

PARS News

Coming Events

- Jan 22 **General Meeting** (Google Earth map)
7:30 pm Speaker: Nancy Moore – Fraser Valley College
 Topic: Small Gardens
- Feb 26 **General Meeting** (Google Earth map)
 7:30 pm Speaker: Garth Wedemire
 Topic: About the Species Studies Workshops
- Mar 25 **Annual General Meeting** (Google Earth map)
 7:30 pm AGM Material - Elections
 Speaker: TBA
 Topic: TBA
- Apr 05 **Annual Plant Sale at Elgin Hall** (Google Earth map)
 Apr 22 **General Meeting** (Google Earth map)
 Speaker: TBA
 Topic: TBA
- Jun 08 **Annual Picnic** TBA



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President's Message – Ken Parker

As February draws to a close we have to think of our AGM. This year we will need to look for a volunteer to fill the secretary's position. Thanks Lynda, for your work and effort during your time as secretary.

Richard has asked me to mention that he needs someone with an accounting background to peruse the books.

We have a Library, with lots of good reading and reference material. Margaret Hodgson takes good care of it, and she has mentioned that she would appreciate it if the membership really used this resource.

Robin Fischer is surely and capably getting the island trip organised. It looks like it will be an interesting and enjoyable couple of days.

As I am tardy with the report this month I apologise to anyone who may receive the PARS newsletter late.

Recipe - Lynda Featherstone

FESTIVE PUNCH

- 2 cans frozen raspberry concentrate
- 1 can frozen cranberry concentrate
- 1 can frozen lemonade concentrate
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 large bottle gingerale
- 2 large bottles club soda

You can always float some Cranberries on top to make it more festive

For an alcoholic version add Vodka

Greenhouse Gardening by James Underwood Crockett

160 pages, approx. 83 plates colour photos, 19 pages with black and white photos or diagrams, illustrating methods to be used in setting up a greenhouse. Appendices include *Greenhouse pests and diseases*, *Characteristics of 102 greenhouse plants*, *Credits and acknowledgments*, *Bibliography*, *Index*. Published in North America in 1977 by Time-Life Books Inc., Alexandria, Virginia. Library of Congress Card Number 77-79073.

James Underwood Crockett (1915-1979) was an eminent horticulturist, writer on gardening subjects and, on television, a teacher of plant care. Many of you will recall the popular programme, “Crockett’s Victory Garden” which was carried for many years on PBS. He was a graduate of the University of Massachusetts’ Stockbridge School of Agriculture. He also received an Honourary Doctor of Science from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and has been cited by the American Association of Nurserymen of the American Horticultural Society. He authored books on greenhouse, indoor and window-sill gardening, a monthly column for *Horticulture* magazine and a monthly bulletin, “Flowery Talks”, for florists. His weekly television programme, *Crockett’s Victory Garden*, was broadcast throughout Canada and the United States.

Greenhouse Gardening is a practical guide to any gardener who is interested in year-round gardening under glass. The prospect is becoming more expensive, but a greenhouse does appeal to many of us on the coast to at least winter over many of our plants and to give our plants a head start in the very early spring.

The book is divided into five chapters, with the Appendix following. In **Chapter One**, the author gives a brief description of the history of greenhouses, dating from the time of the Roman Emperor Tiberius 14 – 37 A.D. who had a passion for cucumbers, in or out of season, and the only way to satisfy this passion was to build a structure enclosed in beds of dung and covered over with sheets of mica, this being in the pre-glass era. The Romans continued to improve on their methods, building in ducts and pipes to carry heated water and air for temperature control and allowed for the growing of grapes, peaches, roses, cucumbers and decorative plants. But as Rome declined, so did horticulture, and these ancient skills were not revived until the Italian Renaissance until near the end of the 1200s. By the end of the 17th Century, orange trees were being grown in orangeries to protect them from frost. But the real boom in greenhouse growing came in 19th Century England, after the prohibitive tax was removed from glass. Soon every wealthy family was constructing a greenhouse and adding a gardener to the staff.

Crockett uses this chapter to also give very practical advice of calculating to cost of heating a greenhouse for every area of Canada and the United States with charts from the U.S. National Climatic Centre and the Environment Service of Canada. From there, his discussion moves to *glass* or *plastic*. He brings into discussion the drawbacks of flexible plastics – limited life span, fiberglass is *translucent* rather *transparent*. Some surfaces are uneven and catch dirt easily. It is noteworthy that the author raises many problems that gardener may not have considered.

Crockett also describes the practicalities of 1) a greenhouse constructed from a kit 2) Assembling a prefab lean-to 3) Choosing a location 4) Systems for heating 5) the emergency alarm 6) Benches and walkways within the greenhouse

Chapter Two describes the choice of plants, methods and temperature for use in a greenhouse. In **Chapter Three**, titled **Getting Flowers the Size You Want When You Want** gives practical advice of forcing bulbs, effects of light and dark, tents to block light, pinching for larger blooms and many other suggestions. The **Fourth Chapter**, **The Fine Art of Creating New Plants** includes ideas of combining pools, extending living areas and conservatory areas that essentially

become part of the house as part of your greenhouse plan. In **Chapter Five**, the author has offered a comprehensive coverage of plants for the greenhouse.

Raffle Update - Gail Floyd, Raffle Coordinator

As you saw at the last PARS General meeting your Club Executive has decided we need to brighten up our monthly raffle table. For the next few meetings there will be a wrapped mystery gift on the table. It will be the last item drawn in the raffle.

Also, just a reminder that everyone should bring something for the success of the raffle table. It can be an item that is used, re-gifted or new as well as any plant material.

Thanks again for your support.

Musings from my Garden – Joan Bengough

What a Difference a Flower Makes

This winter seems to have been longer than usual - probably because of the frequent snowfalls. While the amount of each fall has not been great, the snow has been falling on already frozen ground and seems to have hung around longer, making it too slippery underfoot for me to venture too far. My only "gardening" has been confined to sessions of "poop-patrol" - hardly inspiring!

But joy of joys - opening the blinds one morning I saw a small patch of yellow where I thought nothing was planted. It demanded instant inspection, and I found a small pot of winter aconites I had forgotten. What a glorious site. No matter how much colour is provided by foliage, winter pansies and berries, by the end of the winter the whole effect looks a little tired. A few fresh spring blossoms and the garden comes to life again.

Along with the members of Fraser South Rhododendron Society I recently had a chance to visit the garden of Bill & Carla Bischoff. (PARS members will no doubt recall that Bill has spoken to us on a couple of occasions.) The couple specialize in Cyclamen and Orchids, but their garden is an eclectic mix including rhododendrons, ferns, trees and shrubs. We should all be growing more cyclamens - they make a wonderful show under rhododendrons.

The Bischoff garden is amazing - it is a small lot in a cul-de-sac and every inch is used. The variety of cyclamens in bloom, the flowers and leaf colours and shapes were incredible - but that was only the beginning. The rich collection of shrubs and trees, shade house, arbours, decking with ponds, shelving for garden paraphernalia and so on, were fitted in like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. Incredible use of space.

And then there were the orchids. There was a warm greenhouse - really warm - full of the most exotic collection of orchids I have ever seen. Next came the cool greenhouse with a different variety of equally beautiful orchids. There is yet another greenhouse full of cyclamen seedlings. I could go on and on.

It is obvious that here is a couple who are gardening all year around - snow or not.

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