



What's Growing On?

The newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc.

Spring, 2006

Romancing the Garden



Sudbury MGs are celebrating a unique event. On New Years' Eve, MGs Tom Johnson and Lisa Turpin were married quietly at the Hummingbird Hill B&B. Tom has been a member for ten years. In 2002, he interviewed Lisa, who was interested in becoming a Master Gardener. The rest, as they say, is history. Their first date involved hiking. Then Tom left a pair of new rubber boots on Lisa's doorstep as a gift. After dating for two years, they became engaged in January, 2004, bought a new home, and began to garden together. Imagine the result when two MGs create and nurture a garden. Congratulations to Tom and Lisa!

Executive notes

... by Mary Beverley-Burton

Stepping Down

Hello to all Master Gardeners and MGITs of Ontario.

I expect that most of you know I have had to resign as president of MGOI because of my body deciding not to behave and me finding that I could not carry on effectively. I thought about this resignation for a long time as I am passionate about wanting MGOI to become a truly great organization within the province and within Canada.

I have tried to instill a feeling of forward movement instead of stagnation, hence the educational collaboration with the Niagara School of Horticulture to produce courses that *you* the Master Gardeners have helped design and which, based on a few inquiries that we've had, may well be taken up by Master Gardener aspirants from farther afield.

Another example of moving forward is the partnership of MGOI and the Niagara Parks Commission to produce the upcoming Niagara Flower and Garden Show (June 9 to 11, 2006). This crowd pleaser will help raise both funds and awareness for MGOI. I am sure you all realize that MGOI is short

of money and our ambitious projects are costly. Therefore, fundraising is an imperative; we will be re-applying for a Trillium grant, seeking sponsors, looking for donations and doing anything we can (short of robbing a bank).

At present, we are blessed with a strong board of directors, which has implemented several initiatives in my absence: the Interim Examination process; long-term service recognition and our presence at Canada Blooms. I sincerely hope that you will support the board at all levels and help with organization and administration. James Lee has stepped up to the plate and has agreed to act as interim president.

As individual Master Gardeners, I urge you to do all you can to make the public recognize the important work we are doing. Give talks, put on gardening seminars, be a part of the public scene and *educate*.

I hope to remain active within MGOI so you probably have not heard the last of me. I feel like the cat in Alice in Wonderland, with a grin from ear to ear that only fades slowly into the trees!

Best to All!

Regards,
Mary Beverley-Burton

Interim Exam

In December, the board approved an Interim Exam and the use of a guideline document entitled *Basic Knowledge Requirements for Passing the Interim Examination to Become a Master Gardener in Ontario*. This document defines the subjects that Master Gardeners in Training need to learn about to pass the Interim Exam, including practice questions. The document was distributed to all directors and co-ordinators in January. To put this process into action, the board has now approved the exam itself, which has 100 questions that target the entry-level Master Gardener who has learned enough to function effectively in hotlines, clinics, speaking engagements and other MG activities. It is expected that this will only be a beginning for the MGITs – an important step in the journey of life-long learning. They will also be expected to satisfy the other MG requirements with respect to volunteer hours and technical workshops. We hope that everyone will assist the candidates for this exam in every way, through training and encouragement within your groups. Co-ordinators should contact Wendy Chrystian to arrange for those in your group who are interested in taking the exam. –Gary Westlake

Zoning in

... news from our 11 zones

Zone 5

When Helen Smith became co-ordinator of Brantford MGs one of her priorities was to hold monthly educational programs – and she's done just that. In the past year, speakers have included GRCA Ecologist Tony Zammit, Nancy Lee-Colibaba, Sean Fox from the University of Guelph, Brantford MG Dave Collins, Keith Tyndall of

Keltyn Woods Hostas, Reiner Jakubowski speaking on Peonies, Brenda Luff of Brantford Parks & Recreation and Ken Marchant of the Canadian Food and Inspection Agency. Upcoming talks include Starting Plants From Seed with Connie Dam of William Dam Seeds and Dr. Jim Brasch on Beginning To Grow Orchids.

Zone 6

The Etobicoke Master Gardeners are into their second year. The group is divided into two sections: those completing the Guelph Distance Learning courses and those awaiting the start of the Niagara School of Horticulture program. They have 18 members with two more people considering joining. The group has ordered handsome kelly green aprons from Fiel and will wear them at the Successful Gardening Show.

Oakville MGs will be providing advice clinics at Terra Greenhouses in Milton every Saturday and Sunday during the

month of May, as well as resuming its weekly newspaper advice column in the local community newspaper, *Oakville Today*. Oakville MGs have also provided preliminary advice on rejuvenating the 1.78 acre sanctuary garden at Ian Anderson House, a cancer hospice in Oakville and have offered hospice volunteers ongoing gardening advice.

Zone 7

Prince Edward County MGs are taking part in the Lilac Festival at Macaulay Heritage Park, which runs from May 26 to June 1. Members will be talking about the various types of lilacs, their care and how to incorporate these attractive and fragrant flowering shrubs into a garden's design.

Zone 8

Lanark MGs kicked off the year with a workshop on how to create hypertufa troughs. Master Gardener Judy Wall demonstrated the technique and helped to make a variety of troughs for the group to sell at the spring plant sale.

Tripp's Tips

Oh Deer!

For those living where deer are problem plant some foxgloves (*Digitalalis*). The plants are toxic and the deer won't go near them. Foxgloves are bi-annuals and will self seed, so sow seeds two years in row to guarantee a new crop every year.

However, a more effective deterrent might be to build a double, four-foot high fence, with each length of fencing running parallel and placed about four or five feet apart to prevent deer from jumping over.



More Information

An article written by Laura Langston offers plenty of tips for "keeping Bambi at bay", including an extensive list of deer-resistant plants (in her experience, there are no deer-repellant ones!). To read all about it, visit www.canadiangardening.com/howto/ideas_deer_proof.shtml

Ottawa-Carleton MGs will be participating in the Ottawa Home Show which runs from March 23 to 26. They will be holding advice clinics and giving five 20-minute presentations.

Ottawa-Carleton MGs have planned a lecture series for Tuesday evenings in April, sponsored by Friends of the Central Experimental Farm. MG lecturers include Fran Dennett, Lee Boltwood, Edythe Falconer and Nancy Seppala.

News to use

... tips for Master Gardeners

The Plant Doctor

Toronto MG Sonia Day has written a new book, *The Plant Doctor*, a practical guide that's full of good advice on how to grow a healthy garden. Key Porter, \$26.95.

The UofG online classroom

Mary Ann Van Berlo of Ottawa-Carleton opted to take the online and interactive courses from the University of Guelph and she has completed all three in less than a year. "The experience was very positive," she says. "I enjoyed the online format. You really do feel that you are part of a classroom—complete with discovery, sharing of knowledge and the occasional heated debate. There was constant contact with the professor and the other students. I highly recommend the courses."

Mulch Ado About Nothing

Unfounded rumours have been flying about termite-infested mulch being exported from hurricane-ravaged Louisiana. Many of our members helped to debunk this "urban legend" by tracking down a posting on the Snopes website, which is dedicated to getting to the root of false rumours like this one and providing

more reliable information. According to Dennis Ring of the Louisiana State University Agriculture Center, "the [termite affected] parishes are under quarantine" which was put into place in October, 2005. When talking to gardeners who may believe the rumour, please set them straight and assure them that mulch imported from Louisiana is safe. For full details, logon to www.snopes.com/inboxer/household/termites.asp.

Tributes

... activities & achievements

Brantford Kudos

Brampton MGITs Bill Holder, Tami Proctor, Hannah Lawrance and Eva Kuehlem have completed their courses and are now full-fledged Master Gardeners! Congratulations also go to Steven Buzzell on 10 years of service.

Exemption Exam

Congratulations to Janet MacIver of Stratford who has passed the Exemption Exam to qualify as an MG.

Kitchener 20th Anniversary

Maryanne Weiler joined the Stratford MGs 20 years ago and soon after, helped to establish a group in Kitchener. An active member who regularly completes more than 100 hours, she has recently retired after many years as manager/head gardener of Rockway Gardens in Kitchener. Since retiring, she has taken up astronomy. You go girl!

Never Too Late

Doug Bruce of Ottawa-Carleton has applied for Emeritus status after giving 15 years of exemplary service, which began after he was eligible for the Old Age Pension!

Oxford County Grads

Congratulations to Rose Roi and Cathy Cardy who have just received their Horticulture 3 Certificate from the U. of Guelph.

Peterborough & Area MGs

Proudly recognize Edith Butler for five years, Ruth Arndt for ten years and Ferne DeBaeremaeker for 15 years' service. And congratulations to its newest graduate, Gladys Fowler.

Stratford 20th Anniversaries

Congratulations to Dorothy Elliott and Anna Peterson who attended the organizing meeting of the Stratford Master Gardeners in January 1986, completed the qualifying test and have since been active members of the group. They attend meetings, updates, present talks to groups in the area, and help with group activities.

10-Year Veterans

Congratulations to Alice Graf, Renai Rennick and Paul Pospisil who have been with Lanark County MGs for 10 years.

Toronto Achievements

Toronto MGs honour graduates, Barbara Anderson, Pat Anderson, Jane Beck, Dawn Bell, Ellen Eyman, Shari Ezyk and Diane Savage. Five year pins go to Katy Anderson, Carol Bairstow, Linda Fischer and Eleanor Ward. Sue Martin celebrates 10 years, and Charmiene Montgomery receives a 15-year pin. Congratulations to all!

20-Year Members

Ottawa-Carleton congratulates Lee Boltwood, Fran Dennett, Ruth Kempthorne, Polly McColl and Joan McNab on their 20th anniversaries!

On the wires

... the electronic MG

Brantford Website

The Brantford Master Gardeners now have a website. The site features a Question of the Month, articles on gardening and information about the group's upcoming garden tour. Check it out at www.brantfordmastergardeners.com.

Peterborough Revamp

Peterborough's website has a new look. Check it out at www.peterboroughmg.ca

Calendar

... upcoming horticultural events

March 25

Spring Gardening Seminar

The London/Middlesex MGs are hosting a seminar featuring speakers Brenda Gallagher on Native vs. Invasive Plants, Paul Ranour on Dos and Don'ts of Landscape Design, Elmer Jorgensen on Lawn Care and Bruce Hunter on Organic Gardening.

Time: 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the Church of St. Jude in north London. Admission, \$5. Contact

Nancy Abra aabra@gtn.net or call 519-461-0037.

April 14, 15

For the Love of Gardening

The Peterborough Horticultural Society and Peterborough & Northumberland MGs present their annual garden show at the Evinrude Centre in Peterborough. Admission, \$4.

For more information, visit www.fortheloveofgardening.ca.

May 7

Spring Gardening Seminar

The Brantford Master Gardeners are planning a gardening seminar geared to the public. For details, contact Tami Proctor at 905-628-1348.

May 13, 14

Birding Festival

The Prince Edward County MGs will be participating in the PEC Birding Festival by giving talks on attracting wildlife to gardens. Details at www.pec.on.ca/other/birds.html.

May 20

Spring Plant Sale

Lanark County is joining forces with the Perth Horticultural

Society for a spring plant sale at the Stewart Street School in Perth.

June 3

Gardeners' Gala

Prince Edward County MGs & Horticultural Society present a Gardeners' Gala. The day includes a plant sale, talks by Lorraine Johnson and peony expert Mary Pratte and the Horticultural Society Flower Show and Plant Auction. Doors Open Prince Edward County occurs this weekend too, so it's a great chance to explore the county. Information, contact Sandra Dowds at centuryhouse@sympatico.ca or 613-393-5577.

June 25

Gardens On Parade

Brantford garden tour of seven gardens and plant sale. For information and tickets, contact Alex Kucharew at 519-756-8678.

September 9

Technical Update

Mark your calendars for the Quinte Tweed Master Gardeners' technical update. The day includes a small marketplace, speakers, including Mary Taylor speaking on the Role of Plants in Habitat Remediation, and Karyn Wright of Terra Edibles, which sells heirloom and organic seeds.

September 23

A Walk on the Wild Side

Simcoe County MG's technical update focuses on growing native plants. The day includes talks by Professor Larry Lamb, Graham Buck of Nith River Native Plants, Scott Martin of Wild Canada and Darcie McKelvey of the North American Native Plant Society. To register, contact Linda Peacock, at peacockfamily@sympatico.ca or 705-424-2179

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What's Growing On? is published four times a year for Master Gardeners in Ontario. To submit news about your Master Gardener group, contact Lorraine Flanigan, Editor at lorraine.flanigan@sympatico.ca.