

Kitchener Horticultural Society

President's Report for 2006

This year as I think about my report for 2006, I am looking out the window at the 'green' garden and the thermometer reads 10 deg C and I am wondering what Horticulture will hold for the future. Will we see a new trend in gardening; will the vast variety of plants become even more diversified; and how will we as Horticulturalists improve and contribute to our new environment?

This year marked the 100th anniversary of the Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA). The OHA is the parent body under which all 282 Societies in Ontario operate. These Societies are divided into 19 districts and our district, the Region of Waterloo, has 9 Societies. We were the last district named and are District 19. The Presidents of our 9 Societies meet twice annually to conduct workshops, arrange lectures, and do business on your behalf. As a member of the Kitchener Horticultural Society, you are also a member of the OHA and may join in any Society activities across the Province. The meeting this year in New Hamburg with Carl Hiebert as the speaker, was one of these meetings. The Annual Convention of the OHA held in Ottawa was another and it was attended by three Kitchener members.

Other than the AGM, our Society does not meet with its membership as do other Societies to explain the logistics of our organization. Accordingly, I took this last day of my Presidency to report something different to you. The following reports of activities detail the operations of the various committees and are not in need of repetition. Any and all comments are welcome.

Things to look forward to in 2007 include an improved and expanded website, the continuation of a family membership introduced late in 2006, celebration of the 135th anniversary of the founding of the Kitchener Horticultural Society, recognition of long support of the Society and the ever present upgrades to Rockway Gardens.

Finally, I would like to thank the many people that make the Kitchener Horticultural Society and Rockway Gardens a perennial success. Thank you to the people who have assisted me over the years, thank you to the same dedicated staff that keep Rockway Gardens beautiful, and thank you to all the partners that fund and support us: the City of Kitchener; volunteers at Rockway Gardens; the Kitchener Master Gardeners; the Kitchener Public Library; Sheridan Nurseries; Ontario Seeds; Colour Paradise; MTD Products Ltd; Peter Etril Snyder; the members of our region that so graciously offer their gardens for our garden tours; and you the members.

Maryanne Weiler
January 2007

Horticultural Therapy Report for 2006

Horticultural Therapy programs are offered at Grand River Hospital - Freeport and at Winston Park Nursing and Retirement Home in 2006. Four Society members in total: Theresa Billo, Bruce MacNeil, Ruth Paape and Maryanne Weiler work with staff members at the two facilities throughout the year.

The program at Freeport Hospital involves participants who reside at the Hospital during their short-term therapy. In the winter, workshops are conducted in the Solarium. Once the weather is good enough for us to work outside, we begin planting the raised garden beds located on the upper terrace. Participants plan, plant, and maintain vegetable and flower gardens in the raised beds and harvest the resultant crops throughout the growing season. They also start plants from seeds and cuttings, transplant and maintain the new plants under grow lights and prepare them for sale at the Annual Plant Sales. Profits from sales go back are used to supplement support from the Hospital for Recreational Therapy.

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We again planted flowers and some tomatoes and other vegetables in our raised beds most of which had been started from seed by the residents. In 2007 we plan to focus on flowers almost exclusively but will plant a few tomato plants for the residents.

Participants at both facilities vary in number weekly but consistently run between 6 and 13 participants at each of the weekly sessions.

January 2007
Bruce MacNeil

Membership Committee Report for 2006

Society membership remains relatively constant with a very slight decrease of 9 members from last year. At 2006 year end, membership stood at 355. Of this number, 11 were Youth Group members and 25 were members of the Kitchener Master Gardeners. We trust that with the emphasis we are placing on attracting interesting speakers to our regular joint programs at the Kitchener Public Library, we will be able to increase membership to the 400 level again. Furthermore, the introduction of a family rate at the end of the year seems to have had the net benefit of both an increase in funds and an increase in the number of family members participating in Society activities.

Bruce MacNeil
January 2007

Newsletter Report for 2006

The newsletter was distributed monthly in paper format and electronically to our 355 members, to Kitchener Public Library locations and to City of Kitchener Community Services Department staff members. It was also made available at Kitchener Horticultural Society and Kitchener Master Gardener events. Currently, 158 members receive their Newsletter electronically. The use of electronic resources helps to control distribution costs.

Contributors include Theresa Billo, who provided the feature articles, Al Shivas who provided information about Rockway Gardens and bulb availability and Bruce MacNeil, the Newsletter Editor. Information was also received from Dianne Wittig, Program Coordinator and Maryanne Weiler.

We continue to try to provide interesting and topical information and articles for your consumption.

Bruce MacNeil
January 2007

Program Committee Report for 2006

Each year, the Society presents programmes of a horticultural nature for the education and enjoyment of the membership. These monthly meetings give the Board of Directors and the membership to socialize and enjoy their love of Horticulture.

Our programme throughout the year included Sabina Kennema of Greenway Blooming Centre; Karen Michaud on *Growing Versatile Herbs*; Chris Lepard on *Designing with Perennials*; Peter Keeping on *Clematis*; Trish Symons on *Edit - Trade Up*; and Janet O'Reilly and Pat Harris for

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our Christmas Decor. May through August were filled with our ever popular Plant Exchange; Bulb Sale and garden tours.

We would like to thank the Kitchener Public Library for their assistance with the lecture series by providing the facility, technical support and the advertising. In addition, we want to extend a big THANKS to the homeowners who shared their gardens with us.

Maryanne Weiler
January 2007

Rockway Gardens Committee Report for 2006

The new carpet bed was constructed by Al Shivas last winter and this summer the logo of the OHA was displayed in honour of the 100th anniversary of the Association. The logo of MTD Products Ltd will be displayed in 2007 in recognition of their generous donation of equipment for the maintenance of the gardens to the KHS.

Plant material has been added to the main fountain and the new bridge continues to be heavily used for picture taking. The east end is still a work in progress and many new plants, shrubs and trees were added this Fall. Bulbs have been planted and if this weather continues we may have tulips and daffodils in March.

Watch the garden house this summer for some new additions. Although there was a fair amount of rain this year the gardens looked great and I would like to thank the staff for their hard work and dedication for a job well done

Charlie Davis
January 2007

Youth Group Report for 2006

The KHS Youth Program ran from May to October and included a dozen junior gardeners who met Wednesday evenings. They once again planted and maintained garden plots out at the J. Steckle Heritage Homestead. The annual Scavenger Hunt took place to celebrate school's end with the help of our long time gardeners Josh and Alexandra Kocher. Seeing as our participant numbers were down slightly this year, we decided to plant the empty plots for the 'Grow a Row' program which benefitted the Food Bank weekly. Some of our newest gardeners grew some very interesting varieties of vegetables including eggplant, teardrop yellow tomatoes, black peppers and cabbage. It was a dry and hot season from the start but the late rains gave us amazing yields of tomatoes, zucchini, pumpkins and gigantic potatoes. We celebrated our harvest with another incredible cake made by Karen Nairn. In conclusion the participants were given a package including a spade and Tete et Tete daffodil bulbs to enjoy in their own home gardens for years to come. We hope to run the program again this coming season but at this point we do need to increase our numbers. If you know any young enthusiasts please have them contact Trish Malleck at 519-570-9158 to reserve their plot as soon as possible.

Trish Malleck and Kim Ball
January 2007