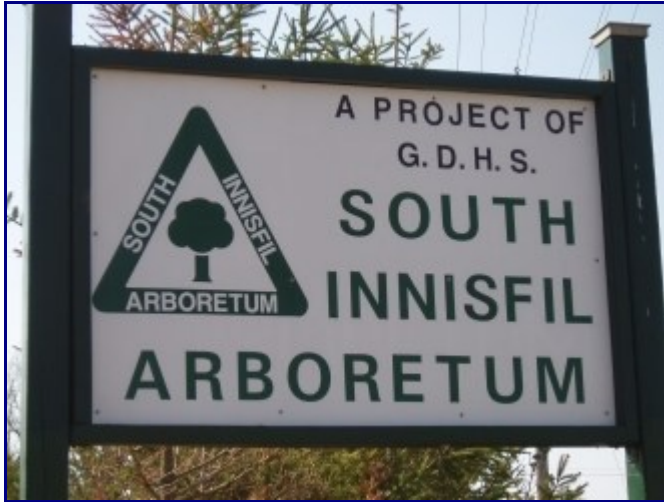


History Page



South Innisfil Arboretum History Page

A BRIEF HISTORY

Researched and Written by Judith Rogers

At a meeting of the Gilford & District Horticultural Society in 1991 a decision was made to establish an arboretum and the search began for a suitable site. Information about Florence Luck's land was obtained and upon inspection deemed the perfect location. In 1993 a proposed contract was drawn between the GDHS and the Conservation Authority. Shortly thereafter, a parking lot was graded and gravelled.

The grand opening of South Innisfil Arboretum took place in 1994 with local dignitaries on hand for the planting of five new trees. In 1996 a large perennial garden was designed and planted by two members and a local carver created and presented the Arboretum with a 34 foot totem pole. Later, a member of the Arboretum Committee built the intricate gazebo that sits by the entrance to the property.

Trees, smaller ornamentals and benches are available for sponsorship in memory of loved ones or for groups commemorating special events to raise funds.

Over the years the Arboretum has acquired, through generous donations and sponsorship of trees, heavy equipment to maintain the trees, grounds and facilitate watering. It operates without government or township financial support; the society's 'Annual Plant, Tailgate, Bake Sale and BBQ' also raises money for continuing upkeep of the place.

Sheds to house equipment were erected in the past. In 2007 a new shed for the horticultural society to house their records was built.

The original large perennial bed has been shortened for easier maintenance and in 2007 the corner bed by the crossroads was completely overhauled. This project entailed removing all the old plants and

constructing a new low maintenance and water-wise garden planted with lavender, daylilies, junipers and draught tolerant ornamental grasses. In the spring the garden is ablaze with red tulips planted in honour of Canadian servicemen. Also that year the grass bed was reworked with more varieties added and labels for identification.

In the upper meadow a beautiful tranquil pond is hidden by the trees and is a source of water for newly planted specimens.

Florence Luck's desire to preserve the land naturally is honoured in the memorial plaque to her at the base of the flag pole:

“Florence Luck – for her love of trees”

To familiarize yourself with the trees planted in the Arboretum go to ‘The Trees’ page.

1995 - The Arboretum is taking shape



1995 - Perennial Garden: All plants were donated by Jean & Stuart Crane, who dug the beds, planted, and took care of the weeding for the rest of the year.

1999 - The Pergolas were donated by Jean and Stuart Crane. There are two pergolas in the Arboretum, one in the lower meadow (white) and one in the wetland area (green). Arthur and Joan Harper spruced up the white Pergola.





1996 - The Gazebo was designed and built by Arthur Harper in the basement of his home. Arthur and a crew of committee members, volunteers and neighbours lifted it onto Bob Matchett's truck and it slowly made it's way to the Arboretum where it was erected at its present site.

1996 - The Totem Pole is 34' high. It was built and donated to the Arboretum by Adolph von Graffin. Seen here being lifted by crane and ..





1996 - here in its final place. The base is secured with stones approx. 3' high. The stones were also donated and placed there by Adolph.

Yes, we have a Pond in the upper meadow, a valuable aid in watering the trees.



The Shed was built in the Spring of 1995 and the new Iron Gates donated by the Souilliere Family in 1997

1999 - The final Grove tree arrives a 'Black Walnut'



Note the various steps involved in a tree planting

- Not easy -





Very labour intensive and accomplished by just a few.