



THE BULLETIN

BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL
OF GARDEN CLUBS

JUNE 2026



'Crocus Rose', a David Austin shrub rose. Photo by Brenda Viney,
Vancouver Rose Society.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

LYNDA PASACRETA

PLEASE FORWARD TO ALL OF YOUR CLUB MEMBERS

It is always fun to look back to see how we got here!

June is named after Juno, the Roman goddess of marriage, childbirth, and women's vitality. It was considered the most auspicious time to get married.

Apparently it was great time to have a bath! Back in the 14th and 15th centuries people were mostly into annual cleaning rather than regular bathing, so June was a great time to get married because they were at their freshest.

June weddings also meant that if women became pregnant they would be healthy enough to help with the harvest in the spring.

June weddings also allowed for a honeymoon (a term associated with the first moon after summer solstice). For farmers, it followed a busy planting season and preceded the busy harvest, allowing for a celebration without hindering agriculture work.

Roses came into the picture because of their strong-smelling scent to help mask any odours of the wedding party.

In the Victorian era, the language of flowers (floriography) became popular, with roses used to convey messages of love and affection.

June is also the peak season for many flowers, including roses. Historically, this was the first time of the year that fresh flowers were readily available for decoration and celebration.

Brenda Viney, Vancouver Rose Society, has kindly contributed photos of her roses for the newsletter that are specifically in the 2026 Pantone colour of the year — Cloud Dancer (www.vancouverrosesociety.org).

Jason Crutch, Fraser Valley Rose Farm, and a regular contributor to our in-person meetings, has picked a couple of his favourites in the Pantone colour (www.fraservalleyrosefarm.com).

Thank you kindly to both Brenda and Jason. These roses are beautiful and deserve front and centre recognition.

Time to take a break from planting and have a bath!

'Tranquility', a David Austin Rose. Photo by Brenda Viney, Vancouver Rose Society.



JUNE ROSES: THE BIG SHOW IS ON JASON CROUTCH, FRASER VALLEY ROSE FARM

Well, here we are. After all the pruning, the feeding, the waiting through those grey spring weeks — the roses are coming into bloom. This is what it's all for.

June on the West Coast is a bit of a pivot point for rose care. We've come through our wet spring and the soil is starting to dry down, so watering moves to the top of the list now. Deep, infrequent watering is the goal — you want moisture getting down to the roots, not just wetting the surface. Keep an eye on things; our weather can flip from cool and overcast to a proper hot stretch faster than you'd expect.

If you did a fertilizer application or top dress back in late winter or early spring, you're right on schedule for round two. Roses are consistent feeders — they do best with regular, moderate applications rather than one big hit. I lean toward alfalfa pellets, compost, or well-aged horse manure because they feed the soil as much as the plant, and that pays off over time. That said, a balanced granular or soluble fertilizer works well too if you want a quicker response. Whatever you reach for, look for

something in roughly a 3-1-2 NPK ratio — higher nitrogen than phosphorus, good potassium, easy on the middle number.

Now, start making a habit of looking under the canopy. I mean really getting in there and checking the lower leaves and interior of the plant for the early signs of black spot — those tell-tale dark splotches with fringed edges. Catching it early and removing affected leaves (and cleaning them up off the ground) can make a real difference as we head into the heart of bloom season. Prevention and prompt response beat trying to chase it down later.

Later in June, deadheading comes into the picture — removing spent blooms to encourage the next flush. Honestly, it's one of those things that's a lot easier to show than to explain in writing. If you want to see exactly how I approach it, I've got you covered on my YouTube channel with a step-by-step video.

For now though — go enjoy those roses. You've earned it.



SCHOLARSHIP FUND NEWS

OWEN SMITH, BCCGC SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT, UBC ROSE BANCROFT AWARD

Owen Smith
UBC student and BCCGC scholarship recipient
Vancouver, BC

To the members and donors of the BCCGC:

I am extremely grateful to have received a BC Council of Garden Clubs scholarship. Gardening has been a lifelong interest for me that I hope to continue through both professional pursuits and personal enjoyment.

Growing up in Edmonton, Alberta, I was surrounded by vast canola fields, cattle, and a lot of *Populus tremuloides* (Trembling Aspen). I can remember my first time visiting BC on an early spring road trip with my family and being quite impressed by the difference in climatic viability of the Lower Mainland compared with the Prairies. I suppose I wrongly assumed that vegetation everywhere in Canada was defined by various shades of brown between the months of October and March. I love that horticulture and gardening garners incredible support in BC; living in Vancouver has allowed me to truly appreciate the beautification of public spaces through community gardens, ornamental tree planting, and maintenance of road verges.

Albertan climate notwithstanding, my parents are both avid gardeners and I spent many childhood hours weeding and playing in gardens, or, more realistically, gorging myself from one of the fruiting trees, canes, and shrubs in our yard. Special shoutout to the Romance series of dwarf sour cherry trees developed by Dr. Bob Bors at the University of Saskatchewan fruit tree breeding program: they combine cold hardiness with some of the most delicious fruits I've ever tasted. In my opinion, sour cherries are highly underrated in BC and I wish both growers and hobby farmers planted them more often.

I started at UBC in 2021 in Environmental Science, but soon discovered the Faculty of Land and Food Systems through friends and acquaintances, who encouraged me to switch my degree to Sustainable Agriculture and Environment. I finished the coursework for that major last year, and have been working on completing a Minor in Fermentations, upon completion of which (in a few weeks I will graduate!) I am hoping to be accepted into an International Masters in Horticulture and Plant Science. This program is relatively new and is the result of a collaboration between multiple prestigious European universities such as the University of Bologna, Humboldt University in Berlin, and the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences in Vienna, along with a few others.

Through my work as a research assistant in Dr. Simone Castellari's lab at the Wine Research Centre at UBC, I have found a branch (or a shoot?) of plant science and horticulture that I truly enjoy. The viticulture industry is incredibly important to BC's economy and culture, as are other fruit crops that the lab studies such as blueberries and raspberries. In the future, I hope to return to Canada and work with fruit crops in some capacity, whether that be through further studies and research or an industry position.

Many thanks to all involved with this scholarship program!

Owen Smith

ALL ABOUT THE BC COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS SCHOLARSHIP FUND DEBBIE MELLENGER, SCHOLARSHIP FUND CHAIR

Since 2006, the BCCGC scholarship fund has been managed by the Vancity Community Foundation. Members are always interested in how the funds continues to grow and why we do not give a larger amount away when we have all this money. So, here are some answers!

In addition to donations, the fund grows through investments. The capital from long-term funds like ours is pooled and invested together to maximize impact. About 90% is invested through Vancity Investment Management in socially responsible investments that avoid harmful industries, including fossil fuels, and focus on progressive companies with strong growth potential. These companies are regularly monitored for their environmental, social, and governance practices.

The fund is managed with a long-term goal of achieving an average annual return of 6%. In years when returns exceed that target, the surplus remains in the fund to help support future grants during less profitable years. Only the interest generated is given out, allowing BCCGC to fund sustainable awards on an annual basis.

The remaining capital is invested in projects such as the Affordable Community Housing Accelerator Fund, which helps create climate-ready, affordable rental housing in partnership with non-profit, cooperative, and Indigenous organizations.

It is reassuring to know that the scholarship fund is being managed thoughtfully, ethically, and with long-term sustainability in mind.

We also receive quarterly reports from the Vancity Community Foundation outlining the fund's value, donations, administrative costs, and overall balance, allowing us to monitor its progress regularly and share these reports with our members.

Should you have any questions related to the scholarship fund, please contact Debbie Mellenger at scholarship@bcgardenclubs.com.

Cecil Beaton Photographs. Women's Horticultural College, Waterperry House, Oxfordshire, 1943. Photo from Wikimedia Commons.





HOW TO DONATE TO THE BCCGC SCHOLARSHIP FUND

If you wish to make a donation by cheque please send it to:

BC Council of Garden Clubs
Scholarship Fund, c/o: BC Council
of Garden Clubs

10952 McAdam Road

North Delta, BC, V4C 3E8

Please ensure that the cheques are made out to the "Vancity Community Foundation" and the memo field shows "BC Council of Garden Clubs." If the person or organization that the donation is from does not clearly show on the cheque, please include a brief note with the cheque indicating who the donation is from and a return address (so that an income tax receipt can be issued).

If you wish to donate online with a credit card:

Go to

www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca.

Click the "Funds" button on the top right side of the home page.

Locate the BC Council of Garden Clubs Scholarship Fund, either by scrolling through the list or searching "garden clubs" in the search bar.

Once on the BCCGC Scholarship Fund page, click "Give to this Fund" and complete the form.

OR

Go to www.bcgardenclubs.com.

Go to the "Scholarship Fund" on the top bar and click on the "Donate" page below.

Scroll down to the link to Vancity Community Foundation and click on it. This will take you to the BCCGC Scholarship Fund page.



HOW FAR CAN WE GO?

DEBBIE MELLENGER, SCHOLARSHIP FUND CHAIR

Thanks to our incredible supporters, we have reached our \$12,000 fundraising goal this year! Every additional contribution now helps us expand our programs and student assistance.



Cecil Beaton Photographs — Women's Horticultural College, Waterperry House, Oxfordshire, 1943. Photo from Wikimedia Commons.

LIZ KNIGHT

DARTS HILL CONSERVANCY TRUST SOCIETY, SURREY

As you know, Darts Hill Garden Park is one of the Lower Mainland's best kept secrets. Everyone has heard of VanDusen Botanical Garden, and UBC's Botanical Garden, but Darts Hill?

Created 75 years ago by Francisca and Edwin Darts, it is a 7.5-acre plantsman's garden and contains one of the most diverse collection's of mature and unusual trees and shrub species in the Pacific Northwest. Of special interest are a superb collection of magnolias, 1,000+ rhododendrons, extensive alpine beds, a food forest and pollinator garden, an orchard of heritage fruit and nut trees, and much more.

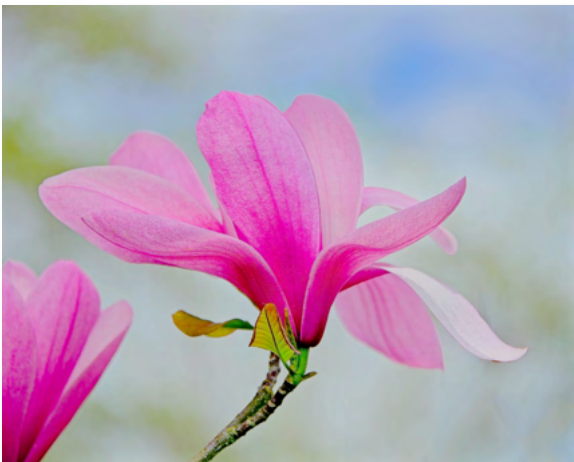
Douglas Justice, associate director at UBC Botanical Garden, said *"If you are looking for a particular plant and you can't find it at UBC or VanDusen, you will probably find it at Darts Hill... It's an amazing collection."*

I am newly appointed to the board of the Darts Hill Conservancy Trust Society, and my remit is to let more gardeners know about this horticultural treasure. I would be delighted to make a presentation to your club at one of your meetings, which would briefly cover the history of the garden, with the primary focus being on the plants themselves.

I can organize a guided tour of the garden for your club members. Any time of year is right for a visit to Darts, but spring is especially good, when the rhododendron collection is at its best. If any part of this is might be of interest to your club, please contact me and we can go from there — lizknight1@me.com. For more information, visit <https://dartshill.ca/>

Editor's note: Liz promises to make the talk fun and educational, answering vital questions like:

- 🌹 Why green tea never really caught on in England.
- 🌹 How the very first use of chemical weapons in recorded history involved rhododendrons.
- 🌹 Why pawpaw growers hang roadkill in their orchards.



Magnolia and *Acer henryi*, Henry's maple, in Darts Hill. Photos by Phil Knight, South Surrey Garden Club.

INTENTIONAL PLANTING

LYNDA PASACRETA, RICHMOND GARDEN CLUB

Sage Kosa, Kindred Gardens, was our scholarship fund speaker at our spring in-person meeting in April. She was a recipient of a BC Council of Garden Clubs scholarship in the past.

She spoke of gardening with intention. This really resonated with me as it is my modus operandi anytime I set foot into a garden bed.

I look at the light in the garden, the condition of the soil, and I think about the wildlife I want to support.

Sometimes the garden directs my intention to change. Richmond Garden Club maintains a little urban farm on the rooftop of the Richmond Cultural Centre. There has been willy-nilly planting over the years but last year we decided to intentionally plant pollinator-friendly perennials and some native plants. Mid-May this year we were planting trays of alyssum and marigolds in amongst the new growth of perennials when a painted lady butterfly landed on the purple bloom of an onion planted last year! Then a couple of swallowtail butterflies flitted through the prolific *Erigeron* that blew in on the wind a couple of years ago and is now covering the ground on the rooftop garden. To some the *Erigeron* looks messy but to our bees, butterflies, and other pollinators it is an invitation to drop in and stay awhile. One year one of our members intentionally

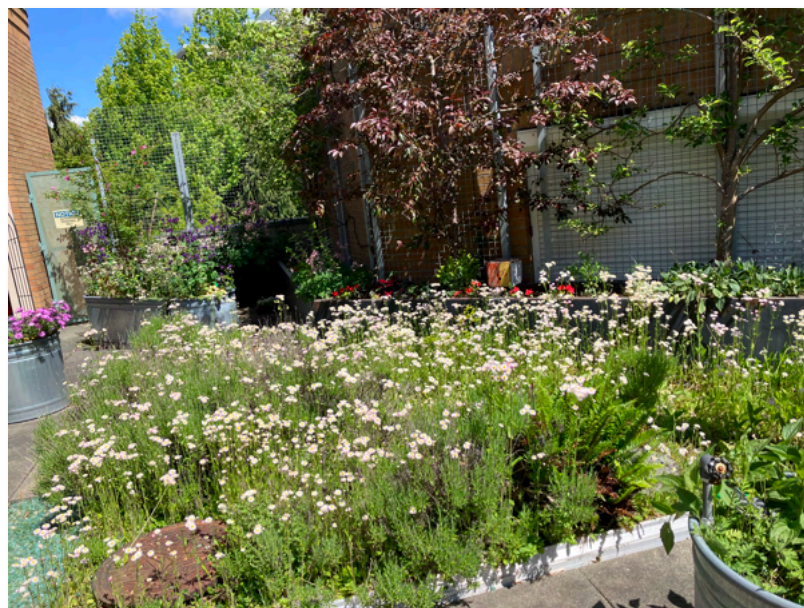
removed the daisy-like plant as she truly thought it was too messy. Back it came the next year along with reminders to our members about who we are intentionally planting gardens for. 🐝

Even though we are now intentionally planting for the pollinator-friendly insects, we also think about the visitors to the rooftop garden.

Interspersed with the meadow-like flowers are vegetables and fruits, which brings me back to Sage Kosa's presentation on creating meadow gardens in amongst your vegetable gardens.

Raspberries, blueberries, fruit trees, eggplant, squashes, tomatoes, onions, beans, they are all part of the scene up on the second floor. There are plenty of chairs and a giant picnic table to accommodate those who want to be immersed in the garden.

We intended to create this!



HISTORY OF ROSES

There is plenty of information online about the evolution of roses.

So grab a coffee or tea and learn some interesting facts about these captivating blooms.

Roses evolved over 35 million years ago. China domesticated the rose around 5,000 years ago. Our garden roses today come from 18th-century China, via the imported *Rosa chinensis*.

Roses became popular throughout Rome and the Middle East as symbols of love, beauty, and even currency!

Roses have been a notable part of our history. Christianity during the Roman Empire identified the rose with the Virgin Mary.

Roses were symbolized in a conflict between the Houses of York and Lancaster — known as the War of the Roses.

There are over 30,000 hybrids and cultivars today.



'Janet B. Wood' , a white rambler rose. Photo by Brenda Viney, Vancouver Rose Society.



'Memoire' rose. Photo by Jason Crouch, Fraser Valley Rose Farm.



'Madame Hardy' rose. Photo by Jason Crouch, Fraser Valley Rose Farm



Announcing the 2026 Communities in Bloom Theme — Therapeutic Gardening

This year, CiB is recognizing the restorative power of green spaces — gardens that nurture the mind, body, and spirit. For more information on therapeutic gardening — <https://bccib.ca>.

For those who may have missed it, Communities in Bloom is pleased to share the recording of the recent webinar presented in collaboration with the Compost Council of Canada.

Food Gardening Matters:

Cultivating Resilient Communities Through Therapeutic Gardens from March 25, 2026. Watch the recording here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W42dlUnRvcU>

A sincere thank you to the moderator, Susan Ellis, and to the speakers, Tina Liu and Anne Kadwell, for sharing their valuable insights and expertise. We encourage you to share this recording with your networks so others can benefit from the discussion.

Wonderful quote from Eleanor Roosevelt. From the Vancouver Rose Society's website.

Which Rose?

*I once had a rose named
after me and I was very
flattered. But I was not
pleased to read the
description in the catalogue:
no good in a bed,
but fine up against a wall.*

— Eleanor Roosevelt

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

We would love to feature your club or community garden in the newsletter. 🙏

Tell us about some of the projects your club or community garden is involved in.

You are invited to submit an article at any time (please include photos and name of author). Photos should be high resolution and you should include the name of the photographer if possible. Articles should be in the range of 300–500 words. If you have an idea for a

longer piece, connect with the newsletter editor in advance to discuss your idea.

Articles are due on the 15th of the month preceding publication. If they are submitted after that date, they will be held for the next issue.

The next due date is June 15 for July 1. Submissions/inquiries: newsletter@bcgardenclubs.com

Lynda Pasacreta, Editor

Pam Robertson, Copy Editor

BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS

Lynda Pasacreta | President

Vacant | Immediate Past President

Cindy Tataryn | First Vice President

Ron Ouwerkerk | Second Vice President, Insurance

Dorothy Barkley | Secretary

Ann Peters | Treasurer

Debbie Mellenger | Scholarship Fund

Lynda Pasacreta | Communications Coordinator

Lorna Herchenson | Membership Committee

Lynda Pasacreta | Newsletter Committee

Frank Girard | Website

bcgardenclubs.com | www.facebook.com/bcgardenclubs