

# GARDENING GEMS

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Iris versicolor –  
Harriston emblem



The downtown planters, hanging baskets, cube blocks and bridge boxes are alive with this year's colors of red, purple, lime green and yellow.

As one recent visitor said, "Kudos to the Horticultural Society and the town workers for such a stunning display" .

Another observation was that the hanging baskets are low enough that you can see the whole arrangement not just the bottom of the basket



**Aren't we the lucky ones to be associated with such a colorful community**



The bridge boxes are full and brimming over with color. Workmen in that area last week were kind enough to drape the flowers with plastic to keep off most of the dust.

**The town signs are very interesting with their checkerboard pattern of this year's colors.**

**These certainly are bright focal points for "Harriston Rising"**



(W. Wick and D. Anderson photos)

"When cutting gladiolus, it is always best to remove the top bud, which often results in more flowers in the stem opening to their full potential", so says head gardener Tom Brown of Parham House and Gardens in Sussex, England. *Mind you this would only be for bouquets or arrangements in your own home - not so for entering in the upcoming August Flower Show.*

If you follow Shauna Dobbie's blog "Ten Neat Things About.....", then you may have already read the following. Shauna has an entry about every two weeks and poses some very interesting information. To sign up for her blog emails go to <https://localgardener.net/category/10-neat-things/> and subscribe. This week she talked about Asian Lady Bugs, but a while ago it was on citrus fruit, and in particular grapefruit. Grapefruits, like other citrus, will not ripen once they are off the tree, but once ripe can remain on the grapefruit tree for up to four months before starting to dry out.

Kind of makes you wish we could grow them here, doesn't it!

Grapefruit for losing weight - being high in fibre, as most fruits are, and low in calories, grapefruit may well find a spot on the diet of anyone interested in losing weight.

Grapefruits are rarely picked by machine; they are picked by hand. Machines can damage trees and fruit. If fruit is being processed, that's not so bad, but for fruit that is eaten fresh it needs to be blemish free. A vacuum tube system is being used in some places, where pickers put grapefruits into a vacuum tube rather than into a bucket. The tube whisks them to a central gathering place.



We were happy to announce at our last meeting that Brenda Ortman would be taking the new Judging School classes. Dorelene Anderson has a part in instructing this course and she was pleased to relay that Brenda won third prize for her arrangement entry. We were all so happy thinking we would soon have another local judge in our midst. Unfortunately because of timing and work constraints Brenda has already had to withdraw. The picture shows some of the entries from the students in the June class.

Dorelene and Doug Anderson, plus Don and Joanne Matthews were the only members from the Harriston Society to attend the recent OHA Convention held in Windsor. Many thanks to Dorelene who is always willing to give us a report of the weekend. The following are excerpts from her write-up

### Ontario Horticultural Convention

Hosted by District 11 Essex, Chatham-Kent and Lambton July 19-21 in Windsor at St. Clair College for the Arts In partnership with Best Western Hotel

Doug & I went on the Thursday so we could be there for the meeting starting at 9 am on Friday. We didn't have any entries so we just registered & met with old friends & went to supper with Rose O'Dell with whom I am co-chairing the Judging School in Kitchener.

At the Friday meeting the head table was led in by a piper; all the usual dignitaries were introduced & spoke a few words. Rose O'Dell read the nomination report for the 1<sup>st</sup> time. Then Charles Freeman, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President did the first part of the Resolutions. They were spread over 3 days but all passed. They were all necessary even tho' they seem to be for similar reasons, but the main reason was to establish that if your Horticultural Society is a paid up member of the OHA then you as a person are a member of the OHA.

Plenary Speaker was Kim Cooper who spoke on Agriculture in that area. There were a lot of good seminars in the afternoon and I went to the one on rare plants Of Point Pelee National Park. In the next session I went to see Celia Roberts show one of the new designs called "Transparency". It is described in the newly released *Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards* booklet.



Doug & Dorelene Anderson  
(submitted photo)

Entertainment Friday night after dinner and silent auction was a party with people dressing in 1920 costumes. We did our version. Doug has the reputation as a card shark since we introduced Euchre into the evening fun at our meetings while I was on the board. So they got him to play the part and I was his lady. We had fun.

Saturday was the usual reports, vendors & show rooms. Speaker was Matt Korpan on the Greenhouse Industry. His presentation was excellent. It's beyond my imagination how they grow tomatoes in these huge greenhouses. If you ever get the chance to drive in that area, do it. Doug & I took a couple of days & drove along Lake Erie & saw a lot of these green houses.

Doug went to the Lee valley workshop where they were making planters. He helped some of the others to build theirs. I went to Judging Things. It is hard to get a standard on how to judge, so either I take the workshops or lose my Judging certificate. The one I took was "Changes in OJEST". I have a copy and if anyone is interested please ask for it. The other presentation I attended was "Garden Art for Cheapskates".

Saturday Banquet was great, good food, and presentation of awards was done very well. One of the high points was to hear the speaker David Phillips, Senior Climatologist with Environment Canada. He spoke on **This is Not**



**Your Grandmother’s Weather Anymore.** His biggest points were *saving the environment by not cutting our trees down but saving our earth by maintaining our big trees which help clean the air. Save the wood lots because trees keep the land from eroding; stop filling in swamps and wet lands, and stop building on them which causes flooding .*

Sunday - all the business was completed; all the resolutions passed, and we were ahead of time. Succulent plants were given to each attendee.

The 2020 convention will be in London with a Western Party theme on the Friday night.

In addition to her report Dorelene stated that there are many grants and awards available that societies are not taking advantage of. She is certain that there are people who are deserving of awards who are not being recognized. Her suggestion is that society committees are formed to understand the process of what grants and awards are available, and how to use them.



**New lime green bench in Mill St. Park**  
(Andy Pridham photo)



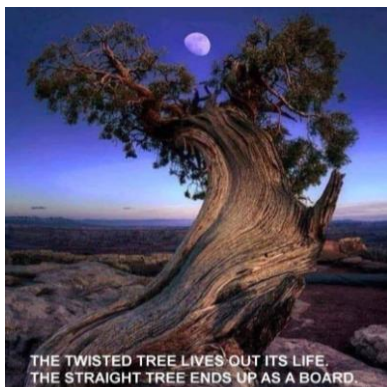
**District 7 Director Kathy Bouma poses with the new Harriston bench**  
(Willa Wick photo)

Many of you are not aware of the history of the “lime green benches”. This was a 2019 project of the Harriston Horticultural Society, and they were constructed by Andy Pridham of Weathered Minto. The lime green color was chosen so they would be a bright accent in the shaded areas of the Mill Street Park. After a trial placement in the park for a few days it was determined they needed to come forward toward the street to be more visible, and to give extra exposure for the horticultural society.

This year the town businesses and groups are concentrating on bright color and tourist hot spots for Harriston, so Andy, with an eye to creativity, had the benches moved uptown for Street Days weekend, and placed them as a seating area in front of the CIBC bank.

They certainly did add a shot of color there, and one may stay, but the other will go back to Mill Street Park where it will be fastened to a cement pad.

On Thursday, August 15<sup>th</sup> the Executive of the Wellington County Historical Society visited Harriston for their monthly meeting. On a tour of the town our own District 7 Director Kathy Bouma was impressed with the bright benches (Kathy is a double hatter as she’s also treasurer of the Wellington County Historical Society).





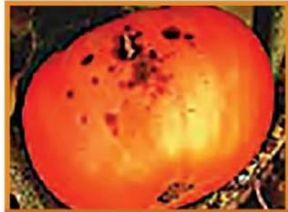


**Early Blight**  
*Alternaria solani*

**75°F to 84°F**  
Warm and humid

**Foliage Symptoms**

Large, irregular patches of black necrotic tissue; characteristic concentric ring pattern



**Fruit Symptoms**  
Immature fruit with brown spotting

**Cultural options**

- Begin with certified disease-free seed; pathogen may be carried on seed coat
- Minimize leaf wetness with drip irrigation
- Provide good air circulation
- Remove infected leaves and fruits immediately
- Apply preventive fungicides prior to onset of warm, wet weather

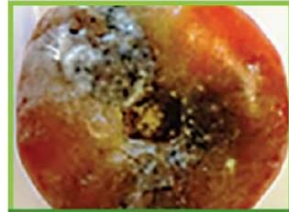


**Late Blight**  
*Phytophthora infestans*

**55°F to 73°F**  
Cool and wet

**Foliage Symptoms**

Large, water-soaked areas that turn brown and spread rapidly; whitish sporulation on upper and lower leaves



**Fruit Symptoms**  
Fruits with irregular brown patches with a greasy appearance

**Cultural options**

- Begin with certified disease-free seed or plants
- Use disease-resistant cultivars whenever possible
- Remove infected leaves and fruits immediately
- Sanitize all surfaces and, if reusing, all stakes/cages with bleach or Kleengrow prior to use
- Apply preventive fungicides prior to onset of cool, wet weather



**Septoria Leaf Spot**  
*Septoria lycopersici*

**59°F to 80°F**  
Warm and wet

**Foliage Symptoms**

Smaller circular, water-soaked lesions starting on lower leaves; brown with gray centers that dry up; leaf dies under severe infection



**Fruit Symptoms**  
Circular to irregular raised white-beige lesions

**Cultural options**

- Fungus survives in crop debris, soil and in weeds — especially solanaceous weeds
- Limit spread with clean cultivation practices — sanitize prior to and during production
- Apply preventive fungicides prior to rainy or very humid weather

Our Treasurer and Greenhouse grower Joanna Steckle submitted this chart for all us tomato lovers who experience trouble with the plants.



Not included on the chart is Blossom End Rot. Some think this is a calcium or other nutrient deficiency so put in additives when watering. And surprisingly enough it works. However it is not the chemical that's added that does the trick, it's the watering itself.

If the plant lacks water during the critical period of fruit formation, less sap reaches the fruit which will therefore not receive its share of calcium and voilà! Blossom end rot sets in. Typically, blossom-end rot occurs when the plant is repeatedly stressed by irregular watering or rainfall, going from very dry to moist to very dry again. It tends to occur more often in container-grown plants ... because they dry out very quickly.

*(excerpts from the blog of Larry Hodgson, the Laidback Gardener)*

**A quote for those non-green thumbs**  
**"The Lord intended me to be a Gardener**  
**but**  
**the Devil ran off with the blueprints"**

**tank smarts**

Is there an accurate method to tell how much propane is left in my barbecue-grill tank?  
A half-cooked steak is frustrating

**A:** The most accurate method is to grab the bathroom scale and weigh the tank, then calculate how much cooking time remains.

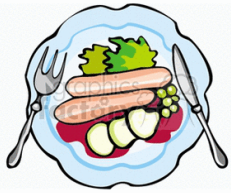
A normal-size tank with a 20-pound capacity weighs about 17 to 18 pounds empty and about 37 to 38 pounds when full of propane. A full-size gas grill (35,000 Btu) will cook for 30 minutes per pound of propane. So if your tank weighs 21 pounds, it contains at most about 4 pounds, or approximately 2 hours of grilling time (4 pounds x 30 minutes).



**The Garden of the Month** sign award project has been active again this year and the judges have viewed many gardens as they tour the streets and back roads in the Town of Minto. But altho' fun for them it is very time consuming during a season when volunteers are already extremely busy. They patiently wait for other members, neighbors, and friends to make recommendations so they don't have to spend so much road time. Unfortunately not enough of these notices are forthcoming. So if you see, or know of a property which deserves accolades - then let us know.



Backyard gardens of Alma & Roy Campbell, John and Alfien Vandenberg, and Laverne and Irene Rae (Sue Bridge photos)



Our annual "Petals and Plates" garden tour will be held on Thursday, August 29<sup>th</sup>. Be available at the Harriston arena at 1:15 for car-pooling to the various locations.

Three gardens will be visited before supper and a fourth after. At the moment it's more of a mystery tour as destinations haven't been finalized.

Harriston's newest restaurant "Cardeno's Grill has been chosen for our meal. They have proposed a buffet of ethnic Philippine dishes, dessert and coffee/tea for \$15. This is an exceptional deal, BUT, we have to have his quota of numbers .....and we still need a few more names on the list. Please let [willawick@wightman.ca](mailto:willawick@wightman.ca) know if you are interested.

***This is an excellent way to experience something new as well as one organization supporting another.***

As if it isn't bad enough that we've had to suffer through the destructive effects of the red lily beetle and the emerald ash borer - now it seems there's an even worse villain which might soon appear. The following website gives the particulars of the spotted lanternfly. This is scary,

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/home/this-is-going-to-be-a-bad-one-a-new-pest-is-causing-quarantines-in-va-and-pa/2019/06/25/7f9659f0-91ff-11e9-aadb-74e6b2b46f6a\\_story.html?noredirect=on&wpisrc=nl\\_homes&wpmm=1](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/home/this-is-going-to-be-a-bad-one-a-new-pest-is-causing-quarantines-in-va-and-pa/2019/06/25/7f9659f0-91ff-11e9-aadb-74e6b2b46f6a_story.html?noredirect=on&wpisrc=nl_homes&wpmm=1)



Have you noticed when you visit a blog or website to search for information that you're inundated by advertisements. Some are nicely placed at the sides out of your way, but others are smack dab in your face and you have to scroll down past them. The reason is simple - the ads pay for the blogs, The blogger has no choice over the ads, apparently they are chosen by a computer program based on your search habits. So for instance, if you only seek out gardening stuff, then you would likely only see gardening offers and ads - but make one mistake and click on a porn site and you may start seeing things you never imagined. Of course there are "ad blockers" but that's a whole different story. The ads you see on your computer will be completely different from another person's because you each have your own search habits.



Photo: ellishollow.remarc.com

With “Yarden Art” we’ve heard of DIY’ers making alliums by poking nails into a sponge rubber ball and then spray painting, but this new trick takes Alliums to a whole new level - when the flower is finished blooming and the brown seed ball heads remain - spray paint them different colors right where they stand. (protect while painting so the overspray doesn’t get on other plants). Come fall cut, and take indoors for a winter decoration.

There is at least one type of fly you need to learn to appreciate - the hoverfly. While the head of the insect remains absolutely still, the transparent wings beat like mad, allowing the insect to hang in the air: a true little insect helicopter! They have bodies that are striped yellow and black or brown and gardeners often mistake them for small bees or wasps, but they’ve adopted these beelike colors to confuse their enemies. Hoverflies never bite or sting. Hoverfly eyes are huge and cover much of the head, bee eyes are smaller and on the side of the head. Adult hoverflies are pollinators, flitting from flower to flower, feeding on nectar and pollen. To compensate for this theft, they carry pollen and thus help pollinate plants. They’re believed to carry less pollen per trip than bees, but then, they make more flower visits, so are often just as efficient. The larva feed on harmful insects, including leafhoppers, thrips. and aphids. Indeed, some hoverfly species are being studied for use as a biological control of plant pests.

**Hoverflies: the best gardening friend you never knew you had!**



The next meeting is Wednesday, August 21<sup>st</sup>  
7:30 p.m. at the **United Church Fellowship Hall**

This is our annual summer flower show so bring in your specimens and arrangements in the morning

Guest presenter will be Maneesha Sharma of Harriston Natural Remedies = “Pure is Cure”

**On GARDENING:** Realize that you’re going to kill some plants (usually the expensive ones). Don’t get discouraged, Look at these as lessons rather than losses.



The **Gardening Gems Newsletter** is published monthly by the Harriston and District Horticultural Society. Established in 1952 we now have 212 members.  
President: Jean Anderson Past President: Sue Bridge  
Secretary/Newsletter editor: Willa Wick Treasurer: Joanna Steckle  
Comments/ suggestions/new ideas - willawick@wightman.ca