



The Cury Bulletin

THE FRIENDS OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE GARDENS SOCIETY

Since 1993
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December 2015



Fond Memories, Farewells, Kudos

As 2015 draws to a close, we can look back on a year of fabulous weather which had our gardens looking better than ever. The weather was a bonus for the gardeners and many of our volunteers were busy in the gardens well before the official 'Tools Up'. The warm weather and sunshine was great for the many thousands of visitors that Government House welcomes each year.

Her Honour, Lieutenant Governor Judith Guichon has now become the busiest Lieutenant Governor to date, logging well over 400 (closer to 500 actually) official functions and appearances on her busy social calendar.

Yet despite this packed schedule, she still found time to visit the Friends volunteers as they worked either in the gardens or down at the Mews. It was not uncommon to see her leading Lil Lamb around on his leash as she sought a few moments of peace and fresh air in between her many functions and duties.

The recent AGM saw a huge turnout of Friends. We welcome three new faces to the Board - Cynthia Bray, Patty Grant and Susan Myerscough. Copies of the AGM reports are available from the Cottage.

2015 saw the Friends gain many new volunteers, and sadly say goodbye to old friends who moved on. This year we lost three valued and much loved members - Marion Elliot, Virginia Fisher and Audrey Smith. These ladies all contributed enormously to the success of the gardens, the House and the Friends. We shall always remember them.

The House also said goodbye to Her Honour's Private Secretary, Colonel James Hammond, - 'Jamie' to those of us who worked closely with him. Colonel Hammond has moved on to serve in the Provincial Government and we wish him all the very best in his new adventures.

On a very happy note (and a huge pat on the back for our Friends volunteers), Senior Discovery Tours which handle tours all over the world for seniors (they have been doing this for 40 years) have a new addition to their 2016 travel brochure. Under Tours of Canada, specifically British Columbia, they advertised a 12 day tour of our province, and under included excursions, is Government House, Victoria, "a visit to the costume museum located in the former Mews is a must see." Congratulations to the over 40 volunteers who have put the Costume museum on the map!

On behalf of the Board of Directors for the Friends of Government House Gardens Society - we wish you all the happiest of holiday season and a huge THANK YOU!

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Friends Website: www.fghgs.ca

The Friends - a group of over 400 dedicated volunteers, approximately half of whom spend many hours working in the gardens. Non-gardening members work in archives, library, photography, publications, greeting cards, administration, tour guides, education, special events, the Costume Museum and the Tea Room

Gardening Volunteer Coordinator: Nairn Hollott

To join the Friends of Government House Garden Society, please contact Nairn Hollott at 250-744-4019.

Director of Gardening Activities: Brian Rogers

Garden Coordinators

Cottage Garden:	Phyllis Muir 2nd: Pat Mayhill
Cut Flower Garden:	Jan Drent
English Country Garden:	
Floral Designers' Garden:	Liz Thompson
Herb Garden:	Nancy Murray
Iris Garden:	
Lavender Border Mob:	Carol Dancer
Nursery:	Bryan Taylor
Pearkes' Peak:	Sharon Vermaning
Peter's Rock:	Yvonne Jordan
Pool Garden:	
Rock and Alpine Garden:	Eileen Evans
Rockland 1:	Sandra Fleischman
Rockland 2:	Phyllis Muir 2nd: Diane Adams
Rotary Garden:	Michael Russell & Siewkeen Quah
Sunken Rose Garden:	Nairn Hollott
Terraces:	Alison Leamy
Vegetable Garden:	Mary Cake 2nd: Sue Hara, Brian Dallamore
Victorian Rose Garden:	Vaughn Edwards 2nd: Maurice Vanden-Bulck
Woodlands:	Kathleen Martin (Tuesdays) Rosemary Balfour (Thursdays)
Winter Garden:	Carol Dancer
Tool Shed Manager:	David Langley

Director of Non-Gardens Support: Angela Newton

Archives Groups - FoGHGS:	Sue Baptie
Bulletin Mailing Group:	Mary Anne Skill
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Garden Tours:	Arthur Timms
Greeting Cards:	Connie Rese
Library:	George Metcalfe
Mews Docents:	Geoff Thornburn
Photography Group:	Kate Cino
Plant Registry:	Crenagh Elliott
Telephone triage:	Catherine Spencer
Telephone Committee:	Eileen Edgar 2nd: Frances Bardon
Volunteer Coordinator:	Nairn Hollott

Director of Operations: Jermy Brownridge

Costume Museum:	Susan Erling-Tyrell
Gov't House Archives:	Caroline Duncan
Floral Designers:	Lynn Thompson
Gift Shop:	Jermy Brownridge
Tea Room:	Jermy Brownridge

Bulletin Editorial Team

Editor: Mary Anne Skill, Technical Support: Peter Freedman, Graphic Design: Mary Anne Skill, Proofreading: Carmel Linka, Jim Ferguson, Leah Freedman, Peter Freedman & Denise Stocco. Contributors to this Issue: Valerie Murray, Kate Cino, Peter Freedman, Gayle Hozack, Cathy Lylock and Angela Newton.

All photos unless noted are courtesy of The Photo Group

Contributions, comments, photos welcomed and may be left in the 'Publications Folder' on the hall desk in the Cottage, or emailed to: CaryBulletin@yahoo.ca

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2014/15

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Susan Myerscough

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Government House :

Jermy Brownridge

Volunteers Co-ordinator:

Nairn Hollott

Horticultural Advisor:

Valerie Murray

To contact any member of the Board of Directors, please email board@fghgs.ca

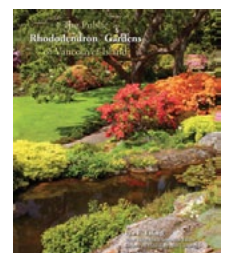
From the Library Shelf

by George Metcalfe

The Public Rhododendron Gardens of Vancouver Island by Alan E. Efford

The author takes the reader on a tour of 30 interesting and beautiful public gardens, including a few private gardens that welcome visitors. These gardens differ widely, including some of historic interest, others that are centres of horticultural and education, and some that must be visited because of their aesthetic beauty.

This book brings together a description of these public gardens along with more than 120 colourful photographs.





Message from Government House

Another remarkable year has come and gone at Government House. Every year seems to be an improvement on the one before, and 2015 was, in my view, no exception. It was a year of partnership, change, hot weather and considerable achievement.

The roses began to take shape in February, and gave us feasts for the senses that I had never experienced here at Government House. In both the Sunken Rose Garden and Victorian Rose Gardens, we saw roses like they were meant to be. Fantastic.

Thanks to the early heat, and lessening rains, the Country Garden, Rock and Alpine, and Woodlands bloomed, too. By May, Rockland I and II, as well as the Rotary and Cottage Garden were amazing. Thankfully, the deer have yet to develop a taste for rhodos, so the front gardens and east lawn area, in its new and cleaned-up splendour, delighted visitors right into June. The new Azalea and Dogwood Walk was delightful too.

The wonderful addition to the Tea Room – Rudi's Tea Room as it is now known thanks to our benefactor, proved a success. The collection of displays, costumes, panels, videos and wonderful food all fed into the delightful ambience provided in the Mews. Of course Lil' Lamb did nothing but help with smiles and a warm atmosphere as well. What a fantastic season 2015 was.

We are always amazed by what is produced by the veggie patch. Mary's group really outdid themselves this year, and working with the Growing Young Farmers was a wonderful compliment to Her Honour's Priority Programs.

This year was not without its difficulties. We lost some special Friends. The passing of Audrey Smith is particularly difficult for me, as I spent so many years with her merry group of ladies decorating the interior of the House for hundreds of occasions. And we lost Marion Elliott and Virginia Fisher as well. Both truly remarkable and dedicated volunteers.

But it is with a smile and vigour that we look to 2016, which is now right around the corner. It is exciting to continue the special partnership we have with the Friends and the Foundation that has allowed us to tackle some projects that have long been ignored. The strengthening of ties and finances has been significant this past year, and I know it will continue to flourish under the excellent leadership of your President Brian Rogers and Michael O'Connor from the Foundation.

On behalf of all of us at the House, and most importantly Her Honour, thank you, thank you, thank you for another great year, and all the best for 2016.

Have a safe and Happy Holiday Season!

Director of Operations



A Message from your President

As your President, I welcome our three new board members: Cynthia Bray, Treasurer, Patty Grant from the Terraces and Susan Myerscough from the Woodlands. I think they will enjoy their involvement.

As the gardening season winds down, we have several projects that will be going forward during the winter months. First will be the re-edging and gravelling of the pathways in Pearkes Peak, Rockland 1 and 2, the Rotary and Country gardens.

Secondly, the beds to the left of the entrance gate as you drive in will be replanted. The third project will be the continued restoration of the rhododendron garden to the east of the House.

These projects will be undertaken by Colin and his crew with the help of some of those who continue to work all winter.

The funding for these projects is coming from the 3x10 fund. This fund is supported by the Friends, the House and the Foundation. Everything should be completed by the spring gardening season.

For myself, I am going on 'injured reserved list' for a few months to have a knee replacement. I go under the knife December 16 so should be back in time for Her Honour's and Jeremy's hot chocolate run in March. In sports terminology, "put me on the injured reserved list Coach, don't send me down to the Minors."

Best wishes to all for the New Year and I look forward to 2016



Brian Rogers

Introducing the New Board Members

At the November AGM, we welcomed three new members to the Board of the Friends of Government House Garden Society. They join existing member: President Brian Rogers, Vice-President Peter Freedman, Past-President Catherine Spencer, Secretary Geoffrey Thornburn, and Directors-at-Large: Cathy Lylock, Angela Newton, Mary Anne Skill and John Barton.

Non-voting members of the Board are Volunteer Co-ordinator Nairn Hollott, Horticultural Advisor Val Murray and Government House Liaison Jeremy Brownridge.

Please welcome the following new members to the Board:

Cynthia Bray

Cynthia takes over the role of Treasurer from outgoing Treasurer Yvonne Dawe.

Cynthia was born in Victoria, raised a family here and has operated an accounting business for more than thirty years. The last five years she's been involved with the Government House finance and operations. It is during these years that she has met many of the Friends, seen the positive impact they have on the House and learned how important a role they play in promoting the work of the LG.

Cynthia is happy to be a part of this dedicated group and feels that she can contribute by taking on the role of Treasurer.

Patty Grant

Patty has been working on the Terraces since 2013. Her first formal gardening education was at the age of 10 as a member of the Quaker Willing Workers 4H club in rural Michigan.

After retiring from 40 years of nursing Patty discovered the joys of being a 'Terracite'. She is honoured to have the opportunity to be on the Friends of Government House Board.

Susan Myerscough.

Susan moved from Toronto to the Victoria area over forty years ago. Her life has been filled with family, friends, libraries and volunteering, with lots of time spent on gardening, sailing, hiking, nature and local history among other interests.

Susan started volunteering at Government House in 2009, when a friend told her about all the volunteer gardening here. Ever since, she has enjoyed working with the Woodlanders in the Garry Oak ecosystem and learning about all the other ways the volunteers support the House and Gardens.

Susan would like to do what she can to help the gardens continue to develop. She is honoured to be elected to the Friends of Government House Board.

Where do Red Bananas migrate in the Winter? by Val Murray

We were fortunate to have received the donation of a red banana about 4 years ago.

Ensete ventricosum 'Maurelli' is a stunning plant native to the tropical forests of Africa. We grow it for its beautiful ornamental red and burgundy tinted foliage that gives an exotic flavour to the borders of Rockland 1.

This plant is only hardy to Zone 10 and we are officially Zone 8 so we are doubly fortunate in having friends at the City of Victoria with room for our tropical plant in their greenhouses at the city works yard in Beacon Hill Park.

Volunteers dig up our banana in early November and deliver it to the care of Parks staff where its leaves are trimmed to decrease the possibility of insect infestation.

Our plant is lined up for the winter season with all the other bananas that the City has placed around Victoria in their own ornamental beds. The plants are kept fairly dry and at a cool temperature, 48 degrees, until February when the heat is turned up to around 52 degrees to encourage growth.

At the end of April the plants are taken out of their protected houses to make room for propagating summer bedding. And we come back and pick it up a healthy, often bigger plant in May.

We thank the City for their assistance. It's so good to have friends in warm places.

Can you find our banana in these pictures?



Thanks to our Retiring Supervisors

The Friends of Government House Garden Society have been very fortunate in the quality, skill, talent and enthusiasm of the people who step up to become Supervisors of the different gardens around the estate. Without their hard work and dedication, these individual gardens would not be nearly as beautiful and well maintained as they are.

Therefore it is always with sadness and appreciation that we say a hearty 'Thank You' to the following supervisors who have stepped down to allow others the opportunity to have a say in the direction of their garden.

We are changing the name of supervisor to coordinator. If anyone is interested in taking the leading role in their respective garden, please contact Nairn Hollett.

Jessica Sluymmer. Joined July 1997. Worked in the Pool Garden, Supervisor 1998-2015.

Ruth Minshall Joined March 2004. Worked in the Country Garden and Supervised from 2008-2015. Has put together a history of the Country Garden.

Maxine Brook Joined March 1993. Organized Arts and Crafts Fairs. Worked in the Country Garden. Supervised the Thursday gardeners from 2008-2015.

Diane Symes Joined March 1993. Worked in the Cottage Garden, Supervisor 1998-2000 and in Rockland I, Supervisor 1998-2015.

Liz Wallis. Started Sept 1991 - one of the original group that renovated Rockland I where she still works. Supervised the Coffee mornings for many years, stepping down at the end of last year.

Volunteer Spotlight

There are so many wonderful people who volunteer to work in and around the gardens of Government House. This spotlight introduces one of our special volunteers.

Introducing Geoffrey Thornburn



A very busy man in the Friends organization is Geoffrey Thornburn.

Geoffrey does not work in the gardens at Government House, “although I greatly enjoy seeing them. I have more than

enough to do in my own garden!”, however he has completed the requirements for the Master Gardener certificate at the Pacific Horticultural Centre and designed his own garden at Glen Lake in Langford.

Nevertheless, he is a familiar face to many gardeners as he bustles about the Cary Mews tending to his varying duties. He, and his wife Olivia, have volunteered in the Tea Room virtually since its inception. They joined the Friends in May 2012, when the Tea Room opened. He and Olivia were looking to volunteer at something together instead of having all of their activities separate (she volunteers at the RBCM also). The Friends and the Tea Room fit the bill!

They are part of a wonderful team on Friday afternoons. They have also been involved in a number of other specific events particularly around Christmas times.

When not in the Tea Room, Geoffrey started and heads up a new group to the Friends – the Cary Castle Mews Greeters, begun in May 2015. Working in the Tea Room, Geoffrey quickly came to realize that many of the visitors to the Garden had a myriad of questions about the Gardens and the House as well as Victoria in general. When he brought it to the Board of Directors attention, he was asked to consider starting a group of Greeters to provide a welcome and introductory information to Mews visitors.

As the first ‘face’ of Government House to many visitors, the Greeters answer a wide range of questions or refer people to where that can be found. This includes such information as bus schedules, and directions to other key tourist sites, as well as the many gardens and walking paths around Government House.

Director of Operations Jermy Brownridge has noted that the Greeters put a positive, human face on the activities in the Gardens and the Mews, helping direct visitors from around the world, but including many Victoria residents, to locations within the site. Jermy noted that the House has received a myriad of positive comments from visitors, staff and other volunteers on the helpfulness of this Greeter service.

As if that was not enough to keep him busy, Geoffrey is also into his second year serving on the Friends Board of Directors in the capacity of Secretary – a job that keeps him very busy as the Board meets once a month.

So who is Geoffrey outside of the Friends? Geoffrey was born and raised in Victoria, and lived here until he went to Grad School at Queen’s University at Kingston, Ontario in 1967. It was while he was at Queen’s that he met his wife Olivia, who is from Kingston. The couple moved to Ottawa for 31 years, except for a period of three years back in Victoria.

Geoffrey’s academic training was in Economics with a focus on industrial organization. He worked in Federal forestry and environmental agencies and then for 22 years with the International Joint Commission. This work concerned Canada-US trans-boundary issues – notably Great Lakes water quality, cross boundary water levels and other shared environmental policy issues from coast to coast, all of which had significant social and economic components.

Geoffrey and Olivia moved back to Victoria for good in mid-1999 when he came on a special assignment with Environment Canada. Once in Victoria, Geoffrey also served on the Capital Regional District’s Environmental Roundtable and the Quality of Life project of the Greater Victoria Social Planning Council, primarily developing indicators of regional well-being, precursors of the Victoria Foundation Vital Signs reports.

As if his work was not enough to keep him busy, Geoffrey’s primary additional activity has been as a professional musician, specifically as an organist. His first appointment in this area was at the age of 12 and he has held organist positions and performed concerts at many Victoria, other Vancouver Island and Eastern Ontario locations.

Phew, what a busy man! No wonder the Friends have benefited from his organizational talents.



Geoffrey and his dog Cedar in his personal garden at Glen Lake in Langford.

The Camperdown Elm

Tucked in behind the Victorian Rose Garden is a Camperdown Elm. This tree is a specimen tree, and is spectacular in summer with its dense foliage, and short stature. It is a perfect specimen for parks and larger landscapes due to its wide spreading branches, which can droop to the ground.

The grafted Camperdown Elm slowly develops a broad, flat head that may eventually build as high as 4 m (13 feet). This tree is characterized by its large obovate leaves, and weeping structure. It is also known for its twisting, crowded branching, and how intolerant it is to being trained: the branch structure seems to have a mind of its own.

Discovered in Scotland about 1835 - 1840 (often misstated as '1640'), the Earl of Camperdown's head forester, David Taylor, discovered a young contorted elm tree (a sport) growing in the forest at Camperdown House, in Dundee, Scotland. The young tree was lifted and replanted within the gardens Camperdown House where it still remains to this day.

The original tree is less than 3m tall, with a dramatic weeping habit and contorted branch structure and grows on its own roots. The Earl's gardener is said to have produced the first of what are commonly recognized as Camperdown elms by grafting it to the trunk of a Wych Elm *Ulmus glabra*. Every Camperdown elm in the world is descended (as cuttings taken from that original sport) and are usually grafted on a Wych elm trunk.

Camperdown Elms satisfied a mid-Victorian passion for curiosities in the 'Gardenesque' gardens then in vogue. Many examples were planted, as 'rarities', in Britain and America, wherever elite gardens were extensive enough for tree collections (Arboretum). There are many on university campuses, often planted as memorials.

The Camperdown Elm *Ulmus 'Camperdownii'* is a cultivar which cannot reproduce from seed. Although often still classed as a cultivar of the Wych Elm *U. glabra*, the tree was considered a nothomorph (Any member of a group of different hybrid forms produced by crosses between the same two parent species) of *Ulmus × hollandica* 'Vegeta'

'Camperdownii' is usually grafted to *Ulmus americana* in North America and *Ulmus minor* in Europe and thus it is susceptible to Dutch Elm disease caused by Elm Bark Beetles. In North America it often escapes infection possibly because the American vectors of the disease do not feed on Wych Elm; however its leaves are heavily damaged by the Elm Leaf Beetle *Xanthogaleruca luteola*, Elm Yellows, and disfigured by leaf-mining and leaf-rolling insects, such as the Elm casebearer, *Coleophora ulmifoliella*.

Camperdown elm is cold hardy, suffering more from summer drought than winter cold (to zone 4), although 90% of the University of Minnesota elm trials specimens were lost during the exceptionally severe winter of 2002-2003. However established Camperdown elms in Scotland do endure temperatures as low as -25C without ill-effect.

The cultivar requires a large open space in order to develop fully, and so is not recommended for small home grounds. The tree is often confused with the much taller 'Horizontalis' (Weeping Wych elm) owing to both being given the epithet 'Pendula' at some stage.

It is sometimes confused with *Ulmus glabra* 'Pendula' as they are both weeping trees with similar albeit confusing forms. However, 'Camperdownii' produces a dome shaped crown, while 'Pendula' produces a stiff, flat crown.

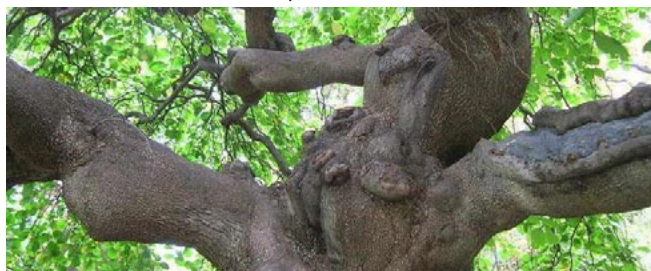


The original tree, located on the Camperdown Estate in Dundee, Scotland.



The lush obovate leaves that crowd the crown of the tree.

The twisted, knarled trunk that characterizes the Camperdown Elm



Membership Update by Peter Freedman

This year we processed membership payments for 434 members to the Friends including 64 new members. Together with carry-overs who joined late last year and people who have been awarded honorary lifetime memberships the Friends finish the year with 449 members. Of these, 340 are active volunteers and many members volunteer in multiple capacities.

We were able to catch up on awarding Long Service Pins at the Tools Up gathering in the spring as 70 members qualified for them. This will become an annual event in the spring and next year we will be able to hand out the first 25 year pins!

Membership renewal for 2016 are proceeding well. At the time of writing 301 members have already renewed and we have 6 new members to the Friends. All membership cards for 2016 that were not picked up at the AGM are being mailed out this year with the help of the House.

Website Update by Peter Freedman

The Friends of Government House Gardens Society website (fghgs.ca) continues to be the window by which the world can keep in touch with the Friends and view the results of the work we are doing.

Again this year, spectacular slide shows from the Friends' Photography Group illustrated the glories of the gardens as they changed throughout the seasons. Descriptions and photographs of some of the major enhancements made to the gardens were also cataloged in blog entries and all editions of the Cary Bulletin since February 2014 are available for download.

The website enjoys about 1000 visitors every month. Most of these are from Canadian internet users, but almost as many hits on the site are from the United States. Doubtless, many of these people are people who have visited the GH gardens while on vacation in Victoria or on a stopover from a cruise ship and wish to remember their visit or show others at home where they have been.

Benefits of Membership by Cathie Lylock

1. Supporting the Queen's representative in BC, the Lieutenant Governor of BC, by assisting in the beautification of the grounds and gardens of Government House.
2. Meeting and sharing with like-minded volunteers, gardeners and would-be gardeners.
3. Gleaning and refining gardening skills and expertise from seasoned gardeners and gardening supervisors.
4. Access to gardening resources such as books, magazines, articles, the Cary Bulletin, and special "members'" access to the FGHGS website.
5. Coffee mornings once per month (the second week of each month) to spend one hour meeting more of the over 400 volunteer membership.
6. Commercial liability and accidental death and dismemberment insurance coverage while gardening on the grounds of Government House (extended to those members less than 85 years of age).
7. Advance notification of plant sales and shows.
8. April Volunteer Appreciation Exchange Pass for Victoria and Capital Region.
9. Special Invitations to volunteer appreciation receptions put on by the Lieutenant Governor in Government House which may include one or more of the following: "Tools Up" Reception, "Tools Down" Reception, Christmas Luncheon, Summer Barbecue, and any additional events that may be named at Their Honours discretion.
10. Discounts at designated nurseries, garden supply stores, and other local businesses.
11. The opportunity to purchase fresh and affordable produce from the vegetable garden.
12. Three to four special interest lectures and/or presentations given in Government House during the winter months (November-February- non-gardening season).

In Memorium

It is with great sorrow that we lost three vital members of the Friends this year.

Marion Elliott.

Marion joined in September 1996. She was President of the Friends 1999-2000 and Director of Gardening Activities in 2004. She supervisor of the Herb Garden from 1998-2015. A member of the Government House choir. A hardworking and loyal member of the Friends.

Virginia Fisher.

Virginia started work in the Woodlands in 1990 and joined the friends in October 1992. She cared for the Orchard from 1998 until recently and then worked in the Lavender Border. She was a member of the Photography group.

Audrey Smith.

Audrey joined the Friends in 1996. She was the lead Floral Designer for the House. Her designs for Government House were marvelous and garnered many praises. She insisted that we present B.C. Blooms and made it a success.

Photo Group's Best Shots on Show by Kate Cino

These images by the Photo Group are a wonderful showcase of the many individual gardens, flowers, plants, birds and animals at Government House. The photos in the links are labeled with plant names and some locations. These photos are used by the Card Group to make cards - a successful fund-raiser for the Friends. The Lieutenant Governor gifts these cards to dignitaries in her world travels. Visitors can purchase the cards in the tea room and they are sold to volunteers at coffee mornings. At coffee get-togethers, we enjoy meeting other volunteers and chatting about the photos and their gardens. Kate has made cards for some individual gardens, featuring their volunteer teams. These group photos spotlight the special people who make our gardens great. You can also find Photo Group images on the Friends website.

The Photo Group welcomes new members. Please email kate-cino@shaw.ca



Photo Group Favourites from August, 2015
<https://photos15.smugmug.com/Aug-15-Chosen/>



Photo Group Favourites from July, 2015
<https://photos15.smugmug.com/July-15-Chosen/>



Photo Group Favourites from September, 2015
<https://photos15.smugmug.com/Sept15Chosen/>

The Cookie Lady by Gayle Hozack



Sometimes when you are toiling away in the gardens, you wonder if anyone really appreciates your efforts. Well, now some of the gardeners have proof that their work is noted, appreciated and touches the heart.

This is Sandy Spalding (the Yummy Cookie Lady) and she lives across the street from the duck pond with her dog, Auli.

Sandy frequently walks about the gardens. She says the Government House gardens are so healing for her, particularly after a serious operation she had. She is so appreciative of all the efforts made by the gardeners that result in these beautiful surroundings with nature.

The AWESOME home made platters of cookies that she delivers to the gardeners while they toil are a token of how grateful she is of our collective hard work.

We would like to say 'Thank You, Sandy' not only for the cookies, but for gladdening our hearts with your appreciation and care.

Long May She Reign



The sun couldn't have shone any brighter as the people of Victoria and Government House celebrated Her Majesty becoming the longest reigning monarch in British history.

The House put on a splendid garden party and there were many festive hats and fascinators on display for the event. The Commodores Big Band provided music to dance to, while entertainer Rick Scott stole people's hearts with his stories and songs about becoming a Canadian citizen.

Following on that line - Judge Gerald Pash led everyone present in repeating their Citizenship pledge and affirming their loyalty to Her Majesty and Canada.



Over 1200 guests dressed for a tea party and enjoyed the sunshine, the music, the food, and the specialness of celebrating Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth becoming the longest reigning monarch in British history. Even Lil' Lamb put in an appearance, much to the delight of the crowd.



Thank You to Non-Gardening Volunteers by Angela Newton

Tea Room servers, Costume Museum staff, Photo Club photographers, Photo Card makers, Coffee Morning workers, Cottage “upkeep person”, Cottage Library organizer, Telephone and email message senders, Plant Registry person, Archivists, Mews Greeters, Garden Tour Guides, Membership Guru and Website Master, Cary Bulletin editor and Proof Readers make up the 130 members of the non-gardening branch of the Friends. Some groups have a membership of 40; others, a membership of 1.

This year, as in the past, has been a busy and productive one for non-garden groups.

- The Tea Room offered an opportunity for volunteers to indulge themselves in a lot of hard work and fun while being surrounded or immersed in the world of the dining public, the ‘famous lamb’ and a few productive chickens. Makes one want to break into song about who had a little lamb! Success of the Tea Room is due in large part to the enthusiastic participation of volunteers.

- The Costume Museum works year round to create and showcase beautiful displays. Presenting accurate information about period clothes and the people who wore them is part of the volunteer assignment. The museum graciously hosts many thousands of guests during the spring, summer and fall.

- The Photo Club is tireless in their quest to capture the gardens in all seasons. Many of their beautiful photos are presented on the website.

- The Card Club manufactures and sells the much in demand Government House Gardens cards. Popularity of these products was demonstrated when, at the recent AGM, 71 cards were purchased.

- The Coffee Morning ladies work in the Friends Cottage. They dedicate themselves to creating an atmosphere conducive to camaraderie for all the Friends as they present food and drink on the second Tuesday and Thursday mornings during the gardening months.

- Garden Tour Guides offer extensive, informative walking tours. People leave the tour with knowledge of the plants, the gardens and the people who “dwell” therein.

- The newly established Mews Greeters welcome tourists and locals alike. Conversations about the grounds, the buildings, the history of 1401 Rockland the bus routes, the bathrooms and the lamb, are part and parcel of information requested and supplied by the greeters .

- The Phone Committee keeps those without email in the know regarding events and the email messaging offers news to all members.

- The ever changing Website and Membership tracking jobs require ongoing attention.

- Plant Registry keeps track of where specific plants are located in the garden, and maps the ever-changing looks of the Gardens.

- Cottage Library maintains the Friends collection of books and magazines that are available for loan to members.

- Cottage Maintenance ensures the cottage is in tip-top condition for Friends gatherings,

- The Cary Bulletin is the newsletter that keeps the Friends connected to happenings within the Society and the House. It publishes four times a year with the capable assistance from the proofreaders.

- The Archives Group maintains and coordinates the heritage of the Friends.

- The Floral Designers and the Government House Docents are members of the Friends who work under the guidance of Government House. Some members also volunteer in both non-gardening and gardening work. Their efforts, whether it be offering beautiful floral designs or leading instructive House Tours showcase Government House and The Friends.

To those new and not so new non-gardeners, should this article pique your interest in joining another non-garden group please contact Angela at newton_foster@shaw.ca



Off to Greener Pastures

Lil Lamb, who won the hearts of Friends, visitors and their pets this past summer, has found a new home on a hobby farm in Cordova Bay. He joins a small flock on a hobby farm.

We hope your new flock are as kind and accepting as the Friends.....best of luck in your new home!!



The Beauty of Winter

In case you forget the beauty of the Gardens, just look how they glow in December.



The Gardens at Government House are truly a 12 month experience of beauty. There are always moments that will take your breath away.



All these photos were taken by members of the Friends Photo Group in December 2014. The weather might be colder and duller, but the gardens offer up a different kind of beauty.

