

The Cary Bulletin

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THE FRIENDS OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE GARDENS SOCIETY
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CRAFT SALE 2009 REPORT TO THE FRIENDS OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE GARDENS

“Buying at the Butterworth” 2009 brought together 95 volunteers from the Society, 1300 members of the public, and 65 vendors.

It also offered an opportunity for the staff from the House and Their Honours to be our guests on the opening Friday evening.

The huge time commitment from volunteers, the enthusiastic and tangible support from the House and the generous donation of goods by the Friends of Government House all contributed to making this a positive event which raised nearly \$5,000 for the Friends garden projects.

Comments from various members of the Friends indicate the Craft Sale is a great opportunity to meet other people in the organization.

Members of the public left messages such as: “This is a beautiful place. Fabulous buildings, What wonderful, friendly, helpful people.”

Notes from some vendors conveyed pleasure at being well treated. One person wrote to say he came back each day over the weekend to share in some of the good feelings.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! to everyone who made this “slightly prestigious yet not pretentious event” a success.

Angela Newton

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**FRIENDS OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE GARDENS SOCIETY
GARDEN SUPERVISORS 2010**

Cottage	Phyllis Muir	Second - Yvonne Jordan
Country Garden	Ruth Minshall (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	Marlene Reed	Second - Diana Knuffman (Tues); Felicity Hackett (Thurs)
Orchard	Virginia Fisher	
Pearkes Peak	David and Crenagh Elliott	
Peter's Rocks	Peter Underwood	
Pool Garden	Jessica Sluymmer	
Rock and Alpine	Rand Harrison	
Rockland 1	Diane Symes	Second - Sandra Fleischman
Rockland 2	Phyllis Muir	Second - Dianne Adams
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 & Hugh Porter	

NON-GARDENING SUPERVISORS 2009/10

Archives Group	Sue Baptie
Bulletin Mailing Group	Renate Ferguson
Coffee/Tea Mornings	Liz Wallis (Tuesday) & Martha Livingston (Thursday)
Cottage Upkeep	Renate Ferguson
Arts & Crafts Fair (2009)	Angela Newton
E-mail Communications	Jean Williams
Greeting Cards	Margaret Nelson
Library	George Metcalfe
Photography Group	Renate Ferguson
Telephone Committee	Eileen Edgar
Christmas Lunch (2009)	Mary Cake, Peggy Dallamore & Noella Birch
	Second - Frances Bardon

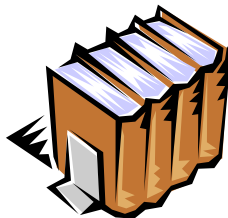
E-MAIL MESSAGING

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 250-477-5848.

FROM THE LIBRARY SHELF

Thanks to Robert (who volunteers in the Archives) and Alan Patterson for donating many garden books and magazines to the Friends' library on behalf of Cecy Baldwin, the former Librarian at the Agricultural Experimental Farm in Saanich. The books include *Gardening Without Pests*, *The Language of Flowers*, and *Flora of the Saanich Peninsula*, plus magazine issues of *The Garden* and *Davidsonia*, a quarterly publication of the Botanical Gardens at UBC.

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 **April issue** of the *Cary Bulletin* is **Friday, March 19, 2010**.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2010

The Friends of Government House Gardens Society

President: Alex Muir	250-592-0407	alex_muir@telus.net
Vice-President: Angela Newton	250-381-0752	newton_foster@shaw.ca
Past President: Brian Rogers	250-592-8882	brianrogers@shaw.ca
Secretary: Marlene Reed	250-382-5651	marlenereed@telus.net
Treasurer: Catherine Spencer	250-382-6340	catherinespencer@telus.net
Gardening Operations: Nairn Hollott	250-744-4019	nairnhollott@shaw.com
Garden Support: Howard Smith	250-598-3385	hsmith@island.net
Activities: Audrey Smith	250-382-0314	audnbill@shaw.ca
Directors-at-Large:		
250-595-7751 Michael Rankin		mjrankin@shaw.ca
250-592-9994 Peggy Dallamore		pdal@shaw.ca
250-598-0542 Denise Stocco		stocco10@shaw.ca
250-477-0899 Janet Renouf		storyline@shaw.ca
Head Gardener: Valerie Murray	250-592-2005	vmurray0@gmail.com
Volunteer Coordinator: Vacant		
Membership Coordinator: Susan Bartol-Drinker	250-380-9447	susan.bartol-drinker@shaw.ca
Honourary Member: Carol Dancer	250-721-5273	w.dancer@telus.net
Director of Operations/Government House:		
250-387-2080 Jermy Brownridge		jermy.brownridge@gov.bc.ca
Government House web site		www.ltgov.bc.ca

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On January 6, the Board of Directors held a special planning session. As you know, we have had to cancel the Plant Sale for this year due to a number of circumstances. We also had some good feedback after the Craft Sale which led me to the decision that we needed to look at where we are, and what we need to be doing to support our activities in the future. We wanted to look at several topics:

- Fund raising (plant sales, craft fairs, other possibilities)
- Recruiting and retaining members
- Other member activities
- Other events we might consider doing

The planning session went extremely well, with many great ideas put forward during the brain storming session. We then went through the many suggestions and sorted them into categories and priorities. Once this was done, we assigned them out to various directors to take them to working groups. The expectation now is that the working groups will look into the various suggestions in more detail. From this we hope to get some really good approaches to the various ideas that will enable us to move forward and implement them.

The working groups will be looking for any of you who are interested to get involved and help us in the next steps. You do not have to be currently involved in society activities of any kind. If you are interested in contributing, we'd like to hear from you. We are hoping that some of you would like to take this opportunity to become more active with the society, especially as we look at activities that might interest non-gardeners or people who for various reasons cannot work in the gardens. Please consider helping out. There are some great ideas that may lead to some very interesting opportunities for other people to get active.

The following are the various working groups:

- Craft Sale/Bazaar: Angela Newton to head the group to come up with ideas, plans and suggested dates.
- Educational Component: Janet Renouf volunteered to look into the suggestions with an educational component and will report back to the Board with activities that might be popular.
- Events: Public Events Committee to look at ideas generated from events list and which are the most viable. Contact for this is Angela Newton.
- Fund Raising: Howard Smith and Denise Stocco will look into the Fund Raising suggestions and report back to the board with their conclusions about which should be implemented and could be successful.
- Selling Plants: Denise Stocco agreed to take this on.

I encourage everyone to look at these categories, choose one, and get involved. As I mentioned, you do not have to be currently active in the society. If you have not been, then now is the time to take advantage of this great opportunity (sounds like a commercial...) to contribute. Call the number on your screen...oh, wait, this really isn't a TV commercial! But please do call the contact person for the working groups. They would love to hear from you and get your input and ideas.

Let's all get involved in helping make our society even better, stronger, more fun for all, and much more visible to the public.

Alex Muir



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Catherine (Taffy) Carsley

Barb Humble

Judy Hambleton

Susan Kaufman

Susan Ross

Susan Henderson and Ron Carter

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCH AND FESTIVITIES



1. Phoebe Noble.
 2. Phoebe Noble, with Herb LeRoy, receiving the Garden Spade Award from Alex Muir, President.



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3. Nairn Hollott with Jerymy Brownridge and Bette Anderson.
 4. Ross Flint on retiring from the Board.
 5. Doug Timney behind the poinsettia.
 6. Howard and Valerie Smith on tickets.
 7. Lucy Waldo, Angela Newton and Jim Ferguson.
 8. Shirley Bracey, Sandra Fraser and Elsie Newlove tucking in.
 9. Alex Muir presenting the Silver Trowel Award to Yvonne Jordan.
 10. Peggy Dallamore and Mary Cake.



CHRISTMAS EVENTS AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE



Christmas Trees in Government House

Left: in the front entrance hall, decorated with white lights and traditional ornaments, topped by a white feathered 'peacock' and a red cardinal.

Right: in the main reception room, decorated with white and red lights, with glass icicles, and topped by a red cardinal.

Below: three of eight trees with white lights, decorated individually by visiting schools of grade 3 students.

Photos supplied by Ross Flint



In recent years, volunteers have been recruited by the Public Events Committee, chaired by staffer Heidi Elliott, with volunteers Alison Leamy, Angela Newton and Brian Rogers, to decorate the ground floor of Government House at Christmas-time. This entails purchasing and delivering 9-6 foot trees and 2-15 foot trees to the House, installing each on stands and distributing them to various locations on the main floor of the House. From the attic, carefully labeled and stored at the end of each Christmas season, 2-8 foot artificial trees and boxes of decorations are retrieved. Invariably replacement lights must be purchased and dated ornaments replaced. The end result, as shown in the above photographs, is really quite spectacular and draws appreciative comments from visitors to the House. In these surroundings, one day is devoted to hosting 8 groups of grade 3 students from local schools, 2 teas for about 180 residents of local full- and partial-care homes on separate days, the Friends' Christmas Lunch, and, of course, visitors attending His Honour's New Year's Levée. After the festivities are over, the same group of volunteers gathers on a day in the first week of January to dismantle, cart away the tired real trees and pack everything else up for storage in the attic until next year.

Nigel Godfrey

A HANDFUL OF WINTER FAVOURITES

Winter can be an overlooked season in the garden, especially if we approach it with the same criteria we experience the other seasons. Winter asks us to slow down and appreciate its more subtle charms by looking at our gardens with different eyes. Blooms are smaller, to avoid being battered by winter storms, but what the flowers lack in visual impact they often make up for in delicious scent. Here are a few of my indispensable plants that enrich the winter landscape with their colour and scent. All of them can be enjoyed on your next walk around the gardens of Government House.

Wander into the Winter Garden at the tradesmen's entrance and you will be transported by a delicious scent that seems to come from nowhere. *Sarcococcas* are indispensable evergreens that should be better known. They produce small tufts of flowers in mid winter that are inconspicuous to the eye but release a powerful honey scent. They are good for edging a path or bed in a neat but less formal way than box. They grow in shade and are relatively drought tolerant. There are a number of *sarcococcas* in the winter garden, including one of the largest specimens I have ever seen in Victoria. If you have a small garden choose the dwarf variety *Sarcococca humilis*.

Iris unguicularis is another easy and welcome winter plant. This is a plant that seems to thrive on neglect. It doesn't want a rich soil or any coddling. Give it a dry place where it can bake all summer, reproducing the conditions of its native Algeria. The 10" lavender flowers begin to appear in late November and continue to bloom until March. They have beautifully stenciled markings and a delightful scent which can be appreciated close up. This is a plant that most gardeners beg from friends. It does not sell itself in a nursery pot where it usually sulks and refuses to flower. Give it the conditions that it requires and then ignore it for a couple of years and you will both be happy. The clump does not like to be disturbed and just gets better with age. A rare white form is of course available somewhere, but I haven't formed the necessary friendships to acquire it. It is definitely worth a visit to the Terraces to admire the lovely clump growing there.

Hamamelis are not rare trees and they fully deserve the popular recognition they receive as they give pleasure in every season. Their habit is open and vase shaped and have beautiful leaves which turn lovely shades in the fall. It is the winter though when the witch hazel has it's finest moment. Its bare branches are covered with clusters of 1" scented flowers that resemble twisted spiders in shades of yellow, orange or red depending on the cultivar. This small tree is a good specimen for a town garden or it can be planted in groups to great advantage if one has the luxury of space. Fortunately, Government House does have space and fortunately it is a favourite of Carol Dancer's as well. She has planted an assortment of them throughout the garden which will be a wonderful legacy in years to come.

There has been a number of remarkably mild days in the garden this January with robins and volunteers alike singing and enjoying the wonderful weather. Make plans to visit over the next month, it will refresh your spirits.

Valerie Murray

REPORT FROM GOVERNMENT HOUSE

We first wish to express our thanks to those Friends involved in the successful planning and execution of the Christmas lunch. By most reports, fun was had by all. I know Herb and I particularly enjoyed ourselves, although we agreed that we ate too much. It was however, a very convivial event.

Second, we would like to thank the volunteers who helped out with seasonal decorations at the House and volunteering at our annual series of community Christmas events, namely the Senior's Teas, Children's Tree Decorating Party and the Levée. All went off without a hitch, but wouldn't have without your assistance.

Their Honours and House management will be busy with the upcoming 2010 Winter Games, albeit primarily in Vancouver. Given the locations of all Olympic/Paralympic events and the logistics, most of Their Honour's representational responsibilities will keep them on the mainland. His Honour will be hosting a dinner for the Princess Royal who will be in Vancouver for the opening of the Games in mid-February.

As you are no doubt aware, there may be some significant changes in the Friends' fundraising activities in the coming year. The House is working closely with the Friends' Board to ensure that new, viable methods are sought out. Many good ideas have already been brought forward, and we at the House will do whatever we can to support these ideas and work them through to fruition. We are particularly interested in bringing life to the rehabilitated Butterworth Cottage area, both for the betterment of the community and the coffers.

We look forward to another wonderful year in 2010. Many thanks in advance to all the active volunteers who will once again spend countless hours volunteering for the betterment of the Estate of the Lieutenant Governor.

Jeremy Brownridge

NOTICES

GARDENING START-UP

Tuesday, March 2, 2010 will mark the first official day of gardening for members volunteering on the grounds at Government House.

TEA/COFFEE MORNINGS

Tea and coffee accompanied by delicious edibles will be served in the Cottage on **Tuesday, March 9** and on **Thursday, March 11**, and thereafter on Tuesday and Thursdays mornings from 11 am. in the second week of each succeeding month to and including October 2010. All members are welcome.

LIAIBILITY INSURANCE POLICIES

From time to time, members enquire about insurance coverage while actively volunteering on Government House property. There are actually two policies: "Coverage applies while the volunteers are performing their duties on behalf of the province. These policies cover Commercial General Liability in the amount of \$2,000,000 and Accidental Death and Dismemberment for various limits". This means that members are covered in any instance of a liability law suit against the Friends, and also provides coverage in case anyone is seriously injured or killed while working on the grounds.



PLEASURE AND THE NEED FOR VIGILANCE

Volunteering in the gardens at Government House offers one of the great pleasures certainly for those of us who are retired and away from wage earning lives that once dominated our time and energies. A satisfying day in the gardens might well include deadheading gloriously flowering summer plants to extend their colour and beauty for just a few more weeks or digging over a massive expanse overgrown with Hypericum in order to create a wholly new garden. It is meticulous work and sometimes heavy work but whatever it is it seems to satisfy in each of us some inner demand for creativity.

Regrettably, the pleasure of volunteering in such circumstances is occasionally broken by random acts of thievery. As recently as last December, a beautiful, 4-foot, vigorous Bosnian pine, generously donated, disappeared from the Terraces. Last spring, two carved wood bears were wrenched from their plinths to which they had been 'securely' bolted; both had been donated to Government House while Her Honour Iona Campagnolo was Lieutenant Governor. In at least one of the gardens at Government House, under the momentarily diverted eyes of its owner, an expensive pair of secateurs vanished. Cedar fence rails that had been assembled in the Woodlands along the public foot path were unceremoniously dumped over the fence on to Richardson Road. Plants have vanished from the Nursery Garden, the Rotary Garden and from elsewhere on the grounds. Such episodes may indeed be part and parcel of a public garden. They are also a reflection of a mean and disrespectful disposition.

So, what to do? Please report any and all incidents to the Director of Gardening Operations (Nairn Hollott) who in turn will alert the House. Outside of regular gardening mornings, if you witness an incident, please report it to the Commissionaire on duty in the House. Please be vigilant. Keep your gardening tools and equipment close at hand. When not in use, place all tools belonging to the Friends in the lock boxes or in the tool shed.

Although unfortunately these things can and do happen, they should not prevent us from enjoying ourselves as volunteers in the gardens at Government House.

APOLOGY

A sincere apology is extended to Lindsey Maule for the error printed under *In Memoriam* in the December 2009 issue of the *Cary Bulletin* where it was incorrectly announced that Lindsey was deceased who in fact is very much alive. To Lindsey and her family, we extend our deepest condolences for the recent loss of her husband.

CORRECTION

In the December 2009 issue of the *Cary Bulletin*, on page 5, photograph 7, "Chef CJ cooking lunch" should have read "Chef AJ cooking lunch". AJ, please accept our humble apology.