

139th Annual Meeting



Stratford & District Horticultural Society

Date Nov 2017, Issue 139

Of Special Interest

140th Anniversary Plans



Agenda

Call to Order
Approval of Agenda
Introduction of Special Guests
Presentations
Approval of the 2016 AGM Minutes
Reports
 Treasurer
 Auditors
 Committee Reports
President's Remarks
 Motion to approve the actions & decisions of the Officers &
Nominating Committee Report
 Election & Installation of Officers
Appointment of Auditors
New Business, Announcements
Adjournment

President's Message

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As you read this annual report you realize the diversity of our activities and the volunteer commitment you have to our society. Most of these activities are horticultural in nature but there are also some that are not. A considerable amount of time was spent on job descriptions which we felt are required in order to have documented expectations of the position so that possible candidate would be able to make an informed decision. It also gave us an opportunity to assess all of our activities. There is an article in this report on this topic. Another project was to develop our own web site. In the past we used the Ontario Horticultural Association web site but it is quite generic and

not flexible in meeting some of our specific needs. Social media is the communication method of choice for potential members. With new members we can get new skills, new knowledge and new volunteers. It will take time for this to bring us new members. The details of this project are also an article this report. Now you may wonder, why take on such projects? The answer is simple. We are doing it for the survival of the society. While these types of projects do not guarantee success, not doing them will guarantee failure. Another option we have adopted is job sharing. We have a board opening for a recording secretary. If there are two

members who would be willing to share the position then there would be half the time commitment for each. This job sharing is an option for all positions so if you are willing and able but have time commitment concerns please let a board member know or put it on your volunteer survey. This is your opportunity to help ensure that the Stratford and District Horticultural Society continues to add to the quality of life in our community through horticulture. I would like to extend my greatest appreciation to all of you who have given most generously of your time.

Respectfully,
Mike Matthews



"To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow."

Believe in Tomorrow Iris 2018

Membership

On behalf of the Society I wish to thank those 156 people who renewed their memberships and also to welcome 52 new members. With 14 complimentary garden Tour members and 1 Lifetime member, the total 2017 membership is 223.

A big thanks to several members who assisted in selling memberships at general meetings, at Local Seedy Sunday, May Plant

Sale, for workshops and a bus trip. In May we welcomed new Owner, Jillian Roth of **Flowers on York** who agreed to sell memberships and also again Amanda Speelman of **Stratford Blooms**; both shops sold extremely well - thank you to all staff. As well, we truly appreciate the 9 merchants who continue to give discounts to members.

We are concerned to ensure membership numbers continue to increase. Please renew your membership for 2018 and encourage family, friends and neighbours to purchase a membership as well. If you would like to volunteer to sell memberships, for more information contact me at [\(519\) 271-2266](tel:519-271-2266) marihoffman@cyq.net.

Mary C. Hoffman

Canada 150 Parade Committee

Two floats in two parades - 2016 and 2017 'Canada 150' show Stratford citizens that we are here and this is what we do.

People turned out to see our 53 foot garden on a trailer and our attempt at vertical gardening with two back-to-back 4x8 flags. These involved 16 large flats planted out with nearly **600 Wax Begonias**.

Mike M built a fine wooden arbour for the trailer.

Several members spent an hour or two of their Saturday morning arranging blooming plants and shrubs to present a 'serene garden'. The Stratford Master Gardeners emphasized the vegetable aspect featuring a (simulated) raised vegetable bed. Thanks for your generosity: **Sebringville Garden Centre** for a special order of plants, **Cobe G** for two long planters filled with colour,

Woodcock Brothers for the free loan of their tractor trailer and driver, **Klomp's Garden Centre** for the loan of shrubs and colourful planters, and to **Eligh-Feryn Landscaping** for the original garden design. We came in close to budget and now have material for next year, our 140th year, for which plans are already 'germinating'. Dennis Rawe

SDHS Website - Social Media

With a goal to improve access to SDHS information, communications and transparency in one place, a new website was developed.

The site, developed by volunteer webmaster Pat Anderson, operates under domain gardenstratford.org.

We also secured the domain sdhortsociety.com and the garden guide project stratfordgardens.com.

Initial content has been loaded including annual reports, events calendar, society position descriptions for board and volunteer jobs,

society gardens and activities.

Communication and social media links are being incorporated as needed.

Please log into and use the website to get up to date info on Society activities.

Susan Kurtz

Library and Center St Gardens

Stratford Public Library Garden ~

My plan for 2017 was to keep the ground 'clean' and nourished and present an attractive garden year round.

Plants added this year are Abies koreana, "Taiga", a low, slow growing Korean Pine and Penstemon 'Husker Red', that does well in wet winters and hot, humid summers.

Knowing this exposed garden suffers harshly in the winter, I added Echinacea, Helenium, Spring bulbs and annual plants to keep up the colour through the season.

The cold wet June and early July caused the twitch grass to flourish, a battle we did not win, but the rest of the garden quickly caught up and

presented a fine show. Weekly visits and some extra for watering amounted to 16 volunteer hours. Dennis Rawe

Centre Street ~

This garden is in good shape having deep, well composted topsoil, mulched and cultivated regularly. Regular visits by myself and **Lorraine K** kept weeds under control.

New plants include Daylilies "Growing In Grace", a rose and several annual plants. Noted is Cotoneaster "Tom Thumb" with charming tiny green leaves that turn bright red in fall. The architectural pattern created by its branches and compact habit makes it a good ground cover shrub for small spaces - particularly rock gardens.

One difficulty with this garden is the rampant growth of beautiful Japanese anemones: their roots just love the deep rich soil here and tend to become the only plant left in the garden. This garden demands a wide range of skill and attention but is especially satisfying.

The Stratford Parks and Forest department have been asked to upgrade the "patio" level from Stone dust, which requires constant weeding, to a solid surface around the Memorial seat.

Note that your Board, at its October meeting, recognised unanimously the masterful planning of the City's annual flower gardens by City staff, in particular, Ryan Bedford. Dennis Rawe



Our Society Emblem - the Iris

Gardens Gardening and Gardeners

Monthly Column

Beginning in January, 2017, I've written monthly columns for Stratford Gazette.

The writing has been pleasant and instructive for me and it has also provided publicity for Hort Society meetings.

I have no idea of how many readers see the column, but it does seem to have attracted at least occasional newcomers to meetings.

Your comments and suggestions are welcome.

Online Garden Guide

I tried to generate interest in funding organizations for a printed Guide To Stratford's Public Gardens as a project commemorating the 140th anniversary of SDHS.

It became obvious fairly quickly that funding agencies had little interest in supporting anything in print but that money might be available for an online Guide.

The Destination Animation Fund provided \$1,000 to develop and launch the site.

Special Thanks to **Ms. Jaimie Park**, web designer, as well as those SDHS members and Stratford residents who provided photographs and important information about the public gardens.

The Stratford Gardens website, found at **stratfordgardens.com** receives four or five visits daily. Though most viewers are Canadian, others are from the United States, U.K. Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.

Doug Reberg



Garden Festival 2017

Member Benefits

Advanced Compost Fundraiser – May

Advanced Compost, a local farmer, introduced their composted manure product at the Stratford Garden Festival. Because it is only available in bulk, the Directors agreed to offer it to members in smaller quantities as a fund raiser. A total 296 bags were sold, with 2/3 pre-sold to members. Several members purchased 20+ bags!

Quality Fertilizer

generously donated plastic bags. The 14 volunteers who bagged the compost stated that the task was not onerous.

Seedy Sunday - Feb 12

The Society provided a display table at the Seedy Sunday activity organized by The Local. Displays included pollinator plants, with bee friendly fertilizer samples provided by **Quality Fertilizer**. **Mary Hoffman**

and the membership committee were on hand with Program Brochures and membership information.

Volunteers **Mary H, Dorothy V, Marg O, Nancy B**, provided 21 volunteer hours for this one day event.

Hypertufa Workshop -

Twenty people made hypertufa containers at a workshop held **June 10** at the Local, facilitated by Maureen and Don C

Plant Sale May 27 2017

The Society partnered with the Local Community Food Center for this year's Plant Sale. The Local provided breakfast and was pleased with proceeds from their vegetable give - away, including tomatoes, onions, kale, chard.

We are grateful to those many Members who provided 228 volunteer hours over 2 days!

Arrangements were competently made by the Committee comprising **Nancy B, Leslye G and Dorothy V.**

Publicity was excellent this year, particularly articles in the paper, crafted by **Doug R** and city wide signage placed by **Ron B.**

Members generously donated a broad range of perennials. As well, Garden Captains thinned perennials from the Society gardens to

provide top quality plants including mature grasses.

Also on offer were mature bulbs and plants donated from a St David St garden, which sold for premium prices. The demand for food plants including common herbs and vegetables was strong – oregano, sage, parsley, tomatoes, peppers.

This year, there were no plants on offer at \$1.00 and only a few at \$2.00. This caused some complaints from customers; however, the overall sales indicate that customers were happy to pay the stated prices, appreciating the quality of member-raised plant material. Few plants were left; we were thus unable to fill all requests from charities.

See Treasurer's Report for income and expenses.

Plant Rescue and Potting Up

A dozen volunteers dug and potted up plants from several gardens whose owners were unable to dig on their own. Other volunteers each planted a flat of seedlings which were offered at the sale.

As well, volunteers "potted up" approximately 144 hard-to-find herbs purchased for re-sale from Richter's Herbs.

People wanted advice.

The Master Gardeners were kept busy giving expert advice to novice and experienced gardeners alike.

Prior to the Sale, Master Gardeners were instrumental in identifying plants, suggesting cultivation requirements and pointing out species on the Ontario invasive species.

Maureen Cocksedge

Plant Rescue and Seed Collection

For the past 3 years, members have collected annual and perennial seeds from public gardens. This is both educational and cost effective, contributing seeds to local and provincial seed exchanges. This year, the activity has been expanded to include the taking of cuttings and lifting of annuals slated for composting, with the City's permission. City gardeners provided an informative tour of the Shakespeare Garden

with a discussion of appropriate plants for propagation.

Endorsed by other community groups, including Civic Beautification, Community in Blooms, The Local Community Food Center, Master Gardeners and the City Environment Committee, three public workshops were held, in August, September and October, with 30+ attending.

At the workshops, seeds and cuttings were collected from Churchill Circle, Shakespeare garden, City beds and member gardens.

These will be available to members and the public, on request or at the spring seed exchange. Plants are being over-wintered by several members including **Cobe G Dennis R and Owen S** and will be offered at the spring Plant Sale. -- Maureen C

Iris Bed

Our Iris bed bloomed beyond our wildest imaginations this year, with a variety of Iris from early May to the end of June and into July displaying a rainbow of colour. When we thought they were finished for the season several of the re-blooming varieties thrilled us with more beauty.

The additional plantings of grasses, lavender, and Autumn Joy Sedums have flourished, in spite of a loss

of a few plants because of theft.

Thanks to our dedicated volunteers, **Cobe G, Virginia M Steve and Doreen Z and Sheila P** who managed to keep the weeds well controlled. Big thanks to **Don F** who edged.

If anyone has an hour once per week you are welcome to join us on Wednesday, mornings between 0900 and 1200. It will be fun and you

will be contributing to beautifying our city.

It has been gratifying to see the results of all of last summer's hard work and we look forward to celebrating our 140th anniversary next summer with the introduction of a new Iris cultivar called "Believe in tomorrow". We hope you will come to the celebration June the 9th, 2018
.....Marg O Reilly

Churchill Circle Quadrant 1

Churchill Circle Q1 (SE corner) continued to garner praise this year. Cared for by Louise S and Terrie W, this garden sports herbs as well as perennials. The show stopper this year was an ornamental cabbage which over-wintered and continued to grow to gigantic proportions, with **TEN** heads! Not to mention the massive Cardoons!for

which seeds will be available at Seedy Sunday.

Our efforts to provide the neighbourhood with three seasons of colour was much appreciated by the people who walked through and drove by while we were working; they left us with thanks and words of support for our efforts.
Louise Spandler

Volunteers: Always welcome, please spare a few hours over the year ahead. We start in the Spring with general cleanup and weeding, and then continue with tidying and watering throughout the season. The conversation with passers-by is certainly an added bonus!

Garden Tour Report July 2 2017 10 - 4

Blessed with a beautiful sunny day, we had record turnout.

Tickets: Twenty two Advance tickets for \$10.00 were sold at the May meeting. Advance sales of 175 tickets took place at the Sebringville Garden Centre, Cozyn's Garden Gallery, Flowers on York and Tom's Eldon Landscaping. The main ticket sales took place at City Hall on the day of the tour - 200 tickets- with 25 tickets sold at the gardens, for a grand total of 412 tickets. See Treasurer's Report for income and expenses.

The home of **Andrew T & Rebecca L** served as our refreshment garden. There we had a chair on display donated by CRPlastics for which we had a draw. As well, each home had a specific perennial marked with a flag that people on the tour were

asked to identify and then place their entry in the perennial challenge draw. A planter donated by the Sebringville Garden Centre was the prize.

The Horticultural Society owes a great deal of gratitude to the home owners who open their homes and gardens for this event each year. All gardens were very well received and thus made our tour a success.

Thanks also to the members who contributed cookies for the refreshment garden as well as the many members who worked in each garden as guides and checking tickets.

We were very appreciative of the Master Gardeners who, not only assisted with the choosing the perennials for the challenge, but also

worked at the homes helping visitors identify and understand the various species of plants.

Thanks to eight local business sponsors: **Bosco Pool & Spa, C.R.P. Plastic Products, D.P.S. Printing, Flowers on York, Franklin E. Hinz Financial Services, Greenbelt F.A.R.M, Home Hardware Building Centre, Louise Spandler Visual Artist, Tim's Tree Care, Tom's Eldon Landscaping, Tri-County Brick Company.**

Finally, please commend the committee members who have worked diligently for several years now - **Sharon M, Shelly M, Louise S, Felicity S, Ron N, Leslye G Stella F and Larke T.** Join us next year on July 1 2018. Respectfully,
Marg O, Chair

Newsletter Editor Report

The SDHS newsletter, the gardener, was published three times in 2017: winter, spring, and fall. Over 200 email addresses and about a dozen mail recipients get the newsletter. For the first time, the email and mail issues were not necessarily the same.

In the past, the most efficient way to produce a paper version of the newsletter was to have a multiple of 4 pages of content, and emails followed this practise. But this is not a limitation with email versions and this year they were produced to accommodate whatever content was available. These versions were then appropriately shortened for print.

The newsletter has been focusing content on the tag line "About us, for us, by us". We want the newsletter to contain information relevant to Stratford and District gardeners and not what can be found on the Internet.

There was also a focus on "business operations" with articles about such things as funding and revenue. There were also several articles and pictures contributed by Master Gardeners.

Producing our own content has the ancillary benefit of not violating any copyright laws. There were, however, a few pictures used under the "Creative Commons" system.

Also for the first time, many recent issues of the newsletter were made available on the Society's new website, GardenStratford.org. In future the most recent issue will appear there concurrently with email distribution.

Although there were really good articles and pictures, the pool of contributors was relatively small. If the newsletter is to remain viable, more members need to contribute.

Suggestions: send pictures of your garden, a favorite plant, items to swap, sell or give away etc.

Michael Murray

Churchill Circle and More

Quadrant 2 (SW corner) was ably cared for by **Felicity S, Lorraine K & Jinny M.**

The plan included annuals for continuous colour. Next year look for new perennials to be added to the bed.

Quadrant 3 (NE corner)

Don F and team planned the stunning red and yellow theme. He also edged all the Circle and the iris bed.

Quadrant 4 (NW corner).

Ron N, Nancy B and **Mike M.** shared the workload here. Nancy says, "It's fun! It's not a lot of work, but just fun." about their dedication to this garden.

Bonnie Richardson's

memorial garden +

Queensland Garden.

Darlene I, Bruce W, Henry M and crew with **Owen S**

faithfully maintained the beds, kept the plants thriving and enjoyed the honks of passersby who were grateful for the beauty.

The Pergola:

Henry M and **Owen S**

maintain this lovely riverfront garden, planted in 2010. The grasses were split this year. Recent additions are lighting, mulch and pavers lifted from the Oxford St. construction.

And still moreBus Trip

Bus Trip

Thirty five members took in Huron Perth Garden Trail, visiting 4 private gardens in Auburn and Blythe as well as Canada Banana and Sunset Springs Garden Center.

All enjoyed a full day of lovely plants, learned about **planting cotton underwear** and the interesting facts about growing bananas in Canada. Nancy Lupton

Job Descriptions

At the Jan. 9, 2017 SDHS Board meeting, a committee of three (DR, MC, MM) was struck to continue Maureen's work developing "job descriptions" for various SDHS functions and "terms of references" for committees. Since then we met several times and exchanged innumerable emails in pursuit of developing short documents that describe 30+ SDHS positions and committees. We presented different descriptions to the Board at subsequent meetings to get feedback and to Board members informed.

Our goal was to develop documents that describe in broad terms the goal of the job or committee and its main objectives and activities. We attempted to **not** make this a *detailed* "to do" list of activities and tasks. Although we now have many job descriptions, we did not attempt to write one for every single job in the Society. What

we have included are "mandatory" positions, such as President, and major activities, such as Public Gardens and Garden Tours. There are also some new positions, such as Photographer and Database Manager that we feel that the Society should have. Exclusion from the list is not a judgement about the importance of an activity, but rather a statement that the Society and in particular the Board should expect to have these positions filled.

When we had detailed information about the job or committee's activities, we appended it to the job description as a "how to" document. This attachment is not intended as a prescribed set of activities, but as starting point for a new person taking on the position or useful information that might not be available elsewhere. We did not attempt "how to" documents

for new positions.

Both job descriptions and the "how to" documents are not final, set-in-stone documents. The job descriptions will need to be revisited and reworked over time, especially as they are used for various purposes, such as job recruitment.

The "how to" documents should become working documents maintained by job incumbents as a means of both documenting what is done but more importantly as a reference for new people coming into the job.

The job descriptions and "how to" documents are available online at GardenStratford.org, and directly to SDHS members electronically or in printed form when requested.

Michael Murray, Maureen Cocksedge, Doug Reberg
Oct. 31, 2017

And still more

Programme

Garden Chats have been a tremendous addition to our meetings. Dan Cooper, our speaker in April, was impressed with the Garden Chat "xeriscaping" which complimented his talk on "Gardening from a Hammock."

Also in April, we hosted extra guests from local horticultural Societies. There were many (too many?) door prizes to defray some of the evening's costs.

The move to Festival Inn ensued because we had outgrown the facility at Spruce Lodge, where members at the popular garden Chats were crowded in like sardines!

Bernice Barratt

Exhibit and Floral Design Report

The mini flower show in September was aptly titled "Oh Canada". Six exhibitors- two new- presented quality designs. There were 8 designs and 25 horticultural entries, making a total of 33 exhibits.

Awards:

Moss Green Trophy - **Henry McVey**, Crown of Thorns Lingard Trophy, President's Choice in Design - **Henry McV**
Judge's Choice in design - **Linda Murray**

Thank you to the Committee - Linda and Susan...there is talk of a Basic Design course next spring - Stay tuned

Annual Flower Beds Report

Dutch Memorial

In celebration of Canada's 150th birthday, the colour scheme for all the annual beds was, of course, red and white. Red and white begonias and snapdragons lined the walk up to the Dutch memorial. The monument itself was surrounded by blue ageratum to represent the Dutch flag.

The round bed closest to the Lion's Pool contained flowers from gardens past: Love Lies Bleeding Amaranthus, white Nicotiana sylvestris, red Salvia and white Alyssum.

The rectangular beds closest to the Huron St bridge and the triangular bed in the traffic island continued this theme but added Cardoon to remind us that this is the present...including one volunteer Cardoon from the year before!

Yes, some snapdragons had traces of yellow than white, but still looked beautiful. We all know how sometimes plants do get mis-labelled!

Delamere and Mornington

This bed was a representation of the Canadian flag, created using red and white begonias. Height in the center came from Amaranthus. The wet weather and perhaps extra fertilizer caused the Amaranthus to topple with the excess heights achieved in the fall.

The city has informed us they will be taking back the two beds that are surrounded by traffic as a safety precaution; we will again plant annuals in the beds closest to the memorial itself, at least for our anniversary year.

Thank you to all those Volunteers who helped on planting days - always in late May - and thank you in advance to those who came forward to plan next year's annual garden schemes.

I trust you all enjoyed driving and walking past to enjoy our work.

Bernice Barratt

Did you know:

The photo for the Garden Tour posters and book marks was taken at Kew Garden UK.

The artwork for the front cover of the Garden Tour ticket was designed to reflect **Canada 150** with flowers and our **Stratford Swan** symbol.

This will be modified to include our organization symbol - the iris - for our 140th.

See these and other member photos on our website...and, please, upload yours!

Louise Spandler

2017 Bursary

The \$500 bursary was awarded to **Arly Mitchell**, St Mary's high school, a student going on to University of Guelph.

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2017 Directors
Bernice Barratt
Maureen Cocksedge
Susan Kurtz
Michael Murray
Marg O Reilly
Dennis Rawe
Doug Reberg
Mike Matthews

Outgoing:
Elizabeth Ainslie
Glen Querenguesser
Jinny MacDonald
Louise Spandler

Incoming
2018 Directors to be
inducted at AGM:
Alice Maitland
Karen Van Baren
Sheila Phillips

**Get involved: New Board
members and Volunteers
are always welcome**

We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.gardenstratford.org

140th Anniversary - the Year Ahead

**Projects and Activities
to celebrate 140th:**

Churchill Circle Renovation

Dutch Memorial Upgrade
pathway pavers - sponsor,
Touch of Dutch

J Grayson Home - first
president of SDHS - **Plaque**

Garden Festival: 1878
Garden Design - March

140 Recommended Plants
Members are asked to
nominate (and donate if
possible) their favorite plant.
These will be offered at the
May Plant Sale.

**Dedication of the Reverend
Corcoran Memorial Iris Bed**
and **Believe in Tomorrow**
Iris - June during
GardenOntario Week

Stratford Art Gallery:
Exhibition of Botanical Prints

Parade Float: July 1

Garden Tour: Celebrate the
history and design of public
beds as well as private
gardens. July 1

Online Guide to Stratford
Gardens:
www.stratfordgardens.com:

and

New Society Website:
www.gardenstratford.org

Donation of 140 trees,
shrubs and edible plants to
the Local "Edible Forest"

Our Volunteer Organization 2017

**3200+ volunteer
hours**

220 + members

12 Board Members -
more always welcome

12 discount merchants

8 Garden Tour Sponsors

8 General Meetings, last
Mondays at Festival Inn
Ontario St. STRATFORD

6-8 Garden Chats

1 Flower Show

1 Bus Trip

2 Workshops

1 Plant Sale

1 Garden Tour

3 Public Displays

30+ Volunteer Jobs

