

The GardenShed

AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2016

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CRAMAHE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY



THE UNITED COLOURS OF SEPTEMBER

Photo by Barrie Wood



The GardenShed

~From the Editor

One scorching summer day followed another and on my morning rounds I watched sadly while a few unhappy plants – astilbe, campanula, brunnera – wilted, then browned, then finally disappeared completely. But isn't nature amazing? All it took was a few days of cooler weather and a very light sprinkle of rain, and those little green guys are pushing up from the root once again. Wow! I really thought they were goners.

Surprisingly, many gardeners are currently enjoying a wonderful vegetable harvest despite the hot, dry conditions. In this issue, Peg critiques some of the new veggie seeds she tried this year, and Karen offers a few recipes for cooking up your garden's bounty. And don't miss Robin's excellent report of Dr. Rick Conrad's presentation on growing garlic.

Barrie and I had the opportunity to see Rick's presentation a couple of years ago as guests at a Grafton Horticultural Society meeting and were inspired to purchase his garlic as 'seed' and follow his instructions. As a result, garlic was by far our best crop of 2016, truly spectacular in size, flavour and keeping ability.

You never know what you're going to learn at a horticultural society meeting – whether it's here in Cramahe or 'Over the Garden Fence' – but you can pretty much guarantee it's going to be good!

~ Lorelyn



*Sharron displays our 50th Anniversary plaque from the Ontario Horticultural Society
1966 – 2016*

~ President's Message

It doesn't seem possible that summer has gone by so quickly and that we are now into fall. I must admit that I am not unhappy to see the heat and humidity make a retreat. I really did not enjoy the weather this summer!! What we are having right now is more to my liking, cooler nights for sleeping and much less humidity during the day. It makes it much easier for doing the necessary yard cleanup that we must all do at this time of the year. I was finally able to spend some time in the yard yesterday and it always feels so good to be able to get something accomplished. I understand that we are supposed to have a few nice days in the coming week, so hopefully I will be able to get some more work done. I never seem to have enough time for everything that I get myself into....

We did very well on our first attempt at Trash & Treasures on August 13th, even though the weather was not in our favour that day. Wouldn't you know, the only two days in August that we had anything planned for Horticulture and it rains!! Despite the weather, we did have a very good sale and we have decided to give it a try again next year. Keep that in mind folks when you are going through things in your home and you think that you might want to get rid of them. We will be happy to have your items for the sale next year. We just require that you hold onto them as we don't have anywhere to store them. We would appreciate your help in this matter, both in keeping your items for us and for helping on the committee that is being formed to look after the sale.

We had a very small group attend the August 23rd picnic. Due to the inclement weather the week before, we had to move the picnic ahead by a week and unfortunately, that was not a good day for many of the members. Those that did attend had a good time and lots of good food was enjoyed by all of us that were able to make it.

It was great to get back to our meetings in September and we had our Vegetable and Decorative Flower Show on the 20th. Congratulations to all the entrants and to the members who placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in the show. We also had a wonderful guest speaker that night, Rick Conrad, who talked to us about garlic and how to grow it – a very interesting topic and we learned a lot.

Our meeting in October will be our Photography Show and our guest speaker will be Stephen Poole, who will be talking about closing your garden for the winter.

Nominations will also be accepted at this meeting, so please give some thought to taking on a position in the Society. Many of our members have been in their current positions for some time and would like to take a break....please look at the list of positions that are available and consider giving us the benefit of your time and knowledge.

Hope to see you at the next meeting!

~ Sharron



Sharron drives a hard bargain at the Trash & Treasures sale in August.



*Ready for customers at
Trash & Treasures ...
...until the rains came ...*

And a very successful September Vegetable and Decorative Flower Show



~~ September Presentation ~~

HOW TO GROW GARLIC

With Dr. Rick Conrad
of
Millbrook Valley Farm
millbrookvalleyfarm@gmail.com



What to do in retirement? Dr. Rick Conrad had a plan! After a long career in the field of veterinary medicine, the good doctor embarked on the necessary research and logistics to grow some 22,000 garlic plants and in so doing, became an integral part of the 100 mile diet movement in Northumberland county.

For those of you who have cultivated the “Stinking Rose” in your home garden and who like to flavour your garlic with food, listen up. One could be forgiven for thinking that, with garlic, it is a case of sticking a clove in the ground and standing back, but actually there is a science and technique to growing a healthy, tasty crop whether you attempt it at home or on a commercial basis.

Garlic originated in Central Asia where it has been harvested for food and medicine for over ten thousand years. The Roman army fed garlic to its soldiers believing it to instill both strength and courage, and it was extensively used medicinally in ancient Egypt.

It can be eaten cooked or raw, has a wide variety of cultivars which produce a range of tastes. When garlic is chopped or crushed, the enzyme alliinase converts alliin into allicin, which is responsible for the aroma of fresh garlic and in that state, it is considered an

effective antibiotic, antifungal and anticancer treatment.

Garlic is a member of the Alliaceae family and it propagates via cloning not sexually, therefore there is no risk of cross pollination.

There are two types of garlic grown in Ontario – hardneck and softneck.



Hardneck varieties (*Allium sativum* var. *ophioscorodon*) bolt during late spring/early summer, producing a tall, flower stalk or scape. Bulbils, which are small aerial cloves, are produced at the tip of the scape in place of a true flower. There is considerable variability in

the size and number of bulbils produced by hardneck garlic. Hardneck garlic can produce anywhere from 4-12 cloves per bulb.

Varieties grown in Ontario include Rocambole, Porcelain and Purple Stripe. Generally, the hardneck is more winter hardy than the softneck, and it is for this reason that Dr. Conrad chose to grow only that variety.

The hardneck variety is characterized by a tall, stiff "scape", it has fewer cloves, but they are larger and have a strong flavour.



The first order of business is to prepare the planting area. This requires a soil analysis, a consult with a local agrologist for the critical PH balance, and the National Research Council for the soil supplement formula.

Then it is time to mark out the plots and prepare the soil (eg: adding sulphur to lower a too high PH). Add a fall fertilizer to ensure good root establishment and plant 8 inches apart on the first of October. On the planting day, it is time to "crack" the garlic cloves, keeping the skin intact to the degree possible. Ideally, hand cracking ensures a clean break from the basal plate, then plant pointy side up to ensure germination. It is critical that the plant be placed sufficiently deep, with 2 to 3 inches of soil above the tip, and that the beds are covered with straw to keep the plant frozen during early thaws. The straw can be removed but it can also be left on the beds to provide protection and to help retain moisture.

By late April in Ontario, the plants should be 10" out of the ground, poking through the straw. It is time for a Spring fertilizer and, in keeping with the organic strictures, no pesticides, herbicides or animal manure should be used, principally because garlic is often eaten raw.

By mid June the plant is turning brown from the tips toward the base of the leaves. If the scales are removed at that point, it will increase the bulb output by as much as 30%. Happily, the scapes can be used in stir fry dishes etc.

Begin harvesting when 30%-50% of the leaves have died back. In mid to late July, the scapes stand up straight and tall as if to wave and advise it is time for harvest. Do not pull the garlic out of the ground because it will break. Loosen the dirt by hand or mechanically, dig up the bulb and shake off the dirt. It is also important not to bruise the bulb or it will rot like an apple. Garlic bulbs harvested too early may be immature and tend to shrivel when cured, while late harvested bulbs may have stained, partially decayed wrapper leaves and/or exposed cloves. Spread the plants out to dry in a well ventilated area, out of the sunlight. And, in anticipation of the next October planting, plow the field, plant oriental mustard and rotate the beds to ensure the health of the next crop.

As with any crop, garlic has its enemies. The garlic nematode is a microscopic eel-like organism that lives in soil and water and causes basal plate rot. There are formal treatments but the best option is to rotate the planting area, do not use any damaged planting stock and finally, plant oriental mustard between the crop rows.

Garlic is usually hung in porous bags and if the bulbs are not kept in the refrigerator, they will last until the next harvest.

~ Robin Young

August Picnic rain date – a beautiful day on the second try

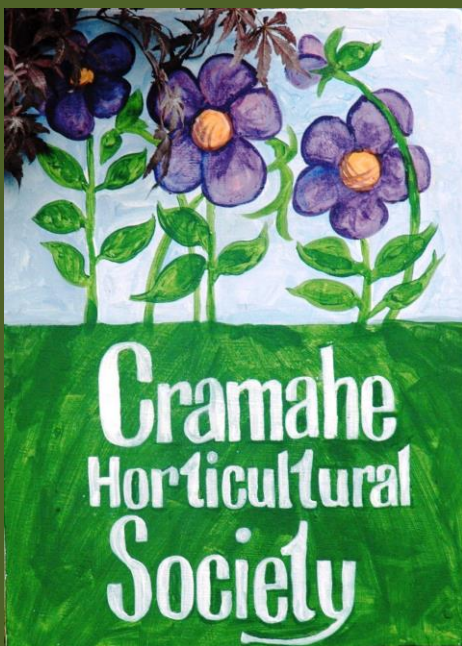


~~ Executive Doings ~~

BOARD NOTES FROM SEPTEMBER 13, 2016

The first meeting back after the summer always provides a chance to catch up with people, and the Really Big News is that this summer was . . . wait for it - HOT!!! OK, you already knew that. But there are as many ways that the heat showed itself in our gardens as there are plants in them. My pears and apples have thicker and tougher skin than usual – and everyone seemed to have a similar story: strange things that happened in an unusual summer. Which may become usual as time goes on. Hello, Global Warming.

We met once again at the historic home of Trish O'Brien, our faithful Secretary, and we are all grateful for her ongoing generosity and hospitality, which saves the Society quite a bit of \$\$ now that we are being charged for use of the Keeler Centre.



Our terrific new sandwich board sign, hand-painted by Karen Prins.

We had a report from Trash 'n' Treasures. It showed that \$820.00 was made, but at a cost of much MUCH labour, before, during and especially after the event. The rain made

cleaning up the unsold remainders (which went to the stores of Covert Street in Cobourg) that much harder. Thanks to members Jim and Valerie Detenbeck for the use of their driveway, and that amazing mauve umbrella, and to Trish and Alan O'Brien for being Trash Central for 3 days. Discussion was that we would do a sale another year, with the proviso that the work be shared more, and that all submitted items be "table ready" i.e. not just as you found them in the granary, or at the bottom of that dry well. Some items had to be thoroughly scrubbed before going out to the public.

JoAnne Titus was convinced into staying on to steer the Plant Sale for 2017, on the condition that MORE HELP from MORE MEMBERS be forthcoming. Not on the day – we get plenty of help then – but in the planning, planting, digging, and potting beforehand. It is a huge workload and many of JoAnne's former helpers are ready to retire from active service. A new committee will be formed to help JoAnne. She has done such a great job for so many years, let's not drive her away with want of assistance.

Sharron reported that our (that is to say Sharron's) Facebook presence remains strong. 452 people watched "How to Transfer Peonies". Think of all those peonies forced to remain homebodies without Sharron's posted video to set them free to travel a bit. 224 people watched "How to Plant Bulbs in your Lawn". However, 225 watched "How to Get those *!@# Bulbs out of your Lawn". (just kidding about that last one). The point is a LOT of people keep tuning in to see what Cramahe Hort is up to. And they find a lot of good things, and keep coming back – it's what Facebook does when it's done well. And thanks, Sharron, for doing it so well!

We looked at a projected budget for 2017 based on 2016 expenditures. As always, some things we were able to cut down, others



required extra \$\$\$. The decision to raise membership fees had been made before the summer break and we decided to announce it at the General Meeting September 20 – which I hope you attended. If you didn't, in a nutshell: It has been at least 10 years since the last increase, and with the fees to OHA for insurance, memberships, and more insurance, and then some insurance just for insurance (I think we have insurance to cover the possibility that we don't have enough insurance), our \$15 membership fee netted us about \$2.00 per person. So, to make that figure a bit more reasonable, new rates as of 2017 are **\$20 Single,**

\$30 Family. Still a fine bargain. The Membership Department asks again that 2017 fees not be paid until January, UNLESS you are going to be away through the winter, in which case we will be happy to receive your fees at any meeting before you go. Post dated cheques welcome.

Don't forget to get your garlic in in the first week of October. Rick Conrad was inspirational – and his methods work extremely well! At least, they do in Lakeport.

Until next time,

~ *Barrie Wood*

~~~ *From One Gardener to Another* ~~~

Well, we made it through the hot, droughty summer!

Anyone who happened to plant Queen Anne's lace (wild carrot) or chicory this year was brilliant. I've never seen them at the roadside so gorgeous or prolific. They loved the conditions this year. And speaking of Queen Anne's lace, some friends and I were strolling around the property one day and one of them spied two pink ones in my lawn! None of us had ever seen this before, only the white. You may think I'm crazy, but a few days later I transplanted them into a garden. They appeared okay, but have finished blooming now. Hopefully they will return next year. I looked them up in one of my books and apparently they do sometimes appear in pink.

The vegetable garden is slowing down now, but it has given excellent production this year. I'm very thankful. I am extremely happy with two things in particular. The first is the green beans. I tried two new varieties – Jade and Slenderette. They are both excellent. Very heavy production, long tasty beans and if I couldn't pick every day or two to eat or freeze they

seemed to stay well on the plants. They didn't get overly large and inedible too soon. I believe they are my new favourites.

Second is a new tomato called Mountain Merit. It was advertised as having great resistance to late blight. It's true! Very prolific, very tasty and the plants are still producing well. If (when) it starts to get cold I may even cover one plant with plastic and try to keep it going longer. And there is no sign of any disease.

My old favourite cherry tomato Sweetie is excellent as usual, still loaded with fruit. I also have one plant of the heritage variety Black Krim, an old favourite.

Two new peas to me, Alaska and Green Arrow, were good and prolific. I have lots in the freezer for the winter.

I tried Cylindra beets this year. They are god. I ate them fresh, made pickles and borscht, but I think I'll go back to my old favourite, Detroit Dark Red.

The Celebration acorn squash is attractive to look at with its yellow/orange/green colours but



I haven't eaten one yet. I'm sure it will be delicious.

The Blackhawk leaf lettuce is very tasty and a beautiful red-black colour in salads. I will have it again. The Raider cucumber was good but I could hardly keep enough water to it so it turned crisp and petered out partway through the summer. When I realized what was happening, I planted more seeds in another area. The plants are now producing many new little cucumbers. I'm sure I'll get plenty more and I may cover it with plastic to keep it going longer.

As for the five types of carrots, I have yet to do the side-by-side taste test. We have been eating them quite a while and they all taste good. Actually they are my favourite vegetable.

I like to dig them after a little light frost to use in winter. I often still have some at the end of January.

One thing I noted regarding flowers this year. I grow six types of balloon flowers (platycodon) and I have never seen them as good and loaded with blooms. They loved the conditions this year. And I adore them, they are on my top ten list. Actually, some are still blooming as I keep deadheading them.

All for now!

P.S. as the leaves come down, use them in your garden.

~ Peg Howden

~~~ Garden to Table ~~~



GRAPE JELLY

1. Boil together for 15 minutes:
 - 1 basket Concord grapes
 - 2 tbsp water
2. Crush and strain. You should have 4 cups of juice. Keep juice in fridge until next day.
3. Boil together for 20- 60 minutes:
 - 4 cups juice
 - 3 ½ cups sugar
4. Test for jelling after around 30 minutes. Pour into hot sterilized jam jars.
5. Put on lids. Once you hear the lids pop you can tighten for a good seal.

PICKLED BEETS

- 4 cups sliced boiled beets
 - 1 cup brown sugar
 - 1 ½ cups vinegar
 - ½ cup cider vinegar
 - 10 whole cloves
 - Pinch salt & pepper
1. Pack beets into clean jars.
 2. Mix all remaining ingredients & stir until sugar is dissolved. Pour over beets.
 3. Lid & store for at least 2 days. [I have stored for a year with no spoilage, due to the large amount of vinegars.]

CARROT CAKE

2 cups sugar
 1 ¼ cups vegetable oil
 2 cups all purpose flour
 2 tsp cinnamon
 2 tsp baking powder
 1 tsp baking soda
 1 tsp salt
 4 eggs
 3 cups grated raw carrots
 1 cup chopped walnuts
 ¾ cup raisins

1. Mix sugar & oil. Add sugar mixture alternately with eggs, beating well after each addition.
2. Sift flour, soda, baking powder, cinnamon & salt.
3. Mix in sifted dry ingredients. Fold in carrots nuts & raisins.
4. Pour into a greased & floured 10 inch tube or bundt pan.
5. Bake in preheated 350 oven for 50-60 minutes. Test with toothpick. Invert onto plate when cool.
6. Ice with cream cheese frosting, drizzle with a lemon & icing sugar glaze or have it as is.

ZUCCHINI LOAF

3 cups grated zucchini
 1 ½ cups sugar
 1 cup oil
 4 eggs
 3 cups flour
 2 tsp baking powder
 1 tsp baking soda
 1 ½ tsps cinnamon
 ½ tsp salt
 1cup chopped walnuts

1. Grate unpeeled raw zucchini & mix with sugar, oil & eggs.
2. Sift the dry ingredients and add nuts.
3. Mix wet with dry.
4. Pour into greased & floured 10 inch tube pan or 9x13 pan.
5. Bake 350 for 1 ½ hours.
Check with toothpick. Cool before cutting.

~ Karen Prins

~~ OHA News ~~

Fall Seminar (District 4)

Oct. 29, 2016

Bobcaygeon

Photo competition:

- An open and shut case
- An icy landscape
- My favorite 'pest' garden visitors

OHA Convention 2017

Dates TBA

Toronto



~~~ *Over the Garden Fence* ~~~

(Neighbouring Horticultural Societies)

Brighton Horticulture meets at King Edward Community Centre, 81 Elizabeth St. 4th Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm. Upcoming Meetings: October 25, **Celestial Gardening** with Kathryn Aunger. November 22, Potluck dinner, AGM :& Installation of Officers, **Pruning** with Mellisa Spearing of Groundcovers Unlimited.

Campbellford Horticulture meets at Christ Church Anglican, Kent & Church Streets, Campbellford, 1st Monday of the month at 7:30pm. Upcoming Meetings: October 3, **Why Organic?** with Frank & Amanda Vaughn. November 7, **Fall Colour in the Garden** with Peter Green. December 5, **Wire Tree Ornaments** with Pam McEvoy.

Cobourg Horticulture meets at Cobourg Columbus Community Centre, 232 Spencer Street East (D'Arcy), 1st Wednesday of the month at 7:00pm. Upcoming Meetings: October 5, **Growing Glorious Vegetables Organically** with Paula Anderson; Awards Presentations. November 2, **Shrubs & Evergreens** with Stephen Poole; Annual General Meeting. December 7, **Native Ontario Orchids – An Unexpected Treasure**, with John Alexander & Peter Kaelgren; Christmas greenery exchange.

Grafton Horticulture meets at St. Andrews United Church, 137 Old Danforth Rd., 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:00pm. Upcoming meetings: October 11, **What's New in Seeds** with Dirk Berghot of Floribunda Seeds; Youth Awards Presentation. November 8, **Working With Nature** with Kathryn McHolm; AGM & Election of Officers. December 13 at 5:30, Christmas Pot Luck and Awards.

Omeme Blooms Garden Club meets at Trinity United Church, 3rd Monday of the month, 7:30 p.m. Upcoming meetings: August 15, **Gardening and Living Safely** and **Flower Show** at the Omeme Legion. October 17, 6:00 pm, **Summer Successes & Failures**; Potluck. November 21, **Christmas Cactus** with Sue Flinders-Adams; AGM & Photo Show.

Peterborough Horticulture meets at the Lions' Centre, 347 Burnham St., Peterborough, 4th Wednesday of the month, 7:00 p.m. Upcoming meetings: October 26, **All About Garlic** with Gail & Todd Grainger. November 23, **Bugs in the Garden** with David Beresford.

Port Hope & District Horticulture meets at the Ruth Clarke Centre, 81 Mill St. S., 2nd Monday of the Month at 7:00 pm. Upcoming Meetings: October 12, **Bridge Basket Workshop** with Liz Forder (Director); Annual Awards. November 14, **Forcing Bulbs for Home and Show** with Debb Poole of Connon Nurseries. December 12, **Christmas Display Design**; Christmas Flower & Photography Show.



~~ Please Join Us ...

... on *facebook* or online at cramahehort.ca

... or at a meeting - on the 3rd Tuesday of the month in the Keeler Centre in Colborne.

Upcoming:

October 18, 7:00 p.m.

Closing the Garden for Winter
With Stephen Poole
Photography Show

November 15

Doors open at 5:00, Dinner at 6:00 p.m.
Annual Pot Luck & Awards Dinner
AGM, Election & Installation of Officers



Photo by Barrie Wood

CRAMAHE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

President: **Sharron MacDonald**
sharron@start.ca

Secretary: **Trish O'Brien**
twillow_51@hotmail.com

Treasurer: **Clair Breton**
clairbreton@bell.net

Newsletter: **Lorelyn Morgan**
lmg@sympatico.ca

*Growing our
community
one garden at a time.*

