



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



Hello everyone, and welcome to summer! I hope your spring has been a good one. In my neck of the woods, we have had a bit more of cold weather than we are used to this time of year which has slowed down things in my yard, but at least there is no snow, right, well unless you were in some parts of Cape Breton recently – sorry guys!

Speaking of Cape Breton, I am writing this at the end of the most recent convention weekend, which was a blast! I had a wonderful time at the beautiful Inverary Inn and Friday and Saturday's weather was simply perfect for enjoying some great Cape Breton hospitality. Thank you to the organizers for putting on a fantastic event! Great speakers, great food, and lots of laughter! I know my club is already making plans for next year's convention in Liverpool. If you have not yet been to convention before, next year is your chance to attend, it is sure to be a great couple of days from June 11th to the 13th, so mark your calendars!

One exciting item that came out of this year's convention is that we have a prospective new club joining NSAGC, which will be based in Baddeck! I am extremely excited to see them come on board. We have been on a role with club recruitment lately! If you know of any clubs in your area that may be a good fit with NSAGC, please direct them to our contact us page on nsagc.com for more information on joining!

I am in the final stages of getting a member survey out to all clubs provincewide. This is one item connected to the ongoing work in our strategic plan. There will be two \$50 prizes drawn from all clubs that respond to the survey. Keep an eye on your inboxes for this survey as it is a great opportunity for NSAGC to check the pulse of clubs in the province and help build your recommendations into future planning.

Also, related to the strategic plan, we are in the editing stages of a full refresh of our board member handbook and are excited to complete and roll that out as a much more user-friendly document that will further assist directors and board members in their roles. A huge thank you to Deb Bowes-Lyon and Debbie Innes for all their work on this refresh so far!

I hope you all have a wonderful summer and that the rain gods are a little nicer to us this year! I am looking forward to visiting several events clubs have already invited me to this year. Remember, if you would like me to come out to talk to your club about NSAGC, please reach out to secretary@nsagc.com and we can make arrangements!

Geoff MacDonald
NSAGC Chairperson
secretary@nsagc.com

Inside this Issue:

**Message from the
Chairperson** Page 1

**"Dr. William Saunders
And Isabella Preston"** Page 2

**How to Start a Perennial
or Garden Bed The
Good Old Fashion Way** Pages 3 - 5

**Lime and the pH of
Soil** Pages 5 – 6

**Garden Club
News** Page 7 – 15

**In Memory of . . .
Joanne Ford** Page 16

**A Note from the
Editor's Desk** Page 17

NSAGC Team Page 18

**Advertise Your Service
or Product in the Scotia
Gardener** Page 18

**Scotia Gardener –
Editor's Discretion** Page 18



“DR. WILLIAM SAUNDERS AND ISABELLA PRESTON”

Submitted by Janice Schmidt

Dr. William Saunders was considered Canada’s foremost authority on agriculture and horticulture. He immigrated from England with his family as a child, and they settled in London, Ontario. In 1869, he purchased a small farm near London, where he planted fruit trees and began hybridization experiments.

The first known Canadian Hybrid rose is ‘**Agnes**’ bred by **Dr. W. Saunders** in about 1900 and introduced by Agriculture Canada, Ottawa in 1922. Dr. Saunders founded the Agriculture Canada’s rose breeding program, but ‘**Agnes**’ is the only rose of his that is still widely grown. The rose breeding program was set up to develop rose hybrids which were hardy down to Zone 3 or 4 and was based on the Agriculture Canada Research Stations in Ottawa, Ontario, Quebec and Morden, Manitoba.

Agnes is one of the earliest roses to bloom in spring with abundant blooms that are loosely double and delicately fragrant. Agnes will occasionally re-bloom later in summer. Open and upright in its growing habit with dark green crinkled foliage and finely prickled stems.



Hybrid Rugosa Agnes



Rosa 'Carmenatta'



Rosa 'Orinda'

Isabella Preston carried on with his work. An immigrant from England, she graduated from the Ontario Agricultural College, where she specialized in hybridizing fruits and vegetables.

By 1916, Preston was Canada’s first professional female hybridist. Throughout her career, she remained devoted to ornamental plants. She originated over 200 hybrids, working particularly with roses, lilacs, irises, columbines, crab apples and lilies.

Pictured above are two of the well-known roses hybridized by Isabella Preston.

Many of her hybridized roses became the inspiration for the **Explorer series** featured in the *Winter – December 2025, Volume 25, Issue 4 Scotia Gardener* newsletter, hybridized by **Dr. Svejda**.



If you have any questions related to the growing of roses, please email me at jantim200698@gmail.com.

For more information on The Canadian Rose Society, please visit their website at [Canadian Rose Society](http://CanadianRoseSociety.com).



HOW TO START A PERENNIAL OR GARDEN BED THE GOOD OLD FASHION WAY

Submitted by Robert Perry, Organic Gardener in Branch LaHave, Lunenburg County and Vice-President of the Upper Vaughan Garden Club

Hello fellow gardeners. This article will be about my thoughts about how to start a new garden bed. It has worked for me for the last fifty years.

The very first thing that I have found is that ***please, please, please*** never buy the plant material ahead of time. If you do buy early you will want to plant the plants before the bed is properly prepared. We are humans and want to rush to get things done. One must think and think again!

Think about the **size of the bed**. What can you keep up? The weeding, the watering, the pruning, the deadheading, the mulch that has to be reapplied every two or three years, and the fall clean up - just think!! Personally, I do not do this, and I make things too big, and I never get everything done that I would like every year, but I do have fun trying.

Next - **what can you afford?** What plants do you need to buy or what plants can you get for free from a fellow gardener. Free is good - yeah!

So, do you **make the bed in the fall or in the spring?** It is cooler in the **fall** and lots of garden centers have their stock on sale. Mulch usually goes on sale too. As long as you get your plants in the ground before the **end of September**, they will be fine to overwinter. **Spring** is fine too, but I find myself busy at this time of the year and spring around here tends to be too wet and cold for working in the soil. So, whatever works for you is fine. Just think and be **HAPPY**. Life is good and Gardening is great!

Now, when do you want **most of the color in the garden: Spring, Summer, or Fall?** What colors do you like: yellows, purples, reds, whites or just greenery – think! Just stop and think about these things. It will pay off in the long term and then you will not be saying that I wished I had done this and/or done that!

Next step, **what do you do with the sod** that you will be removing off the top of the bed? I do not like to waste any thing so look at your property, is there a low spot in the lawn that needs to be leveled up? If so, take the sod and turn it upside down (soil side up) and fill in the area. Put some topsoil over it and reseed it. Simple and you did not waste the sod. **Good for you!**



The sod can also be **compost**. Just put it in a big pile, soil side up, water it and put a tarp over it and in a year, you will have the best compost for free. Free is good - make us feel good inside – Yeah!

So, now **what about the rocks** in the bed -**Think Positive!** The rocks are free – Yeah! Rocks are beautiful. Rocks that are bigger than a toonie must come out. I am fussy but plants roots cannot grow through a rock. Maybe if the rocks are large, you could build a stone wall or turn them upside down and stand them up in the bed. Maybe? Become an artist - stand three or five together and make a statement. One of a kind – “**a piece of art,**” no one else will have! I love what people do in their gardens. You can be so **unique!** Be proud. It is your garden remember that.

Now with the **smaller rocks** – fill in a pothole in your driveway. I use mine to fill in the pothole over by my mailbox, there is always water in that hole over there!

Now the **fun part**, get out your **edger** and think like an artist and create a shape. A shape that is you. Remember, keep the size to a size that you can manage - **OK**.

Once this is all done, take your **square mouth shovel** and remove the top half inch of the sod and soil off. Get your **wheelbarrow** for the sods and a **five-gallon bucket** with a handle for the small rocks.



HOW TO START A PERENNIAL OR GARDEN BED THE GOOD OLD FASHION WAY

Continued from Page 3

I know that this is a lot, but the workout will pay off. It will keep a lot of the grass and weeds from growing back up in the bed. You are just cutting off the roots of the weeds and grass. With this chore, I like to wear my kneepads, and my wheelbarrow is on one side and the bucket on the other side. I find it too hard on my back getting up and down all the time, so I stay on my

knees. I also like to wear a pair of thin cotton gloves. The soil can be damp and cold - a good way for arthritis to set in. Please do not try to be too macho - fill the bucket or the wheelbarrow to a weight that you can handle. Do not get a sore back – **OK**.

Remember we are humans and things wear out as we age. Take care of yourself! **ROME WAS NOT BUILT IN A DAY!**

Also, you know that the dryer the soil the easier the sod comes off and it is much lighter. One thing, **NEVER, NEVER work with wet soil**. You will ruin the structure of the soil, and it will become too compacted so that the roots of your plants will not be able to penetrate the soil. **It takes a lot of work** to fix compacted soil. Now that the sod is off, the shape is made, the rocks are gone - **be proud**. Remember this has been a good workout. Cheaper than going to a gym – Yeah! Free workout!! Now you are done for the day have a gin and tonic, a rum and coke or whatever you like. Be proud and relax, turn your brain off.

The **next morning** go look at your creation. If you like the shape leave it and be proud.

Next step, **should I dig or till?** Sometimes I like to dig up the bed to loosen the soil and then take the tiller though it. Once the bed is turned over it is time to start adding all the good stuff. Please put at least 6 inches of compost, rotten manure, shredded leaves, pine needles, rotten straw, anything organic. The earthworms are going to love you, and they make the compost for plants. Nice to be loved -Yeah!

Now, take the tiller and mix it into the soil to a **depth of 6 to 8 inches**.

Next, take **bags of lime or wood ashes** and add this to the soil. If you are growing acidic loving plants like ferns, rhododendrons, or azaleas - **DO NOT ADD THE LIME**. Mix this all together and level the bed with a rake. So, enough for today, get a drink and relax.

Take a couple of days off and do the fun stuff - **SPEND MONEY** and buy the plant material. Make sure you **read the tags** for the height and the width of each plant and for the hardy zone. Our zone is **Zone 5 or lower**. Remember do not overplant - if the tag says that is going to grow 5' x 3' - that the size that it will grow in about 7 to 9 years. Read the tags and remember, sometimes **LESS IS MORE!** It is true.

So, keep the plants well watered and start placing them in the bed. Have the whole bed filled with the plants before you start to plant them.

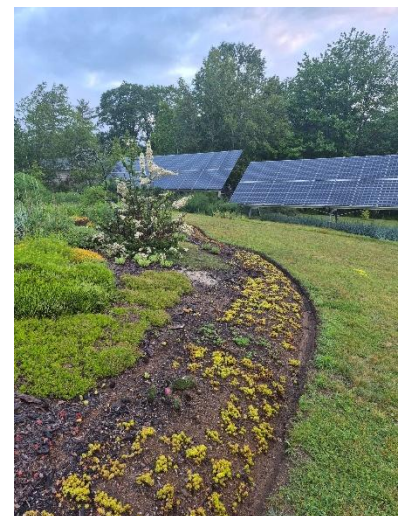
Now, get out your garden hose and let do the fun stuff – **PLANTING!** This is so much fun. Planting all your little babies.

Get a couple of zip lock bags to put the original plant tags in. You then need to make your own plant tags - I use cut up old venetian blinds for this. Keep the original tags and the receipts in the bags - some gardens centers give a warranty on their plants, but we must have the receipts.

Plant the **larger plant material first**. Take each plant out of the pot, turn it upside down and then unwind the plants roots. This is very important especially for trees and shrubs.

Planting is so much fun. Dig a hole twice the size of the root ball and add good organic matter to the hole. You can use **bonemeal** in the bottom of the hole - it is **great for promoting roots to grow** but **can attract racoons and rats** - **so make sure it at the bottom of the hole**.

Take the plant and plant it at the same level as it was growing in the pot, put it in the hole and fill in with soil. Press the soil around the plant then water each plant as you put them in. Do It! Please put the original plant tag in the zip lock bag and the tag that you made in



HOW TO START A PERENNIAL OR GARDEN BED THE GOOD OLD FASHION WAY

Continued from Page 4

the soil beside the plant. So, treat all the plants like little babies - blow them kisses and tell them to grow.



Once all the plants are in, **take your edger** and put a **nice 6-inch-deep edge** around the bed. Next, level all the soil in the bed and add a good **4 to 5 inches of mulch** over the bed.

Keep the bed watered well - **moist but not wet!** Usually about every four to five days for two weeks will do. **This is important - Do It!**

So, keep the weeds out, add a few handfuls of compost around each plant every year and they will be happy. No need for chemical fertilizers - ***Mother Nature and our planet will love you!***

Wow - you are now done! Get a drink, call your friends to come over and **be proud**. Think of the free workout that you just had - no gym fees. The aches and pain will go away in a week or two. HA! HA! No problem you are an artist and a gardener.

I have been a gardener for over **fifty years** and am still gardening and loving it.

So, to all you gardeners be proud of yourself and your gardens. They are an expression of yourself. Work with Mother Nature and she will reward you!

Happy gardening. **Life is good.**

LIME AND THE PH OF SOIL

Submitted by Robert Perry, Organic Gardener in Branch LaHave, Lunenburg County and a member of the Upper Vaughan Garden Club

Hello again all of you fellow gardeners:

We all have the same passion. We all love to plant, feed, and watch our plants grow and bloom. So, rewarding -Yeah!

But first before we buy and plant, we must think about the soil where the plants roots will be growing and taking up all the nutrients that they need to perform well. This is where the **pH** of your soil comes into play.

“**pH**” stands for the **potential of hydrogen** in your soil. The pH is rated on a **0 to 14 scale**. **Zero** means very acidic, **7** is neutral with **14** being alkaline. A pH of **6 to 6.5** is the best for most veggies, annuals, and perennials.

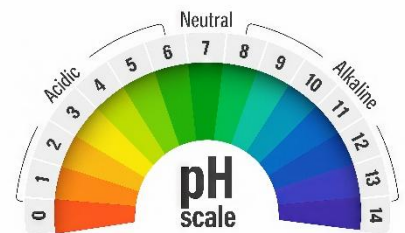
Most of the soil in Nova Scotia has a pH of **4 to 5** - an acidic soil. This is why our blueberries; azaleas and rhododendrons do so well here. These **plants love an acidic soil**; they do not like lime!

So, let us talk about the good **ORGANIC lime** and why we should use it, but we do not? Humans can be kind of crazy and stubborn at times!!

Lime is totally organic and much cheaper than any man-made synthetic fertilizer. **Lime** is 5% Magnesium and 15% Calcium.

Magnesium is the central core of the **chlorophyll molecule in the plant tissue**. So, magnesium helps to keep your plant growing healthy and not stunted. **Calcium** is an **essential element** for good growth and the development of plants in both non-stressed and stressed conditions. It makes the plant stronger. Just like we give our chickens calcium so that eggshell stays strong and does not break as easy. Calcium will help keep your plants leaves stronger and a darker green color. It is crazy if you do not use it unless you have a money tree and want to waste your money on synthetic fertilizers. But this is up to you.

By using lime, good old Mother Nature and our planet will love you. ***So nice to be loved - Right?***



LIME AND THE PH OF SOIL

Continued from Page 5

Most of our lime comes from **Upper Musquodoboit** in Nova Scotia - Yeah. Let's buy local – *So Good!*

Pelletized lime can be purchased at Canadian Tire, Home Hardware, and similar stores, but I find that at your local Co-op or Shur-Gain Feeds'n Need the price seem to be better like \$6.00 a bag. Make sure that **when you buy lime that is not wet** – *Ok.*

The lime must be dry. Pelletized lime is easier to work with than the powdered lime, but the powder does work faster to change the pH.

Now, **how much lime** do you add is a good question? I have bought the kits to measure your pH and if you follow the directions they do work. You can also send a soil sample to the **Nova Scotia Agriculture College** (now Dalhousie University's Department of Agriculture) in Bible Hill, and they will test it for you, but you must pay a big fee. So, all of this is too costly for me, and I know that soil here in Nova Scotia has a low pH under 5. You can use too much lime but here in Nova Scotia that would take a lot of lime! I usually put a handful around each plant every couple of years. A little is better than none! You can put lime on anytime of the year. I usually put it on in the Fall as it takes a couple of months for the lime to react and raise the pH of the soil.

The pH for most flowers is about **6.5**. This will help your plants absorb more of the micronutrients like Calcium, Phosphorus, and many others. Your plants will grow much healthier.

Lime helps for breaking up clay soil making this soil easier to work with and it will also make your plant stems much stronger so they do not blow over with the wind.

Lime is one of the best things for your lawn. Lime will keep the grass much greener, and it will help to get rid of a lot of weeds. A lot of weeds love to grow in acidic soil like chickweed and dandelions. If you add lime and raise the pH those weeds will eventually die out. Putting wood ashes on your lawn will also raise the pH and help to get rid of moss or that "*Creeping Charlie*." Wood ashes are free! Free is Good - Yeah! So, add cheap lime and your lawns stay greener and the weeds will die. Why do we not add more lime – *Crazy, Crazy!*

Forget about man-made fertilizers and start working with *Mother Nature*. She will reward you! Do not make things complicated. Keep it simple!

So, this is my view on organic lime. So simple - easy to get, easy to apply, and cheap. What more can you ask for?

Take care and happy gardening.



Wood Ashes.



GARDEN CLUB NEWS

MEANDER GARDEN CLUB

(District 5 – Valley)

Submitted by K. Simpson, Co-Vice-President

This spring at the **Meander Garden Club** (formerly *Haliburton Garden Club*) we had another successful plant sale and would like to express our gratitude to **The Brooklyn Garden Center** for hosting us again this year.



As the hesitant spring progressed, a small team of members have been busy maintaining the **Ardoise Park**. After several years of heavy work on development and bed planting, we are in the maintaining phase of 300 feet of gardens on both sides of a short trail. Wind falls resulted in significant tree clearing work this spring. We welcome all visitors out to the gardens that are springing into bloom. We hope you enjoy the eating area and the new play equipment for the littlest gardeners. Located on Ardois Lane off Highway 1 in Ardoise.

Thanks to the endurance of one dedicated member, we are near the end of the important, but less dirt related tasks required to start our newest project, the **Community Garden at Clifton House Museum** in Windsor. This project is unique and unlike our other projects and maintained beds as the community garden will be focused on vegetables and to a lesser extent fruit production. It is intended to provide opportunities for community engagement, education and with all the food donated, or picked as needed, we are using

our skills to make a real and tangible contribution to move the needle on food insecurity in our community. We would like to thank **Vessey's** for their donation of seeds in support of this project. Major challenges are on the horizon; water and very happy park deer to name a few, but we are eager to finally start putting our hands in the good earth on this exciting project!

If this sounds like a project you are interested in being involved in, please reach out. We are just starting so need everything from plants to hand tools, hoses, you name it. As the temperature is rising, and the birds chirp we are all eager to get outside and wish everyone - happy growing.

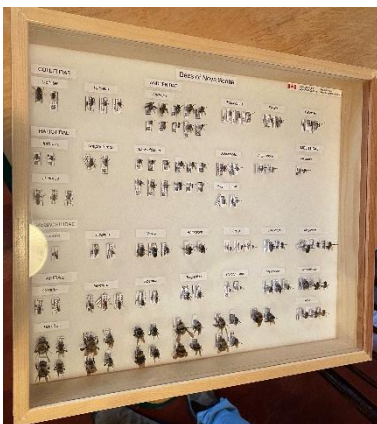


BAXTER'S HARBOUR GARDEN CLUB

(District 5 – Valley)

Submitted by Heather Stauth, President

The **Baxter's Harbour Garden Club** continues to grow and see new members joining. We are starting to run out of space in our Community Hall that use to be a one room schoolhouse!



This **spring** we had a presentation on **soil, compost, and mulch** by one of our members, **Amelia Kirk**, which was a big hit. There were lots of questions and discussion throughout.

In **May**, we had **Landscape Ecologist** and **native bee expert Steve Javorek**

from **Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada** give a "show & tell" on the bees of Nova Scotia. We learned there are **222 species of bees** in our province! It was a fascinating look into the lives of our bees and what they eat, where they nest, and how far they



GARDEN CLUB NEWS

BAXTER'S HARBOUR GARDEN CLUB

Continued from Page 7

travel to find food. Steve also brought an insect display case with many of Nova Scotia's bees to compare colours and sizes. One of our members, Amelia Kirk, brought hand-decorated cupcakes to continue the bee theme.

This was the first year our garden club helped with the **plant sale** at our **Community Market**. Our Community Association holds the plant sale to raise funds for the upkeep of their historic buildings. Members donated plants and volunteered their time on market day, and it was a record-breaking sale!

In **June** we have plans to tour a member's garden and greenhouse as well as a bonus activity where we will receive a demonstration on how to make concrete stepping stones with rhubarb leaves.

This summer we are working on our first fundraiser: a "**Create & Donate**" **Community Birdhouse Challenge!** We are asking the community to build and decorate birdhouses that will be voted on and raffled off at the **Baxter's Harbour Community Market** at the **end of July**. The birdhouse with the most votes wins our **top prize** of the **Golden Hoe!**

HANTS NORTH LATE BLOOMERS GARDEN CLUB

(District 3 – Central South)

Submitted by Geoff MacDonald, Treasurer

On **Saturday May 30th** the **Hants North Late Bloomers** held our **annual plant sale** at the **New Horizons Hall** in Noel. While the weather was not overly cooperative that day, we did see a good turnout, with strong sales of plants and baked



goods. We also had an overflowing garden basket of goodies that we sold tickets on, and it was extremely popular! We had a beautiful flowering quince as our door prize, which was donated by one of our members. This annual sale is one of our major fundraisers for the year and this year we had one of our best years for sales!



We had all hands-on deck for the day and had some great conversations with shoppers about their gardening plans and even got some good plugs in for the NSAGC. If you have not been out to visit the **Noel Shore** it is a beautiful part of the province with hidden gems such as **Burntcoat Head Park** and the **Fundy Tidal Interpretative Centre**.

We usually hold our sale on one of the **last weekends in May**, so keep an eye out next year – it is a great excuse for a wonderful day trip to our shore!

GREAT VILLAGE GARDEN CLUB

(District 3 – Central North)

Submitted by Cheryl Cooke, President

Hello fellow gardeners!

The **Great Village Garden Club** has had a couple of well attended meetings this Spring. We had a presentation by one of our members, **Arthur Haskins**, on forcing shrubs. It was a great activity to do after plowing through snow for a few months to add some color and hope with a forced cutting of magnolia or forsythia to our homes.

Then we had a presentation of deer resistant plants and hot picks by **Micheal van den Hoek** from **Lowland Gardens** in Great Village. Along with some beautiful flowers **Mike** provided some Dad jokes as well!

GARDEN CLUB NEWS

GREAT VILLAGE GARDEN CLUB

Continued from Page 8

Our latest presenter before our summer break was **Sergio Sani** who is a graduate student from **Dalhousie Agricultural Campus** in Truro. He spoke on several ways to minimize weeds in your garden.

After nominations, **Sybil Flemming** was unanimously chosen as our **2026 Outstanding member**. Her devotion and contributions have made significant impact on our club for many years.



Our **Annual plant sale** was a sellout success again!

Thanks to our members for their donations and time as it is our only fundraiser for the year. Several young future gardeners enjoyed making fairy gardens at our children's corner while



their parents shopped.

Looking ahead we are planning our summer group tour then we will start planning our Clubs 75th Anniversary Celebration for 2027.

LUNENBURG AND AREA GARDEN CLUB

(District 6 – South Shore)

Submitted by Kate Wyard, Secretary

Lunenburg Plant Sale Success

Our **annual plant sale** at the Community Centre on **May 30th** was undoubtedly our largest and most successful yet! A dedicated winter planning team streamlined our setup and sales processes, which greatly increased satisfaction for both our customers and volunteers. In addition to our popular plant and equipment displays, we successfully introduced three major new community services:

- **Native Plants:** Expert resources and tailored local materials.
- **Education:** Practical tips for high-yield home gardens.
- **Young Gardeners:** Hands-on activities to inspire the next generation.



Seed Starting & Creative Opportunities

Our **March** meeting focused on smart season extension strategies:

- **Susan McDonald** delivered a comprehensive presentation on indoor seed timing, maximizing thermal gain, protecting crops in transitional weather, and utilizing detailed record-keeping.
- **Pauline Morehouse** followed up with a highly practical demonstration on assembling and using space-saving "seed snails" for economical seed starting.
- **George** introduced an exciting community initiative: the **SAGED (Senior Artistic Garden Experimental Documentaries)** project. This program invites senior gardeners to participate in a short film that will screen at the upcoming **Lunenburg Doc Fest** from **September 23 - 27, 2026**.

Fisherman's Memorial Hospital Garden

In **April**, we restarted our maintenance and enhancement work at the Fisherman's Memorial Hospital grounds. This rewarding project was originally launched in partnership with the Hospital Auxiliary back in 2023. Teams of club volunteers now



Hospital Garden Early June.

GARDEN CLUB NEWS

LUNENBURG AND AREA GARDEN CLUB

Continued from Page 9

meet every few weeks to water, weed, prune, and add new plantings. We were thrilled to see a beautiful, vibrant succession of spring colours across both the front and back gardens this season.

Custom Planter Workshop

The **Garden Center at Wile's Lake Farm Market** generously hosted our popular interactive workshop this May. Attendees designed and planted their own custom patio pots and window boxes using a wonderful selection of market annuals. The finished creations grew beautifully in the market greenhouses before members picked them up in early June.

Local Garden Tours



In early June, club members enjoyed exclusive tours of two stunning, inspirational private properties right here in Lunenburg. A magnificent display of spring flowers and structural bushes were cultivated in both gardens. One property, managed by the owner, features rare and uncommon spring specimens. Now well into her 90s, she shared her active lifestyle philosophy - which includes regular curling and golfing - alongside invaluable care tips for her unique plant collection.



MOUNT DENSON GARDEN CLUB

(District 5 – Valley)

Submitted by Lori Reid, President and Dale Kelly, Vice-President

After a cold, wet start to our spring, sun and warmth have found us and none to soon.

Honoring our **Outstanding Member** of the year happens in **April** and this year our club unanimously chose **Tracey Martin** for this much deserved honour. A long-time member of our club, Tracey freely shares her extensive knowledge of all aspects of gardening and has served on many committees including positions on the Executive Team. This year we gave special recognition to Tracey and three past Outstanding Members by presenting them with club hoodies embroidered with the year they received this honour as a way for members to show their appreciation.

The **District 5 Meeting** was hosted this year by the **Forties Garden Club**. Fifteen members from the Mount Denson Garden Club travelled to New Ross and spent the day learning, sharing and participating in wonderful fellowship with our District family. Everyone went home rejuvenated and inspired. Each participant was gifted with a folk-art inspired hand painted rock created by Sheila McKeand and her team. They are beautiful and much appreciated.



Bagpipes at Saturday's Opening of the NSAGC Convention. (Photo credit Lori Reid)

One of the highlights in **May** is the spring cleanup of the four **Memorial Garden beds** at **Riverview Cemetery** in Hantsport. It is always our joy to have the gardens looking their best for Mother's Day each spring.

A **District 5 Council Meeting**, hosted by our **District Director Dale Kelly**, was held in Hantsport the end of **May**. These bi-annual meetings are a great way for Executive members from the District clubs to get together to share information and ideas.

The NSAGC Convention was held in Baddeck with seven members from the Mount Denson Garden Club in attendance. What a beautifully picturesque venue for our two-day gathering which included fun activities, inspiring speakers, wonderful food, and the creation of lots of lasting memories.



2026 Outstanding Member - Tracey Martin with Past Recipients: Brenda Bailey (2025), Dale Kelly (2024) and Lori Reid (2023).

GARDEN CLUB NEWS

MOUNT DENSON GARDEN CLUB

Continued from Page 10



This and the photo on the right of the Mount Denson Plant Sale courtesy of Tracey Martin.

We were gifted with a glorious sunny day and warm temps for our **Annual Spring Plant Sale** on **June 14th** at **Clifton Museum Park**. Outstanding member participation along with the Free Children's Table, loads of plants, lots of laughter and tremendous community support made for a very successful sale.



BIBLE HILL GARDEN CLUB

(District 3 – Central North)

Submitted by Cathy Fanning

The **Bible Hill Garden Club** has enjoyed a busy and rewarding spring filled with learning opportunities, community involvement, and successful fundraising activities.

At our **April** meeting, members welcomed guest speaker **Lorraine Lorette** of **Branch & Blossom Flower Farm**, Fort Ellis. Lorraine shared valuable insights and practical tips on growing cut flowers, drawing from her experience establishing her farm with support from her family in 2022. She offers bouquet subscriptions, as well as U-pick flowers and special events at the farm. She recommended *The Gardener's Workshop*, an online resource by **Lisa Mason Ziegler** as a resource for anyone interested in growing cut flowers.

Members were also pleased to receive their annual Nova Scotia Association of Garden Clubs (NSAGC) plant giveaway, the colourful "**Rockin Red**" **Dianthus**. Several members looked forward to attending the **NSAGC Annual Convention** in **June**, held in the beautiful village of **Baddeck**, Nova Scotia.

May was an especially busy month for club members. Volunteers gathered for the club's annual spring cleanup at the **Bible Hill Cemetery**, where they spent time weeding and mulching to help maintain the beauty of this important community space. The club also held its **annual community plant sale**, which was successful and well attended.

At the **May** meeting, two members, **Karen Hart** and **Tina D'Andreamatteo**, delivered a presentation on the collecting, harvesting, and using a variety of herbs and native plants for both culinary and medicinal purposes. Their informative talk highlighted the many benefits and practical uses of plants that can be grown in home gardens and found in nature.

Members also enjoyed a full-day garden tour to **Antigonish**, visiting two private gardens- **Willow Gardens** and **The Old Barn Gallery and Gardens**-followed by a picnic lunch at **Bethany Centennial Gardens**. The afternoon included visits to **Duykers Greenhouses** and **Gary's Greenhouses and Nursery**, with the day concluding with a buffet supper at St. Francis Xavier University.



Eleanor, Janet and Cathy enjoying one of the gardens on their recent garden tours.

Looking ahead, club members are excited to participate in the **Bible Hill Canada Day Parade**, the **Flower and Vegetable Show** in conjunction with **Dalhousie Agricultural Campus Community Day** on **July 23rd**, and the annual local garden tour and club social gathering in July.

The **Bible Hill Garden Club** wishes all members a wonderful summer.

GARDEN CLUB NEWS

BRIDGEWATER GARDEN CLUB

(District 6 – South Shore)

Submitted by Heather Dominique, President

May and June are such busy months on our calendars both at home and at our club. We have our standing **annual plant sale in May** and attend the **NSAGC Convention and AGM in June**.

I love our plant sale. It is just such fun sharing our love of plants and doing a wee bit of shopping from the club's members donations, you never know what surprises will walk through the door. We usually have an abundant turn out from our club members and this year was no different. We had a long line-up of fifty people waiting for the doors to open at 9:00 a.m.

May and June are also busy months as we are in the final planning stages for our annual **Flower Show & Tea**. Our program committee developed the flower show program in January, to allow plenty of time for members to plan their flower planting to align with the program. We decided that this year's theme would be ***Our Home and Native Land***, with a salute to the **Canadian National Parks**.



Wendy King admiring the flower workshop design samples created by Connie Jefferson at Century Homestead Farm and Floral.

We then had two flower arranging workshops, in April and May to give club members and opportunity to play around with ideas and get feedback on their designs. **April** was an **Ikebana** workshop and **May** focused on traditional arrangement shapes, triangles, horizontals, and verticals. I am so looking forward to **Saturday, July 11th** to see the contributions. **Doors open for viewing at 1:30 p.m. with tea served at 2:00 p.m. at the Dayspring Fire Hall in Upper LaHave.**

Enjoy your gardens and time to reflect on the beauty of nature.



Three Sue's at the AGM in Baddeck - Sue G., Susie H. and Susan V.



Visiting the Waterfall Garden in Isle Madame.

UPPER VAUGHAN GARDEN CLUB

(District 5 – Valley)

Submitted by Mark Kehoe, President

The warm days of **Spring** are an exciting time for gardeners. We finally get back into our gardens and get to enjoy all the new landscaping and plants we have been planning for all winter.

Spring is a busy time for the **Upper Vaughan Garden Club**. The club hosted three separate **member talks**: **Mark Kehoe** talked about the five types of **Hydrangeas** we can source and grow in our gardens; **Robert Perry** hosted a workshop/talk on **Orchid Care**, and **Terri Bowlby-Chaisson** presented a slide show of beautiful photographs from her visit and tour of **Kew Gardens in London**.

Members also enjoyed attending the **District 5 Meeting** hosted by the **Forties Garden Club** in New Ross. Following the District 5 meeting our club hosted our largest **annual plant sale** to date at the **Upper Vaughan Community Hall** on **June 6th**. Club members have also been busy building, maintaining, and freshening up our **community flower beds**.

Everyone is gardening and enjoying Spring.



GARDEN CLUB NEWS

EASTERN SHORE GARDEN CLUB

(District 4 – Halifax District)

Submitted by Diane Lucas, President

At our **March AGM**, our Executive hosted a Chili Dinner. We enjoyed our dinner after successfully filling all our executive and volunteer positions. We presented, our Member of the Year, **Penny Roche**, with a certificate and a bouquet, and celebrated with a cake.

Our Speakers at our **April** meeting were **Tracey Smithe** and **Tracey Milson** of **Sea Spray Garden Initiative**, who explained - *'We are a group of experienced gardeners with a vision: to establish a not-for-profit organization on the Eastern Shore focused on promoting home vegetable gardening and enhancing local food security.'* They are based in Musquodoboit Harbour and are concentrating their efforts on sustainable vegetable growing.

In **May**, our speaker was **Andrew Lowe** from **Super J Garden Services**. Andrew spoke about worm vermiculture using three bins.



We also held our **annual plant sale** at the end of **May**. We had a Nova Scotia invasive plant list and made sure that no invasive plants were sold at our sale. **Diane Morrison**, our plant sales team leader, did a wonderful job organizing our sale and it was once again an immense success.



Penny Roche, Member of the Year.

QUEENS GARDEN CLUB

(District 6 – South Shore)

Submitted by Chris Radimer

Spring in Queens County has been a confused mix of warm sunny days with very cold days and nights creating a challenging start to the gardening season.

As summer approaches, several members reported late plantings and annuals struggling to make it through some of the colder nights. With **June** well upon us, we are still facing some single digit nights, even as the days grow longer.

Despite the weather, the club had an excellent start with member **Mary White** conducting several public workshops on starting gardens from seed. Mary brought her extensive experience in starting seeds in the local climate to members and guests at the **Thomas H. Raddall Library**. The workshops were held in conjunction with a seed bank/seed giveaway sponsored by the club.

Our **April** meeting brought **Glenn and Cindy Higbee** of **Higbee's Berry Farm** for an informative talk on the growing and care of blueberries. They shared their 30+ years of experience in best practices for healthy plants and good harvests. The club learned of effective fertilizers, pruning routines, and soil composition to maximize success. Glenn and Cindy also brought along some plants for members to buy and to put their newfound knowledge to use.

In **May** we were pleased to receive Landscape Architect **Candy Venning** who is also **President** of the **Shelburne Garden Club**. Candy gave an inspiring talk about using native plants and natural terrain in landscape design for our properties. Her photo collection presented many ideas that suit Queens often rocky and hilly geography.



Blueberries forming.

GARDEN CLUB NEWS

QUEENS GARDEN CLUB

Continued from Page 13

The club ended **May** with a hugely successful **plant sale** on the **30th**. Enthusiasm for the sale was so great that many plants were already with new owners before the formal 9:00 a.m. opening. This year we were fortunate to use the sheltered market area across from the **Privateer's market grounds**. A special thanks to the organizers, and all those members who brought in plants for sale. And *thanks to the people of Queens* who came out to support the club's annual sale!



The cold weather did not affect the hostas available for our spring sale.

FORTIES GARDEN CLUB

(District 5 – Valley)

Submitted by Jean Frank, Secretary

It was a very busy time for members of the **Forties Garden Club** as we prepared and hosted the **NSAGC District 5 Annual Meeting** on **April 18, 2026**, at the **Forties Community Center**. Our theme for this meeting was “**The Enjoyment and Rewards of Gardening**.”

We were so pleased to have **Geoff MacDonald**; **Chairperson** of the **Nova Scotia Association of Garden Clubs** (NSAGC) join us and help us welcome participants to our meeting along with our **County Councillor Tina Connors**.

Speakers included: **Susan Larder, Floral Designer**, who along with her partner founded **Foraged Florals** – a sustainable floral farm on thirty-two acres of woodland near New Ross. She is a member of the Sustainability Floristry Network which is a new system of thinking that supports a healthy future for people, businesses and the planet. Susan put all the participants to work creating a seasonal boutonniere.



Participants making their boutonniere with Susan Larder, Floral Designer.



Bonnie Levy, Faculty, Horticulture, School of Trades & Technology

Bonnie Levy, a **Faculty** member of **Horticulture** at the **School of Trades & Technology** at **Kingstec Campus** shared her extensive experience and expertise on **Landscaping - Steps to protect your property**. She raised an awareness for property owners to create a plan which focuses on the need to limit the risk of wildland fire to their homes. She provided an interesting booklet entitled: **FireSmart Begins at Home Guide**.

Christina Caldwell, co-owner of **Bar M Ranch**, a 6th generation farm in New Ross shared the basics about how to grow, save, clean and store seeds on a small scale which was of great interest to all those present.

Mona Keddy, a Yoga Teacher/Physiotherapist engaged participants in stretches and joint mobilization exercises to

promote longevity and counter the typical positions of the avid gardener.

Garden Clubs in our District presented their club reports and several Outstanding Member Award were presented by **Lori Reid, Vice-Chairperson of the NSAGC** and **President of the Mount Denson Garden Club**. A delicious turkey dinner catered by the Forties Community Hall was enjoyed along with visits to several Vendor tables. As participants left for home, they were able to select a **hand-painted rock** to take to place in their gardens. A huge thank you of support to everyone who made this day so special for the Forties Garden Club.



Debbie Reeves with her Outstanding Member Award presented by Lori Reid, Vice-Chairperson, NSAGC.

GARDEN CLUB NEWS

PARRSBORO GARDEN CLUB

(District 3 – Central North)

Submitted by Georgie Hebb

April 2026 meeting – Composting tips from members

At our **April** meeting members contributed tips and tricks relating to **composting**. Many suggested adding eggshells, tea bags and coffee grounds, along with veggie scraps to further enrich the compost. Some used a **composter** set up, some dug in kitchen scraps directly into the soil around the plants.

Other ideas were to not add onions as it turns the compost sour, recycling old soil to add in, wait until later spring after the bugs appear from overwintering and include vines and old bits from plant cleanup but make sure no seeds are included. Compost tea was talked about, as well as big tumblers that you turn often to use as compost bins. There were lots of informative tips and even a look at a red wiggler worm compost bin from Margaret at the end of the meeting.

May 2026 – Planning meeting for the annual plant sale, and Plant Sale at the Hall

A great big thank you to our Parrsboro and local communities for your support of our plant sale, it was a huge success. This is our only fundraiser each year, and proceeds are used for our local club activities. Also, we give a huge thank you plants from the **Dino Garden** at the **Fundy Geological Museum**. We have nurtured and tended that garden for six years. Now, sadly, it will be dug up to put in new fuel lines. But that's a sad story for another day.

June 2026 – Garden tour

For our June meeting, we decided on a **garden tour** instead of our usual meeting, with the theme of '**Greenhouses**'.

First, we went to **Mary's** where she gave us lots of useful information about the building of her large 9'x16' greenhouse using sustainable lumber and corrugated panels. A couple of panels were hinged for ventilation and there will be eaves and rain barrels to collect water and a perennial garden along the side to make use of the water as well. Mary has come up with ingenious ways to control the bad bugs but not kill the good ones. Tucked in beside the greenhouse is a huge patch of rhubarb, and there are numerous gardens outside where Mary grows a variety of veggies and flowers.



Mary's Greenhouse



Louanne's Greenhouse

Next was **Louanne's** where we toured her lovely 12'x12' greenhouse built for her by her family on an old deck that was previously enjoyed when the water levels in the aboiteau were much higher. It was built with old windows sourced from garage sales, with huge blue containers also bought second hand online to grow the plants inside. There are also solar fans and a rain barrel for watering.

The lower deck is still in use to house some garden boxes and accessed from the back door of the greenhouse, is a terrific place to get a great view of the river and forest beyond. Inside is a lovely seating area with a view of the house, lawn and gardens.

Lastly, we drove to Advocate, and after a nice lunch outside at the Cape Chignecto picnic area, we visited **Airielle's** super large hoophouse, made using thick plastic and using dripline irrigation. In here she starts many veggies and flowers including tomatoes, lettuce, zucchini, cucumbers, herbs and sunflowers. She then transplants them outside to her numerous garden rows. A huge job that she handles mostly by herself. Airielle sells her Back Street Bakery yummy baked goods and veggies often at local markets and popups and has a small café at her house. We were treated to coffee, tea and some gorgeous Danishes, which many of us enjoyed while sitting outside looking out at the water.



Airielle's Super Large Hoophouse.

Upcoming

Fall Rally, District 3 North and South, Saturday, September 19, 2026

Preparations are almost complete for the District 3 Fall Rally this year. **Parrsboro Garden Club**, with cohost **Cobequid Garden Club** are looking forward to seeing other garden club members from our district and we would be so pleased to see you all come out to enjoy the rally and some beautiful sights of our lovely community. Two emails will be sent out with details and our request for attendee numbers and food choice.



In Memory of . . .



JOANNE FORD July 14, 1966 – March 26, 2026

On March 26, 2026, **Joanne Ford** passed suddenly at her home after a brief illness. Joanne left an indelible mark on the gardening community in Cape Breton. Her many gifted plants will continue to bloom, inspire, and be shared, with the same love and passion for gardening Joanne shared with so many others.

“Joanne had a life-long interest in gardening which she shared with her mother and her son. She became very involved with several garden clubs in Cape Breton, starting with the North Sydney Garden Club. Her garden at her home on Old Kings Road in Sydney became well-known in the community as having an excellent collection of flowering perennials. Every day during gardening season, she would pour hours of her time and labour into her plants. She was very generous in sharing, trading, and donating plant materials from the garden. Joanne and Eric also entered competitions yearly at the Cape Breton Exhibition and won numerous awards for floral arrangements, photography, and pie-making.”

“That passion for gardening led to her becoming District 1 - Director for the Nova Scotia Association of Garden Clubs and she was a founder, president, and driving force behind the creation of the Isle Madame Garden Club. For years she wholeheartedly committed herself to the clubs and was consistently involved . . .”

In typical Joanne Ford fashion, in lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to any of the garden clubs in Cape Breton.

Full obituary can be found at www.wjdooley.com (W.J. Dooley Funeral Home).

Our deepest condolences to Joanne’s Family and Friends. — Respectfully submitted by District 1 Cape Breton



“After work tonight, I took a quick walk around the garden and could not believe my eyes! ALL MY ROSES ARE IN FULL BLOOM!!” — Joanne Ford



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Summer is here and today, where I am located, it is warm with a light breeze. a glorious day for not only gardening but for celebrating **Canada's 159th Birthday**.

I hope that you enjoy this edition of the Scotia Gardener. I am always looking for **articles, poems, your gardening stories – perhaps what worked and what did not in your garden, gardening songs** such as the “Garden Song – John Denver Version” (*see below*) that we sang at the District 5 Meeting in the Forties in April, and *so on*.

As you will see in this issue there are **no Advertisers**. Over the next couple of months, it is my plan to contact gardening and other such businesses and encourage them to advertise in our quarterly newsletter to increase their visibility to the membership of the NSAGC. If you have any suggestions or wish to contact a business in your **District**, give them my email address (newsletter@nsagc.com) and/or send me their contact information and I will reach out to them.

An early reminder that submissions for the **next Newsletter** will be due on **September 15th**.

Have a great summer,

debbie

Editor, Scotia Gardener

GARDEN SONG (John Denver Version)

Inch by inch, row by row
Gonna make this garden grow
All it takes is a rake and a hoe
And a piece of fertile ground

Inch by inch, row by row
Someone bless these seeds I sow
Someone warm them from below
Till the rain comes tumbling down

Pulling weeds and picking stones
Man is made of dreams and bones
Feel the need to grow my own
Cause the time is close at hand

Painful rain sun and rain
Find my way in nature's chain
Tune my body and my brain
To the music from the land

Plant your rows straight and long
Temper them with prayer and song
Mother Earth will make you strong
If you give her love and care

Old crow watching hungrily
From his perch in yonder tree
In my garden I'm as free
As that feathered thief up there

Inch by inch, row by row
Gonna make this garden grow
All it takes is a rake and a hoe
And a piece of fertile ground

Inch by inch, row by row
Someone bless these seeds I sow
Someone warm them from below
Till the rain comes tumbling down



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If you require more information, please contact the Newsletter Editor at newsletter@nsagc.com

Scotia Gardener – Editor's Discretion

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 pictures in the newsletter are original. Pictures will be credited on the page where the photo appears.