



# MILL BAY GARDEN CLUB NEWSLETTER

Website: [www.millbaygardenclub.com](http://www.millbaygardenclub.com)

Email: [mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com)

## Next Meeting:

Date: **Tues, May 27, 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!**



## May Brag Table Theme:

### *Marvellous May Bouquets*

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

## May Speaker:

### **Bethany Couture on Permaculture for Edible Gardens**

*See page 3 for details*



### Inside...

- President's Message p 2
- This Month's Speaker p 3
- Executive/Committee Reports p 4-6
- Flower & Garden Show p 7-8
- Last Meeting's Minutes p 10-11

## A little ray of sunshine...

Club member and Flower and Garden show chair Janice Rose sends card on behalf of the Club to members experiencing illness or loss, 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: May 2025

Richard Nelson

Spring is such a time of transition. The days lengthen dramatically and we can garden from the wee hours of the morning right through to the late evening or as much as our backs will tolerate. Birds, insects and rabbits and squirrels are as active as the gardeners. Temperature transitions keep us on tenterhooks in Spring while we champ at the bit to direct sow those more tender annuals and set out the tender plants from the greenhouse. That extended daytime is certainly useful in order to deal with all the jobs the garden presents. Spring pruning and deadheading compete with mulching, planting and weeding – the weeds are transitioning too, from tiny two finger sprouts to hefty two handed, head high monsters. The No-Mow-May movement offers a welcome delay in pushing a machine over the green carpet of grass and although neighbours may look askance at the apparent slothfulness, the pollinators will reward our restraint. The reduced workload allows more time to replant those weakly germinating peas or carrots in the veggie garden.

The Mill Bay Garden Club is also in transition at this time of the year. The Flower and Garden Show is upon us and the anticipation is excruciating for

all the members who have spent so much time and energy planning and preparing for this momentous event. I have tremendous faith in the organizing abilities of the committee just as I have faith in the weather transitioning to summer-like conditions for the day, the 31st of May.

Our Annual General Meeting is a wonderful celebration of the year culminating with a feast and celebration of our shared pursuit of the joy of the garden. It will be summer by the AGM day and our transition continues with a change of some of the Executive and Committee leaders. Not all members are able to make it out to the AGM so I will take this opportunity to express heartfelt gratitude to everyone involved in Mill Bay Garden Club. To name each person who has contributed to our success would be to recreate the entire membership list because the level of involvement is so great. My duties as President have been made light thanks to the willingness of so many of you to step up and take on any task large or small to the benefit of our group. Thank you all for being Mill Bay Garden Club.

In Gardening,

*Richard*

## 27 May 2025, Mill Bay Garden Club Agenda

- 1) 7:00 p.m.: Call to Order
  - a) Approval of the agenda
  - b) Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting
  - c) President's Message – Richard Nelson
  - d) Executive Committee reports
    - F&G: Al Mikalishen
    - Nominations: Gill Keir
  - e) Questions for the Executive
  - f) Brag Table: Marvellous May Bouquets
  - g) Garden-related Questions with our Master Gardeners
    - Break -
- 2) 8:00 p.m. Speaker: **Bethany Couture on Permaculture**
  - h) Adjournment

## Executive Members

### President

Richard Nelson

### Vice President

Kathy Code

### Treasurer

Gord Hamilton

### Secretary

Carol Goodger-Hill

### Past-President

Gill Keir

## May's Speaker:

### Bethany Couture on Permaculture for the Food Garden

Bethany Couture is a sustainable horticulturist, permaculture practitioner, and educator from Victoria, BC. Her desire to find more sustainable ways to work with the land led her down the path of permaculture where she now holds a Permaculture Design Certificate and a Permaculture Teacher Certificate. She is the permaculture instructor at the Pacific Horticulture College and the lead steward of the public permaculture garden at the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific.

Through her business, Garden Alchemist, Bethany designs ecologically functional and beautiful landscapes rich in edible and native plants and offers consulting services to empower individuals and communities to integrate sustainable gardening practices into their landscapes. You can visit her website at [www.GardenAlchemist.ca](http://www.GardenAlchemist.ca)

Be introduced to how permaculture can help you transform your edible gardens to be lower maintenance and higher yield by learning to work with nature. This talk will share how to cultivate flourishing, food-yielding ecosystems through techniques like proper plant selection, companion planting, composting, soil management, water conservation, and more.

## Committee Leads

### Membership

Robin Reid

### Flower & Garden Show

Janice Rose

### Library

Katherine Miller

### Kitchen

Judy Raimondo

### Plant Sales

Carrie Nelson

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## 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](http://www.Millbaygardenclub.com)

**Social Media**  
Pat Spezowka  
[www.facebook.com/millbaygardenclub](http://www.facebook.com/millbaygardenclub)

**Newsletter Editor**  
Dave Byrnes  
[mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com)

## Committee Reports

### 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*

### Notes from the Library

Just a reminder that our regular May meeting is the last chance this year to sign out a book, as our June meeting is a potluck, offsite. So please return what you have at home and plan on signing out some good summer reading on May 27th.

*Katherine Miller*  
*Garden club librarian*

### Plant Sales - General Meeting

My neighbour & I trade special plants back and forth all the time and it's a good thing we do. Often one of us will exclaim, "I've lost my primula auricula "Argus," or "my treasured Mukdenia didn't like where I planted it." Sharing plants at the MBGC regular meetings is a great way to meet people & ask questions about unusual plants or veggie starts if you're new to gardening. If you'd like to ensure a plant lives on, bring it along to the meeting & donate it to the plant sales table. Your donations are always welcome.

*Carrie Nelson*

### Memorial Garden Clean Up

**Volunteers for the next Clean Up required!**

**Saturday June 14th 10:00am**

**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**

### Social Media

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

[www.facebook.com/millbaygardenclub](http://www.facebook.com/millbaygardenclub)

## Committee Reports (continued)

### Plant Table - Flower & Garden Show

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered to help. I have resent the job assignments so please check your email and verify your assignment.

Donations to the Silent Auction are also welcome; the donation form is included in this newsletter.

Wednesday May 28th, at noon, is the last chance to drop off plant donations at the Jenkinses, as we will be pricing and organizing them that afternoon. Thank you to all who have already made donations.....we have a wonderful selection for the plant sale.

*Katherine Miller*



### Executive Elections at June AGM

#### **Executive Committee positions still requiring nominations:**

**Membership:** This position requires you to keep the membership database up to date. You attend each general meeting, collect fees, and issue memberships.

**Kitchen:** This position ensures that there are refreshments for our breaks and passes around a sheet for volunteers to bring treats at each meeting.

**Raffle:** This position requires you to purchase or solicit from the membership, items for the club's raffles. There are funds available for the purchases.

**Webmaster:** This position updates our web site with the current newsletter, upcoming events, and directs emails from those who use our "contact us".

I will be at the general meeting on May 27<sup>th</sup>. Please contact me if you wish to forward a nomination or want more information.

Gill Keir, Past President

## Committee Reports (continued)

### Social Media Report

Hello from my new position as Social Media/Facebook Chief,

I have taken over the position a couple of weeks ago so am still getting acquainted. Enjoying it though. The MBGC Facebook is a Business page; managing it differs quite a bit from our personal pages.

My plan is to try and make our Facebook page more informative and interactive. This is where you all come in. I love to see your likes and hearts but would love to see you posting your garden questions and lots and lots of garden pictures. Garden questions are accepted but answers not guaranteed. Hopefully some of our many experienced gardeners will check in regularly to help. I will also bring questions to the general meeting if they are not answered online.

Our site has 859 followers at the moment so lets keep them entertained. What a great way to increase our membership.

These are a few rules we must follow:

As this is the place to share all Mill Bay Garden Club related activities. Please help make this a true community forum for all to enjoy. Being part of this group requires mutual trust. Authentic, expressive discussions make groups great, but kindness is required. We are all responsible for co-creating a space that is innovative, respectful, kind, and inspiring. Let's treat everyone with respect. Healthy debates are natural but negative or hurtful posts are not allowed and will be deleted by Admin.

Spam, sales and irrelevant links aren't allowed.

Please double check your posts for spelling and grammar before posting. Admin will not edit posts and Mr. Spellcheck would love to change your lovely red roses to red noses.

Looking forward to seeing you all on Facebook,

*Pat Spezowka*

### A Message from Cairnsmore Volunteers

Hello fellow gardeners!

We want to send out a big Thank You to all who supported our Cairnsmore/Hospice Annual plant sale last Saturday. Thanks to you we raised a record amount of over \$7500 which will cover the costs of soil, mulch, fertilizer, plants and tools for the coming year, allowing us to keep the gardens beautiful for the patients and staff.

We'd also like to thank the Mill Bay Plantaholics - Elaine Scott, Ali Morris, Barb Kohlman, Sharon Martin and Noreen Carver - for their generous donation of hundreds of the wonderful plants we were able to sell. Another thank you goes out to the Cowichan Valley Garden Club for also donating plants that were left over from their sale. This gave us a fabulous selection that we were able to offer to you!

We'll see you again next year and, in the meantime, happy gardening!

The Cairnsmore/Hospice Volunteer Gardeners

## Our Flower & Garden Show - the Essence of Spring

What better way to celebrate spring and gardening than joining friends, family and club members at our flagship annual event – the Mill Bay Flower & Garden Show March 31, 2025 (9 am to 2 pm).

As the days lengthen and temps slowly climb, every day delivers another delight. Spring is ushered in by yards abounding with dazzling rhodos, azaleas and lilacs. Spring bulbs give way to precocious perennials and the first fragrant waves of roses. You will see the best of all of these – from violet columbines and delphiniums, to fragrant sweet peas and elegant summer bulbs like irises and lilies, and an array of foliage plants like hostas.

Do you have a special favourite in your garden? Bring it to the Cobble Hill Hall the day before the show – between 1 pm and 6:50 pm – to enter it in the show. Experienced volunteers will be on hand to show you the ropes if you haven't entered before. The club provides vases for most classes – see the exhibiter brochure for details. Find it at [millbaygardenclub.com/show](http://millbaygardenclub.com/show).

For some members, the highlight of the Flower& Garden Show is definitely the Silent Auction. Goodies in past years have ranged from loads of mulch to oil paintings to handcrafted garden soil screeners. And the best part is pitting your wits against the competition to win those prized items!

Outdoors, explore the Garden Market, where you will find delightful garden plants and accoutrements, and our very own Mill Bay Plant Sale staffed by club members with the support of our master gardeners. The sale this year promises to be extra special, including unique specimens from the Plantaholics collection.

*Chris Mercer*

*Mill Bay Flower & Garden Show Committee*



## Mill Bay Garden Club's Flower & Garden Show - May 30th & 31st

The 2025 Flower & Garden Show (May 30th & 31st) is only one week away. Many of us are now looking to our gardens and our seedlings to assess what we hope to enter into the show. Please be sure to consult this year's brochure with its updated classes of flowers and vegetables we can enter.

The success of the show depends on our entries but also upon members volunteering to help. On Friday the 20th, we need help in setting up the hall and in supporting participants in entering their exhibits. On Saturday, we need helpers in many capacities during the show. In volunteering, you meet many club members in another context. It is a rewarding experience. We hope to hear from you if you have not yet volunteered.

If you are interested and available to volunteer, please call or e-mail Al Mikalishen.

The success of the show depends not only on the exhibits, but also on our volunteer participation.

*Al Mikalishen*

## 1st Duncan Rotary Garden Tour June 1st

The Rotary Club of Duncan is excited to host its first annual Garden Tour fundraiser on Sunday, June 1, 2025. In its previous format, this popular fundraiser has attracted hundreds of attendees who have enjoyed visiting some of the most spectacular gardens in the Cowichan Valley.

"We are honoured that six local garden owners have generously opened their gardens for the public tour this year," says Duncan Rotary President Karen Thorington. "From Rhodos to Roses and rare flowers and trees", the tour is a wonderful opportunity for the community to come together to appreciate the beauty of nature while raising funds for many local community projects to assist local not-for-profit organizations.

Tickets are \$25 each and come with a map of the garden locations. They are available for sale at the following outlets:

- **Duncan**- Buckerfield's Supply Store, Volume One Bookstore,
- **Mill Bay** – The Third Addition Gifts & Toys
- **Chemainus** – Valley Roots Farm Market Garden Centre, Sandpiper Gardens & Glass

The Rotary Club of Duncan would like to thank the following sponsors who generously donated funds to assist with the Duncan Garden Tour promotion: Capstone Group Royal Lepage, Country Grocer, and Dinter Nursery.

## Remembering Elaine Scott

When we remember Elaine perhaps strength would first come to mind.

Elaine gave others strong, positive thoughts, as she was knowledgeable on many things and sharing those knowledges to all when they could help.

She approached all endeavors with her whole heart for family, friends and fellow members of the many societies that she was involved in.

She was part of Master Gardeners for over 23 years and used that knowledge to start (with two people and a few hundred plants) to develop the Plantaholics group. She was a strong Heather lover and fully helped maintain their association. She worked on and organized the Mill Bay Garden Club annual plant sale for 17 years.

She was also a beautiful quilter and of course shared ideas and “stitches” there.

With presentations through climate monitoring, mentoring and networking Elaine's work benefited both individuals and the community.

We will truly miss her in so many ways.

*Barb Kohlman*

I remember Elaine as being welcoming and generous with her time, her knowledge and her plants. I am in awe of how deeply she was involved in the club and in gardening in general. Doing everything from Master Gardening, Plantaholics, presentations through climate monitoring, mentoring and networking Elaine's work benefited both individuals and the community. She leaves a tremendous legacy and I will miss her. It is so sad to see her leave us.

In gardening,

*Richard Nelson*





## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

7:00 pm, April 22, 2025

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

Norman Redcliffe moved adoption of the agenda; seconded by Janice Rose. Passed.

Carrie Nelson moved acceptance of the minutes of March 25, 2025; seconded by Katherine Miller. Passed.

**President's Report:** Pat Spezowka will take on the responsibilities of Social Media.

Monika Morgan announced that Cairnsmore Plant Sale will take place on Saturday May 10 at 9 AM. Spring fling will be at Sylvan United Church on May 3. There will be a plant sale and lots of other goodies. They donate their left over plants to us.

Past President Gill Keir can not be with us tonight but sent a note to say that most of the current executive of the club are willing to stand for their positions on the executive next year. This does not preclude any other club member from standing for a position on the executive. Janice Rose would like to have an assistant for her position as Chair of the Flower and Garden Show next year. Stephanie on the Raffle table would also like an assistant.

**Treasurer and Web:** Gord announced that the Web has been updated to include information on the Flower and Garden Show. Our bank account is in good shape.

Tonight he is also doing Membership and two new members have joined.

**Flower and Garden Show:** Janice said that it is 5 weeks until the show. Everyone should plan on entering something. The schedule for entering is available at each meeting.

Al Mikalishen is still looking for volunteers, specifically, folks to help with set-up on the 30th; someone to bring the bins from Katherine Miller's home to the hall (there are about 20 totes); assistants for the judges; helpers for outdoor set-up on Saturday; someone to be the final inspector for cleanup on Saturday and cash people for the Silent Auction. Once the list is finalized it will be sent to members so they can see what they have signed up for.

**Silent Auction:** Janice reminded everyone to bring something to the Silent Auction and also to come to the auction and bid. The show is fun. There are lots of vendors and also a strawberry tea. Jennie Campbell reminded us to fill out donation sheets for the items we donate. They are available at the meetings and will be emailed out to members.

**Plant Sale:** Katherine Miller said that donated plants should be dropped off before the show so they can be priced. Drop them at the Jenkins' home at 1232 Deloume Road in Mill Bay. She needs someone with a truck to bring the plants to the sale on Saturday morning.

Carrie Nelson has created a beautiful painting to illustrate how to display your plants at the show. The painting will be at the next meeting and also at the show.

Vases for your flowers are supplied. Nick will put posters and book marks on the front desk of this meeting so members can pick them up during the break and display them in the community.

**Sunshine:** Janice will send a card to anyone who needs a pick-me-up. If you wish to send a card to Elaine Scott you may give it to Barb Kohlman who will deliver it.

**Memorial Garden:** Heather thanked those who turned up for the last clean up day. The next one will be on May 10. She also thanked Barb who painted the memorial stones.

**Library:** Katherine showed us some new books which included the following:

- Water Gardens by Peter Stadilman. Barrons, 1992.
- Water Gardens how to design, plant and maintain by Jacqueline Heriteau and C.B. Thomas. Houghton Mifflin, 1996.
- Sun, Seed and Soil by Dan Rubin. Boulder Books, 2023
- The Garden Awakening by Mary Reynolds. Cambridge: Green Books, 2016

**Raffle:** Stephanie has a number of good prizes tonight including a small cypress from Bernie Dinter.

**Plant Table:** Tonight there are some strawberry plants, gladiolus bulbs for \$5 a bag

Kitchen: Judy is passing a list around She needs 3 volunteers for May.

Richard announced that the AGM will be on June 24. Randy Thompson and Gayle Volker have once again offered their garden for our meeting.

**Brag Table:** Tonight we had a beautiful display of various types of rhododendron blooms in a log, a 20 year old Sapporo bonsai, a vase of tulips, camellia, magnolia, fern and blue bells, a beautiful wooden basket with a sprays of tree heather, spiraea and camellias and 2 glass vases with displays of flowering quince, bridal wreath spiraea, blue bells and clematis.

We broke for refreshment at 7:45 and reconvened at 8:02.

The raffle was held and the lucky winners took home, a chocolate bunny, an amaryllis bulb in a pot, a dwarf cypress and a set of coasters.

Richard introduced tonight's speaker Bernie Dinter of Dinter's nursery who spoke on dwarf conifers. These are wonderful plants that fit into smaller gardens. Some shrubs grow to heights that their buyers did not anticipate but dwarf conifers remain small. Many species that we know as large trees are available in dwarf forms in a range of shapes, textures and colours. He went through a list illustrating each species and describing their hardiness and the type of soil they need.

Katherine Miller moved adjournment at 9:05 PM.