



Uxbridge Horticultural Society



"We Bring Gardening Down to Earth"
www.uxbridgehorticulturalsociety.com



"Your Local Garden Club News"



The Year of the Iris - photograph by Stephanie Davidson

April 2020 - Series 17, Volume 2

Dear Fellow Gardeners:

While no one could have predicted the circumstances we now find ourselves in, here we are. COVID-19 – the Coronavirus – has indeed changed our lives entirely for a long time to come. In order to beat this pandemic, we have had to change almost every aspect of our lives – how we interact with our family, friends, neighbours and community; work; leisure activities; shopping; appointments and the list goes on and on. For far too many of us, we now have to rely on technology to see and talk to our loved ones, which is difficult indeed.

The importance of social distancing and incredible attention to hygiene and sanitation/sterilization activities cannot be over-emphasized! This virus is insidious and relentless! As difficult as it may be, please pay heed to all of the directives of our medical experts and political leaders. It literally could save your life and the lives of others!

This has also thrown into question our Garden Club activities for the foreseeable future. Our meetings will remain cancelled until such time that the respective Governments deem it completely safe to resume group gatherings and the Township facilities have been deemed safe to re-open. No one can predict when that may be, and as of this week, the Province of Ontario has extended the "stay home" directive another four (4) weeks up to mid-May. **As things stand at the writing of this newsletter, our April, May and June meetings are cancelled, along with our Plant and Bake Sale at the end of May.** We will continue to communicate with you by way of this newsletter and/or e-mail notices.

Please continue to do your part to stop this pandemic! While we are unable to get together in person with family, friends and neighbours, that doesn't mean we can't socialize by phone call or video conferencing. This is a difficult time for many people, particularly those who live alone. So pick up the phone and give your friends/acquaintances a call. It could very well make their day! Also make sure you get out and get some fresh air – take a walk if you can, while maintaining a more than required safe distance. Maintaining our mental health is very important, and as gardeners, we know that Mother Nature can play a very large part in that.

We will keep you updated at the beginning of each month. In the meantime, stay safe; stay kind; stay calm; stay home!

Sandee

In Memoriam – Gerda de Ruiter

We would like to offer our sincere condolences to **Christiana Carter** and **Yvonne de Ruiter** on the passing of their beloved mother **Gerda de Ruiter** on April 3rd, 2020. **Gerda** passed away peacefully at home.

Gerda was a member of our Garden Club and a proud contributor to the Uxbridge Cottage Hospital Auxiliary, through the donation of her beautiful knitted goods. We will certainly all miss her beautiful smile!

A celebration of her life will take place at a future date at Low and Low Funeral home when it is safe for family and friends to gather together again.

At the request of the family, please do not send any flowers. If you wish, a donation to the Uxbridge Cottage Hospital would be appreciated. c/o: 4 Campbell Dr., PO box 5003, Uxbridge, ON L9P 1S4

Send Me Your IRIS photos

As your Irises come into bloom this year, please take some pictures of your favorite ones and send them to me. I will try and include as many as I can in future newsletters. Here are four of your beautiful entries in the Yearbook Cover Photo Contest. More in future newsletters.



Angie Andruss



Bev Tooley



Cathy Van Hezewijk



Christiana Carter

Virtual Garden Tours on the Internet

With our self-isolation, this is a great opportunity to take virtual tours of many of the public gardens in Canada and around the world. These can easily be accessed on YouTube. I encourage you to view the many beautiful and, in some cases, unusual, gardens! Simply go to “**YouTube**” and search under the name of the garden or “botanic gardens” and the name of a country you are interested in. Below are a few suggestions to get you started.

- **Butchart Gardens** - Victoria, British Columbia, Canada
- **Royal Botanical Gardens** - Burlington, Ontario, Canada
- **Montreal Botanical Gardens** – Montreal, Canada
- **The Great Gardens of England**
- **Kew Gardens** – London, England
- **Alhambra** – Granada, Andalusia, Spain
- **Garden of Ninfa** – Rome, Italy
- **Cairns Botanic Garden** – Queensland, Australia
- **Royal Botanic Gardens** – Sydney, Australia
- **Keukenhof Gardens** – Amsterdam, Netherlands

Uxbridge Fall Fair 2020 Cancelled

The Uxbridge Fall Fair Committee, after much deliberation, has made the decision to cancel the Uxbridge Fall Fair for 2020. This was not an easy decision, particularly given what an important and popular event the Uxbridge Fair is to the residents of Uxbridge, surrounding area and visitors from outside the immediate area. We regret having to make this decision but the health and safety of all Fair visitors, volunteers, sponsors, participants, vendors and service providers has to take precedence over all else.

The Uxbridge Horticulture Society and its many volunteers have always been valued supporters of the Fair and its horticultural and agricultural exhibits and events. The Fair Board would like to express their sincere thank-you for this ongoing support!

We are planning to be back in 2021 with a bigger and better Fair! We wish you and your families good health, and thank you again for your support!

Bev Latva

Local Resources to Assist You

There are numerous local resources available to you through this very difficult and challenging time. Absolutely one of THE very best sources of information is the website and communications by Dr. Jennifer Wilson and Dr. Carlye Jensen and the other health care professionals at the Uxbridge Health Care Centre and the Uxbridge Cottage Hospital. I encourage you to check their website at:

<https://www.uxbridgehealth.ca/>

In addition, the Uxbridge Cosmos has also published a “**Local Resources to Assist**” section in their publication which provides information on:

Local Residents and Organizations Offering Assistance such as Vince’s, Zehr’s and Walmart; several pharmacies offering home delivery; Uxbridge Helping Hands at uxbridgehelpinghand@gmail.com; and Community Care Uxbridge at 905-852-7445.

Reliable up-to-date Sources on Health such as Uxbridge Health Care Centre (above); Durham Region Local Health at durham.ca/NovelCoronavirus ; Government of Ontario public health at covid-19.ontario.ca/ ; Government of Canada at canada.ca/en/public-health.

Government Support for Coping such as Mental Health Online Support at Ontario.ca/mental_health; Price-gouging Reporting at Ontario.ca/form/report-price-gouging; Durham Region Support for Vulnerable Residents at durham.ca/covid-19-community-resources;

Regional Support for Local Businesses such as up-to-date List of Essential Businesses at ontario.ca/page/list-essential-workplaces; Durham Region Resources for Businesses at investdurham.ca/covidresponse; Federal Government Support for Businesses at canada.ca/economic-response-plan.

Support our Local Businesses

There has never been a more important time to support our local businesses! While some have closed completely, others are open for phone and on-line orders. Next month’s newsletter will have a list of all of our sponsors for this year, but we encourage you to support not only those who support us, but also all the businesses in our communities. If you are not sure if a particular business is open and you are not an internet user, please pick up the phone and give them a call. **Please support the businesses in our community!**

Starting Seeds

If you haven't had time in the past to start some of your own plants from seed, now is a good time to try. You are likely home more than you were before, so you have more time to pay attention as your seedlings start springing to life. Starting seeds for vegetables, flowers and herbs can be a lot of fun and very rewarding and is not difficult – but you do need to pay attention.

Seeds can be started in many different vessels from pots to peat pellets to egg shells to egg cartons to direct sowing in the garden, just to name a few. Do a bit of research if you are not sure whether to start seeds indoors or sow directly into the garden. Some flowers and even vegetables do not like to be replanted so need to be sowed directly into the garden. And while the choice of many different types of soil mediums to choose from can be mind-boggling, a good quality seed starting medium or even a good quality potting soil will work just fine.

I won't go into detailed instructions on starting seeds as there are such a great number of resources available on how to grow from seed – online, magazines, books, knowledgeable friends. I am not by any means an expert in growing plants from seed but as you can see from the photo below – my little seedlings have been very cooperative. Now I am just waiting for warmer weather!

Give it a try – you have nothing to lose!



“The single greatest lesson the garden teaches is that our relationship to the planet need not be zero-sum, and that as long as the sun still shines and people still can plan and plant, think and do, we can, if we bother to try, find ways to provide for ourselves without diminishing the world.”

- Michael Pollan

Caring for our Mental Health

Looking after and caring for our plants and gardens is a wonderful way to care for ourselves as well, particularly our mental health in stressful times like these.

The many benefits of gardening are well documented – reducing stress, increasing muscle tone and strength, lowering risk of illness and disease, increasing happiness and promoting continuous learning. Just being in nature is in and of itself, known to contribute to a better mood and better mental health.

You don't need to have a formal “garden” to experience the benefits of gardening. A window sill garden, a patio garden or a small raised garden on your deck can all bring mental health benefits.

Please take care of your physical and mental health through these stressful and challenging times.

“Flowers always make people better, happier, and more helpful; they are sunshine, food and medicine for the soul.”

- Luther Burban