



The Peony Post

April 2018

www.pickeringhorticulturalsociety.com



I am sure all of us are ready for another gardening season; we certainly had to wait long enough. Why are we surprised every year when winter turns into summer within a few days? Freezing rain one day, then within a week, 25° and blooming daffodils everywhere. Mother Nature does like to keep us on our toes, doesn't She?



April Meeting Recap

Our Visitor Day and 85th Anniversary celebration was a great success. It was great to see how everyone was happy to interact with perfect strangers and have a good time. Maybe those delicious cupcakes had something to do with it? Some of you even brought your husbands and convinced them to sign on as members: we welcome *Stephen Hiley* and *Vijay Seth*.

Announcements

- The Pickering (Township) Horticultural Society was formed on April 28, 1934. 85 years later we are still functioning – an accomplishment we take pride in.
- A reminder about the District AGM on April 21st. So far, five members are planning to attend.
- Our Plant & Bake Sale will be held on May 12, starting at 8:00 am at the Gazebo in Esplanade Park. We are hoping to have lots of product to sell.
- Bus Tour to the Hockley Valley area; lunch at “Mrs. Mitchell’s” restaurant. The fee is \$75.00 per member, \$90.00 per non-member.
- “Milkweed Watch” is a program run to track areas where milkweed grows, thereby helping monarch butterflies to breed successfully. For lots of information about the program, visit www.naturewatch.ca

Next Meeting

May 8th, 2018
7:30 pm

Learn all about

**Pelargoniums
And
Geraniums**

from
our feature
speaker

William Grainger

He will also have
some plants for sale
– don't forget your
wallets.

Feature Speaker - Melissa Spearing

Melissa, an enthusiastic gardener since childhood and a graduate of the Niagara School of Horticulture, gave us a more scientific take on gardening with her topic of “Plant Phenology”. Her specialty is using phenology versus pests in the garden. It is a very fascinating subject to study. I wonder though how many ordinary gardeners have the dedication to keep track of a lot of very detailed information?

Next Meeting – May 8th

Hooray, hooray – it’s time for our spring flower show. This past week has been wonderful for hurrying things along in the garden. Daffodils, early tulips and many others should provide a colourful show. You can also show off your houseplants that you have nurtured all through the winter.

In the design division you will notice that the class titles and requirements are the same for both Advanced & Beginners because we found that beginners sometimes preferred the ‘advanced’ titles. We hope this keeps everyone happy.

Our feature speaker will be *William Grainger*. He will talk to us about pelargoniums and geraniums. I am sure most of us are planning to plant some of them and could use some insights into what’s best or most interesting. William will bring some plants for sale; maybe it’s a good idea to bring some money so you won’t miss out.

Pickering Horticultural Society Plant & Bake Sale

May 12, 2018, starting at 8:00 am at the Gazebo in Esplanade Park

What’s new this year?

In addition to plants, we are selling baked goods, lovingly prepared by our members. We are hoping that this will create some additional interest. After all, who can resist a home- made cookie or a slice of carrot cake?

Of course, we greatly appreciate any plants or baked goods you are willing to donate. Please deliver your plants between 7:00 and 8:00 am. Some exceptions: We will not accept goutweed, Tawny Daylilies (ditch lilies) or anything else considered highly invasive.

If at all possible, please have your plants labelled.

We hope to see a lot of you there and don’t forget to tell your friends and neighbours.



This and That

Willow Water

Did you know that you can make your own rooting hormone or transplant solution? It's called willow water. Here is the recipe from the Spring 2013 issue of GARDENMAKING Magazine: Collect willow twig ends (any willow will work) 12 to 18 inches long with swelling buds. Remove any leaves that have begun to sprout. Crush the twigs with a hammer or cut them into one-inch pieces, and put them into a clean container. Pour in enough boiling water to cover the twigs, then let them steep for 12 to 24 hours. Drain the water into a clean receptacle and use it immediately to water cuttings, seedlings or garden transplants. The willow water can be saved for up to six weeks in the refrigerator, or frozen for longer storage.

Pickering Blooms

The Pickering Blooms Garden Showcase has been revived for this year. Some changes have been made: our members will no longer review gardens; an expert gardener has been engaged to do it. A maximum number of 50 gardens will be assessed on a first come/first served basis. The assessment period is during the whole month of June. To register for the program as either a supporter only or to be mentored, please visit the City of Pickering website and search for "Pickering Blooms".

Compost Give-Away

May 12th, 2018, 8:00 am till noon. Get your free compost in the arena parking lot of the Pickering Recreation Complex. Residents are allowed up to 4 blue box size loads. Bring your own shovel.

Please note: there is no point in waiting in the long line up at 8:00 o'clock. Come to see our plant sale first. By 10:00 there is no longer a line up and you get in and out of there much more quickly.

Artfest on the Esplanade

May 26th, 2018, 11:00 am till 5:00 pm.

Visit with local artists, enjoy some music at this annual event.

The Peony Post is published by the Pickering Horticultural Society eight times per year. Comments, suggestions or contributions are always welcome. Please send them to the Editor, Sigrid Squire, at asquire8347@rogers.com