



The Cary Bulletin

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THE FRIENDS OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE GARDENS SOCIETY
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TASMANIA - A HORTICULTURALIST'S VIEW

I once read that the world is a book and those who have not traveled have read only one chapter. This past October and November, I read several chapters as I traveled through Australia and New Zealand to attend a rhododendron conference in Burnie, Tasmania.

Tasmania is a relatively small island of slightly more than 64,000 square kilometers. It is separated from mainland Australia by the 240k wide Bass Strait; it has a mild climate that is not much different from Victoria's but our winters are somewhat colder and longer. Tasmania lies in the path of the Roaring Forties which sweep up from the Antarctic and I can attest to the fact that those winds can be very cold and very strong. The day we visited Hobart, the capital, it snowed. The local children had a wonderful time but I was looking for flowers!

The vegetation in Tasmania has two components; the Southern Oceanic flora and the eastern-mainland Australian flora characterized by acacias, eucalyptus, and the many shrubs with pea-like flowers. The Southern Oceanic flora dates back to the time when Tasmania was connected to South America, New Zealand and the Antarctic. This flora is characterized by the Southern beech, both evergreen and deciduous, eucryphias, olearias, podocarpus and the amazing tree ferns. More than 200 species of plants are endemic only to Tasmania.

The island is mountainous with over sixty peaks. The highlight of my trip was a visit to Cradle Mountain which is a World Heritage Site. We hiked along the base of the mountain at an elevation of about 900 metres across boggy areas covered with sedges and ferns. Mire communities of mosses, herbs and grasses formed spongy, quaking mats of vegetation. Prickly heaths dominated the hummocks. On the higher slopes, the Tasmanian pines, King Billy, Pencil Pine, Celery-top Pine and the Huon Pine grew. Although they are called pines, they do not belong to the family of *Pinaceae*. As we descended the slopes, we entered a remnant of the ancient Gondwana Forest. To walk through an area where the vegetation remains much the same as it was sixty million years ago was enough to send shivers up and down my spine. The only thing missing was for a platypus to emerge from a pool of water!

The rhododendron conference was held in the Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden just outside the town of Burnie. It is a public garden that is under the control of the Burnie Branch of the Australian Rhododendron Society and most of the work is carried out by volunteers from this Society. The Garden consists of about 20 hectares surrounding a natural amphitheatre. It is a beautiful natural site containing stunning examples of *Dicksonia antarctica*, the tree fern, and *Nothofagus*, the Southern beech tree. Unlike mainland Australia which is too warm and too dry, Tasmania is the one state where a wide variety of rhododendrons can be grown successfully.

Today, Tasmania has very strict controls for the importation of any plant material, so growing from seed or local hybridizing is the source of most new plant material. I met some marvelous growers and saw some beautiful and interesting gardens. Pigeon Hill, part of one of Tasmania's oldest farms, stands out in my memory. It is a large garden containing innumerable rhododendrons, maples, dogwoods, magnolias and native trees. There are many eucalyptus trees on the property. But one in particular is king measuring over 16 metres in diameter. Bronze-winged pigeons inhabit the property, hence the property's name.

I wouldn't want you to think that I traveled all those kilometers only to look at plants! Tasmania has a fascinating if somewhat violent history as a penal colony. I was enthralled with the beautiful Victorian architecture that is preserved and protected throughout the island.

The seafood was wonderful and the local wines were very good. Tasmania, if only you were a little closer!

Carol Dancer

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FRIENDS OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE GARDENS SOCIETY

GARDEN SUPERVISORS 2007

Cottage	Phyllis Muir	Second - Sheala Wagnell
Country Garden	Jo Finlayson	Second - Joan de Turberville (Tues); Maxine Brook (Thurs)
Cut Flower Garden	Terry Hanak	Second - Jan Drent & Sheila Moulton (Tues); Second - Rita Porter (Thurs)
Flower Arrangers	Audrey Smith	
Herb Garden	Marion Elliott	Second - Eileen Collier
Iris Garden	Val Smith	Second - Karen Phillips
Nursery	Lynn Hill	Second - Diana Knuffman (Tues); Felicity Hackett (Thurs)
Lily Garden	Ian Back	
Orchard	Virginia Fisher	
Pearkes Peak	David and Crenagh Elliott	
Peter's Rocks	Peter Underwood	
Pool Garden	Jessica Sluymer	
Rock and Alpine	Charles Dool	
Rockland 1	Diane Symes	Second - Sandra Fleischman
Rockland 2	Phyllis Muir	Second - Wendy & Robert Higgins
Rotary Garden	Michael Russell & Siewkeen Quah	
Winter Garden	Carol Dancer	
Sunken Rose Garden	Nairn Hollott	
Terraces	Alison Leamy	
Victorian Rose Garden	Vaughn Edwards	Second - John Ruitenbeek
Woodlands	John Arnold	Second - Eileen Edgar
Tool Shed Manager	David Langley	

NON-GARDENING SUPERVISORS 2007

Archives Group	Sue Baptie	
Bulletin Mailing Group	Margot Harrison	
Coffee/Tea Mornings	Liz Wallis (Tuesday) & Martha Livingston (Thursday)	
Cottage Upkeep	Herma Hughes	
Arts & Crafts Fair	Maxine Brook and Lasha Lum	
E-mail Communications	Jean Williams	
Greeting Cards	Margaret Nelson	
Library	George Metcalfe	
Photography Group	Renate Ferguson	

E-MAIL MESSAGING

Society messages for distribution to Friends by e-mail should be sent to Jean Williams at least a week ahead of time: jwbaskets@shaw.ca or 477-5848.

FROM THE LIBRARY SHELF

Two very interesting books have been donated to the Garden Library thanks to Phyllis Muir. *Perennials and Their Garden Habitat* by Richard Hansen and Friedrich Stahl (SB434.H29) demonstrates how attention to the ecological needs of herbaceous perennials can result in low maintenance gardens. The book contains colour illustrations and informative sketches and tables. *The Natural Garden* by Ken Druse (SB457.53.D78) is a beautifully illustrated book that advocates gardens be planted with species natural to their environment and making use of long lasting materials will thrive. Thus, instead of fighting the elements to create a beautiful lawn and formal garden, you work in partnership with Nature.

George Metcalfe

BULLETIN PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

Members include Marion Jensen, Lyn Anketell, Nigel Godfrey, Val & Howard Smith. Comments, suggestions, original and photo materials are welcome and may be left in the 'Publications Folder' in the Cottage, or contact any of the above-named members. The deadline for receipt of contributions for the June issue of the *Bulletin* is **May 18, 2007**.

DONATIONS TO THE FRIENDS

Thanks to all those friends of Lennie Wong who have so generously given donations to the Friends in Lennie's name.

As a reminder, all donations to the Friends over \$25 should be made specifically to the 'Government House Foundation for the Friends of Government House Gardens Society'. For these donations a tax receipt will be issued.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS - 2007

The Friends of Government House Gardens Society

President:	Brian Rogers	brianarogers@shaw.ca
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Deputy Director/Government House	Christine Diemer	christine.diemer@gov.bc.ca
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Government House		www.ltgov.bc.ca

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

We learned last week that Alison Leamy is to receive the 2007 British Columbia Community Volunteer Award for her outstanding contribution to the people of Victoria. This is a well deserved recognition to a person who has given more than her share to our community. Alison served as your President for two terms and under her watch the terraces were transformed from a overgrown tip into the splendid feature they are today. Whenever the House requires help from the Friends, Alison is there. Serving coffee at the concerts, hot chocolate at Halloween, or "buffing up" the House for Christmas, Alison and her husband, Jim, take charge. All this while still maintaining a 5:30 am paper route for the *Times Colonist*! On behalf of the Friends, well done Alison, and justly deserved!

It was great to see everybody back at our first coffee morning. It was like a homecoming after the long bleak winter. The Terracites put on a display of calorie counting goodies that were soon hoovered down by the overflow crowd that had not been together since our Christmas lunch.

Many people have asked me how Fred Bjarnason, House Chef, was doing after his surgery. Fred looks and feels terrific. His doctor has restricted him to working part time but for any of you who managed to sneak a muffin at the coffee morning, Fred made them for us. Yes, Fred is back, and his muffins were marvelous.

I want to mention some garden- related items. Most of the winter tree damage has been cleaned up, with many of the over- mature ornamental evergreens having been removed. The wretched laurel hedge to the west of the Sunken Rose Garden has been removed and soon a new yew hedge will be planted.

The Elliotts have been working all winter to clean up the jungle at Pearkes Peak only to discover a sign saying "Mrs Clary Wallace's Garden". I will leave it to Howard Smith and the Archives group to decide which garden the Elliotts were in; Pearkes's or Wallace's?

Margaret Nelson and the Nursery Garden gang are well on their way to staging another terrific Plant Sale on Saturday morning, April 28th. I am sure that if any of you have plants that lack a home or need dividing, Lynn Hill, Supervisor, and Margaret would love to get their hands on them. No commission sales!

For those who have never walked through the Woodlands, I strongly suggest that over the next month, you should take the time, bring a friend and stroll through this magical space. The *Erythroniums* are starting to flower and will be followed by a flood of *Camassia*. Don't miss it. John Arnold, Supervisor, and his crew have been slaving in this area twice a week for twelve years and they have restored what is truly a magical place. It is being discovered by more and more visitors who give a big "thank you" as they come puffing up the hill.

Finally, our beloved turtles. They will soon have a new log on which they can sun themselves during the warm summer days.

I hope you all have a wonderful spring.

Brian Rogers

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Nominating Committee, composed of Arthur Timms (Chair), Susan Bartol-Drinker, Carol Dancer, and Renate Ferguson, invites nominations from Society members to fill positions on the Board of Directors. There are four positions to be filled for two-year terms (2007-2009) including a Director for each of the positions of Treasurer and Secretary. Candidates will be elected at the Annual General Meeting to be held in mid-October 2007. The names of nominees duly proposed, seconded, and signed, may be left in the Board Secretary's folder in the Cottage or given to any member of the Nominating Committee. The Committee may receive nominations until 28 days before the AGM. Details of the AGM will appear in a future edition of the *Cary Bulletin*.

IN MEMORIAM

Attended by her many friends and acquaintances on February 16, 2007, a memorial service was held for Lennie Wong who passed away suddenly on February 5, 2007. Lennie was renowned for her volunteer services in Victoria and notably as a long-time member of the Friends of Government House Gardens Society and the Flower Arrangers Group. Our sincere condolences are extended to her family.

WELCOME - NEW MEMBERS

Heggie, Laurie & Jim Allan	Patricia & Philippe Nevon	Sheila Moore	Louis & S. Rochette Hebert		
Joan Kennedy	Lloyd Wansbrough	Jennifer Cano	May K. Chow	Peggy Dallamore	Bette Anderson
Julia Stenner Epps	Ruth Perkins	Anne Young	Davis & Sandra Johnstone	Cora J. Thomson	
Marjorie Bailey					

YOU AND I

In the opening statement of his book, *The Principles of Gardening*, 1979, Hugh Johnson declared that the essence of gardening is control. I remember reading that statement a decade ago. It was a statement which at once intrigued and troubled me as I increasingly realize what an illusion control is. Indeed, as I progress in age, it strikes me how little in control of anything we really are. I recall fondly some of the great gardening projects I have been involved in and the joy they gave me in their creation. They are alive in photographs I have saved and in the memories of the seasons of my life. They all eventually give way to neglect, development or the ideas of a new generation.

The ultimate in horticultural control has been achieved in the Japanese art of bonsai. Perhaps this is the fascination we find in this art form. The illusion of permanence and control is created in these living sculptures which pass from generation to generation. They represent the pinnacle in horticultural discipline and dedication. I clearly remember a past edition of the Northwest Gardening Show in Seattle which featured a *Forsythia* in full bloom which was all of 15" tall. It was 75 years old, young by Japanese standards, but it filled me with awe.

Such transitory indulgences, beautiful and lasting as they may seem, must inevitably pass. Like great civilizations which came before us, relatively little is left. In my quest for permanence, I have turned my hand to sculpting rock, really hard rock. I find it even more predictable than plants or people. It yields its beauty with a delicate and patient touch. But is there any permanence there? I doubt it.

Looking back, I realize I may have turned to horticulture because I found plants so predictable in comparison with people whom I felt difficult to understand.

As my career progressed, I inevitably became a supervisor, a teacher, a mentor and eventually a business owner. In my experiences, I came to know that the real "juice" in life was making a difference in the lives of other people. It was passing on the knowledge I had gained and infecting others with the joy, passion and wonderment of the gardening process. The Friends of Government House are in a unique and natural situation to do just this and indeed they do. By contrast, I have been in situations in municipal politics (sorry, I meant Parks) where situations degraded into a battle of wills and political maneuvering. What should have been the most pleasant and rewarding job in the world, sometimes became miserable. In like manner, I recall a gardening show where some of my choice Alpines were on display. A couple of Alpine aficionados fell to debating over the true naming of one of my treasures. At numerous points of the conversation I attempted to interject the statement, "Yes, but isn't it beautiful?" I honestly think these erudite gentlemen missed the point. The point was beauty. The point was wonder. The point was sharing. The hotly debated plant has invariably gone the way of all things, but I still remember its beauty.

So in the joy of your creating, as the unfolding spring raises your spirits, remember what is important. Remember what is best. Strive to create beauty in all its transitory forms, but in all your striving, touch someone else's life with your passion and skill. I have been blessed in my life to be associated with some of the finest gardeners in the area. I feel privileged to have known them and feel responsible to give back what they have given me. For if control is an illusion and permanence is relatively temporary, then what we most importantly have left, is how we affect each other.

A new generation expressed this concept most poignantly and poetically in their song "The Riddle" ("Five for Fighting", album "Two Lights", 2006). *Here's a riddle for you... find the answer... there's a reason for the world... you and I.*

Colin McCrea



Rock & Alpine Garden -
Overlooking the Woodlands and
Lotbinière Avenue

*Photograph supplied by the Photography
Group*



OUR NORTHERN CORRESPONDENT

January 2007

It's a dark and stormy night, still and again. I am writing to you all to assuage the loneliness of the northern gardener, though I hear that you Victorians have been having your innings as well. In 33 years on the North Coast, I don't remember such relentless rain and wind, storm-force following hurricane-force following gale turn and turn about, months on end.

Still there is hope: I finally got out to the garden yesterday. I have done a bit of puttering over the last few months, pulling a few weeds here, cleaning up some dead stalks there, gathering a few basket loads of seaweed from my beach and spreading them over the rhubarb patch and some of the bare raised beds. The ground has been so soggy and cold and the gathering weather systems so relentless however, that these efforts have been feeble and sporadic. But just lately, the very first signs of impending spring are appearing, like the first stir of a breeze that presages a coming wind. Snowdrops, bluebells, irises and daffodils are pushing up tentative tips, as well as rhubarb, *Dicentra* and sedums; buds on the currants and alders, hardy souls, are swelling almost imperceptibly; the perennial weeds, buttercups and the like, are looking just a bit greener and more hopeful, drat them. And most telling of all, the gardeners are getting restless.

We who live on the rain coast are spoiled, even those of us who live so far north as to border Alaska. We are used to being able to get out into our yards and work all winter building gardens and paths, cleaning debris and turning compost, if not actually working the soil. Not this year: the weather has simply been too awful.

In the last while however I have spotted the first signs of determined activity, the real die-hards out working in the short breaks. Des has been pruning and raking in the over-grown beds of the new place he and Wendy bought; Norma has built a new box around a hedge so she can mow more easily and she and John have sheared the tops of their boundlessly enthusiastic dogwoods; Richard has been clearing and day-lighting on the hillside behind his and Jane's house (every year he fells a few trees and plants more rhodos); Maxine has pruned a large and bushy pine into a standard; and I finally got to work again on a project that has been hanging fire since October. I built another raised garden bed, the sixth of an eventual eight. Then I happily trundled around with my wheelbarrow moving piles of debris, mostly wood bits tossed to the sides of the potato patch and the new berry patch, begun last year, but also old boards, sod clumps from the new raised bed site and dead stalks from monkshoods, poppies and irises.

I was out there for about five hours and got filthy, sore and tired: very very very happy, in short, to be back at it! The relentless stormy weather is back, but I am content to bide my time again, having some hope that soon there will be another day to garden, and another. **Lou Allison**



Rock & Alpine Garden - masses of poppies
Photograph supplied by the Photography Group



Early Erythroniums in the Woodlands
Photograph supplied by the Photography Group

ROCK AND ALPINE GARDEN

To work in our garden, you don't need lederhosen, nor do you have to be able to yodel, but if you do have a few goat genes, that might be useful!

In the summer of 1993, the blackberry patch at the north end, up on the rocks, was attacked by some very willing and determined volunteers and totally (almost) wiped out. The rock surface was hosed down to hopefully remove all traces of roots and new soil was brought in to provide a planting surface. Approximately fifty plants were put in by Al Smith and Colin McCrea.

In the spring of 1994, when I became a volunteer, I was asked to take on the garden as no team had yet been formed to work here. Bit by bit we spread further a-field.

A year or two later, we removed all the soil down to the rock surface between the fire road and the rock wall only to find a fissure in the rock providing some water seepage causing a boggy condition. A kind gentleman from Vancouver gave us one thousand dollars and with this money we were able to bring in gravel as a base and to encourage draining. This was covered with landscape cloth, then soil for planting the heathers that were donated by the Victoria Heather Society.

The West Bed was probably the least attractive area in August when the grass was dormant. Soil removal took a whole summer. George Radford suggested that since there wasn't a natural rock formation west of the fire road, we should think about drought-tolerant material and use some large, more dramatic plants to create an uneven line as you approach from the north end. Under the oak tree (south of the stone steps), we had two full-grown willow leaf cotoneasters filling that space. We cut the front one to the ground, opening up that area on top of the rocks for further plantings and re-shaped the back one into an umbrella to provide some partial shade for the *Erythroniums* and candelabra *Primulas*.

There used to be an area of mown lawn from the top of the stone steps, back to the bushes. This did not belong in an alpine setting, so we gradually removed all the sod (the final portion, thanks to the "Terracites"), and prepared a bed on either side of the new gravel path which continues into the Terrace Garden.

I belong to the Vancouver Rock & Alpine Garden Club, the Alpine Garden Society, London, and The Scottish Rock Garden Club, Edinburgh. My memberships include an annual selection of about 15 or 20 packets of seeds collected by members from all over the world. As a result, I can claim that I have not bought more than a dozen mature plants for our garden. Everything is started from seed. Not everything has been viable but most are and have provided a great selection to work with and discover their likes and dislikes. In a way, we are always experimenting.



Rock & Alpine Garden - summer heathers
Photo supplied by the Photography Group

Many have found their way into several of the other gardens at Government House so they are not exclusive to us alone.

We have expanded as far as possible, so the future plan is to maintain and re-arrange the material in this area. Each spring brings a new selection of seeds; another starting point. Isn't that a parallel to living?

Charles Dool, Supervisor



VOLUNTEER COORDINATION - CURRENT VIEWS

In January I put aside my straw hat and earmuffs and donned another hat, that of the Auxiliary of Victoria General and took in a day-long workshop on volunteer recruitment and retention. The seminar was principally directed at paid Volunteer Coordinators and people from many societies and groups attended. I mined several nuggets which might relate to the Friends of Government House Gardens Society, so our esteemed Editor asked me to pass them on.

All of us at Friends, those in and out of charge, are really involved with volunteer recruitment and retention because we often personally encourage people to join and then we try to make them want to stay. Some of us have brought in many people. Others may have been discouraged by the lack of response among acquaintances or confused when people don't stay.

Maybe some of the ideas and advice from this volunteer day can help us all.

Our expert directed us to prepare a two-year recruitment plan. Obviously the objective was to get dozens of devoted hard-workers who show up rain or shine for eight hours per week. But there will also be the people who are not in town all the time and the ones who only want to spend two hours weekly when they are. Based on this exercise, a recruitment plan should enumerate the different dimensions, such as groups, kiosks, ads, publicity, etc.

Finding volunteers is the next step. There is a separate talent needed in formulating ads and notices. As a newspaper person, I felt confident doing an exercise to produce a newspaper ad looking for volunteers. My ad failed miserably because I was looking at it from my point of view, what my needs were. Any of us who stand up at a meeting or gathering or mention Friends to people in emails or on the phone might get a better response if we give all the pertinent details, that is details pertinent to the prospective volunteer, not you. If what we write or what we say answers all their questions, we will get the right people. Highlighting a mutual friend who is a member raises your chances. Telling about the role volunteers play clearly and that experience is not required, and, in fact, gardening instruction or the existence of archives, or event organizing, etc. will be given. The advice was: speak and write clearly to potential volunteers mentioning the minimum requirements.

When I meet people I often make false assumptions, like "I'm sure Joe wouldn't be interested because he's so busy" or "Jill probably doesn't like to garden" or "Irma might find it boring."

Many of us belong to other volunteer groups

which don't compete with Friends, so it's easy to mention Friends to your support groups, professional associations, and fund-raising committees.

The Friends orientation procedure that includes rotating through the gardens seems to be effective. Volunteers who complete it seem to be well prepared and keen. I hope the Supervisors of gardens and of all the other volunteer areas go out of their ways to see what these new volunteers need and want because they are our future workers, board directors, and who knows what.

It was fascinating to learn at the workshop that people don't come because the gardens need them but rather because they need the gardens in some way. We should be sensitive to what other members need and why they might be volunteering. Not everyone is here for the same reasons. Some gardeners get their noses out of joint by being banished to a solitary corner while others prefer the quiet.

One thing all volunteers have in common is that they want to feel comfortable and smart. And this need means that they require an immediate reply to any inquiry, especially if they are Boomers who need to know the precise mission of membership in the Friends. We need to value the skills they arrive with as well as their gardening and weeding abilities.

At the workshop, we were told that a volunteer should be asked for a specific commitment. In our case, volunteers join for a year but should be asked to attend orientation and six weeks of volunteering or some other finite number. The important part is that at the end of the six weeks they must be officially thanked and will, we hope, be eager for more. That is the time to discover any difficulties, questions, or reservations and deal with them. The key for all of us members is to remember to thank and encourage.

The timed commitment mentioned above is the first step in retention. The workshop spelled out that keeping those volunteers is an outcome of recruitment. Getting the right people in the first place means they stay, in the second place, because it is what they expected.

Different volunteers want different things. Some want to be thanked effusively, others want to climb the ladder. Still others want recognition, personally or formally. Sometimes the rewards are plants that bloom or the LG's compliments. Other times it is pins and prizes.

We're all different. A technique to handle these differences is to invite some regular member to ask a newbie after a few months how it's going. The person might not want to complain or say anything but there may be some little or not-so-little thing that needs to be said.

The workshop was fascinating and it made me aware that we all share the responsibility for getting and keeping volunteers.

Val Smith

NOTICES

FRIENDS OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE GARDEN SOCIETY COFFEE/TEA MORNINGS

In the Cottage at 11.30 am on **April 10 & 12; May 8 & 10; June 12 & 14; July 10 & 12; August 7 & 9; September 11 & 13; and October 9 & 11.** Refreshments, chatter, and access to the Friends Library are featured.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE OPEN HOUSE

Her Honour, The Honourable Iona Campagnolo will host an Open House on **Sunday, April 15, from 1 to 3pm.** Her Honour will commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the fire that razed Government House in a ceremony recognizing the firefighters who fought the blaze. Following the ceremony, the public is invited to tour Government House where historic photos and heritage items will be on display. Guests will also have the opportunity to purchase *Government House: The Ceremonial Home of All British Columbians*, the new book by renowned BC author Rosemary Neering.

TWELTH ANNUAL GARDENING FOR WILDLIFE SALE AND DEMONSTRATION

Saturday & Sunday, **April 21 & 22, 2007**, from 10 am to 3 pm

Over 100 species of native plants, seeds, books, bird feeders, nesting boxes, workshops, presentations, demonstrations and displays will be available at Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary, 3873 Swan Lake Road, Victoria, BC. Admission: \$3/day or \$5/weekend pass; price includes admission to all the workshops and demonstrations. Admission free to Friends of the Sanctuary. Contact: www.swanlake.bc.ca or telephone (250) 479-0211.

FRIENDS OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE GARDEN SOCIETY ANNUAL PLANT SALE

Saturday, **April 28, 2007** from 9.30 am to Noon

The Friends Annual Plant Sale will be held on the last Saturday in April (as it always is). We encourage you to tell all your acquaintances that they can take a bit of Government House home with them as most of the plants are grown right here in the nursery garden. You, our members, are our greatest source of publicity. There will be over 3000 plants - perennials, shrubs, roses, grasses, specialty plants - all grown in Victoria. Volunteers for the sale are still needed. Please call Margaret Nelson at 477-3514 to sign up. This year, any plants that are not sold will be offered for half price to Friends during regular gardening hours on Tuesday and Thursday, May 1 and 3 at the nursery garden. This is our biggest fundraiser - let's make it a really good one. Contact: Lynn Heenan at heenans@shaw.ca or telephone: 250-220-7690

VICTORIA DAHLIA SOCIETY TUBER SALE 2007

Saturday, **April 28, 2007** from 9 am to 5.30 pm at Hillside Mall

Many tubers and dahlia cuttings will be on sale throughout the day together with knowledgeable volunteers to answer questions and help new or novice growers. Contact: Graham Rendall at 250-652-8390.

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VICTORIA CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC GARDEN TOUR

Mother's Day Weekend, **May 12 & 13, 2007**, from 10 am to 5 pm

Open gardens this year include a hardy plant collector's dream, a magical woodland garden, and a recently designed seaside acreage with sweeping beds and innovative landscaping in the Victoria area. There will be a plant sale featuring old favourites and exciting new plant varieties. The two-day pass costing \$25 allows for a leisurely, self-guided tour. Tickets with tour maps will be available in early April at a variety of locations in Victoria, Sidney, Duncan and Nanaimo; look for the *Conservatory of Music* poster. Contact: www.vcm.bc.ca or telephone the Conservatory at 1-866-386-5311.

REMINDER

Membership renewal time for 2007 is upon us once again! Please contact Susan Bartol-Drinker, Membership Coordinator, at 380-9447, for details. Only paid-up members are permitted to work on the grounds at Government House whose membership includes general liability insurance coverage. Membership also includes use of the facilities in the Cottage, access to the Friends extensive gardening library, and receipt every two months of the *Cary Bulletin*. Everyone is welcome to apply.