



MILL BAY GARDEN CLUB NEWSLETTER

Website: www.millbaygardenclub.com

Email: mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com

Next Meeting:

Date: **Tues, October 28, 2025**

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

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

Activities:

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

October Speaker

**Genevieve Singleton on
Qwu'utsun Sp'e'luq'um,
Cowichan Flowers**

See page 3 for details



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October Brag Table Theme:

Orange is the New Black!

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. If you've never participated, give it a fling, be it flower, vegetable or fungus!



A little ray of sunshine...

Club member and Flower and Garden Show Coordinator Janice Rose has stepped into the shoes filled for so many years by Mary Gale. Janice will continue sending cards to members experiencing illness or loss on behalf of the Mill Bay Garden Club, bringing a spot of sunshine into 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 Janice know and she will send a card on our behalf.



President's Message - October 2025

Richard Nelson

In celebration of the onset of cooler and damper weather many of us are busily tending to gardening tasks that mark the season. With the autumn colours forming a backdrop there is great weather between the showers to get going on cutting back overgrown vegetation, taking cuttings for propagating favourite perennials and safely stowing those more tender beauties into a frost-free snug. Some blooming stalwarts display a renewed vigour in the shoulder season – many Roses produce a fresh blush of bloom, the Dahlias take on deeper colour presenting the opportunity to arrange bright bouquets to bring cheer into the house against shortening days.

Once the late veggie harvest is complete with the squash, onions, and garlic cured and stowed in the cool room there is just enough warmth through the day to germinate a cover crop of fall rye or hairy vetch that will help nurture the soil ecology through to the spring. These weeks of early fall are prime time for getting next year's garlic in the ground with a bit of bone meal under each clove and a cozy blanket of straw or leaf mulch on top to protect the growing plants from both freezing cold and driving rain, oh the joys of a coastal winter. Speaking of rain there is good book in the Club Library on Rain Gardens in the Pacific Northwest which is both thorough and practical for

anyone keen to take on a serious project in climate change mitigation.

These shortening days lead some of us to reflect on gardens past and to imagine gardens future. The triple whammy of deep drought, high temperatures and severe water restrictions invokes thoughts of xeriscaping, rain water capture and mulch, mulch, mulch. Gardeners are naturally optimistic which is one major reason that they are so great to hang out with; there is usually a patch of blue among the dramatic clouds.

Even though we aren't yet through Hallowe'en it is time to be like the retailers and get prepared for Christmas. The Christmas Party and pot luck dinner is scheduled early this year – December 2 – so save the date for this reliably satisfying and uplifting event.

In Gardening,

Richard



Mill Bay Garden Club General Meeting

Agenda October 28, 2025

I. Call to Order: 7:00pm.

- a) Approval of the Agenda:
- b) Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting
- c) President's Message: Richard Nelson
 - Save the date: December 2, MBGC Christmas Party
- d) Executive & Committee reports:
- e) Questions for the Executive:
- f) Brag Table: Orange is the New Black!
- g) Garden related questions with our Master Gardeners:
- h) Award Ceremony

Break . . .

2. Presentation 8:00pm. **Genevieve Singleton, Qwu'utsun Sp'e'luq'um, Cowichan Flowers**

- h) Adjournment.



October's Speaker:

Genevieve Singleton: Qwu'utsun Sp'e'luq'um, Cowichan Flowers

Genevieve Singleton has been a keen nature lover since childhood. She is especially interested in ethnobotany and has worked with Quw'utsun elders and Nancy Turner for many years. She is a nature interpreter and biologist, sharing her love of nature throughout the Cowichan Valley and further afield for many years with children and adults. She has her own native plant garden and is keen to encourage gardeners to include native plants.

Executive Members

President

Richard Nelson

Vice President

Kathy Code

Treasurer

Gord Hamilton

Secretary

Carol Goodger-Hill

Past-President

Gill Keir

Committee Leads

Membership

Alicia Wonsiak

Flower & Garden Show

Janice Rose

Library

Katherine Miller

Kitchen

Judy Raimondo

Plant Sales

Carrie Nelson

Cont'd next page...

Committee Reports

Membership News

We are half-way there!

Great news! The current tally indicates that 50% of Club members have now renewed their membership for 2025/26. Thank you :)

A friendly reminder to the remaining 50% of members, please pay your annual membership fee of \$20.00 by sending an e-transfer to MBGCfees@gmail.com or in person (with cash or a cheque) at the next monthly meeting on October 28th - doors open at 6:15 pm. Please come early to avoid the rush.

Alicia Wonsiak
Membership Chair

Social Media News

Hello everyone,

I hope you're having a wonderful fall. It seems we are getting just the right amount of rain and sun to keep the flowers blooming.

Our Facebook page is developing, but very slowly and we need a lot more members to make it a success. If you still haven't joined us please do so, also invite your friends, they don't have to be a garden club member. Others are welcome to join and contribute to our page.

My vision for our club: Facebook is a lively exchange of ideas, questions, answers and of course lots of posts and pictures of your gardens and plants.

Click on the link below to join.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/g/179g2iN22r/>

I look forward to hearing from you,

Pat
Social Media

...from previous page

Committee Leads (cont'd)

Bursary

Ann Baty

Sunshine

Janice Rose

Brag Table

Barb Kohlman

Memorial Garden

Heather Jenkins

Raffle

Stephanie Taylor

Website Administrator

Gord Hamilton
www.Millbaygardenclub.com

Social Media

Pat Spezowka

Newsletter Editor

Dave Byrnes
mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com

Social Media

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

[https://
www.facebook.com/
share/g/179g2iN22r/](https://www.facebook.com/share/g/179g2iN22r/)

News and Committee Reports (continued)

Memorial Garden

Thank you to all those who turned up to help weed and clean up the Memorial Garden in October.

Fantastic job done in a very quick time!

Watch for further bulletins in case we need help in November!



Flower & Garden Show 2026

WANTED - PERENNIALS

The Flower and Garden Show plant group are asking you to consider us when you are doing your fall clean up and dividing plants.

Please pot up any spare plants and overwinter in a protected dry area with a leaf mulch covering or in a cold greenhouse.

Perennials to divide in the fall include but not limited to:

Asters, Astilbe, Black-eyed Susan, Bleeding heart, Coreopsis, Daylilies, Ferns, Garden Phlox, Hostas, Iris, Peonies, Salvia, Sedum, Shasta daisy and Yarrow.

Heather Jenkins

From the Kitchen

Just the usual reminder for folks to bring their own cup for coffee time, and a big thanks to all the volunteers who signed up to bring treats and help in the kitchen.

Judy



News and Committee Reports (continued)

From the Plant Sales Table

We are so fortunate to have avid propagators in our group! The benefits are evident at the general meetings and ultimately at the Mill Bay Community Flower and Garden Show. Thank you so much! Besides donations from members, this month we have received a generous donation of approx 60 plants from Glenda, representing the Vic Master Gardeners Association (VMGA). Again, thanks! What does not sell at the Oct meeting will be held until the Spring planting period or the Flower and Garden Show. Members are encouraged to donate healthy, labelled (if possible) plants to the meetings.

Available at this month's meeting:

From VMGA:

- Astilbe -pink
- Astrantia 'star of billion,' (Masterwort)
- Achillea millefolium 'Milly Rock' (pink yarrow)
- Beesia deltophylla ground cover, (evergreen heart shaped glossy leaves, dainty flowers)
- Ceanothus 'Victoria,' 3 from cuttings
- Cranesbill Geranium, 'cinereum,' pink, hardy, single pink, 20 inches tall
- Dendratherma 'Hillside Sheffield Pink'
- Eryngium variifolium (Sea Holly)
- Lychnis, (Rose Campion)
- Scabiosa, 'salmon rose,' (an annual that could be held over in a greenhouse)
- Salvia 'hot lips' 45 cm tall
- hippophae rhomoides dioecious, 'Sea Buckthorn' – edible berry bush
- Phygelius 'sensation,' (Cape fuschia, magenta)
- Thalictrum Flavum 'Elin,' (lavender meadow rue -8')
- Grapes, green: Vitis 'Interlaken'
- Stachys macrantha 'Rosea,' violet purple flowers
- Nassella tenuissima, (Mex feather grass, .5 – 1 metre tall)

3 x Streptocarpus, (Cape Primrose), a houseplant you can put outside in late spring.

4 x 3 gal bamboo plants will be outside the hall – pay at plant sale table.

Carrie Nelson



Gardening Tips for November 2025 by Barb Kohlman

I'm terrible about cleaning up in the garden in the fall; however, have come to learn that there are benefits to leaving some things alone all winter – especially flowers and perennials, as it helps to protect them from the cold as well as provide food and shelter for birds.



So, take this list of tasks as something you can do this month if there's a nice day, and if you'd like to get out in the garden.

I'm here to assure you it will all be there in the spring and nothing awful happens if everything isn't done.

Vegetable & Fruit Garden

- Cut raspberry canes that fruited and mulch all berries if haven't yet.
- Cover perennial vegetables like rhubarb, asparagus, and artichokes with composted manure and straw.
- Cover any fall/winter vegetables with cold frames, plastic tunnels, or row covers.
- Continue to harvest cool weather greens like kale, chard and turnip greens.
- Check potatoes, onions, carrots if they are in storage.
- Apply chicken manure to any dormant garden beds to produce a soil in spring full of nutrients when time to plant.

Flower gardens

- Lightly prune roses to protect from wind damage (save hard pruning for late winter/early spring).
- Pull the last weeds and mulch around perennials, if needed.
- There's still time to plant bulbs for spring blooms (tulips, daffodils, etc.) in most areas.
- Cut back chrysanthemums that have bloomed down to 4-6 inches.
- Plant trees and shrubs (great time to see the fall color of tree varieties) or divide and move perennials.
- Wrap tender plants in burlap, if needed.
- Bring in houseplants still outside or any tender plant to overwinter.
- Drain irrigation systems, unhook hoses and store.
- Rake and compost leaves – to use as a mulch around tender plants, run a mower over them a couple times.

Cheers,

Barb Kohlman

Awards, Rewards & Cupcakes - September General Meeting

Gillian Kier was honoured at our MBGC September meeting with the Lifetime Membership Award. Gill joined our club in 2013 and began volunteering in 2015 as a kitchen helper and with the Silent Auction at the Flower and Garden Show. Then she jumped right in with her boots on and became Vice President (2 years), President (2 years) and is currently serving as Past President. If that wasn't enough Gill also chaired the Flower and Garden Show during her time as President. Thank you so much for your leadership, commitment to our club and the hundreds of hours of volunteer time Gill! We all appreciate it very much.

Gord Hamilton was honoured with the Lifetime membership award at our September meeting. For over a decade Gord, has served as club Treasurer. In addition he has been our Web Master keeping our club's events and information up to date and available for everyone. Two years ago Gord took on the additional responsibility of being treasurer for our Flower and Garden Show!

If it were not for Gord, our club would be like a boat without a rudder! Thank you for your hundreds of volunteer hours, guidance and leadership Gord!



Photo: Pat Spezowka



Photo: Jim Wisnia

Every year at our Flower and Garden Show the judges award points for each exhibit on show in the hall. In 2025 Barb Juurlink scored the highest number of

points to win the MBGC Flower and Garden Show Aggregate Trophy. Congratulations Barb!

Congratulations also go out to Heather Jenkins and Pat Spezowka for placing 2nd and 3rd.



Cupcakes by Pat Spezowka
Photo by Janice Rose

Mill Bay Garden Club General Meeting September 23, 2025

President Richard Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Norman Redcliffe moved approval of the Agenda; seconded by Dustin Carlson. Passed.

Norman Redcliffe moved acceptance of the Minutes of the General Meeting of May 27, 2025; seconded by Janice Rose. Passed.

President Richard Nelson welcomed the good crowd tonight and complimented the fabulous Brag table.

Vice President Kathy Code said tonight's speaker is Bryan Emory, President of the Victoria Orchid Society

Treasurer Gord Hamilton said the full treasurer's report is in the Newsletter. Lots of funds have been dispersed to local charities. He also manages the Web page but would give it up to any member who has an interest.

Membership Chair Alicia Wonsiak collected membership fees tonight . We have several new members. She introduced and welcomed Jason Whitfield, Pamela Wilson, Patricia Davies, Rhonda Hodgkin, Natalie Breckner, Autumn Marston and Ulli Meng. Please remember to pick up your membership cards tonight.

Sunshine; Janice Rose sent several cards to members who were ill over the summer.

Memorial Garden: Heather announced that the next work party will be October 4 at 10 AM.

Flower and Garden Show This will be Janice's last report until next January. At the show in May Liz Lindquist won the People's Choice award for her creation "Made in Canada". Janice presented the Aggregate trophy to Barb Juurlink who received the most points for her entries during the Show.

Social Media: Pat's report is in the Newsletter. She has changed the Facebook page. It is now up and running. Please check it out at Mill Bay Garden Club Group on Facebook.

Library. Katherine Miller will be away for the next few months. Nancy Bonner is taking over the library. She reported that the books are arranged by category, Please sign books out, and when you return them next month remember to cross your name off. Nancy recommended a number of books which included:

Sun, soil and seed by Dan Rubin. Boulder, 2023

A busy person's guide to the 20 minute garden by Gill Page. Abbeydale Press, 2000

Gardening in small spaces by Peter McHoy. Kelly, 1999.

Valley Naturalist-- a bi-monthly publication which will be attached to our Newsletter in the future.

Raffle: Stephanie had a helper tonight Charlene Caumanns. There are lots of good prizes so be sure to buy your tickets at break.

Bursary: Two deserving high school students won our \$750.00 scholarships. From Frances Kelsey, Paige Elliott will be studying science at Camosun College. She plans in future to go to the University of Victoria to specialize in mycology research. Ian Letson from Quw'utsun Secondary had planned to study Horticulture and Landscaping at Vancouver Island University but the program was canceled. We are holding the scholarship for him while he searches for another program.

Plant Sale : Carrie has a lot of plants and bulbs for sale tonight. There are also some quince fruit.

Brag Table: Dustin Carlson and Bryan Emory took turns describing the entries tonight. Bryan brought a cork log in which were embedded a number of plants. He took a prize for it at the fall fair. He also brought an Angel Wing hybrid begonia with beautiful hanging pink flowers. Dustin brought a number of squashes and a small orchid in a pot. There were also colourful dahlias in a vase and several orchids from Bryan.

Kitchen: Judy passed around a sign up sheet for goodies for November and January.

Garden related questions: Why are the quince on the tree beginning to split? They are ready to pick.

Award Ceremony: Long Service Member Awards were presented tonight to two deserving members. Gord Hamilton has been treasurer for many years and has also taken care of the Web site. He has also been treasurer for the Flower and Garden Show. Gillian Keir has been Vice President, President and Past President and has chaired the Flower and Garden Show. Both have been members for many years. Their valuable work is much appreciated by the club. They received Life Member Name Tags.

The meeting broke for refreshment at 7:40 PM and reconvened at 8:03.

The prizes from the raffle table tonight were a watering can, a packet of spring bulbs and an orchid in a pot.

Kathy Code introduced tonight's speaker, Bryan Emory, President of the Victoria Orchid Society. He brought along an tray of orchids for sale. He grows orchids from the highlands of South America. He prefers orchids of bright colours and small size. Bryan has been growing orchids since he was 10 years old. He explained that there are 650 to 750 genera in orchids and at least 30,000 species. Orchids have been hybridized for a very long time and they usually have tiny flowers. There are 23 species on Vancouver Island. Bryan showed photographs and described the properties of the various types of orchids and gave us hints on how to care for them.

Gwen Redcliffe moved adjournment at 9:05 PM.