



The Columbine

K I N G S T O N H O R T I C U L T U R A L S O C I E T Y

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

- January meeting and guest speaker Emily Dowling on Community Shared Agricultural—January 10th
- February meeting and guest speaker Michael Oster on Biodome Greenhouses—February 14th
- Kingston Seedy Saturday at Loyalist Collegiate and Vocational Institute—March 9th

2018 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

BY JEAN BARNA

Our AGM is not only a time to present to our membership important aspects of how we do business, but is also an opportunity to highlight our accomplishments throughout the year, recognize our volunteers, and present awards to our flower show exhibitors:

- Our volunteers recognized for their community and society contributions were Pat Haslett, Barry Robertson, and John Poland, who each received a donation from Neil's Flowers.
- Our Golden Trowel Award winners were Linda & Brian Hetherington, Rebecca Kelly, and Virginia Wakeford.
- The President's Award was presented to David Kelly.
- Occasionally we take the time to honour members for their long service and making a difference to KHS. This year Jane Murphy received a Life Membership Certificate and card.
- The "In the Spotlight" Award winners were Adrian Cooper & Elizabeth Read, Yvonne & Roland Boegman, Alita Battey-Pratt, Jean Barna, and David & Rebecca Kelly for their entries in the horticultural and design classes throughout the year. What will they be growing in their gardens this year? Wait and see.

Many of you have helped to shape our year and make it a successful one, so pat yourself on the back for a job well done. Congratulations to everyone.

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NEW BOARD ELECTED FOR 2019

At our Annual General Meeting on November 8, 2018 a new Board was elected for 2019.

Front row from left to right: Bill Allen (Secretary), Alita Battey-Pratt (Past President), Maureen Williams (Treasurer), Denise Owsianicki (Membership),
Back row from left to right: Suzanne Maranda (Vice President & Publicity), Lorna Lee (Events) and Jean Barna (President)



Congratulations to our new Board of Directors!
Photo: Bryan Williams

P R E S I D E N T ' S M E S S A G E

Happy New Year: A cause for celebration as they say. For KHS, our new year started in September with our annual membership renewals, our round table discussions and our colourful Autumn Bounty Flower Show.

Festive

Then we heard about gardening heritage from John Poland and were surprised at the large number of entries for *pavé* design in the October flower show.

Joyfull

November was a time to recognize our accomplishments and honour our volunteers and award winners.

Bravo

A new perspective on the *Perennialist* gardening style from Nalini Stiernerling was shared and there were a few exuberant winners for Share the Wealth in December.

Congratulations

There were certainly various opportunities for engaging our diversified resources.

Like clockwork, there is a cyclical transition in the next eight months that we can anticipate. Portfolio Chairs will start conducting their team meetings as we gear up for our busy season. I'm sure you are all expecting the usual events to happen but – wait a minute – can we move forward if we don't have enough help? If you have creative ideas to share, are willing to take on a few leadership responsibilities, and contribute to the decision making process, then give me a call. We really need some additional members to step up and join us at the board level. We need volunteers to spearhead our Outreach community events and our Garden Tour. Don't feel like you are in this alone. Since some of the groundwork has been established, let's learn together.

Winter is setting in and there is time to ponder as we take a physical break from gardening. In anticipation of a new season I'm sure there are changes that you are hoping to make in your garden plan, new seedlings to start, and new plants to purchase. Why not share some of the seeds you have harvested at the next meeting?

Looking forward to hearing about your adventures,

Jean Barna, President

Team Building begins with:

- Sharing creative ideas
- Developing leadership skills
- Contributing to the decision-making process

KHS Needs Your Help:

- Garden Tour Coordinator
- Outreach Portfolio Chair
- Board Members



We're all in training as we build the best team possible.



I S Y O U R M E M B E R S H I P O V E R D U E ?

If it's overdue, start the New Year off right by renewing your KHS membership. It has been a busy 2018 and we hope to see and hear from you again throughout 2019. We value your membership.

Renewal notices can found on the KHS website. If you want your membership card mailed, please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope.

THE NEW PERENNIAL MOVEMENT AND THE HOME GARDENER

BY NALINI STIEMERLING

The New Perennial Movement, also known as the Dutch Wave, Naturalistic Gardening, or Ecological Garden Design, has influenced several public gardens on both sides of the Atlantic. Fairly recent commissions in North America are the 1.45 mile long High Line in Manhattan, the Lurie Garden in Millennium Park in Chicago and the Entry Walk Garden at the Toronto Botanical Garden. Though not completely radical historically, this style of planting design offers several new ideas for the home gardener in Kingston Ontario, Canadian Plant Hardiness Zone 6A. Two underlying concepts of this movement are a combination of sustainability and dependability, and an emphasis on form and structure.

Firstly, design your perennial garden with a view to the sustainability and dependability of the plant material. Rather than planting the latest hybrids, include a certain amount of locally native species and their close cultivars which will self-seed and result in some hardy and resilient plants (the garden style, however, is not wedded to exclusively native plants). An example would be planting the native pale purple coneflower (*Echinacea pallida*), a highly adaptable plant that is long-lived, low maintenance, tolerant of heat, humidity and poor soils instead of some of the fancy new hybrid coneflowers which are sterile. They do not produce viable seeds to support seed eating birds and insects and because they are reproduced through asexual propagation, either by tissue culture or by cuttings or division, they do not contribute to genetic diversity within the *Echinacea* gene pool leaving the plants at risk for disease and death.

Sustainability and dependability of plants would also include knowledge of the inherent longevity of perennials (some are short lived by their very nature), their ability to spread through vegetative growth, their compatibility with other plants, their ability to stay in one place rather than moving around the border (as beebalm often does!) and their self-seeding capability



Lurie Garden in Millennium Park, Chicago
Photo: James Byard, Dreamstime.com

as mentioned above. Depth of knowledge of plants can be increased by study, observation of your own plants and garden visits. An excellent resource is Roy Diblik's *The Know Maintenance Perennial Garden* (Timber Press, 2014) in which he recommends that we choose 10 plants we are growing per year and get to know them in a personal and intimate way and slowly keep extending our familiarity with all our other plants.

In a larger context, sustainable perennials would also be those that needed fewer external inputs in the form of fertilizers, pesticides and human labour, allowing the garden to become more of a



The High Line, New York City

Photo: Courtesy flicker/cc/David Berowitz

self-sustaining community. For example, by not cutting down dead growth in the fall, it could feed birds and feed and harbour a variety of invertebrates over our bitter winters as well as provide nourishment to the flower beds when plants are cut and composted in the spring.

(Continued on page 7)

U P C O M I N G M E E T I N G S

C O M M U N I T Y S H A R E D A G R I C U L T U R A L

At our January 10th meeting, Emily Dowling, owner of Root Radical Farm on Howe Island, will speak about the Community Shared Agricultural program, also known as CSA, in the Kingston region. She believes that her farm fresh vegetable program helps people to eat better, by spending less time shopping and more time enjoying food. On her farm, Emily grows, tasty, high quality, organic vegetables that may be purchased by subscription. She gives her customers a yearly commitment to maintain weekly or bi-weekly deliveries of the freshest, most varied foods available. Emily also offers a mini course on food storage, refrigeration, preparation, and meal design, along with nutritious recipes. With her fresh local food diet, her customers feel healthier and better connected to the land. Warning: this presentation may leave you feeling very hungry



Photo: courtesy Emily Dowling

T H E B I O D O M E G R E E N H O U S E

At our February 14th meeting, Michael Oster will tell us about his award-winning system of raised gardening beds inside the 'Biodome' greenhouse he has designed, engineered and constructed for the Brewer Park Community Garden in Ottawa. The structure is totally off-grid for energy independence during a three-season plant growing period.



Photo: courtesy Micheal Oster

Its features include increased yields, reduced water consumption, early seeding for outdoor transplanting and other benefits. The project focuses on accessibility for gardeners at all levels of physical abilities and ages. Michael has engineered two models, one as a smaller family size and one as a commercial size, both for comfort gardening, efficiency and accessibility. They provide growing space for food and ornamentals most of the year under an easily-erected geodesic dome. Michael plans to launch his business in Kingston in the spring of 2019.

A R E A E V E N T S

- Kingston Seedy Saturday - Saturday March 9th from 10 am–3 pm at Loyalist Collegiate and Vocational Institute, 153 Van Order Dr. Kingston, ON. Come celebrate local seeds! Learn how to save your own seeds, swap seeds with others and visit our local seed vendors, activities for the whole family. Suggested donation of \$2 at the door.

RE-INVIGORATING YOUR AFRICAN VIOLET

BY REBECCA KELLY



Time for repotting.
Note the length of the neck

African Violets are great house plants to grow. They are cheerful and undemanding, and with care, will last many years. In a perfect world, they should be repotted every 6 months. Dead leaves should be removed to expose the stem, and the bottom of the root ball should be cut off and the plant repotted burying the newly exposed stem.

But what happens if you haven't been diligently following a repotting regime and your African Violet now has a long neck, bare of leaves? Don't despair; there is an easy way to rescue the plant. First cut the stem at soil level, then remove most of the foliage. Take off any dead, or damaged leaves and remove all but a few "rings" of leaves. If the leaves are healthy, you can use



Cut the stem off at soil level



Stop removing leaves when you have a nicely shaped crown of about 12 leaves

them to start new African Violet plants. Then re-cut the stem so you have about 1 - 1.5 inches left. You don't need much of the old stem to start the new plant. You can then lightly scratch the surface of the

sides of the stem, but that's not absolutely necessary. Dip in rooting hormone and insert the neck in pre-moistened potting soil. Make sure the soil is loose and friable. Since there are no roots, you may want to



Re-cut stem to about 1.5"



Scrape stem with edge of sharp knife

If this is a special African Violet and you want to make sure it survives, take the opportunity to clone it with one of the leaves you removed. It's as easy as taking one of the leaves and re-cutting it so the stem is about 1 - 1.5 inches, dipping in rooting hormone and sticking it in some potting soil. Then wait, making sure it stays hydrated. Patience is needed. I had a variegated leaf specimen that took 9 months to root. Eventually, a new tiny plant will appear in the soil, sometimes 4 or 5 of them, and when they get to be a good size, you can pot them up individually. Good luck.

keep the plant in a covered container, or in a bag for about a month or until it roots. But I don't usually bother. When you see new growth occurring your African Violet will have created a new root system on the old stem.



Repot prepared stem in fresh damp soil



Propagated leaf cuttings at various stages of development

Five plants grown from one leaf cutting.
Hope they'll be ready for selling at the Spring Plant Sale



Photos: David Kelly

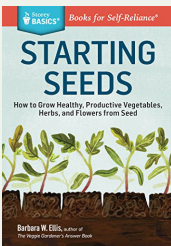
THE MIKE TWIGG AWARD

The late Mike Twigg was a former President of the Kingston Horticultural Society. He passed away in October 2004. The Society wanted to honour him by dedicating an award in his name, but he disliked the whole idea of trophies. During his presidency trophies went missing, so he had the great idea of keeping them safe and on display in a central location where the public could view them - at the Isable Turner Branch of the Kingston Frontenac Public Library. He even built a cabinet for them. Instead of a trophy the Mike Twigg award is books, which are available at the KFPL. For a review of this year's books see page 6.

BOOK REVIEW

BY REBECCA KELLY

Every year the Mike Twigg Award is presented for the most points scored in Horticulture in both the Joys of June and Autumn Bounty Fall shows. The award is presented at the November AGM meeting, and in 2018, David and I were the proud recipients. The award is unusual, in that it is in the form of books that the recipients can enjoy for a month before they are donated to the Kingston Frontenac Public Library, so that anyone can take them out to enjoy. Although currently not searchable using the KFPL search engine, a list of books awarded in past years will be made available on the website, and a request will be made to the KFPL to tag the books so that they will be searchable in the future. Stay tuned for updates.



Meanwhile, here is a review of the 3 books awarded in 2018. I hope they whet your appetite enough to visit the library.

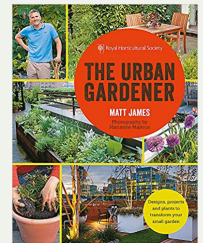
If you are itching to grow your own from seed this year, then *Starting Seeds: How to grow healthy, productive vegetables, herbs and flowers from seed* by Barbara Ellis (Storey), would be perfect for you. Don't be fooled by its diminutive size; it is packed with all kinds of information you need to successfully start your own plants from seed. It is succinct, very

practical, and illustrated with simple line drawings. If it was my book, I imagine it would quickly become muddy and dog-eared with constant use!



Bonsai is an art that is perhaps beyond the average gardener. However, *Miniature Bonsai: The Complete Guide to Super-mini Bonsai* by Terutoshi Iwai (Tuttle) might tempt you to give it a try. Lavishly illustrated, this gorgeous volume gives step-by-step instructions on how to create, and take care of bonsai that are truly tiny – in fact they are quite happy living in a thimble!

The Royal Horticultural Society is the UK's largest gardening charity, and providing advice is one of its mandates. *The Urban Gardener* by Matt James (Mitchell Beazley) is a practical guide to making the most of the urban garden, no matter its size or location – from balconies and roof terraces, to courtyards and passage ways. I garden in the country, where I face a whole different set of challenges, but nonetheless found this an interesting browse, and agree it would be perfect for someone who wants to transform their urban space.



Photos: David Kelly

THE HELLEBORE

Also known as the Christmas Rose, Hellebore has historically been used medicinally, often as a purgative and was thought to be a cure for lunacy. All the many varieties of are poisonous and care should be taken when handling as they can cause skin irritations. *The Christmas Rose* Anonymous, first appearing in *Punch* on December 30, 1882

Know ye the flower that just now blows,
In the middle of the winter the Christmas Rose?

A plant, indeed, of the crowsfoot kind,

Not really a rose, but never mind,

It blooms out o'doors in the garden bed.

Its petals are white with a tinct of red.

Though it lacketh perfume to regale the nose,

To the eyes right fair is the Christmas rose.

A fiddlestick's end for the frost and snows;



THE NEW PERENNIAL MOVEMENT AND THE HOME GARDENER

BY NALINI STIEMERLING

(Continued from page 3)

The second concept is the priority given to form and structure rather than colour from flowers or foliage. Gardening in Britain has been the prime inspiration for gardens all over the world. There, flower colour has been given the most emphasis. Given relatively cool summers, where flowers last much longer, and the Northern European long growing season, this made sense. When copied in North America, with its huge range of climate zones, many continental climates, and often short growing seasons, it did not. Here in Kingston, useful plants would be those that can look good long after their short flowering season providing interesting skeletal forms, seed heads and subtle shades of grey, brown and black in the long six months which follow.

One way to choose plants that emphasize form and structure is to distinguish them from fillers. Perennials hardy in our zone may be divided into those that provide outstanding structural interest for up to nine months of the year, and those that are fillers that provide flower or foliage colour only for a few short months and then become formless or even untidy after mid-summer. A rough rule of thumb espoused by designers is 70% structural plants to 30% fillers. The excellent book by Piet Oudolf and Noel Kingsbury *Planting: A New Perspective* (Timber Press, 2013) includes a Plant Directory listing characteristics of the majority of perennials, grasses and ferns used by them. By their books, cone-flowers (*Echinacea*), Joe-Pye weed (*Eupatorium maculatum*), feather reed grass (*Calamagrostis acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster') and royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*) would score high in structural interest for 9 months of the year whereas columbine (*Aquilegia vulgaris*) and delphinium hybrids would not.



Eupatorium

Photo: Rebecca Kelly



Grasses providing structure

Photo: Rebecca Kelly

Much has been written by the lead designers of this movement on the placing and quantity of plants. Drifts, blocks, intermingling and colour coordination are addressed. Details are beyond the scope of this short article and can be found in the Oudolf and Kingsbury book, above. Matrix planting, in which restrained looking plants form a ground cover (examples would be coral bells (*Heuchera*), sedges (*Carex*), sedum Autumn Joy (*Hylotelephium spectabile*) from which the more visually dominating plants can emerge, is another possibility for the gardener. If the matrix plants have good structure, they can look good for most of the gardening year as well as prevent weed growth.

In conclusion, there are hundreds of resources on the web and quite a few books with beautiful photographs that will tell the reader more about this gardening style. For an example of a New Perennial inspired home garden in Britain search <https://herefordshiregarden.wordpress.com/> Another excellent resource is our own Tony Spencer whose blog at <http://www.thenewperennialist.com/> provided me with much of the information for this talk. Follow his journey in creating a woodland garden in Mono, Ontario in the New Perennial Style.



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KHS BOARD FOR 2019

PRESIDENT:	Jean Barna
VICE PRESIDENT:	Suzanne Maranda
PAST PRESIDENT:	Alita Battey-Pratt
SECRETARY:	Bill Allen
TREASURER:	Maureen Williams

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PUBLICITY:	Suzanne Maranda
PROGRAMS:	Alita Battey-Pratt
EVENTS:	Lorna Lee and Jean Barna
MARKETING:	Vacant - TBD

HOUSEPLANTS CROSSWORD - ANSWERS

ACROSS

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Boston | 11. Moth Orchid |
| 3. Passion | 14. Hibiscus |
| 4. Norfolk | 15. African |
| 5. Sensitive | 17. Umbrella |
| 7. Agave | 18. Carrion |
| 8. Poinsettia | 19. Snake |
| 10. Amaryllis | |

DOWN

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| 2. Staghorn | 12. Dracaena |
| 5. Stephanotis | 13. Prayer |
| 6. Jade | 16. Rubber |
| 9. Spider | |

Crossword appeared in the November / December 2018 issue.

BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Local author Janette Haase will be offering an 8 week course: *Grow Your Own Food*.

- Topics include:
 - Eating locally and seasonally
 - Designing and creating your garden
 - Greenhouses and other season extenders
 - Seeds, seed orders and seed saving
 - Making transplants
 - Creating healthy soil
 - Plants, pests, pollinators
 - Permaculture, carbon sequestration and other great ideas
- Weekday evening in February and March (location to be advised)
- Cost is \$260 and includes a copy of her book *From Seed to Table*
- For more info please contact janettehaase@gmail.com or 613-453-1247

