



University  
of Victoria

## Friends of Finnerty Gardens March 2014 Newsletter

### Finnerty Plant Sale: New Beginnings

Our annual Plant Sale has been the major fundraiser for over 25 years for supporting and maintaining this quiet garden oasis on campus – and in that time it has become a much-awaited annual event marking the start of Victoria’s gardening season. Thanks to the efforts of the organizing committee, it has been a well-oiled machine, purring along with a host of dedicated volunteers and excellent plant sale convenors.

While the McKinnon Gymnasium has been a great site for the sale over the years, we have always wanted to create a stronger connection with the Finnerty Gardens, particularly as May is such a spectacular month for our many Rhododendrons. For this reason, and because parking will be much easier adjacent to the Gardens, we are trying a new approach for 2014: the Plant Sale will be held on the first Sunday of May (May 4th) from 11 am - 2 pm as usual -- but in a new location on the lawn adjacent to the entrance to Finnerty Gardens (see the map on page 4).

In addition to this new more convenient and beautiful location, we are offering a smaller but more select choice of plants. We are excited that these changes will be good ones and hopeful that we will get the usual lineups of avid

gardeners. Tents will be set up on the lawn opposite the Chapel entrance for vendors and their plants. Space, of course, will determine how many vendors and the variety of plants that can be offered.

At this time we know for sure that we will have a very good assortment of Rhododendrons in bloom, perennials that have been grown for a year at the Finnerty greenhouse, and miniature conifers and alpine perennials. If space permits, we hope to also have a good selection of choice ferns, exotic woodlanders, and tender plants suitable for containers.

We also plan to have refreshments, entertainment in the Gardens, tours and – as always -- many knowledgeable people to help you choose plants to fit your garden.

Since set-up and take-down will all be happening on the same day, we will be needing volunteers for specific jobs in a concentrated time frame and would appreciate lots of help. Since the sale is a brief one with a more limited array of plants, there is no opportunity for presales to volunteers, as in the past. We sincerely hope this will not be a deterrent to helping us out. And at the end of the day, isn't it all about helping Finnerty Gardens to grow and thrive?

## Looking Forward to Another Year

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If you wish to volunteer, you can contact our new volunteer coordinator Anne Mace by email at [amace@telus.net](mailto:amace@telus.net) or by phone at (250) 479-7677. Here are just some of the jobs we will be needing help with: set up, cashiers, tallying, helping people with their purchases to the parking lot (as shopping carts don't work on lawn), take down, membership table, refreshments. Please let Anne know your interests and we will do our best to place you where you are most needed.

*We are looking forward to our new Plant Sale format with the Garden in bloom as a backdrop – and to seeing you once again at this signature event!*

*Carmen Varcoe, Chair  
Friends of Finnerty Gardens*



Here we are already in the third month of 2014! We have had an incredible winter with no serious weather to disrupt Finnerty Gardens. Sadly, the garden has lost three large Garry oaks, which had to be removed because they were rotten and considered dangerous. We often think that the Garry oaks will last forever and we tend to only remove trees when they have fallen over or show obvious signs of disease or decline. These trees were once in the natural bush line and years ago, when we cleared more of the lower vegetation as we developed the Garden, we noted they were damaged. We had to clean them up by hand as they were deep in the Garden where trucks and chipper could not get to. With change comes opportunity so we will be thinking of what we can plant to replace them.

Looking forward into 2014 we have no major projects in planning. We still have a water feature idea for the ponds near the timber bamboo that needs more thought as to how we will get electricity to the site and install a liner and pump without disrupting the garden too much. As with everything, the devil is in the details.

Jeremy has been working to improve drainage and make changes to increase the irrigation coverage for the Salix bed and the stumpery. There is always mulching and path improvements, the deer are still getting into the garden, and we need to do fence repairs. The garden is already beginning to show spring colour with a few Rhododendrons, Camellias and many bulbs springing up to show spring colour.

We are excited to have the annual Plant Sale at the Chapel entrance to Finnerty Gardens this year as it will be a great opportunity to showcase the Garden at a time when it is in its glory. I have always said Mother's Day is the best time if you only can come to the Garden one day a year. We will have Rhododendrons that are from cuttings from the Garden for the sale, as well companion plants. We can only hope for sunshine to make this day perfect for all to enjoy.

I hope to see you all there.

*Rhonda Rose  
Supervisor of Horticulture  
Facilities Management, University of Victoria*

## Mark Your Calendars

“Welcoming Spring” Tea for the Volunteers who support Finnerty Gardens

Thursday, March 20th, 3-5 pm at the University Club

University of Victoria Plant Sale

Sunday, May 4th, 11 am - 2 pm at the Chapel Lawn, adjacent to the Finnerty Gardens. Free parking in Lot 6

## Membership

We encourage you to renew your membership in the Friends of Finnerty Gardens, either at the Volunteer Appreciation Tea on March 20th for those of you who volunteer, or at the Plant Sale on May 4th. You can also send a cheque to External Relations by mail, as noted below to renew your membership.

The membership fee is \$10 per year (single or couple). This fee supports the Gardens and includes an occasional newsletter that highlights activities and events that are open to members. Funds raised through membership support enhancements within the Gardens which would not be possible otherwise.

This newsletter is also available on the University of Victoria's Finnerty Gardens website at <http://www.uvic.ca/finnerty/index.php>. To save paper and postage, we can email this newsletter to you if you provide your email address to:

Joy Davis, Division of External Relations  
University of Victoria, PO Box 1700 STN CSC, V8W 2Y2  
(250) 472-5474 [joydavis@uvic.ca](mailto:joydavis@uvic.ca)

## Volunteering

Volunteers play an important role in the Plant Sale and in a range of other Finnerty activities. We encourage you to join us – and to extend your network of garden enthusiasts.

We are delighted to welcome Anne Mace as our new Volunteer Coordinator, replacing Kathleen Bellows who has done such a wonderful job over the past few years. If you are able to volunteer with Finnerty Gardens, please contact Anne at [amace@telus.net](mailto:amace@telus.net).

### VOLUNTEERS - WHAT WOULD WE DO WITHOUT YOU?

Our annual plant sale has only been successful because of the many volunteers who spend countless hours willingly and cheerfully working at this worthy event.

We have in the past allowed presales as a thank-you -- but this year being a transitional one with a new venue, tighter set-up times and fewer plants, we can't offer this kudo to our volunteers. Instead, we would like to thank you in another way. If you have in the past volunteered to help our annual sale in any way, we hope you will consider joining us to welcome Spring with tea and goodies at the University Club

on Thursday, March 20th from 3 - 5 pm.

Please let us know if you wish to participate in our Volunteer Appreciation Tea, as we need to make sure everyone has a goodie or two. So RSVP to Anne Mace, our new volunteer coordinator, at [amace@telus.net](mailto:amace@telus.net) or by phone (250) 479-7677 by Monday, March 10th at the latest. We do hope to see you and to show our gratitude for your past endeavors. As well, we hope that you help again this year in our new location at the Finnerty Gardens on Sunday, May 4th.

*The information presented and the opinions expressed by the authors in this newsletter are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the University of Victoria or any employee thereof.*

