

The East York Garden

Newsletter of the East York Garden Club

January & February, 2006

Thursday, January 19, 2006

Speaker: Barrie Porteous
Topic: The Plant Hunters

A founding member of the Ontario Rock Garden Society, Barrie Porteous has observed the native habitats of plants across North America and Europe. He has written extensively about his travels, and is known as an excellent photographer. The Plant Hunters were the fascinating explorers who went out to China, the Himalayas, and South America and discovered many of the wonderful plants that we now grow in our own gardens.

At this meeting we'll also be holding the official "installation" of the 2006 EYGC Executive Board.

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 the meeting.

Thursday, February 16, 2006

Speaker: David Tomlinson
Topic: Ecologically-Friendly Gardens

David Tomlinson specializes in ecological evaluation of the natural landscape, parks naturalization and the re-creation of wild-life habitats. In his own garden, Merlin's Hollow, in Aurora, he grows over 2500 different plants (native & non-native). He graduated in Horticulture from the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, England. With over 50 years experience in horticulture and landscape architecture, David has several major awards for landscape design in both England and Canada.

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 the meeting.

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-President:
Dawn McEachern

Newsletter Editor:
Malcolm Geast
416-429-4719



Upcoming in March:

Pruning – How, When & Where with Marion Jarvie

From the President's Desk

This year will be marked by two significant horticultural anniversaries.

It was in 1906 that the Ontario Horticultural Association was created by an act of the Ontario legislature. Through the following years, as the OHA grew, it contributed to the beautification of the Ontario landscape and strengthened community ties. With 280 clubs and societies, it now has approximately 35,000 members. Largely as a result of lobbying by the OHA, the *Trillium grandiflorum* became the province's floral emblem. During both World Wars, garden club and hort society members grew fruits and vegetables for distribution to needy families on both sides of the Atlantic. Our Association has also frequently helped with the provision of seeds and the replanting of trees following disasters as diverse as the Prairie dust storms of the thirties, the tornadoes of 1985, and the ice storm of 1998. As it moves into its second century, the OHA's new motto – *Keeping Ontario Beautiful* – reaffirms the commitment of its first century. The centennial convention of the OHA will be held in Ottawa on August 11 to 13. Open to all members, it's always an enjoyable and interesting experience. We'll be providing you with information about speakers and programs as it becomes available in the next few months.

Twenty years after the inauguration of the OHA, our own Club was formed. Our original name was the East York Horticultural Society, a name that stood for 40 years. In the mid-sixties, after the membership felt that a less-formal name was warranted, we became a Garden Club. Around the same time, we moved from R. H. McGregor Public School to the Stan Wadlow Clubhouse (known at that time as the Cedarvale Clubhouse). We've undergone many changes since our formation, some for the better, some out of necessity, and some for reasons that we're not really sure of – unfortunately there are many holes in our archives. But during 2006, I'm hoping that we'll be able to put together a history of the club, and fill in some of those holes.



One feature of our history that has fallen by the wayside over the past few decades is the awarding of trophies to the winners of the Club's competitions. A look through any one of the yearbooks from the forties, fifties, or sixties will reveal a couple of pages (or more) of trophies. Unfortunately, it's been many years since any of them have been awarded. Many have been lost, and those that remain are sadly in drastic disrepair. In 2006, we'll be starting to turn that around. This year we'll be reviving an award that has not been presented since the late fifties. The George S. Henry Trophy was given to the member who received the highest number of aggregate points in the monthly shows. George S. Henry was, for 30 years, the MPP for East York, and for four years, the Premier of Ontario. Each year, from some time in the thirties (we're not sure exactly which year) until his death in 1958, a cup was donated in his name. Early last year, as a result of efforts by Martin Rainbow, President of the East York Historical Society, we were able to acquire one of those cups, which we've had refinished and mounted on a new stand. Once again, it will be presented to the points winner from the monthly shows. We'll also be introducing a new trophy this year. The photography contest, now in its seventh year, has become a permanent fixture. To coincide with our 80th, a new trophy will be presented in conjunction with the competition. Details haven't been worked out yet, but we'll be letting you know in a few months.

Malcolm Geast

2006 Meeting Schedule

January 19	Barrie Porteous	Plant Hunters
February 16	David Tomlinson	Ecologically-Friendly Gardens
March 16	Marion Jarvie	Pruning – How, When, and Where
April 20	Mary Audia	Preparing for a Show – What the Judge Looks For
May 18	Toronto Master Gardeners	Lawns – a Panel Discussion. Grasses and Alternatives, Lawn care, Pests and Diseases
June 15	Hazel & Joe Cook	Delphiniums to Die For
July 20	Pot-luck Supper at The Rockery in Stan Wadlow Park	
August 26 (Saturday)	Annual Flower Show & Tea	
September 21	Chris Graham	House plants – selection, care and propagation
October 19	Allan Foster	Myths and Magic of Plants
November 16	Annual General Meeting, Awards Presentation, and Pot-luck Supper	

Perennial Plant of the Year.

The Perennial Plant Association has named *Dianthus gratianopolitanus* “Feuerhexe” (commonly known as “Firewitch”) the 2006 Perennial Plant of the Year. The genus *Dianthus* contains annual, biennial and perennial species and includes plants with the common names of carnation, sweet Williams and pinks.



“Firewitch” is an evergreen selection with bluish-gray, silvery foliage. The flowers are a bright purplish-pink to magenta-pink and prolific, lasting for weeks! Being a member of the carnation genus, the flowers have a spicy, clove-like fragrance. The first peak bloom time is mid-spring.

I Love a Parade....

It seems that, in keeping with the old song, everyone loves a parade. We’ve suggested a couple of times that we’d like to once again be a part of East York’s Canada Day Parade, and have received enthusiastic endorsement. But in order to participate, we need to have a committee and a chairperson to take care of the planning and the details. At the present time, the resources of the Executive Committee are stretched a little too thin to take on this task by itself. So, instead, we’re looking to the Club’s membership for some assistance. If you’re one of those people who would like to see us participate, and if you have a few hours, please consider volunteering to help out. We particularly need a chairperson. Unfortunately, without this assistance, it’s unlikely that we’ll be able to participate.

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).

Gardening on the Web

So, for Christmas you received a computer and a connection to the Internet. But your interest is gardening, not computers. How can you combine the two? With all of the information available on the World Wide Web (usually known simply as “the Web”), you’ll soon find it to be one of the best sources for gardening knowledge around.

There are billions upon billions of pages of information available on the Web. So, how do you find what you’re looking for? Fortunately, there’s a quick way to make the hunt easier. You may have heard of Google, a Website that has become so well known and so highly used that you can find it as a verb in several dictionaries. When you go to the Google site (www.google.com), all you’ll need to do is enter a word or two related to the subject that you’re interested in, and in less than a second, you’ll have more references than you could ever hope to be able to read. For instance, a search for “garden” reveals that, worldwide, there are 297 million related sites (don’t worry – it only shows 10 at a time). But the gardens that you’re interested in are in Canada. No problem. Enter “Garden Canada” instead. Now the list is smaller (but it still has more than forty million entries), and includes predominantly sites that have content related to gardening in Canada.

One of the first on the list is “I Can Garden” (www.icangarden.com) – a site based in Alberta that lays claim to the honour of “Canada’s largest Internet Gardening resource site.” You’ll find thousands of articles, an events calendar that covers the entire country, and most importantly, links to hundreds of Canadian public gardens, vendors, magazines, and garden clubs. In addition there’s a members area that enables you to ask

questions and participate in horticultural discussions (membership is free).

But let’s narrow the search a bit more. This time we’ll enter “Garden Ontario” on the Google page. Now there are “only” 12 million sites. At the top of the list you’ll likely find the site of the Ontario Horticultural Association (www.gardenontario.org). The OHA has had a presence on the Web since the mid-nineties. A couple of years ago it underwent a radical redesign, and now can boast an attractive appearance, and an abundance of information. There are links to gardening sites, information about the OHA, news about the preceding and upcoming conventions, an online edition of the Association’s newsletter, and links to all of the OHA’s clubs and societies.



And of course, one of the clubs that you’ll find on both the I Can Garden and the OHA sites is our own (www.eygc.ca). As well as information about our upcoming meetings, you’ll find several pages of links to other clubs and societies, nurseries and garden equipment companies, and gardening publications. There’s also a listing of upcoming horticultural activities in the Toronto area, and all of our newsletters since 2003. A few weeks ago the site underwent a change in appearance. Over the next few months, it will see enhancements such as a picture gallery with the winning entries from the past few photography contests, and information about the history of the Club. Later this year, we’ll be adding back copies of the newsletter dating back to the 1990s.

This is the first in an ongoing series about the Internet and horticulture. In March, we’ll be looking at a couple of on-line gardening magazines.

Spring...the Time for Gardening Shows

It's time to start thinking about the upcoming gardening season. To help you along with that, there are a number of spring gardening shows coming up in the next few months.

First off the mark is *Getting the Jump on Spring*, on Saturday, February 18 at the Toronto Botanical Garden. Due to the construction at the facility, this annual show took a time out in 2005. This year it returns with an exhibitors' area, guest speakers, a children's area, and Master Gardeners to answer your questions. Admission and parking are free. The show runs from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

In early March, it's time for *Canada Blooms*, with its usual array of vendors, demonstration gardens and speakers. It runs from March 8 to 12 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre (south of Front Street, and east of the CN Tower). Admission is \$18 (\$15 for seniors).

Less than a week later, it's the *Successful Gardening Show*. Now in its 14th year (and formerly known as the Success with Gardening Show), it features demonstration gardens, a flower show competition, vendors, and speakers (such as Mark Cullen, Denis Flanagan, and Marjorie Mason). The flower show is organized by the OHA, and is open only to members of gardening



A Note About Our Website

On the opposite page, we told you that the Club's website (www.eygc.ca) will be seeing some enhancements over the next few months. In January, a change will be made that will make it easier to find the site with some of the search engines (at the present time, it's almost invisible to Google). Unfortunately, while this is happening the site may be down for a day or two. If you find that you can't get to the site, try again a few hours later, or the next day, and it should be back.

clubs in Ontario. We'll have copies of the show rules and entry forms available at our January and February meetings. The show takes place at the International Centre (Airport Road & Derry Road) and runs from March 16 to 19. Admission is \$12 (\$8 for seniors), and parking is free. The OHA is also looking for volunteers for its booth and to help out at the flower show. Volunteers will receive a free pass that is good for the duration of the show. If you are interested, please speak to Malcolm Geast, or call 416-429-4719.



In April, it's time for the OHA District 5 Annual General Meeting. This year's meeting is hosted by the Markham Garden Society and has as its theme, *Gardeners Without Borders*. Featured speakers will be Arthur Beauregard, the Executive Director of the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation and floral designer Glen Fidler. As well, there'll be a flower show, raffles, and a 50/50 draw. As always, this is a great opportunity to meet other gardeners from around the GTA. And of course, lunch is included. The meeting will take place on Saturday April 22, in Markham. Admission is \$25. We'll have more information in the March newsletter, and a sign-up sheet at the February and March meetings.

A Thought From the Past...

While "digging around" in some of our old yearbooks, we recently came upon this little poem from the forties. We thought we'd share it with you, and hope that you'll think of it as a sentiment that continues today:

*We've done a little digging
with the hoe and rake and fork,
Lets dig a little deeper
and Beautify East York.*

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, February 1

Trends in Flowering Shrubs at the Toronto Botanical Garden (Leslie & Lawrence)

Tim Wood searches the globe for new plants for Spring Meadow Nursery. He'll be explaining how new breeding and developments in shrubs are changing our perceptions and the way we garden. Starts at 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$15.00, free for TBG members.

Thursday, February 9

Monthly meeting of the Leaside Garden Society at the Leaside Public Library (165 McRae Drive)

February's topic is *Clematis Old and New*, with Dugald Cameron. Begins at 7:30 p.m.

February 11 & 12 (Saturday & Sunday)

Southern Ontario Orchid Show at the Toronto Botanical Garden (Leslie & Lawrence)

Open to the general public 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission is \$10.00, children 12 & under are free.

Wednesday, February 22

The Landscape of Home and Colour in the Garden at the Toronto Botanical Garden (Leslie & Lawrence)

A double lecture in garden design. Starts at 7:00 p.m. Admission is \$25.00, free for TBG members.

Thursday March 2 to Sunday, March 5

Stratford Garden Festival at the Stratford Coliseum, 20 Glastonbury Drive, Stratford

Admission is \$8.00. Further information is available at www.stratfordgardenfestival.com or by calling 519-271-7500.

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

East York Garden Club Membership Form

Name.....

Address.....

Postal Code..... Phone #.....

email.....

(Note that we will only use your email address to send you EYGC information. **We do not distribute it to anyone else.**)

Membership fees are due by January of each year. Fees for 2006 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