



Newsletter



Veronica
Heiderich receives
the
Allison Trophy from
Stuart Gough

AGM & POTLUCK DINNER:

Monday, December 10th, 2012 6:30 p.m.
Location: Knox Presbyterian
MacMillan Hall
89 Dunn Street
Oakville

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President's Message

The garden is now winding down. As I learned years ago, Grey Cup weekend is the final weekend to prepare the gardens for the coming winter season. At least that is what John Bradshaw used to say on his weekend radio program.

Looking back, it has been an interesting and challenging year. We started off early with the Fun With Flowers event on Family Day in February. This was our society's second year at this Town of Oakville event. It was quite amazing to walk into the room with all the flowers that had been gathered from our many wonderful sponsors. Colour and fragrance filled the room and made you feel for a moment that winter was a spent force. Little did we know how quickly the winter would be over and that we'd be enjoying the earliest maple syrup season ever.

The early spring allowed us to get into our gardens to prepare for the Plant Sale. As we potted up for the sale, it became apparent that we would be selling very mature, very large plants. Sale day arrived sunny and warm and the plants sold well, bringing in \$4,589. Congratulations to everyone involved in the sale.

That early start to the gardening season changed the look of the gardens for our Garden Tour as most of the June blossoms were finished. That being said, there were still many interesting features to be discovered. This year the tour netted \$1,607. I cannot begin to thank the garden owners enough for allowing us to showcase their gardens, and to those in the society who worked on the tour.

Through the hot dry summer, our members kept busy preparing the Anderson Bridge Parkette for the official opening in September. Attended by M.P.P. Kevin Flynn, Mayor Rob Burton, Councillor Dave Gittings and many Town and Region officials, the morning was filled with speeches and colour. This project was awarded the OHA Community Improvement Award. We will be tending the garden through the coming winter months, and are planning to plant a new tree on the bank to replace one we lost.

Past member Margot Byers created a drought tolerant, low maintenance garden at Maplegrove Arena - the only arena in Oakville to feature a garden. After a year on its own, it needed some assistance, so very quietly and far from the spotlight, Gertrud Bieri and Susan McLaney spent the summer reinvigorating this garden. Gertrud and Susan have made great progress getting the Town involved. This is a project that our society should further support.

I would like to thank volunteers Margaret Larson and Joan Paris who are stepping down. Margaret has been our Program Director, booking the interesting and entertaining monthly speakers and has been the co-chair of our Monthly Shows. Joan has been our 2nd Vice President for many years. Our society has very much appreciated their valuable service.

On behalf of myself and the OHS Board of Directors, I wish to thank all of you who support our society through your membership and your time. We wish you all Happy Holidays and invite you to join me in welcoming and assisting the new board members as we work to make 2013 another great year for the OHS.

Stuart Gough



Model Train Exhibition at the Royal Botanical Gardens until Jan 8

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The Oakville Horticultural Society Newsletter is published 10 times a year from September to June. All photographs and articles are produced by the Editor unless otherwise noted. Articles and photographs should be sent to the Editor Barbara Phillips-Conroy at ohs.editor@oakvillehort.org. Deadline for submission is the 3rd Thursday of the month.

Annual General Meeting and Potluck Dinner - December 10, 2012*

I hope you'll be able to join us this year at the AGM and Potluck dinner. As previous attendees will tell you, the agenda of the AGM is blissfully short - and the dinner is a wonderful opportunity to meet new members and renew friendships.

Because we're unable to use the china and cutlery at the church, **here's what you'll need to bring:**
(There will be paper napkins; if you prefer cloth, bring your own.)



Plate, knife, fork
& mug



Be sure to mark
your serving dishes
and spoons clearly

Each member should bring either a "before", salad, hot casserole, or dessert. Please bring serving spoons if necessary. As well, note clearly if your dish contains either seafood or nuts. If you're coming on your own, bring enough to feed four - eight, if you're bringing someone with you. Unfortunately there are no facilities to reheat your casseroles.

6:30 p.m. 'Befores' and punch

7:00 p.m. Dinner

8:00 p.m. AGM and Election of Officers and Directors

8:30 p.m. Entertainment & Prize Draws

Margaret Larson and Marie Decker, who are in charge of this event, have put together several prize baskets. The tickets will be \$1.00/4 or \$5.00/25. The ticket holders will then select which draw they'd like to enter. I too will be asking you to fill in a gardening survey - the contents to be used for future newsletters. I'll be selecting one completed survey for yet another fabulous prize. All in all, it should be a lovely evening. Do hope you can make it.



Photographs Stuart Gough

* If the weather is severe - please check our website to see if the event is cancelled www.oakvillehort.org

THE AWARDS

Chairman's Trophy

Wand Memorial Trophy

Open to all members. The winner has the highest number of points in the Chairman's Trophy Class in the Design Division of the flower Show.

- #1 Florrie Abbess
- #2 Marie Decker
- #3 Cecilia Roberts

Class of Distinction

T. Eaton and Company Trophy

Open to only 8 members of the society who have won two firsts in the Chairman's Trophy class. Members eligible to enter this class may not enter the General Novice category.

- #1 Marie Decker
- #2 Florrie Abbess

Overall Decorative Cup of Excellence

Awarded for the highest points in Design (including miniatures).

- #1 Marie Decker
- #2 Veronica Heiderich
- #3 Michelle Durrant



Congratulations to Our Winners - Decoratives

I'm a decorative and horticultural competition-appreciator rather than participant. After each meeting, I love going downstairs to see what our members have brought in and created for the competition. This month, I'm sharing some of the thoughts of our Decorative Winners - next month I'll tell you about our Horticultural Winners.

Florrie Abbess, Chairman's Trophy winner, says that she considers and juggles ideas in her mind based on the competition theme. Once she's pictured what she wants, she can often put her displays together in 10-20 minutes - providing all goes according to plan. Like most of those I spoke to, she enjoys the creativity of exhibiting. Florrie is continually inspired to achieve a high standard after meeting four judges - two of whom were international judges - at Cloverleaf Garden Club, where she also is a member. That meeting, and of course the competition afforded by our other terrific members, keeps her coming back for more.



Design Florrie Abbess - Edgy

Marie Decker won both the Class of Distinction and Overall Decorative. She had always enjoyed doing floral arrangements at home, so when she joined the society, she thought it was just a natural progression to learn about decoratives and another way to express her creativity. She says her designs can take two to three hours or just 10 minutes - it all depends. The large eight-foot entries that she's done for Canada Blooms, (She took home a 2nd place ribbon for the arrangement to the left.), take between two to four hours to complete. I can only imagine how beautiful her arrangements are around the house are now. Below is her winning miniature from the OHA convention in Niagara.



Veronica Heiderich won the Allison Trophy. Here's what she said about her design process: "It takes me two hours or less per floral design entry, from vision to creation. I start with focusing on the theme and deciding how I think I could present it which is not always the final result. Usually the biggest influence is from what is readily available at my favourite flower shop, the flowers/greenery that 'talk' to me and the vase containers I have. Sometimes it's a colour, texture or combination of flowers that makes my final decision. A trip to the produce section at the grocery store has also proved fruitful, (no pun intended); to be different I have used broccoli and star fruit (Carambola) for example. I have referred to a few library books on floral design and received coaching from our experienced OHS floral design competitors. I decided to start entering because of the encouragement of Marie Decker and inspiration from seeing Marie's designs along with those of Celia Roberts and Mary Cameron. All in all it is a lot of fun and I have learned a new side of my creative self!"



Veronica Heiderich



Veronica Heiderich

Design Veronica Heiderich - Yellow Wave & Handel's Water Music

One group that completely amazes me is Miniature Design. These sweet little creations look like they are completed by wee elves or extremely talented designers with some very good tweezers. **Jean Latham** and **Marie Decker** tied for first for the Noad Trophy. For those of you who are counting, this is the 12th time Jean has won this trophy! When I spoke to her, she told me that she approaches each design the same way - nose to the ground in her garden looking for tiny special treasures to bring the arrangements to life. Crucial to each miniature design is that they look like a regular sized arrangement when photographed on their own. Not only is the design itself important, but the shape and the way it fills the frame. She began doing miniatures at her daughter's suggestion, moving away from the larger arrangements. There is quite a time commitment to producing each perfect little arrangement - from the production of the container that will hold the flowers, to the collecting, conditioning of the flowers and preparation of the design. Aside from her own garden, she has been known to go hunting in the boulevard in front of her house to look for tiny specimens - once finding an absolutely perfect 1/4" viola in the midst of a grassy patch. It's not just determination and hard work that brought Jean all those wins, but a real passion for what she does. As she said to me, "I love it!"

THE AWARDS

General/Novice Trophy

Allison Trophy

Points are combined in the general and novice classes in the awarding of the Allison Trophy. *General class* is open to all members; *Novice* is open to all members except those members eligible to enter *Class of Distinction*. Entrants eligible to enter the *Class of Distinction* are not eligible to win the Allison Trophy, nor are those who have won the Allison Trophy twice.

#1 Veronica Heiderich

#2 Michelle Durrant

Miniature Noad Trophy

Awarded for the highest points in Miniature Design.

#1 Jean Latham & Marie Decker

#3 Michelle Durrant

Highest Horticulture

Stratton Trophy

Awarded for the highest points in Horticulture.

#1 Mary Cameron

#2 Rob Welsh

#3 Michelle Durrant

Combined Horticulture &

Decorative

Wye Trophy

Awarded for the highest points in Design and Horticulture combined. A member must earn at least 15 points in the Design division to qualify to win this trophy, or a minimum of seven points to qualify as a runner up.

#1 Mary Cameron

#2 Marie Decker

#3 Veronica Heiderich

Men's Highest Horticulture

Bell Trophy

#1 Rob Welsh

#2 David Lewis

#3 Don Dusha



In Memoriam

Violet Simkins died at the age of 91 at Sunrise Assisted Living in Burlington on November 5th, 2012. Predeceased by her husband John and her daughter Janice, she is survived by son Jon and daughter Jennifer and grandchildren. Many of us knew Violet through John and were delighted that she was able to be a guest of honour last year at our AGM and potluck dinner. She worked hard in the background, keeping John's world renowned peony collection catalogued and managing his post-retirement career of speaking and writing. She was a 40-year volunteer at Oakville Trafalgar Hospital and was a remarkable seamstress and tailor making both her and her children's clothing for many years. We will miss her wit and smile at this year's AGM.



Louise Reynolds died at the age of 94 at The Wenleigh in Mississauga on November 20, 2012. Wife of Russell Reynolds and the late Alf White. Mother of Christopher White and Anne Cordon, and Randall White and Jeanne MacDonald. A member of the OHS, she won the Red Rose Tea Award in 1989 and 1992 for her red roses. She was a dear friend and painting colleague of Beryle Lowther.

Decorating Trends - Winter Greens

Who better to ask than our very own Celia Roberts - Design Judge, Instructor and Designer par excellence about what the trends are for this season. She told me that it's back to old-fashioned red and green; birch branches are still strong; and that larger branches are being used to frame and balance the overall design. Here are some beautiful examples from downtown Oakville and around my neighbourhood:



Winning Photographic Entries from November 2012 Competition

In addition to the horticultural and decorative competitions, in March and November, there are photo contests. I thought the winners did a marvelous job and wanted to share some of the winning entries with you, along with their comments about their photos.



This Rugged Coast – a shoreline depicting a rugged scene with horticultural content



Shades of Amethyst - any purple coloured flower

“Both pictures were taken on different occasions when I was out on my favourite walk in South East Oakville down through Joshua's Creek Trail to Lake Ontario. 'This Rugged Coast' was taken in the early morning when I had gone out on a walk to take pictures. I think of this beach as my 'secret beach' because it is not easily accessible and probably not known to many of the people who walk down to the lake regularly. 'Shades of Amethyst' was taken in the late afternoon and the location was close to the water treatment park. Wild asters are one of my favourite wild flowers particularly when they are the beautiful purple shade these flowers were.” Cathy Ryan



Stars of Wonder

“I took several photos against different backdrops and some with more than one seed head. Some were in silhouette and were quite striking, but in the end I chose this because I thought it had the most impact from a photography angle and because of the striking background colour. Because you never know what the judge will like, it becomes what Bob and I like best.” Marie Decker



Flutterby - butterflies on a plant/flower

“The photo was taken in my back yard in the afternoon. I was weeding and all of a sudden about 30 butterflies surrounded me. I ran to get the camera and only about 10 remained when I returned. So I snapped away.” Elly Cooper

MASTER GARDENER CORNER

No gardening questions for our hard-working Halton Master Gardeners this month. Instead, I asked what gift they would like to receive and what they'd recommend for a new gardener. Here's what's on their lists:

Christine Lee is hoping to get full-spectrum fluorescent lights for her grow-table. To encourage new gardeners to be water-wise, she suggests soaker hoses, programmable timers and multi-branch connectors for hoses help to direct moisture to areas of the garden that need it. "A simple water gauge would make a great stocking-stuffer."

Books top Ancaster's **Donna Parker's** list. She recommends for new or experienced gardeners: *"What's Wrong with My Plant? (and how to fix it) A Visual Guide to Easy Diagnosis and Organic Remedies"* by David Deardorff and Kathryn Wadsworth, and for the new gardener *"Readers Digest All New Illustrated Guide to Gardening"* (now also all organic) always a very comprehensive reference book and *"Incredible Edibles"* by Sonya Day, a very easy to follow guide for growing vegetables in containers and what to do with them after.

Roseanne Nelson would like any gardening implement from Lee Valley; a good fitting pair of gardening gloves to keep her hands warm when it's cold; a Tilley hat to keep the sun off her head; a gift certificate from a reputable nursery; and an offer of physical help in the garden. For the new gardener, she'd give a gardening journal to record successes and surprises; a subscription to gardening magazine; a membership at the local horticultural society, and some gardening gloves.

Linda Brentnall says, "When everything is covered in a blanket of white, it's always a pleasure to see colourful birds. So a birdhouse, a bird bath or feeder would be most welcome. And as there's so much to learn as a new gardener, books about soil, appropriate plants and design are helpful, but there's nothing like getting a cutting and having the joy of nurturing it into a shrub or tree."

Valerie Love also agrees that a subscription to a magazine or a good gardening book is a great idea for either the beginner or more advanced gardener. "My mom has a gardening encyclopedia from the 60s that I still refer to." She also recommends giving a gift certificate to a nursery, so come spring, the new gardener can go out and spoil themselves with plants.

Cathy Kavassalis has worn through her favourite pair of gauntlet rose gloves. "They were a wonderful washable goat skin which allowed for easy movement with long cuffs to protect the wrists. Definitely on my wish list. And, there is nothing like a good tool for a new gardener. The two tools I use most are a good quality digging spade and a good quality pruners, e.g. Felco. While I have accumulated all sorts of other odds and sods, these are the backbone of my collection and the two tools I use most."

David Marshall would give a Lee Valley border fork and spade set. "Great quality and the perfect size for 90% of garden jobs. The fork is a great weeder too, if held at the balance point and rammed horizontally under weeds. I have most things that I will ever need, but a time lapse camera for the birds and flowers would be nice."



May you have a lovely holiday!

The OHS Executive (FR) Celia Roberts, Barbara Phillips-Conroy, Stuart Gough, Joan Paris, Elizabeth Thompson (BR) Valerie Westwood, Veronica Heiderich, Sonja Tessari, Margaret Jeffery, Christine Lee, Cathy Kavassalis (Missing Linda Tock, Fred Teng & Marie Decker.)