

The East York Garden

Newsletter of the East York Garden Club

January & February, 2005

The East York Garden Club is a member of the Ontario Horticultural Association, District 5.

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month (except August and December) in the Stan Wadlow Clubhouse, 373 Cedarvale Avenue at 7:30 p.m. The Clubhouse is wheelchair-accessible. Visitors are always welcome.

Yearly membership fees are \$20 for a single, and \$30 for a family. To inquire about membership, contact Denise Alexander at 416-759-5736.

Visit us on the web at www.eygc.ca

President:
Malcolm Geast

Vice-Presidents:
Linda Boyko
Dawn McEachern

Newsletter Editor:
Malcolm Geast

Thursday, January 20, 2005

Speaker: Laura Grant
Topic: Small Water Gardens for Tight Spaces

Laura founded the Ontario Water Garden Society. Her exquisite East York garden features several water features including ponds and bogs. A long-time member of the Toronto Rhododendron Society, she recently became Executive Director of the American Rhododendron Society.

Members whose surnames begin with A, B, or C are asked to bring some cookies or sweets for the evening's tea. There will also be a draw table following this meeting.

Thursday, February 17, 2005

Speaker: Jacqui Dixon
Topic: Japanese Maples in Small Gardens

Jacqui is a Toronto Master Gardener and is passionate in finding the best plants for her Leaside garden. Japanese maples are a favourite. They must be small to fit in – she is growing at least 35 different cultivars.

Members whose surnames begin with D, E, or F are asked to bring some cookies or sweets for the evening's tea. There will also be a draw table following this meeting.

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Speaker: Mike Maves
Topic: Vegetables in the Garden

Find out the best conditions for various vegetables and when the best time is to plant and harvest them.

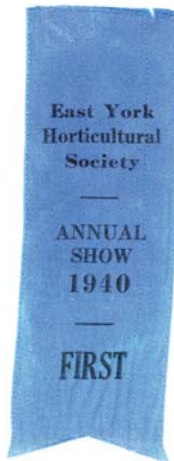


Upcoming in April: Native Plant Gardening, with Ken Parker

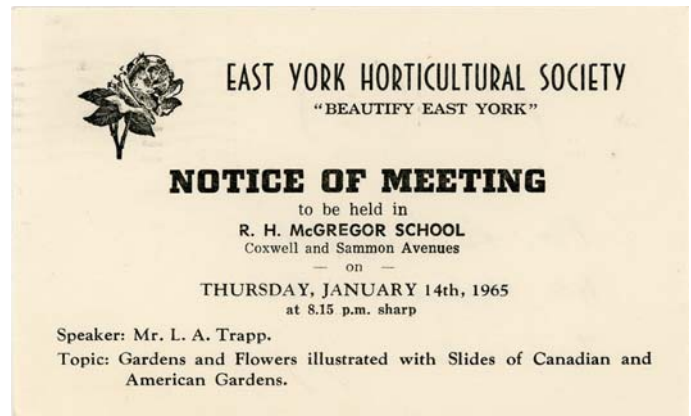
From the President's Desk

2005 marks the 80th anniversary of the founding of our Club. It may not be quite the same as a 50th or 75th, but it's still a significant milestone. We've gone through remarkably few changes over the years. There have been a couple of name changes, from the Greenwood and Woodbine Horticultural Society to the East York Horticultural Society in 1929 and then the East York Garden Club in 1968. Our location has remained exceptionally stable. After meeting at R.H. McGregor School for the first forty years, in 1965 we moved to our current location, known then as the Cedarvale Clubhouse, and now as the Stan Wadlow Community Centre.

Over the course of 80 years, a considerable amount of memorabilia can be accumulated: yearbooks, newsletters, meeting notices, newspaper clippings, and photographs. Unfortunately, the items that we have are scattered through the past 65 years: a few show ribbons from the forties (the oldest of which you can see here), meeting notices from the sixties, some photographs (mostly undated) from the eighties and fifties, an assortment of newsletters, and yearbooks dating back to only 1978. Although many other items were saved over the years, most of them left our possession in the early nineties.



East York Horticultural Society Picnic at Dieppe Park, date uncertain, likely 1940's or 1950s



Forty Years Ago...

Those items that were lost to us are unlikely to be ever found again. However, we would like to be able to put our hands on any historical items or records that still exist. If you have any memorabilia related to the Club's activities over the years, we would greatly appreciate it if you could donate or lend it to the Club. We understand that you may not wish to part with a lot of this material. But if you could let us have it for a brief period, copies can be made, or photographs taken. With regard to yearbooks, 1997, 1979, and all editions prior to 1978 are missing. We have a nearly continuous file of newsletters back to 1993, and then several bunches from the early eighties, late seventies, and mid-fifties.

As I noted at the top, this isn't as big an anniversary as a 50th or 75th, and as a result, we haven't planned on marking it in the same way as we did five years ago. But there is one event that we're hoping to participate in this year that we haven't been a part of for some time. Last year it was suggested to me that we should have a presence in the annual Canada Day parade. I must admit that I was a little reluctant at first. However, at the October round-table and the November AGM, I saw enough support to convince me that we should look into it further. It's still not a certainty, and we have no idea yet what exactly we'll be doing, but in another couple of months (once we're finished working on the District 5 AGM), we'll be making a firm decision. And don't worry, we're not going to ask you to dress up as flowers.

Malcolm Geast

The Rain, the Park, and Other Things.....

The OHA District 5 Annual General Meeting is now less than three months away. As you probably know, on April 9, along with the Leaside Garden Society, we are co-hosting this year's event. The theme for this year's meeting is The Rain, the Park, and Other Things.

We've invited Environment Canada's David Phillips to speak about *Gardening in a Changing Climate*. You've probably seen David in one his frequent appearances on the nightly news, the Weather Network, or the Discovery Channel. As the creator and author of the Canadian Weather Trivia Calendar (still Canada's best selling calendar), he has an encyclopaedic knowledge of weather and climate events, which he is always willing to talk about with great enthusiasm.

In *Celebrating and Protecting the Massey Creek*, Andrew McCammon will be speaking about the Taylor Massey Project, an ambitious plan to protect and restore the natural features of an important part of the East York and eastern Scarborough communities, and the core of much of East York's parkland.

Several of us have been working on the arrangements for this meeting since late 2003. But when we get closer to the meeting, we'll need a bit of assistance. In particular, we'll be asking for about a dozen volunteers to help out on the evening before, and the day of the meeting, assisting with setup, providing directions, and helping with registration and the flower show. We'll be circulating a volunteer sheet at the February meeting, but if you're interesting in helping, you can speak to one of the members of the Organizing Committee at the next meeting, or you

can call or email Malcolm Geast at 416-429-4719 (malcolm@eastyork.net)

AGM Organizing Committee:

Don Beard (Leaside)
Joanna Blanchard (Leaside)
Barb Foster (East York)
Betty Goldring (East York)
Malcolm Geast (East York)
Anna Leggatt (East York & Leaside)
Dawn McEachern (East York)
June Murdoch (Leaside & East York)
Sheila Whiteley (Leaside)

Two Important Requests

Each November we elect an Executive Board, which oversees the operation of the Club. As well as the elected positions, there are also four positions that are appointed: the Treasurer, the Secretary, and two Financial Reviewers. We have a Treasurer and a Secretary, but no Financial Reviewers. These are positions that must be filled in order for us to produce a financial statement, and to receive our Provincial Grant. The duties are to, once a year, review the financial records and transactions of the Club, and to approve the Treasurer's end-of-year financial statement. Except for those who are a part of the Executive Committee, any member of the Club can be a Financial Reviewer. Please consider volunteering

for one of these positions; the duties are not onerous, but the importance of the work makes it a valuable and much-appreciated position.

It appears that, for the District 5 Annual Meeting in April, we may be in need of an LCD projector (i.e. a projector that can be used with a laptop computer). Since purchasing or renting one would be overly expensive, we are asking if any of our members have access to one of these projectors that could be loaned to us for one day. If you are able to help out in this situation, please call or email Malcolm Geast at 416-429-4719, malcolm@eastyork.net

2005 Meeting Schedule

January 20	Laura Grant	Small Water Gardens for Tight Spaces
February 17	Jacqui Dixon	Japanese Maples in Small Gardens
March 17	Mike Maves	Vegetables in the Garden
April 21	Ken Parker	Native Plant Gardening
May 19	Canadian Food Inspection Agency	Watch Out! The Asian Long-horned Beetle and Other Pests
June 16	Rosemary Dobson	Flower Arranging In and Out of Water
July 21	Pot-luck Supper at The Rockery in Stan Wadlow Park	
August 27 (Saturday)	Annual Flower Show & Tea	
September 15	Larry Lamb	Exotic Invaders – Our New Weeds
October 20	Round Table Discussions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting your Garden Ready for Winter • Simple Seasonal Decorations • Club Talk • Question Time 	
November 17	Annual General Meeting, Awards Presentation, and Pot-luck Supper	

And the Answers are...

Every year, at our October meeting, we pass around a questionnaire asking you about issues for the upcoming year. This past October, we had 44 responses. Here are some of the results:

The first question asked you about the topics that you're interested in this year. There was considerable enthusiasm for Native Plant Gardening with Ken Parker. As a result, we've booked him for the meeting in May. Many of you were also interested in Japanese Maples (which became our topic for the February meeting), and Exotic Invaders – our New Weeds (that one is on the list for September). A couple of other topics that you were interested in didn't make it onto the schedule for 2005, but we'll remember them when it comes time to think about 2006.

There were several recommendations for speakers, but most of them were people who we have had in 2003 or 2004. Generally we don't like to repeat speakers for a couple years, but we'll take your recommendations into account if we're thinking of rebooking any of them next year or in 2007. We'll also take it as a sign that you've been happy with the speakers that we've had in recent years.

On the question of the July meeting, there were 20 that preferred the pot-luck in the park, six for the regular meeting, eight for both, and 10 had no preference. We're glad to hear that you've enjoyed the summer pot-luck suppers. This July we'll do it again when with we have another get-together in the area above The Rockery .

Bus tours have been a bit of a problem over the past few years. Support that shows up early in the year seems to evaporate by summer, and as a result we haven't been able to sign up the number of people required to prevent a financial disaster. This year, 24 people (more than 50% of those who responded) said that they would go on a tour. Only 10 said no, and another 10 were non-committal. We'll try it again, and hope that we can find a time when all those who wish to go are available.

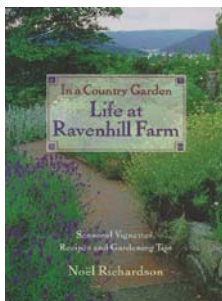
The final section of the questionnaire asks if you would be willing to volunteer to help with various activities of the Club and asks you to check off the activities with which you'd like to be involved. There were 32 positive responses, with a total of 61 boxes checked.

Books for a Winter's Evening

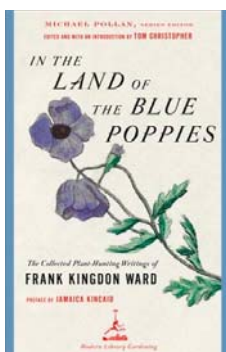
Linda Boyko

If you are tired of looking at your snow (or slush) covered yard and the seed catalogues are dog-eared from being thumbed through so often, may I suggest the following titles as an antidote to the winter blahs.

Situated on Vancouver Island, Ravenhill Farm is the herb farm home of author Noel Richardson. In her book *In a Country Garden: Life at Ravenhill Farm*, Richardson takes you through the seasonal trials and tribulations of owning and trying to make a living from an herb farm. Recipes and useful garden tips are interspaced between humorous and insightful tales that draw you into the author's world of country living.



A different type of story is found in a collection of writings of the British plant collector Frank



Kingdon-Ward. In the early years of the 20th century Kingdon-Ward roamed the world in search of plants that were, at that time, unknown in Europe and the Americas. Among his “finds” was the Tibetan blue poppy. In this book, *In the Land of the Blue Poppies*, the editor has drawn together an interesting collection from the many works

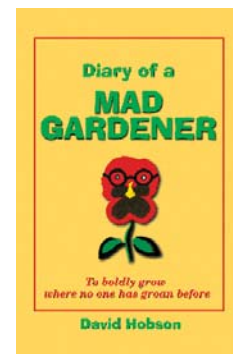
produced by Kingdon-Ward during his lifetime. Kingdon-Ward's writing has the ability to make you feel as if you are next to him as he struggles through a blinding blizzard in Tibet or crosses a raging river in China. The emotion he felt as he sees for the first time that blue poppy is readily conveyed in words. You will come away with an understanding of the obsession he felt.

Closer to home, *Stoneyground – The Making of a Canadian Garden* follows Douglas Chambers through his work to transform the family farm into a living history of garden design. Located on the Bruce Peninsula, in an area so heavily wooded that “it was the last lot in the township to be taken up from the crown,” Chambers' book is partly his philosophical outlook regarding gardening, his struggle to turn the land into a showpiece

highlighting different aspects of garden design and is completely riveting.

Michael Pollan's *Second Nature: a Gardener's Education* is an autobiographical story of one man's relationship with his garden and how that in turn ties him to the natural world around him. At times serious he manages to successfully lighten things up with chapters such as one entitled “Made Wild by Pompous Catalogs.” I'm sure we've all experienced disappointments when the seeds we planted and took care of so lovingly, failed to produce the wonderful plants depicted in the catalogue picture.

Last is David Hobson's *Diary of a Mad Gardener*, which originated on the Internet as *Dibble's Diary* (home.golden.net/~dhobson/index.html). It should have come with a warning label on the front cover. Recently on the streetcar I kept drawing stares from fellow transit riders as I burst out laughing at various parts of the book. It is hilarious. Whether he's describing his rivalry with Shirl down the street or his attempt to get work done in exchange for the elusive blue poppy this book is guaranteed to make you laugh and forget the snow and ice outside.



Finally – remember that spring is only two months away.

In a Country Garden: Life at Ravenhill Farm, paperback, Whitecap Books, \$16.95

In the Land of the Blue Poppies, paperback, Modern Library, \$21

Stoneyground – The Making of a Canadian Garden, paperback and hardcover, now out of print, but used copies can be found for under \$20

Second Nature: a Gardener's Education, paperback, Grove Press, \$19.50

Diary of a Mad Gardener, paperback, Flip Publishing, \$21 (order online from home.golden.net/~dhobson/book3.html or call 519-576-2498)

Sprout Gardening

Diane Ronan

Over the holidays, I was served a very tasty mixed green salad with alfalfa sprouts sprinkled on top. It started me thinking about the 70s when I was into down-to-earth cooking and growing my own sprouts. I still like to use sprouts as vegetables but now I'm more likely to buy them from a supermarket.

So my New Year's Resolution is to start sprout gardening again. Think of it as an indoor garden that produces nutritious salad makings in two to four days. Sprouted seeds are bursting with vitamins, minerals and proteins. Besides salads, you can use them in sandwiches, omelets, stir-frys and soups. Mung beans produce the bean sprouts that we've all tasted in Chinese dishes. Alfalfa and radish seeds produce sprouts that taste tangy and spicy.

The process is simple but it does take a few minutes of your time each day to get quality sprouts. Buy your seeds from a health food store. It's important that they haven't been treated with a fungicide, insecticide or any other material. Get yourself a clean, glass, wide-mouth quart jar.

Put one to two tablespoons of seed into the jar and add enough warm water to be at least twice the volume of the seeds. Cover the mouth of the jar with cheesecloth or nylon screen and secure with a screw top lid. Soak the seeds for 8 – 12 hours in a warm, dark place, like a kitchen cupboard.

After soaking, drain off the water and rinse the seeds with clean water. Drain off the rinse water and prop up the covered jar at an angle that distributes the seeds evenly along the side of the jar. This ensures that the sprouts will have drainage and air circulation.

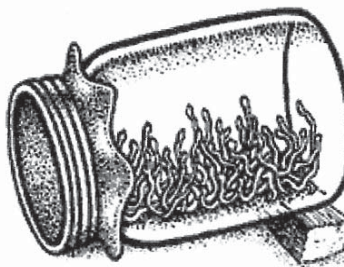


Figure 1

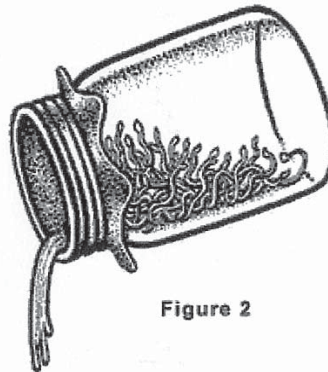


Figure 2

(Figure 1). Continue to store the jar in a warm, dark place and rinse the sprouts two to four times a day until they've grown to the length you want. Always be sure excess water is drained off the sprouts; otherwise they could ferment and spoil (Figure 2). Mung beans take 3 – 5 days; alfalfa 1 – 2 days; and radish 2 – 4 days. Sprouts will keep in the refrigerator for a week, if they are in a sealed container.

And from me to you, here's a recipe to try:

Avocados with Alfalfa Sprouts

Cut 2 avocados in half and remove pits.

In a bowl, mix together: 1/3 cup of fresh washed alfalfa sprouts, 4 sliced green onions, 1/3 cup sour cream, 1/2 cup cottage cheese, 1 tsp. veggie salt, and 2 tsp. lemon juice.

Spoon salad into avocado halves before serving.

P.S. If you want to see sprouts being used in an exciting, innovative way – be sure to attend the O.H.A. District 5 Annual General Meeting on April 9. It's going to be fun!

TBG Update

Construction at the Toronto Botanical Garden is reported to be going very well. Word just a few days ago was that the staff anticipate being back in the offices by February 1. Lectures and workshops will begin again soon after. Library and Trellis Shop don't have a firm date as yet, but it's anticipated that they should re-open around November or December.

Emailed Newsletters

If you'd like to have the newsletter emailed to you (instead of, or in addition to the mailed copy), drop us a line at newsletter@eygc.ca. If you're looking for back issues, they're available on the Club's website (www.eygc.ca). At the moment, issues are available from January 2003 onward. As the year progresses, newsletters from earlier years will also become available.

Philadelphia Flower Show

Details are now available for the Philadelphia Flower Show tour that we told you about in November.

The tour will take place from Saturday, March 5 to Tuesday, March 8. The cost is \$525 for double occupancy, \$675 for single occupancy. (triple & quad occupancy are also available) Note that there is a 4% surcharge for Visa payments.

Included is

- Admission to the Philadelphia Flower Show
- A private tour of Longwood Gardens, one of the world's greatest horticultural displays
- A tour of Winterthur Museum and Gardens, one of the finest collections of early American decorative arts
- Philadelphia City tour
- Dinner at the historic Chadds Ford Inn with special entertainment
- Three continental breakfasts
- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- Three nights accommodation and baggage handling
- The whole tour is fully escorted
- Snacks and entertainment are served en route

This tour has been arranged by District 5 of the OHA, through DKM Travel Services.

For more information, or to make your reservations, please call Margaret Dailey-Plouffe, at DKM: 416-410-4680.

Perennial Plant of the Year

The Perennial Plant Association has named the Lenten Rose (*Helleborus xhybridus*) as the 2005 Perennial Plant of the Year. It is an evergreen, late-winter or early-spring flowering member of the buttercup family that performs best in partial to full shade. Lenten rose is hardy from Zone 9 to Zone 4. With snow cover, it's probably hardy into colder zones. Mature plants can form clumps that are 45 to 60 cm tall (18 to 24 inches), as wide as 75 cm (30 inches), and often have 50 or more flowers per plant. The flowers usually last at least two months.

Although it's commercially propagated from seed, you may need patience to do this yourself. It can take four or five years to produce a plant of



flowering size, and frequently does not come true from seed. You'll find that, once they're established, they're not troubled at all by the dry conditions that are a frequent part of our summers, and need only occasional watering.

You may want to make sure that you're wearing gloves when handling the plant, since long-term exposure has been known to cause mild dermatitis.

Centennial Tulip of the OHA

In 2006, the Ontario Horticultural Association will mark its 100th anniversary. To help mark this occasion, the OHA is offering a special Centennial Tulip. Signifying loyalty and longevity, it's a deep purple Triumph Hybrid that will bloom year after year. The Triumph is a cross between the long-stemmed Darwin Tulip and short-stemmed Early Tulips and should grow to a height of about 45 cm (18 inches). It's also an excellent pot plant and will mingle beautifully with softer colours like apricot

and lemon yellow. In conjunction with the sale, the photography and slide competitions at the 2006 OHA convention in Ottawa will each feature three categories for the Centennial Tulip.

The price for the tulips will be \$8 (prepaid) for a bag of 10. These are premium bulbs, 12 cm and larger. Orders will be accepted at all of our meetings until June. Delivery is promised for early September.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, January 23

January meeting of the Toronto Rhododendron Society at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre, 6 Garamond Court. In 2001 Glen Patterson, a long-standing member of the Vancouver Rhododendron Society, relocated from his extensive and mature garden at his home in West Vancouver to a suite with a roof garden. At this meeting he'll explain how he made the transition. The meeting begins at 2:00 p.m.

January 28 to 30 (Friday to Sunday)

Eastern Winter Study Weekend at the Toronto Airport Marriott. The North American Rock Garden Society presents a weekend of speakers, workshops, plant sales, and related events. Further information: Katy Anderson 416-767-3602.

February 5 & 6 (Saturday & Sunday)

2005 Orchid Show at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre (6 Garamond Court) Open to the general public 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission is \$10.00, children 12 & under are free.

Sunday, February 13

Gardens of Inspiration at the Spadina House (Spadina Road, immediately north of Casa Loma) A lecture and slide presentation by Frank Kershaw, recipient of the Garden Club of Toronto Award of Honour, and a founding member of the Canadian Wildflower Society. Begins at 1:00 p.m. Further information: Call 416-392-6910 ext. 300

Wednesday, February 16

Fearless Plant Hunters at the Toronto Botanical Garden. Writer and lecturer Barrie Porteous, a founding member of the Ontario Rock Garden Society, will speak about the "Plant Hunters," who explored the western regions of China and introduced to the rest of the world a host of garden-worthy plants. Begins at 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$12, free for TBG members.

You'll find a complete list of events on our website (www.eygc.ca). The list is updated at least once a week.

2005 Membership Form

Name

Address

.....

Postal Code Phone #

email

Membership fees are due by January of each year. Fees for 2005 are \$20 for a single, and \$30 for a family membership. Fees can be paid in person at a regular meeting of the Club or by mailing this form and a cheque (payable to "East York Garden Club") to:

East York Garden Club
18 Warvet Crescent
East York, Ontario
M4B 1P3