



The Garden Master News



Newsletter of the Atlantic Master Gardeners Association

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WINTER 2017



Remembering Diana

Diana Dorothy Smith
April 15, 1963 - December 29, 2016

Inside this Issue:

Remembering Diana	1
President's Message	2-3
Mystery Plant	3
Long Line Linen in NS	4-6
Book Reviews	7-8
AMGA NEWS	9
50 Plants Annapolis Royal	10-11
AMGA Contacts	10

This issue of the Garden Master News is dedicated to the memory of **Diana Smith**.

Diana was an enthusiastic Atlantic Master Gardener, a well loved Nursing Instructor in the Dalhousie Nursing Faculty as well as a Master swimmer.

Diana became a member of AMGA in 2008. As with everything Diana did, her gardening projects were met with energy and enthusiasm!

As health issues interfered with the physical demands of her day, she continued to find gardening a healing agent.

Diana contributed greatly to our Newsletters over the years. Some of her Newsletter articles on the AMGA Website include:

<http://www.atlanticmastergardeners.ca/html/newsletter.html>

Winter 2012 - ``Remembering Cathy``, Pages 11-13

Summer 2012 - "Remembering Diana Steele", Pages 9-11

Spring 2014 - "Fameuse Apple", Pages 8-11

Summer 2015 - "HERB GARDEN "PART 1, Pages 8-10

Fall 2015 - "HERB GARDEN" - PART 2, Pages 3-7

Diana will be sadly missed by many!



Diana in her backyard garden
for YWCA Garden Tour



Presidents Message

Notes from the Treehouse

- by Lynn Brooks



It is very hard to be upbeat at this time of year. 'Dead of winter' what a horrible expression, but it accurately reflects the season. This bleakness has not been helped by our neighbours to the south making a political choice, that has left us wondering "what were they thinking"? The grey weather and all this bad news has so far not driven me to retreat to my bed and medicate with chocolates and wine. Happily seed catalogues have arrived, and online catalogues are popping up at a regular basis. And I have a new book! Christmas in my house always includes a gardening book for the Mother, this year it is 'Planting A New Perspective' by Piet Oudolf & Noel Kingsbury.

The picture above is the second year of a my newest adventure. The anchor of the bed is a Cornus Kousa 'Venus', it is wonderful addition to my tree collection, I especially like that for such a young tree (3 years on site), it flowers so prolifically. My photographic skills fail to do justice to the size of the blooms. My goal is to create a border that will be something like what a master like Piet creates.

My attempts to duplicate his style is all about getting the right blending of plants, a kind person might say mine is a work in progress. Still, even in its infancy it is already a magnet for bees and butterflies, and joy of joys, deer not so much. It just needs tweaking and more of the right plants..

Maintenance of this style of planting is a breeze, the odd weedy interloper can look right at home. Europe and the US are embracing it for their public spaces. The High Line in New York and Chicago's Lurie Garden are just two examples of Oudolf's work. The first built on a elevated train line and the other on the roof of a parking garage. Definitely not your typical herbaceous border settings. There are places in Halifax that gardens like these would make sense. Perhaps for many they appear messy. Some would sooner have a boring expanse of brown grass in winter, and the sea of dandelions in the spring. But as we move into a post industrial world with a rapidly changing climate, gardens both private and public must adapt to new realities. On the local scene, VP Jim Sharpe and I are continuing to build relationships with our libraries, dates are now set for a series of presentations in March and April. Last fall Anita Sully made contact with some local markets who expressed interest in having us do a "Ask A Master Gardener" table. It is nice to have at least two MGs attending these events for moral support and on occasion to fill in the blanks when the presenter has a senior moment. Soon the AMGA will have a interesting library of

Presidents Message

(Continued from page 2)

presentations available for everyone to use.

It is still only an idea, but while having a chat with our Secretary Aileen Reid, she mentioned in passing how she had created a version of Jeopardy for her company as a fun way to learn the ins and outs of insurance. Wouldn't that be a fun thing to do with garden clubs, instead of bringing in a speaker play "Garden Jeopardy"! So please help me to encourage her to find that file, and look to adapting it as a game for gardeners. It will need lots of suggestions for categories and answers.

Past President Heather Connors-Dunphy and Carol Goodwin have been busily working on the conference and the next newsletter should have all the details. I know everyone on the executive would appreciate hearing from the membership on this and other issues. Suggestions, criticisms, all are welcome. It is difficult for the few to make decisions for the many, so we need to hear your thoughts.

As always your executive is just a mouse click away,

- *Lynn*

Mystery Plant

Anita's Mystery Plant remains a mystery - even to Anita. Help out Anita to identify her plant !

If you have a plant that you can't identify, or that you think might stump our members, send it along to:



suestuart@bellaliant.net



Long Line Linen Comes to Nova Scotia, From Taproot Farms



-by Frances Dorsey

We are familiar with “slow food” - locally grown food that is prepared simply and deliciously; and we also value the “terroir” appellation for our local wines. The geography, climate, soil quality and rainfall subtly affect the flavours and qualities of the grapes and other things we eat and drink, rendering them distinct and grounded in a fundamental way to this place and this time. Because they are produced near by, transportation and labour are minimized and the money stays in the community. But, how much have you thought about “slow clothing”?

The textile industry is the second most polluting on our planet, behind only the petrochemical industry. The volume of herbicides, water and other chemicals used to produce and colour the cotton, wool, nylon, polyester, acrylic etc that we buy, use and toss away beggars the imagination. The Aral Sea is drying up from the demands of cotton agriculture, and China now subcontracts the dyeing of items like bluejeans to less affluent African countries that have more “flexible” pollution regulations than it does. We pay as little as possible for most purchases, and discard when stained or faded. Factories pressure their workers to labour in ever more dangerous situations for ever lower wages in the name of competition. This unsustainable downward spiral of consumption and disposal will inevitably end, and it is hard to imagine just what lies ahead for us all when that happens. But here in Nova Scotia there is a glimmer of light.

No one is proposing that we go back to the days before the Industrial Revolution, when most people owned only two or three shirts or dresses, each being made from hand-spun, hand-dyed, hand-woven, hand-sewn fabric grown nearby. But, when it comes to our clothing we have lost the appreciation we still lavish on our local fruits and vegetables, maple syrup, honey and so on. That is, until the Taproot Farms Fibrelab came up with its own brash and courageous proposition to grow flax, process it, spin, dye and weave it and then produce a line of local garments and domestic textiles.

When Dr Christine Holzer-Hunt, Dean at NSCAD and Dr Richard Donald, the VP for Research at the NS Agriculture College began a chance conversation in an airport waiting area some years ago, they immediately realized that there were collaborative possibilities that could benefit students from both institutions. After a series of meetings, small conferences, visiting experts and trips, involving a growing list of interested and supportive people, to see how other places addressed some of the production dilemmas, the Taproot Fibrelab was born.

The idea to invest in local flax was seeded at a FFANDS (Fibre, Fabric and Natural Dyes Symposium) forum hosted at TapRoot in 2011. Patricia Bishop, the farm’s co-owner, participated in the forum and had a vision for a local natural fibre industry, an industry that seems to have disappeared from the mainstream.

Long Line Linen Comes to Nova Scotia

(Continued from page 5)

At the time, Bishop recalls, she asked herself: “Why don’t we do it here anymore and could we do it here again, and is now the time? Is now the time to rethink local fibre production? I want to grow a shirt!”.

The first acre of flax was planted soon after and by now they have been experimenting with seed for some years to find the best varieties for the Nova Scotia climate.

Flax from the past few years, at different stages of processing, is now being used.



Newly sown flax at Taproot Farms 2013



Flax retting in field after harvesting

photos F. Dorsey 2013

A stumbling block has been the processing machinery, which tends to be either too large-scale (think of photographs of acres of machinery in a Chinese factory) or too “hand made” (the first European settlers) so a crucial step was to develop a line of flax processing machines that are priced competitively, could be purchased by a community or would load onto a flatbed truck so a community could rent the line for a month, process their product and then send the machines to the next community. Prototypes for these machines are in the test or early production stages, as are long-line spinning machines, working in collaboration with Belfast Minimills of PEI.



The rippler removes seed bolls from stalks



The scutcher beats the stalks to remove the shive

*photos courtesy of TapRoot Farms
photos S. Farmer*

Long Line Linen Comes to Nova Scotia

(Continued from page 6)

For additional pictures and more information please check : www.taprootfarms.ca/TapRoot-Fibre-Lab. Hand in hand with this longline linen production is finding a use for the waste at every stage; the shive can be used for animal bedding or garden mulch, the seeds can be used for future crops, animal feed or pressed for oil, and the tow can be spun with wool to create more wonderful yarns.

Additional research linked to this includes a natural dye project to light and wash-test linen samples from dye plants such as alder (*Alnus rugosa*), goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*), ladies bedstraw (*Galium verum*), weld (*Reseda luteola*), and woad (*Isatis tinctoria*) that are either indigenous or sympathetic to this climate, that can be included in the farm cycle, or are waste components like apple tree prunings (*Malus* spp.) that are already abundant and could be pulled out of the existing cycle for extraction. Another project involves designing a small line of garments that are elegant, simple and useable by differently-abled as well as fully-abled individuals.



**Alder-dyed linen jacket
designed by G. Markle**



**Weld-dyed linen dress
designed by G. Markle**

Yet another involves weaving yardages and dyeing and/or printing linen yardage for domestic use.



Block printed and

Photos F. Dorsey

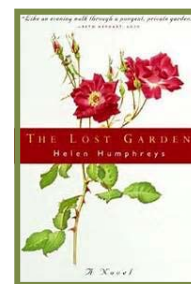
The surface has just begun to be scratched! These initiatives involve students and young graduates at every stage of the planning and production, and could result in an industry that keeps our talented young entrepreneurs, farmers and artist/artisans here in the province.

Obviously this local linen initiative is not going to solve the world's textile/waste problems, but it demonstrates that a change in spirit may prevail and we could begin to become more conscious of the repercussions of our decisions, choose to have fewer clothing items, choose those that are long lasting, of high quality, and local, and keep them out of the waste stream for much longer. One thing is definite; a gorgeous local product from our gardens and farms is about to make big waves far beyond our rocky shores, and is just cause for celebration and hope.



Book Reviews

- by Pauline Kemp



While I am still waiting to get out on the garden, I read, a lot, and not only seed catalogues. I have quite a collection of novels and history books that feature plants and gardens, so thought I might share some of my favourites.

The Language of Flowers

- by Vanessa Diffenbaugh

A well written novel, beautifully weaves past and present, creating a vivid portrait of an unforgettable woman whose gift for flowers helps her change the lives of others even as she struggles to overcome her own troubled past. The Victorian language of flowers was used to convey romantic expressions: honeysuckle for devotion, asters for patience, and red roses for love. But for Victoria Jones, it's been more useful in communicating grief, mistrust, and solitude. After a childhood spent in the foster-care system, she is unable to get close to anybody, and her only connection to the world is through flowers and their meanings. Now eighteen and emancipated from the system, Victoria has nowhere to go and sleeps in a public park, where she plants a small garden of her own. Soon a local florist discovers her talents, and Victoria realizes she has a gift for helping others through the flowers she chooses for them. But a mysterious vendor at the flower market has her questioning what's been missing in her life, and when she's forced to confront a painful secret from her past, she must decide

whether it's worth risking everything for a second chance at happiness.

The Lost Garden

- by Helen Humphreys

Spring 1941, a young horticulturist is ordered to the Devon countryside to instruct girls to grow crops for the home front on a beautiful but neglected country estate.

More of a emotional novel than a gardening book it is a short, well written story of that place & time, the life of the Land Girls.

Another book on this topic is:

A Green and Pleasant Land - How England's Gardeners fought the Second World War

- by Ursula Buchan,

very much a history of gardening during the war years. Definitely not a novel, but a very well researched history of how Britain was able to change from its dangerous reliance on imported food to turning great areas of parkland, playing fields & bowling greens into gardens, and encouraging its inhabitants to dig up their roses and grow potatoes and cabbages. There were great losses as stately home owners and nurserymen destroyed acres of valuable and often irreplaceable plants, but all were persuaded to 'dig for victory'.



Book Reviews

(Continued from page 7)

Earthly Joys and The Virgin Earth

- by Philippa Gregory

Some years ago I read the two books written about the John Tradescants, father and son, and enjoyed them both tremendously. Although purely historical fiction, all the garden references are interesting. They tell the story of John Tradescant, father and son, botanists and gardeners to the politicians and royalty of their day. John senior scours the world and amasses a huge collection of new and beautiful species of plants, and other curiosities. These are books full of politics, personal discovery and glorious gardening details. John Tradescant the younger has inherited his father's unique collection of plants along with his unerring ability to be able to nurture them. But as gardener to Charles I, he confronts an unbearable dilemma when England descends into Civil War. His political life is divided between royalist and rebel, his plant hunting and nurturing between England and America, and emotional life is divided between two women. Through all the upheavals of the new world order the Tradescants strive to consolidate their reputations as the greatest gardeners in the country. The Tradescant collection is in the Ashmolean Museum, thought to be swindled from them by Elias Ashmole.

And one more, on tulips, as we look anxiously wait to see our own coming up:

Tulipomania

- by Mike Dash

is the history of the tulip from its origins in Central Asia, through its place of honour in the gardens of Constantinople to the most coveted flower in Europe in the seventeenth century. In the 1630s Dutch citizens from every walk of life were caught up in a frenzy of buying and selling tulips. The tulip was the first futures market in history and its rise and fall are well documented. This is a fascinating well written book about the tulip, with an extensive bibliography.



Happy
10th
Anniversary

AMGA NEWS



AMGA Conference 2017

- Celebrating 10 years

Following is a **Tentative** schedule for the AMGA 2017 Conference to be held July 6th and 7th in the Studio in Collins Building, Dal Agricultural Campus:

Day 1, July 6, 2017

8:30-9:00am - Registration and Welcome

9:00-10:30am - AMGA PowerPoint Presentations available /how to use them by Aileen Reid.

10:30-10:45am Coffee Break - Anniversary Celebration with Level 1 students.



10:45am - 12:15pm- Gardening for Wildlife by Carol Goodwin

12:15-1:00pm - Lunch



1:30 - 3:30pm - **AGM**

3:30 - 4:00pm - Plant Exchange and presentation of 10th Anniversary Plants

5:30 -7:30pm - Dinner- King Lam Restaurant
39 Main St, Truro, NS

7:30pm-Graduation/Certification/Recert.

Day 2, July 7, 2017

9:00-10:00am - Research and Advice on Growing Christmas Trees, by Dr Raj Lada

10:00 - 10:15 - Coffee Break

Day 2 (continued):

10:15- 11:30 am - Atlantic Canada Regional Seed Bank and Seed Security—ACORN Speaker, Steph Hughes

11:30am -12:00pm - Members in the Spotlight

12:00 - 1:00pm - Lunch on your own

1:00 - 2:00pm- Garden Tour, Bible Hill

2:00 - 3:00pm - Identifying and Protecting Native Bees (Karen or Paul - Dal Ag)

NOTE: Please review this schedule. Any questions or comments may be sent to any executive member listed on the last page of this Newsletter. We look forward to seeing you at the Conference!



Another opportunity you might not want to miss is the 2017 **NSAGC Convention** hosted by Cape Breton, District 1, June 2nd and 3rd Inverary Inn, Baddeck. Check details out here:

<http://www.nsagc.com/NSAGC%20Convention%202017%20Registration%20Form.pdf>

The deadline date for submitting articles for the Spring Newsletter will be April 28th. Send your articles to: suestuart@bellaliant.net.

The next AMGA Executive meeting is scheduled for April 2nd/17. Items you would like to have discussed can be sent to an Executive member (See list page 12)

'50' Great Plants at Annapolis Royal Historic Gardens

- by Karen Achenbach

<i>Tilia europeana</i>	European Linden
<i>Ulmus americana</i>	American Elm
<i>Rhododendron 'Bellefontaine'</i>	Rhododendron
<i>Hydrangea aspera subsp. sargentiana</i>	Sargent's Hydrangea
<i>Calocedrus decurrens</i>	Incense Cedar
<i>Actinidia arguta</i>	Hardy Kiwi
<i>Actinidia kolomitka</i>	Variegated Kiwi Vine
<i>Asimina triloba</i>	Pawpaw
<i>Sorbus alnifolia</i>	Korean Mountain Ash
<i>Vitex negundo 'Heterophylla'</i>	Cut-leaf Chaste Tree
<i>Paulownia tomentosa 'Coreana'</i>	Empress Tree
<i>Cephalotaxus harringtonia 'Fastigiata'</i>	Japanese Plum Yew
<i>Pyrus salicifolia pendula 'Silfroza'</i>	Weeping Silver Pear
<i>Heptacodium miconioides</i>	Seven Sons Flower
<i>Franklinia alatamaha</i>	Franklinia
<i>Prunus 'Kiku-shidare-zakura'</i>	Chenail's Weeping Cherry
<i>Rubus cockburnianus</i>	Ghost or White-stemmed Bramble
<i>Disanthus cercidifolius</i>	Heart-leaved Disanthus, Redbud Hazel
<i>Taxus baccata 'Adpressa'</i>	English Yew
<i>Acer rufinerve</i>	Grey Snakebark or Redvein Maple
<i>Acer capillipes</i>	Kyushu or Red Snakebark Maple
<i>Salix gracilistylus 'Melanostachys'</i>	Black Pussy Willow
<i>Acer griseum</i>	Paperbark Maple
<i>Stewartia pseudocamellia</i>	Japanese Stewartia
<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	Tulip Tree
<i>Aesculus x carnea 'Briontii'</i>	Red Horse Chestnut
<i>Abies koreana</i>	Korean Fir
<i>Gleditsia triacanthos var. inermis 'Ruby Lace'</i>	Honey Locust
<i>Abies holophylla</i>	Manchurian Fir, Needle Fir
<i>Abies koyamae</i>	Koyamae Fir
<i>Fargesia murielae</i>	Umbrella Bamboo



50' Great Plants

(Continued from Page 10)



<i>Fargesia nitida</i>	Fountain Bamboo
<i>Chionanthus virginicus</i>	Fringetree
<i>Magnolia virginiana</i>	Swamp Magnolia, Sweetbay Magnolia
<i>Cedrus deodara</i> 'Shalimar'	Deodar Cedar
<i>Cedrus libani</i>	Cedar of Lebanon
<i>Cedrus atlantica</i> 'Glaucua'	Blue Atlas Cedar
<i>Davidia involucrata</i>	Dove Tree, Handkerchief Tree
<i>Metasequoia glyptostroboides</i>	Dawn Redwood
<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>	Black Tupelo, Blackgum
<i>Parrotia persica</i> 'Pendula'	Persian Ironwood
<i>Aesculus sylvatica</i>	Painted Buckeye
<i>Aesculus pavia</i>	Red Buckeye
<i>Aesculus parviflora</i>	Bottlebrush Buckeye
<i>Gunnera tinctoria</i>	Chilean Gunnera, Giant Rhubarb
<i>Rhododendron</i> 'Nancy Steele'	Rhododendron
<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>	Ginkgo
<i>Nothofagus antarctica</i>	Antarctic Beech
<i>Picea abies</i> 'Froburg'	Froburg's Weeping Norway Spruce
<i>Picea glauca</i> 'Acadia'	Acadian Spruce
<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>	Lawson Cypress, Lawson False Cypress, Port Orford Cedar
<i>Koelreuteria paniculata</i>	Golden Rain Tree
<i>Oxydendrum arboreum</i>	Sourwood
<i>Ricinus communis</i>	Castor bean
<i>Sciadopitys verticillata</i>	Umbrella Pine
<i>Cercidiphyllum japonicum</i>	Katsura
<i>Taxodium distichum</i>	Bald Cypress

NOTE: The Acadian spruce: "*Picea glauca* 'Acadia' is a discovery of the late Wilfred Armstrong, of Granville Ferry. It is very reminiscent of the Dwarf Alberta Spruce, but discovered in the woods of Nova Scotia. He propagated it and donated one to the Annapolis Royal Historic Gardens (It's in the Rock Garden). I don't know if he ever tried to register it. As to the 'proper' name? *Picea glauca* 'Acadia' is what we call it! - Karen

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