up at Debra Halbig's.

Have you seen the great number of art classes being offered by New West School's Continuing Education? A great range of topics: drawing & sketching, oil painting, pencil crayon, water-colour basics. Taught by Sue Dyer and Peri-Laine Nilan (the instructor at our first meeting). Why not continue your sketching under the guidance of one of these excellent instructors? Registration Sept 4.

## **BC COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS:**

**www.bcgardenclubs.com** is the new website for the Council. Interested in another club, check it out! If a club has a website, ours for example, it is linked. If interested in a club not yet listed, talked to Audrey. She can give you information from the printed Council Directory.

**Help at the PNE:** The Council has a booth at the PNE and is looking for volunteers to man it. Shifts can be from 11 to 3 or 4 to 7, or for the full 8 hours. Free admission (and possibly free parking) for volunteers. Loads of time slots available from Aug 22 to Sept 3 inclusive. Talk with Audrey or contact Margaret Nakahara (604-980-4433 or [margaretn@3web.com](mailto:margaretn@3web.com))

**Fall meeting:** Oct 27th, different location. Talks on Garden Photography and the flora & fauna of the Queen Charlotte Islands. More details next month.

## **"THIS 'N' THAT":**

■**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!** Gladys Jacobson, turned an amazing 98 on August 2nd. We hope you enjoyed the day and many more, Gladys.

■**HAPPY BIRTHDAY,** too, to Debra Halbig's daughter, Yzabelle (pronounced "Is-a-bell"), born the morning of our garden tour. Healthy & happy—excellent! Congratulations!

■The **Plant a Row, Grow a Row** season is in full swing. This is that fantastic program that matches excess produce grown by home gardeners to those in need at the New West Food Bank and Monarch Place. Drop off produce at St. Aidan's Church, 14th St and 7th Ave, New West between 9:30 and 10:30 Sunday mornings. If you can't drop off the produce, phone 604-526-4914 before 11am Sundays for afternoon pick-up service. If you need help picking the fruit from a tree contact Eileen Sparrow at [eileensparrow@telus.net](mailto:eileensparrow@telus.net), with a cc to the mailbox of Bruce McAndless-Davis, [bm-d@telus.net](mailto:bm-d@telus.net) in case Eileen misses your email.

■**South Burnaby Garden Club Fall Fair** on Sept 8 & 9th, afternoons at Bonsor. The extensive schedule is available on [www.southburnabygardenclub.org](http://www.southburnabygardenclub.org). It looks like great fun if you are into exhibiting—or if you just want to have a good time. Admission is free.

■Have you got some great shots for our photo contest? Why not double-duty them? Enter the **Minter Gardens Photo Contest!** The deadline is the end of August and you can enter electronically. Fantastic prizes! Check out details at [www.mintergardens.com](http://www.mintergardens.com).

■This is the time of year that our **seed exchange** coffers get filled (hopefully!). If you are collecting seeds for the exchange, please remember to make sure that the seeds are picked mature and to put your seeds in a paper bag or envelope (definitely NOT plastic!) for them to dry. If you put them in plastic, there is a very good chance they will just become a soggy mess of mold. Just leave your bulk seed donation in the box on the free table. Give as many details as you can—including your name & phone number, in case Buff has questions. Tks.

■Please confirm with Audrey that you are still interested in the **ParGro Stonewool** growing medium. She purchased some and sold many to members (at \$2 per "stick") and is worried that she may have sold some of the reserved stock. If needed, she can probably purchase more.

■Want a **club T-shirt**? We have a limited supply of Med & Large (in both pale & dark green) available at the treasurer's table. \$15.

■Amazingly, we still have some **black plastic plant saucers** available—12, 14 & 18". Back to the normal club member price of \$1 each—see Audrey if you would like to buy some.

## **E-MAIL NOTIFICATION OF MEETINGS:**

Please contact Anna Camporese if you have any changes to your email address or if you want to be added to the list. [Anna\\_Camporese@telus.net](mailto:Anna_Camporese@telus.net). Please preface your email subject with "nwhs".