

March ~ April
2013

Newsletter of the East York Garden Club



The East York Garden Club is a member of the Ontario Horticultural Association, District 5.

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month (except August and December) in the Stan Wadlow Clubhouse, 373 Cedarvale Avenue at 7:30 p.m.

Refreshments are available at 7:00 p.m. The Clubhouse is wheelchair-accessible. Visitors are always welcome.

Yearly membership fees are \$20 for a single, and \$30 for a family. To inquire about membership, please contact Christina Brown at 416-755-9077.

Visit us on the web at www.eygc.ca

President:

Susan Bartlett

Vice President:

Rosalind Regnier
& Barbara Piercey

Newsletter Editor:

Jennifer McDougall



Thursday, March 21st, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

Topic: City Tree Management and Bylaws Speakers: Kristjan Vitols & Mark Ventresca

Over the years, this is the one of the most requested topics by our members. This presentation by two of our City's Urban Forestry supervisors will give you information and insight into the City's canopy: the current health of our trees across the city and specifically East York and what difficulties the canopy faces now and in the future. Information regarding policies and procedures for removing a tree from a property (and then replacing trees) and some helpful hints to help the process go smoothly; how the permits are monitored and how a homeowner can verify if a permit has been issued if questionable tree removal is taking place. Information also on pruning trees on city property, and some examples of the interesting and sometimes humorous dilemmas the teams have come up against while performing their jobs. A short question and answer session to follow the presentation.

Working with the City of Toronto in the Urban Forestry branch, and in their previous careers related to forestry, both of our speakers have interesting and varied credentials. Kristjan is the Supervisor, Forest Health Care and Special Projects, Urban Forest Renewal and is focused on forest health care issues within the City particularly the Emerald Ash Borer infestation that is killing thousands of ash trees in Toronto. Mark is the Supervisor, Tree Protection and Plan Review (Toronto East District) and is responsible for the enforcement of the Street Tree and Private Tree Bylaws as well as reviewing internal and external plans for their impact on Street, Park and Private Trees.

Members with surnames beginning with "L" through "N" are asked to bring in some cookies or squares for the refreshment table. Don't forget to bring your own mug for coffee or tea.

Thursday, April 18th, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

Topic: Crops that Wow! Speaker: Steven Biggs

If your veggie gardening space is limited, why grow the green beans you can easily buy. Instead, paint the supper table with a surprising array of coloured veg including red okra, purple beans, yellow carrots, and rainbow chard. Then add an exotic touch with intercultural crops such as Malabar spinach, something hard to find at the supermarket. If you grow veg or want to grow veg, but want something that is fun and a bit different, this talk is for you.

Steven Biggs is an award-winning journalist and author specializing in gardening, farming, and food production. Along with studying horticultural science at the University of Guelph, he has worked in greenhouse and nursery production, plant propagation, biological controls, horticultural supplies, and farm marketing. In the garden, he favours a practical, no-nonsense—and fun—approach to things. He runs the how-to website The-Locavores-Garden.com, along with a newsletter called Homegrown, here he gives readers practical advice about growing edibles, cooking and preserving, and having fun with kids in the garden.

Steven gardens in Toronto, Canada with his three young children; and is joined in the kitchen by his wife Shelley, where they cook up garden fare together. Steven's book *No Guff Vegetable Gardening*, co-authored with Calgarian Donna Balzer, is a Canadian national bestseller.

Members with surnames beginning with "O" through "R" are asked to bring in some cookies or squares for the refreshment table. Don't forget to bring your own mug for coffee or tea.

Getting to Know EYGC Members ~ Lucie Simons

An On-going Series into the gardening of EYGC Members

By Barb Piercey

You have probably seen Lucie. She attends almost every meeting—every meeting since 1988 when she moved into her current home just off O'Connor Drive. What was her main reason for joining the East York Garden Club? Her first shady garden.

I met with Lucie on a sunny, wintry morning at her home. While looking out the back window at her garden, I could understand why she wasn't sure how to deal with the "shady" garden alone. What I saw before me was an amazing steep ravine property with a huge mature canopy of trees. That is a shady garden. So, shade it was that brought Lucie to us.

She was born in London, England almost 93 years ago. Her earliest memory of gardening was in the teeny tiny garden of her childhood home which had previously been a brickyard. A few odd plants around the edge, but what she remembers is her father planting an alberic barbier rose—a rambling and climbing white rose—it was so very special in that London garden.

After the war, Lucie and George got married and emigrated to Canada. One of their houses in Montreal was a lovely old house and with a large garden made up of lawn and shrubs that were there already. She loved working in that garden and it flourished as did her career as an accomplished artist. She specializes in serigraphy (original silk screen printing) and oil paintings. You can see some of Lucie's work at www.luciesimons.com.

George's work brought the family to Toronto in the late 1970's. Their first home was in Cabbagetown with a small garden that she was able to extend by 6 feet by removing the concrete parking pad to create a pretty courtyard garden. When she and George purchased their current home in East York, there was no garden at all—just a strip of grass which she immediately turned over to start a garden. With each piece of art that Lucie sold, another path or flight of steps or landing got built in order to fully explore her ravine property. About 4 or 5 years ago the paths and steps were finally completed. Looking back towards the house from the bottom of the steps, you can appreciate just how much work was done.



She has been an EYGC member for over 25 years and had been a board member for a number of those years and our President also. When she joined there were about 75 members and she quite quickly joined the board and that helped her to get to know the members better. She helped organize the annual tea and show, the flower shows, and opened her garden for many tours. She became a life member in 2010. She likes how the club has grown and developed over the years: offering wonderful bus trips and the year- end potluck AGM.

Lucie has tried many plants, but found that the Japanese maple grew well in her well- canopied garden. She now has about 25 Japanese maples. She planted every one of them and loves their colours and shapes and buys and plants a new one every year.

Lucie works almost everyday on one piece of art or another working towards a show at The Arts & Letters Club this year. She volunteers at Fudger House (senior's home) on Sherborne Street as she has done for the past 35 years and has received a City honour for her contribution. She still gardens with a bit of help from her daughter cleaning the stream every spring so that it runs freely and a helper who deals with any big, heavy stuff, but other than that, she does manage to do the work herself.

Lucie's advice for someone just beginning to garden? "One never finishes. There is always something to do. Join the EYGC as there are some members with lots of knowledge and as for gardening, just have a go at it and see what happens. Try to use perennials and shrubs as they do become part of the landscape." Garden Imports produces a lovely catalogue that she reads cover to cover for inspiration and then orders a few new plants for the coming season—still searching for something for the shady garden.

April: the First Flower Show

April 18th is the first flower show of the year and it is also the show where preserves have a chance to shine. Were you busy canning peaches, pears or pickles last summer? Have you been making jams, jellies or salsas since then? Vinegars, chili sauces, marmalades count too. So, maybe the flower competition isn't your thing. Enter one of your preserves with the following guidelines: Full container, made within the previous 12 months and vacuum-sealed. No more than two entries per class per household. Ingredients must be listed.



Then we have the Design category theme: "The Kitchen". The first category is "Bread and Butter" and this is open to both experienced and novice designers. Your design must be predominantly white and yellow, but the size, shape and style are up to you. Then there is "Tempest in a Teapot", "Kitchen Sink", "The Spice Rack" and "Hard Boiled"

Read or re-read the flower show rules, the definitions and the helpful hints in your yearbook or on the eygc.ca website to refresh and refine your entries. For those of you who purchased an OHA Exhibiting Standards booklet at the last two meetings, use that as a resource too.

If you are new to competition, enter a few cut specimens and try a Bread and Butter design in the novice category. Call or email me Butter design in the novice category. Call or email me if you have any questions.

Barb Piercey
Flower Show Coordinator
416-755-0278



Our EYGC logoware will be available for purchase at the March and April meetings.

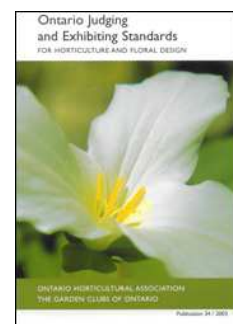
T-shirts are \$12.00, Polo shirts are \$30.00. Meeting tote bags are \$15.00 and Boat Tote bags are \$20.00.

OHA Judging and Exhibiting Standards Books

If you haven't made it to the last two meetings, we still have eight copies of the \$6 books available for sale. It is especially useful if you compete or are thinking of competing in the 2013 flower shows. Valuable information on how to select, groom and present your flowers, plants, fruit & vegetables for show. There are definitions of various forms of design and tips as to what the judges are looking for in both horticultural and design entries.

If you would like me to reserve a copy for you let me know.

Barb Piercey
Flower Show Coordinator
416-755-0278
barbpiercey@bell.net





Rewind

*A Look back at the January Meeting ~ The Gardens of Tuscany, Florence & Countryside, Donna Fenice
By: Veronica Callinan*

The tour started with the Basilica di Santa Maria del Fiore (English: Basilica of Saint Mary of the Flower). The White Iris used to grow wild within the walls of the old City. Italy was a disunified group of city states ruled by various wealthy elites until 1870's. Their coat of arms looked like balls on a shield. They eventually became the bankers of the world. In the 1400s the Medici built fortresses across Tuscany, to protect themselves from warring rivals.

Villa Adriana or Hadrian's Villa (from Roman times) was discovered in Tivoli, Tuscany, which sparked the Renaissance. The Medici wanted the same villas as the Romans had - so they renovated their fortresses into Roman replicas. Theirs was the first Renaissance garden, setting the pattern for gardens all over Europe. Villa Medicea has the largest collection of citrus in the world, over 500. All are in pots, watered by the hand. The pots are all brought in during the cooler months. Some plants still show signs of stress when they had to be left out all winter when the greenhouses were used as a hospital during WW2.

The purpose of the Renaissance grand gardens was as an allegory of God's universe and cosmic the hierarchy. Every plant and statue represented something. The statue of Venus washing her hair represented the wealth Florence. Venus=Florence, Water=Wealth.

The Duomo, in Siena, has an amazing view and gardens. The Giardino di Boboli boasts Cypress lined allées. These gardens were used for entertainment. Hidden water jets were included that would spout off randomly. Guests loved these and the grotesque & humorous statues.

A proper Renaissance garden also needed a grotto. What is nature (natural)? What is art (man made)? A successful garden designer had to be able to blur the lines between the two. The grotto was the 'third nature' - man made nature. Metamorphosis was man's state of being. These features are all present in Giardino di Boboli. The view out was also important-such as of the mountains and/or ocean. Then off to the country:

Roses at the end of the vine rows were planted because the rose and grape vines are susceptible to the same diseases. If the roses showed signs of disease, that meant the grapevine would also be susceptible.

Villa Vignamaggio - home of the new 15 year old bride who is now known as "Mona Lisa". The Villa was also used for the movie "Much Ado about Nothing"

Not many castles are open to the public, more gardens are for public viewing however these are still not common and admission is considerable. The walled gardens represented the geometric Order in the universe with symbolic plants, layout and statuary. They are very formal and geometric. Prior to recent years, vegetables and flowers were planted together in the same beds. Wild Boar are very destructive in gardens. Hotels also have lovely gardens, some with shrub mazes. Little gardens are everywhere - roofs, niches, front-door gardens with pots, etc.

Val d'Orcia is now a World Heritage site. It fuses art, landscape and ecosystem in one geographical space, and is the expression of a series of marvelous natural characteristics

After the meeting there were 2 draws: Jim Grass won the 50/50 donation and Linda Boyko won the book "Gardens of Tuscany", written and donated by the speaker Donna Fenice.

There was only one entry for the Photo Contest donated by Sue Ellis. Since there wasn't enough photos for a "competition", no winner was "chosen".

Show & Vote in the People's choice Flower Show!

In April, along side our regular flower show, there will be an additional competition where you, the members, have your say. This will be our second year trying the Novice Corner-People's Choice Competition. Voting with a coin that you will be given, you decide which cut specimen you like the best. It may be the colour of the flower, the type of flower, the condition of the flower, or the way it compares to the others. Whatever you decide, the winner is determined by the greatest number of coins.

Last year, the winning entry was a spectacular narcissus from Mary Furlong. The judge of the regular flower show said that it was such a great specimen that should have been entered.

This section is for novices only. In this category, a novice is anyone who has not yet won a first-place ribbon in an EYGC flower show. Voting will take place between 7:15 and 7:30. All those who are in attendance at the meeting will be eligible to vote.

Note: winners will be ribboned, but this category does not count towards points for the Anna Leggatt Award or George Henry Trophy.

Bring any cut specimen from your garden, fill out an entry label and put it in one of our vases and put in on the table. You may be surprised, just like Mary was last year or, Valerie, George, Roseanne, Jenn, Terry, Leslie.....

Any questions, please feel free to call or email me: **Barb Piercey, Flower Show Coordinator**
416-755-0278 ~ barbpiercey@bell.net



The Library is Back!

The board decided to roll out the library again and there is a wonderful selection of books for you to borrow. We want to see how viable it is, how many books get borrowed, how many members borrow. There is a limit of only 4 per member per meeting, and when you borrow, you will get a call a few days ahead of the next meeting to remind you to bring back your books. Easy peasy!

While the library is small compared to some other garden clubs and the terrific one at the TBG, it is well stocked with a good variety. Are you interested in vegetables, water gardens, herbs, annuals, bulbs, container gardening, planning and designing, grasses, wildlife gardening, bugs and diseases, pruning, or roses? Well, we have something for you. There are currently over 65 books available and just waiting to be read by you.

We are interested in what you think of the library and of the books you borrow. Please stop by before or after the meeting and borrow a book or two.



HELP US GO GREEN

We want YOUR email address!! Yes, it is important that you forward your current email address to the editor as postage costs are going up and it is so much better and green to get your newsletter via email.

That way you get it in colour too!

To get your newsletter the green way, email me, at jenn@majam.net



Rewind

A Look back at the February Meeting ~ Design an Outdoor Room By Celia Rutte

By: Veronica Callinan

Garden rooms are a balance hard and soft.

An Outdoor Room is a multi functional outdoor living space. Outdoor room is separated by walls and partitions. Free standing areas. They have an approach, an entry way, walls, floor and need to have a PURPOSE.

Outdoor rooms with the same "hyper attention" as indoor rooms is relatively new.

Outdoor rooms increase space from the indoor out. They can include electricity, lights, water, art, accessories, flooring, etc. Ceilings and walls can be "Implied", that aren't solid. Curtains can provide privacy.

Pavilions are separate from the main building, same idea - NOT a shed. Outdoor kitchen can be simple with a BBQ and shelving, or complex with fridges, downdrafts, islands, lighting, etc

Process of Designing the Outdoor Room:

What is the purpose of the space: socializing, seating, eating, etc. ? What's your style: romantic, bold, zen, country? What vistas, views and focal points are available - fire pit, pond, particular shrub or tree, neighbouring property? Consider adding a window to focus on a view.

Determine location, which should include respect for the path of the sun. A property map will align the new room with existing other rooms, building, trees, etc. Approach is important - how will you get there - straight, journey? How does the approach set the mood for the destination? What material will be used for the path - gravel, stone? Flooring can be elaborate or simple, the choice is endless. Recycled material works well. How much protection from above be needed? The ceiling can be a tree, awnings, canvas sails, a trellis or pergola, vines, umbrella. Walls are similar, determine how much privacy is desired (could be shrub, vine, corrugated plastic, etc.)

Furniture style should compliment the style of the room. Weatherproof materials are available in many stores now - Ikea, Fabricland, Canadian Tire. Lighting, outdoor carpet, art - all available to endure outside.

CELIA'S WINNERS

February's speaker, Celia Alida Rutte, awarded 2 free garden room consultations to the embers that emailed her closest to certain times. Congratulations to both Vicky Anki and Jean Quinn for hitting the email after the meeting.



ORGS Super Plant Sale 2013 ~ 5th Annual Super Plant Sale

Enjoy a great start to your gardening season!

The Ontario Rock Garden and Hardy Plant Society is sponsoring its FIFTH annual super plant sale, on May 5, 2013 at the Toronto Botanical Garden Floral Hall. Once again, we are gathering an amazing collection of members' plants, as well as commercially-grown, interesting varieties. We have also invited vendors who will bring rare and unusual plants, and garden supplies.

Proceeds from this Sale are used to fund their Speakers' programme. Join them to hear the best speakers from around the world and at home who share their knowledge and love of plants and Gardening.

Please check out the website www.onrockgarden.com

Outdoor rooms need plant material. Determine how the sun moves. Work with the soil, light and air.

Lighting, art, accessories:

Consider how buggy the area can be. Is screening required? Lighting can be lanterns, spot lights, fairy lights, flickering votives, task lighting,

2013 Perennial Plant of the Year Announced

National Garden Bureau is pleased to bring you the following announcement on behalf of our member, the Perennial Plant Association. For more information on this and other perennials, please visit their website at www.perennialplant.org.

Polygonatum odoratum 'Variegatum'
2013 Perennial Plant of the Year™

Common Names

Variegated Solomon's Seal
Striped Solomon's Seal
Fragrant Solomon's Seal
Variegated Fragrant Solomon's Seal

Hardiness

USDA Zones 3 to 8

Light

Part to full shade

Soil

This Solomon's Seal prefers moist, well-drained soil.

Unique Qualities

Solomon's Seal has arching stems that carry pairs of small, bell-shaped, white flowers in mid to late spring. The variegated ovate leaves are soft green with white tips and margins. Fall leaf color is yellow.

Uses

This perennial offers vivid highlights in shaded areas of borders, woodland gardens, or naturalized areas. The variegated foliage is attractive in flower arrangements.

Polygonatum odoratum, pronounced po-lig-o-nay'tum o-do-ray'tum vair-e-ah-gay'tum, carries the common names of variegated Solomon's Seal, striped Solomon's Seal, fragrant Solomon's Seal and variegated fragrant Solomon's Seal. This all-season perennial has greenish-white flowers in late spring and variegated foliage throughout the growing season. The foliage turns yellow in the fall and grows well in moist soil in partial to full shade.

The genus *Polygonatum*, native to Europe, Asia, and North America is a member of the Asparagaceae family. It was formerly found in the family Liliaceae. Regardless of its new location, members of *Polygonatum* are excellent perennials for the landscape. The genus botanical name (*Polygonatum*) comes from poly (many) and gonu (knee joints) and refers to the many-jointed rhizome from which the leaves arise. The common name Solomon's Seal has several proposed derivations. The first is that the scar that remains on the rootstock after the leaf stalks die off in the fall resembles the seal impressed on wax on documents in the past. The second source is that John Gerard, the English botanist and herbalist, suggested that the powdered roots were an excellent remedy for broken bones. He also felt that the plant had the capacity for "sealing wounds", which was why the perennial received the common name - Solomon's Seal.

Polygonatum odoratum 'Variegatum' grows 18 to 24 inches tall and will spread by rhizomes to form colonies. The oval-shaped leaves are carried on upright, arching, unbranched stems. The variegated leaves are light green with white tips and margins. Leaves turn an attractive yellow in the autumn. Sweetly fragrant, small, bell-shaped white flowers with green tips, are borne on short pedicels from the leaf axils underneath the arching stems. Bluish-black berries are sometimes present in the autumn.

Variegated Solomon's Seal is a classic beauty for the shady woodland garden or the part-shade to full-shade border. It is a great companion plant to other shade lovers including hostas, ferns, and astilbes. The sweet fragrance will enhance that walk along a pathway on a spring morning. Flower arrangers will find the variegated foliage to be an attribute for spring floral arrangements. And finally, this all-season perennial offers yellow fall foliage color.

There are no serious insect or disease problems with variegated Solomon's Seal. Plants may be divided in the spring or fall. The white rhizomes should be planted just below the soil surface. *Polygonatum odoratum* 'Variegatum' is a very easy perennial to grow and will enhance any shade garden, especially a more natural one.

Let's Go Garden!



Please visit <http://www.ngb.org/> for more information.

If you would like to make a submission in be included in the next issue of *The East York Garden* newsletter the next **deadline is April 26th, 2013**

Please e-mail you comments regarding our Newsletter or submissions for the next issue to jenn@majam.net



EAST YORK GARDEN CLUB

We're on the Web!

<http://www.eygc.ca>

Mark your Calendars ~ Some Great Upcoming Events

- ◆ **Canada Blooms** ~ March 15-24 at the Direct Energy Centre
- ◆ **March 23rd** ~ Earth Hour, turn off your lights from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m.
- ◆ **April 22nd**—Earth day
- ◆ **April 27th** ~ OHA District 5 AGM hosted by Scarborough Garden and Horticultural Society
- ◆ **May 11th** ~ Mother's Day Tea & Truffle Pairing at the Toronto Botanical Garden, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Public \$65; Members \$55
- ◆ **May 25th & 26th** ~ Toronto Island Spring 2013 Garden Tour - www.torontoisland.org
- ◆ **June 8th** ~ Lynedoch Garden Tour in Norfolk County from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. (gn.skelding@hotmail.com)



March Photo Contest

By Malcolm Geast



This month's Garden Club meeting takes place during the same week as Canada Blooms, and with that thought in mind, the category for our **March People's Choice Photo Contest is Indoor Blooms**. Whether it's from your living room, a greenhouse, or a garden show, as long as it's taken indoors, bring in your best photo of something blooming for the contest. Entry rules are the same as last year, so photos (no larger than 5 by 7 inches) must be received by 7:15 p.m.

After a somewhat disappointing number of entries in our January contest, we bounced back in February with the highest number of entries we've ever received for the monthly competition (14!). Congratulations go out to the winners of both months' contests:

January (Christmas Light): 1st - Susan Ellis

February (Purple): 1st - Anna Leggatt; 2nd - Jeff Cutler; 3rd - Helen Koski

This is the seventh year that we've had the People's Choice contest, and while it has been quite popular, the number of entries in the January competition has often been a little on the low side. Next year, we're going to try something different. Instead of an "open to interpretation" category, **next January** we'll be asking you to bring in your **best photo of 2013**. The subject is up to you, and it can be horticultural or non-horticultural. So remember to keep track of your favourite photos from this year, so that you can select the best of them for the January 2014 contest.