

SUMMER 2007

The Oracle

A newsletter from the Darts Hill Garden Conservancy Trust Society

Darts Hill Garden Park is located on 16th Avenue, at 170th Street, Surrey, B.C. Accessible by pre-booked tours only. Call 604-501-5050 for your tour.

COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR –

Linda Stanley Wilson

Greetings! It's finally Spring (even though June has just arrived.)

We had a tremendous turn-out for our Spring Open Houses with well over 1000 people able to visit the garden during our Open Houses in April and May. This year, we were able to offer our visitors a “piece” of the garden to take home with our first-ever garden sale organized by the Propagation Committee. The sale was very successful and I believe that you will be seeing more available from the Propagation Committee during your visits this year.

Having just been elected as Chair, I have not yet set forth my goals with the Board, but I would like to share with you some of the ideas that I'd like to accomplish during my tenure. Firstly, I wish to further bring Darts Hill to the attention of the public by enhancing our Marketing and Public Relations efforts. I look forward to building on the efforts of our Marketing Committee. Plans are already underway to further develop our website so that the graphics and style are consistent with our fabulous new brochure. I also plan to expand our relationship with the Partners in Parks program to bring new volunteers into our program.



Francisca sitting on one of the original garden benches recently placed in the center of the new bed #50.

And finally, I am excited about the opportunity to work with our Education Committee to strengthen our relationship with Surrey schools. We have already had two grade three classes visit the garden, enhancing their curriculum with experiential learning.

I am very interested in hearing about your experiences in the garden and ideas about how we can enhance your visits. I invite your feedback! Please send me your thoughts, ideas and photos. You can e-mail me directly at: lindasw@mac.com

See you in the garden!

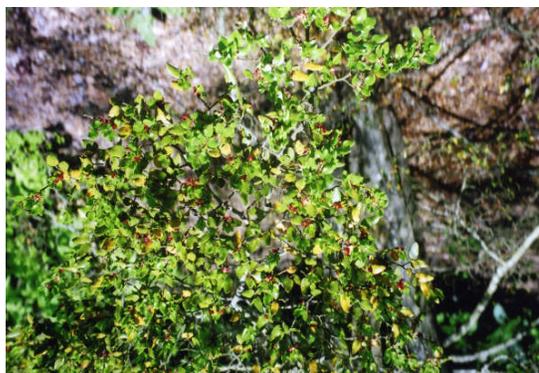
Linda

GARDEN OPERATIONS – update, by Graham Laine

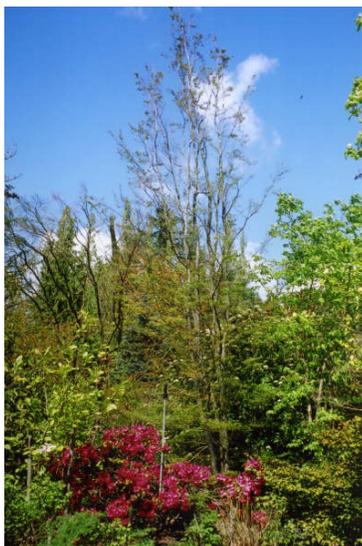
Over the years Margaret Charlton and Charlie Sale have given many plants to the garden. This spring Charlie arranged for eight special Magnolias from UBC. We will keep them in pots until the Fall when suitable sites can be made ready for planting. Charlie was also able to secure for us (at the UBC auction) a Cornus Kousa ‘Summer Fun’. This tree has white and pink leaves with blue/grey centers. I am looking forward to planting this white flowering Japanese Dogwood.



Work has begun on the renovation of the center beds. Those with bark mulch over heavy landscape cloth. A test section at the top of bed #33 is complete with the removal of the cloth, raising of the plants (mostly shrubs) and improving the clay soil with coarse sand and clean mulches raising the bed level by at least six inches.



The large Eucalyptus on the driveway was not so lucky and is dead to the ground. It may however grow back from the root as it did following the cold winter of 89-90.



Nothofagus solandri var. cliffortioides. This evergreen southern beech from New Zealand is not fully hardy here but did survive this winter with some foliage damage. Our tree, a multi-trunk specimen, 30ft +, growing in bed#34 has tiny dark red flowers in early May.

“Flowering cherry” - We have planted a flowering cherry in the north west field area to recognize Susan Murray’s study of trees and long connection to Darts Hill Garden Park. The Prunus ‘Shirofugen’ is a late flowering fragrant double white (pink in bud) with attractive bronze coloured new foliage.



Weeding

Unfortunately we have not had the volunteer turnout as we had hoped for to assist in garden weeding. Just a reminder that the garden is open for volunteer weeders on Wednesday and Saturday mornings from 9am to 1pm. If you can spare an hour or two within that time we would appreciate your help.

Bed 50:

The two Rhododendrons moved into this bed, Rh. Edwin and Rh. Francisca took a beating with the weather extremes this winter. They are however flowering now in mid-May and I hope the plants will fill out over the next few years. Can we help this along? So, for you knowledgeable Rhodo folk out there, can we take tip cuttings/scion wood and graft onto lower trunk/branches or the root just below the soil level to ultimately fill out the shrubs on the south side. Alternatively it may be possible to bend down a lower branch and layer it at the plant base. At the very least we should take a few cuttings to produce new plants of both Rhodos for our own stock to place in other parts of the garden in various exposures.

Darts Hill Guides Looking Forward to New Season

On March 10, 2007, the Guides of Darts Hill held their first meeting of the 2007 season and had an early celebration of Francisca's 91st birthday. Planning for the upcoming year was the main focus of the meeting, and much of the conversation centered around the goal of increasing awareness of and access to the garden.

School tours will be encouraged, with the focus on Grade 3 students. Tours will be designed to address three outcomes of the Grade 3 Science curriculum: (1.) *Compare familiar plants according to similarities and differences in appearances and life cycles*, (2.) *Describe ways in which plants are important to other living things and the environment*, and (3.) *Describe how plants are harvested and used throughout the seasons*. A number of enthusiastic guides have volunteered to conduct the tours; and Lynn Morfitt, a guide and elementary school teacher herself, gave a presentation on working with school children. As a pilot project, two school tours will be conducted on May 24.

The guides also decided to continue advertising of specialized garden tours in the *Surrey Leisure Guide* as a means of raising public awareness of Darts Hill and bringing people into the garden during off-peak periods. They also accepted an invitation to have an information booth and display at GardenWorks on March 17 and 18.

There are currently 26 Guides, and there is always room for more. Qualifications include a love of Darts Hill Garden, knowledge of plants, and a keen desire to learn more. Contact Nancy Oike (604-535-6245) or Sue Muraja (604-536-2511) for further information.

Photograph:

Back Row (left to right): Rose Mary Wald, Reta Gray, Peter Thompson, James Good, Lynn Morfitt, Nancy Armstrong, Lily-Ann Nassey, and Wendy Fidgeon.

Front Row (left to right): Christine Deagle, Mary Dunn, Francisca Darts, Pamela Morninglight, Carol Wong, Nancy Oike, Anna Burian, and Sue Muraja.

Missing from Photo: Marilena Fluckiger, Paula Hart, Diane Langmead, Gwen Odermatt, Joe Rykuiter, Hennie Smid, John Smith, Sharon Williams, and Linda Wright



Early Spring Bulbs and Blooms Tour - For Darts Hill Guides, Led by Ann Burian

Darts Hill Guides regularly participate in education sessions, which may be conducted by outside experts or by guides with a particular interest. On March 10, Ann Burian, one of Darts Hill's knowledgeable long-term guides, led a tour of the garden, which focussed on the early blooms and bulbs in the garden. One of the first plants to capture attention was *Primula elatior* or oxslip, found in Bed 6 at the Meet and Greet area (see photo).

This vibrant plant, native to northern Europe, is easily grown in shade in heavy, rich, chalky soil. From the Meet and Greet area, Ann led her group to Beds 25 and 26 to discover a rich array of early bulbs and other flowering plants, including *Galanthus nivalis*, *Crocus tommasinianus*, *Cyclamen hederifolium*, *C. coum*, *Eranthis hyemalis*, *Scilla siberica*, *Iris histrioides*, *Camassia leichtlinii*, *Pulmonaria angustifolia*, *Hepatica*, and a variety of hellebores. Heading back toward the parking lot, Ann pointed out the many colours of *Primula* species and hybrids in Bed 40, the *Trillium sessile*, just emerging in Bed 11, and *Ranunculus ficaria*, growing a little too vigorously in Bed C3. Despite the rain, which just kept getting heavier, the tour was enjoyed and appreciated by all.



PROPAGATION COMMITTEE

Sanne Dryborough is the Chair of the Propagation Committee

The Darts Hill Garden Society have held our first plant sale, thanks to the efforts of the Propagation Committee members. The sale took place at the Spring Open Days and we saw over \$1200 income.

The purpose of this committee is to propagate the plants of Darts Hill Garden Park, as needed, for replacing and expanding the existing inventory and for fundraising purposes. Volunteers are still needed – not just to dig or take cuttings but to help pot up seedlings and to water plants in the plunge beds at the garden.

If you can spare a bit of time on occasion and would like to help with this Committee, please contact Sanne at 604-536-4506.



SPRING OPEN HOUSE UPDATE

1095 visitors were in the garden over the two open days – April 29 and May 6 – what a success! We signed up 23 new members to our Society – welcome! Comments we received included: amazing, beautiful, hidden treasure. Thank you to the volunteers who helped and to the guides for their knowledge and continued support of the Garden.

Autumn Open House – October 14, 2007 – 10:00 – 4:00. This is a great time to see the many changes of colour and textures in the garden – please spread the word to your friends and local community groups.

Reminder: The Garden is closed in August

FAUNA CORNER



Whether it's a cute Easter bunny or a pesky wabbit, why is it that the more you pay for a plant, the faster the rabbit finds it? Photo provided by Ann.



Can anyone I.D. this bird?

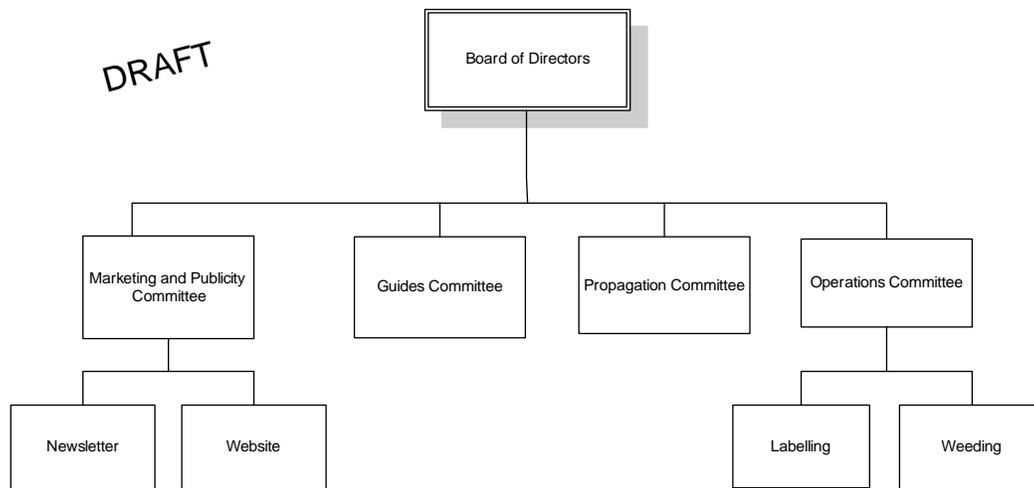
Frost Damage in 2006 – submitted by Dr. John Smith

Frost of any severity is almost unknown in October, but in November there have been severe sudden frosts in 1985(-7), 1993(-6), 2003(-8), 2006(-9). These frosts are sudden and extreme, and the plants have not had time to harden-off. The severe frost of 2006 started on November 26 with a very heavy fall of snow, which crushed many shrubs and tore the branches off cherry trees. The snow was very wet and very heavy and froze unto the branches within a day. It was followed by out-flow conditions and a fall in temperature to below-9 Celsius for four days. The snowfall was 32 cms deep and insulated lower-growing shrubs, some of which were also protected by Hessian. This article is a report of the survival of exotic shrubs on Panorama Ridge and Darts Hill Garden Park in Surrey, British Columbia under these conditions.

<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	Leaves slightly burnt
<i>Berberidopsis</i>	Lowest shoots survived, upper shoots killed
<i>Calistemon</i>	Some were killed, some survived
<i>Camellia</i>	<i>wilsonii</i> and <i>sasanqua</i> both killed
<i>Cistus</i>	<i>crispus</i> , <i>purpureus</i> , <i>scanbergii</i> Allan Frad <i>viticillata</i> , all killed. Sunset, Bennetts white damaged.
	<i>Heterophilus</i> , <i>ladiniferus</i> , <i>cobariensis</i> , <i>laurifolius</i> , Blanche, Elna, Peggy Salmons, Mrs Smith undamaged
<i>Ceratostigma willmotianum</i>	undamaged
<i>Cytisus</i> x Porlock	killed
<i>Battandierii</i>	killed
<i>Crinodendron hookerianum</i>	strikings in cold frame survived
<i>patagua</i>	strikings in cold frame survived, plant in open ground died
<i>Daphne genkwa</i>	shoots exposed above snow died, below the snow survived
<i>Odora</i> , <i>giraldii</i> , <i>Blageana</i> , <i>mezereum</i> , <i>tangutica</i> , <i>caucasia</i> , <i>cnoreum</i> , <i>Burkwoodii</i>	All survived undamaged
<i>Edgeworthia</i>	Terminal shoots and blossoms killed. Plant survived
<i>Desfontainea spinosa</i>	Unexpectedly undamaged
<i>Eucryphia glutinosa</i>	Unexpectedly undamaged
<i>Eucalyptus</i>	All killed except <i>Moorei nana</i>
<i>Ficus carica</i>	Nine varieties tried, Desert King quite undamaged
<i>Fremontia</i>	Damaged in 2003, killed in 2006
<i>Halimium atriclipifolium</i>	Always killed by frost
<i>Halimium lasianthum</i>	Undamaged
<i>Grevillea victoriae</i>	Undamaged
<i>Halimicistus sahuicii</i>	Undamaged
<i>Halimicistus wintonensis</i>	Undamaged
<i>Halimicistus merrist wood cream</i>	Slight damage
<i>Itea ilicifolia</i>	Some damage
<i>Itea virginica</i>	Undamaged
<i>Jasminum officinale</i>	Wall protection, no damage
<i>Jasminum mesnyi</i>	killed
<i>Mitraria coccinea</i>	Undamaged, covered by snow
<i>Lycesteria formosa</i>	Undamaged
<i>Lycesteria crycothercos</i>	Undamaged
<i>Piptanthus nepalensis</i>	Killed
<i>Rosa bractea</i>	Root survived, shoots killed
<i>Sophora davidii</i>	Undamaged
<i>Sophora tetraptera</i> Sun King	Killed despite protection
<i>Stachyurus</i>	Undamaged but bloomed poorly
<i>Ulex parvifolius</i>	Killed
<i>Wisteria</i>	Unprotected shoots killed, poor blossoms

DHG Conservancy Trust Society

BOARD OF DIRECTORS	
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DID YOU KNOW? (provided by City of Surrey Staff)

No Alcohol in Parks - Did you know that alcohol is not permitted in Surrey's Parks and that anyone found drinking alcohol in a park is committing an offence, subject to Bylaw 13480? Help keep our parks a welcoming environment and respect your fellow park users.

Parks are Closed Dusk to Dawn - Did you know the City of Surrey's Parks Bylaw states that park spaces are closed between dusk and dawn? Enjoy our lit facilities but please be respectful of our park neighbours and stay out of the parks after dusk.

Damage In Your Park? - Sometimes bad things happen to good parks. If you notice any damage or vandalism in your local park please call Surrey's Service Request Line at 604-501-5050. If you are interested helping keep your park free from vandalism join our Partners In Parks volunteer program. Call the Service Request Line to get more information!



An organization working in partnership with the
City of Surrey to ensure the preservation of Darts Hill Garden Park

