



MILL BAY GARDEN CLUB NEWSLETTER

Website: www.millbaygardenclub.com

Email: mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com

Next Meeting:

Date: **Tues, September 22, 2026**

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!



WELCOME, AND WELCOME BACK!

Welcome one and all to the first meeting and the opening of the Mill Bay Garden Club's 42nd season!

September Speaker

Sean Rustemeyer:

Care of Garden Tools

See page 3 for details



September Brag Table Theme:

Sumptuous September

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...

MBGC Social Secretary 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. 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.



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President's Message - September 2026

Kathy Code

So here we are again in September, ready to gather again for our first meeting of the year. I hope the summer has been one of adventure and bounty for all of you, a chance to revel in the fullness of the natural world. I know I have welcomed the woosh of raven wings, the cheeky chatter of the Stellar Jay, the hilarious bobbing of the rabbit's white tail as it flees for shelter in the bushes and the silent slither of the army of snakes as they hunt for pesky prey in my gardens. I feel this common bond that we are all in the service of Mother Nature.

I often find myself holding a seed in my hand in continual wonderment of the information contained in that little kernel. It holds the pattern for life, for growth, for leaves, for flowers, for fruit, for the distinct characteristics that distinguish it from every other type of seed. Equipped with that pre-programming, that seed then grows through the spring and summer, now resulting in the often-explosive growth we see before us. As we harvest all that bounty, we can pause to reflect on the rhythms of the seasons that got us to this point of beauty and deliciousness.

I have been a member of the Mill Bay Garden Club since I moved to Cobble Hill in 2015. I knew even before I made the

move from Victoria that I wanted to retire to a rural property where I could install an orchard, large veggie and berry gardens and a greenhouse. The logical source of knowledge was the MBGC and beginning with that first meeting, I have been in awe of the depth of knowledge and generosity of our members. I could have asked for no better or more fun organization to motivate and inspire me in my gardening practice.

Now I find myself in the position of president and I can only hope I can do the job justice. I am grateful for past president Richard Nelson's mentorship and the support of an experienced and hard-working executive. Thank you all for making me feel welcome.

I am excited this year to offer a new project to celebrate our club and all the good work we do. The MBGC Book proposes to collect stories, photos, recipes and tidbits of our combined knowledge and make it available to not only club members but the general public itself. I hope you will all want to make contributions that will spark curiosity and deeper interest from the community.

I look forward to working with all of you during the year. Cheers!

Kathy

Mill Bay Garden Club General Meeting Agenda September 2026

1. Call to Order: 7:00pm.
 - a) Approval of the Agenda
 - b) Approval of the minutes of the previous General Meeting
 - c) President's Message
2. Executive & Committee reports
3. Questions for the Executive
4. Brag Table: "Sumptuous September"
5. Garden related questions with our Master Gardeners
6. Break . . .
7. Presentation 8:00pm: Sean Rustemeyer, Head Gardener / Owner of Soil 'N Green Landscaping **Care and Sharpening of Garden Tools**
8. Adjournment.

September's Speaker (Tuesday, September 22):

Sean Rustemeyer: Sharpening Workshop

Sean Rustemeyer is the owner of Soil 'N Green Landscaping based in Nanaimo, B.C. His company uses ecological practices such as working with zero emission battery powered equipment, installing native plant gardens that promote biodiversity, and gardening without the use of synthetic pesticides. Sean is a graduate of Gaia College and recently completed the Master Pruner Program through PlantAmnesty in Seattle, Washington.

www.soilngreen.com

Sharpening Workshop:

Learn the basics for cleaning and sharpening your own tools. The workshop will focus on the techniques and products needed to care for pruning tools - secateurs, shears, loppers – and will also cover digging and weeding tools. Sean will present a slideshow followed by a live demonstration on a variety of tools. There will also be time for Q&A and to come up and check out the various sharpening supplies.

Executive Members

President

Kathy Code

Vice President

Sian Richards

Treasurer

Gord Hamilton

mbgcfes@gmail.com

Secretary

Carol Goodger-Hill

Past-President

Richard Nelson

Committee Leads

Membership

Emily Bendall

mbgcmembership@gmail.com

Flower & Garden Show

Angie Stanta

Library

Katherine Miller

Kitchen

Judy Raimondo

Plant Sales

Sally Emory

Cont'd next page...

News and Committee Reports

Mill Bay Garden Club Book Project!

Psssst! There's a secret the MBGC has kept hidden for far too long. Our members have a wealth of knowledge of the world of nature, how to create landscapes of beauty and bounty and much beyond that. Heck, some members know the Latin names of things, while most of us struggle with the English. Together, we all have much to offer, so it's time we share our very best, most curious, just plain funny and uplifting stories, photos, gardening tips, recipes and secrets to growing the wonderments of nature. Our AHA! moments of joy and celebration can help inspire others in our community. This is a book to which we can all contribute and could be made available in hard copy and online.

For now, we need volunteers to establish a committee to receive and collate our offerings, and develop the final product. Are you interested?

We promise fun times and much camaraderie in producing a book we can all be proud of.

Kathy

Searching for Speakers... can you help?

A message from VP Sian Richards:

I'm looking for speakers this year and would welcome any member who would like to speak. Maybe about some expertise that they have, as well as professional speakers. I'm also looking for the members who grows lots of Dahlias. They were for sale at the plant table one year. And I thought Dahlia growing would be a good topic.

...from previous page

Committee Leads (cont'd)

Bursary

Ann Baty

Social Secretary

Janice Rose

Brag Table

Barb Kohlman

Memorial Garden

Heather Jenkins

Raffle

Alex Spezowka

Website Administrator

VACANT

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)

Notes from the Library

Hello everyone and welcome back. I hope your book choices were useful, helpful and/or entertaining over the summer break. This summer Nancy Bonner and I did an inventory of the library. Obviously, we could not include the books that were checked out for the summer. When you return your books in September, please DO remember to cross them off in the sign-out book. Please DO NOT reshelve them and do not take them out again. Pile them on top of the bookcase so they can be identified and added to the inventory. Thank you for your help as we keep the collection current and organized.

Katherine Miller, MBGC Librarian

Membership News

Fall greetings from your new Membership Chair! What an incredible friendly, fun, and kind group you all are. The club ended last year with 145 members, 128 paid, 14 life time memberships, and 3 under-25 free memberships.

We had a lovely booth at the Cobble Hill Fair on August 22 this year, many thanks to Pat, Alex, Richard, Skip, Fran, and Bou for all your help in setting up, volunteering at the booth, and the take down. We had 97 entries for our raffle basket! Congrats to Patty Wiens for winning. I hope we see some new faces at our September meeting.

It is renewal time! The annual \$20 fee is due in September. I am sure there will be a big line at our meeting, so if you can, please e-transfer your fee in advance to mbgcfees@gmail.com with your name in the message/ notes box for clarity on our end. Then you only have to pick up your member card at the meeting! As always, cash/ cheque can be paid at the meeting for those who prefer it.

Emily Bendall, Membership Chair

Plant Sales

Please welcome Sally Richards Emory as the lead for plant sales at the general meetings. Donated plants, in clean pots and preferably labelled, can be dropped off after 6:30.

Fall is a great time to divide perennials so feel free to bring in your divisions to share! Thank you.

Carrie Nelson, Past Plant Table Chair

News and Committee Reports (continued)

Social Media News

Hello Fall Gardeners,

As you know from the information I've sent out to all of you, we've made a big change to the MBGC's Facebook account. We are now Mill Bay Garden Club Group. It's taken a bit of time and some \$\$\$ words but finally is up and running. Now that it's done we need members. Thank you to those who got right on it and joined already, but, to make this site informative and fun we need more members and lots of communication. Show off your beautiful flowers and vegetables or ask questions. If members can't answer them I will take them to the next general meeting to get answers from the pros. Share the site with friends who you know will be contributing members. As far as advertisers go we are accepting only local nurseries, greenhouses and other gardening related businesses.

Join from Facebook by searching for Mill Bay Garden Club Group or send me an email and I will send you an invite.

I look forward to seeing you on Facebook,

Pat Spezowka , Social Media Admin

Raffle Table

Hello everyone, I am now looking after the Raffle Table. Thanks to Stephanie for her years of taking care of the Raffle. Many thanks to members and non-members for their donations. Check out the prizes when you arrive and during the coffee break. Draws take place after the break.

Alex Spezowka

Memorial Garden Clean Up

Volunteers needed for the fall clean up

Saturday October 3rd

10.00 am

I hope you all had a wonderful summer and are eager to help with the fall clean up. The maintenance of the garden reduces our annual hall rental by \$500.

Many hands make light work. Bring your weeding and pruning tools. It's always fun. Get to know some of your fellow club members while you weed and chat.

Heather Jenkins

Gardening Tips for September 2026 by Barb Kohlman

Fall Cleanup Practices:

Clean up all debris under plants that have fungal disease tendencies, eg. Roses. This removes the spores, that winter over in the debris, from causing a problem next spring. Depends on how hot your composting gets whether you compost or destroy.



Allow leaves from deciduous trees to remain on your beds, where they fall!!!! They provide winter protection from cold and rain to your garden beds.

If you have a surplus of leaves: cover your veggie beds with them.

And any healthy (or somewhat healthy) debris that is still in your veggie beds – e.g. plants and roots that you have harvested the fruit from,

CHOP AND DROP: Chop up the debris (as in stems and leaves) and drop it right back onto the beds. This offers winter protection and a valuable source of nutrients that will break down over the winter and feed your soil microorganisms.

Don't leave soil exposed. Our winter rains can cause compaction and also cause valuable nutrients to be washed away.

FEED YOUR SOIL !!!!!!!

Cheers,

Barb Kohlman



Photos from this summer's AGM at the home of the Nelsons, by Ron Witherspoon

Mill Bay Garden Club General Meeting May 26, 2026

President Richard Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM in the Mill Bay Community Centre.

Norman Redcliffe moved adoption of the agenda; seconded by Fran Benton. Passed

Sally Emory moved adoption of the minutes of April 28, 2026; seconded by Georgie Finch. Passed.

President: The Flower and Garden Show is next week on June 5 and 6. The AGM is on June 23 at 1720 Baldy Mountain Road. There will be a motion to amend the bylaws. See the information in the Newsletter for the proposed changes. One change is to amend the numbers for a quorum down to 25 from 50. A few copies of the bylaws are available tonight. There will also be an election of new executive officers at the AGM and some spots still need candidates. Richard reminded us that April and May are good months for visiting gardens. Several have been opened already.

Vice President: Kathy said that tonight's speaker is Janice Currie who will speak on desert plants of the Atacama Desert in Chile.

Past President: Gill needs someone to volunteer to chair the Flower and Garden show next year. We need someone to look after the plant table for general meetings and we also need someone to take over the web from Gord Hamilton. See Gill at break to volunteer for these positions.

Treasurer: Gord said we have \$4000 in the General Account; \$3750 in the Bursary Account (this includes money for awards this year and one unclaimed award from last year); \$2500 in Savings; \$ 3800 in the Flower and Garden Show Account (we still need to pay the hall rental so that will come down); \$2300 in a term deposit. Gord also thanked all those who came to his open garden a few weeks ago.

The registration for the Cobble Hill Fair on August 22 has been submitted. We will need volunteers to man the table.

Flower and Garden Show: Janice thanked all those members who have volunteered to work at the show. Over 1000 plants have already been donated but more plants are welcome. We have over 16 vendors. The Silent Auction has over 80 donations and more are welcome. Janice urged people to contribute plants from their gardens for display at the show. Brochures for displaying plants are available here and at the show and there will be help at the show. Bring your flowers on June 5. If you bring a plant for the show you will not need to pay the entrance fee the next day. Many vehicles have also been volunteered.

Sunshine: Janice has continued to send cards to Gayle Volker. If any member is ill or in need of cheering up, let Janice know.

Memorial Garden: Heather thanked all those who helped with the garden this year. The garden is looking good. She will need help again in September.

Social Media: Pat has joined 6 community groups. She will post information about the show on those sites. She will also post information on individual vendors.

Library: Katherine reminded us that this is the last night to borrow books until September. If you check out a book tonight, bring it back in September. She showed us three new books for the library as follows:

- Bee Friendly Gardens by Kate Frey and Gretchen LeBruhn. 2016
- Home Grown Vegetables, Fruits and Herbs; a bountiful healthful garden for lean times by Jim Wilson. Creative Homeowner, 2009.
- Attracting birds and Butterflies by Barbara Ellis. Houghton Mifflin, 2019

Raffle: Remember to buy your tickets during the break. The grand prize tonight is a hummingbird feeder. There is also an African violet in a special container with a wick since it likes to be watered from the bottom.

Bursary: The recipients have been chosen and the announcement will be soon.

Plant Table: Tonight there are lots of plants - vegetables and flowers, dahlias and roses. If any plants are left at the end of the night, would those who brought them please take them home.

Kitchen: Judy said that she could use a helper for the AGM and she needs a few more names for goodies for September.

Brag Table: Fran Benton commented on the glorious display on the table tonight. There were vases of pink roses, an arrangement of rhododendron blooms on a log, a red peony, deep purple clematis, a gas plant, a vase of camas, red viburnum and lupin; a vase of scented azalea.

Question: What are we to do with all the bugs and slugs this year?

The meeting broke for refreshment at 7:40 and reconvened at 8:00.

Raffle: The prizes tonight were a 1000 piece puzzle, an African violet, a book on Perennials and the hummingbird feeder.

Kathy introduced tonight's speaker Janice Currie who spoke on the flowers in the Atacama Desert in Chile. Janice started her botanizing in New Zealand, then went to South Africa. She has been to South America many times. In 2022 she was on a botanizing tour from September 2 to October 8. The Atacama Desert is very dry, receiving sometimes less than 1/2 inch of rain per year. After the rain many species of cactus come into flower and flowering plants appear from the desolate ground. Janice showed us a lovely series of pictures of these plants taken over the week of her trip. The temperature in the fall is lovely, about 25 degrees C during the day and 18 degrees C at night.

Gord Hamilton moved adjournment at 9:02 PM.

Treasurer's Report

Included in this newsletter are the Income Statement and Balance Sheet for the year ending August 31, 2026. We ended the year with a Net Income of \$5087.25 which left us with a General Account balance of \$9,842.07. The Flower and Garden Show contributed \$1,404.71 after expenses while the our Plant Sales at the F&GS generated an additional \$4,200.80.

\$4,143.27 which will be used as seed money for next year's show.

You might notice that we do not have any donations recorded in the Income Statement.

there is not enough time to finalize the statements and approve the donation list by the Annual General Meeting so it was decided to move the approval of donations to the fall. At the th Executive meeting the board approved a list of proposed expenditures out of the excess cash in the General Account. At our General Meeting on September 22 you will be

Below are the list of donations as recommended by your executive:

\$1,600	Bursaries. With the \$2,000 already allocated, this will allow for 3 @ \$1,200
\$1,500	
\$1,000	CMS Food bank
\$500	Somenos House
\$500	Cowichan Hospice
\$500	Nourish Cowichan
\$500	

Total to be disbursed: \$6,100.

Gord Hamilton
Treasurer

MILL BAY GARDEN CLUB
INCOME STATEMENT
Year Ending August 31, 2026

INCOME

Membership Dues	2,615.00
Plant Sales	5,469.90
Raffle	184.97
Kitchen	291.95
Flower and Garden Show	5,245.11
Book Sales	121.35
Memorial Garden	500.00
Name Tags	30.00
Donations	11.00
Interest & Misc	109.80
TOTAL INCOME	14,579.08

EXPENSES

Rent	1,049.51
Speaker Presentations	1,250.00
Donations	0.00
Bursary	2,000.00
BCCGC Fees and Insurance	300.00
Flower and Garden Show	3,840.40
Equipment	
Library	310.50
Christmas Party	216.60
Annual General Meeting	150.00
Promotions	205.15
Name Tags / Engraving	81.22
Bank Charges	21.25
General	67.20
TOTAL EXPENSES	9,491.83

NET INCOME (LOSS)	5,087.25
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MILL BAY GARDEN CLUB
BALANCE SHEET
As at August 31, 2026

		<u>ASSETS</u>	
Current Assets	General Account	9,842.07	
	Bursary Fund	3,793.75	
	F&GS Account	4,143.27	
	Bank Accounts	17,779.09	
	Membership Float	50.00	
	Plant Sale Float	50.00	
	Raffle Float	25.00	
	Total Floats	125.00	
	Prepaid Expenses	0.00	
	Total Current Assets		17,904.09
Reserves	Term Deposit	1,066.24	
	F&GS Term Deposit	2,342.33	
	Total Reserves	3,408.57	3,408.57
	TOTAL ASSETS		21,312.66
		<u>LIABILITIES</u>	
Current Liabilities	Accounts Payable	295.00	
	Bursaries Payable	2,750.00	
	Total Current Liabilities	3,045.00	
	TOTAL LIABILITIES		3,045.00
		<u>EQUITY</u>	
	Club Members Equity	6,659.13	
	Retained Earnings - Beginning Balance	6,521.28	
	plus Net Income	5,087.25	
	Retained Earnings - Ending Balance	11,608.53	
	TOTAL EQUITY		18,267.66
		TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	21,312.66