



**Fredericton Botanic Garden
Association Newsletter**

**Bulletin du Jardin Botanique
de Fredericton**

Vol 18 No 1

Winter 2006

**UPCOMING
EVENTS**

**Brian Pike of Scott's
Nursery, on Winter
Plant Propagation**
January 27, 7:30

**ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING
and SILENT AUCTION**
February 11, 2006

SEEDY SATURDAY
February 25, 2006

**Dr. Jim Goltz
on Attracting birds to
your Garden**
March 30, 2006

**Dr. Wayne Albert
on Preventing
Repetitive Injuries**
April 27, 2006

Also in April (date and
time TBA),
**Daryl Hunter will give
a Saturday seminar
on grafting plants
and trees.**

**Tamsin Morgan
of Wetmore Nursery.**
May 25, 2006

PLANT SALE
May 28, 2006

End of May/early June
**a field trip to Joey
Shotanus' magnificent
fields of tulips.**

President's Report

I hope that you all had a very Merry Christmas and that 2006 will be a bountiful and Happy New Year for everyone.

Since the last report your board has been busy working on our ACOA application and presenting our business plan to city council. The plan was well received and council sent it to staff for an in depth review. We hope to hear from council early in the new year. The approval of the Garden's business plan is necessary in order to receive the appropriate support from the City for our ACOA proposal to succeed.

Our next big upcoming event will be the Annual General Meeting and Silent Auction. This year's AGM will be held on Saturday February 11, 2006 at the Heritage Centre in Marysville. We are absolutely thrilled to have our Patron, his Honour the Lieutenant Governor as our Guest Speaker. He will be speaking on "Zen and the Art of Growing Morning Glories". Please circle Saturday February 11 on your calendar and be sure to attend the AGM.

The Garden is also applying to the Fredericton Foundation's special Foundation 50 program for a grant to rebuild our entrance garden. A special thanks goes to Brian Parker for his efforts on this project.

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at the AGM.

Bill Seabrook, President

Plan to attend the
*Annual General Meeting
and Silent Auction*
on February 11.

The event is being held in the
Marysville Heritage Center.

The meeting will be the first
item on the agenda followed by
the *Silent Auction*
with viewing and bidding.

Our guest speaker
and the Patron to the Garden,
the Hon. Herménégilde Chaisson
will speak on
*"Zen and the Art of Growing
Morning Glories"*

Light refreshments are being
offered
An invitation with details will be
forthcoming.

Membership privileges include: - Newsletters;
advance e-mail notice of all events;
10 % discount at
Capital Landscape and City Designers
Co-op Country Store — Corn Hill Nursery
Green Village — Kent Garden Center
Scott's Nursery — Wetmore's nursery



Continuing with the column for the Fredericton Botanic Garden Newsletter:

Plants That Changed the World: Potato

By Jane Seabrook and Richard Tarn

Take a look at the humble potato. It's a brown, starchy underground stem that is really mostly water (80%). But the mighty potato can, with a milk product like cheese or yoghurt, sustain human life. The potato is the most nutritious of all the world's starchy food crops with more protein, vitamins and minerals than rice, wheat, sorghum or corn.



Potatoes come in many shapes and sizes

Potatoes came to us from South America in the 16th century courtesy of the Spanish conquistadors. In South America the potato was an ancient cultivated crop with many varied forms.....red or blue skin, coloured flesh, and unusual shapes. And even today, potatoes served in restaurants are much more varied than we see elsewhere.

Archaeological evidence shows potatoes, corn and other food plants were cultivated in the high Andes of South America at least 8,000 years ago. The potato, along with tomato and eggplant, is a member of the nightshade family and has over 2,000 relatives world-wide of which only about 200 produce tubers.

The term "potato" is probably derived from "batata" – a Caribbean Arawak Indian term for sweet potato. This is not surprising as early explorers and herbalists of the 16th century often gave several different plants the same name.

The early potatoes from South America probably arrived in Spain around 1570 and were small, knobby tubers and at first were only a curiosity. Most people were afraid to eat them. Gradually, the potato gained popularity. A King's courtier in France posted guards around potato plots during the day and left the plots unguarded at night. Peasants figuring that anything worth guarding might be useful came and stole tubers during the night, and the potato became a common source of food.

So popular did the potato become that large groups of poor people depended almost solely on the potato for food. This was the origin of the Irish potato famine during which over a million people died of hunger when the Late Blight fungus caused the potato crop to fail several years in a row. The mass migration of Irish people looking for a better way of life settled much of eastern North America.

Early European settlers to North America brought potatoes with them that had adapted over time to the long summer days and climate of Europe. After three hundred years of adaptation these potatoes looked little like the indigenous South American potatoes. Later some potato varieties were brought to North America from Central and South America. One of the early introductions was 'Garnet Chili', a long, red-skinned curiosity.

Potatoes grown in Canada by early settlers were not particularly well adapted to our cold spring soils and short growing season. Slowly, farmers selected strains which suited Canadian conditions. Breeding of potatoes by Canadian scientists started in 1934 at the Fredericton Dominion Experimental Farm, now the Potato Research Centre of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

Currently, the Potato Research Centre is an internationally-known centre for research on potato breeding, molecular genetics, physiology, entomology and soils research. The Potato Gene Repository housed at the Potato Research Centre in Fredericton maintains heirloom and Canadian-bred potato cultivars. The Repository frequently has a display at the Fredericton Botanic Garden's Seedy Saturday. Look for an article on the Potato Gene

Repository in an upcoming issue of Canada's seed savers network publication, *Seeds of Diversity* Canada magazine. This is part of a long-standing collaboration between research scientists and volunteers dedicated to saving Canada's heirloom seeds and plants.

Because of their high nutritional value, potatoes continue to be an attractive food in developing countries. The growth in potato production world-wide is in warm climates. Much of the effort of the International Potato Centre in Lima, Peru, one of a number of crop development centres around the world, is devoted to adapting the potato as a "winter window" crop for hot climates. Several North American potato processing companies have recently opened seed potato growing facilities and French Fry plants in China signalling the interest in the potato by the world's most populous nation.



Shepody, a French Fry Variety bred at the Potato Research Center

So the next time you tuck into a delicious shepherd's pie, perogies, poutine, or a plate of fish and chips, remember that the humble potato came to us from the high mountains of the Andes via the Spanish galleons to Europe and then with our European ancestors to Canada.



Needed:
A person to manage the Garden's web site.
Contact Bill Seabrook 459-7862
or call the FBGA office
at 452-9269
fbga@nb.aibn.com



Membership Committee

The committee extends a hearty thank you to the donors of Christmas gift memberships. We hope that donors were pleased with their decorated Christmas wreath over the holiday season. The Membership Committee in conjunction with the Education Committee enjoyed sponsoring the "Wreath Workshop" this year. The workshop was organized by Janis Boston. It was a wonderful success and we plan to schedule another next November. A special thanks to Karen Cook who provided advice, helpful hints, many of the decorations (and a glue gun etc) for the wreath-decorating. And a sincere welcome to all of the new members - we hope that they and all members will take full advantage of the many benefits of membership in FBGA (listed elsewhere in this Newsletter).

The Committees are working hard to make the upcoming "Talks in the Garden" Series interesting to a broad range of Fredericton gardeners. With this in mind we would like to encourage our existing membership to bring their friends and relatives to some of these enjoyable evenings.

The Botanic Boutique was a successful addition to the Treasured Garden Tour last July. Look for the new and improved version in the Membership booth at the 2006 Plant Sale.

Welcome new members

John Welling, Lisa Rousseau, Mary Bastin, Daryl Hunter, Valerie and Mark Archibald, Joey Schotanus

ACORN

(Atlantic Canadian Organic Regional Network)

Gardeners have always known that home-grown vegetables produced without pesticides taste better than vegetables that have travelled long distances to the consumer. Organically-grown vegetables and meat are becoming much more popular with consumers. Organizations like ACORN provide the framework for producers to grow and market food without pesticides.

Certified organic food is produced without the aid of artificial insecticides and follows specific standards: no irradiation or sewage sludge is used, no genetically engineered seed or stock is used and careful regulations on the use of manure and compost must be followed. Independent inspectors visit organic farms to verify that growers understand and follow these standards. Growers who follow the ACORN guidelines can market their produce as certified organic.

To learn more about growing and purchasing organic food, check the ACORN website at:

<http://www.acornorganic.org/>

or write to: ACORN

3101 Hwy 236, RR#1, Kennetcook, NS B0N 1P0

8th Silent Auction 2006 by Nadia and Nancy

On Saturday, February 11
the Fredericton Botanic Garden Association
is holding its 8th Annual Silent Auction.

This message is a request to the membership for donations to this Silent Auction. In past years we have had a wonderful selection of items to bid on and a great time bidding against each other. We also have fun interacting with everyone there and going home with our treasured successes. On top of this, we end up raising money for the garden that is 100% profit.

- New location – This year we will meet at the Marysville Heritage Centre on McGloin Street.
- New Schedule - We plan to hold the Business Meeting prior to the Silent Auction.

We are hoping that the schedule change will encourage a larger turn out. We look forward to the wonderful items you donate, and encourage you to go one step further and bring a friend. Bring two. A detailed list of items being auctioned will be emailed to those of you on our list as the time approaches. No item will be too small or too large. Anything of value will be welcomed. Our well known refreshments will be served. We plan some live entertainment and we are very excited about our speaker this year, so please come.

Items may be dropped off at:
542 Pederson Crescent,
between 3-5 p.m. Mon-Fri until February 9
454-5864



Talks in the Garden

Thank you all for your support over the fall season. We had excellent guest speakers and their contribution to our education series is appreciated. Our "Wreath Workshop" was another success. We made some beautiful wreaths, had a good time doing it and it was a lovely way to start the Christmas season for those members who attended.

"Talks in the Garden" series 2006

The first of the "Talks in the Garden" series for 2006 will be an exciting and informative one with **Brian Pike of Scott's Nursery**. Our talk that evening, Thursday January 27 at 7:30 p.m. will have two themes. Brian's first theme will be on winter plant propagation, starting your garden early with seeds and with cuttings. He will then give us a pre-view of what is new for 2006 in garden annuals, perennials and shrubs.

"**Seedy Saturday** will be held at St Andrews Presbyterian church hall on Saturday, February 25 from 1 to 4 p.m. \$2.00 for FBGA/Seeds of Diversity members and \$4.00 for non-members. All are Welcome."

March 30, 2006 - **Dr. Jim Goltz**—a very fine and engaging speaker who will tell us how to attract birds and keep them coming back to our winter and summer gardens.

April 27, 2006 - **Dr. Wayne Albert** from UNB's Kinesiology department will help us understand what we can do to prevent repetitive strain injuries while gardening.

Also in April (date and time to be announced), **Daryl Hunter** will give a Saturday seminar on grafting plants and trees. We will send out a reminder by e-mail in March.

May 25, 2006 - **Tamsin Morgan** - Wetmore Nursery. Topic is to be announced.

End of May/early June—a field trip to **Joey Shotanus'** and his brother Tim's magnificent fields of tulips. We will see over a half a million tulips in bloom, a delight to behold I imagine, so don't forget your cameras! A car pool from the Resource Centre will be available. Time and date to follow. We will send out a reminder by e-mail.

Thank you all for your support over the fall season. We hope to see you in January.

Janis Boston email: janboston@rogers.com
FBGA "Talks in the Garden" co-ordinator.

Garden Notes

from Richard Tarn
Site Development Committee

The end of 2005 was a busy one in the Garden. The usual end-of-season tasks were completed including a **general clean-up**, mowing of the angelica and a much needed opening up of the rhododendron area by the removal of selected tree branches and background shrubs. Work was also undertaken on three projects with a larger impact.

The first of these was an **enlargement of the major pond**. This was carried out to better drain the surrounding area and to improve access to the Hal Hinds Memorial Garden, and to enhance the pond as a garden feature. After the excavation and grading was completed the pond quickly refilled. It's expected that plenty of pond life survived in the mud to support a rapid re-establishment in the spring.

The second project, **the re-alignment of the lower garden road**, was identified in the 2002 Development Plan. On November 22, 69 mm of rain resulted in the stream overflowing its banks and causing major erosion of the road below the fork to the water tower. This area has regularly been a problem in the spring. The Site Committee decided to immediately go ahead with the road re-alignment. The new road, now mostly completed, starts behind the Resource Centre and follows the old trail beside the woods before swinging across the top to the meadow and joining the existing road just above the water tower turn off. The old road, still in use for water tower access during the winter, will be maintained as a walking trail.

The last project is perhaps the most significant though there is nothing to see on the ground. Water management on the site has been an issue from the beginning and the items above are examples. This fall **Mr. Bruce Baird, of the ADI Group Inc, has completed a study** of the site and provided a water management plan. This is essential background for managing water from the run-off from the Prospect Street parking lot to the pond on the east side and the stream on the west. We are very grateful to Mr. Baird for this contribution to Garden development.

The Fredericton Botanic Garden Newsletter is published four times a year by the Fredericton Botanic Garden Association, Inc.

The FBGA is a registered charitable organization for tax purposes. The objectives of the FBGA are to guide the establishment of the Fredericton Botanic Garden and to foster an awareness and appreciation of plants.

To obtain information on membership and to become involved in FBGA activities please contact us:

452-9269, at PO Box 57, Stn. A, Fredericton, NB E3B 4Y2
or fbga@nb.aibn.com

Web: www.frederictonbotanicgarden.com

Fredericton Botanic Garden Association
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