



MILL BAY GARDEN CLUB NEWSLETTER

Website: www.millbaygardenclub.com

Email: mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com

Next Meeting:

Date: **Tues, February 27th**

Time: **7pm (Doors open 6:30pm)**

Place: **Mill Bay Community League Hall (1001 Shawnigan Mill Bay Rd)**

Activities:

Business Meeting; Members' Forum; Gardening Q&A; Library; Raffle; Plant Sales; Guest Speaker; Socializing!



January Brag Table Theme:

It's Not Spring Yet!

With plant and flower identification and commentary provided by Barb Kohlman, the Brag Table is a great part of our monthly meetings. It's a fun and interactive way to share what's going on in your garden. The bonus is a prize awarded randomly to one of the monthly participants. If you've never participated, give it a fling, be it flower, vegetable or fungus!

February Speaker: Pip Woodcock

Greenhouses, Garden Rooms and other Gems

See page 3 for details



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***DON'T FORGET!
bring your mug
for coffee/tea!***

President's Report

Ajay Oppelaar

Yes, it's still winter, even though I was hopeful. After a week of spring temperatures and major work in the garden, the ground is now frozen again and there is a dusting of snow on the ground still. My garden and I are often fooled by nature. Why should this year be any different?

Lots of fun again at this month's exec and committee meeting, with regrets from a few and the welcome of Cori-Lee Fisher to the committee! Cori-Lee has sat on this committee before, and will be helping Tracy Morris with the raffle for the rest of the season.

Plans are on schedule for our annual presence at Cobble Hill Seedy Saturday. This year the show has been changed up a bit, and according to all sources the not for profit groups will be moved out of the main hall and placed across the street in the youth hall. We have always maintained a presence at SS and heavily promote the show. The executive feels that if we're not included in the main hall we will opt out on participating. More on this as information comes in.

Our insurance policy with the BC Council of Garden Clubs has been paid for 2018. The insurance policy covers all club meetings, shows, demonstrations and tours.

Gillian Keir has a terrific committee now for the Flower and Garden Show, but we are still missing someone who can take on promotions and publicity. We really need someone with strong media skills for this important position. If this is you (and you know who you are....) , please contact myself or Gill Keir directly and identify

yourself! We all need to know.....if nobody comes forward from this request, we'll be targeting people directly which makes it harder to say no to. So please save us all the extreme measures and simply volunteer as soon as you read this. Wink wink nudge nudge.....

Speaking of positions to be filled, we're beginning our search for new leaders within the executive and committee. Two positions in particular that need to be filled are vice president and president. Last year Cliff and I agreed to take on the leadership roles for another year only. These roles are key to the operation of the club. These aren't hard positions, you just have to know how to run a meeting and delegate. Even I can do it!

Lastly, Bill Herring is looking for some volunteers to help out in his year round food production garden in exchange for his sharing from his vast stores of knowledge growing food crops for the home garden. He would like to have two volunteers at a time for two hour shifts. We will discuss this further at the regular meeting next week, and if you are interested please let me know. Bill is an invaluable resource for the club, and can teach you pretty much everything you could want to know about home sustenance gardening. See you next week!



February's Speaker:

Pip Woodcock on Greenhouses, Garden Rooms and Other Gems

This month's speaker is our own Pip Woodcock.

Her topic is "Greenhouses, Garden Rooms and Other Gems".

Pip Woodcock, Mill Bay Garden Club Past President and a Master Gardener with Vancouver Island Master Gardeners is a gardener presently without a garden. Does this bother her? Well no, not at the moment, but she is sure that once Spring has really sprung her fingers will start itching to get back into the soil.



Presentation Summary:

Greenhouses, Garden Rooms and Other Gems

Last summer, after she and her husband, Derrick, sold their log house down by Cowichan Bay which had a garden that required quite a lot of attention, they took off on their travels in Canada, USA and Europe. She is looking forward to sharing some of the fascinating, quirky and traditional greenhouse and garden delights they found enroute.



"Sunshine Mary"

Our esteemed Lifetime Member, Mary Gale, has for a very many years, been sending cards and kind words to those members who are experiencing illness or loss. She does this on behalf of the Mill Bay Garden Club, bringing a spot of sunshine into what is often a stressful time for a club member.

If you know of someone in the club who is sick, in hospital, or has lost a loved one, please let Mary know and she will send a card on our behalf.

And should you have any blank cards (handcrafted most welcome!) that you would like to donate toward this endeavour, they would be very much appreciated.



Committee Reports and News

Plant Table

It's not spring yet......but it is coming!

Got things ready to pot up & donate to the plant sales table? Have you extra snow drops that are finishing off? Great time to plant them.

We plan to bring in a few buckets of Alpaca "gold" manure starting this next meeting. It can go straight onto your garden. \$5 a bucket.

We have more garden magazines for a small donation-which you can enjoy without worrying about returning :-)

Also a gently used long sleeve shirt with garden suggestions, size 10.

Other donations much appreciated & accepted.

*Your friendly plant sales team,
Monika Morgan & Sharon Martin*

Notes from the Library

Please come and check out our latest books covering a huge range of topics. Once again, a number of magazines will also be available at our Plant Sales table this month!

Please remember to return all books that were borrowed last time. If you are unable to attend the meeting and have a book just give me a call and I can pick it up.

*Your Friendly Librarian,
Janice Rose*

Membership News

The Club extends a warm welcome to three new members who joined at the January meeting.

Flower and Garden Show 2018

The 2018 edition of the Mill Bay Flower and Garden Show will be held on May 26, 2018. We still need some volunteers to head the "Promotion and Publicity Committee" and the "Miscellaneous Committee".

Gill Keir

Social Media

If you use Facebook, don't forget to check us out and "LIKE" us at:

www.facebook.com/millbaygardenclub

*Pauline Dueck
Facebook Coordinator*



Garden Tours... this year featuring Gardens As They Are

Each year several members of the Mill Bay Garden Club open their gardens for other members of the Club to view. In the past, members have been interested in both ornamental and food gardens. Typically people who opened their gardens put in considerable effort making them showpieces.

This year, however, we are inviting members to open for viewing their '**Gardens As They Are**'. This means no need to obsess about weeding and deadheading and pruning and mulching and hiding tools and other gardening paraphernalia. Simply identify a day and time and location and a little information about your garden (e.g. it focusses on ornamentals, perennials, roses, rhodos, veggies, heathers, weeds, obnoxious smells etc) and send an email with the information to the Newsletter for publication (mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com). This is a chance for Garden Club members to see what others are doing in their gardens and for those showing their gardens to receive advice/input from those coming to view.

In the past, these viewings have been very popular with our members. We hope that by emphasizing '**Gardens As They Are**' that more members will show their gardens, more members will view the gardens, and more gardening information will be exchanged.

Cliff Stainsby

Gardening Tips for February by Barb Kohlman

Well, normally I might suggest you go out and cut down your grasses and sword ferns —

But perhaps you will wait till next week or so until it warms up a bit. Some of the new fronds on the ferns are already starting to elongate and unfurl.

Also, a little too soon to remove any leaves that are still laying on your garden beds, but again when it warms just a bit more, do this to free the soil to bask in the sun — put them in your compost where they will break down further.

Get ready to layer about 2" of compost on your ornamental beds once the soil has warmed — nutrients for spring growth.

Along with the compost I broadcast my Borden's organic mix to be slowly broken down by the microorganism and released to the soil profile for the plants. From Borden's Mercantile, Victoria or you can mix your own from ingredients from Buckerfields.

Remember (when attacking those nasty slugs) they are a good addition to your compost bin dead or alive — alive they will break down cardboard and paper (carbon material = browns). I always move the native banana slugs to the bins. And if you get slimed — wash your hands/tools with warm water and vinegar.

Cheers barb k



Big Winds... Big Losses by Fran Benton

Well this has been quite a wild winter season. The heavy wet snowfall must have done some damage in your garden. It certainly did in mine! I always worry about my rhododendrons. They cope with the cold very well but can be badly damaged by a heavy snow load. The weight of snow will pull the branches down. As the snow builds up and compresses it can snap off branches. Wet snow is the worst as it is so heavy and soon turns to ice.

While watching the latest storm from the window, I thought to myself, "Let's nip out with the broom and bash that snow off the rhodos". Then the power lines sagged down so far they arced and caught on fire. That stopped me in my tracks. I can be a bit of a garden bozo but I have a healthy respect for fire. Boy! am I glad I did because a few moments later one of our backyard arbutus split off a massive branch that flattened a garden bed.

When we looked at the scar we realized this branch had been hanging by a thread! The poor arbutus had been damaged in the past and grew around the injury like a diaper. None of the injury was visible from the ground. When the tree split you could see a huge void where the branch should have been solid. Holy moly! If I had been standing there I would not be here to write this article!

Fortunately we have friends who enjoy woodworking and they took some of the arbutus. The rest will keep us toasty warm next winter!



Vancouver Island Heather Society Annual Sale

Plan to attend the March 24, 2018 annual Vancouver Island Heather Society sale at the Stu Armour Building, Cobble Hill Fairgrounds (Fisher Road). **Note the slight change in venue.** The sale will begin at 10:00 AM and last until noon or sold out. Experienced buyers will advise you that it is essential to get to the hall prior to the sale starting in order to get the best selection. There will be many unusual varieties on hand including *Calluna vulgaris* spring tips, foliage colour and bud bloomer varieties, *Daboecia* and *Ericas*. In addition, starter kits consisting of nine plants and a planting diagram will be available. Members of the Society will be on hand to help you make your choices and members of the Victoria Master Gardener Association will be there to answer general gardening questions.

For more information on the sale and on the Vancouver Island Heather Society visit the web site at www.bcheathersociety.org



Mill Bay Garden Club Plant Sale

MAY 26, 2018. 9:00 to 2:00 AT THE COMMUNITY FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW

Your plant sale committee would like to encourage you to think about what plants you are going to donate to the plant sale, pot them up, label them and make sure that they look great. Plants potted up early will have loads of time to establish their roots and look great.

As you know, the money that the Club makes from the plant sale helps to support our contributions to projects ongoing in our Community. Our club is very community minded and the sale is important to us.

This year we are hoping that we get loads of plants for sale. We kindly ask you to refrain from donating invasive plants. Sometimes you may not realize that your plants are invasive. The Committee will help you out and remove any plants from the sale that it considers to be invasive.

So, once the rains stop and you begin to tidy up your garden, think about the plant sale and pot up extra plants that you might have.

Thank you one and all.

Elaine Scott

Upcoming Events

- The View Royal Garden Club will hold its general meeting on **Wednesday February 28** at 7:30 pm at Wheeley Hall, 500 Admirals Rd in Esquimalt. The topic this month will be a presentation by Carol Dancer, a well known Victoria gardener and former head of the volunteer gardeners at Government House. She will speak on winter flowering plants and how to plan our gardens for winter interest. As well a judged mini show will feature exhibits from members gardens and a sale of plants and garden items. Visitors and new members are welcome—drop in fee \$5.00 includes refreshments.
- The Victoria Horticultural Society's next meeting is **Tuesday March 6** at 7:30 at the Garth Homer Centre, 813 Darwin Avenue. The main presentation is "Designing and Landscaping Your Garden" and the workshop (starts at 6:30) is "Perfect Planting for a Healthy Tree". For more details visit the Society's website at <http://vichortsociety.org>.
- Cobble Hill's 18th Seedy Saturday will be held on **March 10** from 10:00am til 2:00pm. More info at the end of the newsletter.
Additional Island Seedy Saturdays happening in March include Courtenay, Nanaimo, Duncan and Campbell River. For a complete listing of Seedy Saturdays in February and March, visit <http://www.harbourliving.ca/VancouverIslandSeedySaturdays.php>.

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Upcoming Events (continued)

- MILL BAY PLANTAHOLICS PLANT SALE: **Saturday, April 14**, 2018 from 9am to 2pm at 2836 Oceanside Lane, Mill Bay (east off Trans Canada Highway at Kilmalu, south on Church Way, east on Welch Road, and south on Oceanside Lane). Proceeds from the sale will be divided between the Malawi Girls on the Move program (where the money will provide a scholarship for a young Malawian woman to complete her secondary school education), and Somenos Transition House – a program of the Cowichan Women Against Violence Society. A great selection of healthy plants will be available for purchase. Members of the Victoria Master Gardener Association will be on hand to answer general gardening questions. Cash or cheque only.
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- The Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Garden Society's Annual Spring Flower Show takes place on Friday and Saturday **April 20 & 21** at Cadboro Bay United Church in Victoria. See the poster at the end of this newsletter for details.
 - The 3rd Annual Vancouver Island Homesteading Fair will take place on **May 5 and 6** in Cobble Hill. More details in next month's MBGC Newsletter.
 - And some March workshops happening at the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific that may be of interest to MBGC members (visit hcp.ca/events for more details):
 - * Backyard Orchard Workshop, Saturday **March 3**. This workshop is for those serious about cultivating fruit and nuts in an urban space. It will cover: selection of cultivars, planting, staking & training, soil, nutrients & watering, pruning, plant health & cultural controls, grafting & propagation.
 - * Soil Basics for the Home Gardener, Sunday **March 11**. Instructor Christina Nikolic of the Organic Gardener's Pantry will teach you how to determine the soil types and how they function. You will learn about organic matter and living organism in the soil and how these impact plant health. You will also be introduced to safe and simple fertilizers and amendments to improve your soil health.
 - * The Nature of the Native Plant Garden Workshop, Saturday **24 March**. Participants will learn about Victoria's local ecology, including its abundance of unique plant species well-suited to home gardens, and the wildlife that depend on them. Edible, deer resistant, and drought tolerant species will be highlighted.

On The Record: Assembly of Mill Bay Garden Club

Date: January 23, 2018ce

Assembly convened: 7:00pm

Assembled: the creme de la creme of Growers of all things Ornamental and Edible

Not assembled: all others

Report of Our Leader (aka President): Ajay Oppelaar

- M/S/C to accept the Minutes of our November Assembly
- Announcement by the President (trumpets in the background): Janet Rose will host our Annual Gathering

Report of the Vice President (tinny banjos, obnoxious baggypipes, annoying everyone)

- VP seeks verification of phone numbers and emails of people wishing to go on the April 8 tour of the Eco-Sense operation.
- If enough interest and Eco-Sense agrees, will set up a second tour.

Report from the Treasury: Marie Cooke

- The Assembled hush and pay attention as vast sums are about to be discussed
- We will require about \$125 for insurance
- We have \$167.04 in our account
- whew, no sign of unrest, unusual when monies of such import are at stake
- the Treasurer obviously is either very skillful or feared

Report of the Scribe (once again tinny banjos, obnoxious baggypipes, annoying everyone, no-one cares about the name of the Scribe)

- Big sigh of relief from the Assembled – the Scribe has nothing to say, and surprisingly actually said nothing

Report from the Head of the Bursary Committee: Janice Rose

- The MBGC is offering 2 bursaries of \$500 each
- Students graduating from Kelsey and Cowichan High Schools are eligible
- The bursaries are for students who intend to seek advanced education in matters relating to growing of things ornamental and edible

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January General Meeting Minutes cont'd

Report from the Keeper of Records of Membership in our Esteemed Society: JoAnn Mulhern

- Satisfying the primary urge of the human species the Keeper reports growth in our numbers – 3 new members added to the rolls
- Total members now at an astonishing 122

The Raffle Coordinator report: Tracy Morris

- There will be a raffle at coffee break
- There are a number of exciting prizes
- Thanks to Tracy for her very, very, good work

Report of the Purveyor of Things Ornamental and Edible: Monika Morgan

- There are various items for sale at the coffee break
- If you have extra things ornamental or edible, or related to the growing of things ornamental or edible, feel free to donate for the next meeting

Report from the Scribe in Chief (the one that matters) the Editor of Our Newsletter: Dave Byrnes

- For the rest of this year the Newsletter will keep the same format
- The Assembled applauded Mr. Byrnes for his work producing the highly regarded MBGC's newsletter (*Mr Byrnes expressed humble gratitude for the acknowledgement (ed.)*)

Report of the Head of the MBGC's Culinary Affairs Department: Mary-Ellen Deuling

- No report; she and her helpers were too busy preparing the coffee break feast

Report from the Keeper of Books: Janice Rose (perhaps the same Janice Rose who reported earlier and who will host our Annual Banquet).

- The MBGC's vast library has expanded yet again with the addition of a couple of interesting and profound new magazines and books of interest to Growers of Things Ornamental and Edible

Report of the Organizer and Coordinator of the MBGC's Annual Community Flower and Garden Show: Gillian Keir (full blast from the Orchestra Pit)

- Gill needs help – needs more people willing to have fun and work with others having fun to put on a major community event to which the people of the Cowichan Valley, and even beyond, will come and have fun.
- Please contact Gillian if you are willing to help

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January General Meeting Minutes cont'd

Report of the Master of the MBGC's public relations – Our Website Coordinator:

Gord Hamilton

- Things are going well with the Website
- Please feel free to send to Gord material for the website

Report from our Esteemed Knower of All Matters Related to Growing Things Ornamental and Edible: Barb Kohlman

- The Esteemed Knower once again revealed all that is known about the various offerings from the Assembled
- ... and, once again, the Assembled expressed their gratitude for her offerings with well earned applause

Presentation by Dr. Anna Colangeli

- **The topic:** Exploring the Role of Genetic Research in the Garden.
- **The gist:** There is an explosion of new information in the world of genetics and botany. The presentation provided an overview of the technical advances in molecular genetics and biotechnology and explored the role of Genetic Research on garden plants.
- The critical difference between Genetic Engineering and Smart Breeding was explained
- In the estimation of this very humble scribe – the presentation was very interesting and informative and provided some grounds for optimism about humanity's ability to adapt to changing climates through plant breeding programs that might be viable on a regional basis and not involve engineering of DNA.

Assembly Adjourned: approximately 9:00pm