



# MILL BAY GARDEN CLUB NEWSLETTER

Website: [www.millbaygardenclub.com](http://www.millbaygardenclub.com) Email: [mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com)

## Next Meeting (ZOOM):

Date: **Tues, April 13, 2021**

Time: 7pm

Place: Your desk or a comfy armchair  
in your home

### Activities:

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

# APRIL

## April Speakers: Liz Lindquist & Fran Benton

**Down in the Gutter:  
Gutter Gardens are Fun!**

*See page 3 for details*



## The Return of The Brag Table

### Leap Into Spring!

With plant and flower identification and commentary provided by **Barb Kohlman**, the Brag Table has been a great part of our monthly in-person meetings. And now in Covid and Zoom times, we are doing it virtually!

Do you have an interesting item from your garden? Share it by holding it up to your Zoom camera and Barb will comment on it (please make sure it's well lit!)

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## "Sunshine Mary"

**Our esteemed Life Member Mary Gale**, has for very many years, been sending cards and kind words to those members who are experiencing illness or loss. She does this on behalf of the Mill Bay Garden Club, bringing a spot of sunshine into what is often 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 Mary know and she will send a card on our behalf.

## President's Letter

Bernie Juurlink

Spring is definitely here. The Rufous hummingbirds are back sipping at our Pieris which is in full bloom.

Over the past month three more varieties of camellia are in bloom and as well as some miniature irises, flowering currants, flowering quince, more snowdrops, hyacinths and crocuses have sprung into bloom but strangely our forsythia has not yet bloomed. On the other hand, our rhododendron that usually blooms around Christmas time has decided to again bloom now.

Our Black Tuscan kale which has been producing all winter is still going strong and our Cardinal broccoli, after being dormant all winter, is finally putting forth beautiful purple heads.

We had hoped to have an in-person outdoors event in April but Covid-19 is still in full outbreak. As of March 26, there are more than 307 active cases within Island Health with most of them being in our health region of Central Island and in

South Island according to the BC Covid-19 dashboard. Fifty-five of these active cases were reported on the 26th.

We are hopeful that we can have an in-person outdoor event in the latter part of May.

We also need to start thinking of our AGM that be held on June 22nd, 2021. We will start this meeting off with a talk followed by the AGM. We need to elect the Executive for the next year. So, start thinking about whether you would like to be nominated for a position on the Executive.

Cliff Stainsby has kindly agreed to be our Nominations Chair. For much of the past year our monthly Executive meetings have been via Zoom and lasts at the most for one hour. Hopefully in the fall, when we are all vaccinated, the Executive can meet in person again.

*Bernie*



## April 13, 2021 - Mill Bay Garden Club Agenda

- 1) 7:00 p.m.: Speaker - chaired by Gillian Keir.
- 2) 8:00 p.m.: Club Business
  - a) Approval of the agenda
  - b) Approval of the minutes of March 9, 2021 Club Zoom meeting
  - c) President's Report – Bernie Juurlink
  - d) Executive Committee reports
  - e) Virtual Brag Table
  - f) Garden-related Questions with our Master Gardeners
  - g) Questions for the Executive?

## April's Speaker (Tuesday, April 13):

### **MBGCers Liz Lindquist and Fran Benton, via Zoom, on Down in the Gutter: Gutter Gardens are Fun!**

Liz grew up on 5 acres in Metchosin and was a member of the 4-H sheep club for many years.

Jobs and marriage took her to Prince Rupert, Vancouver and Seattle for 16 years. She took her Master Gardening course in Seattle 6 years ago. Liz's husband retired and they moved back to the island after being away for 40 years. Liz joined the Mill Bay garden club 3 years ago.

Fran did a degree in botany at Uvic many years ago. She was fortunate to meet Dr. David Richardson, a lichenologist who suggested she continue studies in lichenology. Fran got a 3 year position as lichen curator at the University of Saskatchewan. Fran spent three summers in the arctic collecting lichens for the herbarium. Fran returned to Victoria and worked for many years as the program naturalist at Swan lake Nature centre where she shared her admiration for moss and lichens. Fran wrote and illustrated lichen information pamphlets for the NWT government and BC Parks.

## Flower and Garden Show 2021

The members of the committee have decided, once again, that due to the covid virus, we cannot hold the annual Flower and Garden Show. The setup we use does not lend itself to our current needs. We require a secure building for the Silent Auction items and the vegetable and flower presentations and the Cobble Hill hall is not large enough to give us the essential spacing.

*Gill Keir*



## Committee Reports

### Plant Sales

We are not yet able to gather for an outdoor plant sale yet in April. BUT if you are interested in: Alpaca poo, or some Yukon Gold potatoes to plant, give me a shout. You can pick up at my place or I can deliver. I have also potted up numerous plants for hopefully a plant sale in May, so let me know if you can't wait til then. There are also possibilities with Elaine Scott's Plantaholics sale & Cairnsmore plant sales. All virtual this year.

**Also... Someone just donated this compost bin ( \$100 value)! Anyone interested? Suggest \$20 for the garden club?**



Happy planting

*Monika & Sharon*  
*The Plant sales team*

### Memorial Garden

A very small work party (Chris Gatfield and me) spent two hours weeding, raking and moving mulch to beautify the garden at the Community Hall. I'm trying to source manure and more bark mulch, and once that is organized, I will be asking for another work party to meet and continue with the upkeep of the garden. This is only a two hour commitment and a larger turnout would be appreciated. If you are able to help out, please contact me directly by email, and I will add your name to the list of people who have expressed interest. We would likely meet a couple of times in April/May, and again in the fall to tidy up. There is plenty of room to stay distant and respect Covid rules.

Thank you,

*Katherine Miller*



## **CAIRNSMORE PLACE AND HOSPICE HOUSE GARDEN VOLUNTEERS**

### **ANNUAL PLANT SALE 2021 TENTH ANNIVERSARY**

Every spring, local gardeners look forward to the plant sale hosted by the volunteers who maintain the beautiful gardens at Cairnsmore Place and Cowichan Hospice House in Duncan. These gardens provide a space for residents and their families to meet, visit, and enjoy the beautiful surroundings. Community members also appreciate the gardens as they walk the neighbourhood and see the new blooms throughout the seasons. All work in the gardens is done by volunteers, and the plant sale is the main fundraiser to raise money to buy plants, soil, compost, fertilizer, gardening tools, and irrigation equipment. This year we have hundreds of plants including a wide range of flowering shrubs and perennials, and an especially large selection of peonies and hostas. All plants are donated by our volunteers or come from the Cairnsmore Place gardens when we are thinning beds and moving plants. We thank the community in advance for their continued generous support of the sale.

Sale Details: To keep the sale safe for everyone, we will be taking online orders, with distanced pickup in the Cairnsmore neighbourhood. Orders will be taken beginning April 10 and will be filled in the order they are received. We will accept orders from April 10 until either May 7 or when the majority of plants are sold. Orders can be picked up on Wednesdays from 1-4pm and Saturdays from 9am-1pm beginning Saturday, April 24.

The plant list and prices will be available from April 10 by sending an email request to: [plantsalecairnsmore@gmail.com](mailto:plantsalecairnsmore@gmail.com).

Masks and safe distancing will be required even if you have had your vaccine.

Payment can be either by cash or email.



## From the Greenhouse... for the Club

Thank you all for supporting the "bearded Iris" promotion; about four hundred one gallon potted plants found new homes during this "Charity Drive". We are now out of stock of irises.

There are about 100 "sprouted" dahlia tubers currently planted in pots in the greenhouse, and as soon as we can definitely see how many are strong enough to leave their nursery, we will let you know. They will be on sale for \$9.00 each this year.

In the meantime we have 50 Giant Pacific dark blue Delphinium seedlings growing well and they should be available in about three weeks. The price is \$5 each.

Also in progress we have 100 "Topsy Tom Cherry Tomato Plants" potted up and growing well. We have used/grown this variety for the last ten years because it has great flavour and produces an incredible amount of fruit per plant. When we grow them for ourselves, we let the seedlings grow quite tall in their pots, and then plant the roots and the stems HORIZONTALLY about 12 inches from where we want the stems to grow vertically, which the tip will do automatically . This yields a sort of supercharged nutrient flow from the long root structure and one needs a strong frame to support the laden trusses. The potted Topsy Tom tomato plants will sell for \$5.00 each. They can also be pot grown, but one needs a large pot because of the weight of the plant and trusses. Last point; we lace and dig into the soil along the length of the root with a couple of ounces of fish bone meal (Buckerfields), which the plants thrive on.

Thanks to all the members of MBGC, plus the general public, and to Dinter's who helped to make this year's charity fund raising campaign so successful. We hope to pass \$4,000 by May 15.

Regards and thanks,

Norman and Gwen Redcliffe



See the next pages for what's available...

Picture

Name

Description

Description



Bloomquist Sweet  
CO DB DP14/PR14  
Available :3



Gwen Redcliffe  
NR2019 Seedling Single  
Available:4



Blackberry Ripple  
SC V LV1/PR24  
Available:10



Hollyhill Six in One  
B LC V YL12/Rd24/Wh3  
Available:5



Camano Love  
MB PK PK23  
Available:6



Jim Pattison  
NR2019 Seedling LC 6" P/Y  
Available:2



Chilsons Pride  
BB ID LB Wh1/PK22  
Available:4



L'Ancrese  
BA W Wh6  
Available:5



Creve Coeur  
AA SC R R24  
Available:11



Mardy Gras  
M FD FL YL15/Or23  
Available:10



Embrace  
BB SC BR BR1  
Available:12



Ferncliff Spice  
MB Y Y18  
Available:7



NTAC Eliza  
CO DB DP18/LV11/Wh1  
Available:11

Picture

Name

(Bee Not included)





Orange Cushion  
Unrgistered  
Available:4



Lyn's Louise  
M FD LB W/L  
Available:3



Pooh  
CO BI Rd18/Yl18/Y19  
Available:4



R Kris  
B ID W Wh2  
Available:7



Sonic Bloom  
BB ID DB DR7/RD22/Or3  
Available:9



Debora Renae  
Available:4



Piper  
NR 2020 Seedling  
Available:4



Mo Chant  
NR2020 Seedling CO R/Y  
Available:5

**Also available:**

**24 Topsy Cherry Tomato Plants @ \$5 ea**

**30 Pacific Giant dark blue Delphiniums \$5 ea**



## Gardening Tips for April 2021 by Barb Kohlman

Colder than hoped for spring

And windy!!!!

Had to secure our fence, that was actually flapping in the wind yesterday—so if you have hardscaping feature like fences, check that they are in good repair.

My Hyacinths are starting to flower nicely, but I have noticed some buds got damaged from the recent cold nights and the snow dump. I will just let them flower as best they can and offer some organic fertilizer to help with “food” storage to the bulb for next year’s blooms.



Don’t be too quick to write off some “dead” looking shrubs in your garden. A few of mine do not show any signs of new growth, but be patient. You could do a small “scratch” on a lower stem to see if there is green, live growth still apparent and so reassure yourself.

Be careful not to damage the crowns of emerging plants (like hostas) when you are adding soil amendments. In well drained, and therefore drier areas of your gardens, the soil should be warmed enough to start spreading compost (about 1-2 inches). If you add a more carbon-based mulch, it is best to add a nitrogen source (e’g alfalfa meal/ cottonseed meal) on the ground first to provide nitrogen for the “beasts” that do the composting for you.

I do “fluff” my soil a bit on the surface, but do not really disturb the soil to any depth, so that the soil structure is not damaged and the soil biota not disturbed.

I have started to liberally sprinkle organic amendments over my soil, because the organisms ARE starting to break down the components to a degree (in solution) that the plants can take up.

If you have cherry trees (Prunus species) check for Black knot and prune out.

<https://www.alberta.ca/black-knot.aspx>

*Happy spring!*

*Barb Kohlman*

## Gardening with Moss by Fran Benton

“Really?” you may say, my lawn is mostly moss so I guess I can say I garden with moss! Actually there are a whole lot of people out there who have given up their grass lawns in favour of moss lawns. So why do lawns get full of moss and how do you get rid of it (if you want to)? Well let’s face it – we live on the wet coast. We get a lot of winter rainfall. Our soils are mostly pozols. These soils types have their nutrients leached out and are often heavy with silt or even clay. You are a lucky person if you have a lawn with a sandy light soil. Grass loves those conditions and moss does not! Moss adores my lawn. Large mature



fir and cedar trees surround us. The soil is acidic and heavy silt. Moss thinks my place is divine! It outgrows the grass with enthusiasm. A great deal less enthusiasm is shown by my husband who tackles the grass vs moss lawn with all manner of horticultural warfare. His weapons of choice are dolomite lime, iron sulphate, and a magnificent

dethatched/demosser attachment for the lawn tractor. He has been known to mix up a beer and soap concoction and spray the lawn with that. Sadly all this seems to be in vain as the moss comes back with enthusiasm. Let’s face it, moss loves these soils and these trees and this wet coast!



A book I have been reading about moss landscapes is by Annie Martin. She has a nursery for moss, a mossery. She sells big trays of all kinds of moss species. These are super popular in Asian style gardens. They are also very popular in terrariums and fairy gardens. I like growing moss for bonsai planters and as a living mulch in

summer planters. They keep the soil moist and cool but do not change the nature of the potting soil. There are many different types of moss. A hike up Cobble Hill Mountain from the Thain Road location will allow you to see lots of moss. Moss can obviously not be harvested from parks but you can take small amounts from roadsides or private properties with permission. If you know an area is going to be developed often you can get permission to remove moss from that area. Once you collect a few handfuls of moss find a shady moist spot to place the moss. Care for the moss by light frequent watering and semi shade. I put them in old cracked plant saucers. They will double in size and do very well. Pull a bit of black deer mesh over the moss to protect them from raccoons and varied Thrushes. These guys toss your moss all over the place looking for bugs and worms that live underneath. If you are cleaning a roof you can save all that handsome red roof moss and plant it around shrubs in shady areas. Moss is fun and a vital part of natural ecosystems. And it helps fight climate change. How good is that? Happy gardening!





## MINUTES FOR GENERAL MEETING

7:00 pm Tuesday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Via Zoom

Dr. Drew Zwart, Plant Pathologist working with Bartlett Tree Service, spoke on the problems faced by native trees in this time of climate change. Dr. Zwart advised that we can all help the large cedars and firs on our properties by removing ivy and invasive ground cover, providing mulch at the base of trees, and watering for a couple of hours once a month for a depth of 10 inches during dry spells.

### 1. President's Report: Bernie Juurlink

- ◇ Acceptance of the revised Agenda to add comments by Norman Redcliffe.
  - \* Moved by Gillian Keir, seconded by Janice Rose— all voted in favour.
- ◇ Acceptance of minutes from 9 February 2021
  - \* Moved by Dave Byrnes, seconded by Katherine Miller— all voted in favour.
- ◇ President Juurlink reported that there was little to add to the newsletter apart from an additional donation by Norman and Gwen Redcliff because of their successful iris and dahlia sales to club members. He noted also that the Redcliffes have provided plants to Dinter's Nursery, who in turn have made a \$792.00 charitable donation.
  - \* Norman Redcliffe noted that he has 50 more iris available to MBGC members and has 30 delphinium seedlings in his greenhouse, along with Giant Zinnia.

### 2. Committee Reports:

- a) Plant sales: Monika Morgan still has alpaca poo for sale and notes that Heather Jenkins has potatoes (Yukon Gold and Banana) and chili pepper seedlings.

### 3. Brag Table: Barb Kohlman commented on several specimens brought forward for discussion.

### 4. Garden Questions: Bill Herring, Elaine Scott, and Barb Kohlman provided expert advice on gardening. Members were reminded to spray their fruit trees NOW.

### 5. President Juurlink advised that the club is considering hosting a plant sale in April, possibly on 27 April, the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday. Elaine Scott noted that this would complement the Plantaholics sale on 17 April. Monika Morgan noted that Cairnsmore would also be holding a virtual place sale.





Other Issues: Membership Renewals:

- ◇ Gord Hamilton said that members joining or renewing could e-transfer \$10.00 to [mbgcmembership@gmail.com](mailto:mbgcmembership@gmail.com) or send a cheque to him.
- ◇ Pat Spezowka reminded that she needed updated membership information for her membership lists.
- ◇ Norman Redcliffe inquired about the distribution of member email addresses. President Juurlink explained that only ¼ of the members gave permission for their emails to be released and that NR would be better served by having mention of his plant sales be advertised in the club newsletter. It was decided that members could be asked once again if they would allow their email address to be distributed to MBGC members.

6. Motion to adjourn made by Monika Morgan