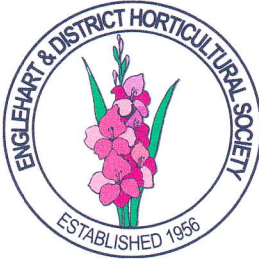




'Through The Garden Gate'

The monthly newsletter of the Englehart and District Horticultural Society
February 2017



Englehart and District Horticultural Society was formed in 1956.

General meetings:

3rd Wednesday of most months at 7:00 p.m. in the Presbyterian Church basement

- *Speakers, workshops, demonstrations
- *Civic Improvement
- *Youth Involvement
- *Displays and Competitions
- *Environmental Stewardship

President: R. Campbell
Bulletin Editor: E. Fisher
Website:
engleharthort.weebly.com

A Word From The Editor

Our Annual Meeting in January was a successful and interesting meeting. The supper was delicious, the annual report booklet (thank you to Secretary Bonnie for all of her work on this) was informative, and it was fun to look back at the past year through the slide show. One thing especially stands out...the men and women who allowed their names to stand for election, whether to a position on the executive or as a Director of the Society. These people agree to give of their time to attend 2 meetings a month to help the Society conduct its business and plan for the future. We owe them a vote of thanks. This lovely old poem (thanks to Jean Bott) is dedicated to them and to all members of our Society.

The Vegetable Garden

First plant 5 rows of Peas:

Patience, promptness, preparation, perseverance, purity.

Next plant three rows of Squash:

Squash gossip, squash criticism, squash indifference.

Then plant three rows of Lettuce:

Let us be faithful to duty

Let us be unselfish

Let us be loyal

Let us be true to obligation

Let us love one another.

And no garden is complete without Turnips:

Turn up for important meetings

Turn up with a smile

Turn up with good ideas

Turn up with determination

To make everything count for something good and worthwhile.

Mark It On Your Calendar:

February 15: General Meeting
March 10-19: Canada Blooms, Toronto
April 29: District 12's Annual Meeting

Quips, Quotes, and Garden Lore

“Mother Nature quickly grabs hold of an abandoned plot and begins to make it over in her own unique way. The weeds appeared, of course. A few coddled perennials did not survive the experience. But, by and large, things generally thrived. It's become rather interesting to rediscover plants that I had forgotten were there, given a second chance to prosper once the clumps of self-seeded native goldenrod get cleared away. The realization that gardens are extremely transient creations had not been lost on me. I regret now that in the past I seldom made the effort to properly document special seasonal moments with photographs or jottings in a garden journal. Live and learn.” (Thanks to Jean Wallace for sharing this from a favourite book of hers, Perennial Gardening Guide by John M. Valleau.) If you have a favourite quote, a piece from a gardening book, or a family gardening saying, let me know, please, so we can share it with others here. Also, how many of you keep a gardening journal or a photo album to document your horticultural successes, failures, or plans for the future? It's a great idea to help avoid repeating mistakes and recording hints to help others.

Looking Back

The lady to the right was one of my favourite people. Anne Cambridge was a longtime member of our Society who was always ready with a smile, a joke, and was eager to work for the club. She loved working the door at events such as the Flower Show as she got to meet and talk with others. She's been gone a long time and I still think of her at every flower show, especially if I'm lucky enough to win the trophy she donated.



Reports from Your Directors:

Nominating: The Nominating Committee met last month and proposed the list of people which was accepted at the Annual Meeting. You will find the 2017 Executive and Directors on page 5.

Social: Convenor Mary Schippers reminds Joyce Smith that she is the hostess for this month's meeting and Bonnie Warner brings the gift for the free draw.

Programme: Carrie Anne Field reports that February's programme will be Jeff Warner of Aidie Creek Gardens who will share experiences and tips on growing giant vegetables. Jeff has won prizes with some of his giant vegetables in Ontario competitions. (Hint- there may be some free seeds available!) It's going to be a great evening!

Website/Facebook: Rick Heaslip reports that we had 4769 hits on our Website last year. He has been working hard on updating the site for 2017. I'm also pleased to let you know that we have 104 members on our Facebook page. Keep posting and learning, folks!

Membership: We currently have 46 paid up members for 2017. If you haven't renewed your membership for this year, please contact Ginny Montminy. You will receive only one or two more bulletins without renewing.

Bulletin: If you are currently getting your monthly bulletin by mail and would like to try it by email, please let Ginny Montminy or me know. Also, if you have something to share in the bulletin, please send it to me. (efisher1951@gmail.com).

Festival of Flowers: There will not be a Festival of Flowers this year. We are going to try to have a series of smaller shows at monthly meetings, featuring a variety of horticultural themes. It will be explained in detail in the March bulletin.



A Seed Primer from Joe
(continued from January bulletin)

Also, like their modern counterparts, the Shakers conducted seed trials of new varieties and worked to develop varieties of their own. It is unclear how many vegetable varieties were actually developed by the Shakers because, as Margaret Frisbee Somer points out, "The Shakers were free with their inventions and discoveries." and other seedsmen may well have taken credit for their work. And here is where the Shaker seed industry diverges sharply from the philosophy underlying most of today's seed development programs. The Shakers believed that it was a sacred duty to work towards the perfection of life. Achievements along this path were shared freely for the common good. The patenting of a life form would not have occurred to them. (*"History of the Shaker seed industry and the Halifax Seed Company was adapted from an article that I originally wrote for Highgrader Magazine".*)

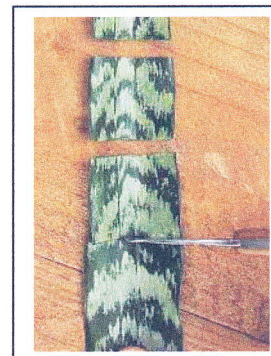
Canada's oldest seed house, Halifax Seed Company, began business in 1866, the year before Confederation. In the early days, the company's inventory included such diverse items as livestock feeds, animal care items, stove parts and firewood. Halifax Seed's modern history began in 1924 when Fred Tregunno, who had been working as a local sales representative for a Toronto seed company, purchased the business. Under his innovative guidance, the operation quickly grew. Tregunno was a man who developed unconventional but effective solutions to business challenges. As he expanded the wholesale seed business, he enlisted local dairy truck drivers to deliver his seeds to merchants along their routes. In return, the truckers got free beer.

Today Halifax Seed Company is still a family run business. In order to avoid disappointment, customers who order on line or by mail should be aware that in most instances their seeds will not arrive in a milk truck. (to be continued)

A winter hint....Don't forget to save wood ash from your fireplace/wood stove, or even from your neighbours, and, in May, sprinkle a couple of scoops around your heavy feeding perennials such as roses and peonies, to promote vigorous blooms and help deter slugs.

January's 'Plant of the Month' was the Sansevieria. I briefly mentioned that the best way to ensure you are able to multiply this plant is to divide the plant, as it puts out 'offsets' or pups. This is important if your mother plant has the stripe down the outside edges of the leaf. By dividing the plant, the new plants will continue to have the stripe. However, you can also multiply the sanseveira by actually cutting a leaf into several pieces. The new plants grown by this method, however, do not have the stripe. There are a few things to remember, however, when using this easier method:

Choose a healthy and green leaf from your Snake Plant to propagate. Cut the leaf into 3-4 inch segments making sure to keep track of which side was the top and which side was the bottom of the cutting. Insert the bottom of the cuttings into fresh potting soil making sure you have your pieces top-side up. If you accidentally insert the cuttings upside down, the cuttings will not root and grow into new plants. Keep the pot in a bright and warm area away from direct sunlight, making sure the soil is moist without getting soggy. In about 3-4 weeks the roots of your snake plant cuttings will start to form but it may take a few months for the leaves of the new plants to start growing. With more time and proper care your Snake Plant can even begin to flower.



Plant of the Month

Rex Begonia

Rex begonias are beautiful, colourful foliage plants. They like bright, indirect light year round and do well under fluorescent lights. They hate being overwatered, like lots of humidity, but do not respond well to misting. Pebbles and water in their saucer work as long as the pot isn't sitting in water. They like average to warm room temperatures and light, loose, fast-draining soil. These plants grow from knobby rhizomes and prefer a relatively shallow, wide pot to spread. Divide when the rhizomes butt up against the sides of the pot. Water with half strength liquid fertilizer every other week during the spring and summer. Don't fertilize and reduce watering in the winter months.



Taking Cuttings (con'd)

*Some plants, such as geraniums, cacti and succulents, should be cut ready for planting, but should be left out of the water or soil for a few hours, even until the next day. This allows the cut at the bottom of the stem to harden or scar over. This helps to prevent this type of cutting from rotting when it is placed in soil.

*Most plants do well in regular potting soil from a store. If you buy something with only peat moss (no soil), be prepared to fertilize your plant more often because there is no food for the plant in the peat moss or 'soilless mixes'.

*All plants need less water in the winter. Most plants do well if you let the top of the soil dry out a bit. Use your finger to feel. If you feel moisture in the soil when you poke your finger tip in a few centimeters, don't water yet.

*Enjoy your houseplants. They're good friends, especially in our long, cold winters. Need more information about a plant? Just Google it, or use a houseplant book, many of which are available at your library.



(Nana must have read our Poetry and Prose this month!)

Poetry and Prose

*Every gardener knows
that under the cloak of
winter*

lies a miracle...

*a seed waiting to sprout
a bulb opening to the light,
a bud straining to unfurl
and the anticipation
nurtures our dream.*

Barbara Winkler



Happy Valentine's Day!

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Copying: Ginny Montminy
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Labels: Rick Heaslip

Results from our January 2017 Annual Meeting

At our Annual Meeting held on January 18th, executive members and directors were elected. These people will be the Executive members and Directors in 2017:

Executive

President: Rosemary Campbell

1st Vice President: Jean Bott

2nd Vice President: Kelly Brownlee

Secretary: Bonnie Warner

Treasurer: Ginny Montminy

Auditors: Twyla Wilson/Darcy Hebert

Directors

Claudette Black

Eileen Fisher

Deb Murray

Bruce Wilson

Ruth Webb

Dee Hill

Rick Heaslip

Marg McMurray

Mary Schippers

Joyce Marie Smith

We welcome new members at all times and know that new blood makes our Society more vibrant and interesting for all members. We hold only two meetings in most months (none in December); a Directors' meeting on the first Wednesday of the month, where business of and plans for the Society are discussed, and the third Wednesday is our General meeting with presentations, workshops, speakers, etc. If you have an idea for an interesting topic for a General meeting, please let us know. Below are some photos from our 2017 Annual Meeting:



2017 Convenors

Christmas Workshop: C. A. Field

Youth Competitions: E. Fisher/B. Warner

Social: Mary Schippers

Membership/Cards: G. Montminy

Plant and Bake Sale: J. Bott

Constitution: B. Wilson

Service Certificate: C. Field

Civic Planting: B. Warner

Publicity: C. Black

Show Schedule: R. Heaslip

Website/Facebook: R. Heaslip/ E. Fisher

Programme: B. Warner

Prizes and Awards: Ginny Montminy

Horticultural Week: D. Murray

Nominating: C. Field

Bulletin: E. Fisher

Phoning: K. Brownlee