



Oakville Horticultural Society December 2020

December Monthly Virtual Meeting

Date:

December 7, 2020

Location:

Set-up Volunteers:

Hospitality Volunteers:

Flower Show Clerks:

The Oakville Horticultural once again will be holding its Monthly Meeting on line - via Zoom - on December 7th. This is of course due to on-going challenges of COVID-19. The meeting will commence at 7:30, however, you are welcome to log in 15 minutes beforehand in case you encounter any challenges and to allow some time to socialize with other members. Our guest speakers will be Brian and Jane Yager – our Newfoundland writers.



Mailing Address:

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

General Information:

info.ohs@oakvillehort.org

President:

Paula Clayton
president.ohs@oakvillehort.org

Vice-President:

Secretary:

Florenda Tingle
secretary.ohs@oakvillehort.org

Treasurer:

Larry Urbanoski
treasurer@oakvillehort.org

Membership:

info.ohs@oakvillehort.org

Newsletter:

Myroslawa Lukiwsky
editor.ohs@oakvillehort.org

Webmaster:

Wade Pitman
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Plant Sale:

Sheelagh Rowland and Trish Bolton
plantsale.ohs@oakvillehort.org

Garden Tour:

Paula Clayton
gardentour.ohs@oakvillehort.org

Junior Garden:

Helen Stephenson
juniors.ohs@oakvillehort.org

Website:

<http://www.oakvillehort.org>

Greetings to all of you. With our Zoom call scheduled for Monday December 7th, We approach the end of 2020. Although we gardeners have been able to enjoy our time outdoors even as the months since early March have brought so much uncertainty, as a Society, we have not had a typical year. Nevertheless, it is time for us to consider what we have accomplished despite the limitations we were operating under. When the annual report is ready to share, it will contain details of what we have learned from our speakers, and the ways we were able to be active in our community.



Like all community groups, the Board of Directors meets to plan and oversee the schedule of the year, and in our monthly executive meetings (via Zoom), we have considered the ways we would be able to achieve the OHS mandate, given all the activities we were forced to cancel. As mentioned at the November meeting, we cannot have an Annual General Meeting because of indoor group size restrictions. That also means that we need a workaround (planned for the December meeting) to have a slate of officers to carry us into 2021. Never fear – the OHS will prevail!

As you know, our Society is part of and supported by the leadership of the Ontario Horticulture Association's District Six. The District Six Executive has provided invaluable advice and direction over the last year and held the District Annual General Meeting on Saturday November 21. There was a healthy quorum on the call, and a number of motions were passed. In addition, Florenda and I learned about a wide range of approaches being used by Societies across the District with the possibility that some may be adopted here. We are proud of the novel initiatives we were able to introduce this year, and it is evident that other Societies have been busy and inventive as well. More details to follow.

Ever the optimist, I am hopeful that regular meetings will resume at some time in 2021 - and we want you to know that we will need all of you to help us get back into the usual swing of things. So, if you have not already renewed your membership, please take a few minutes to do it now. It has never been easier, with the etransfer option introduced a few months ago. About our membership – it naturally shrinks and grows and changes and we want to be sure that we continue to deliver what both new and long-time members want. So please tell us what you think a good horticultural society should offer.

I urge all of you to join our Zoom call on December 7th. Another great door prize will be available for some lucky randomly selected participant. It could be you!

In closing, I wish you all the best for the holiday season ahead. Stay well – I hope you are all able to enjoy the last weeks of this most unusual year.

Paula

Please Join US!



Brian and Jane Yager were residents of Oakville for 22 years prior to relocating to Ferryland on the east coast of the Newfoundland's Avalon Peninsula. They decided to start up a small commercial farming operation in 2013, eager for the challenge of making good soil and growing local food. They grow a variety of vegetables and small fruits on acreage of Crown Land leased from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. The joy comes from relationships with chefs and garden centres as the movement for local food grows. Their hobby has become their passion and they enjoy sharing their farming experiences with others.



The Natural Gardener Inc.
P.O. Box 198
Ferryland, NL A0A2H0
709-330-0889

**Monday,
December 7, 2020**



Oakville Horticultural Society: Proposed Budget 2020-2021

Revenue

Description	Actual 2020 YTD	Budget 2020	Variance 2020	Proposed 2021 Budget
Bulbs, Plants & Seeds	0.00	300.00	-300.00	300.00
Draw Table	396.00	800.00	-404.00	400.00
May Plant Sale	0.00	6,000.00	-6,000.00	4000.00
Membership	1,455.00	1,800.00	-345.00	1300.00
Interest	933.32	850.00	83.32	690.00
Donations	415.40	0.00	415.40	0.00
Garden Tour	0.00	2,500.00	-2,500.00	1500.00
Ontario Grant	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	1000.00
Miscellaneous	803.21	0.00	803.21	0.00
Community Programs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Workshops	0.00	200.00	-200.00	0.00
Junior Program Registrations	0.00	60.00	-60.00	60.00
Special Events	0.00	0.00	0.00	250.00
Total Revenue	5,002.93	13,510.00	-8,507.07	9,500.00

Expenses

Description	Actual 2020 YTD	Budget 2020	Variance 2020	Proposed 2021 Budget
Publicity	251.84	400.00	-148.16	400.00
Social Convenor	387.51	400.00	-12.49	200.00
Bulbs, Plants & Seeds	0.00	400.00	-400.00	300.00
Public Planting	160.36	600.00	-439.64	425.00
Community Programs	1,062.50	1,500.00	-437.50	1,300.00
OHS Memberships	587.60	700.00	-112.40	600.00
Executive	260.81	1,350.00	-1,089.19	1,500.00
Draw Table Convenor	84.65	350.00	-265.35	175.00
Monthly Shows	854.23	1,330.00	-475.77	670.00
Garden Tour Convenor	0.00	650.00	-650.00	650.00
Newsletter	378.92	200.00	178.92	200.00
Monthly Programs	2,083.35	3,700.00	-1,616.65	3,930.00
Junior Program	54.73	1,000.00	-945.27	800.00
May Plant Sale	136.00	3,750.00	-3,614.00	2,750.00
Equipment/Improvements	0.00	500.00	-500.00	1,500.00
Special Events	0.00	400.00	-400.00	100.00
Miscellaneous	463.83	100.00	363.83	100.00
Contingency	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Total Expenses	6,766.33	17,330.00	-10,563.67	15,700.00





OHS Slate of Nominees for 2021

President: Paula Clayton
Treasurer: Larry Urbanoski
Secretary: Florenda Tingle
Directors: Wade Pitman
Sheelagh Rowland
Myroslawa Lukiwsky
Rob Welsh
Patty O'Connor

Committees and Leads:

Plant Sale: Sheelagh Rowland and Trish Bolton
Garden Tour: Paula Clayton, Florenda Tingle and Sheelagh Rowland
Junior Gardeners: Helen Stephenson and Nino Zaino
Fun with Flowers: Florenda Tingle
Membership: Judy Bridges, Christel Mahncke and Wade Pitman
Newsletter: Myroslawa Lukiwsky
Programs: Myroslawa Lukiwsky and Heather Reccord
Website: Wade Pitman
Anderson Parkette: Florenda Tingle
Facebook: Veronica Heiderich
Hospitality: Valerie Rughi
Design/Horticulture: Marie Decker
Draw Table: Florenda Tingle

society news continued...



Renew your Oakville Horticultural Membership

It's time to renew your membership!

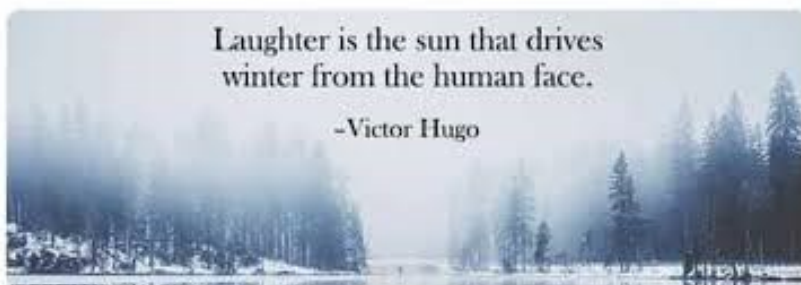
As you know in this past year many of the OHS spring programs were cancelled due to the pandemic. Where possible others were scaled back or altered. The Junior program had to be cancelled but the space was repurposed to grow vegetables for community members in need. The Anderson Parkette was maintained by a small group of dedicated volunteers (social distanced of course) and an extra "Summer" newsletter was produced this year. Some spring meetings had to be cancelled but we started again in September with some great speaker presentations on "Zoom" and will be continuing on Zoom for the foreseeable future.

Please rejoin the Oakville Horticultural Society as we find ways in these difficult times to continue our mandate to "further the knowledge of Horticulture, stimulating an interest in gardening in our community's youth and encouraging the beautification of Oakville"... and hope we can get together, in person, again soon.

We now have 3 methods by which you can pay your membership *.
(Single \$20, Family \$30)

- 1) In person (we are not having in-person meetings so this is not possible at this time).
- 2) Online**: To pay your membership please send an Interac e-Transfer from your bank to memberpay@oakvillehort.org.
- 3) Send cheque to**: Oakville Horticultural Society
P.O. Box 69605
109 Thomas Street
Oakville, ON L6J 7R4

With Gratitude,
Your friends at the Oakville Horticultural Society.





Potluck Diner and Annual Meeting



**Volunteer Appreciation
Tea**



society news

continued...





Family Day - Fun with Flowers

**February Speaker
Steve Wiersma**





District 6 Meeting



Awards Evening



March Speaker
Ken Brown



society news continued...





newsletter contributor



Our 2020 Community Tree Planting

We recently held our second community tree planting event.

As many of you will recall, a couple of years ago District 6 challenged all of the 20+ horticultural societies to commit to planting a tree every year in their respective communities. Oakville Horticultural Society was happy to take on this challenge and did not want Covid 19 to derail this worthwhile activity for our society this year.

The executive communicated via email with town staff (with guidance from Oakvillegreen) to find a suitable location where a young native tulip tree could be planted, with room for it to mature to the glorious, majestic tree that it eventually grows into. A site near the pond behind the Wellspring Birmingham Gilgam House at Sixth Line and Hayes Blvd. was identified and approved by Town Staff and a date was set for November 4th for our tree planting.

The Tulip tree was purchased from Sheridan Nurseries on Southdown Road and we thank Sarah Peters, Acting Manager of the store, for providing free delivery of it to the site on the day of the planting.

In attendance at the planting 'ceremony' were three Oakville town staff: Curtis Marcoux, Supervisor, Invasive Species, Melissa DeCiantis and Lloyd Brown who brought along the mulch and stakes to support the tree. Oakville Horticultural Society executive committee members Paula Clayton, Robert Welsh, Sheelagh Rowland and Florenda Tingle attended with shovels in hand and did the planting. As you may recall, November 4th was the first day of an unusual stretch of summer-like weather we were treated to. A better day, we could not have asked for – warm and sunny – so no coats required.

It was very satisfying to plant this beautiful native tree for future generations at Wellspring. As many OHS members may recall, our much-loved past president Stuart Gough had great things to say about the care and support he received from the staff and volunteers at this facility during his cancer journey a few years ago.

The photos that appear below capture the day's activity. Social distancing was observed. (Masks were removed for an instant while we took photos with smiling faces.) Well done Oakville Hort Society!

Florenda Tingle





This is a reminder that we set up a members only Facebook group this year in order to provide members of the Oakville Horticultural Society a way to post and share information as a private online group.

To join all you need is a Facebook account and request to join the group name “Oakville Hort Sharing” or contact our Administrator Veronica

<https://www.facebook.com/veronica.heiderich> .

Access will be given as soon as possible upon request. Non Facebook members can post information by asking someone who has a Facebook account and is in the group to post on your behalf or contact Veronica by email bvervah7@gmail.com .

Share what is happening in your garden with photos. Have gardening questions, ideas or concerns? Need local or online resources identified? Want to share plants that you are digging and dividing? Do you have advice or proven methods? Anything gardening goes, meeting current bylaws and public health guidelines. The content is only limited by our imagination of what we would like to communicate with other members. The group will be moderated by Veronica our Facebook Administrator. Let's dig in!

Thank you, Veronica



Wolf Creek Trout Lily Preserve

Whigham, Georgia

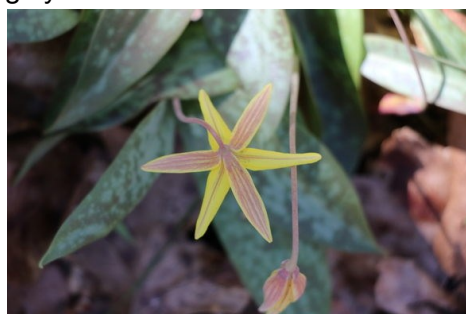
This protected reserve is home to a rare and beautiful species of flower.

LOCATED IN RURAL GRADY COUNTY, Georgia, between the towns of Cairo and Whigham, Wolf Creek Trout Lily Preserve is the location of the largest concentration of trout lilies in the world.

In the Southern United States, these flowers are usually only found concentrated in the area in and around the Appalachian Mountains. Though no one knows exactly how they ended up in South Georgia, a theory is that they migrated here tens of thousands of years ago during an ice age. While trout lilies can now be found in some areas in Southwest Georgia and North Florida, the area around Wolf Creek — which includes a hardwood forest with flecked sunlight in the winter, a north-facing slope, and a moist layer of soil over clay — was apparently a perfect environment for the spread of the lilies. This 140-acre preserve is home to millions of yellow and maroon dimpled trout lilies and thousands of maroon spotted trilliums.

The area was designated as a conservation area in 2009, after years of efforts by volunteers, the (Tallahassee) Magnolia Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society, Georgia Land Conservation Program, Georgia Native Plant Society, and the Georgia Botanical Society.

During the bloom season, which is typically in February and/or early March, the area is open for visitors and guided tours. Bringing a camera is highly recommended.





After the last winter gardening chores are done, my brain atrophies and goes dormant. I just hope that it is perennial! So in lieu of thinking, I have cadged a few quotes and jokes from the internet. Whatever did we do before the internet? Thought for ourselves I suppose.

Two little bunnies bless their souls
Go into hiding in their holes.
And then emerge a seething mob
It must have been an inside job.

Nature looks dead in winter because her life is gathered into her heart. She withers the plant down to the roots so that she may grow again fairer and stronger. She calls her family together within her innermost home to prepare them for being scattered upon the face of the earth

Hugh Macmillan 1871

New gardeners learn by trowel and error.

What a severe and yet master artist old winter is. No longer the canvas and the pigments, but the marble and the chisel.

John Burroughs 1860

Grow your own dope. Plant a man.

At Christmas I no more desire a rose
Than wish a snow in May's newfangled mirth
But take each thing that in season grows.
William Shakespeare

It's good to talk to your plants. The reason is that you breathe carbon dioxide on them, and they like that.

God gave us memories so that we might have roses in December.
J. M. Barrie

Plants want to grow. They are on your side as long as you are reasonably sensible.
Anne Wareham

A man walks into a florist's and says "I want some flowers". "What do you have in mind" says the florist. "Er, I don't know" says the man. Perhaps I can help" says the florist," what exactly did you do?"

The simplicity of winter has a deep moral. The return of Nature, after such a career of splendour and prodigality to habits so simple and austere is not lost on either the head or the heart. It is the philosopher coming back from the banquet and the wine to a cup of water and





Spring summer and fall fill us with hope. Winter alone reminds us of the human condition.

Mignon McLaughlan

Compostaphile or compostaphobe. To rot or not to rot.

One kind word can warm three winter months.

Japanese proverb.

Winter is Nature's way of saying, "Up yours".

The colour of spring is in the flowers. The colour of winter is in the imagination

Terri Guillamets

Why are men like lawnmowers?

They are difficult to get started, emit foul odours, and don't work half the time.

On that note I leave you. Enjoy those seed catalogues and try something different.

Happy gardening dreams, David Marshall!



Lucky winner from November virtual meeting



Congratulations on participating in our virtual meeting and winning a prize! See you at our next virtual meeting December 7, 2020!

Next Prize

?

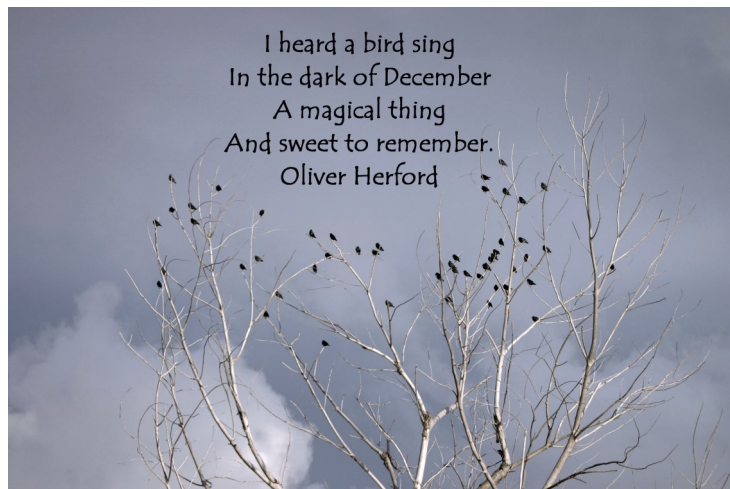




The following chart shows the meetings scheduled for 2020/2021. If you wish to sit in on an executive committee meeting, you are welcome to do so. Just drop either Paula or Wade a line to let them know.

Both Monthly and Executive meetings will take place on Zoom until further notice. We are doing our best.

Monthly Meetings All dates are Mondays	Executive Meeting Mondays or Tuesdays	Day	Notes
September 14, 2020	September 21 (Zoom)	Monday	
October 5	October 19 (Zoom)	Monday	Thanksgiving 12 th
November 9	November 16	Monday	
December 7 (AGM & Pot Luck)	No meeting in December		No Pot Luck this year.
January 11, 2021	January 18, 2021	Monday	
February 8	February 16	Tuesday	Family Day 15 th
March 8	March 15	Monday	
April 12	April 19	Monday	Good Friday April 2 nd
May 10	May 17	Tuesday	Victoria Day May 24 th
June 14	June 21	Monday	
July & August	SUMMER BREAK		No meetings
September 13	September 20	Monday	Labour day Sept. 6 th
October 18	October 25	Monday	Thanksgiving Oct. 11 th
November 8	November 15	Monday	
AGM & Pot Luck Dinner – December 13, 2021	No meeting in December		



News Flash – Enter to win a Google Home Mini!

Buy an Oakville Horticultural Society GIFT membership for a brand NEW member and you will be automatically entered in a draw to win a Google Home Mini -- compliments of Cat McGill, President of District 6. This contest is open to all District 6 societies.

The names of the eligible purchasers will be submitted for the draw by our membership secretary, end of day December 23rd so there is nothing else for you to do once the GIFT membership has been paid for. The prize will be delivered to the winner after Christmas. So, spread the love of gardening to those around you! Mailman, teacher, neighbour, or some young person new to gardening... anyone who might enjoy belonging to a group of gardening fanatics and good luck!

Important Notice

society news ...



Cross Pollination December/January 2020 Issue

<https://haltonmastergardeners.files.wordpress.com/2020/11/cross-pollination-2020-12-final.pdf>



Save
the
Date

Seedy Sunday in late February



community news ...

GARDENMAKING

Inspiring & informing home gardeners

For some wonderful gardening information, please visit: <https://gardenmaking.com/>



The 50 Most Beautiful Places in the World

<https://www.cntraveler.com/galleries/2015-11-27/the-50-most-beautiful-places-in-the-world>



UNESCO World Heritage Gardens

Please visit: <https://europeanhistoricgardens.eu/en/gardens/>



WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEY THE 7 BEST UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE GARDENS

Please visit: <https://worldheritagejourney.com/best-world-heritage>



Dallying In The Dirt, Issue #374 - Is this the last rose of summer?

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/1/#search/ken+brown/MfcgxwKjKngVSdqzPCNJjHjtsctQqSG>



LOOKING FOR SEEDS?

This is a list of vegetable and fruit seeds that were sold in recent years by Canadian seed companies.

<https://seeds.ca/sw8/web/diversity/seed-catalogue-index>

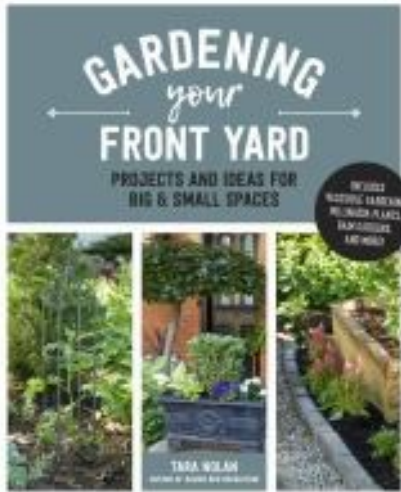


Winter Reads: Favourite books for

Gardening your Front Yard

PROJECTS AND IDEAS FOR BIG & SMALL SPACES

BY NOLAN, TARA



Gardening Your Front Yard is an active, inspiring resource that shows you how to treat your front yard like a backyard without sacrificing beauty, from choosing the right plants to building walkways and setting up a front yard patio. Raised Bed Revolution of SavvyGardening.com weaves you past the main pitfalls you may counter when trying to fit a garden or gardens between your home and the street. This beautiful and comprehensive hardcover book shows how to accomplish several hard scaping projects, such as laying a mowing border and building a walkway; provides inspiration to create a rain garden; and gives DIY instructions for making your own raised beds, a bench, a privacy screen, and more—all custom-designed for the rigors of front-yard gardening. *Gardening Your Front Yard* is a gardening book in every sense of the word, however. Choosing the right plants is even more important when you are dealing with a small, highly visible area sometimes with less than ideal growing conditions. You will find advice on planting around foundation walls, and dealing with road salt, as well as planting boulevards/hell strips. Shade gardens, privacy screening, and security dos and don'ts are covered, plus how to intermingle edibles and landscape plants, dry creek beds, picket fences, and much, much more, convert your front yard from a bland grasscape to a vital living space.

Tara Nolan, author of *Raised Bed Revolution*, is a garden writer and editor with a diverse background in publishing. Her work has appeared in the *Toronto Star*, as well as in magazines, including *Reader's Digest* and *Canadian Living*, and on websites, like *Design*Sponge*. Tara is a co-founder, with three other garden writers, of *Savvy Gardening* (www.savvygardening.com) and was the award-winning web editor of *Canadian Gardening* magazine's website (CanadianGardening.com) for six years. Tara does work for the *Toronto Botanical Garden* and the *Canadian Garden Council*, and volunteers for the *Royal Botanical Garden*. She is also a member of GWA: The Association for Garden Communicators. Tara is from the Toronto, Canada, area.



Experience real flavor from the food you grow, delight in old-fashioned fragrant flowers, add history to your landscape with heirloom fruit. Planting a garden of any size is an opportunity to dig deeper into the past, to rediscover older varieties that have largely been dropped from the seed catalogs.

In **THE NEW HEIRLOOM GARDEN** (*Harmony | Rodale Books; On Sale February 2, 2021*), you'll be inspired to create your own heirloom garden with tangible gardening tips, twelve themed garden designs, and detailed resources and interviews with seed savers who share their stories.

Just in time for the first spring thaw, the first half of the book shares specific garden plans, plant keys with descriptions, plant and seed wish lists, and even tips and tricks to handle local weather. The second half of the book has 60 heirloom recipes, arranged by plant family.



My newest book will inspire you to design a kitchen garden and plant heirloom seeds, plus become a seed saver to pass along seeds to other gardeners. Click here to read the Press Release for: [New Heirloom Garden Book](#)



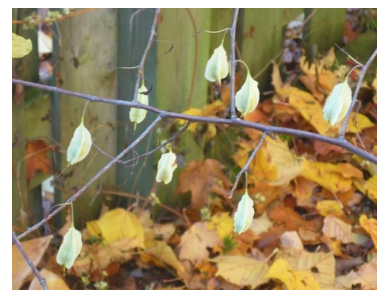
winter reads...

* * * 'Quietly
The garden trees shake down their crown of leaves'.
Sidney Keyes (1922-1940) The Collected Poems * * *

The most recent Garden Notes looked at some of the perennial plants and colchicums that brighten the last days of the gardening season. Sometimes, as this year, they go on and on and on until I am pushed to remove them so that it's possible to turn my attention to other garden tasks. A good example this fall was the oval bed, inescapably dubbed 'The Egg', at the entrance to the driveway, that we have filled for the past few summers, as the tulips or daffodils die back, with *Salvia coccinea*, Texas sage, and which I once asserted to be more tender than the most tender night. I am devoted to this sage because it lacks the quality that is often enthusiastically identified with red-flowering sage, that of brassiness. Its flowers are spaced well apart, so that the overall effect is of a relaxed airiness. It tolerates extended drought and responds well to being cut back in August to produce a second flowering. Ruth Rogers Clausen tells us (*Perennials for American Gardens*) that 'it is often grown as an annual,' the only option if you live north of the southern United States and Mexico. We import the plants, splendidly started, from Katie Dawson at Cut and Dried Flower Farm. They were still flowering cheerfully until October 14 when I finally cut them down, leaving the roots to self-compost. A few first-year plants of *Michauxia tchihatchewii* were left undisturbed, 40 bulbs of *Narcissus 'Joyce Spirit'*, a change from our traditional tulips, were dropped between them, and The Egg was ready for next spring.



But in October, the garden is dominated by the seedheads and foliage of our deciduous trees and shrubs. Some of these are nervously at the edge of hardiness, surviving, when they do through a combination of factors: fast-draining sandy, gravelly soil that encourages the trees to go dormant; hedges and fences that give them a chance to establish before being exposed to the bitterest winter elements; and a good snow mulch, though this is unfortunately not dependable. An example is the seed-grown *Halesia carolina* from the American south-east that has graduated to 3m with a sprinkling of small snowdrop-white flowers in late spring followed by charmingly earnest fruit that cling from August on into winter, but which every winter faces the possibility of being frozen to death.



Acer tschonoskii comes – the happy randomness of a seed packet – in two subspecies, *koreanum* and *rubripes*, the leaves differing slightly but both bright with red and orange fall colour. Its homeland is mostly Japan, but three of our four plants have grown well in spite of their reputed unhappiness, like that of *halesia*, with high pH soils. I tried to grow three together so that they would form a sunshade over *Cornus sericea 'Hedgerows Gold'*, but only two grew strongly so that another design concept was thwarted. Our diary records that on October 11 'I sat for two hours in the SE corner of the Front Lawn admiring *Acer tschonoskii* and reading *To the Lighthouse*.' The gardener's life is often hard.



Acer triflorum, here partly obscured by the newly fashionable Seven Son Flower tree, Heptacodium miconioides (seed was introduced to the USA in 1980: 30 years is 'recent' in the horticultural world), is sometimes referred to as the 'Korean maple' but by us as Le Grand Orange. It is one of the half-dozen trifoliate maples that are happy here, requiring an annual haircut to prevent it from taking over the Nursery Garden. Its Chinese version, well-known to gardeners wherever it is growable, the 'Paperbark maple', Acer griseum, does unfailingly well as an understory tree. A year ago we cut down much of a sugar maple that had been shading it; will it be unfailing now that it is more exposed?



Most visitors to the garden do not identify the Japanese Acer maximowiczianum, the Nikko maple, and A. cissifolium, the vine-leaf maple, as maples because their foliage is strikingly different from the sugar and silver maples (saccharum and saccharinum respectively) with which we are familiar. Our vine-leaf maple offers none of the autumnal flames of its Asiatic brethren, because it is in too much shade, but its foliage, suspended on red twigs, offers a cooling, elegant contrast. The Nikko maple is in full sun, with a golden-leaved tulip tree as its background. Its young foliage, soft, gently ridged, demands to be stroked. It is the latest of our maples to colour, slowly turning a soft rose throughout October before becoming a typical engulfing red and orange in early November if the weather holds.





The Nursery Garden contributes not only the Korean maple to the fall fireworks but also two dramatic mountain ash trees, *Sorbus pohuashanensis*, described by Hillier as ‘possibly the best Chinese rowan of its kind’ and *S. commixta* whose electric spring foliage I have frequently admired in these pages, along with two shrubs, *Cornus kousa* ex. ‘Miss Satomi’ and the seldom seen *Disanthus cercidiphyllum*, described by Helen Dillon as ‘a Japanese shrub of fussy temperament, for lime-free soil and a sheltered position.’ The sheltered position we have given it, the lime-free soil we have not. That may explain why it does not produce ‘its brilliant claret- red’ autumnal display and its future may be troubled. It is a graceful spreading plant, a native of China and Japan, and its redbud- shaped foliage – hence the specific *cercidiphyllum* – sits gently over the special forms of *Helleborus x hybridus* that flourish beneath it.



The dogwood, *Cornus kousa*, a seedling from the well-known cultivar ‘Miss Satomi’ is, like so many of our plants, a gift from a friend. It has grown surprisingly steadily but not flowered; perhaps it is not quite mature enough. As compensation it offers deep purple October foliage, though we have not



given up the hope of seeing great clusters of dark pink bracts next June.



Sorbus commixta, another Japanese migrant, has romped in our alkaline soil and now dominates the north-west corner of the Nursery Garden where it adds to the colourful October firestorm.

* * *

Our Garden Diary contains the following entry on June 22 this summer: 'Moved the blue Maze bench and made a decision to abandon the Maze, but to keep the central square with its bench, and have a path to it directly from the trellis.' This was a difficult decision, the outcome of much unsettling interior dialogue.

The decision to create the maze came in a rather roundabout way. We had long been disappointed that the best views to the east across the Niagara escarpment were not possible from the garden, that it was necessary to climb the fence and walk 40m up a gentle incline in the company of a herd of cattle. The obvious solution – obvious to everyone but us – was to take the garden to the top of the slope, and exclude the cattle with a new fence. That added about 0.4ha to the garden, and it was in that space we decided to make a multicursal maze simply mown in to the reviving grass. It would be an additional feature of interest and it would link me back to my childhood visits to the famous maze at Hampton Court. There were about 800m of path that could be mown, if the grass had not been allowed to become too tall, in about twenty to twenty-five minutes with a power hand-pushed mower.

The maze was made in October 1991. The garden is labour intensive, and I am older than I was in 1991. Twenty-five minutes do not sound like very much, but on a steamy July day, added to the other garden demands, they felt increasingly oppressive, increasingly unjustifiable. We have some help, help that was needed for other tasks. The rational decision was to stop mowing the maze. I felt relieved and saddened that the emotional link to my childhood was being lost as I watched the grass grow and the paths became muddled, but it's important to know when to let go.

Garden Diary, November 20:

'In the a.m. and early p.m. I finished putting on tree guards. Very weary and weak after lunch so dozed until 4.30 when I suddenly decided to mow the maze.'

Brian Bixley, November 27, 2020



‘Dora got into the train...She reflected that she was lucky to have a seat, and with a certain satisfaction watched the corridor fill up with passengers who had no seats. An elderly lady, struggling through the crush, her feet trapped in a heap of luggage, addressed Dora’s neighbour. Dora stopped listening because a dreadful thought had struck her. She ought to give up her seat. She rejected the thought, but it came back...The elderly lady looked very frail indeed, and it was only proper that Dora, who was young and healthy, should give her seat to the lady...She sat still and considered the matter. There was no point in being hasty. It was possible that while clearly admitting that she ought to give up her seat she might simply not do so out of pure selfishness. This would in some ways be a better situation than what would have been the case if it had not occurred to her that she ought to give up her seat. Dora examined the other inhabitants of the carriage. None of them looked in the least uneasy. Their faces reflected the selfish glee which had probably been on her own a moment earlier. There was another aspect to the matter. She had taken the trouble to arrive early, and surely ought to be rewarded for this... there was an elementary justice in the first comers having the seats. The old lady would be perfectly all right in the corridor. The corridor was full of old ladies any way, and no one seemed bothered by this, least of all the old ladies themselves. Dora hated pointless sacrifices. She was tired after her recent emotions and deserved a rest. She regarded her state of distress as completely neurotic. She decided not to give up her seat.

She got up and said to the standing lady, “Do sit down here, please. I’m not going far, and I’d much rather stand anyway.”

“How very kind of you!” said the standing lady.’



According to Dr. Paul Bosland, a premier pepper expert, the fruits (reminder: peppers are not vegetables!) have a long history as dazzling decor. In the 16th century, Europeans were delighted by colored peppers, and used them ornamentally long before they thought about eating them. In the early 20th century, Christmas peppers stood shoulder-to-shoulder with a handful of other holiday plants: Jerusalem cherries, cyclamens, and, of course, the poinsettia.

The Christmas pepper fell by the wayside, says Bosland. But another characteristic contributed to its downfall, too. In a December 26, 1954, edition of the New York Times, writer Elizabeth Turner lambasted the pepper plant as “the Christmas plant with the least future.” While she admired its Christmas coloring, she complained that it had a “bad habit of dropping both leaves and foliage overnight.”

Despite the poinsettia hegemony, Bosland hasn’t given up on the celebratory pepper. As the head of New Mexico State University’s Chile Pepper Institute, he works with breeders who have produced many holiday themed peppers. There’s the NuMex Christmas pepper, of course, plus the NuMex Easter (with pastel chilis), the NuMex St. Patrick’s Day (green and orange fruit, and white flowers, for the Irish flag), and the NuMex Halloween (black and orange). Not to mention, New Mexico’s ristra wreaths, made of colorful dried chili peppers, can be a holiday tradition too.



Beat the Winter Blues



Sunday, January 10, 8:30 am to 2:30 pm

Opening Remarks @9:00 am

Niki Jabbour

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