



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Greetings fellow members and happy spring!

I hope you have all had a great winter! We have certainly seen a lot more snow this year than I can remember in recent memory. I was starting to see some green come back in my yard as the snow receded, but another heaping of snow erased that progress yesterday! Regardless of the snow, I am dreaming of warmer days ahead when our gardens will come back to life.

I would like to start off with some exciting news by welcoming four new clubs to NSAGC since our last edition. We have had **Louisburg Gardeners Club** and **Grey Gardeners (District 1)**, **Seaspray Garden Initiative (District 4)** and **Hants Shore Garden Club (District 5)** join us! Many thanks to District Directors for their work in helping bring these clubs on, as well as the rest of the board members involved in the onboarding process. I hope to meet members of these clubs at upcoming events such as our **June Convention**.

It has certainly been a busy winter for NSAGC! Last fall we started work on a new two-year strategic plan for my term. One important project has been a refresh of both the NSAGC Board Manual and the Club President's Manual. A sub-committee has been formed, and they are at work with the update and refresh. This project has been a long time coming and I am excited to see the results. Thank you to everyone involved in the process! We have also launched a new member recruitment poster that I recently shared with all District Directors. If you are interested in having one personalized for your club, please feel free to reach out to me at secretary@nsagc.com. Finally, we are also working on a member survey, with more details to come and a prize draw available for those who respond!

As our club meetings and events get back into full swing, I encourage you to reach out to me if you would like me to attend any of your meetings or events to speak about NSAGC. I already have a few requests and would love the opportunity to get out there and meet your club!

To close out – if you have not registered for our **June Convention** yet, I encourage you to join us. Convention is always a fun event to get out and meet members from across the province, buy lots of interesting products from a variety of vendors and learn from some incredible speakers. There are a lot of fun events planned this year, and I am sure **District 1** will put on a great event that we will all enjoy! I look forward to seeing you there!

Geoff MacDonald
NSAGC Chairperson
secretary@nsagc.com



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“THE ARTIST SERIES”

Submitted by Janice Schmidt



Emily Carr



Felix LeClerc



Bill Reid



Campfire



Oscar Petersen



Photos courtesy of the
Canadian Rose Society.

These roses are highly popular for their winter hardiness, disease resistance, and ability to thrive in Zone 3. I especially appreciate their attractive blooms that last throughout the summer.

Campfire, introduced by **Agriculture Canada** in **2003**, features vibrant coral, red, and yellow blooms with glossy dark green leaves. It typically grows three feet tall and wide but can be pruned to suit smaller gardens.

This rose pays tribute to **Tom Thompson**, referencing his renowned painting of the same name. It symbolises the colours of a campfire burning in front of a tent during camping trips in Algonquin Park, Ontario.

I own one **Emily Carr** and four **Campfire** roses, and the rest of this article will focus on **Campfire**, my favorite rose from the **Artist Series**.

These are photos from my garden:



“THE ARTIST SERIES”

Continued from Page 2

Campfire is truly one of the most beautiful roses. The tri-colored semi-double blooms continue to please the grower throughout the season from early spring to late fall. It also features glossy dark green leaves. I also like the fact that this rose is highly resistant to black spot which is a common fungal disease.

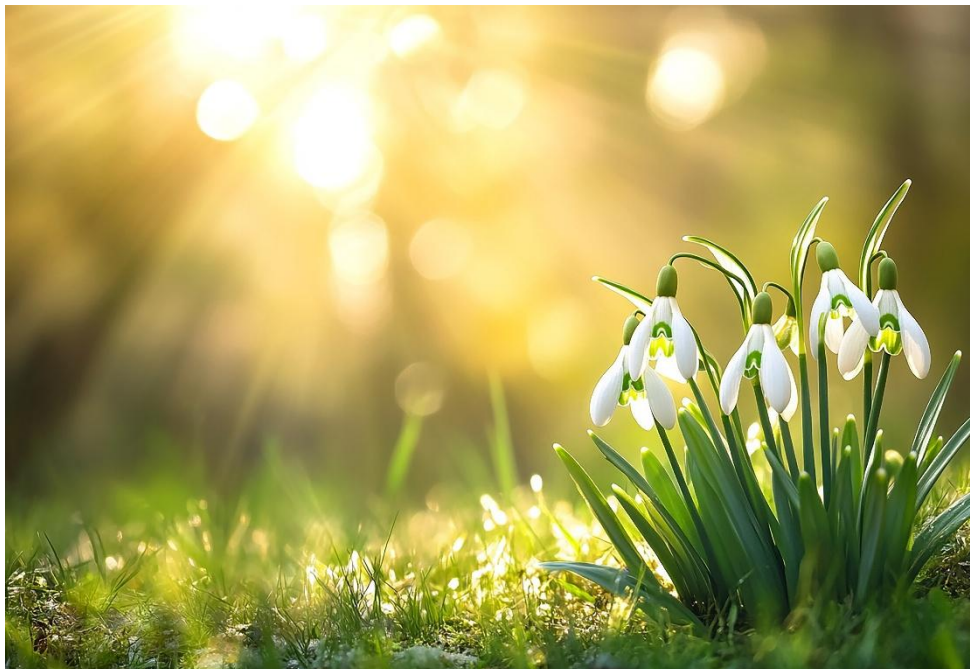


The leaves eventually fall off, contaminate the soil with spores, and leaves the rose bush naked and under great stress which will over time eventually kill the bush. Please take the time to visit our website as we can help you to find that perfect rose for the perfect place in your garden.

It is the time you spend on your rose that makes your rose so important.

While you are there, consider joining us as a member. This year features guest speakers on topics like “*Companion planting with roses*,” highlights from the **Montreal Botanical Garden's rose garden**, and a fall talk by **Matthias Meiland** from **Meiland Roses** on rose fragrance.

I can be reached at jantim200698@gmail.com if you would like more information on the **Canadian Rose Society**.



***Snowdrops are always the first to appear
in many of our spring gardens!***

2026 NSAGC CONVENTION – REGISTRATION FORM



2026 NSAGC Convention Registration

Hosted by District 1 Cape Breton

June 5-7, 2026

Inverary Resort Baddeck

368 Shore Rd, Baddeck, NS (details to follow)

(Please note Registration Closes May 6th, 2026)

CULTURE – RHYTHM – ROOTS

Name: First _____ Last _____
 e-mail: _____
 Telephone: _____
 Mailing _____
 address: _____
 Garden Club or Society Affiliation: _____

ATTENDING:	Friday	<input type="checkbox"/>	Saturday	<input type="checkbox"/>	Banquet	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please, check all boxes that apply.

CONVENTION Fees include: *Friday Evening Reception - Hands on Floral Challenge, Appetizers & Round the Island Presentation. Saturday (830am-5pm) AGM, Guest Speakers, Served Lunch & Refreshment Breaks, Awards, Floral Displays and more.*

Garden Club Members, Affiliate Society Members	\$70.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
General Public	\$80.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Late Registration (Received after April 26, 2026)	add \$10.00	<input type="checkbox"/>

Taxes & Gratuity are included in all meals

SATURDAY EVENING BANQUET Fees include: *Full Three Course Served Meal (please check meal selection), Keynote Speaker, Cape Breton Ceilidh with Doug Lamey & Company.*

Garden Club or Affiliate Society Member, and Guests	\$70.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Roast Chicken	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vegetarian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Atlantic Salmon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vegan	<input type="checkbox"/>

Special Requirements: _____

We are also pleased to offer a **“PROPER GARDEN APRON”** with pockets, adjustable cross-back straps, plus something special (More details and photographs to follow).

GARDEN APRON (NO orders accepted after May 6, 2026)	\$25.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
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CONVENTION + BANQUET + APRON = TOTAL \$

The GREAT REGISTRATION DRAW: Two registrations will be drawn from the those received on or before **February 26, 2026** for a full reimbursement of Convention Fees Only (Banquet Fees, Apron not included).

For more information email: convention@nsagc.com

Online Registration may be completed via nsagc.com “Save the Date” then e-transfer or mail payment.

e-mail registration to: convention@nsagc.com

e-transfer to: convention@nsagc.com In **MEMO** area of e-transfer include **FULL NAME & phone number.**

Mail Registration and/or Cheque payable to **NSAGC 2026** (no post-dated cheques, please) to:

NSAGC 2026 c/o 21 Keefe Avenue, Sydney, NS B1R 2C9

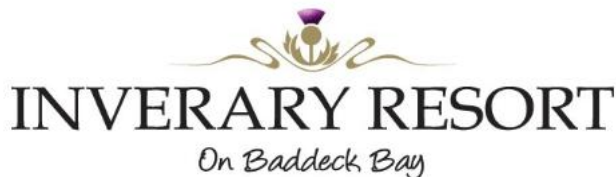
Confirmation email/notice will be sent once your registration form and payment have been received.

ACCESSIBILITY: The venue is accessible but please advise of any considerations that may impede you.

REFUNDS will be considered only for exceptional circumstances, by the convention committee, based on information from requestor.

2026 NSAGC CONVENTION – ACCOMMODATION INFORMATION

We are pleased the 2026 NSACG Convention June 5-7, 2026 is at



WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK THE INVERARY RESORT FOR THEIR SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT AND DEDICATION TO OUR CONVENTION.

The Inverary has provided rooms at group rates of \$224 & up, which **includes breakfast**. **Just let them know you are with the NSAGC Convention in June of 2026.**

Inveraryresort.com or **1-800-565-5660** or reservations@capebretonresorts.com

Please note this site is a resort with many included amenities. They will also be bringing in live entertainment for us on Friday evening at the Lakeside Restaurant at no cost to us.

- AMENITIES INCLUDE:**
- **11 acres of gardens, green space and shoreline**
 - **Indoor Heated Pool, Indoor & Outdoor Hot Tubs, Sauna, Fitness Centre**
 - **Private Beach (with Bonfires in the evening), a boardwalk, shuffleboard, washer toss**
 - **The Inverary Spa (email: inveraryspa@outlook.com)**
 - **The Narrows Café & Bar, Lakeside Restaurant (Oyster shucking)**
 - **Marina (with watercraft rentals - Kayaks, paddle boats, Pontoon boat)**
- Plus enjoy up to 20% savings on golf at Bell Bay Golf Club!*

Accommodations

Room Type	Total Room Count	Dates	Your Group Rates Double occupancy
Main Lodge Water View (King or 2 Queen)		June 5-7, 2026	\$269
Main Lodge 2 Queens			\$269
King Suites			\$330
Two Bedroom Queen Suite			N/A
Traditional King, Double or Queen			\$224
SKYE - 3 Bedroom Cottage - min. 3 nights			N/A
Cottages (King or Efficiency)			N/A
Total Rooms Blocked: 100 (mixed)			

A 3% marketing fee & HST will be applied to the above quoted guest room rate during your groups stay. Suites and cottages may be available as well during this time.

Guest Room Reservations Policy:

- *Inverary Resort requires that the first's night room rate & taxes be paid upon booking of each guest room.*
- *Cancellation Policy for Guestroom Reservations is 3 days prior to date of arrival. Not canceling before this time is a charge of first night's room & taxes charged to the form of payment the reservation is guaranteed to*
- *Check in is at 3:00 pm and check out time is 11:00 am. Any person who checks out later than 11:00 am will have a late charge fee automatically applied to their room account.*

2026 NSAGC CONVENTION – ALTERNATE ACCOMMODATION, ATTRACTIONS, ADVENTURES AND MORE

☞ ADVENTURES IN AND NEAR BADDECK CURATED BY THE INVERARY RESORT ☞

- Hike to Uisge Ban Falls (group transport can be arranged through Bannockburn tours.com)
- Catamaran Sailing – www.sailingcbi.com
- Tour of Big Spruce Brewery – www.bigspruce.ca
- Bell Museum tours - www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/ns/grahambell/index.aspx

The Inverary Resort staff can also assist groups in arranging the above tours. Please contact the Inverary Resort at 902-295-3500 for details after making your reservation with the Inverary Resort.

☞ CAPE BRETON ISLAND – BADDECK ☞

Baddeck has been described as the beginning – and the end – of Cape Breton Island’s world -famous Cabot Trail. Nestled along the shores of the Bras d’Or Lake (a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve), its name likely derived from the Mi’kmaw word Abadak – “place with an island near” (Kidston). Places of interest in and near Baddeck, and see **CBIslands.com** for more ideas:

- Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Site (Museum) and **Mabel Bell’s new Garden**
- Uisage Ban Falls Provincial Park ([Uisge Ban Falls Provincial Park - Wikipedia](#) _ Falls)
- Walk the Baddeck Boardwalk and the public wharf
- Walk Chebucto Street dotted with shops, galleries, cafes, historic buildings
- Gaelic College/Colaisde na Gàidhlig 15 min drive from Baddeck ([Colaisde na Gàidhlig / The Gaelic College](#))
- Provincial Parks – Whycocomagh, St. Anne’s, North River, Mabou & West Mabou
- Amoeba Tours, Sailing CBI, North River Kayak (Kidston ferry opens at the end of June)

☞ NSAGC 2026 CONVENTION OPTIONS ☞

Alternate Accommodation near the Inverary Resort

Within 10 mins walking distance

Uisge Gisele’s Inn
 Uisge Country Lodge
 Inverary Inn
 Telegraph House
 Inverary Dart Lodge
 Inverary’s Bed & Breakfast

There are other accommodations, including campgrounds, B&B, Airbnb within a reasonably close distance to the Inverary Resort and our event venue at the MacAulay Conference Centre.

Restaurants and Café’s in Baddeck

There are two options at Inverary Resort

- **The Narrows**
- **Lakeside Restaurant**



Within 15 mins walk of the Inverary Resort

- Baddeck Lobster Suppers
- Salt Rock Restaurant
- Highwheeler Cafe & Bakery
- Tom’s Pizza
- Three Doors Down Diner
- Main Street Restaurant Baddeck
- Bell Buoy Bistro
- The Freight Shed: Waterside or Terrace

2026 NSAGC CONVENTION – PROGRAM

NSAGC 2026 CONVENTION PROGRAM FRIDAY – JUNE 5, 2026			
GOOD MORNING			
08:00-NOON	<p align="center">“ROOT” MAP to points of interest on CBIsland.com Open garden(s) at Isle Madame Greenhouse Co-op + Marble Mountain Winery? + Orangedale? We’koqma’q Cultural Shop (Amkwesowa’q Kisitu’titl) Myles Doyle Falls s Farmer’s Daughter s Whycocomagh Provincial Park</p>		
AFTERNOON & WELCOME TO BADDECK			
12:00-01:00pm	<i>LUNCH available at the Inverary Resort and other nearby restaurants (See accommodation pdf)</i>		
01:00-05:00 pm	<p align="center">REGISTRATION Pick up your ID pouch with: - Meal tickets -Floral ballots -Plant giveaway# -Gift bag -Tickets</p>	<p align="center">VENDORS Enjoy a curated group of vendors offering local & plant-related goods</p>	<p align="center">GARDEN TOURS Local Baddeck gardens or local attractions per the “Root” Map or Convention Accommodations</p>
EVENING! ARE YOU READY FOR SOME LAUGHS & MEETING OLD AND NEW FRIENDS?			
05:00-06:00 pm	<i>DINNER available at the Inverary Resort and other nearby restaurants (See Convention Accommodations)</i>		
06:00-06:15 pm	OPENING – Opening remarks & announcements		
06:15-06:45 pm	FLORAL CHALLENGE & Speed Quiz for bonus flowers		
06:45-07:00 pm	Short Break		
07:00-08:00 pm	SPEAKERS: Round the Island – Culture-Rhythm-Roots		
08:00-10:00 pm	<p>SOCIAL IN THE BANQUET HALL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ Digby Scallops - wrapped in smoky bacon (GF, DF); ~ Grilled Chicken Skewer - BBQ glaze, spring onion (GF, DF); ~ Bruschetta Crostini - fresh tomato, basil, feta, crostini, olive oil, balsamic, crisp baguette (V); ~ Fruit Skewers - fresh seasonal fruit and berries, yogurt dip (V, GF). ~ Coconut Breaded Shrimp - Tail on, coconut breaded, green onion, sweet Thai chili sauce (DF) ~ Cash Bar ~ Photo Contest Photographs on the big screen 		<p>There is also the option of live music available at the Lakeside Restaurant and, weather permitting, campfires on the beach.</p>
<p>Time to rest up for an awesome CONVENTION PROGRAM & BANQUET</p>			

2026 NSAGC CONVENTION – PROGRAM

NSAGC 2026 CONVENTION PROGRAM			
SATURDAY – JUNE 6, 2026			
07:00-08:30 am	For folks staying at the Inverary Resort, breakfast is at the Narrows		
08:00-10:00 am	Registration Open - ID pouch, meal tickets, gift bag, ballots, etc..		
08:30-09:30 am	NSAGC AGM	09:00 Vendors Open 09:30 Deadline for all floral competition arrangements to be in place. 10:00 Floral Competition voting starts, Silent Auction opens, and Garden Art Exhibit opens. 12:30 Our plant sale begins (Yeah!) 3:30 Vendors close, Floral voting & Auction closes	
09:30-09:50 am	Opening & Piping In		
09:50-10:15 am	<i>Morning Coffee/Tea/Sweet</i>		
10:15-11:15 am	SPEAKER – CYRIL WELSH SPEAKER Q&A		
11:15-11:30 am	<i>Short Break</i>		
11:30-12:30 pm	SPEAKER – CAROLYN CAMERON SPEAKER Q&A		
12:30-01:30 pm	LUNCH		
01:30-02:00 pm	Special Presentation		
02:00-03:00 pm	SPEAKER – KARA McCURDY SPEAKER Q&A		
03:00-03:30 pm	<i>Afternoon Coffee/Tea/Sweet</i>		
03:30-04:30 pm	SPEAKER – JAKE REICHER SPEAKER Q&A		
04:30-05:00 pm	WINNERS, AWARDS & ANNOUNCEMENTS		
05:00 pm ALL PLANTS, WINNINGS, AUCTIONS ITEMS, BANNERS PICKED UP			
05:00-06:00 pm	<i>Break Before Banquet</i>		
06:00-07:15 pm	THREE COURSE DINNER – Cash Bar; Fresh Baked Rolls; Beet Salad - Artisan greens, toasted pecans, crumbled feta, orange basil vinaigrette (GF, V); Plated Roast Chicken -Skin on chicken supreme, mushroom and garlic cream sauce, thyme Chef's choice of potato and vegetable (GF); Plated Atlantic Salmon - 6oz filet, baked with a maple Dijon glaze, spring onion curls, Chef's choice of potato and vegetable (GF, DF); Carrot Cake - toasted coconut, salted caramel, soft whipped cream (VEO)		
07:15-08:00 pm	KEYNOTE SPEAKER – Tuma Young		
08:00-10:00 pm	 FIDDLE/PIANO MUSIC by COMPANY	 DOUG LAMEY &	Cash Bar provided by Inverary Resort
NSAGC 2026 CONVENTION PROGRAM			
SUNDAY – JUNE 7 th , 2026			
08:00-10:00 am	BREAKFAST INVERARY RESORT or nearby restaurants (see Accom. list)		
10:00-12:00 am	GARDENING TOURS IN BADDECK		
11:00-04:00 pm	GARDENING TOURS in BADDECK & ROUTE TOURS THROUGHOUT CAPE BRETON – see the “ROOT” MAP		
12:00-01:00 pm	LUNCH options on routes throughout Cape Breton – see “ROOT” MAP		
ENJOY YOUR TRAVELS HOME OR WHILE YOU SPEND FURTHER TIME EXPLORING OUR BEAUTIFUL ISLAND OF CAPE BRETON CURATED “ROOT” 19 CEILIDH TRAIL TOUR (Please note the program and speakers are subject to change without notice.)			

2026 NSAGC CONVENTION - SPEAKERS BIOS

CAROLINE CAMERON

TOPIC: *Garden for the Ages – adapting the garden as you age.*

Caroline Cameron lives in Strathlorne, just outside of Inverness. She started gardening at her mother's side, then went on to take a degree in plant/soil science, a Master's in Environmental Studies, and Master Gardener training. She has a small gardening business and over the last five years has worked with Mill Road Social Enterprises to gather funding and establish **Mill Road Grows, an Accessible Community Garden and Greenhouse.**

Mill Road Grows supports food security and food literacy in the community by welcoming everyone into the world of growing and empowering their 'inner gardener' through activities and workshops. Caroline especially likes to grow novel and fun foods to encourage the interest of children and help establish life-long habits of healthy activity and healthy eating. Caroline also contributes a column to the Inverness

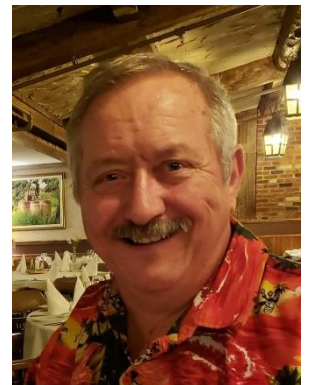


CYRIL WELSH

TOPIC: *Ephemeral Gifts – vernal ponds, ephemeral plants, spring pollinators.*

Cyril Welsh is a passionate apiarist (with native bee knowledge too). He teaches beekeeping and is developing a Cape Breton database of pollen plants. Cyril is an organic farmer and follows traditions of the Mi'kmaw medicine path, [Msit koqoey Weja'tuek wsitqamu'k](#) - ***Our world provides all that we need.*** His family's Highland View Organic Farm and Cottages, located in the scenic community of George's River, overlook the beautiful Bras d'Or lake.

Cyril's fascination with the natural world has led him to study the natural habitats surrounding the Bras d'Or lakes. It is not uncommon to see him around the lakes collecting pollen or mushrooms, taking temperature and salinity measurements, or notes on the species of plants and animals both in the ocean, the Bras d'Or lake or nearby ponds. Cyril's formal career was as a Marine Engineer with his most memorable experiences aboard Scientific Research Vessels and Icebreakers in the Gulf and the Arctic. It was not unusual for him to observe marine wildlife, even constructing plankton tows to observe the microscopic creatures firsthand. More recently the *Fairy Shrimp* found in NS has led Cyril to reexamine the importance of vernal ponds as well as how ephemeral plants and other spring blooms effect pollinators. (FYI - The Bras d'Or Lake is actually "brackish water," varying in salinity between salt and fresh water. They are opened at both ends to the ocean, yet the tides are only a couple of inches. The waters are usually teeming with Zooplankton and fish larvae. The Bras d'Or Lake has also been designated a UNESCO Biosphere Region).



2026 NSAGC CONVENTION SPEAKERS BIOS

Continued from Page 9

DANIEL DILLON

TOPIC: Coal Coast Community Gardens

After converting a school bus to an RV, starting a podcast and travelling around the country with his wife Libby and their 5-year-old daughter, Daniel returned to his roots in Donkin. Together Daniel and Libby bought 20 acres of land in Donkin, just down the road from where he grew up, that became the Wild Island Farm and Wild Island School. With a deep desire to leave a legacy of compassion, resilience and community, Daniel and Libby started the Coal Coast Community Garden in 2023 to grow affordable, healthy and sustainable food for the approximately 1,700 people who live in the former coal communities of Donkin, Port Morien, Birch Grove and Tower Road. After forming a partnership with Donkin School, the group added 18 raised garden beds, an orchard with 16 fruit and nut trees as well as 50 highbush blueberry shrubs. Students and volunteers take care of the seeding and planting then the harvests are shared with the community free of charge. The project has become a social endeavour – bringing an eclectic group of people together to further the community food garden, educate folks in and near the community about gardening, help start new gardens, share seeds, plant pollinator friendly plants, native plants, and share in a growing community that supports each other.



The efforts of the students and volunteers in the community garden has contributed to the Donkin School being the only school in Nova Scotia to receive eco-certification at the platinum level from *EcoSchools Canada*, a non-profit group focused on building sustainable communities. In 2025, Coal Coast Community Garden received the Cape Breton Regional Municipality's Gary McDonald Memorial Award for outstanding community group or project.

JAKE REICHER - VITIS VINES

TOPIC: *Tissue Culture – Vines, Thornless Blackberries and Historical Rose Project at the Annapolis Royal Historical Gardens*

At Vitis Vines, they grow more than just grapevines – they are a growing a community of curious, passionate, and down-to-earth growers who love learning and getting their hands dirty. Since 2012, they have been deep in the research side of things, perfecting sustainable tissue culture techniques to propagate hardy grapevines right here in Nova Scotia's beautiful Annapolis Valley. But what started as a scientific pursuit, quickly turned into growing *a lot* of vines and people were really interested.



Welcome to Rainbow Roses

Rainbow Roses is a Nova Scotia-based initiative focused on preserving rare, antique, and heritage roses using modern plant tissue culture.

2026 NSAGC CONVENTION SPEAKERS BIOS

Continued from Page 10

JAKE REICHER – Lab Manager, Vitis Vines Inc.

Jake earned his B.Sc. in Biology from Acadia University in 2019, where he focused on botany and mycology. Jake is currently completing his M.Sc. in Molecular Ecology at UNB Saint John, while working full-time as Lab Manager at VITIS Vines. With extensive experience in laboratory research and plant science, he has held multiple roles in lab technician and agricultural research positions outside of academia.

Drawn to the Annapolis Valley's growing wine industry, Jake saw an opportunity to contribute to sustainable agricultural innovation through tissue culture propagation. At VITIS Vines, he plays a key role in optimizing research trials, refining propagation techniques, and overseeing daily lab operations. A lifelong plant enthusiast, he has a habit of turning any available space into a mini greenhouse, constantly experimenting with new growing techniques. For Jake, the most fulfilling aspect of his work is being part of VITIS Vines' growth from the ground up, playing a hands-on role in shaping the future of sustainable plant-culture.



KARA McCURDY-

TOPIC: *Roots That Resist - in a Changing Climate*

Kara McCurdy brings together a rare blend of wildfire science, community resilience, and hands-in-the-soil gardening experience. With over three decades in the fire service, she has worked across structural firefighting, wildfire prevention, and Wildland–Urban Interface (WUI) operations, helping communities reduce risk before wildfire strikes. Now focused on wildfire mitigation and resilient landscape design, Kara works closely with municipalities, fire services, Indigenous communities, and homeowners to translate fire science into practical, place-based solutions. Her work emphasizes how plant choice, spacing, maintenance, and landscape design can significantly reduce wildfire exposure while still supporting biodiversity, beauty, and a strong sense of place.

Beyond her professional fire background, Kara is an active **garden club member** and a **Master Gardener student**, deeply rooted in Atlantic Canadian landscapes. She is passionate about bridging traditional gardening knowledge with modern wildfire resilience, highlighting native and fire-tolerant plants that align with local culture, rhythm, and ecological roots. Through education, collaboration, and community-led action, Kara advocates for landscapes that are not only safer—but healthier, more resilient, and deeply connected to the land we call home.



2026 NSAGC CONVENTION SPEAKERS BIOS

Continued from Page 11

TUMA YOUNG - Nujaqnutmewinu (lawyer) Q.C.

TOPIC: *ETHNOBOTANIST and co-creator of Maskwiomin*

Over 25 years ago, Maskwiomin co-founder and Mi'kmaq elder, Tuma Young pieced together lost stories of maskwiomen and rediscovered the traditional Mi'kmaq method to extract birch bark's compounds. As an ethnobotanist, Tuma gathered hundreds of plant stories and recipes to ensure this traditional Mi'kmaw knowledge is preserved and continues to be shared. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBRCWgDY8cQ>

Tuma Young was born into the Atu'tuwej (Squirrel) clan for the Apli'kumj (Rabbit) clan and is one of the 14 children. He grew up on his mother's trap line on the Malagawatch Reserve, a small community on the western shore of the Bras d'Or Lake Unamaki. However, he was not very proficient at hunting, fishing or trapping, so his family sent him to school. He now has an LL.B, LL.M, and is an SJD Candidate in the Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy program at the James E. Rogers College of Law, University of Arizona. Tuma was the first Mi'kmaq speaking lawyer in Nova Scotia and the first indigenous person to become the head of the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society. He also helped to co-found the [WabanakiTwoSpiritAlliance](#). Along with many other awards and recognitions, in 2025 Tuma Young was a recipient of the King Charles III Coronation Medal to recognize his numerous exceptional lifetime achievements.

Tuma is also Assistant Professor, Mi'kmaq Studies at Cape Breton University. He currently lives in Sydney with his partner, Nick, and the two of them putter around the garden, feeding birds, enjoying photography, and creating bougie L'nu fare.



How we grow, share, and honour the food that sustains us is an important consideration for a Knowledge Holder.

Lessons in Netukulimk: Sweetgrass with Tuma Young - kjimsiku Weave respect, responsibility, relationship, and reciprocity into every aspect of their life.

<https://maskwiomin.com> - An Indigenous-discovered, science-backed solution.

(Please note - information and speakers are subject to change without notice.)

2026 NSAGC PHOTO CONTEST

Submitted by Sharon Bryson, Photo Contest Chair

The **2026 NSAGC Photo Contest** is open for the season. The **deadline** for submitting your entries is **April 29, 2026**.

The **PHOTO CONTEST RULES AND CLASSES** are printed below and can also be found on the NSAGC website at <http://nsagc.ca>.

Please read the rules which explain all the procedures for entries. *Be especially aware of the need for full size images.*

Look through your pictures from last year and choose some great ones. You may enter up to ten (10) photos (one per Class) or if you prefer only one or two.

For inspiration the photos presented here are just a few of the entries from last year and you can view more of last years' entries on the NSAGC website at <http://nsagc.ca>.

Have fun selecting your entries for the NSAGC 2026 Photo Contest and we look forward to seeing all your beautiful photos.



Vienie McShane -
Class 3

Photo Contest Rules for the 2026 NSAGC Photo Competition

PLEASE NOTE THAT THESE RULES APPLY TO THE 2026 CONTEST. PLEASE DO NOT USE RULES FROM PREVIOUS YEARS.

1. The contest is open to amateur photographers. (Photography cannot be your primary business.) The Chair of the contest and others associated with organizing the competition are not eligible. The Chair will decide questions of eligibility.
2. Contestants must be **members** of a club, society or an affiliate that pays dues to the NSAGC.
3. Contestants may enter **one photograph per class** in each of the following classes (maximum **ten** photos):

Class 1 - Life in the Garden

- Insects or Animals (e.g., birds, deer, squirrels, snakes, frogs, etc.) **no** humans or pets. Best if photo also shows some botanical feature.

Class 2 - Close-ups

- Close-up or macro of any botanical feature (i.e., flower, leaf, etc.).

Class 3 - Foliage

- Celebrate the beautiful diversity of foliage form, colour and texture featured in your garden plants.

Class 4 - Water in the Garden

- Any image depicting water somewhere, somehow in the garden, from a garden pond, fountain, rain (raindrops), stream, rainbow, etc. This is a class where creativity can be expressed!



Life in the Garden – 1st in
Class - Mark Kehoe



Water in Garden – 3rd in Class -
Tim Geddes

2026 NSAGC PHOTO CONTEST

Continued from Page 13

Class 5 - Vegetables or Fruit

- Any type, singly or in groups, or a mixture, picked or still on the vegetation.

Class 6 - Garden Art

- Any structure, sculpture, piece of art (any type) among the vegetation. Could involve such things as flower show arrangements, wreaths, topiary, creative flower beds, etc., that are part of a garden landscape (best shown among the vegetation or flowers).

Class 7 - Flowering Trees or Shrubs

- One type or any mixture, either in the garden or as an arrangement. Can be shown alone or as part of a garden setting at time of flowering.

Class 8 - Fall Scene

- A creative opportunity to capture the beauty or activities of the season, either in the garden or as a work of Mother Nature.

Class 9 - Landscape

- A photo should capture the fun, beauty, or creativity of a sizable portion of a garden or natural landscape, including aerial shots.

Class 10 - Nature in Winter

- Views of gardens or plants in the winter season that are highlighted by snow, frost or vegetation shape or colour in this season.



Nature in Winter – 2nd in Class - Bill Reader

4. Any individual photo can only be submitted in one class.
5. The finished photograph must accurately reflect the subject matter and the scene as it originally appeared - i.e., no Photoshop-like editing except for cropping or brightness alterations.
6. **Photos will be submitted digitally.** Change the *File Name to Your Name and Class No.* For example: right click the mouse on the photo to change the file name and select *Rename* from the pop-up menu. Type *Adamsmith1* for your name (Adam Smith) and the class number one. Then save the photo using *Save as* in the original folder or create a new folder for just these photos. Continue for each of the photos you will be submitting, changing the class number of each.
 - **Image size is to be no smaller than 1500 pixels on the longest side** (portrait or landscape orientation). Small images do not meet the judges' criteria.
 - Email your photos to photos.nsagc@gmail.com.
 - Exceptionally large files may need to be submitted in successive emails.
 - Include in your email: **your name, address, email address, phone number, and the club or organization** of which you are a member.
 - **Photos are to be received by no later than April 29, 2026**, to allow time for judging, as well as putting the presentation together for the NSAGC convention.

2026 NSAGC PHOTO CONTEST

Continued from Page 14

7. Photos will be judged on originality, composition, focus and exposure. Judging will be done by two independent judges with years of gardening/plant and/or art/photography backgrounds and will be administered by the Chair.

The judges will accept any photo that is a reasonable interpretation of the title of the class concerned. Remember, one of the four criteria of judging is originality.

8. Photos that have received a 1st, 2nd or 3rd place standing in any class of a previous NSAGC annual photographic contest cannot be resubmitted in subsequent years.

9. **One 1st, 2nd and 3rd place prize will be awarded for the three “Best Overall” photos.**

10. Display during convention - since all photos will be in a digital format, they will be part of a video which will run on a screen in a loop during the entire convention so that all attending members will have the opportunity to view them all. Each photo will have the contestant's name included, along with any award it received. The three Best Overall winners will be displayed as well.

11. In submitting your photos, you grant the NSAGC permission to display or reproduce them for the following purposes: to promote, inform or advertise the photo contest to members of the NSAGC; and/or for the NSAGC to use as promotional material. All submitted photos will be displayed on the NSAGC website - www.nsagc.com - shortly after the Convention.

In all other matters the owners of the photo(s) will retain their rights under copyright law. If you choose to include people in your submission, you are responsible to obtain the necessary release from the individual(s) depicted.



Mia Muise - Class 5

2026 NSAGC FLORAL ARTS COMPETITIONS

**We are UPPING THE FLOWER POWER
for the NSAGC FLORAL ARTS COMPETITIONS with
NOT ONE, NOT TWO, BUT THREE ENTRY OPTIONS.**

IMPORTANT TO KNOW:

- ❖ Three separate ballots to vote for your favourite entries will be included in the Registration Package. (They are colour coded.)
- ❖ 1st, 2nd, 3rd place will be selected by People's Choice Voting.
- ❖ **Deadline for all entries to be set-up is 9:30 am Saturday, June 6, 2026.**
- ❖ **Voting starts Saturday at 10:00 am and ends at 3:30 pm.**
- ❖ Winners will be announced at the awards ceremony.
- ❖ All entries must be picked up by exhibitors before **5:00 pm** on Saturday.
- ❖ Committee members will be on hand to assist in completing tags & seals.

2026 NSAGC – FLORAL ARTS COMPETITIONS

Continued from Page 15

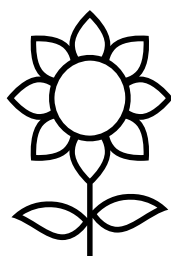
ENTRY ONE – THE MAIN ONE CLUB FLORAL DESIGN COMPETITION



Creating beautiful, balanced compositions using plant material that reflects **CULTURE-RHYTHM-ROOTS**.

1. Any garden club is eligible to enter the Floral Arts Competition.
2. Limited to two (2) entries per club.
3. The majority of the entry must be living plant material, fresh flowers, and/or fruits, vegetables or berries grown in Nova Scotia.
4. Max size 2ft x 2ft x 2ft.
5. Deadline for all entries to be setup is 9:30 am Saturday June 6th, 2026.

ENTRY TWO – NEW FOR YOU INDIVIDUAL FLORAL DESIGN COMPETITION



1. Any Individual from a club is eligible to enter the Individual Floral Design Competition
2. A maximum of three (3) entries per club will be accepted (Cannot be a professional).
3. The majority of the entry must be fresh flowers/plant material grown in Nova Scotia.
4. Maximum size - single container no larger than 6 inches x 6 inches with a max height of 18 inches.
5. Deadline for all entries to be set-up is 9:30 am Saturday June 6th, 2026.

ENTRY THREE – TIME TO TEST YOUR FLORAL SKILLS FRIDAY FLORAL CHALLENGE

IMPORTANT TO KNOW: Your reward for participating in the Friday Floral Competition is a wonderful evening of camaraderie followed by a talk and sumptuous hors d'oeuvres: Digby Scallops wrapped in Smoky Bacon; Grilled Chicken Skewers(GF, DF); Bruschetta Crostini (V); and Fruit Skewers with Yogurt Dip (V)(GF); Coconut Breaded Shrimp - Tail on, coconut breaded, green onion, sweet Thai chili sauce (DF); cash bar.



- ❖ **We will provide all material.**
- ❖ Each table will create a “**team**” floral design (so if you want you can get together or have fun with new garden friends).
- ❖ To win a unique piece to add to your design we will have a **Gardening Speed Quiz** (10 - 12 questions so brush up on your garden knowledge).
- ❖ Yes, they will be judged by People’s Choice on Saturday.
- ❖ Oh, and did we say, you have only 30 minutes to pull it all together?

2026 NSAGC – GARDEN ARTWORK EXHIBITION & APPLICATION

After seeing so many wonderful pieces of Art from our many club members, we thought the Convention would provide a wonderful opportunity to Share & Show Off the Artistic Talent from across the Province.

IMPORTANT TO KNOW:

- ❖ Garden artworks: visual art, fiber, pottery, woodwork, metal etc., that directly relates to gardening are all welcome, *with the exclusion of photographs.*
- ❖ **Wall hung artwork** cannot be larger than 2ft x 2ft overall and must be ready to hang/display. **Three-dimensional pieces** cannot be larger than 2ft x 2ft x 2ft overall and must be ready to display with their own stand/supports.
- ❖ Your submission application for displaying your artwork must be received no later than **April 26, 2026.** (*We reserve the right to refuse pieces not suitable or if space limitations are exceeded. Which means the earlier you put your submission in the better.*)
- ❖ Please email your submission application to convention@nsagc.com.
- ❖ We will provide confirmation and further details prior to **May 6, 2026.**
- ❖ Submissions must be in place no later than 9 am Saturday June 6, 2026.
- ❖ Submissions can be sold privately but not removed prior to 5 pm Saturday.

APPLICATION

Full Name:			
Email:			
Telephone:			
Mailing Address:			
INFORMATION THAT WILL BE INCLUDED WITH YOUR ARTWORK:			
Full Name:			
Garden Club or Society Affiliation:			
Title of work:			
Medium/Materials			
Dimensions	Height:	Width:	Length:
You are welcome to provide your contact information (website, Facebook, Instagram, email):			

Please note: While all exhibits will be monitored during the Convention we are not liable for damage to any artwork piece on exhibit.

GARDEN CLUB NEWS

LUNENBURG & AREA GARDEN CLUB

(District 6 – South Shore)

Submitted by Pauline Morehouse

Garden Tours

We were fortunate to visit two intriguing gardens in **September**. The first was a **hydroponic garden** overflowing with vegetables, including tomatoes, squash, and bok choy. The tomatoes were impressively large and vibrant, though they clearly tempted the local deer population! The owner has since secured the perimeter to keep the "buffet" at bay. We then visited the **Neate's gardens**, a beautiful space maintained by industrious volunteers with the help of teachers and students from Bluenose Academy—a truly welcoming environment for all ages.



Vermicomposting Workshop

In September, Our **Zone 6 Director, Emily Liot**, joined us to share the ins and outs of vermicomposting. Emily had us in stitches with her presentation on those "wiggly" red worms! She is a tremendously knowledgeable and engaging speaker. We all went home much wiser about the soil-health benefits of worm gardening. One lucky member even took home a starter kit, and everyone received a small bag of finished compost to get them started.

Garden Design

Our guest speaker in October was **Candy Venning** from Shelburne (*Sticks, Stones & Garden Bones*). She shared economical ways to make a big impact on garden design while integrating native and deer-resistant plants. Candy's creativity is so infectious that even the timidness of gardener among us felt inspired to add a new feature to their landscape.

AGM and Festivities

At our **Annual General Meeting** in **November**, we were pleased to welcome our new secretary, Kate Wyard. We are also thrilled that our programming team has signed on for another year. We wrapped up the meeting with our Secret Santa exchange, and everyone went home with some lovely, creative gifts.



Holiday Cheer

The season was celebrated with our annual "**Make & Take**" event paired with wine and cheese. This year, a member reached out to the community to identify seniors who could use some extra cheer, and we were able to deliver eight floral arrangements to them. We hope to expand this effort to even more seniors next year!

Outstanding Member Award

Gordon Armstrong received an **Outstanding Member Award** for his diligent work at our garden club as a program coordinator and active member at our events. In particular, he provided ongoing, tender loving care throughout the drought, for the new gardens at Fisherman's Memorial Hospital that our club supported. Thank you, Gordon.



GARDEN CLUB NEWS

BIBLE HILL GARDEN CLUB

(District 3 – Central North)

Submitted by Cathy Fanning

It's beginning to look a lot like spring! The snow is melting, days are getting longer, and the temperatures are slowly warming outdoors. The **Bible Hill Garden Club** does not hold an official meeting in January and therefore, members could spend time browsing garden magazines and seed catalogues, reading blogs, and listening to gardening podcasts - gathering ideas and inspiration for the upcoming season. At our **February** meeting, members observed the process of planting seeds in milk jugs and discussing which seeds work best for winter sowing. Everyone was encouraged to try winter sowing in preparation for our Plant Sale later in May.



In **March**, the club held a seed exchange and shared tips and tricks for starting seeds indoors.

As we move from winter toward the first signs of spring, we look forward to another season of gardening, learning, and sharing together. Happy Gardening

Everyone!



BAXTER'S HARBOUR GARDEN CLUB

(District 5 – Valley District)

Submitted by Heather Knapp, President

The **Baxter's Harbour Garden Club**, which started in **May 2025**, has had an explosion of new members this winter!



January brought a record number of people to our **Winter Sowing** presentation by **Amanda McReynolds**. The presentation inspired many who have since started tons of veggie seeds in the winter sowing way.

Our **February** meeting saw more new people come out to learn about starting perennials with a Baxter's Harbour local **Dan Hagan**. Dan presented his unique germination technique that he has honed over the past many years and brought samples and videos to demonstrate.

In **March** we held a member seed swap and people also brought houseplant cuttings to share. At the same time, we had a general meeting to discuss Club direction moving forward now that we are an established community group.

Our club has grown significantly since our first meeting in May 2025, and we look forward to growing together as a community and having fun at our planned events for the year!



MAHONE BAY GARDEN CLUB

(District 6 – South Shore)

Submitted by Jenny Sandiso, President and Jacquie Avery, Secretary

In 2025 the **Mahone Bay Garden Club** had **seventy-eight members**.

We usually start the year with our **AGM** in **February**, but the weather was appalling last year with freezing rain and ice on all the parking lots. The meeting was cancelled twice and eventually held in **March** with a local speaker, **Naomi Brett**, who told us about her time in Ontario growing cut flowers for the market. In **April Hughston Grimshaw-Surette** gave a talk on invasive plants that are a problem here.

For our **May** meeting we returned to **Wile's Lake Farm Market**, now under new management, for a container workshop.

At the end of **May** we held our **annual Plant Sale**. This year the weather again made things difficult with rain and wind, so the sale was held in the Parish Hall at the Anglican Church. We found this venue worked extremely well for us. Nothing blew away and shoppers lingered; it was a great success. We plan to hold future plant sales inside the Parish Hall.



GARDEN CLUB NEWS

MAHONE BAY GARDEN CLUB

Continued from Page 19

Summer garden tours began in June in Martins Brook and Second Peninsula with some delightful gardens in that area. Then a few weeks later we visited Joan Sargent's garden in Prince's Inlet and the new garden at Fisherman's Memorial Hospital put in by Lunenburg Garden Club. Lastly that evening we visited Judy Estey's garden in Garden Lots. Judy is Master Gardener and a plant collector; she grows a variety of Heaths and Heathers. She also has an extensive fenced garden for vegetables and to protect the plants that the deer love to eat.



The next event was a trip to Foraged Florals in New Ross where we were welcomed by Susan to her amazing flower farm, design studio and woodland wedding venue. We were introduced to a variety of annuals and perennials, many of which were new to us. We enjoyed seeing the huge beds of flowers from which Susan creates her flower arrangements. Our picnic lunch was a delight, set in the Bower, an open-air woodland venue.



Our last tour was to Michele Stevens garden in Second Peninsula. 2025 was the year of the reconstruction of the waterfront in front of the three churches in Mahone Bay which affected some of the plantings there. These will hopefully be re-created in 2026. We have the funds to purchase the plant material we will need and maybe plant some trees too. In the spring and fall we did the usual maintenance of the Aquatic Garden and the Town Hall bed. Other flower beds in town were inaccessible and will be revisited in the spring of 2026.

Cathy Gregoire headed up the creation of the town flower planters this year and they were spectacular. The plants chosen proved to be mostly unpalatable to the deer and they were able to grow well.

Our September meeting was a plant swap at Jenny Sandison's house. Members each brought three plants, potted and labelled. To start everyone gave a short description of the plants that they had brought and then we had the exchange and everyone had three new plants to take home and plant.

In October Dr Peter Duinker gave his talk on 'Aspects of the Urban Forest' which had been delayed due to the awful ice in February. In December the annual Christmas Party was again well attended and a huge success.

Once again, the Mahone Bay Garden Club looks forward to a busy year with interesting speakers and summer tours.

UPPER VAUGHAN GARDEN CLUB

(District 5 - Valley)

Submitted by Mark Kehoe, President

Our gardening club continues to grow and while we patiently wait for the snow to melt away, the Upper Vaughan Garden Club has been busy enjoying a workshop, a guest speaker, and our AGM. Retired florist Jennifer Daniels led a "Build-a-Bouquet" workshop and members learned how to properly construct a bouquet of flowers.

We also welcomed guest speaker Cindy Lou Oulton from Annapolis Valley Luffa for a very educational evening of discussing luffa production and the many uses of luffa.

In March, we hosted our Annual General Meeting where we discussed our 2026 program and events. We are ready for the sun to shine and for our gardens to wake up.



GARDEN CLUB NEWS

QUEENS GARDEN CLUB

(District 6 – South Shore)

Submitted by Chris Radimer

At our **November** meeting an extra-large turnout received an amazing presentation from **Matthew Roy** of **Port Latour's Coastal Grove Farm** along with **Dale Richardson and the team** from the **Shelburne Community Garden and Food Share project**.

With commercial agriculture almost absent from Queens and Shelburne counties it has been estimated that without constant supply from outside the area, our regions have only three days of fresh food supply. Countering this concerning situation will require the kind of efforts that the Shelburne Community Garden and Food share project are engaged in. Shelburne is now the home to a **community geo-thermal greenhouse** that has been established to operate for eleven months of the year to produce fresh produce that can be accessed by food insecure citizens.

The team explained their project along with the challenges and anticipated costs to a very enthusiastic audience, several of whom have been working to establish a new community garden in Queens. Ultimately, there needs to be many of these types of projects to support communities across the area. The work being done in Port Latour and Shelburne is a great example of the possibilities for our area.

This meeting was our final formal meeting for 2025, but the fun continued through end-November and into December with a series of club events.

Christmas season was started with the club's participation in the **Community Christmas Tree display**, held this year at **Privateer's Park** on the banks of the Mersey River. Members created a very gardener-friendly Christmas tree that was an excellent addition to the many community trees in this year's display.

The tree installation was followed by the annual **Christmas wreath workshop** held once again at **Cosby's Garden Centre/Concrete Creations**. It was great to see the very creative arrangements from our talented members.

Queen's Garden Club Christmas weekend was complete with this year's Christmas luncheon held at the amazing **Pembers Garden** in beautiful **Mill Village**. A very large

contingent of gardener's enjoyed the fantastic offerings of **Chef Frankie**. Members raved about the food and beautiful setting. Queens is very lucky to have such talented people doing incredible things that we can all enjoy.

To get 2026 off to a fun start, our club revived its traditional "**Garden trivia night**" which had been shelved during the COVID years. It proved to be a very popular event, with members joining one of seven teams to work together in answering some challenging questions about gardening, plants, and related popular culture. Winning team, "**The Not Weeds**" took home some delicious jams and jellies from Mary White's garden produce.

Our **February** meeting was pleased to host **Gillian MacPherson, Dave Leeson and Adam Savery** from **Rusted Plow Farms** in nearby Camperdown. They inspired members with their journey of developing a small-scale farm which includes an amazing **greenhouse system**.

The greenhouse uses an "**Earth Battery**" **geo-thermal system** to store heat (and to cool in summer) which has been able to maintain a 24-28C temperature providing an excellent growing environment year-round. This has given them the ability to expand their produce options to include an extensive forty fig tree "**figatorium**" that supplies a market stand for the community.

Gillian, Dave and Adam discussed the extensive clearing required along with the addition of one-hundred tonne of rock to create a base for the greenhouse complex. They also were happy to share their plans to expand a seed library, and that they host music get-togethers on the property at their market stand – **1081 Camperdown Road** in Lunenburg County.

With the unusually cold/snowy winter that Queen's has been facing this year, it was a joy to start our **March** meeting with some reminders of what is to come. To that end, the club featured some of the **NSAGC photo contest entries** club members are putting together to submit this year. Sixty photos were featured from several club photographers that sparked awe from the membership. The club will feature more photos in the next meeting prior to the deadline for submissions.



GARDEN CLUB NEWS

QUEENS GARDEN CLUB

Continued from Page 21

Our presenter this month was **Geoff MacDonald**, the new **Chairperson** of the NSAGC who braved the sleet and fog to join us for a presentation on the programs and plans of the NSAGC.

Queens Garden club was also very pleased to see a project come to fruition. Our host location, the **Thomas Raddall Library**, has been adding **stained glass panels** that reflect organizations that use the library. Queens RM (Region Municipality) is blessed to have a highly talented artist who specializes in glass to create these incredible works. With the help of club members who put together the design, **Scot Slessor's** work has now been completed and installed in the library. We are very impressed with the result. Thanks to the Library team and to Scot for all their work on this project.



CHESTER GARDEN CLUB

(District 6 – South Shore)

Submitted by Jayne Campbell, President

Spring is upon us and we are well on our way to having another great year. Our schedule and programs have been confirmed with some great speakers and events. We have a few new members and continue to meet monthly from April until November.



We kick off each year with an **Earth Day** event encouraging the cleaning of our community gardens in Chester.

In **May** we always hold an **Annual Gardeners' Sale** on the *last Saturday in May* at the **Chester Train Station**. Looking forward to a sunny day: wonderful affordable plants, local vendors, and baked goods. In **June**, we hold a social outing for our members. This usually includes a visit to a few local gardens, garden centers, and a meal in a local business.

Chester Garden Club has been hosting a **flower show** for several years in **July**. Stay tuned we always appreciate entries from other garden clubs. Programs in the fall are usually hand-on workshops: floral design, fermentation, harvesting tips and seasonal centerpiece construction.

Our public projects include decorating the **Chester Bandstand** at **Christmas**, as well as the weekly weeding and planting in the **Cove Garden** and the **Parade Square**.



MOUNT DENSON GARDEN CLUB

(District 5 – Valley)

Submitted by Christine Hooper, Secretary

Gardeners know how to cultivate joy in every season, whether the beds are bursting with blooms or tucked beneath winter's blanket of snow. Our club has certainly been tending plenty of fun and friendship over the past few months!

As **November** ended, we gathered for a delightful twist on our annual holiday arrangement workshop, led by our own **Tracey Martin**. Instead of traditional arrangements, members got creative crafting charming free-standing **Christmas gnomes**—each one full of personality! For those who preferred a different project, there was also the option to bring a favorite container and design a festive holiday planter. The room buzzed with creativity, laughter, and the scent of fresh greenery.



GARDEN CLUB NEWS

MOUNT DENSON GARDEN CLUB

Continued from Page 22

Around the same time, **Dale Kelly** planted the seed of a wonderful outing by sharing news of a **Christmas House Tour and Tea** supporting a local cat shelter. Several members happily car-pooled together, enjoying a cozy day out while supporting a great cause.

Our **Christmas celebration** blossomed on December 3rd at **Walker's Restaurant**. It was a lovely evening filled with warm conversation, good food, and festive cheer. Members were thrilled with the door prizes, which included beautiful Diamond Art created by our talented Lori Reid and stunning arrangements crafted by Tracey Martin.

Winter may have settled in by **February**, but that didn't stop our club from blooming with activity. On Sunday, **February 15th**, we gathered for our **Potluck Social** and were delighted by a wonderful turnout and a table overflowing with delicious dishes. As if the feast wasn't enough of a treat, **Tracey Martin** once again surprised us by leading an impromptu **bouquet-making workshop**. It was a cheerful burst of colour and creativity that brightened a grey stormy month.

At our **March** meeting, **Tracey** was at it again, sharing her expertise with an informative and engaging presentation on **Flower Show rules and regulations**. Her talk came just in time as we prepare to host a non-juried flower show this August—an exciting event that will be open to anyone who would like to participate. With Tracey guiding the way, we're sure it will be a blooming success. Outstanding job, Tracey! As always, we had a wonderful time growing, learning, and laughing together.



NORTH MOUNTAIN GARDEN CLUB

(District 5 – Valley)

Submitted by Ron Wilson

The **North Mountain Garden Club** in **Harbourville** has just *completed its inaugural year*. Thirty-four garden enthusiasts of all levels were quick to join and support the club and its efforts. Meetings have been held the last Sunday of each month at the historic **Harbourville Community Hall**. The planning committee of four members meet early each month to ensure guest speakers, topics of discussion, and refreshments for upcoming meetings. Due to snow conditions our January 2026 presentation had to be postponed twice before finally succeeding with a third attempt on **February 22nd**!

Monthly guest speakers covered an array of seasonally timely topics including preparing your garden for winter, winter seed sowing, sprouting winter greens, seed saving, medicinal herbs, and how to prepare and cultivate a vegetable garden from start to finish. Also, a well attended event was a **three-garden tour** in the **Harbourville area** in **July**. The beautiful artistic gardens featured allowed members to see what plants and designs can be successful in our unique part of Nova Scotia. It was quickly decided this will be an annual event for our club.

So, as we begin our second year as a garden club the planning committee is actively searching out new guest presenters and topics that will be of interest to our membership. Our focus and goals in 2025 were to ensure a program of events that would draw members to each meeting. One of our goals for 2026 is to better align our schedule with that of the NSAGC so we are better able to meet their schedules and deadlines. All in all, our first year was a success and feedback from membership has been encouraging and positive.



Garden host - Raymond O'Neil.

GARDEN CLUB NEWS

BRIDGEWATER GARDEN CLUB

(District 6 – South Shore)

Submitted by Heather Dominique

Winter and Spring are very busy times for gardeners. **Bridgewater Garden Club** finished the year with our traditional **December** meeting and a chilli supper. Every year we also make a festive arrangement of sorts. This year we made “**mugs of cheer.**” Festive seasonal arrangements in mugs are fantastic for simple and quick tabletop arrangements. They make great hostess and teacher gifts too.



Our first event of 2026 was **Seedy Saturday**. Our club participated in the annual Seedy Saturday in **February** held at the **DesBrisay Museum**. We signed up new members, maybe did a little seed shopping and listening to a few fantastic speakers, building the excitement to start our seeds.



Our first meeting of the year was March and the weather cooperated, so we were able to hold our meeting with guest speaker **Rebecca MacInnis**, from **Spring Tide Farms**. They are an organic farm in **Lapland NS**. Rebecca talked about organic ways to enrich soil through cover crops. The farm also grows flowers, and we talked about a few of her favourites and how to maximize or minimize growth to ensure nice flowers for a cut flower garden. We also talked about growing under cover and how to extend our growing season here on the south shore, starting early and growing late, by using tunnels. Spring Tide Farm is a regular vendor at the Lunenburg farmers market, if you are looking for locally grown organic produce and flowers.

We had a stellar turn out for our first meeting, and the **Program Committee** presented the plan for 2026. Our **annual plant sale** will be **Saturday, May 30th** at the **4-H Building** at the **Bridgewater Exhibition Grounds**. The date for our **Annual Flower Show & Tea**, is **Saturday, July 11th**, to be held at **Dayspring Fire Hall** in **Upper LaHave**.

PARRSBORO GARDEN CLUB

(District 3 – Central North)

Submitted by Georgie Hebb

December 2025 meeting – workshop and end of year party

After a short time allotted for our usual business, our meeting switched over to the fun stuff - our **needle felting craft** led by our guest, **Isidora Spielmann**, a local artist. Isidora often runs creative community workshops, previously from Art Lab and currently from Parrsboro Creative. We enjoyed learning needle felting and making some lovely garden themed Christmas tree ornaments, from flowers to mushrooms.



While most of us were warm and cozy inside felting, three dedicated elves were very busy outside creating a lovely Christmas planter outside the door, complete with dinosaur ornaments with handmade Santa hats! As well, they did lots of work “sprucing” up the museum planters for the winter with greenery from a spruce tree and decor balls to add some festive cheer. Their efforts were very much enjoyed through the holiday season by us, museum staff and numerous visitors.

This was also our **annual potluck end of year party** and there was lots of yummy food, cider and good cheer. This was a very enjoyable end to a very busy garden club year.

March 2026 meeting – seed starting seminar and seed exchange

After a two-month break, we met again in **March** and had a very informative meeting all about starting seeds. **Mary McPhee**, a club member, is also a very knowledgeable local expert. With her degree in horticulture, Mary uncomplicatedly, yet entertainingly was able to give us a lot of very important information about the dos and don'ts of seed starting. Everything from soil to equipment, tracking, labelling, stratifying,

GARDEN CLUB NEWS

PARRSBORO GARDEN CLUB

Continued from Page 24

hardening off, and much more. We had a large group of members in attendance, plus three new members! Thank you, **Mary!**

Upcoming

Our **Parrsboro Garden Club** has enthusiastically taken on the task of hosting the **DISTRICT 3 - FALL RALLY** this year, with co-host **Cobequid Garden Club**. Preparations are well underway, with a large committee formed and lots of meetings with a plethora of terrific ideas. We are looking forward to seeing other garden club members from our district and we would be so pleased to see you all come out to enjoy the rally and some beautiful sights of our lovely community. More details to come later by email.



CLEMENTS GARDEN CLUB

(District 7 – Western)

Submitted by Gail Wilson

Two years ago, when we were at the NSAGC Convention in Yarmouth, we noticed everyone's beautiful banners. One member, Gail, mentioned that we have a banner but could not find it. So, **Denise Rice** put her thinking cap on and had an "ah-ha" moment. Realizing it must have been made locally, she contacted her daughter, who was working at a local printing company at the time and asked her if they had made it. Sure enough, they had and a new one was printed.



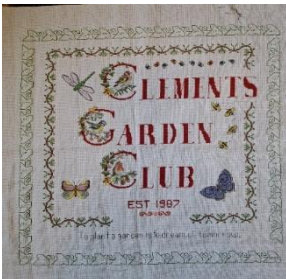
Denise was still thinking of those beautiful banners and decided to design one for the club. Last year, after eight months of cross-stitching it was finished, but not in time for the NSAGC Convention in Antigonish. Our club members' initials are in the ivy leaves around the border.

A meeting was held in **February** of this year, to plan this year's itinerary for events, workshops, and excursions and lots of good ideas were brought forward by members.

Several club members attended workshops over the winter, on planting 'seed snails' and on how to grow potatoes in a bag.

The club is revitalizing **Veterans Park** at **Cornwallis Park**, formerly **Cornwallis Base**.

Last year, we planted several new trees in the park. This year, old gardens will be weeded, replanted with bee-friendly perennials and bushes, and walkways restored, all with a variety of grants. Volunteers will manage planting and garden maintenance.



FORTIES GARDEN CLUB

(District 5 – Valley)

Submitted by Sheila McKeand, Co-ordinator for the District Meeting

The **Forties Garden Club** is hosting the **DISTRICT 5 – VALLEY MEETING** on **April 18, 2026**.

The Planning Committee is hard at work and are looking forward to providing an informative and fun-filled day at the **Forties Community Centre**, at 1787 Forties Road, New Ross, NS B0J 2M0. The theme for the day will be "**The Enjoyment and Rewards of Gardening**."

What can you expect: Opening remarks from **NSAGC Chairperson, Geoff MacDonald**; Guest Speakers – **Susan Larder** from **Foraged Floral Flower Farm**; **Bonnie Levy**, **NSCC** and **Cory Isnor**, **Department of Natural Resources**, "**Fire Smart Begins at Home**"; **Christina Caldwell** – "**Harvesting Seeds to Save Money**"; and, **Mona Keddy** will get everyone active with "**Chair Yoga for Gardeners**."

GARDEN CLUB NEWS

FORTIES GARDEN CLUB

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There is also a **Silent Auction** with lots of items to bid on – check out the **Forties Garden Club Facebook page** for a peak of what is available, **tickets for a 50/50 Draw**, as well as a **hand-crafted trug by Gregory Jollymore**, **Vendor Kiosks**, **Outstanding Member Awards**, **Turkey Dinner**, **Door Prizes**, **Gift Bags**, and *so much more*.

All of this for a **registration fee of \$30.00**. If you have not sent in your registration today, you need to do it on or before the **registration deadline of April 10, 2026**. Send your **full name**, **garden club name**, indicate if you have **any dietary restrictions** and mail your cheque for **\$30.00** to **Sheila McKeand, c/o Forties Garden Club, 1644 Forties Road, New Ross, NS B0J 2M0**. If you have any questions, you can also call **Sheila at 1-902-599-1331**.

Our Club is holding a **Children's Garden Competition**. This competition is for area children to grow their own garden, both flowers and vegetables. The children will be given seeds and transplants in mid-June, and the gardens will be judged by mid-August. Children – 4 to 18 years of age, who want to grow a garden are invited to **register before May 14, 2026**, by calling **Sherry Gates**, at **1-902-299-0529**.

NEW CLUBS IN DISTRICT 1 – CAPE BRETON

Submitted by Glynis Thomas, President

It may be fitting, with **District 1 - Cape Breton hosting the NSAGC 2026 Convention**, that in just over a year they have **doubled** the amount of Cape Breton garden clubs.

In **2025** the **COAL COAST COMMUNITY GARDEN** club joined us representing Donkin & area. They have worked to build a community garden with the local school, improve local food security and education, start a **Butterflyway**, and help bring garden skills and greenery to their community and surrounding areas.

Shortly after, the **FRENCHVALE & AREA GARDEN CLUB** was created with the

hope of bringing local folks together to learn more about gardening and food security. They have already had some interesting speakers on **bees & pollination** and **grafting trees & propagating hardwood cuttings**.

In **February 2026** the **GREY GARDENERS** joined us. As part of the **Main-a-Dieu Community Development Association and Coastal Discovery Centre**, they received funding to build a **greenhouse/gazebo combination** last year. It seemed only fitting after volunteers built this that they should have a garden club to help fill and surround it with flowers, veggies and camaraderie.

March brought us the **LOUISBOURG GARDENERS**.

They have quietly been doing wonderful things in Louisbourg and area for a few years now - planting flowers and veggies throughout the community as part of Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) Active Communities and the Nova Scotia (NS) Horticulture for Health Network; participating in the **Louisbourg Butterfly Pathway** and gathering gardeners together to learn and share.

The **District 1 Clubs of Inverness, Isle Madame, North Sydney, and Westmount** along with all our **Nova Scotia members "Welcome You"** to the NSAGC and hope you enjoy the longevity and friendships that gardening together brings.



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Happy Spring! I say this reluctantly as yesterday we had rain/snow showers, today some areas of the Province freezing rain mixed with snow and it is still *cold!*

Come on sun and warmer temperatures so that we can all get out into our gardens to prune, weed, plant and all that gardening activity that brings us all so much pleasure! I am finally getting around to building the frame for my **ten five-gallon bucket garden**. I have yet to sow some seeds for transplanting and hope to do this soon. I am sure that most of you are well ahead of me.

I hope that you enjoy the **Spring Issue** of the **Scotia Gardener**. I am so pleased to release it on time – maybe one day late but please forgive me.

If you have any suggestions that you would like to see in future issues, please send them along to me. I love history and I think looking back in time on when Clubs began may be of interest to many of you. I will have to ask our Historian if she can provide me with information on the first garden clubs formed in Nova Scotia but if any of you know, please share it with me.

From our **NSAGC Chairperson's Message** in this Issue, I reached out to the **District Directors** that have new clubs. I thought what a great way to highlight their club and its beginning. I hope that you enjoyed reading about the *New Clubs in District 1 – Cape Breton* and I will be sure to highlight new clubs in each District in future issues, but I need your help in letting me know that you have one and/or maybe you would like to share some history from your older clubs. **Pictures** are great way to look back in time and who doesn't like them. I will have to limit the number I can add to the Newsletter but there is that old saying – "*Pictures speak a thousand words!*" and whose doesn't like looking at them.

This is the largest Newsletter yet and with all the **2026 NSAGC Convention information** it is a good way to share this with the majority of the NSAGC membership. However, we may be missing some members who do not have a computer and if that is the case, I understand, that each District can provide printed copies of the Newsletter, if requested. Typically, a newsletter is not this long, and I would like to get back to at least half this size, but exceptions are always made to ensure everyone is being kept informed.

An early reminder that **submissions** for the **Summer Issue** will be due on **June 15th** and they can be sent to me at newsletter@nsagc.com.

Enjoy working in your gardens,

Debbie
Editor, Scotia Gardener



NSAGC TEAM



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If you require more information, please contact the Newsletter Editor at newsletter@nsagc.com

Scotia Gardener – Editor's Discretion

Please note that the Editor of the **Scotia Gardener** has exclusive control over the content and format of the newsletter. All information submitted for publication will be thoroughly reviewed by the editor and will be included or excluded in the newsletter at the sole discretion of the editor.

The preference is that the pictures in the newsletter are original. Pictures will be credited on the page where the photo appears.

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