

Mount Hamilton Horticultural Society

Annual Report 2019

As we entered our 92nd year, our horticultural society was proud to see our Society remaining strong as ever. We had 148 members before the year was finished. We are proud to have five Lifetime Members as well as three Honorary Members. With our Society's commitments, we hope to go forward into the community and encourage environmental awareness thru horticulture.

January

January was an exciting start to the New Year. After almost twenty years at the Chedoke Presbyterian Church, we moved our Society to the Immanuel Christian Reform Church – about 3 km east of our previous location. We now have our meetings in the Fellowship Hall on the main floor. This makes the meetings more easily accessible for all as well as providing better acoustics. The AGM was attended by 85 members and we welcomed four new guests at that time.

The Society's Executive Committee welcomed, for their second term, President Kathryn Spiwak and Past President Claire Kostyshyn. Also welcomed were Treasurer Heather Giglia and Co-Treasurer Maryann Botts. Stephen J. Kostyshyn and Rob Howard took the positions of Vice-Presidents. Speaker Rodger Tschanz presented members with an interesting talk on "Highlights of the Trial Gardens at the University of Guelph".

February

Charlie Briggs presented the Society members with a talk on 'Pollinators'. Members voted on the Brown Bag contest that had eleven entries this year. These entries were used as door prizes. The Society also had their annual Seed Exchange.

Several members represented our Society at Seedy Saturday. Together, they worked hard to entice as many people as they could to attend one of our General Meetings. The D6 Spring Breakfast, hosted by the Flamborough Horticultural Society and held at Connon Nurseries, was attended by a number of Executive members.

March

Rob and Christine Croley presented the Society members with a talk on 'Raised Bed Veggie Gardens'. Our Arts and Crafts display, Expressions of Creativity, had considerably fewer participants than the year before – 8 displays rather than 22 the year before. Unfortunately, this year we were unable to supply our members with their favourite pansies due to the supplier's closure.

April

Our D6 Director, Cat McGill, gave the members a creative talk on 'Planters with a Twist'. Luckily, spring weather was co-operative and there were 13 entries in the 'Spring Thaw' mini flower show. Pres. Kathy Spiwak attended the 2019 District 6 AGM April 27th that was held in Burlington.

May/ June

The Plant Sale was bigger and better than ever before at our new location. Although a bit cool and blustery, we had a large turnout of community members from our new location as well as community members from our old neighbourhood. We put in extra effort to make sure there was signage all around the old as well as new neighbourhoods. We had new suppliers of annuals and perennials as well as vendors. A big success for the Society as a whole.

The Society celebrated the arrival of summer in June with a wonderful Strawberry Social and Major Flower Show. Marie Decker gave the Society a great presentation on 'Roses'.

July/August

A handful of members participated in the Spectator Open Garden Week.
No members attended the OHA Convention held July 19th -21st in Windsor.

September

The September Mini Flower show had considerably more participants than the year before – a total of 20 entries. Michael Abanese presented the Society members with a talk on ‘Rain Gardens’. It was noted that, once again, the RBG passes supplied by the Society were used on a regular basis by our members. Stephen and Claire Kostyshyn represented the Society at the D-6 Fall Breakfast that was hosted by the Oakville Horticultural Society.

October

The Fall Mini Flower show ‘Autumn Bounty’ was enjoyed by all as was Glenda Bargeman’s talk on ‘Hostas’.
Pres. Kathy Spiwak, Vice Pres. Rob Howard as well as 8 other Society members spent a Saturday afternoon in October planting over two hundred donated bulbs in the gardens surrounding Immanuel Christian Reformed Church.

November

Our Annual Dinner & Awards Presentation was held November 15th at our new church. Every table in the Fellowship Hall was filled – the tickets had sold out! Speaker Paul Zammit gave us an enlightening talk on ‘Lessons From My Travels Of Gardens Around The World’. The Opera House Tearoom prepared a wonderful buffet for us with multiple main dishes that appeased all. The Silent Auction, once again, raised a considerable amount of money. The ‘Cup of Cheer’ mini design show entries were implemented with poinsettias as table prizes.

The President’s Award was presented to Dini Balych, and the Volunteer Appreciation Awards were given to Anna Miller and Brian Hathaway. We decided to give the New Members Volunteer Appreciation Award to Nancy Gordon in recognition of her newsletter articles as well as taking on the Chair Co-Ordinator position for the Growing Green column in the Hamilton Mountain News.

Submitted by
Kathryn Spiwak
President

Flower Committee

Feb. 15 Brown Bag Contest – 11 entrants (13 in 2018)

Judged by members with marbles

Mar. 15 Expressions of Creativity– 8 entrants (22 in 2018)

Apr. 26 “Spring Thaw” – 13 entrants (10 in 2018)

Hort- 35 Design – 10 Photos- 2

Judge: Connie Bilj

June 21 “Stage & Screen” major show -14 entrants
(9 in 2018)

Hort- 108 Design- 7 Photos 7

Judge Michelle Lynch

Sept. 20 “Fall Foliage” 12 entrants (5 in 2018)

Hort.- 3 Design- 9 Photos- 8

Judge Elizabeth Piggot

Oct. 18 "Autumn Bounty" 15 entrants (6 in 2018)

Hort.- 11 Design – 8 Photos- 3

Judged by members with marbles

Nov. 30 "Cup of Cheer" 7 entrants (6 in 2018)

Photos 2 entrants (3 in 2018)

Number of members who participated in 2019 (excluding Expressions of Creativity) 39 (25 in 2018) with a total of 231 entries. (173 in 2018)

Submitted by Martha Novoselac and Maryann Botts
Flower Committee Directors

Programs

The program committee met 5 times in 2019 plus a special get-together to cut up strawberries for the Strawberry Social. We came up with many interesting speakers whom we contacted for our 2020 speakers. Kay Suzuki spoke to Kathy Renwald and she agreed to speak at the November 2020 Awards Dinner.

Sales of books, indoor plants and tools were held at numerous meetings thru out the year on a 'donation' basis.

The Strawberry Social in June was arranged and co-ordinated by the Programme Committee members. Gift certificates were purchased for the draw. An enjoyable evening for all!

The November Awards dinner was co-ordinated by the Programme Committee and Pres. Kathy Spiwak. Diane collected and organized the many raffle prizes, placing some in baskets and/or bags. Martha Novaselek bought cake boxes for the tickets which worked out very well. Wine was added to the menu for the first time and was greatly appreciated by all. We were thankful for the many members who both helped set up and clean up.

All in all, it was a very successful year.

Submitted by Diane Naiker
Program Committee Director

Plant Sale

Our 2019 plant sale was a huge success and was augmented by the purchase of many special perennials as well as herbs, veggies and annuals. We felt a bigger selection was needed to cater to our returning customers and to hopefully attract new ones. All but a few plants were sold and those that weren't were donated to Neighbour to Neighbour again. We received much feedback and will implement some of those suggestions for the next year. We are already gearing up for another awesome sale in May 2020. The worm composting vendor will be back and probably someone selling heirloom seeds. We have contacted a few other vendors and are waiting to hear back. Our Plant Sale is growing in leaps and bounds!

Submitted by Dini Balych
Co-chair along with Anna Miller, Plant Sale Committee

Social

Another satisfying year for the Social Committee. Thank you to all those generous and talented folks who contributed goodies to the break table and to those who helped set up before and clean up after the breaks. A special thank you to Terry Erickson for co-ordinating the donations, making the follow up calls and helping in the kitchen. After several years of generously giving us so much, Jeannette is passing the chair position to Debbie Toth. Thank-you Jeannette for your years of commitment...and welcome to the Executive Committee, Debbie.

Outreach

Many thanks, again, to the volunteers who worked throughout the summer at Jason's House providing weekly maintenance, weeding, dead heading and trimming the front garden, and who participated in the Spring and Fall clean-up.

The Society generously increased its donation to the Green Angels program at the RBG, \$1000 this year. We also donated to Neighbour 2 Neighbour as well as sponsoring 4 gardens at the Hamilton Victory Garden. Donations were also made for the rejuvenation of the St. George Cenotaph and the gardens at Immanuel Christian Reformed Church.

Beautification Committee Report

In early January, the MHHS was contacted by St. George's Reformed Episcopal Church on Emerson St. in West Hamilton. They approached us because there is an interesting connection between St. George's Church and our Society. The late John R. Smith is what both groups had in common. John first joined the MHHS in the mid-1950s, served as President in 1962 and 1963 and again in 1986 and 1987 and was a lifetime member. In 2017, the MHHS honoured John's significant contributions to the Society by creating a Lifetime Achievement Award in his name. July 6th was the big clean-up day. Rev. Paul, his family, several parishioners and eight Society members worked hard to rid the garden of weeds and ribbon grass and to trim hedges and the thirty boxwoods, each of which represented a fallen WW1 or WW2 soldier. The following Saturday, July 13th, we were back to plant a large number of perennials in the garden, all donated by our Beautification Committee. We relocated many established plants that were originally growing in the sun but were no longer thriving because they were now shaded by a large Maple tree. When we arrived on our third and last Saturday, we had 40 pots of newly purchased plants and a small Japanese Maple to plant and a large pile of mulch to distribute around the garden. All three of our Saturdays were the hottest days of July! Thanks to Rev. Paul's wife, Tina, their little daughter, and Judy Smith (John's wife) for organizing much needed coffee breaks and for serving delicious lunches in the cool church hall. We will be meeting the Reverend and church members to inaugurate the new garden and install a new engraved stone in memory of John R. Smith as well as a sign informing the community that the MHHS proudly took part in this garden 'rejuvenation'.

Submitted by
Kathy Spiwak
Beautification Committee Chair

Growing Green

The Mount Hamilton Horticultural Society's regular 'Growing Green' feature in the Hamilton Mountain News continued over the 2019 growing season. We were supported in this worthwhile endeavor by editors Gord Bowes and Mark Newman.

Articles were written by society members:

- Helen MacPherson ([Culinary Rhubarb: fruit or vegetable?](#) and [Accept the Challenge & Try Growing Celery](#))
- Rob Howard ([Time to Get Ready for Spring](#))
- Rita Bailey ([Planting an Urban Forest](#))
- Judy Hernandez ([Of Weeds and Wildflowers](#) and [A Garden Under Glass](#))
- Marjorie Cooke ([Agastache Deserves More Recognition](#)), and
- Nancy Haigh Gordon ([Rare June Tulips](#) and [A Win for Pollinators and Gardeners](#)).

With continued assistance from our society's talented writers, I'm looking forward to 'growing' this feature again in the 2020 gardening season.

Submitted by Nancy Haigh Gordon
Growing Green Coordinator

In Memory

The Society was saddened to learn of the passing of long-time member, Jim Riley, on August 19. A donation in Jim's name was made to the Ontario Horticultural Association's "In Memoriam Book". Proceeds support their tree-planting program.