

The Oracle

www.dartshill.ca

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.

Carrierea calycina

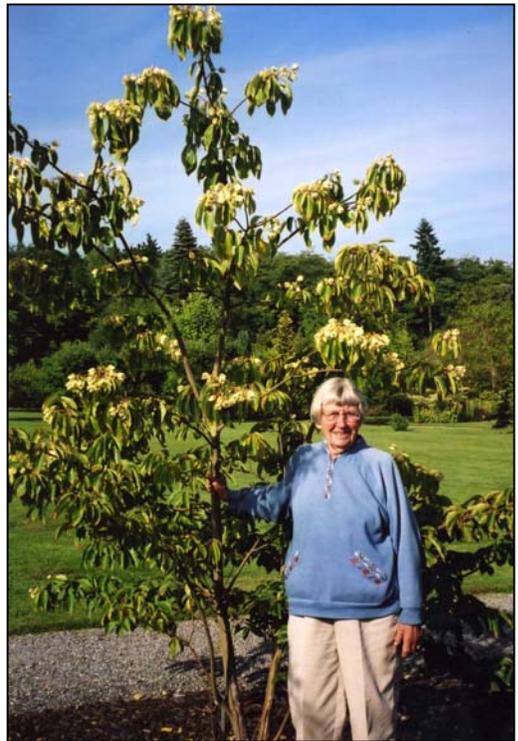
By Douglas Justice

Associate Director and Curator of Collections

UBC Botanical Garden & Centre for Plant Research

Carrierea calycina is a rarely cultivated deciduous or semi-evergreen tree native to southern China known for its large, glossy leaves and extraordinary flowers, which are comprised of large, creamy, cup-shaped, densely pubescent calyses (there are no petals), surrounding either fuzzy, spindle-shaped carpels (on female trees) or masses of stamens (on male trees). Until very recently, it was only known in the West from a very few old plants in British gardens. These were originally derived from seed collected by E.H. "Chinese" Wilson in the early part of the last century, and although Wilson thought the species had great promise as a garden plant, his optimism evidently did not prove well-founded (according to the commentary in W.J Bean's seminal *Trees and Shrubs Hardy in the British Isles*). Recently, however, Peter Wharton, Curator of the David C. Lam Asian Garden recollected this species in the Dashahe Cathaya Reserve in Guizhou, China. Seed of this collection was disseminated widely, both locally and in the UK.

Plants of *Carrierea calycina* in the Asian Garden at UBC (planted in 1995) have not flowered, though they are growing very strongly and look wonderful. One of the local seed recipients was Francisca Darts, who raised a fine specimen in her garden. Her tree, a multi-stemmed specimen planted in the open, flowered heavily this year, to the delight of all who saw it, and showed itself to be a female. We recently learned that a female plant in the Hampshire garden of esteemed



Francisca with *Carrierea calycina*

horticulturist and plant collector Roy Lancaster, flowered last spring, as did a male plant in garden two counties to the east (in Kent). We learned this from Roy himself, as he was visiting UBC during his stay for the Hardy Plant Society Study Weekend in Vancouver and saw our plants. We hope that when our plants flower at UBC that we'll have a suitable pair close enough to transfer pollen successfully. These handsome trees appear to be quite adaptable in this area, although their hardiness has not been thoroughly tested. Perhaps Wilson's reputation can be salvaged, yet.



A closer view of the flowers of "Carrierea calycina". Hopefully in the near future we can find, and plant nearby, a male form of this shrub to help produce viable seeds from this specimen for future propagation. Photo taken by: Graham Laine

UPCOMING MEMBER DAYS:

Make sure you have the following Fall dates on your calendar: The garden is open to members and their guests from 11:00 – 3:00 pm.

Sunday September 18
Sunday October 16
Sunday November 20

Autumn Open House: October 22 – 10:00 – 4:00 pm. Volunteers are needed to help out at the "Meet & Greet" desk in two hour shifts. Please call Kathy at 604.501.5067 if you can help out.

'Darts Hill' has a new on site ride-on mower, seen here being operated by Surrey's gardener Brian. It is a Walker 20 H.P. bagging mower and is versatile enough to efficiently cut 95% of the grass areas in the garden.



Comments from the Chair: Susan Murray

"I am once again struck by how fast the summer months fly by. All those things left undone... in the garden... in my home... but as the temperature cools, my resolve to complete this task or that task which I volunteered to do solidifies. On behalf of the Darts Hill Garden Conservancy Trust Society, I am pleased to write that several individuals have volunteered their time on behalf of the garden this fall and into the coming year.

Many thanks to Mr. Greg Simms, who has volunteered to chair the Publicity and Marketing Committee. Mr. Barry Roberts has joined the Conservancy Trust Board as a Director. Ms. Christine Deagle has taken on the responsibility of Membership Coordinator. Mr. Jim Tonn, from the Surrey Foundation, has agreed to be the liaison between the Conservancy Trust and the Foundation.

A new subcommittee of the Garden Operations Committee was struck this summer, called the Propagation Group, and is chaired by Mr. John Smith, with Ms. Monique Kroeger as recording secretary.

Each time a new individual steps forward and agrees to take on a task, however large or small, it reminds me of how necessary and valuable volunteers are to the well being and development of Darts Hill Garden Park. It reminds me that more helping hands are needed to continue the good work begun by Francisca and Ed so many years ago. Please consider volunteering your time this fall."



MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT – by Christine Deagle

Those members who visited the garden on Members' Days in June and July will have had the opportunity to enter our first two little contests. Your membership committee, comprising Nancy Oike and myself, are attempting to make your visits to Darts Hill even more enjoyable. We have found that by learning through observation we are able to better appreciate the individual beauty of the bark, leaves, flowers or fragrance of the many different species in the garden. We have decided to encourage all members to join us in looking closely at the plants. So we will have a question (with a maybe cryptic clue) at each Members' Day which will cause you to hunt for the plant in question. All answers will go into a draw for a small prize to be awarded to the first correct answer picked at random at the end of the day.

Our first question, in June, was "I have fuzzy red pea pods – what am I?". The answer was *Robinia hispida*, and the prize, a *Primula* 'Francisca', was won by Elaine Hussey and Larry Zelmer. (See photograph.) In July our question was "I have pale blue, fragrant flowers. Most members of my family like to climb – I am much better behaved. What am I?" The answer was *Clematis heracleifolia* var. Davidiana. The prize, this time a *Robinia hispida*, was won by Antonella and Greg Sims. Congratulations to both couples. The next Members' Day will be on Sunday September 18th, 2005, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. There will be another contest – so do come, walk around and enjoy the garden, and maybe you can win our next small prize.



Primula 'Francisca' Photo by C. Deagle

If you can think of any other ways in which we can provide added value to your membership of the Darts Hill Society, please let Nancy or me know. Our telephone numbers are: Nancy 604-535-6245, and Christine 604-538-4972.

A change to when memberships are due for renewal was approved by the Board at their last meeting. Your memberships are now "evergreen". This means that for new members who joined us in 2005, renewals will be due at the end of the month one year after you first joined the Society, instead of at the end of the calendar year as it was in the past. (For example, if a membership was received on July 15th, 2005, that membership will be due for renewal on July 31st 2006.)



Elaine Hussey and Larry Zelmer with *Primula* 'Francisca'

Those of you who joined the Society before 2005 will have renewed your memberships at the end of December 2004. They will therefore be due for renewal December 31st, 2005. I apologize if this sounds confusing. You will receive a letter of reminder from the Membership Chair a month before your membership is due.

Due to the special nature of the blooming of *Carrierea calycina*, we have printed the front page in colour, however full colour versions of this newsletter are available at:

www.dartshill.ca

Questions can also be directed to the Society through the www.dartshill.ca.



This annual grass Zea mays 'Harlequin' (variegated sweet corn) adds interest and colour to the perennials in bed #44. Phlox paniculata 'Becky Towe' is in the foreground. Photo taken by: Graham Laine

Surrey's ReLeaf Tree Planting Program

"Helping the environment one tree at a time!
October and April of every year is community volunteer tree planting season. Surrey's ReLeaf Tree Planting Program can set up a planting in your neighborhood park or boulevard. Do your neighbours or sports team have an idea for a location to plant shade and boulevard trees? Community groups, schools, Scouts, Guides, places of worship and businesses are all welcome. We supply trees, gloves and shovels – you supply your energy and enthusiasm. Please call 604-501-5121 to arrange a planting date for your group!

Membership application:

Individual Rate/Senior/Youth	\$20.00
Couple (2 people at the same address)	\$25.00
Family (2 adults, 2 children under 18)	\$35.00

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov. _____

Postal code: _____

Please make cheque payable to: 'Darts Hill Society' and mail cheque to:

909 – 164A Street, Surrey, B.C. V4A 8N1



Guides in the Garden:
 Peter Thompson enjoying a break under Magnolia tripetala



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

