

# Brantford Garden Club

Founded in 1852

*Written and submitted by Publicity Director, Pat Veale*

*Photos by Nicole Pinto and Pete Byerlay*



## CELEBRATIONS!

It's been 170 years since the Brantford Horticultural Society, aka the Brantford Garden Club, was inaugurated. Imagine! In 1852, our ancestors, with Dr. Digby at the forefront, installed a Board of Directors to promote education and care of the planet and forthcoming food sources. Among the town's best known gardener was Melville Bell, father of our well-known local inventor Alexander Graham Bell.

Brantford Garden Club's official logo includes the daffodil. In Brantford, you will find several flower beds incorporating that flower. In 1919, our Club suggested to the City that it be declared the official emblem and the Council agreed. As 2022 rolled on in, our member Pete Byerlay amended the logo adding the 170<sup>th</sup> banner as captioned here.

With membership hovering about 230, the Board decided on trying out the technical universe and rolled out our first Zoom general membership meeting in February. We knew we weren't going to get our usual participation of 125 so we were quite pleased to have about 50 tuning in to hear our first presenter of the year, the then D6 Director, Catherine McGill, featuring "Planters with a Twist". Finally Covid-19 restrictions started lifting and by May, we were meeting in person once again.

We all knew back in January that our Past President and Plant Sale Chairperson, Mary Thorne was busy forging ahead with how we were going to pull off our annual Plant Sale in May. We had been down for 2 years and there was no holding back now. We started advertising and calling on the membership to consider the Club when spring dividing and seeding was happening. We counted on many volunteers to help with setting up, sorting, pricing and food donations. After all expenses were accounted for, we raised \$1,259.00. That was a little shy of our usual proceeds but we didn't let the circumstances or cold weather defeat us.



In the spring, the local Stedman Hospice approached our Club to see if we could re-develop a plot within their vast Botanical Gardens into a kitchen garden and a cut flower garden. Once again, we canvassed our great supply of volunteers to help us pull this off as our 170<sup>th</sup> Anniversary project. We worked on plans with the Hospice staff and in no time, we were off and running. It was only a matter of a few weeks, and staff were pulling herbs and fresh veggies to assist with their meal planning.





Within the last 50 years, the Brantford Garden Club has been involved in many community projects. When the new City Hall was opening for Canada's Centennial year, something was missing. The Club came up with a proposal: build a sculpture that would include a fountain and our Club supported the initiative with a donation of \$15,000.



Another major project was a yard enhancement at the W. Ross MacDonald School for the blind. We designed a special garden highlighting plants that produced the most pleasing scents. After 700 Narcissus bulbs, 300 Dutch Iris, 400 Crocus and 500 City of Brantford Tulips, the old expression about "stopping to smell the roses" had new meaning.

As you all know by now, 2022 was bannered as "The Year of the Garden". Our Past President Mary Thorne met late last year with the City Works Department with hopes of installing our 170<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year logo into a local garden park bed. After consideration with other community gardening projects, the City came up with a combined outlay. This display can now be seen by all local residents and the many tourists Brantford draws every year.



*Garden Hero  
Bev Hutton*

In July, as we were approaching our summer recess, our Club designated our local Club Hero promoting the Year of the Garden and our Anniversary Garden Hero. Bev Hutton, our present Secretary, was acclaimed at a City Hall Flag Raising Ceremony. Bev has been with the Brantford Garden Club for over 45 years and has held many volunteer positions. Although a very soft spoken and respected

lady, she's always got by-laws, constitutions and members' wishes at the root of all of her contributions.

Our fiscal year end of September 30<sup>th</sup> is fast approaching but I'm sure we will still have a few membership celebrations come fall.

