

## MILL BAY GARDEN CLUB NEWSLETTER



**MARCH 2012**

**WEB SITE [www. millbaygardenclub.com](http://www.millbaygardenclub.com)**

### **A GREAT BIG THANK YOU TO CLUB MEMBERS**

**A great big thank you goes out to those members who helped with the Tyler's work party. It was a small but energetic group consisting of Cliff Stainsby, Heather Jenkins, Nick Jenkins and Mary Vandenberg.**

**Also a great big thank you to those members who represented the Mill Bay Garden Club at the Cobble Hill Seedy Saturday. Mary Gale, Marion Clapham, Cliff Stainsby, Mary-Ellen Deuling, Dee Evans, Carmen Stanek, and Janice Rose. As well Heather Jenkins and Monika Morgan prepared the children's pots for handout during Seedy Saturday.**

### **MARCH MEETING**

**The March meeting of the Mill Bay Garden Club will take place on Tuesday, March 27 at 7 pm at the Mill Bay Community Centre – 1001 Mill Bay/Shawnigan Lake Road.**

The doors will open at 6:30pm to provide you with the opportunity to check out the Club library and plant sale table, buy your raffle tickets, put your exhibits on the brag table and generally socialize. This is a great little garden club that is very social so it is a wonderful place to meet new friends and catch up with old friends. Remember, if you need a ride either phone Ajay (250-743-6551) or Elaine (250-743-0965) who will try to make arrangements to get you to the meeting. **Please remember your mug.**

The information portion of the March meeting will be a question and answer session. Master Gardener members Barb Kohlman, Pip Woodcock and Elaine Scott will answer your questions on the many duties that need to be undertaken in the garden at this time of the year. Feel free to be far ranging with your questions.

## **MARCH'S BRAG TABLE**

**The theme for our March 27<sup>th</sup> meeting's Brag Table is "Spring Forward"**

The plant and flower identification and commentary will be provided this month by Ali Morris as Barb Kohlman will be one of the Master Gardener's conducting the main information session for the meeting. 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 without having 150 club members trying to find parking outside your house. The bonus is a prize awarded randomly to one of the monthly participants in this program. If you've never participated, give it a fling, be it flower, vegetable or fungus.

### **Note from the Interim Editor**

*Elaine Scott*

Hi everyone. Dee has a new job and schedule and, hence, is unable to carry on with the duties of Garden Club Newsletter Editor. I have agreed to be the interim editor until our AGM in June and Lorraine Little has agreed to assist me. We are both past Editors of the Newsletter. There is absolutely no way that I can produce a newsletter with the wonderful layout developed by Dee. She did a great job that cannot be repeated. I would, therefore, ask that you bear with me until June and accept the newsletter produced using the old fashioned Microsoft Word format. Thanks Dee for your hard work in "jazzing" us up – you have shown us how modern we really can be.

### **President's Report**

*Ajay Oppelar*

Wild and unstable weather has been blowing through our region these past few days. The optimism I expressed in my last report has remain unchanged however, and even through flurries of snow, damaging winds and occasional frost, I feel spring is in the air.

We have a change to report on the Executive. Dee Evans has chosen a new career path that has added many extra hours to her work schedule and she will be unable to continue with her current heavy load of volunteer activities. Dee has decided to step down from her MBGC duties and devote that time to the requirements of her new position. We all thank Dee for the great job she has done with the newsletter and hope to see her continued presence at general meetings in the future.

As our constitution allows for the appointing of Executive Committee seats should they become vacant outside of normal voting at the AGM, I have appointed Elaine Scott as Interim Newsletter Editor, and former Newsletter Editor Loraine Little has also agreed to help out as needed. They will serve together until June, when a Newsletter Editor will be elected by the membership at our AGM. Many thanks to Elaine and Loraine from the entire club. Elaine already added her spirited presence to the Executive meeting last night and we shared many laughs.

We had a terrific presence as usual at Seedy Saturday and signed up 8 new members by the end of day. Potting kits were handed out for kids interested in participating in the new kid portion of our Flower and Garden Show. Thanks to the Heather Jenkins and Dee Evans for coordinating this, and roughly 60 kits have gone out to local children to grow “Bright Lights” Swiss Chard from seed to enter in the show.

The next Flower and Garden Show Committee meeting is Monday March 19, 7:00 p.m. at the home of Heather Gibbins. Come see what we’re doing and get involved. Thank you to Cori-Lee Fisher who has generously offered to act as Show Secretary as well as the Indoor Show Chair.

Last month I reported that we would have name badges available for those members who have not ordered one of the official name badges (green, with the club logo). Beginning at this month’s meeting, if you have not ordered a name badge or have forgotten yours at home, please check in at the first table as you enter the hall. Mary Gale will have blank name badges for you to print your name on. At the end of the meeting, please return them to Mary, and we will store them until their next use at future meetings. If you would like to order one of the green club name badges, you may do so at the same table through our Treasurer Gale McIntyre.

Next season, the Executive will have several vacancies to fill. Cliff will be seating a Nominating Committee that will be charged with finding a Newsletter Editor and a Membership Chair. We will change the duties that go along with the Membership Chair position to include controlling the master list of all current members and taking in all renewals. Heather Gibbins will continue on as Assistant Membership Chair and will sign up new members.

The position of Newsletter Editor requires that you have a strong knowledge of desktop publishing and are able to set and meet deadlines. The Membership Chair position requires some advanced knowledge of using spreadsheets. Both positions are required to attend some very fun and lively monthly Executive meetings the second Tuesday of each month at my house and General meetings the fourth Tuesday of each month. If you are interested in either of these great opportunities to become involved in the community, please talk to Cliff.

Lastly, we still need several members to step forward to help plan a bus tour with the Cowichan Valley Garden Club. Should these positions not be filled soon, the time for planning will have passed and again we will not be able to proceed with a tour. We should then look at permanently retiring the once very popular program if it is no longer viable. If you have the time to help us continue this tradition, please contact me.

**Vice President's Report**  
***Cliff Stainsby***

Following upon an excellent presentation in February by Dr. Bill Herring, to whom we owe many thanks for his insights on veggie gardening, we have in March a panel of Master Gardeners organized by former President Barb Kohlman. The panel will talk briefly about preparing ornamental gardens for the season and then respond to questions.

The Mill Bay Garden Club and the Cowichan Valley Garden Club each year coordinate in identifying gardens that our members can visit on identified days during the late spring and summer. If you have a garden that you are willing to have members visit please contact me at [cliffas@shaw.ca](mailto:cliffas@shaw.ca). It is not expected that these gardens will be immaculately cleaned up or extravagant or specially designed. Developed or developing and ornamental or vegetable gardens are all of interest.

**April 2012 Gardening Tips**  
***Barb Kohlman, Past President***

If you haven't cut down your warm season grasses, better do it soon before new growth has developed too far.

Plant bare root trees and shrubs as soon as ground can be worked. Be careful with this, as the ground at this time ( March 15<sup>th</sup>) is still too wet.

Cut down group C Clematis to about 12". These are the late blooming clematis that bloom on new wood.

Dead-head early blooming bulbs as they finish flowering to prevent seed set, but let their leaves die down naturally to feed the bulbs for next year's show.

Sow seeds of sweet peas and other hardy annuals such as calendulas as weather permits.

Divide and transplant (or pot up for the Flower and Garden Show plant sale) summer and fall bloomers.

Take cuttings of over-wintered Pelargoniums (tender geraniums) and Fuchsias, and pot them up to encourage rooting. Pot them on to their summer locations when well-rooted.

**Kitchen Duties**  
***Diane Regan, Kitchen***

**1 Litre of 2% milk:**

Marion Johnston.

**Kitchen Helpers.**

Sue Randolph,  
Wendy Mikalishen

**Cookies/Goodies**

Donna Kaiser, Penny Jones,  
Mary-Ellen Deuling.

**Set-up & Clean-up:**

Al Mikalishen  
Rosemary and Paul Devoe.

## Minutes of February Meeting

The February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2012 meeting of the Mill Bay Garden Club opened at 7:02  
January meeting minutes as posted in the newsletter were moved accepted by Ali Morris,  
seconded by Elaine Scott. Carried.

President's report: Discussed extra meeting to be held in November of each year.

**Motion: Bill Herring: From here on a full meeting will be held every November.**

**Seconded: Ruby Armour Carried.**

Reminder that there will be a work party at the Tyler garden Saturday March 3 from 1:00  
to 4:00 coordinated by Heather Jenkins. Mary Gale will send a card to Jack & Peggy  
saying goodbye.

President Ajay had a meeting with the Cowichan Valley Garden Club. We need two  
volunteers to coordinate a joint bus tour.

No Vice president report

Treasurer report. Gail McIntyre confirmed this is posted on the board

Moved accepted by Mary Gale. Seconded by Heather Gibbins.

Flower Show: Heather Gibbins

Two lists were passed around with sign-up sheets for volunteering for the show.

Heather thanked Dee for the new brochure

The committee is making good progress, still working on new vases. Mary has some to  
hand over donated by Marie Cook.

Cora-Lee Fisher has volunteered to do some minutes for garden show meetings.

Membership: Heather Gibbins reported no new members, one guest

Carmen Stanek introduced as new raffle coordinator

Plant Sales. Heather Jenkins reported still some plants and some free tools.

Library: no report

### Garden Club Plant Sale Committee

*Elaine Scott, Chair*

Your plant sale committee would like to remind you that the annual Mill Bay Garden  
Club Plant sale will take place during the Community Flower and Garden Show at the  
Cobble Hill Farmer's Institute Hall on June 16, 2012. We depend on **YOU** our garden  
club members to have a successful plant sale. As you continue to clean up your garden,  
please remember to pot up plants for the sale. We would kindly ask that you refrain from  
donating invasive plants and the Committee does have the prerogative to remove invasive  
plants from the sale. Last year we raised \$1,029 for the Club. This money goes a long  
way to assisting the club support worthwhile gardening related projects.

### Welcome to New Members

*Heather Gibbins, Membership*

The MBGC would like to wish a warm welcome to our newest members who joined the  
club during Seedy Saturday.

Pat Bennett

Cori McCaw

Linda Parker

Rosalie Power

Sandra Goth

Laura McKinnon

Albert Petersen

Sheila Wheelhouse

You will find this to be a friendly club. Please feel free to contact any members of the Executive should there be any questions that you would like to ask. You will find the contact information for all members of the Executive in this newsletter.

### **2012 Community Flower and Garden Show**

*Heather Gibbins*

The Flower and Garden Show Committee has held two successful meetings (Jan. & Feb.) The Committee is happy to announce that Cori-Lee Fisher has volunteered to be our Garden Show Secretary. However, our Vendor Chair, Dee Evans, has unfortunately had to resign her position due to her new job. Congratulations Dee, we wish you every success in your new position. I am pleased to announce that Mary-Ellen Deuling and Nick Jenkins have agreed to share responsibility for the Vendor Chair position. Thank you Mary-Ellen and Nick.

The next Garden Show meeting is on March 19th, at 7:00 p.m. at my home (2471 Arken Terrace). The Flower and Garden Show is your time to Shine! The Committee is a friendly bunch. We start our meetings with a 20 minute coffee/tea social. Then we get down to work. I find this committee to be co-operative, enthusiastic and fun. This is a great way to get involved in your club. To those of you who may be considering joining the Volunteers, please do. We are as successful as the number of volunteers who will help at our largest fund raiser, THE FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW!!

### **Library Report**

*Janice Rose, Librarian*

Come and check out the MBGC library collection this month. Three new books have been donated by Stephanie Walters including two on growing orchids and one all about water gardens. In addition we have purchased a new book entitled "The Complete Wit and Wisdom of Norman Todd". This delightful book has been published by the Victoria Rhododendron Society and is a must read for enthusiastic rhododendron gardeners.

### **Web Site Report**

*Elizabeth Coulter, Website Master.*

Don't forget that our web-site address is [www.millbaygardenclub.com](http://www.millbaygardenclub.com). I am always willing to consider information that you would like to place on the site. I try to keep it as up to date as possible so that it provides members with a useful communication tool and helps to advertise our club.

### **Pruning**

*Elaine Scott*

March seems like a very good time to discuss pruning. One of the main questions that we normally ask ourselves is when should I prune ornamental shrubs or trees? The general rule is that if it flowers before June 20<sup>th</sup>, prune it after flowering while if it flowers after June 20<sup>th</sup>, prune it in the early spring.

Pruning is normally undertaken in order to train a plant, maintain plant health, improve the quality of flowers, fruit, foliage or stems or restrict growth.

There are two general types of pruning cuts that one uses. The first is the **heading cut** where one cuts off part of a shoot or limb to increase the new shoots and stiffen the branches. Remember, though, that it is not a good idea to prune out the central leader which is the uppermost portion of a scaffold limb.

The second type of pruning cut is the **thinning cut** which is used to remove undesired wood at its point of origin from the parent stem, a lateral side branch, the “Y” of a branch junction or to cut the stem at ground level. This type of pruning is often used with shrubs as it results in a more open plant and maintains plants at a given height and width for years. It does not stimulate excessive new growth but prevents disease as it allows light and air to penetrate. Remember that the crotch angle should be about 45 to 70 degrees in order to prevent the branches from breaking off.

Two types of plants about which one always receives pruning questions are heathers and clematis. According to “Clematis for Everyone” by Raymond J. Evison, first of all determine if your clematis belongs to group 1, 2 or 3 (A, B or C).

For group 1 (your evergreen and early flowering species, Alpina and Macropetala types and your Montana types) cut to 30 cm the first year in the early spring to establish bushy growth at the base of the plant. The second year, immediately after flowering, cut to 1 metre to maintain the bushy growth. If the plant does not become bushy this can be repeated the third year. During subsequent years, remove only dead or weak stems immediately after flowering to maintain a strong plant. This action will mean that the flowering of your clematis is delayed one year but it will result in a more bushy plant.

For group 2 (the early large-flowered cultivars, the double and semi-double cultivars and the mid-season large-flowered cultivars) cut to 30 cm in the first year to establish bushy growth at the base of the plant. In the second year cut to one metre to maintain bushy growth. Also take out dead and weak growth. In subsequent years cut back to a pair of strong buds to maintain shape and remove any overcrowded or dead stems. Pruning time for this group is late winter or early spring.

Group 3 includes the later flowering large-flowered cultivars, the viticella types and the late-flowered species and cultivars. For this group again cut back to 30 cm in the first year in early spring to establish bushy growth at the base of the plant. In the second year in early spring reduce all stems to just above the base of the previous season’s stems, within 45 cm of soil level. During subsequent year reduce all stems in the early spring to within 75 cm of soil level and remove any weak stems completely.

As far as heathers are concerned, pruning keeps plants bushy, well shaped and improves flowering. However, pruning on a regular schedule is not always necessary for winter blooming varieties and low-growing summer blooming varieties (Erica’s). Upright summer-blooming varieties (Callunas) will become leggy and out of control if not pruned. They should be pruned back below the spent blooms before new growth starts – about mid-March in this climate. The second type of heather that one needs to prune is the Daboecia (Irish Heath). Prune off the dead buds in the early spring. New growth will not come on the old woody parts of heather (Callunas) but severely pruned heaths (Erica’s) will sprout in time. When pruning, a little mulch of peat and sand mixed can be tucked under the edge of each plant, well away from stem and crown. Do not smother.

## EXECUTIVE MEMBERS.

Ajay Oppelaar	President	743-6551	<a href="mailto:arkengardens@gmail.com">arkengardens@gmail.com</a>
Cliff Stainsby	Vice-president	743-7483	<a href="mailto:cliffas@shaw.ca">cliffas@shaw.ca</a>
Gale McIntyre	Treasurer	743-9342	<a href="mailto:zonagale@shaw.ca">zonagale@shaw.ca</a>
Arelene Dench	Secretary	743-5644	<a href="mailto:jaden2@shaw.ca">jaden2@shaw.ca</a>
Barb Kohlman	Past-president	743-4485	<a href="mailto:barbkohlman@shaw.ca">barbkohlman@shaw.ca</a>
Diane Regan	Kitchen	743-7314	<a href="mailto:di_regaran@hotmail.com">di_regaran@hotmail.com</a>
Mary Gale	Historian	743-9329	no email.
Heather Gibbins	Membership	743-0424	<a href="mailto:heathergibbins@yahoo.ca">heathergibbins@yahoo.ca</a>
Janice Rose	Library	743-5897	<a href="mailto:aretiredrose@gmail.com">aretiredrose@gmail.com</a>
Carmen Stanek	Raffle	929-6662	<a href="mailto:cstanek@shaw.ca">cstanek@shaw.ca</a>
Heather Jenkins	Plant Sales	733-2268	<a href="mailto:fishface1@gmail.com">fishface1@gmail.com</a>
Elizabeth Coulter	Website	743-2117	<a href="mailto:elizabethcoulter@shaw.ca">elizabethcoulter@shaw.ca</a>
Elaine Scott	Interim Editor	743-0965	<a href="mailto:TheScottRogers@aol.com">TheScottRogers@aol.com</a>

### GROW FOOD GARDENING CLASSES

Wed. March 28 Design Your Edible Garden

Wed. April 4 Healthy Soil Makes Healthy People

Wed. April 11 Planting Techniques

Wed. April 18 Growing Great Vegetables

Wed. April 25 Grow Food in Containers

Time: 6:30 – 8:00 pm Place: Sunflower Café, 149 Canada Ave. Duncan, BC

Cost: \$20.00 drop in or \$15.00 for past participants and Grow Food Magazine subscribers

For more info: [growfood@shaw.ca](mailto:growfood@shaw.ca) [www.growfoodnetwork.com](http://www.growfoodnetwork.com)

### JUNIOR MASTER GARDENER SUMMER CAMPS

*Elaine Scott*

Want a neat idea for your grandchild or child for a summer camp this year? Last year my then seven year old grandson attended the Junior Master Gardener Camp at the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific and absolutely loved it. The camp is every morning Monday to Friday. It will be offered twice this year – July 9-13 or August 13-17. The cost is \$100 per child and this includes all supplies. All they need to take is a snack each day. And guess what, my grandson wants to go again this year. Phone the HCP at 250-479-6162 for registration or for further information.



## VANCOUVER GARDEN TOUR

*May 2012*

The Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society has organised another exciting two-day tour of special gardens of the Vancouver area on May 11 and 12-peak blooming times for rhodos and many other plants in several impressive private and public gardens. Local Garden Club members and others will also be joining us. Features planned:

Deluxe highway coach transportation from downtown Duncan to Vancouver on Friday morning with a return to Duncan on Saturday evening.

A relaxed cruise over breakfast aboard the *Queen of Oak Bay* from Nanaimo to Horseshoe Bay terminal.

Visits to some spectacular private gardens in West and North Vancouver including lunch at the beautiful 3 acre Park and Tilford Gardens with 8 separate themed gardens. We'll also visit the impressive UBC botanical gardens and the Van Dusen Garden.

Overnight at the comfortable Delta Airport Hotel and a fun Friday evening in Richmond for a Chinese Hot Pot dinner experience.

A visit to several specialty nurseries -plant buying opportunities to fill up the bus!

Return to Duncan via Swartz Bay on BC Ferries *Spirit of Vancouver Island* featuring sumptuous Pacific Buffet dining and their decadent dessert bar.

The total cost including all meals except Friday breakfast on the ferry (2 lunches, 1 breakfast, 2 suppers), coffee breaks, garden entry fees, hotel, bus transportation, ferry fares, gratuities and taxes is \$320 per person (double occupancy). Single supplement is \$75 extra. Advance booking is now required to guarantee your seat on this great tour. This is your opportunity for a nice, well organised trip with fellow gardeners and rhodoholics and see some impressive gardens while enjoying a visit to the lower mainland and we do the driving! CVRS trips have a solid reputation for quality service, food and content.

*Departure will be from the Duncan Train station at 7 am on May 11 with a return by bus to the Duncan train station by 8 pm on May 12.* Participants should be in good physical condition but the sites are mostly well accessible.

To join the tour you must send a cheque for \$150 per person made out to Bill Dumont, 1753 Peerless Road, Cobble Hill, BC V0R 1L6 by March 20, 2012. Please provide an email address, street address, postal code and phone number and advise of any food allergies/requests. Balance will be payable by May 1, 2012. For further information please contact Bill TO CONFIRM at 250 743 9882 or [wedumont@hotmail.com](mailto:wedumont@hotmail.com). This tour will sell out quickly so don't delay in submitting your deposit. First come first served!!

### UPCOMING GARDENING ACTIVITIES OF INTEREST.

- **Saturday March 24. Duncan Seedy Saturday. 10am-3pm. Mercury Theatre, 331 Brae Rd., Duncan. Free.**

- **Saturday March 24. Abkahazi Open House.** Abkhazi Gardens, Victoria. For more information go to <http://blog.conservancy.bc.ca/2012/01/abkhazi-garden-open-house-2/>
- **Saturday March 24. Advanced Composting. 10am-noon. Composting Centre, Victoria. BC.**
- **Saturday March 31. Vancouver Island Heather Society Annual Spring Heather Sale. Cobble Hill Farmer's Institute Hall. 10:00 until noon or until sold out.** Starter kits consisting of 10 plants and a planting diagram, individual summer, fall and winter flowering heathers and heaths plus tree heaths will be on sale. The selection will include eight new introductions. For more information contact Elaine Scott at 250-743-0965 or [TheScottRogers@aol.com](mailto:TheScottRogers@aol.com).
- **Saturday April 28, 2012. Garden Club members Barb Kohlman, Sharon Martin, Ali Morris and Elaine Scott invite you to the annual Seeds for Malawi Plant Sale.** Elaine Scott's home at 2836 Oceanside Drive (sale at top of driveway) 9am – 2pm. A wide variety of healthy and interesting plants available. All proceeds used to help families dealing with AIDs in Malawi, Africa. The sale provides you with the opportunity to support a very good cause and obtain healthy and interesting plants at a reasonable cost. Cover available if wet. Contact Elaine Scott at 250-743-0965 for information or if you would like a plant list.
- **Upcoming Classes at the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific, 505 Quayle Road, Victoria. For registration phone 250-479-6162.**
  - **Build a Mason Bee Condo. Saturday March 31, 1-4PM.** No prior carpentry experience necessary. Gord Hutchings will ensure all attendees go home with a bee condo ready for the garden. HCP Members \$40, non-members \$55.
  - **Ethnobotany of Southern Vancouver Island.** Saturday April 14 1-4pm. Charles Knighton will introduce you to the ethnobotany of Southern Vancouver Island including the history of food gathering and related technologies. HCP members \$25, non-members \$35.
  - **Planting a Chef's Garden.** Saturday April 14, 9-11:30am. Lynda Dowling will teach you how to grow, harvest and use a wonderful selection of herbs and send you home with new recipes, a selection of six herbs and the confidence to use them. HCP members \$35, non-members \$49.
  - **Resilient Gardens for a Changing Coastal Climate.** Sunday April 29, 11am-1pm. Linda Gilkeson will teach you how to design adaptable fruit and vegetable gardens, how to help your plants through "weird weather" and what you need to know to become a resilient gardener in these challenging times. HCP members \$25, non-members \$35.
  - **Pollination, 101.** Sunday April 29, 2-4pm. Linda Gilkeson will review plant biology and the different types of flowers. Learn why some plants don't fruit, how to attract pollinators, how to hand pollinate and how to avoid cross-pollination to make sure the seed you save is "true" to the variety. HCP members \$25, non-members. \$35.