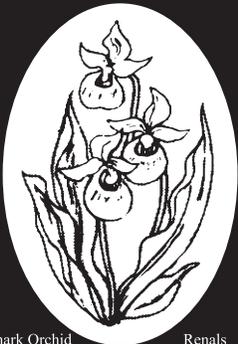


April 2012 Newsletter



*Gardening is the only
venue in which greed is
acceptable. I have too
many plants, and
I want more!*

*David Warburton,
landscape designer
and plantsman*



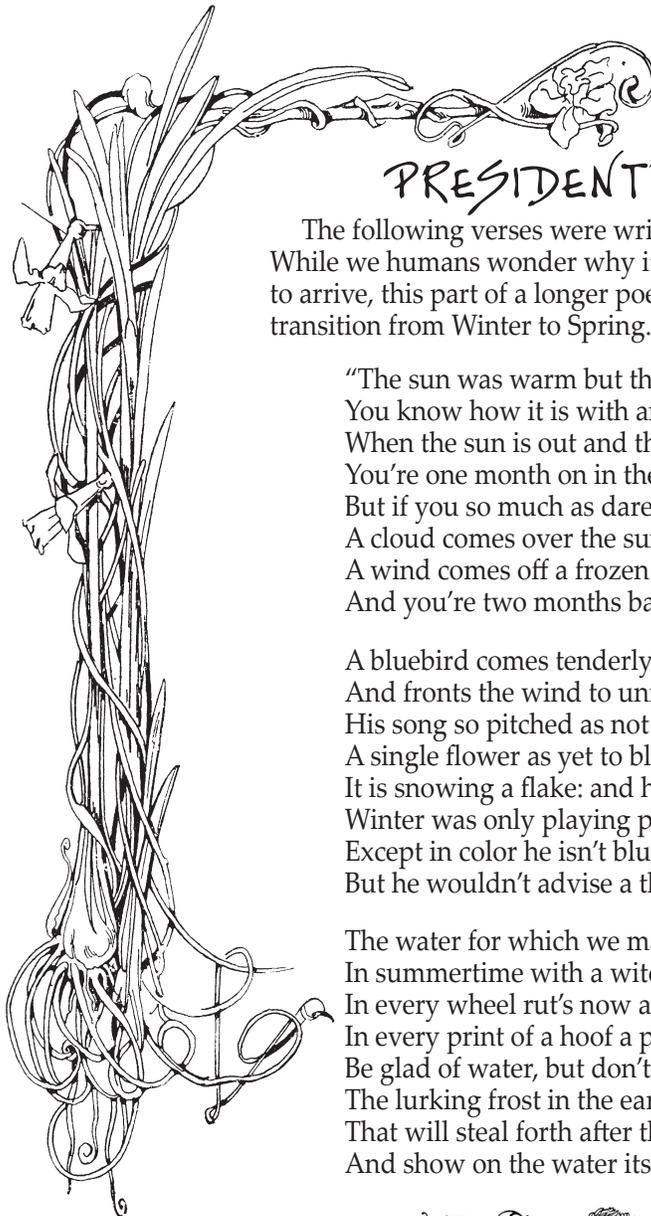
Lanark Orchid

Renals

Perth & District Horticultural Society

P.O. Box 494
Perth, ON, K7H 3G1
www.gardenontario.org

District #2 of the
Ontario Horticultural
Association



PRESIDENT'S PEN

The following verses were written by Robert Frost in 1934. While we humans wonder why it is taking Spring so long to arrive, this part of a longer poem perfectly expresses the transition from Winter to Spring. Enjoy! - *Madeline Archer*

"The sun was warm but the wind was chill.
You know how it is with an April day
When the sun is out and the wind is still,
You're one month on in the middle of May.
But if you so much as dare to speak,
A cloud comes over the sunlit arch,
A wind comes off a frozen peak,
And you're two months back in the middle of March.

A bluebird comes tenderly up to alight
And fronts the wind to unruffle a plume
His song so pitched as not to excite
A single flower as yet to bloom.
It is snowing a flake: and he half knew
Winter was only playing possum.
Except in color he isn't blue,
But he wouldn't advise a thing to blossom.

The water for which we may have to look
In summertime with a witching wand,
In every wheel rut's now a brook,
In every print of a hoof a pond.
Be glad of water, but don't forget
The lurking frost in the earth beneath
That will steal forth after the sun is set
And show on the water its crystal teeth."



Great Perennial Plant Sale

Spring has sprung early this year giving us more time to get plants ready for our plant sale. Perennials are the most popular offerings for the public but trees, shrubs, herbs, vegetables and houseplants are also welcome.

This is our largest fundraiser of the year and two factors are critical to the value of the plants that we sell. First is condition of the plant. If it is potted up early enough for new roots and foliage to be produced it will be more attractive

and increase its value. The second factor is labelling. Included could be size of plant, habit (e.g. spreading), flowering period, flower colour, sun or shade, etc.

Many of our perennials require periodic division to keep them productive. If some of these could be potted up and brought to the Stewart School Gym on May 18 between 4 and 7 p.m., you would be helping the society. The sale will be on **May 19 from 8 to 10 a.m.**

We will also need volunteers for set-up on the Friday and the sale on Saturday morning.



President: Madeline Archer

Secretary: Pam Pratt • **Newsletter:** Pam Pratt, Irene Hofmann

This plant sale is particularly important because of the sudden jump in the number of students participating in our Junior Gardener program this year and probably future years. Our expenses have doubled this year and we are trying to find ways to defray those costs. Making the perennial plant sale a "super duper" sale will certainly help.

More information will be given at the May meeting but if you have any questions, have a supply of pots people can use, have plants but need someone to pot them up for you or would like to volunteer before, during or after the sale, please let David Archer, Lynda Haddon or any other board member know.

Needed: One Friendly Face!

When I first became a member of the PDHS, Peter McMahon would greet everyone as they came in. A genuine smile and hello made me feel welcome. Any questions a first time visitor had when entering a new environment were answered and they were put at ease.

Sadly Peter is no longer with us but our need for a greeter still is. If you think that you would like the opportunity to meet 50 to 70 people each month, see me at the membership desk. You would need to be at the meeting room 30 minutes prior to the meeting, but would not need to commit to every meeting.

David Archer.

Help Wanted:

We need a steward for the monthly flower shows. No experience necessary. Some training will be given. Please contact Madeline Archer.

Who Is District 9 And What Are They Up To?

District 9 has a mysterious ring to it. Does it have anything to do with Area 51, UFOs and Roswell, New Mexico? No it doesn't!

District 9 is part of the Ontario Horticultural Society and encompasses the Niagara peninsula from Grimsby to Niagara Falls. As well, it includes the Dunnville Horticultural Society located in Haldimand County.

District 9 is excited about hosting the 106th OHA Convention in 2012. The venue will be Niagara College at the Niagara on the Lake campus. The date is August 17 to 19, 2012. The theme is "Gardening Then and Now 1812-2012." This is the beginning

of the three year Bicentennial Celebration of the War of 1812. Many events are scheduled in the area to coincide with this event. For information about accommodations, activities and competition schedules please check <http://gardenontario.org> for links or the OHA website for details.

Sheila King from the Kemptville Horticultural Society has been trying to organize a bus to the event plus accommodation for a reasonable price. Although the due date has passed for sign-up, you could contact her or Madeline Archer to inquire if there is any room.

It promises to be a spectacular event and a lot of fun.

Perth Legion Floral Centrepiece Project

The Perth Legion loves the floral design expertise of the PDHS! Once again they are asking our members to design and make floral centrepieces for the Perth Legion Ladies Auxiliary Honours and Awards dinner.

We are asking any PDHS members who would enjoy participating in this endeavour to contact Linda Bartlett as soon as possible. The centrepiece workshop will take place on May 10, 2012 at the Legion.

Last year everyone had a great time and the Legion Ladies were thrilled with our efforts.

Strolling Through The Garden With Your Camera

Our speaker for our meeting May 8, 2012 will be Angela Snowdon. The theme of her presentation will be "Strolling Through the Garden With Your Camera." Angela is the official photographer for the Ottawa Botanical Garden Society, photographing not only their garden tours, but also all the guest speakers, including people such as Marjorie Harris, Madame Clarkson and Ottawa's own Ed Lawrence. It should be an exciting presentation so don't miss it.

May In-House Flower Show

The schedule for the May flower show, which can be found in your 2012 Yearbook, is as follows:

Section I: Horticultural Specimen

- Class 1** Tulip - 1 stem with leaves attached
- Class 2** Tulips - 3 stems with leaves attached of one cultivar

- Class 3** Flowering branch no more than 24" above table
Class 4 Any Iris in bloom - 1 spike
Class 5 Bearded Iris dwarf - 1 spike
Class 6 Tree Peony - one stem
Class 7 Allium over 4" bloom - one stem
Class 8 Allium under 3" bloom - three stems
Class 9 Asparagus - 3 stalks

Section II: Design

- Class 10** "Colour" - a monochromatic design
Class 11 "St. John's Spire" - a line design

April Orchid Show

The Ottawa Orchid Society is presenting its annual Orchid Show on April 21-22, 2012 at the Nepean SportsPlex. If you have never been to an orchid show before, you are in for a real experience. Imagine a 24,000 square foot hall full of orchids. Dozens of exhibits containing hundreds of orchids in flower, displayed to their best in all kinds of settings, fill up half the room. The plants on display are judged by an international panel of experts, with ribbons and trophies for winners in each of the classes. In the other half of the room, nurseries from all over Ontario (as well as neighbouring parts of Quebec and the US) are selling orchid plants of all kinds in all stages of growth, from seedlings to mature specimen plants.

Prices are very reasonable, and many of the plants can be grown quite easily, even on a kitchen windowsill. If you want help or information on which plants are easy to grow, any of the vendors or one of the experts from the society will be only too happy to answer your questions.

If you don't have a "green thumb" for growing live plants, there is something for you too! Orchid related artwork will be featured, with exhibits of orchid paintings, photographs and other fine arts in a large Art Gallery area. There will also be all kinds of craft items for sale, including orchid books, cards, T-shirts, jewelry, and more.

Consider a day trip, lunch and the orchid show - could be fun.

Getting Your Hands Dirty - And Clean

Submitted by Barbara Michie

If you are someone who loves the feels of the dirt in your hands and doesn't like to wear gloves while gardening, you are well aware of toll taken on hands and nails: they can get pretty stained and grungy looking. The solution for that grungy look is a capful

of household ammonia in a small bowl of warm water. Rub your hands around and presto, grunge is gone!

If Only I Could Grown Green Stuff In My Garden Like I Can In My Refrigerator!

There is help for you. Take the stuff from the refrigerator and turn it into compost! Compost benefits from a ratio of brown materials to green materials. Brown materials can include: straw, dead leaves, cardboard/paper, pine needles, sawdust. Green materials include: grass clippings, fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, fresh animal (aside from pet) manure, egg shells, and healthy green plant material from a weeded garden.

Compost benefits from being located in the sun where it can heat up, which helps break down contents, regularly being turned and water added from time to time, especially if the weather is dry. If your compost pile becomes rather smelly, spread a layer of dirt over the top of it and that will eliminate smells and possibly upsetting the neighbours.

A Great AGM In Ottawa

If you missed the District 2 AGM in Ottawa on Saturday, March 31, 2012 then be sure to try and attend the 2013 AGM. It was a beautiful day for driving to Ottawa and the venue at the Hellenic Centre on Prince of Wales Drive was stunning.

There was a marketplace for attendees to shop, fruit and cookies for snacks, terrific speakers, photographic competition awards and a great lunch.

Welwyn Long, Landscape Architect was the morning's speaker who gave some terrific tips about the architectural features in your garden such as pathways, pergolas and ponds. The afternoon speaker, Larry Hodgson, who lives in Quebec City and who has written over 30 gardening books, shared with us 32 of his favourite plants introduced for 2012. His enthusiasm, knowledge and joy at describing these plants made one want to race out to our local nursery and order oh, at least 32 of them!! If you would like to check out his website, you can do so at: www.jardinierparesseux.com.

Consider attending in 2013 and if you do, take lots of notes because Perth will be the destination for the 2014 District 2 AGM!

Richard Inchley Ponds & Aquaria

If you attended our meeting on March 13, you would have heard Richard Inchley give us an overview of what the gardener needs to have a successful pond. While Richard's ponds were large and elaborate, the theory is the same for small ponds too. These are the basics to consider:

- 50% of the pond surface needs to be covered with plants;
- a shelf around the edge of the pond is ideal for marginal water plants
- well water can be used to fill a pond but the size of the pond and the volume of water needed to fill it may affect your well's capacity
- if the water goes green and slimy, there is not enough bacteria (which snuffs out the slime) to maintain clarity. Ponds & Aquaria stocks liquid bacteria to add to a pond
- keeping the water circulating also helps with the clarity
- typically a pond is dug, a pad placed to protect the liner from sharp rocks, then one sheet of rubber liner is placed over the pad covering the hole, shelf and edges
- if the pond is walled, every two feet of wall above ground needs to be held in place by one foot underground. Techno blocks are typically used for walled ponds. They are overlapped and glued so the walls won't heave or collapse once filled
- clay bottom ponds work well, but they run the risk of drying out in the summer
- if a pond ices over in the winter, livestock will die, if plant bases are below the ice line, the plants should get through the winter
- location depends upon where you can best see it from the house. Farther from the house and your electrical bill can be high. Look for overhanging trees and possible leaf debris in the fall. A pond benefits from 6-8 hours of sun a day
- Some ideal pond plants

include: irises (yellow flag, siberian), cannas on shelf at least 12" deep, bog bean (vanilla scented), variegated sweet flag rush, lotus, water hyacinth, various water lilies (like a 12-24" depth to grow well), pickerel weed and many more.

- Ponds & Aquaria will give PDHS members a 25% discount upon presentation of their membership card.

Library News

by Kevin Long

April is a good month to do some garden planning! Head over to our library cabinet to sign out books and magazines, including these three that we are highlighting this month.

Perennials for Ontario (635.93209713 Ren)

by Kathy Renwald and Alison Beck.

This book presents photos and information for the best-growing perennials in Ontario. There is also general information on caring for perennials, propagating them, and protecting them from pests and diseases.



PDHS 2012 Executive

President:

Madeline Archer

Vice President/Treasurer:

Margo Fulford

Secretary/Communications/

Publicity: Pam Pratt

Membership:

David Archer

Community Gardens/Plant Sale:

Lynda Haddon

Yearbook/Website Chair/Youth:

Linda Bartlett

Liaison/IT/AV/Guest

& School Liaison: Ted Bryant

Library: Kevin Long

Programs: Madeline Archer

Social: Janet Osbourne

Member-At-Large:

Carolle Anne Armour

Newsletter:

Pam Pratt / Irene Hofmann

Phone Tree: Margo Fulford/

Carolle Anne Armour

Complete Gardener's Dictionary

(635.03 Ell)

by Barbara W. Ellis.

Set up alphabetically like a true dictionary, it tells you the meaning of more than 2500 garden-related terms. If you have ever wondered what 'renewal pruning' is, how to define 'pH', or how to make 'manure tea', then you will enjoy searching in this book.

Butterfly Gardening: Creating Summer Magic in Your Garden

(595.789 Xer)

by The Xerxes Society.

What can be more soothing than butterflies gliding softly and quietly through your garden? This book shows you how to design and plant a garden that will attract them. Other sections teach you how to watch butterflies, and help you learn about the life cycle of these magnificent insects.