



OAKVILLE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



November 2015

**General Meeting
Flower and Photo Show
Monday, November 9
7:30 p.m. MacMillan Hall
89 Dunn Street
Doors Open: 6:45 p.m.**

**Its time to renew
your membership**

Inside:

- President's Note
- Amaryllis Sale Reminder
- Membership Renewal
- Master Gardener's Corner
- Photography Schedule
- Committee Updates
- Events and Notices
- And more



**November's Guest Speaker:
Larry Urbanoski
*Some Gardens of China***



Join us at our November meeting, when Larry will share with his photographs of gardens in China.

From auditing our books to helping out with our community garden projects and invasive plant initiatives, Larry is an active member of our society. He grew up in small towns in rural Manitoba and Saskatchewan where family vegetable and hardy fruit gardens were very common. This environment fostered Larry's interest in gardening.

His work as a metallurgical engineer has provided him with opportunities to live, work and garden in many places. Like many of us, Larry finds both the act of gardening and observing gardens to be therapeutic. His travels have taken him far from Canadian shores, where he has witnessed many inspiring creations.





President's Message

"Hello, my name is Dorothea and I will be your guide today at Chicago Botanical Garde ..." piped the cheery octogenarian tour guide. "This is your garden," she continued "and you should be proud of it." And proud Chicago can be of the spectacular 385-acre enterprise designed to promote the enjoyment, understanding and conservation of plants and the natural world. It is free to the public and volunteers like Dorothea make visitors

feel welcomed and well informed. She made my visit to the gardens delightful.

Volunteers are key to the success of large organizations like the CBG and small organizations like our own horticultural society. As I walked through the spectacular formal gardens, productive fruit and vegetable gardens, fragrant rose gardens, Japanese gardens and into the conservation prairies, I was amazed at the some 2000 volunteers who support the gardens with their gift of time. In doing so, they give their city one of the greatest gifts I can imagine. As we begin our new year on the first of November, I would like to invite more of you to get involved. Help us promote the enjoyment, understanding and conservation of plants here in Oakville. We need you, yes YOU.

Those of you who have been volunteering –THANK YOU. Please, let Committee Chairs know how many hours you have contributed in 2015. Chairs please let our secretary, Heather Reccord, know your tallies (secretary.ohs@oakvillehort.org). These hours are reported to the Ontario Horticultural Association and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs in our annual report. It let's the ministry know that you believe our mandate is an important one.

If you have comments, questions or suggestions, please contact Catherine Kavassalis. Email: c.kavassalis@gmail.com or call 905-849-7581.

Amaryllis For Sale

David Marshall will have amaryllis for sale at \$10.00 per bulb at our November meeting. There will be a few six inch pots and bags of soil for people who don't have any.

If you plant them up immediately you may have flowers by the end of December, or in January, when we all need a little colour in the house.

Bring Items for Oakville Food Bank

We are going to hold our annual drive at our November meeting. Please bring items or donations. For Items most needed see the Oakville Fare Share website: oakvillefoodbank.com/needed-items/



Renew your Membership for 2016

All memberships dated 2015 will expire on October 31, 2015. Please complete the form that accompanies this newsletter. Provide your membership number and your name when renewing along with any contact information that may have changed.

To comply with the Canadian Anti-Spam Legislation, the Society requests that you indicate your agreement to receive important information and announcements from our Society, the

OHA district and association. Please indicate your acceptance by checking the box “/ Agree to receive Society mail...” You may withdraw your consent at any time by sending an email to membership.ohs@oakvillehort.org with “Unsubscribe me” in the subject line along with your complete contact information.



The form is titled "OAKVILLE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY 2016 Membership" and includes the dates "November 1, 2015 - October 31, 2016" and the address "Oakville Horticultural Society, Box 69605, 109 Thomas St., Oakville, ON L6J 7R4". It features the society's logo on the left. The form has several sections: "Renewing Membership" with a checkbox, "New Membership" with a checkbox, "Single Membership \$20" with a checkbox, and "Family Membership \$30" with a checkbox. There are fields for "Membership Number:", "Name:", "Mail Address:", "Postal Code:", and "Telephone:". A checkbox for "I agree to receive Society mail to the following email address" is followed by an "Email:" field. At the bottom, it says "Please make cheques payable to Oakville Horticultural Society" and "Where gardeners come to flourish".

We thank you for your continuing support of our society.

Photography Schedule for November and March

Calling all Photographers. Please share some of your favourite images at our November Photography Show and begin thinking about the March exposition. Your photos can also be entered at the OHA Convention in Waterloo in 2016 (same categories). So consider our humble show a trial run. Guidelines for the Photography Competition are available at www.gardenontario.org under “Upcoming Convention” and can be found in the **2016 OHS Showbook**. See me at the show hall if you need a copy. Thank you - *Marie Decker*

November 2015

- Class 23. **Monet's Garden** - Your Interpretation
- Class 24. **Fairies** - A Fairy Garden
- Class 25. **Harvest Time** - Crops being harvested
- Class 26. **My Friend Herb** - Your Favourite Herb
- Class 27. **Waterloo Glads** - A Gladiola

March 2016

- Class 17. **Patterns in Black and White** - patterns created by plants (black and white class)
- Class 18. **Woodland Landscape** - woodlands
- Class 19. **Your Grand River** - photo of your local river (must contain vegetation)
- Class 20. **Wilmot Rose** - a single red rose
- Class 21. **Wellesley Hollyhocks** - hollyhocks

Judging Scale: Horticultural Value 40%; Photographic Value 40%; Appearance & Impact 20%



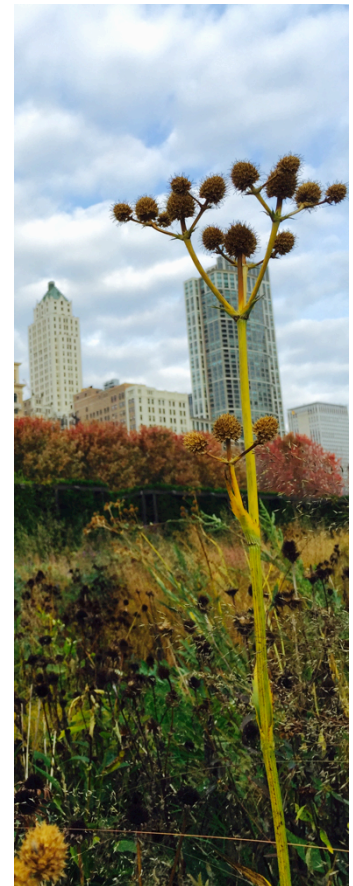
***Urbs in Horto* (City in a Garden)**

Designed by Gustafson Guthrie Nichol Ltd, Piet Oudolf and Robert Israel, Chicago's five acre Lurie Garden is a masterful landscape design. Full of native plants reflecting the city's marshy origins along with just the right peppering of exotic species, this garden is a horticultural masterwork. Appropriately sited across from Chicago's world class Art Institute in Millennium Park, it is described as "living art – a palette of texture and color blending Chicago's unique culture, ecology, history and people." If you haven't had the opportunity to visit this garden, I would add it to your bucket list of

gardens to tour.

On the cool October day I visited the grounds, the sharp Chicago winds were thwarted by a dense five-meter hedge of arborvitae. The American Poet, Carl Sandburg described Chicago as a *Stormy, husky, brawling, City of the Big Shoulders*. The hedge represents the city's big shoulders and the garden ... well the garden is not delicate. Rather, it is bold and full of movement. The bottle gentian (*Gentiana andrewsii*), skullcap (*Scutellaria incana*), goldenrod (*Solidago* 'Fireworks') and October skies asters (*Symphyotrichum oblongifolium* 'October Skies') were among the late fall bloomers putting on a show. But more spectacular were the grasses like prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*), little blue stem (*Schizachyrium scoparium* 'The Blues'), and fountain grass (*Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Cassian') that brawled in the wind and created ever-changing hues throughout the garden. Golden shades of Arkansas blue star (*Amsonia hubrichtii*) were accented with the deep brown seed heads of purple lance astilbe (*Astilbe chinensis* var. *taquetii* 'Purpurlanze'). I was bewitched by the seed heads of rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*), pale coneflower (*Echinacea pallida*) and ornamental onion (*Allium lusitanicum* 'Summer Beauty'). The design is complex juxtaposing 'light' clean and controlled areas against 'dark' lush and unbridled expanses with a seam down the middle.

While it is not apparent to the visitor, Lurie Garden is a rooftop garden. Below ground are parking garages for a nearby amphitheater. It is a beautiful and ecologically sound use of space. Careful plant selection and soil management minimizes water usage. Migratory birds, butterflies and beneficial insects find refuge in this lush ecosystem that boasts of sustainability. These are fertile learning grounds where classes are held throughout the year on everything from *Artistic Morphology of Trees* to a *Gardener's Plant Walk*. If you are planning a visit, you might like to register for one of these free lectures. Or just go and be inspired by the play of plants in this city in a garden. For more information, visit www.luriegarden.org.



Annual General Meeting and Pot Luck

Our AGM will be held on December 14th. At that time, we will elect some new members to the Executive Committee and Board. If you are interested in participating on the Board, please contact Cathy c.kavassalis@gmail.com.

We will also hold our annual Pot Luck. Doors open at 6:00p.m. If you can help set up in the morning or would like to assist the hospitality committee, talk to Valerie Rughi at our next meeting.

Last month, the Board presented the proposed 2016 budget. The Board endeavours to exercise their fiduciary responsibility and present as balanced a budget as possible. Thus

Motion to increase Bulbs Plants and Seeds Expenditures

effort was made to reduce projected expenditures given estimated revenue. To this end, The Bulbs, Plants and Seeds Program Budget was proposed to be revenue neutral, e.g. revenue \$1,000 and expenditures \$1,000. A motion will be put forward to increase the expenditures from the proposed \$1,000 to \$1,500. This would mean \$500 would be drawn from our reserves to subsidize this program. Currently there is approximately \$43K in reserve (with a portion being directed funds for Sustainable Garden Projects). The Society has been drawing down general operation reserves for the last decade to make up for annual revenue shortfall. The membership will have an opportunity to vote on the motion to subsidize the Bulbs, Plants and Seeds Program at the AGM.

Fields of Spring and Anderson Bridge Parkette Updates



As you know, we have been very busy during September and October in the two Fields of Spring Gardens and at the Anderson Bridge Parkette. The Fields of Spring have been weeded, top-dressed and seeded with extra EcoLawn seed. The Parkette has had compost, manure and fresh cedar Mulch applied. Thanks to the Town's watering support, the grass at the Fields of Spring has sprouted and is now growing well.

Many thanks to all the volunteers, especially those new members, who came out to help our group efforts, as well as those who visit each week on the rotation. These projects only shine as they do due to the diligent attention of our members. Also, at the Parkette we have planted several new plants and shrubs thanks to generous donations from Sean James, Jana Schilder and Cathy Kavassalis.

Thanks are also due to the Town for their support with the watering and also to Petrie's for the donation of the 4 cubic yards of top-dressing for the Fields of Spring plus the delivery of the compost, manure and mulch for the Parkette.

- Margaret Jeffery

June Garden Tour

Visiting gardens is a great source of inspiration and joy. Oakville Horticultural Society is proud to provide this service to our community and members.

We need you to help spot amazing gardens. If you pass an address you would like to explore, send a note to Paula Clayton - gardentour.ohs@oakvillehort.org.

If you would be willing to share your own garden, let us know that too. Our Tour Team can help you prepare for the day. Expertise provided by master gardeners can help you evolve your space.

Join the Garden Tour team. You can help with publicity, finding gardens, supporting homeowners, selling tickets, etc. There is much to do to create an event of which we can be proud. Think about how you might contribute.



Cardoon, *Cynara cardunculus*

Artichoke thistle was an old favourite in Victorian gardens. Its leaves were blanched and used as celery. The variety that produces true artichokes (*C. cardunculus* var. *scolymus*) requires about 160 days from seed sown to first harvest. With our 150 day growing season, you would have to start plants indoors if you wanted any hope of a harvest.

But cardoon need not bear food to be a great addition to the garden. It is a theatrical plant with striking silvery, thistle-like foliage. In the garden or in large planters, it is an interesting addition to consider for next year.

While the foliage alone is reason to grow it, the massive purple flowers that develop in late fall are stunning. Dried flowers can be added to autumnal arrangements or left in the garden to provide winter interest.



Master Gardener's Corner

My Favorite Flower is the Dahlia

By Kate Sault - Halton Master Gardener

My favorite flower is the Dahlia. It has been called the bloom with a thousand faces. Dahlias come in many forms including the proper formal decorative, the devil-may-care informal decorative, pompon and miniature balls, laciniated, cactus, waterlily and my favorite the collarette, just to mention a few. There are 19 forms of Dahlias plus novelty open, 15 different color combinations and 10 bloom sizes (with diameters ranging from below 2 inches to 16 inches). This variety comes from the fact that Dahlias have eight sets of homologous chromosomes whereas most plants have only two. Dahlias also have many transposons, which are bits of DNA that move around from place to place upon an allele causing diversity. There is a form, color, and size to suit every taste.

Dahlia is a genus in the family *Asteraceae*. Dahlias are bushy, tuberous, herbaceous, perennial plants. They originated in the mountainous regions of Mexico and Guatemala, where the ancient Aztecs grew them for many generations. They were used as a source of food and to treat epilepsy. The Aztecs called the Dahlia "Acocotli," which meant water cane because of their long hollow stem.

Dahlias grow naturally in areas that do not have frost so in areas that have subzero temperatures their tubers must be lifted and stored in a frost-free location over winter. Their tuberous nature allows them to withstand periods of dormancy. After the first frost, the plants should be cut down to about six inches above the ground. Wait about one or two weeks for the eyes to develop on the tubers before digging the clumps up. Using a shovel, dig about a foot all around the stalk. This severs the long roots and loosens the soil. The tuber clumps should be washed carefully. Any damaged tubers and long roots and tubers with thin necks should be removed. After drying for a few hours the clumps should be divided or the tubers will start to shrivel.

Using a sharp knife or pruning shears divide the clump so that each tuber has a growth eye. The eyes are enlargements located where the tubers attach to the plant stalk or the crown of the clump. A pie shaped cut should be made on each side of the tuber into the crown and extend past the eye and include a portion of the stalk. If the eyes are hard to find, the clumps could be divided into thirds or quarters and re-divided in the spring. Many growers use a fungicide to treat the tuber, which helps prevent rot. After the tubers have dried for about a day they can be stored in plastic bags with small holes and vermiculite or wood shavings. They should be stored at about 5°C and properly labeled. It is important during storage to keep them from being too wet or they will rot, while at the same time not letting them dry out and shrivel. The tubers should be checked throughout the winter and any bad ones removed.

Alternatively the clumps can be washed and divided in the spring. The clumps with attached soil can be stored in open plastic bags or cardboard boxes in a cool dark location. The dirt should not be allowed to dry out completely. In late May or early June depending on the weather your tubers are ready to be planted in the garden.



Notices

Welcome New Members

- ❖ Marion Campbell
- ❖ Margaret Found

Volunteers for November Meeting

Refreshments:
 Christel Mahnche
 Florenda Tingle
 Jane Hardman
 Kathie Dick

Hall Set Up (9 AM):
 Lee Manley
 John Raynor
 Anne Ritchie
 Marylka Empey

Clerks:
 Christel Mahncke
 Celia Roberts
 Mary Cameron - photography

Events

Hamilton Fall Garden & Mum Show

- October 23 - November 1: 9am - 7pm
 Gage Park Tropical Greenhouse
- www.hamiltonmumshow.com

Halton Master Gardeners

- November 4: 7:15am |RBG - 680 Plains Road West, Burlington
- haltonmastergardeners.wordpress.com

Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG)

- October 17 to November 21: Saturdays
 Volunteer Invasive Shrub Removal
 RSVP 905-527-1158 x257
- November 5: *Where Have All the Bees Gone?* Lecture by George Scott at 7:00PM to 8:30PM |RBG Centre
- December 1 & 2 - Evergreen Design Workshops hosted by the Auxiliary
 Register Online
- www.rbg.ca/events

Mailing Address:

Oakville Horticultural Society
 Box 69605, 109 Thomas Street
 Oakville, ON L6J 7R4

Co-Presidents: Marie Decker and Catherine Kavassalis
president.ohs@oakvillehort.org

Membership: Vacant
membership@oakvillehort.org

Secretary: Heather Reccord
secretary.ohs@oakvillehort.org

Treasurer: Florenda Tingle
treasurer@oakvillehort.org

Newsletter: Vacant

Webmaster: Wade Pitman
info.ohs@oakvillehort.org

Website: www.oakvillehort.org

Next Executive Meeting: Monday Nov. 16th
 7:00 p.m. at Oakville Town Hall

The Oakville Horticultural Society Newsletter is published 10 times a year from Sept. to June. Cathy Kavassalis produced all photographs and articles in this newsletter unless otherwise noted.