



The Cary Bulletin

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THE FRIENDS OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE GARDENS SOCIETY
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OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Christmas Message to the Friends of the Government House Gardens Society

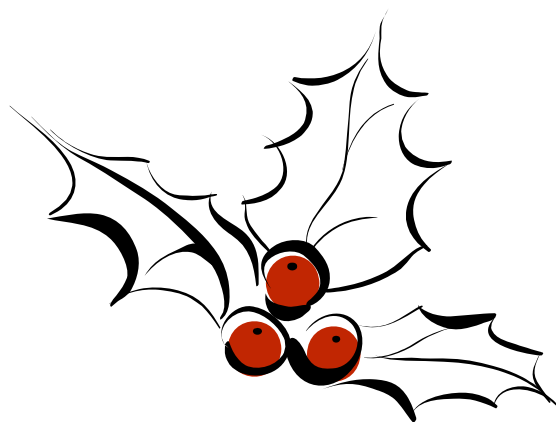
I would first like to thank you, the Friends, for the warm welcome you have given Gwen and me these past weeks as we settle into our new home and role. I have already had the good fortune of meeting many of you and I look forward to the numerous occasions we will share during my tenure as Lieutenant Governor.

The work you do for Government House and the grounds is nothing short of outstanding. From maintaining and enhancing our renowned gardens to volunteering your time to help with events, the countless hours you give play a vital role in making this the home of all British Columbians.

Thank you once again for your continued dedication and support. The work you do is truly appreciated by this Office and the people of British Columbia. My warmest wishes to you and your loved ones this holiday season!

Sincerely,

The Honourable Steven L. Point, OBC



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FRIENDS OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE GARDENS SOCIETY

GARDEN SUPERVISORS 2007/8

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	Pat Boyle	Second - Eileen Edgar
Tool Shed Manager	David Langley	

NON-GARDENING SUPERVISORS 2007/8

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 (2007)	
E-mail Communications	Jean Williams	
Greeting Cards	Margaret Nelson	
Library	George Metcalfe	
Photography Group	Renate Ferguson	
Plant Registry Group	<i>Vacant</i>	
Telephone Committee	Eileen Edgar	Second - Frances Bardon

IN MEMORIAM

Sadly, Pearl White passed away on November 22, 2007. She will be greatly missed. Condolences are extended to her family.

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



A Year on the Garden Path, by Carolyn Herriot, is a practical, weekly garden guide that is easy to follow. It is complete with information and tips including soil preparation, planting for four-season food harvest, growing the best tomatoes, proper pruning, saving seeds and compost building. This guide explains what is happening in the garden, and the gardener's role in creating a healthy garden...organically. Thanks to Terry Hanak for donating this valuable and excellent book to the Friend's Library.

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 February issue of the *Bulletin* is **January 18, 2008**.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS - 2007/8

The Friends of Government House Gardens Society	
President:	Brian Rogers 592-8882 brianarogers@shaw.ca
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Past President:	Nigel Godfrey 477-4731 nigelgodfrey@telus.net
Secretary:	Yvonne Jordan
Treasurer:	Catherine Spencer 382-6340 catherinespencer@telus.net
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Garden Support	Howard Smith 598-3385 hsmith@island.net
Activities	Audrey Smith 382-0314 audnbill@shaw.ca
Director-at-Large	Michael Rankin 595-7751 emcinnestrankin@yahoo.ca
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Director-at-Large	Angela Newton 381-0752 newton_foster@shaw.ca
Volunteer Coordinator	Renate Ferguson 472-3761 renferguson@shaw.ca
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Horticultural Consultant	Carol Dancer 721-5273 w.dancer@telus.net
Deputy Director/Government House	Christine Diemer 387-2080 christine.diemer@gov.bc.ca
Government House web site	www.lt.gov.bc.ca

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

For those of you who attended our Annual General Meeting, you might find these comments rather dull. However, I thought there were a number of points at that meeting worth talking about here. First, the Christmas lunch is sold out so if you have a ticket and can't make it, please call Renate Ferguson at 472-3761 so that she may redirect the ticket to a member on the waiting list. Please, no scalpers!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank both Arthur Timms and Noreen Greig for their outstanding contributions to the Board and the Friends in general. Arthur, for his knowledge of *Robert's Rules of Order* and of our constitution, brought a high degree of professionalism to each board meeting. Noreen, with her accounting background, modernized our accounting systems and kept the books in splendid shape. The two of them will be missed and they have told me they will miss serving on the Board. I would like to welcome our two new members, Catherine Spencer who will be our new Treasurer, and Yvonne Jordan, our new Secretary. In Alex Muir, the Board welcomes the new Vice President. All other board positions remain unchanged.

In my remarks at the AGM, I spoke briefly about the Government House Foundation and its relationship to the Friends. Many people came up to me afterwards saying they were interested in my comments and were unaware of the Foundation and its function. So I thought I would expand on it with my remarks here.

The Government House Foundation was established by former Lieutenant Governor Robert Rogers and the original trustees were drawn from a wide range of talents from architects, engineers, the arts, law and finance. The purposes of the Foundation are to: a) Foster the preservation of the House and its grounds and maintain its historical and cultural values. b) Encourage 1) the use and public display of B.C. arts, crafts and design, and 2) the aim that the grounds reflect florals indigenous to BC. c) Encourage public awareness of the historical and cultural value of Government House. d) Seek and obtain gifts, grants, bequests and donations and raise funds to assist in carrying out the above purposes. The Foundation's Directors are: Chairman John Waddell Q.C. , Vice-President Dewey Parker, Treasurer Michael Ryan, and Past President Brian Rogers; David Price; Ian Howard; Chris Trump; Michael O'Connor; Honorable Judd Buchanan; and the President of the Friends. Non-voting members are The Honorable Steven Point, The Honorable Robert Rogers, Honorable Chief Justice Lance Finch, and Herb LeRoy.

Following Mr. Rogers, Lieutenant Governor Dr. David Lam established the *Friends of Government House Gardens Society* and through his generosity, the David Lam Trust was established with an initial donation of \$300,000, the earnings from which are approximately \$15,000 per year that flow directly to the Friends. Currently, allocations are 25% to capital projects and 75% to operations. The initial donation has grown to \$348,000. The money is invested with the Ministry of Finance through the BC Investment Corporation. As the Friends do not anticipate any capital projects, through good business practices and with frugal management, the Board has decided to re-invest some of the earnings each year to increase the Lam Fund asset base.

As a Society, the Friends do not have charitable status; however, the Foundation does. Thus, whenever members make a donation over and above their membership dues they are invited to make their cheques payable to the Foundation. The Foundation has taken on many projects that could not otherwise have been accomplished by the House. The most recent projects include the new book, *Government House: The Ceremonial Home of all British Columbians*, the stained glass windows in the Ball Room, and the garden access pathways.

Your Board has worked closely with the House and Foundation over the years and I hope this relationship continues. I look forward to seeing everybody at the Christmas lunch. Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year to you all. Remember, if winter comes, can spring be far behind? **Brian Rogers**



RETIREMENT

To John Arnold, retiring Supervisor of the Woodlands, we extend our great appreciation for his strong and supportive leadership since the establishment of the Friends. John has been instrumental in leading the Woodlands Group in the clearing of invasive vegetation and the preservation of native species. Pat Boyle has been appointed as the new Supervisor.

WELCOME - NEW MEMBERS

Jeanne Larsen

Mary & Terry Cake

Michele Obara

Muriel Armstrong

Jane St.Pierre

Sara L. Cook

Izumi & Keiko Matsuzawa

Ruby Lum Ann White

PEOPLE PICTURES



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

1. Renate Ferguson - Volunteer Coordinator, & Ian Horobin - broom eliminator
2. Rob Higgins - 'Arborite' extraordinaire
3. Peter Underwood - *Lewisia* cultivator
4. Alison Leamy - Terraces supervisor
5. Brian Rogers - President
6. Gerald Brown - master root excavator
7. Susan Bartol-Drinker - Membership Coordinator
8. Angela Newton, Nigel Godfrey, Audrey Smith & Arthur Timms - Board members
9. Margot Harrison - Bulletin Mailing Chief.

THE COTTAGE GARDEN

Once upon a time there was a cottage garden that had been forgotten. There was a call for help and two intrepid women armed with trusty pruning saws answered the call. It was for a period of three weeks. That was about six years ago!

We started with the front bed along Rockland Avenue and began clearing and reorganizing the existing plants. As the area is very protected from winter winds and has good drainage, we decided to try some tender plants. Most notable was the *Echium wildpretii*. After gently pruning the laurel at the front gate, we have planted a *Piptanthus nepalensis*, an evergreen shrub with yellow pea-like flowers in late spring. Another shrub that has been included is *Acnistus australis*, bearing blue bell-like flowers from May through July.

The laurel next to the Cottage was the stopping point of the garden and could not be penetrated, so with trusty pruning saws to the fore we attacked the forest and found some interesting plants. A path was created beneath the laurel and a woodland garden was created. It has been planted with *hellebores*, *cyclamens*, various grasses, *Iris unguicularis*, all of which tolerate much raking as the laurel continually drops its leaves. Thanks to the 'Arborites', Rob Higgins and Alex Muir, the laurel received attention creating dappled shade beneath where more planting can be done.

Having opened the vista from beneath the laurel to the back fence, the blackberry tangle and other weeds became more visible. So naturally that corner had to be attacked and cleared. It is now planted with a pink and blue colour pallet including *Sambucus nigra*, *Salvia patens*, *Aconitum carmichaelii*, hellebores, phlox, lilies and *Rosa Mermaid*. To anchor the bed, a *Tetracentron sinense* has been planted.

At the rear of the Cottage, sheets of plastic with sand on top were found so this had to be fixed too. Now this bed features *Abutilon x suntuense* *Violetta* and *Convolvulus cneorum*.

During 2006, the perimeter drains had to be repaired. In mid-February, plants had to be dug up and put into holding beds as the work was to start in March. At this time of year, plants were difficult to identify. Eventually work on the drains commenced and the juniper hedge in front of the Cottage had to be removed. Much excavation took place and in late August we were allowed to start replanting. Mid-September came, the bobcats returned and digging took place again. Early October arrived and the job had finally been completed. Unfortunately, our *Echium wildpretii* did not survive the bobcat running over it! As holding beds had to be created for the duration of the remedial work, they can now be incorporated into the Cottage Garden.

The prize flower at the Cottage this year has been a magenta-coloured *Cosmos*. Although the front bed had been dug up three times last year, it grew on its own so it deserved to survive.

Phyllis Muir

OUR MEDLAR TREE

There is a small tree in the Herb Garden that is the subject of more questions from both visitors and volunteers than any other plant in the garden. It is our medlar tree with the botanical name *Mespilus germanica*.

The medlar is a fruit tree rarely seen in modern gardens; however, the medlar has a long horticultural history dating back into the mists of time. It was a popular and important fruit in medieval Europe. The fruit ripens late in the season and provided a source of vitamin C in winter. Charlemagne's list of fruits, written in 800 AD, includes the medlar. It is also mentioned in many of the old herbals.

As with most plants grown in ancient and medieval gardens, much lore surrounds the medlar. Examples include the belief that to eat the fruit of the medlar offered protection against the devil. Also, planting the seeds of the medlar would bring lifelong prosperity. Today, the medlar is but a curiosity in the garden.

The medlar is indigenous through much of Europe but is thought to have originated in Asia Minor. The Romans grew the medlar and probably introduced it into England. It belongs to the *Rosaceae* family of plants that are closely related to quince, pear and apple.

The medlar is a deciduous tree. The flowers appear in May, are prickly-white and very attractive. In autumn, the foliage develops beautiful orange-russet colours. This makes the medlar an attractive ornamental tree for the garden. The fruit of the medlar is shaped like a small, flattened apple and is much the same colour as a russet apple. The ripening process of the fruit is the most interesting characteristic of the tree. Before the fruit can be eaten, it must be 'bled'. I could not find a definition in the Oxford Dictionary but 'bleeting' is a process of maturation and mellowing. At this point, the fruit is soft but not rotten.

Most information sources on medlars say they are an acquired taste. Perhaps the fact that little attention has been given to breeding new cultivars says it all!

Carol Dancer

THE VIEW FROM THE NORTH COAST

The wind and rain just drove me in from the garden. I did, however, get something done today: I planted an *Ilex* I started from a cutting a few years ago, and have potted up twice. Even though it's knee-high now, it looks pretty small, shrunk from pot-level to ground-level, but I do hope it's happy and planning to grow big, as I expect it to screen my father-in-law's greenhouse next door as soon as possible.

I have been reading a book called *The Well-Designed Mixed Garden* by Tracy DiSabato-Aust. A mixed garden, I thought, c'est moi. Actually "mixed" is a bit kinder than the reality, which is more like "hodge-podge", but there is no price on optimism! At any rate, the author avers that in designing, the gardener should visualize the garden in ten years. Yikes! This thought is both heartening (ten years is a goodly time for the holly to fill out to the generous proportions of its parent plant) and dismaying (ten years from conception to fruition?). Reading books is all very well: the lovely photos, the sonorous Latin, and the lush descriptions are all so satisfying. But comes the time when one must down the book and don the boots and hope for the best.

I have not been in the garden as much as I wished this year, but just lately, I have had more free time. I am realizing that November in the garden is not all bad. The weeds I pull now stay pulled; the water in the newly mucked out ditches gurgles along freely; I don't have to think about mowing (what a relief); it's satisfying to clean up all the debris from summer's rampant growth and fun to build compost heaps; and there are no biting insects. And there is lots of scope for fantasizing about next year: after all, there are months ahead in which to finish last year's half-done tasks, to say nothing of starting new projects which will remain half done when spring's frenzy hits again.

Dodge Cove is looking lovely to me these days in the autumnal gloom. We still have a lot of hardy flowers blooming bravely if not lushly, and although the wind has stripped a lot of bushes and trees of their leaves, quite a few *Cottynias*, *Prunus*, *Spireas*, and *Weigelas* are clinging to purple, brown and gold leaves yet. (Note to self: plant more shrubs for fall foliage: the *Euonymus alatus* (burning bushes) in a neighbour's yard were spectacular this year. I plan to have some of those and some blueberries chosen for scarlet leaves in fall.) I don't remember so much colour in the Cove other years. Perhaps it's been a bit warmer this year. At any rate, we much appreciate the late *Clematis*, *Violas*, *Calendulas*, *Nasturtiums* and *Lupines*, and the greens are greener than ever, even the well-watered (soggy) lawns.

We have been gathering seaweed as well. I love the look of the vegetable beds neatly tucked under their blankets of heaped fucus. It's heartening to feel that even as we head into the seasonal sodden dark, the garden continues to offer sensory satisfaction and solace.

Lou Allison

AN APPRECIATION

"I was astounded by the beauty of the gardens and actually preferred them to some of the more well-known gardens on the island. The variety was incredible and it was clear that much love and care is needed and given to keep them so lovely. The gardens were a true highlight of my vacation. Thank you for your hard work. I hope to see them again someday".

Diana London

September 14, 2007.



1. Medlar fruit (refer to [Our Medlar Tree](#) on page 5)
2. *Callicarpa bodinieri* (refer to [The Winter Garden](#) on page 7)
3. *Azara microphylla* (refer to [The Winter Garden](#) on page 7).

Photos sourced from various sites on Google.

DEPARTING MESSAGE FROM FORMER LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR IONA CAMPAGNOLO

I have been proud to be associated with *The Friends of Government House Gardens Society* during the years of my term as the 27th Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia.

It has been a most remarkable six years and a significant honour for me to have gained some insight and understanding of the many excellent associations and numbers of dedicated citizens who so enrich our shared province.

As my term is now at an end, may I thank you for the many courtesies that have been accorded me and offer you my very best wishes for continued success in the years ahead.

Yours sincerely, The Honourable Iona Campagnolo, PC, CM, OBC. September 7, 2007.

THE WINTER GARDEN

Gardener, if you listen, listen well:

Plant for your winter pleasure, when the months

Dishearten; . . . 'The Garden' by V. Sackville-West.

On entering the grounds of Government House through the Tradesmen's Entrance, one will see two beautiful coral bark maples, *Acer palmatum*. The bark of these Japanese maples glows a warm coral-red during the winter months. Beneath one is a small sign which reads: "The Winter Garden is a gift of Victoria nurseryman Tony Wallner of Cedar Hill Nursery".

The Winter Garden is the smallest garden on the grounds but without a doubt it contains some of the most interesting plants in the garden; plants that are rarely seen in local gardens.

This little garden is a true winter garden that is filled with plants that flower or fruit from late October through into April. Winter flowering plants fascinate me. What would cause a plant to evolve to flower during the dark days of winter? However, the quiet beauty of these plants, with their display of flowers, berries, bark and scent, gives enormous pleasure and allows us to think of the garden as a twelve-month continuum.

One could say that the Winter Garden sleeps through the summer. There are no bright flashes of colour or elusive perfumes during the summer months, but then in October, the Winter Garden springs to life. First off the mark is a shrub called *Callicarpa bodinieri* which in mid-October sheds its leaves to reveal its fruits and starts another season of winter treasures. *Callicarpa*, sometimes called Beautyberry with good reason, is native to Central and Western China. It is notable for its conspicuous rich violet berries which make a dramatic display of colour and last for several months. It is a plant of unremarkable stature during the rest of the year but come the late autumn it always draws comment and the Flower Arrangers love it!

In November, the flowering season gets started with the *Mahonias*. These are the Asian cousins of our native *Mahonias* but are much larger in stature and flower. They have evergreen compound leaves and racemes of elegant yellow flowers that are held stiffly erect. It is a beautiful sight to see a *Mahonia* in full flower in the mid-winter sun.

In late November, the dainty single pink flowers of the *Camellia sasanqua* begin to bloom. The *C. sasanquas* are the slightly more common *C. japonica*. They have the wonderful characteristic of dropping their spent flowers unlike the *C. japonica*. We are blessed with two hardy cultivars that bloom for many weeks and seem able to withstand anything that our winters throw at them.

By Christmas, the hellebores, iris and primulas are in bloom and more shrubs are beginning to flower including the rhododendrons, the witch-hazels (*Corylopsis* and *Hamamelis*), daphnes, viburnums and honeysuckle. A few of the plants deserve a special mention. Two species of *Azaras* (*lanceolata* and *microphylla*) grow in the Winter Garden. They are evergreen shrubs with tiny, fragrant yellow flowers and are native to Chile and Argentina. If you are walking along the Winter Garden and think that you smell vanilla, it is the *Azaras* throwing off their perfume. Another South American native is *Drimys winteri*, a small evergreen tree with loose umbels of ivory-white flowers. The Winter Garden is the only place where I have seen this lovely plant in local gardens. Van Dusen Gardens in Vancouver has requested cuttings.

And then there is one of my favourite shrubs in the Winter Garden, *Edgeworthia chrysantha*, another native of China. It isn't the easiest of shrubs to grow and until the past few years it has been difficult to obtain. It seems to have found a home in our garden and blooms each year. It is a deciduous shrub with nodding terminal clusters of fragrant creamy-yellow flowers. In Asia, it is used to make special paper for banknotes.

Sadly, Mr. Wallner passed away this year. However, he has left us with a wonderful gift. Few people would ever think to create a Winter Garden. I never knew Mr. Wallner when he had his nursery at Cedar Hill but I loved to visit with him at his place in Saanich to hear some of his stories. He once told me that when he had his nursery at Cedar Hill, he had his regular customers but he also had his 'back-door customers'. The 'back-door customers' were the gardeners who appreciated the rare, the beautiful and the unusual and only to those select customers would he sell his best plants. I have since carried a mental image of certain members of the gardening community slipping out of the back-door of the nursery after dark carrying a rare gem of a plant, perhaps a magnolia which was Mr. Wallner's favourite genus. While I knew him, Mr. Wallner still loved gardens and plants and he continued to be very generous to Government House Gardens.

Carol Dancer

NOTICES

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THE COTTAGE

I am looking for new members to volunteer in the Cottage. You do not have to call if you are already on the list. This would only require 1-2 hours once a year on a Saturday during the gardening season. You don't work alone but with a partner. Your effort would be greatly appreciated:

Our heritage cottage needs you.

Because it is feeling rather blue.

It only takes an hour of your time,

To maintain our special building in its prime.

Please make it your commitment

To assist us all in its betterment. [*Anonymous thankfully!*]

Please contact Renate Ferguson at 472-3761.



FOR NON-GARDENERS

Our coffee mornings, the second Tuesday and Thursday mornings from February to October, are in need of more helpers to set up the food provided by the gardeners and to make the coffee and tea. You will be able to socialize with our hardworking volunteer colleagues who appreciate these special treat days. Please call Renate Ferguson at 472-3761.

CRAFT FAIR 2007

We have just completed our second year of organizing the annual *Friends of Government House Craft Fair*. We have thoroughly enjoyed volunteering our time in putting this event together. Our emphasis and our main goal has been to achieve a successful event to benefit the Friends. We feel we have achieved and have met our goals. After saying that, we would not have been able to meet these goals without the extensive help from numerous volunteers to whom we extend a hearty 'thank you' for your help and support.

Lasha Lum & Maxine Brook

PHOTOGRAPHERS NEEDED

The Photography Group is looking for enthusiastic photographers. At the moment, we are in transition from slide to digital format. We require you to have a camera with 6-mega pixel capacity or more. You would be involved with digital imaging, power point presentation and use of the Friend's equipment. Please contact Renate Ferguson at 472-3761 for more Information.

CAMOSUN COLLEGE RECIPIENTS OF THE GEORGE RADFORD BURSARY

Supported annually by the Friends, Vanessa Hawryluk, Vince Keller and Chelsey Thapa are the 2007 first year students in the Horticulture Technician Program. The Society has been a committed supporter of this program since 2005 and has provided practical horticulture opportunities in the gardens to several College students in recent years.

NON-GARDENING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

For many members, the physical requirements of gardening are understandably not an option. But perhaps some less physically-demanding opportunities in sheltered locations like the Cottage, at home or in the Multi-Purpose Room by the stables could be. Please contact Renate Ferguson at 472-3761 if you would be interested and available to take on some light volunteer assignments such as preparing plant tags for the annual spring plant sale, etc.

