

PETERBOROUGH HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Volume 160 April 2021 Number 4

April 28 Double Bill: Harmony Evans from Wild Ginger Farmstead and Kara Carr from Rocky Meadows Lavender



Harmony Evans: Wild Ginger Farmstead is a female run market garden farm in Millbrook, Ontario. We focus on growing tasty and nutritious veggies by caring for our soil in a regenerative way. We are now going into our second year of growing, and continuing our 20 member CSA program, and supplying both the Millbrook and Peterborough Farmers' Markets. Along with the help of many kind friends, I am growing on half an acre of soil to produce the most wonderful array of delicious fruits and vegetables. We also care for a mixed flock of heritage breed laying hens who provide us with fresh eggs, and raise pastured broiler chickens for fresh meat during the Summer and Fall. We are now entering our third official growing season as Wild Ginger Farmstead, and are so excited to see what it has in store for us.

Kara Carr, Rocky Meadows Lavender, Indian River: We are the faces of Rocky Meadows Lavender! A few years back we were talking about what we were going to do when we retired. We both love lavender! After speaking to an owner of a lavender farm east of us, our interest was further piqued and we thought maybe we would try growing this beautiful herb here. That was 5 years ago. So, we got our first load of little plants and have incrementally increased each year since. We have a shop on our farm property where we sell the products that are made in our kitchen laboratory. We are a small batch producer in order to keep things fresh. We use lavender buds from our plants and lavender essential oil to make all of our products. We hope to increase production as COVID permits. Hopefully soon we will be distilling our own oils. We will be open 6 days a week this coming season, as I (Kara) retired on March 18 after 49 1/2 years nursing. So we hope you will come to visit our farm and enjoy the flowers, horses and chickens. We open on May 22, 2021.



President's message

Greetings again during this continued challenging time. I'm hoping and praying for health and safety for our PHS community and look forward to the day that we can meet again -- maybe even as early as this coming September. Can you imagine the scene of joy after more than a year and a half of home heaven / home jail? 😊 😊

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Until then, we have SPRING -- I've never known a spring as early as what we've been experiencing so far in late March/early April. Everything is greening and growing at a crazy pace. Like many of you, SPRING is my absolute favourite time of year. I wander my gardens daily, getting reacquainted with amazing plants that I've collected. I have my water collecting tanks hooked up so I'm ready for the April showers. I've planted quite a few spring bulbs over the years and crocus, daffodils, fritillaria, and tulips are all pushing their way through the soil. Many of my hellebores are in full bloom which is a sight to see.



We hope you enjoy another "newsy" newsletter which is very different from the newsletters pre-covid. We're doing what we can, and my Board of Directors always make us look good. I hope to see you at the next meeting virtually, and in person whenever that might be. As always, suggestions are always welcome. But, at the current time: stay safe, stay home, and get your fingers dirty!

❖ MJ Pilgrim

Awards night for OHA District 4, representing 17 societies

At the virtual AGM on Saturday April 10, two of our own walked away with top honours from our district, District 4.



The Hazel Wilson Award (the district's top honour) was presented to Claire Sullivan: Claire is and has been for a long time, a behind-the-scenes tireless worker who gets things done. She is dedicated, reliable, and consistent and has been such an amazing contributor for so long that I'd really like to see her be awarded the Hazel Wilson recognition. She has a calm and friendly, practical nature. She has a good sense of humour as well. Claire has been a member for 34 years, an executive officer for at least 12, and a board member for probably about 20 years. Well deserved, Claire. We miss you around the board table!

The 2019 District Service Award was presented to Pat de Villiers:

Pat de Villiers has been a member of the Peterborough Horticultural Society since 1991 – 28 years continuous. During that time, she was our president, garden show chair, assisted annually at the Spring Plant Sale, Fleming Park volunteer, sat on the scholarship committee, and organized PHS Bus Trips. She has been on the PHS Board since 2006 - 13 years.

Pat is always cheerful and has a real "get it done" attitude. She is an effective organizer and is especially good at keeping a team on track and ironing out any interpersonal difficulties (and we know there are always some of those!) Pat is a positive energy person. Well done, Pat!



Thank you Annie!!

We had the privilege of presenting Annie English, Past-Chair of Fleming Park, with some PHS love for a job well done as the past-chair of the park. Annie will be continuing her work in the park under the leadership of the auspicious Fred Doris. 😊

TO ALL MY FELLOW PHS MEMBERS Thank you so much for the beautiful orchid (Phalaenopsis) and Gift Certificate received on retiring as Chair of Fleming Park. I will purchase 2 Fuchsia hanging pots at Marg Burley's, as I did last year, because my hummingbirds absolutely love them. I am staying on as a team member at the Park, so will see many of you at our **Annual Spring Clean-Up Saturday April 24th**. If you are like me, we are all itching to get out in our gardens. Cheers and stay safe everyone.

❖ **Annie English**



Some history of the healing garden

When humans began actively to cultivate gardens, one of the first things they grew, other than food, was herbs. The Chinese began recording their use of herbs about 3400 BC.

By 500 BC, Egyptian herbalists were practicing all around the Mediterranean spreading their knowledge and plants. Dioscorides, a 1st Century Greek physician, wrote *De Materis Medica*, which became one of the earliest and most influential manuscripts on medicinal plants.

The first Christian monastery founded in AD 305 in northern Egypt, included a small enclosed garden. By the time the Benedictine order was established near Rome in AD 540, gardening was very much part of monastery life. By the 9th century monks all over Europe were formulating the first herbals.

Until this time, knowledge of herbal healing had been the preserve either of educated men with access to manuscripts or women, who had a small repertoire of healing herbs that was passed on to daughters. As time went on, many of these herbal remedies from both small and large gardens alike, became the basis of modern remedies.

Learn more details from the book by Marjorie Harris entitled "The Healing Garden."

Do you grow herbs for healing or teas? Many are quite attractive.



❖ **Shaun Pyper**

Flower photo display; camera time!



For anyone interested in photographing spring flowers and having them printed in our May newsletter, here are some Rules and Tips:

Send one or two photos only to both Anita Clifford (anitaclifford@bell.net) and Shaun Pyper (bagofwoods@hotmail.ca). We will look them over before sending them on to the newsletter for printing in the May edition.

You may begin sending your photos starting Thursday May 6th, until Sunday May 9th. Photos received after May 9th will not be accepted.

Place your flower vase in front of a plain wall/curtain, no busy backgrounds. Be sure that **ONLY** your flower vase is in the photo.

You may put 1-3 flowers (same cultivar: eg. all tulips) in your vase. These will not be judged. They are for the viewing pleasure of our members only.

❖ **Shaun Pyper**

Amaryllis, a sturdy bulb



In 2001, my daughter, Bronwen, bought a house in Mexico City with planters on the roof. I went to help turn them into a verdant garden. We replaced the hard, dry, dead soil with bags of soil and compost from a major garden center. However, neither the soil nor the compost was of particularly high quality. In one of the bags, I found a lump which turned out to be half an amaryllis bulb! We planted all our purchased plants and pushed the half bulb down between some plants, pretty much as an after-thought. The following spring, some familiar leaves poked through and soon, a beautiful red flower greeted my daughter. Over subsequent years, every Easter my daughter reported (with glee, knowing how I watched my single pots of amaryllis each Christmas) how many flowers she had

as the bulb(s) multiplied. Bronwen was often away, for months at a time, and the planters received only intermittent care over the next 18 years. At the end of 2019, the house was sold prior to moving to Merida, and Bronwen dug up the amaryllis bulbs --- over 100!! She gave as many as she could to her friends and acquaintances (telling everyone their history) and the remaining bulbs were put into brown paper bags and sealed in a box. Bronwen had a particular affection for this feisty plant!!! She had no idea where or when she would be able to plant the bulbs or any of her other rescued plants, which were potted for the journey. Unfortunately, all of the plants in pots were seized at the state border when the moving van was inspected, as plant material may not be transported into the Yucatan peninsula (a detail which Bronwen had not known). Luckily, the box of bulbs escaped notice and arrived safely at the new house where it was left in a damp and musty corner which was particularly prone to scorpions and other nasties (as Bronwen subsequently discovered). Over the next four months, the house was completely gutted and flooded by Tropical Storm Cristobal. Understandably, Bronwen stayed in a nearby village. In October, 8 months after being packed, with some trepidation the box was opened. Rather than a smelly mess or a nest of scorpions, the bulbs were found to be blooming in their bags!! Some were potted up and given to the owner of the house in the village where Bronwen had stayed. The remaining 30 bulbs were planted in January and all but one have sprouted, enthusiastically! Bronwen rather doubts there will be any flowers this Easter, but next year.....!

❖ **Ruth Hillman**

Theses 'roots' are made for walking!

Times like this we wish we could go somewhere other than a walk around the block. But we know we must stay put right now and the conditions around us will get better. Not so for plants! Sometimes they land in places that are not good for them and over time they will fail to thrive. Consider taking a look at your perennials this spring and see how they are doing. Maybe they would enjoy a change of scenery and growing conditions. Do your homework first and learn about where they would like to set their roots for years to come. We might think 'sunny' girl hostas, like Venus and Aphrodite, would look great beside a Komodo Dragon Hosta, but he is a bit of a 'shady' character and wouldn't necessarily like to share their location! Trying to bend a plant's nature to our will doesn't usually work out well for the long term and you might end up having to look for something to replace a plant that just can't grow where we think it should. This season, plant selections might be limited again so consider trying something new that would be a good companion plant that likes the same growing conditions as one of your established plants that are doing well. I sometimes transplant a struggling plant into a pot and move it around to figure out where it wants to stay. I have even dug holes in garden beds in the fall and put these potted plants into the ground to overwinter until they make up their minds! Just because we are all stuck in one place right now and feeling a little grouchy, our situation will change. Our sad looking plants on the other hand, shouldn't have to stay rooted where they are now and be unhappy all summer long.



❖ **Laura Jack**

HELP WANTED

1. An organization has contacted us in search of 2 summer students who may be completing their college or university courses in horticulture. It will be for 15 - 20 weeks ending August 31, 2021, 4 days/32 hours per week. The work will be performed at a residence about 10 minutes outside Peterborough. If you are interested in one of these positions, email ptbohotsoc@gmail.com and I will forward to you the contact information for the group.
2. Peterborough Landscape Supply is looking for help at both locations (Keene Road and Kawartha Heights. Full and part time. Visit the Kawartha Heights location with your resume and speak with MaryAnn.

Deer-proof gardens



In my garden the deer prefer some of my plants, so I have included a few that the deer dislike!!

BARBERRY...	hardy and colorful with thorny stems
ABELIA...	pretty arching shrub, blooms all summer to fall-fragrant flowers (hummingbirds and butterflies love them)
BLUEBEARD (caryopteris)...	bright blue flowering shrub, late blooms, pollinators love this.
FORSYTHIA...	sturdy cheery yellow blooms in early spring
WINTERBERRY HOLLY...	brightens winter landscape, birds love them, to get the berries you need a male and female plant.
HEUCHERA (coral bells) ...	grown for variety of striking-colored leaves, cold hardy
LAMIUM (dead nettle)	variegated foliage, great shade plant, can withstand dry soil,
POTENTILLA...	low maintenance blooms all season, cold hardy
BAPTISTA (false indigo)	native perennial, spikes of flowers late spring, drought resistant
ALL ORNAMENTAL GRASSES	

My Homemade Deer Repellent

- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 raw egg
- 1 cup water

Place in blender, then add 1 tbsp. dish soap. I just drop by spoon on plant foliage, especially tulips that "my deer" love!!

❖ **Annie English**

A “heavenly” plant, despite its name!



One of my favorite perennials to start the Spring season in the garden. Commonly known as hellebores, the Eurasian genus *Helleborus* consists of approximately 20 species of herbaceous or evergreen perennial flowering plants in the buttercup family *Ranunculaceae*, within which it gave its name to the tribe of *Helleboreae*. Despite names such as "winter rose", "Christmas rose" and "Lenten rose", hellebores are not closely related to the rose family. Many hellebore species are poisonous.

❖ **Anita Clifford**

Anemone, anyone?? (*Anemone americana*, round-lobed hepatica)



Spring is my favourite season for garden flowers. Despite the pandemic, the lockdowns, the Costco lineups, which, by the way, I will avoid at ALL costs, I get extreme joy from my garden. I think we all do! Last week walking through and admiring the green that is popping up, I was greeted by the smiling face of hepatica. Hepatica seems to be the first “true” wildflower to bloom in our region, I see their darling colourful faces as an indicator that spring has really sprung. The flowers range in shades of pink, lavender, purple, white, and an incandescent blue. They are low growing and small, perfect for a fairy garden if you have one. Now for a bit of the science, the designation “hepatica” derives from the Latin for “pertaining to the liver”. This refers to the shape and coloured patterns of the lower and older leaves which resemble that organ. This plant

has no medicinal properties which is fine by me; its smiling face is just enough. They retain their distinctive leaves for a full year which allows the plant to photosynthesize on mild winter days, allowing it to bloom so early. North America has 2 species of hepatica, one with leaves that have three rounded lobes, and another that have more pointed-lobed leaves, both of which belong to the *Anemone* genus. They have hairy stems, which serve to protect their delicate flowers from the cold temperatures and drying winds. Get outside, drive to a forest, and practice shinrin yoku, also known as forest bathing, as was mentioned in a previous newsletter. I challenge you all to look down at the base of deciduous trees and find these little lovelies. I promise right now they will be smiling back at you, and you will feel better for having enjoyed them. Happy spring!

❖ **Elane Kalavrias**

Design principles for a new perennial bed



Got a new perennial bed to build this year? Here's a refresher on garden design principles to consider before heading to the nursery:

- Start with 'structural' plants. Think of these as the plants that provide the 'bones' of the garden, like the tall shrubs lining the back of the garden. You might want your planting to be symmetrical, such as planting the same shrub along the back or edges for structure. If you choose a variety of different structural shrubs, aim for those that are similar in height and density so that the garden remains balanced.
- Add a 'focal point' to the garden, like an ornament or a distinctive plant, something that draws the eye. The focal point is your launching off spot for the rest of the planting.
- Choose your plants and decide how many of each you want or can fit in your garden. You might want to plant a favorite specimen in mass by placing a few of the same plant beside and around each other. Or you might want to plant in drifts, which is like mass planting except it's elongated and somewhat meandering through the garden.
- Consider the height and width of the plants at maturity when deciding their placements – it's vexing to see a favorite plant struggle to reach its full potential because it wasn't given the right amount of space.
- Think about creating contrast in the garden by mixing colours from opposite sides of the colour wheel, such as orange and blue, or yellow and purple, adding white and green for depth.
- Choosing different types of plants will provide a variety of shapes, foliage, and textures for garden interest.

❖ **Sandra Caswell**

Get the dirt on your dirt!

Do you know what your soil consists of? What it's high in? Deficient in? Is it alkaline? Acidic? Sometimes, shopping for soil is harder than buying a bathing suit or a pair of jeans! There are so many factors to take into consideration.

Here are the 5 main types of soil and the plants that grow well in them:

Sandy Soil: is light, warm, and dry with a low nutrient count.



Best Plants for Sandy Soil (in full sun): Bearded Iris, Black Eyed Susan, Butterfly Weed, Lavender, Phlox, Salvia, Sedum.

Clay Soil: weighs more than sand, making it a heavy soil that benefits from high nutrients.

Best Plants for Clay Soil (hot, humid areas): Aster, Bearded Iris, Bee Balm, Butterfly Bush, Daylily, Echinacea, Sedum.

Peat Soil: is acid-rich and very rarely found in natural gardens. Gardeners use peat moss mainly as a soil amendment or ingredient in potting soil. It has an acid pH, so it's ideal for acid loving plants.

Best Plants for Peat beds: azaleas, rhododendrons, ferns, heathers, camellias, and American laurels, blueberries, and camellias.

Silt Soil: is a light and moisture retentive soil type with a high fertility rating. As silt soils are compromised of medium sized particles, they are well drained and hold moisture well. As the particles are fine, they can be easily compacted and are prone to washing away with rain.

Best Plants for Silt Soil: Moisture-loving trees such as Willow, Birch, Dogwood and Cypress, most vegetable and fruit crops.

Loamy Soil: it retains water but drains easily. Loam soil is composed of almost equal amounts of sand and silt with a little less clay. A good ratio is 40 percent each of sand and silt, and 20 percent of clay.

Best Plants for Loamy Soil: tomatoes, peppers, green beans, cucumbers, onions, lettuce, sweet corn, okra, radishes, eggplant, carrots, pole beans, and spinach.

If you're unsure what type of soil you're "diggin'", take a sample to a local greenhouse and they can analyze it for you. Then you can make a successful plant choice!

❖ **Donna-Marie Fennell**

Discounts for PHS Members: You must show your 2021 membership card to qualify.



10%

On "living" items



10%

On perennials, trees & shrubs



10%

10%

does not include delivery fees

It's been a TOUGH year for our local vendors. Please **SUPPORT LOCAL**, even if they're not listed here.

REMINDER of Fleming Park Cleanup:

Fleming Park cleanup day is **Saturday April 24 at 9:30am until 11am.** Bring your masks, rakes, pruners, tarps, gloves and enthusiasm. Fleming Park is located at the corner of Brock & Alymer downtown.

Visit Meadow View Gardens

The best remedy for the Covid blues!

Let the stresses and strains of today's world slip away for a few hours while you wander through the meandering paths and relish in the sights and sound of this quintessential English Country Garden



Opening Times

*All garden visits this year are by appointment only. Open from June 20th 2021 to October 10th 2021
Tuesdays, Wednesdays and some select Sundays Between 10.00am and 5.00pm*

