JUNE 2023/ISSUE #6

RICHMOND GARDEN CLUB

June Delights

"But you, oh gardener, poet that you be
Though unaware, now use your seeds like words
And make them lilt with colour nicely flung."
(Vita Sackville-Westl)

Photo by Visnja Gasparic Vojvodic

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Message from the President

Lynda Pasacreta

June always has us thinking of brides, weddings, and flowers from days gone by. My Dan and I were married in June way back when in the West Kootenays, Castlegar.

It was a homemade wedding. I made my own dress (sewing on daisy appliqués just before walking down the aisle). My mother made our cake. We asked our neighbours if we could pick flowers from their gardens for my bouquet and for my hair. Friends and work colleagues of my father lent us his beautiful home for the wedding reception.

I remember, at the time, wandering through the very hot, Kootenay gardens trying to decide what my bouquet was going to showcase. It was not difficult for me. I am a Shasta daisy type girl so my bouquet comprised mostly of Shasta daisies as did my hair! All of this activity took place a few days before our wedding! It was a lot of fun, involved family and friends as we put this wedding together. At that time in my life, I was already a very passionate lover of gardens and flowers. (The photo is of my very British grandmother who was an astounding gardener and myself on the day of the wedding.)

So to this day, I love wandering through fields of daisies and feel blessed that some 50 years later I have the same man and plenty of flowers still in my life!

Enjoy all the flowers in your life and gardens too, in this gorgeous midsummer month of June.

Photo courtesy of L. Pasacreta

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 9-18
Fleurs de Villes: VOYAGE
World renowned floral display coming to Van Dusen Botanical Gardens. a Floral journey of discovery celbrating iconic global destinations.
https://www.fleursdevilles.com/

Club News Update

Tour of Thomas Hobbs' Langley Gardens

Further to the terrific talk by Thomas Hobbs at our April meeting, and his generous offer to come visit his Langley gardens this summer, a visit date is now confirmed for June 23. We will be car-pooling there and meeting at a pre-arranged time and place. Bring your own water bottles, lunch and sunscreen! More info to follow.

June 10,11
All day.
Desert Plant Society Show & Sale. At VanDusen Gardens
https://www.desertplantsocietyofvancouver.com/

June 18
12:30 - 4:30 p.m.
Vancouver Rose Society 66th Biennial Rose Show
A judged rose show featuring hundreds of blooms from member gardens. Floral Hall, VanDusen Gardens
https://vancouverrosesociety.org/events.html

June 21
7:00 - 9 p.m.
Midsummer Eve Garden Party
Paulik Park

June 23
10 a.m.-2 p.m. (approx)
Thomas Hobbs Garden Tour
Langley

July 9
11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
RGC Members Gardens Tour

All interested in attending should contact Lauren Craze c/o of richmondgardenclub@gmail.com so we can keep you informed of details and share group numbers with Thomas Hobbs.

RGC Members' Gardens Tours

Come stroll through fellow members' gardens on a summer's day to savour the sights and enjoy your fellow club members' gardens. We always learn something new. Members can visit the listed gardens in any order from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and then mingle with fellow RGC members at the final garden stop at the home of Gail and Ken Stoltz in Terra Nova, for a wrap-up garden party with some refreshments. More details will be coming before the date. We also still have room for more gardens on the tour. Please consider adding yours to the circuit!

In the interim, any questions, please contact us c/o of richmondgardenclub@gmail.com.

Mid-Summer Eve Garden Party

Time to relax and smell the roses. Save the date June 21, 7:00 to 9 p.m. for a mid-summer social in our Paulik Park. Come meet your fellow club members, enjoy some refreshments.

U-ROC Youth Award

Congratulations to Lynda Pasacreta on receiving the U-Richmond Outstanding Community (ROC) award last month from the City of Richmond for her significant contributions to supporting and mentoring youth in the community.

Volunteer Opportunities

Our club is 100% volunteer-run; we have no staff! So, no matter how much or how little experience you have, if you are ready to have fun and pitch in somewhere, there is a place for you. It's a great way to get to know others in our club, learn a few new skills, and help keep our club vibrant. Here are a few options to consider.

Some short term immediate jobs we need help with are:

- Richmond Hospital Auxiliary Thrift Store Garden - Seeking volunteer gardeners Friday mornings, 9:30 am. No experience necessary.
- Richmond Cultural Centre Rooftop Garden - Seeking volunteer gardeners to help during the following weeks.

- July 9-15 (1 person needed to ork wih Jasmine)
- July 16-22 (2 persons needed)
- July 23-29 (1 person needed)

No experience necessary.

If interested, email richmondgardenclub@gmail.com.

The Complete RGC Committees /Project List

Below is the complete list of projects and committees currently active. We don't have the space to include detail for all of them here but, if any of these projects pique your interest and you might like to get involved, reach out to the lead contact listed below, to learn more c/o *richmondgardenclub@gmail.com*. Where you see 'vacant' there is something that needs help right away and you can contact Lynda Pasacreta for more information.

- Speakers Coordinator - Vidyut Aklujkar
- Paulik Park Committee - Jill Wright
- Parlour Show - Pat Walach
- Rooftop Garden - Ruth Henderson
- Annual Plant Sale - Kate Herring
- Communications - Gary Lake
- Members' Garden Tour Tea - Joyce Novick
- Advertising Sales - Vacant
- Membership Committee - Judy Matheson
- Photography Committee - Thora Gislason
- Newsletter - Lisa Colby (Writers wanted!)
- Raffle Prize Draw - Joyce Novick
- Steveston Boardwalk Planters - Karen Hakansson
- Richmond Hospital Thrift Store Planters - Kate Herring
- Refreshments - Maria Silva

Grow Your Garden Savvy

Photo by Visnja Gasparic Vojvodic

Garden Giggles
What did the florist say to the customer who haggled over the price of roses?

Answer:
"Take it or leaf it, bud!"

Ruminating on Roses

June is the month the roses start to bloom. Beautiful, fragrant, exquisite roses. And not only are they beautiful - they are a great addition to your organic garden. They attract pollinators, are non- toxic to pets, and people have used them for a host of medicinal, culinary and cosmetic purposes throughout time.

If you are already in the game and having fun with roses - great! On the other hand, if you are a beginner wanting to try planting some roses for the first time but feeling a little mystified by all the types you have heard about, keep reading. True, there are hundreds of species, both semi-evergreen and deciduous, including tens of thousands of named roses (varieties and cultivars), and the classification terminology can seem daunting. But, don't be discouraged - it really doesn't have to be complicated to get started.

ASK THE GARDEN GURU

Have a gardening question? Many others probably have the same one – we guarantee. Send those questions in to our Garden Guru at richmondgardenclub.com and we will track down answers to publish in the newsletter each month, so we all learn together. (Watch out Master Gardeners and other local experts, we might be calling for help!)

Q: There are aphids on my roses - what should I spray

them with? Should I buy lady beetles and put them in my plants?

A: Don't panic! There is an easy solution.

If the aphids are just present but no damage to the plant is apparent, leave them be and late nature take care of it. There are many beneficial insects in the garden (such as aphid midges, syrphid flies, aphid parasitic wasps, lady beetles) that feed on aphids and will eliminate the problem. If you see parasites or predators near the aphids, the colony may soon collapse from the attack so you can wait a day or two before taking further action.

If it is a more serious infestation starting to damage the plant, and you dont see predator insects homing in, then spray the aphids with a strong enough stream of water to knock them off. Do it at 3-4 day intervals, 3-4 times.

Keep your garden healthy enough to attract a diverse ecosystem of healthy insects.

Also try to keep your plants resilient by ensuring they are adequately watered and not overly fertilized with nitrogen. Slightly drought-stressed trees and plants or plants that have soft succulent growth from over-fertilization with nitrogen, are ideal conditions for aphids.

Spraying with water effectively knocks the aphids off the plant, damaging the proboscis (sucking mouth part) that they pierce into the plant tissue to feed. This

There are plenty of books and catalogs and websites that will tell you about a great rose to try. But for a safe bet, go to your local nursery and ask for advice from the experts there. Your local nursery (not big box store) can knowledgeably help you narrow in pretty quickly on a range of realistic rose varieties that are well-suited for our local climate and will bring you joy for years to come. Also ask for varieties with better disease and pest resistance. With those options narrowed down, then you can zero in on the colour, form, and fragrance that tickle your fancy from there.

Once you get your rose home, be sure to refer to the tag to understand the specific cultural requirements of whatever you buy. This will help you recognize where exactly to plant your rose in your garden, and how to best care for it. Most roses like more than 6 hours of sun per day, and more is better, but there are some varieties that are tolerant of part shade or shade.

In addition to respecting the cultural needs of the specific variety or cultivar you have purchased, good organic practices that will also help your rose thrive include:

- Use drip irrigation or a soaker hose, or hand water at the roots of your roses, to avoid getting the leaves wet while watering (this will help reduce spread of fungal diseases).
- Plant companion plants between your roses like yarrow, lavender, salvia and chives. They look amazing mixed in together, but the combination also discourages pests.
- Select an organic fertilizer that has more phosphorous than nitrogen to encourage abundant blooms.
- Mulch to retain moisture and reduce pests.
- Add compost to your rose garden bed regularly to build up healthy soil naturally for the insects and microbes. A healthy soil ecosystem better supports a healthy plant. (If you are planting in a container - use a container soil mix).

And that's it for getting started. You can see all sorts of potted roses in bloom in the nurseries right now, so it's a chance to see first hand what you are getting in terms of bloom colour, shape, and size.

Now if you also want to understand what experts and breeders mean when they refer to Old Roses or Modern Roses or English Roses etc., then read on for a quick simplified orientation of the way roses are categorized. It's not necessary to know these categories in order to grow roses, but it's fun background to learn.

damaged proboscis ensures that even if not killed outright, they will not be a threat to climb or fly back up to feed on the plant again.

Spraying with pesticide of any sort will kill aphids but will simultaneously kill beneficial insects and can harm birds that feed on those insects - all of which is unnecessary given the effectiveness of the water spray technique. Most insects in our gardens are beneficial and play a part in a more resilient ecosystem.

Importing purchased non-native lady-beetles to your gardens is unnecessary and not advised for a few reasons. Firstly, it is likely ineffective, given the lady beetles released into an open garden often fly away to where they want rather than staying where you want them.

Secondly, imported non-native lady beetles could carry hitch-hiking parasites.

Thirdly, the non-native imported lady beetles may out-compete local lady beetles or other important insects in the garden. Beneficial native insects can be negatively affected when new competitors are imported into their environment.

So keep it simple and easy. Just spray with water!

Sources:

Natural Insect, Weed & Disease Control. 2013. L. Gilkeson, pp.49-50.

Photo by Visnja Gasparic Vojvodic

The American Rose Society is the official "International Registration Authority for Roses" for the entire world. All new cultivars must be registered within this system to avoid duplication. All known roses are organized into 3 main groups:

- Species roses (ie wild roses).
- Old Garden Roses (those rose classes (hybrid groups) in existence before 1867), and
- Modern Roses (those rose classes (hybrid groups) introduced after 1867).

These groupings then have further class subdivisions. All varieties/ cultivars fit within these class categories. All new cultivars must also be registered within this system to avoid duplication.

1. ***Species roses (wild roses)***

Species roses are wild or pure roses of natural origin. They can be either shrubs or climbers, and most bearing single flat 5-petaled fragrant flowers in one flush from spring to early summer, blooming on old wood, followed in turn by black or red hips.

2. ***Old Garden Roses*** (rose classes in existence pre-1867)

There are many classes and considerable variety within this Old Garden Rose category. If one were to generalize, however, some of the best attributes of Old Garden Roses apparently are: their rich fragrance, their shrubby habit, and their classic charm.

Occasionally you may also hear people further subdividing Old Garden Roses into Antique Roses and Old Roses. The Antique Roses are simply a hybrid group with ancestry

Lady Beetles: Should we Buy them for our Gardens? by Linda Chalker-Scott. Jan 2023. https://pubs.extension.wsu.edu/Product/ProductDetails?productId=3826

dating back to The China Rose (*Rosa chinensis*) that was introduced to Europe after 1792, and the remainder pre 1867 rose classes without that ancestry, are the Old Roses. As a rule of thumb (with occasional exceptions) the Antique Roses are repeat bloomers, whereas the Old Roses are not.

Old Roses
Some of the more popular and recognizable names of Old Garden Rose classes that are also known as Old Roses (Pre-China Rose Influence) include:

- Alba
- Centifolia (also called Provence or cabbage roses)
- Damask (known for heavy intense fragrance).
- Gallica (most ancient)
- Moss
- Portland (Gallica x Damask hybrid)

Antique Roses
Some examples of the Old Garden Rose classes that are also known as Antique Roses (Post-China Rose Influence) include:

- Bourbon (Damask x China Rose hybrid)
- China
- Hybrid Perpetual
- Noisette (China rose x Musk Rose hybrid)
- Tea

Photo by Visnja Gasparic Vojvodic

3. ***Modern Roses*** (rose classes in existence Post-1867)

If one were to generalize, some of the best attributes of Modern Roses are their repeat flowering reliability, their larger bloom size, and their wide array of colours. But there are also several classes and variety within this category, including:

- Climber
- Floribunda (cluster-flowered bushes)
- Groundcover
- Hybrid Rugosa
- Hybrid Tea and Grandiflora (large-flowered bushes)
- Miniature
- Climbing Miniature
- Miniflora
- Polyantha (low-growing shrub rose)
- Rambler
- Shrub
    - This class also includes English Roses (David Austin roses), a group of approximately 200 varieties bred by David Austin since 1962 to combine the fragrance, habit and classic charm of Old Roses (Gallicas, damasks, etc.) with the repeat flowering and wide colour range of Modern Rose (Hybrid teas and floribundas).

In the interest of space we can't list all the classes within the Old Garden or the Modern Rose categories but hopefully that gives you a sense of the context for these labels you may have heard.

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), knows a thing or two about roses. They offer a few simple top line selection reminders for beginners to remember:

- for traditional looking roses, choose from the Modern shrub and bush roses categories;
- bear in mind that 'climbers' tend to repeat flower all summer, whereas 'rambling' roses often bloom impressively but only once in June.
- remember that roses can be grown successfully in pots too - especially if that is your only sunny spot. Check out some of the smaller and miniature cultivars varieties for pots.
- and we'll add a note here too, that the English roses (in the Modern - Shrub Rose category have a good balance of the advantages of both the Old Garden Roses (fragrance and classic charm) and the Modern Roses (great colour, repeat flowering, better disease resistance).

For far more detailed RHS guidance on possible varieties to explore, refer to https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/roses/choosing-the-best.

Have fun finding the perfect one. Every gardener deserves to play with roses!

Sources:

A-Z Encylopedia of Garden Plants. 1997. Reader's Digest

Association (Canada). Editors-in-Chief Brickell, Cole, Zuk.

https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/roses/choosing-the-best

https://www.finegardening.com/article/what-is-an-old-garden-rose

‘Chelsea Chop’ Pruning

By Lynda Pasacreta

The ‘Chelsea chop’ usually occurs at the end of May, coinciding with the Royal Horticultural Chelsea Flower Show. It is a pruning method by which you limit the size and control the flowering season of many herbaceous plants.

It is most suitable for late-flowering perennials such as

- *Anthemis tinctoria* (golden marguerite),
- *Echinacea purpurea*,
- *Helenium*,
- *Phlox paniculata*,
- *Sedum* (upright, strong-growing forms such as ‘Herbstfreude’) and
- *Solidago* (goldenrod).

The closer to flowering time you prune, the greater the delay in flowering. Some herbaceous perennials can be cut down as much as half with very positive results.

We will be performing the Chelsea chop on some of the late-flowering perennials in Paulik Park. The benefits include:

- limiting the size of plants so that they are not so tall and leggy.

- The plants need less staking.
- The flowers are smaller but more plentiful.

How to carry out the Chelsea chop:

1. Clumps of perennials can be cut back by one-third to one half using shears or secateurs. This will delay the flowering until later in the summer and keep plants shorter, more compact and manageable.

2. If you have several clumps of one plant, try cutting back a few and leave others alone, which will prolong the overall flowering time.

3. Another method is to cut half the stems back at the front of the clump which will extend the flowering season rather than delay it.

Green Inspirations

Poet's Corner: Photo by Visnja Gasparic Vojvodic

Art, Poetry & Time in Paulik Park

By L. Colby

Dad,

What can you see from
your poplar tree,
Looking back through the wind
and wheat?
A Fraser River ebbing high,
whose banks yearn for
your feet?

Where is it you are looking, fron
your branches up above
the fish ponds that your
father built
and the sleeping Holland bulbs?

Are you looking to the sunny east,
where you first began your climb -
the east where you are still a child
with pockets filled with time?

There is a mystery in Paulik Park. Not the deep 'mystery of the universe' type. More of a light-hearted Agatha Christie paperback one that we could solve in a weekend. But a fun little mystery, nonetheless.

Those of us newer RGC members helping maintain the Paulik Gardens Neighbourhood Park (Paulik Park) have scant knowledge of the origin and meaning of a series of stone slabs with poetic inscriptions peeking out of the gardens and underbrush throughout the grounds. We have all seen the stones; we pull weeds around them and clear off their faces, but who made them and what are they all about? What are they whispering? We are intrigued.

In his book, "What Time is This Place", well-known urbanist Kevin Lynch argued the crucial importance to our psychological well-being and contentedness, of seeing visual evidence and traces of time unfolding across our evolving living landscapes. He argues that a supportive and life-enhancing sense of time in our environment, is not one that

Are you looking to the southern warmth,
where trees are always in bloom -
the south that fills your lungs with love
as your children keep the child within you?

Are you looking to the dusky west,
where the day seeps toward the sea -
the west where life reminds us
of what all we've witnessed means?

Away on in the treetops,
keep your compass poplar green.
But as you search for where you're going
hold close the places you have been.

Spending all these hours
alone by pretty flowers
beside the towers

Through the field of grass
buildings grow by the mass
nature falls fast

Sweet scent in the air
flowing vividly the hair
perfect math, the stare

Trading on the soil
untainted by war's recoil
to rich and royal

Enjoying cool pond
together, forever bond
destiny not wronged

Together
let's walk hand in hand
and leave reality
in the shadow

With these hands
I mended a broken heart
and grew it
into a garden

A symphony of flowers
singing a new tune
with each step upon the staff

My heart fell
but the wind brought it back
and with it came
a new fragrance

preserves and freezes things in time, but rather, "... is one that celebrates and enlarges the present, while making connections with the past and the future". This patina or traces of time in our surroundings is healthy for us. It grounds us, orients us, and joins us to each other.

These engraved stones certainly seem like a remnant of time past. And as stewards of this lovely Paulik Park (and as amateur weekend detectives), both for curiosity and the reasons above, it became incumbent upon us to learn the story of these poetry stones.

Well, a few enquiries, glasses of wine, Google searches later, and mystery solved. (Oh, and there might have also been a helpful information plaque near the circle garden that none of us had ever noticed or read before. Silly us. But you probably never read that either. So lean in if you are curious - here is what we have learned about our stones!)

The stones are symbols and references to one of the really neat layers of time at Paulik Park.

The scattered stones with inscriptions, partially covered by greenery and moss, were a public art project commissioned by the City of Richmond 14 years ago for the newly purchased Paulik Gardens Neighbourhood Park lands. The 6 acres of park lands were purchased from the Paulik and Ohler families, whose adjoining farms together included 35 perennial gardens, blueberry field, water gardens, and a woodlot with a rich and varied collection of trees. The commissioned artwork is called: "lulu, a memory garden." It was created by two artists: Jacqueline Metz and Nancy Chew.

Step in,
indulge yourself
and become
the creator
of your own story

Here,
I can fly,
laugh,
sing,
dance...
here,
I am free

Words cannot explain
the beauty of this sight
and the smell of this new beginning

And yet again
I am in love
with the sight
sound and smell
of the flowers

Someone has painted this picture
with a space and all the
colours of the natural
earth

Island plantings,
green grass tides lap
at the edges
of blue flower reefs

In the seed I truly live
and with open hands I give

Between these trees, the
ferns grow,
along this path, I go

A hundred shades of green
are enough
but still,
the glorious afterthought
of flowers

The trees tick to the
flowers tock:
from fade to beauty,
this giant clock.

These evergreen buttresses,
these cloistered ferns,
these windows of stained life,
are built for you.

The crow calls the gardener
to his bed,
but leaves him tired, aching, fed.

Reminiscent of the rambling nature of the farm gardens created over several generations by the Paulik and Ohler families, the artists created a rambling poetic text installation with fragments of poetry and memories about those gardens. The text fragments were carved into basalt slabs and tucked throughout its gardens and forests, as a reminder of that layer of its history.

The text engravings speak of emotional connections to the lands by their occupants and neighbours in that slice of time. They are fragmented selections from poetry created in a collaboration with descendants of the Paulik and Ohler families, the Palmer Secondary School art class, and poets from the Palmer Secondary School poetry club. (See sidebar for full poetry listing).

These text engravings reflect one layer of the park's past and its ownership dating back three generations to the 1930's. And we know there are other parts of its story further back and in the years ahead for other artists to perhaps explore. But the story of the Paulik and Ohler lands time period remains interesting as it is representative of a similar and simultaneous history of change that occurred during that period across much of Richmond. The project timing also marks for posterity an important transition of these lands as they emerged from private ownership and a more rural and agricultural past into public ownership (and stewardship by the Richmond Garden Club) to serve a changing, growing, and urbanizing Richmond neighbourhood.

Another component of the artwork, a radial pattern of large black stone paver slabs with etched drawings of horticultural images had also originally been installed by the circle garden lawn. Unfortunately, those horticultural images have been completely lost to the elements over the last 14 years and are gone now.

With city permission, those stone slabs are now being given new purpose in the park, having been shifted into a radial pattern in a beautiful quiet glade seating area in the north end of the park in a space we are now unofficially calling, 'Poet's Corner.'

So now you know the story of the poetry stones. And Kevin was right. There is something quite grounding about seeing a few footprints of time in the garden. And we hope a few of our own footprints will endure here in the park as we tackle different challenges stewarding the park forward in a changing world.

Come garden with us Tuesday and Saturday mornings in Paulik Park. Let it start growing its roots into you...

Gardener, have you left space
for the next plant,
the one I cant't yet imagine
that will make this place
complete?

Oh crow! What does
the tree give you in return
for all that good advice?

I the flower, you the eye.
I am rooted, you pass by.
Come the winter, we will part,
but in spring, O, let us start!

The bird calls to the branch
and so then next, to my
heart
the bright notes go.

Beneath your feet
this garden's genius lies:
roots touching in the dark,
seeds most sly.

A cloud dances past
the sun, and for a moment
this can all be seen.

Bountiful flowers
dutiful trees
awe struck by
the beauty.

The poetry above was a 2009 collaboration between Paulik and Ohler families, the Palmer Secondary School art class, and poets from the Palmer Secondary School poetry club.

Sources:

- https://www.metzchew.com/lulu-a-memory-garden
- https://plepuc.org/en/artwork/lulu-a-memory-garden/
- What Time is this Place? 1988. MIT Kevin Lynch

Laburnum in Vandusen Gardens: Photo by Visnja Gasparic Vojvodic

Happy Midsummer!

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