

The Garden View

SUMMER, 2020

Gardening is Still Happening



Melissa Wright, Centennial Park, Fenwick

Photo by Wendy Vahrmeyer

CENTENNIAL PARK COMPETITION GARDEN BED

Pelham Garden Club members Wendy Vahrmeyer and Melissa Wright magically turned a blank flagpole area in Centennial Park, Fenwick into a stunning garden.

Why? In late May, the Town of Pelham offered local clubs, groups and businesses the opportunity to create a garden around town where a garden would be appreciated. Each group could choose one of ten areas on the list. Our gardeners jumped at the chance, choosing the flagpole at Centennial Park in Fenwick and the results are amazing. The transformation took place early in June, following social distancing guidelines. Melissa and Wendy designed, got the plants and planted, planted, planted. A big thank you to fellow garden club member Kristi DeLima for donating the mulch!

This is also a contest and maintenance is part of the deal. The judging will take place on Labour Day weekend and the results will be announced soon after. Up to ten winners will be presented with gift certificates from local businesses ranging from \$50.00 up to \$500.00.

More photos available on our facebook page.

Anyone willing to help water and weed, please contact Wendy.

Please note that there is no water available at the site – even more challenging.

Monthly Meetings

Usually 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. at the Pelham Public Library, Fonthill Branch, 4th Monday of the Month

Pelham Garden Club meetings and events are CANCELLED until further notice.



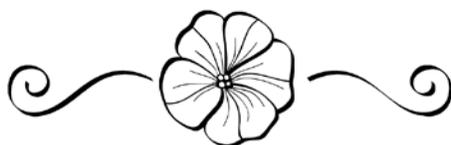
Photo by Melissa Wright



Photo by Wendy Vahrmeyer



Photo by Melissa Wright



ONTARIO HORTICULTURAL ASSOCIATION, DISTRICT 9

A note from a co-president's desk

Hello fellow members!

As the summer edition of the Garden View arrives, it is a very changed world. A year ago at this time, I was celebrating a beautiful adventure to Alaska and British Columbia, sitting on crowded buses, tourist trains and aerial cars, in bustling restaurants, at cruise ship buffets and entertainment venues. That all seems so strange and impossible in these times of social distancing. As we all carry out our various responsibilities, whether that be staying at home, socially distancing or going out to work each day, our life has changed in many ways.

Efforts by your fellow Pelham Garden Club members have changed as well. We must first thank those members who put much time, effort and creativity into events which couldn't happen this year. At the same time, I am heartened by the ongoing creativity of our club members. Projects are directed by phone, email and skype, and work is completed being mindful of physical distancing. Volunteering for club activities is vital to the success of these new adventures and allows us all to stay emotionally connected while also contributing to Pelham.

The flower beds at the Pelham Library, Fonthill branch, have been prepared and planted. The new Pollinator Garden on the south side of the stairway to the Post Office is near completion, thanks to Sandra Black and Barbara Jaques and their team. The Pelham Garden Club has also entered the Community Garden Competition. Wendy Vahrmeyer has stepped up to co-ordinate our entry – the flagpole bed at Centennial Park, Fenwick. Wendy and Melissa Wright have planted the bed. Both of these sites require watering weekly so please volunteer for watering at one of these sites.

Check out our new Facebook group **Pelham Garden Club!** It is developing into a place to share photos and videos of your gardens, to ask gardening questions, seek gardening advice and offer gardening items to other members. I have never been a Facebook user before but in light of this new adventure, I even joined Facebook to see the fun happening on the site.

The Keith's Pie Recipe Book GoFundMe page, <https://ca.gofundme.com/f/keiths-pie-recipes-to-fight-covid-19>, established by Club member Vilma Moretti and her son Todd Crick, was a huge success and PGC members have stepped up to help there as well.

As we lament the cancellation of our favourite summer activities: the spring meetings and speakers, the Home and Garden Show, the Plant and Bake Sale, the June Garden Walk, July Picnic and August Flower and Vegetable show, know that your executive and



Photo from June 10, 2020, Pelham Garden Club Facebook page posted by Barbara Botden: Orientale Pink Ruffles Poppies.

directors are working to maintain a vibrant presence for this club in the community.

If you didn't have an opportunity to pay your annual membership dues at the January or February meetings, please refer to the payment instructions from the treasurer, Amber Cuthbertson, and pay if you are able. Without the fundraising ventures of our Plant, Lawn and Bake Sale and the Evening Garden Walk, membership dues are important to our ongoing endeavours.

It has been said that this pandemic has unlocked everyone's inner horticulturalist. I see it happening all around me. I sincerely hope that everyone stays safe and healthy and that we can all gather together very soon in our common enthusiasm for gardening.

Barbara Botden, PGC Co-President

Payment of annual Pelham Garden Club dues

Please make your \$15.00 cheque out to the "**Pelham Horticultural Society**" – NOT garden club and mail to: Pelham Garden Club
c/o Amber Cuthbertson
P.O. Box 1479
Fonthill, ON L0S 1E0

If you do not have cheques, please send a message to pelhamgardenclub@gmail.com to make arrangements for a cash payment.

DID YOU HELP AT ANY GARDEN CLUB PROJECTS?

To submit your volunteer community service hours, contact Carol Empacher. The hours are submitted for a government grant which helps to finance Pelham Garden Club. Thanks to all of you for your hard work.

What's going on in gardening in Ontario?

The summer issue of the OHA Trillium newsletter is available on the OHA website: <https://gardenontario.org/2020-summer-trillium/>

GardenOntario
KEEPING ONTARIO BEAUTIFUL™

What Little Seeds Can Do

Last year was the first year that I grew tomato plants from seeds. I got hooked on the magic of seeing a tiny seed grow into a huge plant that produced delightful sweet fruit all summer long! I am back at it again this year, waiting for my first luscious tomato. I have two people to thank for my addiction: the late Brian Calvert of the Pelham Garden Club and my late mother-in-law, Madeleine.

I joined the Pelham Garden Club in 2016. At about my second meeting, there was a large table set up with packages of seeds, free for the taking. Brian hung around the table, sharing information about the seeds that he had grown, saved, labelled, and then packaged into double-sealed bags. He was friendly and encouraging and told corny jokes like: "What did the father tomato say to the baby tomato whilst on a family walk?" "Ketchup!" Beyond the endless jokes, Brian had serious knowledge of all kinds of gardening subjects. But I think he was really proud of his seeds. Upon Brian's urging, I took home six little bags of seeds, thinking that one day I would start my own plants from seed.

I was no stranger to knowing how hooked gardeners could get, growing their own produce from seed. I saw my mother-in-law, Madeleine, transform every spring. During our visits in the early days of March, we could hear new optimism in her voice, observe a little more activity around her house, and notice the little pepper and tomato plants taking root in her sunny window. It happened every spring like clockwork: a definite rising state of happiness and well-being in Madeleine with the planting and growing of her tomato and pepper seeds.

Last year, I decided it was time to try my hand at growing the seeds. Since I was not sure that each seed would 'take,' I decided that I should plant a few extra, just in case my little seed-growing experiment failed. I set up a lighted growing station in my basement and spent every evening planting and tending. In no time at all (it really is remarkable how quickly the sprouts appear!), I had little tomato plants. With tender loving care AND great seeds from Brian, I had lots of tomato plants. I gave some to my neighbours. I gave some to our Club to sell at our Annual Plant Sale. And I still had some left to give as door prizes at our meetings! Later in the year, many members thanked me because the Pear Tomato plants, (from Brian's seeds) were real producers!

This year in the early days of March, I thought of Brian and Madeleine and knew that it was once again time for magic. I never eat a tomato now without thinking that each of those little seeds has everything in them to grow another plant! I know that I was late in discovering this fact and in finding such joy in the smallest of things – seeds. This year, I am growing a few more tomato varieties. I have more confidence in my growing abilities so I grew fewer plants. I was pretty sure my experiment would work.

As I tend my garden, I am grateful that I joined the Pelham Garden Club. I enjoy many wonderful friendships and have learned so much. My fortunate meeting with Brian Calvert before his passing gave me a gift I will always treasure. He encouraged me with his humour, knowledge and generous offer of seeds. My green-thumbed mother-in-law, Madeleine, is always with me (in spirit) in the garden. She showed me by example how gardening can change your attitude towards life. It really is amazing what little seeds can do.



Some of the more than 100 tomatoes picked from one pear tomato plant that Heather started from seed.



Not the least bit shy, one yellow pear tomato plant took over the other tomato cages in the garden and spread 6' in both directions. There were tomatoes hiding underneath, behind and near the ground.

Heather Carter

Photos and captions by Laura Masterson

PELHAM GARDEN CLUB POLLINATOR GARDEN PROJECT

Our Pollinator Garden Project is completed! In this time when COVID-19 has had such an impact on our daily lives and it is unknown how much of our planned Garden Club program for 2020 will occur, it is time to celebrate this project.

In 2019, Barbara Jaques kickstarted the idea of applying for the Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA) Pollinator Project Grant of \$200 to complete the planting of our latest garden bed at the Fonthill Library. A Pollinator Garden Committee of Barbara Jaques and Sandra Black was formed.

The Garden project was scheduled to be completed this year but the restrictions imposed by COVID-19 intervened.

However, Barbara and Sandra persevered and planning continued. To ensure a vibrant pollinator-friendly habitat; a diverse variety of plants in massed clumps that bloom from early spring to late fall; choosing native plants and heirloom varieties; provide a source of water; create shelter/habitat that provides a variety of nesting materials nearby along with bare patches of soil for ground nesting insects. A maintenance plan must be established to ensure the sustainability of the project. A daunting list you may say? Not for our Committee. All have been provided.

At a time when nurseries were shut down, it was fortunate that the Welland Horticultural Society held a plant sale that followed restrictions. Plants were purchased there for a good price and Welland also donated some plants.

The water source is provided by a butterfly puddle (a mix of water, sand and manure) in an attractive container. A log pile and stone pile gives an opportunity for shelter. Sandra already has a volunteer crew for maintenance and watering at the library that will now include the Pollinator Garden.

Lee Valley is the donor of the pollinator project grants and will provide a sign for the garden that will be formally installed at a later date.

It is time to celebrate all those who contributed to this project; the Pollinator Garden Committee of Barbara Jaques and Sandra Black, the support of the Club Board; Barbara Jaques, Sandra Black, Carol Empacher, David Hunt and Marjorie Tuck who planted on May 28. Sandra took photos of the completed garden and the various components and will continue to do so as the garden grows. Amber Cuthbertson will draw the site plan for reference. The garden has already received amphibian approval as a toad came along when planting was completed.

So come and see what has been achieved. It's wonderful to have something to celebrate.

Marjorie Tuck

To help water the gardens at the Fonthill Library – Please contact Sandra Black.



Photo by Marjorie Tuck

The garden



Photo by Sandra Black

Rock pile habitat



Photo by Sandra Black

The wood pile habitat



Photo by Sandra Black

Our butterfly puddle – a mix of manure, sand and water



Photo by Sandra Black

There was a toad before we left



Pelham Garden Club email address: pelhamgardenclub@gmail.com



For more information and updates, visit: www.gardenontario.org. Contact Amber Cuthbertson at AMcuthbertson@hotmail.com to send photos and information for our website.

To send news items and pictures for the next issue, please contact Laura Masterson by Sept. 18, 2020