

NOVA SCOTIA ASSOCIATION of GARDEN CLUBS

The Nova Scotia Association of Garden Clubs became an entity in 1954 as the result of the work of the Rural Beautification Project Committee. In 1944, the Rural Beautification Committee was appointed by the Honorable John A. MacDonald, minister of Agriculture, to come up with a plan for rural beautification projects. Mr. Nick Jankov, a Landscape Specialist, began working with the Agricultural Representatives, Women's Institutes, Home and School Associations and Service Clubs, to begin formulating a long term plan for Rural Beautification around the province. He assisted groups in getting organized and provided landscape sketches and plans to these groups. Another part of the project was to provide trees and shrubs to groups. The trees and shrubs were grown at the Agricultural College and distributed to clubs for a small fee to help offset the costs involved in developing the project. Over the years, many new horticultural groups and garden clubs were organized and the Rural Beautification Program became a very successful endeavour. By 1948 there were forty three garden clubs and four Horticultural Societies that were actively taking part in projects throughout the province. However all the groups working under the umbrella of the Rural Beautification Project were working by themselves in their own communities and did not know what the other areas were doing. For this reason and in order that one group might learn from another, Mr. Jankov put forth the idea of bringing the groups together through a provincial organization. The Department of Agriculture sponsored a two day conference so that all the groups could send representatives to find out what projects were taking place in other areas and how they could benefit from each others experience. At this conference, a committee was appointed to plan for another conference in 1955. This committee planned the organization of the Garden Clubs and Horticultural Societies into a provincial body and selected the name "Nova Scotia Association of Garden Clubs.

The Nova Scotia Association of Garden Clubs (NSAGC) is made up of garden clubs and horticultural societies from all areas of Nova Scotia. The NSAGC is the coordinating body for organized gardening groups in the province and is guided by an elected board of directors, whose members come from the different districts of Nova Scotia. The district representative, also known as the district director, serves as the link between the individual clubs and the NSAGC board.

The main objective of the NSAGC is to promote the general landscape beautification of the Province of Nova Scotia, by promoting community beautification and encouraging the formation of horticultural groups (garden clubs) which will procure interest in all phases of home gardening and ornamental horticulture in their areas.

The districts in the NSAGC are Cape Breton, Eastern, Central, Halifax, Valley, Western and the South Shore. Within each district, local clubs provide the outlet for budding gardeners, amateurs and professionals alike. There are over fifty local garden clubs and horticultural societies throughout the province.

Each year the NSAGC convention and board meeting is held in one of the districts. The convention is hosted by one of the garden clubs in that district, while the other clubs in the district play assisting roles. The convention brings together enthusiastic gardeners from all walks of life, whether they are professional or just part time amateurs, with the penchant for gardening.

The convention program includes guest speakers, presenting their specialty or a general topic, workshops and tours. Other activities at the convention include vendor's tables, plant sales, the floral contest, photo contest, the awards banquet and the annual business meeting. Delegates take this opportunity to meet with gardeners from other areas of the province and discuss gardening issues. It is also a chance to learn new things that may benefit their own gardening efforts, their club's endeavors and further one of the objectives of the NSAGC; the landscape beautification of Nova Scotia, through home gardening.