

# SCOTIA GARDENER

Newsletter of the Nova Scotia Association of Garden Clubs



## Fall 2023

### Message from the NSAGC Chair

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Greetings, gardening friends,

Although most of our gardens have already been put to bed for the winter, the fall continues to be a busy time for many of our clubs and members.

In early October I had the pleasure of attending the NSAGC District Two rally. It was a full day of interesting presentations, fun contests, a great meal and a wonderful opportunity to meet and chat with members. A heartfelt thank you to the volunteers of Lismore and District Garden Club for planning and hosting this event.

Congratulations to the Antigonish Garden Club members who recently celebrated their 40th anniversary.

Congratulations as well to the Fall River Garden Club on the installation of the impressive Monarch sculpture at Jamieson Park. Please read the full article in this edition.

Other exciting news is that registration is now open for the NSAGC 2024 Convention. Full details are contained in this edition and can also be found on our website: [www.nsagc.com](http://www.nsagc.com) Register by February 29 to get in on the early bird contest for a chance to have your registration fee refunded!

A final note to advise you that due to popular demand we have updated and printed our venerable bookmark. A limited supply will soon be available from your District Director.

Wishing you and yours a safe and happy holiday season.

Deb Bowes-Lyon

Chairperson, NSAGC

[secretary@nsagc.com](mailto:secretary@nsagc.com)

## Queens Garden Club Happy to Help Their Municipality

by Krista Doody, Vice President

September always seems to mark a new beginning—a new school year for students and the beginning of another exciting year for the Queens Garden Club!

At our first meeting in September, we dedicated most of our time to organizing ourselves for the new year. We had a list of things we do throughout the year and things that need to be taken care of, as well as a list of jobs and committees. Our hope was that everyone would find their niche and find something to get excited about. All of our jobs and tasks found a home with a member or a committee and are in good hands for the coming year. We have created an Executive Committee and our past President, Karin, has agreed to stay on as President with me as Vice-President, Audrey as our Treasurer and Deb as our Secretary.

With so many members chipping in and taking care of things, Karin's job will be much easier this year.

Our Municipality is planning to set up a lending library of garden tools to help residents have access to the tools they need to beautify their properties. They contacted the club and asked for a list of tools that would be useful for such a

project. We were asked to come to our September meeting armed with our three favourite gardening tools. The list and the possibilities were endless. We added everything to the list from small Felco

pruners to a large lawn roller to be attached to a lawn tractor, from rakes and wheelbarrows to dandelion digger uppers!

We were also approached by the Physical Activity Coordinator for the Municipality for assistance with creating an indoor garden. She is hoping to do a pilot project with some experienced gardeners to see what kinds of vegetables/fruits/herbs/flowers would grow well indoors and create a how-to guide for others as well as spark community/school interest in indoor gardening that can be done throughout the year.

While it is certainly a good idea that has lots of potential,

this may end up being a bigger project than the coordinator thinks and we'll have to see where this takes us. We have created a "Kids Gardening Club" committee and it may be something they can run with. Either way, we are happy that the Municipality is reaching out to us to make the community link. (continued on following page)



Club members suggested favourite tools for a municipal garden tool lending library project. Photo provided by Krista Doody

## Queens Garden Club (continued from previous page)

At our October meeting we enjoyed an informative presentation on the issue of Lyme Disease and flora-based prevention as well as healing strategies by Dr. Claudia Schmiemann from the Holistic Health Centre in Lunenburg and Keliza Healthy Living in Mahone Bay. Ticks are here to stay and it's important to know what to do to avoid tick bites as well as what to do if a tick bite is apparent. The bull's eye is the most common indicator of a tick bite, though it doesn't always appear and that's where treatment becomes more difficult to secure in a timely manner. As a group we seem to be on the right track in terms of prevention and now I'm sure we'll be adding a drop of black cumin seed oil to our salads as we've learned that ticks don't like the taste of it. It's comforting to know that with the right care through a combination of prevention, antibiotics and flora, though the road may be long and arduous, we can heal from Lyme Disease. New to me was the fact that the name "Lyme" disease comes from Lyme, Connecticut, where groups of children began exhibiting signs of swollen knees, paralysis, skin rashes, headaches, and severe chronic fatigue in the early 1970s. They called it "Lyme," but it wasn't until the 1980's that the connection between a tick and the disease was discovered.

Claudia also left us with some flora recipes for Lyme healing purposes using Japanese knotweed, cat's claw, Andrographis, garlic and teasel root.

As I am writing this at the end of October, I am looking out my window at my one and only hydrangea bloom for this year and I noticed a lupin in our yard yesterday. I've also noticed that the red berries are early and particularly bright. They will make a lovely addition to our Christmas wreaths and outdoor planters this year.

We're looking forward to sharing our Christmas photos with you in the next edition of our newsletter. In the meantime we wish you happy holidays and all the best in the New Year!



Black cumin seed and black cumin seed oil



Dr. Claudia Schmiemann

Photos provided by Krista Doody

## Clements Garden Club Membership Growing

by Ginny Blayney

On Wednesday, November 1, the Clements Garden Club had its 2023 annual general meeting. The threat of bad weather made for a low turnout but we are now approaching 50 members in our club!

There was a change in some of our executive positions this year with Alison Vassallo taking over the role of secretary from long-serving Gail Wilson. Thanks were given to Gail, along with a gift certificate for Bunchberry Nurseries.

Scott Digweed has recently stepped into the role of treasurer and has overhauled our banking process, enabling e-transfers for transactions.

The evening ended with snacks and a lively auction to raise some additional funds for our club.



Photos provided by Ginny Blayney



## Bedford Horticultural Society: Always Learning

by Marlene Grigg, Secretary

The sudden descent into the cold days of November took at least a few of us gardeners by surprise. Are there others who are only now digging up dahlias and planting spring bulbs? Even though I'm slow to accept that winter really is on its way, I'm already dreaming about the 2024 gardening season.

This summer of 2023 was difficult for many of us in Bedford. Heavy rains caused the Sackville River to rise up over its banks and flood the surrounding areas. Home and business owners along its shores still are struggling to clean up the mess and make repairs. Contractors are backlogged due to the wildfires earlier in the year and long waits to complete the work are being experienced. The Bedford Leisure Club, where BHS normally meets, is one of those buildings. Our president, Donna Burris, worked hard to find alternative meeting locations so that we could host regular general meetings and lectures in September and October and hold the Christmas potluck, our most popular event, in early December.

The questions of how to grow dahlias and, especially, successfully overwinter the bulbs are often debated. In September, Rod Prowse provided down-to-earth guidance on both subjects and left participants feeling more confident on all aspects of dahlia growing and storage, including how to identify the "eye" and some new ideas on keeping the bulbs over winter. I, for one, will be trying the plastic wrap storage method this year. Participants were delighted to go home with bouquets of dahlias from Rod's Garden.

In October Lynn Brooks presented a lecture on the subject of care and growth of house plants. Once again, we were treated to common-sense direction. Lynn emphasized the importance of choosing the appropriate plant for its location in your home (lighting, temperature and humidity); proper watering, feeding, and pest control; and giving your plant an annual summer holiday outside on your deck or patio.

Our Christmas Potluck, normally held in November, will be held on December 6 this year. As always, members will treat each other to their best seasonal offerings and there will be games, music, and possibly even a visit from the Jolly Old Elf himself. It is our opportunity to get together, give thanks for our blessings, share our gardening knowledge and enthusiasm and have fun.



Gorgeous dahlias (left) from the garden of Ron Prowse (right)

Photos (left) by Donna Burris and (right) Emily Walker

## Fall River Garden Club Unveils Spectacular Monarch Sculpture

by Lawrence Spencer



The Fall River Garden Club have just completed a project that will be a major addition to Jamieson Park and the community of Fall River and area, as well as Halifax at large. We have placed a large (about seven feet tall!) full-colour metal sculpture of a Monarch butterfly and milkweed flowers on a concrete pad that we had prepared for this purpose. Jamieson Park is located on Fall River Road between the G.P. Vanier and Ashe Lee Jefferson schools.

We have supported and been supported by the local community for many years. In addition to our annual bursary to the Dalhousie Department of Agriculture, Truro; donation to the Lions Christmas fund; and planting and maintaining the three local parks, our membership, as well as a large number of local residents, wished to do something lasting, and supported the idea of the Monarch from the beginning. The artist, Heather Laurie, (Heavy Metal Heather, near Windsor) was keen to do it. She knew it would be in a high profile position, with three schools and lots of foot traffic and she needed to combine beauty, strength and safety as part of the overall work!

(continued on the next page)

Heather Laurie, the artist who is known as Heavy Metal Heather, stands proudly in front of her breathtaking sculpture. The sculpture of a Monarch butterfly perched on a milkweed is located in Jamieson Park in Fall River. Photo provided by Lawrence Spencer

## Fall River Garden Club (continued from previous page)



Obviously delighted with this wonderful work of art, club members are shown with the artist. The whole community supported this project and hope that this installation will raise people's awareness to the plight of the Monarch. They anticipate that highlighting the food source for the Monarch will encourage people to plant milkweed—with its beautiful blooms—in their gardens. Photo provided by Lawrence Spencer

This sculpture is a symbol of our need to care for the environment as the Monarch relies on only **one** plant for survival—the milkweed which produces a chemical toxic to butterfly predators, but not to the Monarch. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of milkweed in the province.

So is this a local, provincial or national issue? We believe that it should be something that everyone should support, regardless of political affiliation or level of government.

The Monarchs are international in scope, involving Canada, where they come for the summer; the

United States, where they feed along the way; and Mexico, where they over winter.

Our club members believe this will be a great addition to, and attraction for, this area and Nova Scotia, in general, as well as a wonderful teaching icon. It certainly will be a unique piece of sculpture both here and across Canada!

We trust you like and support our effort to heighten the awareness of the plight of the Monarch and will be encouraged to plant more milkweed in your own garden.

# Antigonish Garden Club Celebrates 40th Anniversary

by Sharon Bryson



The Antigonish Garden Club is observing its 40th anniversary in 2023! Our special commemorative meeting was in October. Members and former members met for a special evening with guest speaker Susie Murphy from “Big Barn, Little Farm” in nearby Meadow Green. (See photo above.) She gave a very interesting presentation showing the evolution of their vegetable growing efforts over the last few years. The hall was decorated with beautiful floral arrangements which were given as door prizes and gifts to several “alumni members” in attendance. We had special refreshments highlighted by a beautiful cake.

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Sharon Bryson presents Pat Smith the Outstanding Member award for 2023. (right)

What a beautifully decorated cake and colourful dahlia arrangement! (left)



Mary MacLean and Laura Reddick received lifetime memberships to recognize their long and faithful participation in Garden Club activities.

Photos on this page and next page provided by Sharon Bryson



## Antigonish Garden Club (continued from previous page)

We were pleased to make two special presentations to members. Pat Smith received the Outstanding Member award for 2023. Lifetime Memberships were awarded to sisters Mary MacLean and Laura Reddick to recognize their long and faithful participation in Garden Club activities.

Prior to this special evening, our fall activities included our September meeting where Greg and Shirley Giffen gave a presentation on exhibiting flowers and prepared a beautiful arrangement. (See photos below left.)



Several members from our Club attended the District Two Fall Rally hosted by the Lismore and Area Garden Club. It was a fun and informative day with great speakers, food and conversation. (See photos above, right and below.)

Our club has formed a Facebook Group called Antigonish and Area Garden Club and Friends. We will be meeting in November to have a special festive craft night, plus a look back at the 2023 gardening season. Our year will round out with a Christmas Afternoon Tea in December. We typically have a break in January and February, commencing our regular meetings in March.



## Eastern Shore Garden Club Finds Out About Fungi

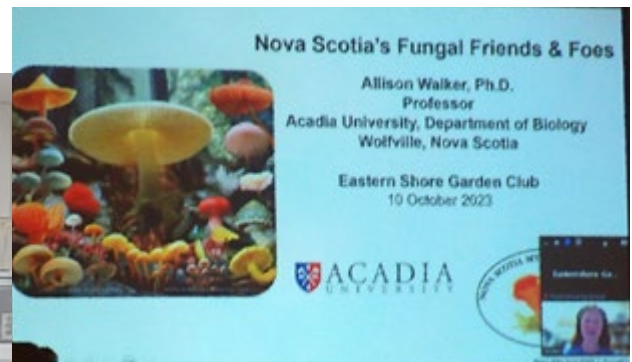
by Linda Disbrowe and Diane Lucas

At the Eastern Shore Garden Club September meeting Darlene Hart and Bev Dunne presented a slide show about the NSAGC Convention. The next part of the meeting was a discussion of general seed-saving information by Cathy Connolly, as the October meeting would include a seed and tuber exchange. For those wanting more information, club member Erica Clarke will be holding seed-saving workshops at her local farm, with details on her website. <https://sowlocalseeds.ca>

At our October meeting, we welcomed, via Zoom, Dr. Allison Walker, a Mycologist and an Associate Professor at Acadia University, Biology Department. In addition, she is the Director of the E.C. Smith Herbarium at Acadia and is also part of the Canadian Fungal Research Network. Dr. Walker provided a great deal of information with a slide presentation on the topic of Fungal Friends and Foes. Between the beautiful slides and Dr. Walker's vast knowledge, this presentation was interesting, educational and fascinating. For further information, please check the internet and, for further mushroom identification, Dr. Walker recommended [www.mushroomexpert.com](http://www.mushroomexpert.com)



Cathy Connolly provides tips on seed saving.  
Photo by S. Hazelton



Via Zoom, Dr. Alison Walker provided a fascinating talk titled Fungal Friends and Foes.  
Photos by Linda Disbrowe

## Inverness Garden Club Loses a Special Member

by Betty Anne Cameron

Members of the Inverness Garden Club are all saddened by the passing of one of our founding members, Marg Ryan. Marg and her husband Jim retired to Inverness (Jim's home town) in 1999. Marg was active in the community as secretary of the IDA when Cabot Links came to Inverness; originator of the Inverness Crab Fest; co-founder of the Inverness Garden Club; volunteer with the Hospital Palliative Unit; and was instrumental in establishing the Cabot Links' Monday Golf Program.

Garden club members, President Betty Anne Cameron and Marg Ryan came up with a fundraising plan that had a big impact on the community—The Mistletoe Gala. For 13 years garden club members would busy themselves in November getting the Art Centre ready for a dinner and dance for 100 guests. It turned out to be a great fundraising success and also gave the ladies an opportunity to model their latest finery and gave the men the opportunity to show off their culinary talents.

The garden club continues to beautify the town each year with its lavish bouquets on Main Street.

Marg fought cancer for 25 years. In her fight against cancer, Marg began a running, then a walking regimen of two hours daily. Her diagnosis of a two-to-five year survival term by her Toronto doctor in 1998 extended to 2023. She held cancer at bay for 25 years. Cancer patients can take solace from Margaret's determination to live on.

The Inverness Garden Club are planning on planting a tree at one of Marg's favourite places—the Cabot Links Golf Course.

Marg Ryan was a special lady.

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## Bridgewater Garden Club Learns About Lyme Disease

by Joshua Michael-Sievers

The Bridgewater Garden Club was supposed to host this year's NSAGC District Six (South Shore) meeting on September 16 organized by Angela Griffin, Vicki Trenholm and Club President, Peter Wagner. Angela Griffin selected the theme of flora and its healing powers. Dr. Claudia Schmiemann was expected to open the NSAGC District Six meeting with a presentation on helping to heal the symptoms of Lyme Disease with flora. However, due to the effects of Hurricane Lee, the District meeting was cancelled.

As there was widespread interest among the NSAGC Clubs on the South Shore to learn about Lyme Disease, Angela suggested organizing an event with Dr. Schmiemann at a later date. With the help of president Peter Wagner, I was able to organize a Lyme Lecture with Dr. Claudia Schmiemann.

Dr. Schmiemann runs the Lunenburg Holistic Centre and the Health Food Store, Keliza Healthy Living in Mahone Bay along with her husband, Thorsten Gooss. Our garden club members know of Dr. Schmiemann due to her weekly posts on Fauna and its Healing Powers. Dr. Schmiemann ran a successful family practice in Delmenhorst, Germany and is a specialist in Emergency Medicine, Psychotherapy, Craniosacral Therapy, Homeopathy, and Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Dr. Schmiemann's Lecture was scheduled for October 10 at 6:30 pm and invites were sent to all the NSAGC Clubs in District Six. It was a pleasure for us to welcome NSAGC Members from the Mahone Bay Garden Society and the Lunenburg Area Garden Club. (continued on following page)



Dr. Claudia Schmiemann holds everyone's interest as she shares her knowledge of the treatment of Lyme Disease. Photos on this and the following page provided by Thorsten Gooss

## Bridgewater Garden Club (continued from previous page)

Dr. Schmiemann began her lecture by asking how many of us had ever had a tick on ourselves, and most raised their hands. She discussed methods to keep ticks away, such as Atlantick (developed locally here in Nova Scotia). We learned about the benefits of using black cumin seed oil orally. Some in the audience also talked about using permethrin-treated clothing and DEET spray to discourage ticks from getting on the body.

We were also informed about the progress of the development of a vaccine against Lyme Disease. Dr. Schmiemann shared her personal experience of dealing with long-term Lyme and how she has kept herself informed about the developments in treating Lyme Disease.

Dr. Schmiemann advised what to do if we were bitten by a tick. We were told what antibiotics were available at the pharmacy to help against the possible infection of Lyme Disease. She informed us about three over-the-counter products available at Keliza Healthy Living in Mahone Bay such as DMSO (di-methyl sulfur oxide) which gets absorbed into the skin and kills the localized bacteria. Taking a shower after being outdoors, regular tick checks, and putting outdoor clothes in a clothes dryer were also discussed.

Dr. Schmiemann also talked about the many different symptoms and complications of those dealing with Long Lyme Disease. The good news is that there has been significant research done in the USA by Stephen Buhner about treatment of Long Lyme. For those suffering with Long Lyme, there are herbal supplements available through Lunenburg Health Centre to help with the symptoms.

We were given a handout containing recipes with Japanese Knotweed, etc., to help with the symptoms of Lyme Disease.

We also discussed the new platform: [eTick.ca](http://eTick.ca) which invites the public to participate in the monitoring of ticks in Canada by submitting tick photos for identification by a professional. The identification results, combined with other data such as collection date and locality, can then be consulted

and mapped so that all users may visualize the information related to any/all species for any given year and/or geographical area.

Dr. Schmiemann's lecture lasted 90 minutes, instead of 45 minutes, and was enthusiastically received by all attendees. The attendees had several questions and comments which resulted in us going home with a wealth of knowledge on Lyme Disease.



We look forward to having Dr. Schmiemann back next year. The interest in Dr. Schmiemann's lecture on Lyme Disease was shared by the Queen's County Garden Club, who hosted Dr. Schmiemann for a Lyme Lecture on October 19.





**Photo by Nancy Hutchinson, NSAGC Photo Contest  
2023 Class "Fall Scene" (this page and previous page)**

## Pictou and Area Gardening Club Encourages Children to Garden

by Lauren Forbes

The Pictou and Area Garden Club are proud to display flowers, vegetables and plants each September at the Pictou North Colchester Exhibition. This beautiful flower show garners lots of admiration and interest, sometimes prompting the viewer to join the club! Club members in 2023 entered over 100 articles (flowers/veg/plants).

The Pictou Horticultural Society was the name of Pictou and Area Garden Club, founded in 1939, and in early days recognized the need to get children introduced to gardens. About 1964 the first competitions began, little realizing more than 60 years later the program still thrives. Each June more than 50 students grades 2-5 register, and are provided with nasturtium seeds, this year from West River Greenhouses. But, as often happens by August when judged, about half are not judged for various reasons: lost seeds, cat/dog dug up the garden, or, this year, flooded. Many thanks to the club members who personally check each garden, judge based on criteria of: followed instructions, weeded, watered, added their personal touch—very close decisions. The kids deserve praise for joining this program and often rejoin a second year! Junior gardeners from McCulloch Ed Center and West Pictou Elementary can enter blooms in the Exhibition in September.

Fall Rally: The Lismore Garden Club set the bar high this year, hosting an excellent gathering for the annual 2023 Eastern District Two Fall Rally. Despite several members being unable to make the planned journey due to ill-



ness, nine Pictou and Area Garden Club members traveled to the Lismore Community Hall to take part. Members from our district clubs, (which include St. Mary's, Westville and Area, Antigonish, Lismore, and Pictou and Area) arrived to receive a wonderful welcome from hosting Lismore members with a swag bag for all. Musical talents from a talented local fiddle band were on display onstage inside the community center as we made our way to our tables and settled in.

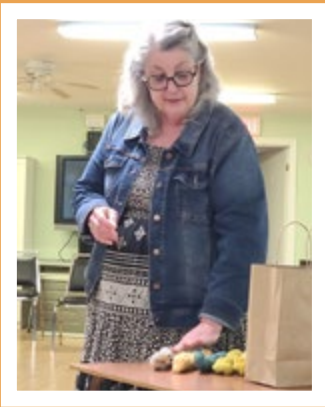
Outstanding Member: We extend a shout out to member Heather Mattie who was chosen as our Outstanding Member of the Year for 2023. A vote was taken in early May 2023 and an announcement was made at the May 17 meeting congratulating Heather as the unanimous winner.

Club Facebook Posting Garners 1.1 Million Hits: Heather Mattie was excited to report that there were 1.1 million views on the article "Why wasps act the way they do in the fall". Rhonda Rafuse, one of our Facebook members, reposted the article on our page and did it explode. Heather was totally shocked watching the numbers roll in every hour. People sure have a love or hate relationship with this insect. The post was commented on by people from Africa, Europe, Canada and the US. It kept Heather busy previewing each comment to monitor for spam and to approve people's opinions. This was the second time the club Facebook page went viral this year. The first time was due to Beth Henderson's yellow lady slippers photo. I am amazed every day that our club has such a great Facebook community and club!

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## Pictou and Area Gardening Club (continued from previous page)



Andrea Rahmel, Natural Ewe Yarns: Our club was grateful to host speaker Andrea Rahmel from a locally owned business called Natural Ewe Yarns. She spoke about how they use flowers, leaves, bark, roots and sometimes even bugs to hand-dye their yarns.



Giant Plants: Pictou and Area Gardening Club member Dawn Westhaver was amazed at the giant growth heights that some of her plants achieved this year. She reported a corn broom which was about 11 feet tall! (far left)

Dawn's granddaughter Annie Westhaver (also a garden club member) poses with her beside "needful", the giant thistle I grew this year (near left). Dawn believes 2023 was a year when plants grew like Jack in the bean stalk or died with all the rain.



Heptacodium Happy: Joy Sinclair has an interesting shrub growing in her garden. It is called a heptacodium. She and her husband bought it in Antigonish at Pleasant Valley Nurseries about 18 years ago. It grew very large and has curved drop leaves with white flowers that are fragrant—the bees and wasps love it. In the fall, after the flowers are gone, little red petals form and it now looks like a large Christmas tree. Joy comments that it is a tough shrub and easily grown. One reason she bought it was because it blooms in late summer.

Photos on this and previous page provided by Lauren Forbes

## Mount Denson Garden Club Has an Active Season

by Carla Scholten

This fall weather has been fabulous for gardening! We hope you were able to get out and enjoy it.

Our Member Social was held on September 23, a beautiful fall day. We enjoyed a tour of the Dill Family Farm in Windsor and supper on site from Chef Dilly, followed by a delicious carrot cake dessert. Check out our photos on the following page.

Unfortunately, our September meeting was cancelled due to illness. Volunteer members were still busy that month. We had a work group for fall clean-up of the Memorial Gardens at Riverbank Cemetery in Hantsport. We also hosted a plant sale at the Avon Farmers Market. It featured mums, donated by Avon Valley Floral, and many plants from the gardens of members. In addition, we hosted a Children's Planting Workshop (photos on the following page) and door prizes/draws, donated by Sherry's Custom Sewing and Avon Valley Floral. Special thanks to Lori Reid for preparing plant tags for our customers.

On October 11 our invited guest speaker was Su Hirtle, from Hosta La Vista Nursery. Su talked about how she and her family started this new nursery in 2023, based in the Sambro area. It operates as an on-line store. She brought along bulbs for members to purchase.

Finally, a few of our members participated in Spooktacular at Avon Farmers Market on October 29, selling popcorn and providing information to the public about our club.

Club members are looking forward to getting together over the next month for a planter workshop and party. We'd like to wish you all a lovely holiday season.

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Member Markus Kehoe presents the Norma Sweet Memorial Bursary to Ava Copas, second-year student at Acadia University, majoring in History minoring in Environment and Sustainability.  
Photo by Traci Copis



Member Catherine Keusch presents the Norma Sweet Memorial Bursary to Gus Barker, a second-year Horticulture Student at NSCC Kingstec.  
Photo provided by Carla Scholten

# Mount Denson Garden Club

(continued from previous page)



Diane, from Dill Family Farm, shared information about growing giant pumpkins and the challenges of the wet summer we had.  
Photos by Lori Reid

A big day—Mount Denson Garden Club Plant Sale  
Photos by Carla Scholten

## Country Garden Club Weathers the Storm

by Carole Morrison, President

At our last meeting we decided that the big news for our club was the flooding at the end of July that hit us more than some other parts of Nova Scotia. We shall never forget the night when repeated thunder and heavy rain stalled above our region, so that we woke to flooded properties, roads and washouts of driveways that affected us for the rest of the year. Below is a photograph one of our members in a canoe on the water in her back yard and also one of my flooded waterfront.



It was also an unusual season for pests. One of our members gave up on her vegetable garden because the plants were chewed up by earwigs. Japanese beetles invaded all our gardens in large numbers for the first time. They are so pretty but also so destructive; so we spent a lot of time picking them off plants. Also, although most of us had thriving milkweed plants, none of us saw any Monarch caterpillars. Maybe the unusual amount of rain meant they couldn't fly?

On a positive note, as a result of the heat and rain, everything grew well, especially the weeds! The 2022 NSAGC giveaway plant balloon flower Fairy Snow grew well for some and is now producing seed. The 2023 giveaway plant, the Pincushion Flower Flutter Deep Blue is also growing well and is still in bloom!

Many of us attended the NSAGC convention at MSVU and the Fall Rally. We made the Fall Rally our September meeting. Both were a great opportunity to meet gardeners from other clubs and get fresh ideas.



Japanese beetles, pincushion flower, balloon flower (left to right)

Photos provided by Carole Morrison

## District Three South and North Fall Rally a Huge Success

by Beate Acker, Director



The Stewiacke Garden Club team warmly welcomes members from clubs in District Three North and South.

The Musquodoboit Valley Weeders, Stewiacke Valley and Stewiacke Garden Clubs joined to host a wonderful afternoon for all 12 clubs in District Three North and South. The theme was “Growing Our Future.” The opening remarks, given by the chairperson, began with an energetic cheer to celebrate finally having our first post-Covid Fall Rally.

Our Colchester County Mayor, Christine Blair, was present and shared her appreciation for the ongoing contributions of all NSAGC clubs and noted how inspiring and valuable a group they are for the communities that they support.

Our past NSAGC President and District Director Vicki Willis shared information on the many valuable contributions made over the years and the positive initiatives realized collectively like the establishment of Provincial Gardening Week.

Pamela MacLean, NSAGC Historian and Past President, shared information on the ongoing work being carried out by the Association and explained the importance of collecting detailed historical information from clubs and how it will support the NSAGC efforts to develop future initiatives in building the beautification of our communities.

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Pamela MacLean (above left) speaks about how the history of the NSAGC will shape its future. Brenda Grasser (above right) presents a bouquet to Colchester County Mayor Blair (right).



Past District Director Vicki Willis presents her perspective on the achievements of the NSAGC. Photos provided by Beate Acker

## District Three South and North (continued from the previous page)

Two Outstanding Membership Awards were presented to: Ada Swift of the Stewiacke Garden Club for over 20 years serving as treasurer and inspirational presence and Colleen Jackson of the Stewiacke Valley Garden Club for her dedication and support serving as president. Twelve clubs shared details of the many activities they held throughout the year which were not limited to but included planting trees, creating green spaces, welcoming new members of the community, learning about innovative farming methods and green energy projects.

Brenda Theakston presented the wonderful work being carried out by the Butterfly Way organization and how the Rangers are helping backyard gardeners and community projects in establishing wild planting beds to support butterflies.

We enjoyed winning prizes and a wonderful lunch donated by the host clubs followed by an engaging presentation from Charlie Baird, the Tree Guy, as he provided information on edible trees, their care, the varieties he offers, how and where to plant them and how the demand is ever increasing.

Another highlight was the appreciation shown to Elizabeth Hill for serving over eight years as Director of District Three North and South. With her ongoing support and guidance our district has thrived, enjoying the pursuit of gardening and continuing to have fun. Thank you, Liz!

At the closing of a wonderful afternoon our district director Brenda Grasser thanked Lori Savery, President of the Stewiacke Valley Club, and Sheila Fisher of the Musquodoit Valley Weeders Club for their committee's hard work. She reminded us of the importance of growing our future and our club membership, community engagements, sustainability and wellness and enjoying our love of gardening. A truly fun event—thank you to everyone in our district for helping make it a great success.



Ada Swift (left) and Colleen Jackson (right) receive awards of recognition.



Brenda Theakston presented a talk on the Butterfly Way.



Taylor Ross talks with Charlie Baird, the Tree Guy, (above left) and Elizabeth Hill (above right) is honoured for her eight years as Director of District Three North and South.



## Pumpkins: The Inside Story

Fall is the right time for the scoop on our favourite gourd. Here's the inside story.

- Pumpkins are from the gourd family *Cucurbitaceae* and are grown for human consumption, decorative purposes and animal feed.
- Botany classifies a pumpkin as a fruit called a pepo. Pumpkin seeds are called pepitas and are delicious when roasted.
- We know all about big pumpkins in NS. Decades ago Howard Dill put us on the map with his big pumpkins. World records are now set with mighty gourds weighing over 2000 pounds!
- The tradition of carving lanterns out of vegetables began in the British Isles, especially in Ireland. It was the custom to hollow out turnips, potatoes and even beets, carve faces on them and insert small tallow candles inside to provide light. These vegetable lanterns were used to celebrate the Celtic holiday of Samhain on November 1. This day marked the end of summer and the beginning of the new year.
- Few people could afford iron lanterns so using vegies provided a cheap substitute.
- Halloween pumpkins are called Jack-o'-lanterns. This term refers to the flickering lights sometimes seen in marshlands. These eerie lights are also called will-o'-wisp or foolish fire. The scientific explanation is that methane gas released by rotting plants ignites and briefly emits flames that dance over the ground.
- The city of Calabasas, not far from Los Angeles, California, holds a pumpkin festival each year to honour its name. *Calabaza* is the Spanish word for pumpkin.
- It was only a matter of time until someone figured out we could use huge, dug-out pumpkins as floating vessels. Occupants paddle valiantly with oars but have little control over direction or stability—lots of fun for the onlookers.
- In the fall we put a little pumpkin on the menu: pumpkin spice lattes, cheesecakes, pies and loaves. A few dedicated souls prepare pumpkin from scratch but most of us resort to cans. It is always a bonus to find a recipe that uses up the entire can!



Photo by Rena Nixon, NSAGC Photo Contest 2023 Third in Class "Fall Scene"

# NSAGC Western District

looks forward to welcoming everyone to the Rodd Grand  
in Yarmouth, as we go

**“Back to Our Roots”**

**June 7-9, 2024**

**at the 2024 NSAGC Annual Convention.**

Due to inflation, the cost for the convention registration and banquet has increased from 2023. However, we **PROMISE** you a Fantastic and Fun-Filled Convention showcasing:

Yarmouth’s History, Acadian Culture, Fun and Frivolity,  
and opportunities to get “Back to Our Roots” with  
Conversation, Camaraderie, and Jam-Packed Activities!

**\*Early Bird Registration Contest\***

See page 4 for details.

**2024 NSAGC Convention Registration Form**



**Hosted by Western District 7**  
**June 7-9, 2024**  
**Rodd Grand Convention Centre, 417 Main St, Yarmouth, NS**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I am a member of \_\_\_\_\_ Garden Club or Society

**Convention Registration Fee** (includes Friday evening reception, Saturday lunch, nutrition breaks)

NSAGC member **\$ 70** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Non-member **\$ 80** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Late Registration Fee** (after May 1, 2024) add **\$ 10** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Saturday Evening Banquet** (includes appetizer, main course, dessert, gratuities, taxes)

Number of main courses – Each **\$ 60**:

Chicken \_\_\_ or Salmon \_\_\_ or Vegetarian \_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Special food sensitivities \_\_\_\_\_

(please also mention food sensitivities to your server at the time of the meal)

**Friday Workshops** (2-4 pm; running simultaneously)

1. **Acrylic Painting** – See page 3 for details. **\$ 25** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

2. **Garden Journal** – See page 3 for details. **\$ 25** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Event Unisex T-Shirts** – Each **\$ 25**: S \_\_\_ or M \_\_\_ or L \_\_\_ or XL \_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(see page 4 for the exclusive T-shirt design)

**Total Amount Payable** ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration closes on May 15, 2024**

**Registration Options:**

a) Print and complete this form and mail to address below or email to [convention@nsagc.com](mailto:convention@nsagc.com)

b) Complete online registration at [www.nsagc.com/NSAGC-Convention-Registration-Form](http://www.nsagc.com/NSAGC-Convention-Registration-Form)

**Payment Options:**

a) Cheque payable to NSAGC District 7 (no post-dated cheques, please) and mail to address below.

b) Send by e-transfer to NSAGC District 7, email [nsagcdistrict7@gmail.com](mailto:nsagcdistrict7@gmail.com)

**Mailing Address:** Convention 2024, 9360 Hwy 3, Pleasant Lake, NS B5A 5J9

**For more information, e-mail** [convention@nsagc.com](mailto:convention@nsagc.com) **or phone/text (902) 740-2750**

## Conference Event Details

### Rodd Grand Hotel Accommodations (Rodd Grand Hotel, 417 Main St, Yarmouth, NS)

A block of 80 rooms has been reserved for convention attendees (Friday and Saturday nights) at a rate of \$114 per night plus applicable taxes. Rooms are only guaranteed at this rate until May 8, 2024.

**Call or book online:** 1-800-565-7633 or reserve online at [Rodd Grand Hotel Booking Link](#)

Please specify the Rodd Grand Yarmouth as your destination and that you will be attending the NSAGC Convention on June 7-9, 2024, to insure you receive the preferred rate.

### Itinerary Sneak Peak

#### **Local Garden Tours (details and directions will be provided on arrival at convention)**

Friday, 2 - 4 pm and Sunday, 10 am – 2 pm

**Workshops:** You may only choose one as they will be running concurrently.

1. **Acrylic Painting** – Max **25** participants. Join us for a 2-hour step-by-step plant themed acrylic painting on canvas in a relaxed and fun atmosphere. No experience required and all materials supplied.
2. **Garden Field Notes Journal** - Max **20** participants. Transform a plain hanging file folder into a beautiful, reusable 9 x 5 ½ inch garden journal. All materials supplied.  
Sample photos: embellishments may vary.



**Floral Competition Theme:** *“Back to Our Roots”*...Participants will interpret the theme, limited only by their imagination and creativity! No size restrictions on your design. Entries will be judged by convention attendees.

**Live Entertainment:** *cost is included with registration fees*

Friday evening Meet & Greet: The Shantymen

Saturday evening following Banquet: Acadian Kitchen Party

**Walking Tours:** TBA - Information will be in your registration bag.

## 2024 Early Bird Registration Contest

To be eligible for this contest, paid registration for the NSAGC Convention must be received no later than **February 29, 2024**.

In March, two (2) names will be drawn at random, and these individuals will receive a refund of their registration fee (\$70 or \$80), to be presented when they register at convention. ***What a nice surprise!***

\*If one or both initial winners cancel their registration a secondary draw will be made from the same list of eligible attendees. \*

## Exclusive Convention Event T-Shirt



T-Shirts \$25.00 each

Available in unisex sizes:  
**Small, Medium, Large, X-Large**

Colour: light beige only

**Orders must be received by May 1, 2024**

## A Note from the Editor

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Hello, fellow gardeners,

Pumpkins and vividly coloured mums are appearing on front steps and in garden centres. Fall is such a beautiful time of year and 2023 gave us an extension of summer with some lovely warm days and misty mornings. November brought the cold but with sparkling blue skies and starry nights—a true spirit lifter!

It is always heartwarming to hear about successful district rallies and about clubs inviting neighbouring clubs to hear special speakers. A lot of work goes into planning and executing these events—the good thing is that those who host and those who attend both derive a great deal of satisfaction and enjoyment from these events.

As always, this issue features some of the superb photos from our NSAGC photo contest. What an iconic Nova Scotia scene on pages 14 and 15! The photo on page 23 brings back special memories of choosing that very best pumpkin. And the final page closes our newsletter with a spooky Halloween photo of a spider web beaded with dew. What an eye our NSAGC photographers have!

Please mail your club news and photos for the next issue of the newsletter (deadline March 15) to: [newsletter@nsagc.com](mailto:newsletter@nsagc.com)

With best wishes for the approaching Christmas season and the New Year,  
Emily Walker



## NSAGC Executive

**Chair,** Deb Bowes-Lyon  
email: secretary@nsagc.com

**Past Chair,** Kathy D'Entremont  
email: secretary@nsagc.com

**Vice Chair,** Ginny Blayney  
email: secretary@nsagc.com

**Secretary,** Melissa Weir  
email: secretary@nsagc.com

**Treasurer,** Susan Hazelwood  
email: treasurer@nsagc.com

### Awards Committee and Nomination Committee

Kathy D'Entremont  
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**Historian,** Pamela MacLean  
email: secretary@nsagc.com

**Photo Contest Committee,** Sharon Bryson  
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**Scotia Gardener Newsletter,** Emily Walker  
email: newsletter@nsagc.com

**Plant Give Away,** Geoff MacDonald  
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**Web Content Manager,** Susan Hazelwood  
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### Directors

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**District Three,** Central North, Beate Acker (acting)  
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**District Three,** Central South, Brenda Grasser  
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**District Five,** Valley, Lori Reid  
email: secretary@nsagc.com

**District Six,** South Shore, Emily Liot (acting)  
email: secretary@nsagc.com

**District Seven,** Western, Kathryn Davidson  
email: secretary@nsagc.com



## Nova Scotia Association of Garden Clubs Board Current Openings

Members of the executive and the directors of the NSAGC enjoy the experience of expanding their horizons through meeting and working with gardeners throughout Nova Scotia. They also have an interest in encouraging and supporting the gardening community in their area.

There are currently no positions available:

Contact any Board member for details about the NSAGC. For information about NSAGC Board positions, please contact Kathy D'Entremont at: secretary@nsagc.com

## Advertise Your Service or Product in the Scotia Gardener

### Fees:

**\$25—3.5 inches by 2 inches (business card size)  
per issue; \$50 for four issues**

**\$50—7 inches by 4 inches per issue; \$100 for four  
issues**

**Please contact the newsletter editor at  
[newsletter@nsagc.com](mailto:newsletter@nsagc.com) if you have questions.**

## Scotia Gardener: Summer 2023 Issue (Volume 23, Number 3)

Please note that the editor of the Scotia Gardener has exclusive control over the content and format of the newsletter. All information submitted for publication will be thoroughly reviewed by the editor and will be included or excluded in the newsletter at the sole discretion of the editor.

The preference is that the photographs in the newsletter are original. Photos will be credited on the page where the photo appears or listed below.

Photo credit: Emily Walker, pages 1, 11 and 28



# Outstanding Natural Beauty

Photo by Jennifer Hill, NSAGC Photo Contest 2023  
Class "Garden Art"