

Meet the Vice-President!

A Provincial Perspective

By Lanny Hui

It seems like yesterday when I went to Rhodofest for the first time in 2006. I joined BRAGS not knowing what I was signing up for but I somehow felt proud that I now officially belonged to a gardening club!

Coming from Mississauga, Ontario, I had the notion that gardening was about making my garden better than my neighbours'. I dug sections of clay soil and had cubic meters of premium top soil delivered. I planted all kinds of 'hardy' perennials which in Ontario behave like annuals, or at best, biennials. The more I planted, the more plants died. Rhododendrons, delphiniums, roses, heathers, black-eyed susans, trilliums, and English ivies (yes, the ones you call weeds here, and other than dandelions, do not survive even one Ontario winter). The surviving ones were hardy geraniums, hens-and-chicks, clematis, the existing maple and crab-apple trees, some shrubs such as lynwood, dogwood, and honeysuckle, and the evergreen juniper. In the end, I always felt that my garden was not as good as theirs, no matter what I did.

Since I joined BRAGS, my idea of gardening has changed. Gardening has become more of a personal experience (to some degree, as long as it is in compliance with the strata rules). Gardening is about creating an outdoor room for myself. It is a place to unwind and detach myself from the real world. It is a constant reminder that I have to slow down and take time to care for the plants and enjoy the beauty of each plant.

Moreover, I have learned that we may use our garden to express our artistic side. We carefully choose plants to occupy a certain spot in our garden. We consider the foliage, height, and width of mature plants, whether they like sunny or shady spots, and

whether they are shrubs, trees, perennials, or annuals. We also add various features, such as rocks, water, and containers to enhance the ambiance of our garden. In addition, some of us want our garden to be functional by planting all kinds of herbs and vegetables and setting aside some space for composting. Or perhaps, we want to nurture our desire to care for the environment by planting native plants or other plants for insects or other animals beneficial to our ecosystem. Whatever our intention is to garden, when things work out according to our desire, we all feel deep satisfaction.

Looking back, as a VERY novice gardener when I was in Mississauga, I should have hired a professional to landscape a backyard half the size of a tennis court. It would have been less difficult for me than to try to do it all on my own with little knowledge of landscaping. Before we sold the house and moved to Burnaby I only had a chance to replace clay soil a foot deep with top soil in about a third of the backyard and planted a few things - and it still looked far from what I wanted it to look like.

One last thing. Coming from a place in Ontario with extremely hot summers and cold winter weather, I am grateful for the west coast rainy weather to the extent that I would rather be here with the rainy weather than in Ontario with the sunny weather which means either below zero temperatures, hot and muggy, or high UV index. Here, I have three kinds of Japanese maples, a beautiful rhododendron bush, two tree peonies, and two katsura trees - all of these would not likely live happily in Ontario. Moreover, the rainy days make the foliage of every plant stand out as the various hues of green leaves and the bold colours of flowers are beautifully in contrast with the grey sky.

THANK YOU Lanny!

Send me your secrets!

Send to Cheryl Fiddis @ ecfiddis@telus.net
We would love to have more members share their 'secrets' and garden thoughts. Don't be shy!

Picnic 2011 Summary

by Cheryl Fiddis

Sunday, August 7th dawned sunny and bright and stayed that way all day! After a non-existent spring and a tardy summer, we couldn't have asked for a more perfect summer day for our BRAGS picnic. A total of 21 members and significant others arrived at the home of Helen and Rodney Vaughan for a delicious pot luck lunch and an afternoon of socializing, soaking up the sun, and catching up.

Thank you to Helen and Rodney for being such wonderful hosts and welcoming us all into their home and garden. We look forward to another picnic next year!

Ps – Helen, can I put in a request for that fabulous home-made ice cream NOW????

And congratulations to new grandmother Susan Brandl, whose son and daughter-in-law welcomed the birth of their first daughter just as the picnic wrapped up.

Now that's a grand finale to a grand day!

BRAGS Membership

Annual membership cost \$12. Members share various gardening interests and enjoy 10% discount of regularly priced items at Garden Works by presenting their membership cards.

Have you considered asking a friend or neighbour to join our club?

Make Pesticides a Thing of the Past

Tips from the Canadian Wildlife Federation

Do choose plants native to your area – because they evolved with local wildlife they have natural defences against it.

Do keep your garden soil healthy by adding compost and well-aged manure. These are better than chemical fertilizers.

Don't stick to the same old plants. Many pests eat only certain plants. Growing a diversity of plants minimizes your garden's susceptibility to any pest invasion.

Do use non-chemical methods, such as hand picking pests, using plant barriers, or setting insect traps.

Do welcome insect predators – such as birds, toads, snakes, spiders, or bats – to your garden by providing shelter, water and supplemental food sources.

Don't water in the evening. Damp leaves in the evening can lead to fungus and other diseases.

Upcoming Meetings

September 7, 2011

To wrap up the summer season, an interactive evening with members sharing their garden tips, successes and failures is planned. Come prepared with pictures if you have any, or bring something from your garden to show and discuss. Perhaps if you have some extra edible bounty to share from a garden harvest, please bring it along to share as well.

October 5, 2011

Jennifer Juk will give a talk on Dahlias. Find all about growing, various forms, and how to pick blooms for showing. A variety of blooms will be available for viewing.

November 2, 2011

Carol McIntyre gives a talk on winter harvest vegetables.

December 7, 2011

This meeting will commence with our AGM and then we will all enjoy our annual Christmas party. Please come with a dish to share with your fellow members, and also bring your significant other to kick off the festive season.

BRAGS 2011 EXECUTIVE

President

Verna Adamson
604-294-5550

Vice-President

Lanny Hui
604-415-8287

Treasurer

Kim Taylor
60435-0728

Secretary

Linda Cholette
604-298-9059

Past President

Judy Wellington
604-434-8287

STANDING COMMITTEES

Membership

Anne Forsyth
604-298-6350

Nominations

Judy Wellington

Publicity

Lanny Hui
604-415-4564

Rhododendron Festival

Wendy Thompson
604-420-6513

June Dodson

604-939-2597

OTHER COMMITTEES

Garden Tour

Vacant

Plant Sale

Lanny Hui

Newsletter

Cheryl Fiddis
604-435-2801

Anne & David Forsyth

604-298-6350

Welcome

Faye Kilpatrick
604-434-5921

Sheila Chowdhury

604-298-1196

Raffle

Joy Makepeace-Smith

604-433-5869

Refreshments

Helen Vaughan
604-299-2014

Speakers

Rosemarie Daviduk
604-431-6207

Website

David Forsyth
604-298-6350

BRAGS Meetings

All meetings start at 7 pm, at the Burnaby Village Museum, - Main Building, 2nd floor.

It's centrally located and there is ample parking.

Refreshments are served. All are welcome.

Don't forget to bring your own mug to be eco- friendly and save a Styrofoam cup!

BRAGS Ideas...Please!

Do you have an idea for an event or a future guest speaker that our members might enjoy? If so, please mention your ideas to your executive team, or if it's an idea for a speaker, to Rosemarie Daviduk directly.

Out and About

September 3rd & 4th

The Vancouver Dahlia Society's Annual Show at the Floral Hall at VanDusen Gardens located at 37th & Oak. Admission is by donation. For information contact Evelyn @ 604-437-8395 or visit

www.vancouverdahliasociety.com.

Hours: Saturday 1-5; Sunday 12-3:30.

September 10th & 11th

The South Burnaby Garden Club is once again hosting their Fall Fair at Bonsor Recreation Centre. Something for everyone, and free admission!

Hours: Saturday: 1-5; Sunday 11-4.

www.southburnabygardenclub.org

September 15th, Thursday - all day

Customer Appreciation Day at all Gardenworks locations.

15% Discount!

Ongoing - Eagles Estate Information

From Lynsey Dobbie, Head Gardener

-Garden tours are available year-round. Learn about the history of Eagles Estate and the ongoing restoration of its gardens.

-Volunteer gardeners are always welcome to help us maintain and restore the garden. Volunteers are needed on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

-Eagles Estate will be hosting a number of fall and winter workshops in the coming months, including pumpkin carving for children and Christmas wreath-making for adults.

-If you don't have enough room in your garden after dividing your perennials this fall, let us know! We are always interested in adding more plants to the garden as part of our ongoing restoration.

For more information, please call Head Gardener Lynsey Dobbie at 604-733-2313 or email ldobbie@conservancy.bc.ca