

the GAZETTE

BIRCHWOOD GARDEN CLUB

www.birchwoodgardenclub.org

CHARTERED 1931

September Topic: Fall Foliage and Flowers

Submitted by Tamara Hall

The Birchwood Garden Club will hold its September 2016 meeting on Wednesday, September 7, at 7:00 p.m. in the Whatcom Museum of History and Art. The speaker for the evening will be Danielle Young from Skagit Gardens.

Fall is a glorious time in the garden. The frenzy of the summer water schedule has abated. Most of the veggies and fruits are in and processed. Gardeners can settle back and take stock of their landscapes and make plans for changes and additions for next year's enjoyment.

What better way to make new landscape decisions than by being surrounded by the impressive array of fall foliage and flowers in your garden. Fall plant stars can be bought, planted, and enjoyed all at the same time...no waiting...minimal watering stress.

Danielle Young from Skagit Gardens offers a visual tour of foliage and flower powerhouses that will make a gardener treasure their Fall gardens. Come see the plants which deliver the leaves, stems, berries or flowers which will light up your garden and transform your Fall season.

Fall Care for Perennials

It is difficult to accept that it's September already! Where has the summer gone? Although our growing season is not over yet, it is time to take care of perennials to make the next season easier.



If you have plants in your yard that usually look nice into the fall, it's worth it to give them a little extra care right now. But do not fertilize or prune them! This will only make them less winter hardy. But do give them a good soak if recent rain showers don't amount to much.

The flowers on sedum 'Autumn Joy' have barely begun to turn color and these are the high point of a perennial garden in fall. Cut back cushion spurge (*Euphorbia polychrome*) in mid-July and it will turn

gorgeous shades of red and orange this fall.

Cut back most perennials to about 3 inches from the ground. Any closer may damage crowns. Late summer pruning of perennials is really just a matter of aesthetics, so leave them if they provide interesting shape as they turn brown.

Another reason to cut down certain perennials is if they were infested with an insect or disease, then by all means cut them down and keep the debris out of your compost pile.

Wait until spring to cut back some species, including European ginger, bishop's hat, ferns, ornamental grasses, and upright sedums. In addition to adding winter interest, some perennials overwinter better if left uncut. If the growing season has been dry, water deeply in fall before the ground freezes.



News & Notes from President Judy Boxx

Summer 2016 is coming to an end but what a summer we have had. Thanks to Sheri Lambert and Carol McBride for again coming up with wonderful tours. The first of June was a tour of club members' gardens and then the first of July was the wonderful tour of gardens in Canada. If you did not attend you really missed out!

On a beautiful sunny day in mid-July we had the unveiling of the new sundial and pedestal donated by the club in the Cornwall Rose Garden. With thirty five club members and rose garden neighbors in attendance our Zapote Gregory and the Kelli Linville, the Mayor of Bellingham, did the unveiling. Zapote is a faithful volunteer at the park. Thanks, Zapote, for all you do and for making this event happen. Also a special thank you to Cheryl Haak for her work in arranging the day.

Finally the first of August we finished our summer events by having a wonderful potluck in the garden at the home of Carol McBride's. Thank you, Carol, for being such a great hostess.

Now get ready for our fall meetings, as Tamara Hall has been working hard at getting us a great lineup of speakers. Thanks Tamara.

Remember to invite a friend or neighbor; they might like to join us. Remember we can always use plant or garden related items for our silent auction table.

See you in September

Judy

The Case For NOT Gardening By Ira Penn

My namesake, Ira Gershwin, once wrote, “Summertime—and the livin’ is easy.” Ira obviously didn’t garden. For gardeners, summer is not easy. It can be fun, yes, but not easy. Admittedly, the fun adjective wouldn’t have fit the mood of the Broadway show he was writing for so I guess we can be charitable and give him a pass, but still...

I’ve met gardeners who don’t think summer is fun. Heck, I used to be one of those gardeners. At peak, a few years after retirement, I had a completely landscaped acre with 20 display beds containing hundreds and hundreds of plants. The Daylily varieties alone numbered 450. And every plant was labeled. We were “on tour” for

five different horticultural societies and the maintenance was a full-time job. Oh... and did I mention that the garden was in Nashville, Tennessee, where the average summer temperature is 87 degrees and the average humidity is 84 percent? To say that it was a lot of hard, sweaty work would be to understate the case substantially.

Don’t get me wrong; I loved it! Creating that garden was one of the true highlights of my life. But it was rough. And at the end of a day I was usually exhausted. Because even though I had been gardening for over 50 years at that time, I still hadn’t gotten the message that I was actually supposed to stop and smell the flowers that I was tending to so assiduously.

And that is why I titled this piece “The Case For NOT Gardening.” Because sometimes you shouldn’t garden! Sometimes you should just sit in a chair or lie in a hammock and enjoy the fruits of your efforts. Relax... and smell those flowers.

If you time it right there will be something smell in every season. Even in late winter you’ll be able to put your olfactory senses to work if you have Witch Hazel. I don’t grow it but it’s strictly a space issue. I simply don’t have room for another large shrub.

So my garden fragrance starts in the spring with Viburnum. (*Viburnum carlesii*). The sweet smell wafts over the garden with each breeze. Soon after the Lilac (*Syringa vulgaris* ‘Charles Jolie’) follows. The Hybrid Tea Rose (*Rosa* ‘Love and Peace’) requires you to walk up to it and sniff, but when you do you find that it’s worth dodging thorns for. In contrast, the climbing Hydrangea (*Hydrangea petiolaris*) is more willing to share its lovely smell. All you need to do is pass by it.

My garden now is far less than an acre. But even a downsized garden is work, and because of that summer is still not easy. But when you take time away from work and you sit outside in a comfortable chair in our beautiful PacNW climate and actually enjoy the fruits of your labors, it puts a whole different perspective on things. Try it; it’s great!

Snacks

This month’s meeting snacks will be provide
by Susan Metcalfe and Tamara Hall.

Thank You

Summer Garden Tours

Submitted by Sheri Lambert and Carol McBride

We were very fortunate that 3 club members offered their amazing gardens for our June garden tour. Sue Kenney, a lifetime member of our club, and husband Max have a lovely garden on a very deep lot on Cedarwood. With a greenways trail behind and a small park beside the property it feels very private and quiet. The garden has a large variety of perennials and Sue is a pruning expert as demonstrated on the Maples that she keeps in check. The Nyssea Tree was gorgeous as were the Atlas Cedars surrounding an arbor.

Diane and Ed Gerhard have done an amazing job of transforming a sloping yard into an oasis with shade loving, mostly native plants. A small stream runs through the property and although deer wander through daily the plants were intact. Stone steps leading to different levels and some great yard art added to the beauty of garden.

Ken and Stephanie Salzman's 1.5 acres proved to be even better than last time we visited with the addition of 5 wooded acres of native plants and trees and paths throughout to explore. The garden with the wonderful combinations of colors and textures of plants was gorgeous and the pond made one just want to sit and enjoy.

We had such a great time visiting member's gardens and we encourage more club members to share their gardens with us for next years tours

In July we travelled to Canada to explore three gardens in Langley and Surrey. Erikson's Daylilies began as a hobby and Pam now has over 3,000 varieties of Daylilies. Although a bit past their prime many were still very beautiful and the perennial gardens they have developed were lovely. Many of us were fortunate to be able to purchase plants at this garden and Pam delivered them to us a few days later.

After a stop for lunch at the turkey farm next door we traveled to another small nursery "Petals and Butterflies." This wonderful display garden is just over an acre but felt a lot larger and has it all with a large pond and waterfall, vegetable garden, alpine garden and a plethora of perennial gardens. Among the plants in this garden are many of the Pacific Northwest Great Plant Picks.

The third stop was Dart's Hill Garden which is now owned by the city of Surrey. Although it is open to the public only certain weekends of the year they opened it for us and even had tour guides to take us around in small groups. This 7.5 logged acreage was purchased 70 years ago by Francisca and Edwin Darts who transformed it into an award winning orchard and then a unique garden. Francisca's curiosity and love of the new and interesting has resulted in the most diverse collection of mature trees and shrub species in the Pacific Northwest. Many were planted from seed collected from around the world. This garden is well worth exploring other times of the year and a list of the weekends they are open to the public is on their website, google Dart's Hill Gardens.

After Dart's Hill we drove to the Semiahmoo library in White Rock so see the largest Sedum Wall in North America. This planted wall covers the whole south side of the library and was worth the 10 minute drive to see it. Then some of us did fish and chips by the water in White Rock before cruising home. Our only regret about the day that many of our working club members were unable to join us on a weekday.

For those who would like to visit another garden open to the public certain weekends of the year " The Glades" which is just over the border (Peace Arch Crossing) is well worth visiting. It features Rhodys and perennials so spring visit here is the best option. Google The Glades for schedules.

Meeting Minutes

May 4, 2016

Submitted by Cheryl Haak



President Judy Boxx welcomed 3 guests and 41 members to the meeting. Last month 5 more members joined the club for our new total 110 members.

Minutes of the April meeting were approved.

President Judy Boxx gave the Treasurer's report. The plant sale was a success with funds totaling \$2,624.08 after expenses. Thank you to Dianne Gerhard for her excellent job of serving as the Plant Sale Chairperson once again this year.

Julia Raider, Garden Project Coordinator, from the Bellingham Food Bank gave a brief overview of the work the Food Bank does in the community. This was followed by some discussion about donation of club treasury funds to the food bank. It was decided the subject of donations would be deferred to the board meeting in August. In addition, please send Judy Boxx ideas of additional entities related to gardening which could benefit from donations.

Sheri Lambert, one of the Garden Tours Chairpersons, announced that this summer's tours would be held on June 1st at which time we'll tour 4 gardens in the Bellingham area. The second tour will be held during the day of July 13th in Canada. Carol McBride has volunteered to host our annual potluck picnic at her home in August.

Old Business: Judy Boxx said everything is ready with the pedestal, sundial and plaque. She is now working with the city to arrange a date to install it at the Cornwall Rose Garden. Once that is completed we will have a ceremony to dedicate it this summer, the date of which is to be determined.

New Business: Judy Boxx said we will not need a committee formed to nominate board members this year since all current members have agreed to serve another year.

Tamara Hall reported that the Backyard Habitat and Native Flora Fair will be held again on May 21 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Fairhaven Village Green. Please consider helping to get new members by hosting our club's table displaying club brochures, newsletter copies, a list of speakers for the past year and/or photos from past garden tours. Please contact Tamara if you'd like to help out.

Ken Salzman will have an exhibit of his photographs of birds at Bellewood Acres from July 1 through August 31. There will also be a reception on July 9th from 1:00 till 4:00.

Ann Holland, Library and Museum Gardens Chairperson, announced that watering this summer at the library could be a complicated affair since there is a problem with flushing toilets at the library while we are watering. In addition, it seems we will have to contact the library to get the water turned on before we can water. Ann is going to work out the bugs with this new problem and will be in contact with members to arrange for help getting the weekly watering accomplished.

Thank you to Sheri Lambert and Cheryl Haak for our snacks tonight and to Sheri and Russ Lambert for our coffee.

The Birchwood Garden Club (BGC) is open to everyone in Whatcom and Skagit Counties who supports the objectives of the organization. BGC meets the first Wednesday of each month from September thru May. Annual membership is \$10 for an individual, \$15 for a family, due in September. Membership applications are available from the website: www.birchwoodgardenclub.org.

The Birchwood Garden Club Gazette is published monthly, September thru May, by the BGC. Articles, inquiries, letters to the editor, or other comments should be directed to the Editors, Ken and Stephanie Salzman, at the above address or via e-mail to: sasalzman@comcast.net

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President Elect - Ann Holland
Treasurer - Kathy Sparks
Secretary - Cheryl Haak
Garden Tours – Sheri Lambert & Carol McBride
Historian – Kay Reddell
Hospitality – Carol McBride
Library/Museum Gardens – Ann Holland
Membership – Judy Lewis
Newsletter – Ken & Stephanie Salzman
Plant Sale – Dianne Gerhard
Programs – Tamara Hall
Publicity – Susan Metcalfe
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