



Finnerty Garden Friends

OCTOBER 2017

Finnerty Gardens in early fall

by *Chelsea Bentaberry*

September and October in Finnerty Gardens are some of the most beautiful months of the year. A little rain has washed away the dust, the leaves are changing colour and all the migratory birds are back for the next couple of seasons. It does, however, mean that we say goodbye to many of our perennials (we keep some up for the seed-heads and winter interest), the warm afternoons and our much-loved Rufus Hummingbird. I think it is worth it though. The sun and warm days will be back again before we know it.

A tree of particular interest in early fall is the **Cercidiphyllum japonicum**, or Katsura. The Katsura's leaves will start to break down and turn a fabulous shade of yellow, sending their sweet aroma throughout the gardens. I'm stopped at least once a day



around this time of year and asked where the cotton candy smell is coming from. We have quite a large *Cercidiphyllum japonicum* in the center of the Memorial Bed, but the one that seems to get the most attention is in the Zelvova Bed across from the Tree Bowl.

There are so many nice shrubs in the fall, but the one that stands out for me is **Callicarpa** or the Beauty Berry Bush.

The glossy purple berries are such a welcome sight at this time of year when everything else in the gardens tend to be green.



Some people enjoy this shrub later into early winter when the leaves have fallen off and those little jewel-like berries remain. However, sometimes migratory robins will devour every single berry on the plant, so I enjoy it while I can!

The perennial that steals the show in early fall is the **Sedum 'Autumn Joy'**. We have been reinstating a mass planting along the entire front of the Meadow Bed. I have been dividing our existing plants and replanting them along the border, similar to how they were before the Iris Society



borrowed the space. A neighbour close to Finnerty Gardens must keep honey bees because every afternoon, the Meadow Bed is a buzz with activity.

If you haven't been through Finnerty Gardens in a while, please come through and maybe you'll catch a glimpse of the barred owl, but you'll most definitely see our much-loved garden as it changes from summer to fall.

Volunteer days

The Finnerty Advisory Committee held the first Volunteer Spring Clean Up on Earth Day, April 22nd. We had a good turnout of happy and energetic volunteers including Barbara, our amazing 93-year-old(!) lunch helper who has been a Finnerty supporter for many years.

We started the day with Tim Bits and coffee, worked our hearts out and snacked on pizza at noon. It was the first time volunteers and Finnerty fans have had the opportunity to get their hands on the Finnerty dirt! Many expressed an interest in participating in another work day in the future. We met members of the Kreiss family enjoying the gardens. Some of you might know the Kreiss family by their generous donation of species rhododendrons in the West Coast Bed.

I spoke to a father and son cherishing memories as they strolled in the Garden of Remembrance. All in all, it was a very rewarding day working in beautiful surroundings mingling

with happy visitors and making new friends ... what more could we wish for?

We are planning our next volunteer day in the gardens for a **"Fall clean up"** on **October 28th**. We need help raking, cutting back the perennials, clipping back the ferns, and general putting the gardens to bed for the winter. We'll supply the tools, just wear a good pair of work shoes or boots, bring some gloves, and join us for a fun ½ day of digging in the dirt (9 a.m. – noon). Please rsvp and sign up with our volunteer co-ordinator Anne Mace, via phone or email at (250) 479-7677 / amace@telus.net



New Information Kiosk donated and built by the Trelawnys

In memory of John and Ruth Trelawny—Passionate gardeners and supporters of Finnerty Gardens

As a project to honor their parents, the Trelawny family has been working with the University for the past year on the design of an information Kiosk to be placed in the gardens, just inside the main gates. The brothers spent Easter weekend erecting the new cedar kiosk, and it looks (and smells) great. It will hold the new walking maps of the Gardens, and information on the history and founders of the site and the Rhododendron collection.



Left: The Trelawnys, posts are up, ready for the roof. Right: UVic crew—Jeremy and Chelsea.

September song: Beauty in the autumn garden

Words and photos by Linda Derkach

Finnerty Gardens at the University of Victoria strives to be a four-season garden—and it certainly does not disappoint. In autumn, there is beauty in the smallest blossom or the dying leaves as they make their way from shady canopy to beneficial leaf mulch. A walk in Finnerty in September shows a different side of the gardens that we enjoyed in May, with the quiet beauty of fall taking centre stage. Open all year round and free to the public, it is worth a visit any time of year.



This **magnolia** is likely in its second bloom for the year.



A large shrub, woodlander **Leycesteria formosa (Himalayan Honeysuckle)** fares well in sun or part shade. Pendant spikes with small white flowers among purple-red bracts hang around from summer into fall, followed by berries through winter.



The stumpery at Finnerty has been developing nicely over the past few years. Here **woodlanders** thrive in old stumps and roots that offer a comfortable home to native plants as well as exotics. Many ferns thrive here as well.



This huge **mahonia** provides a great backdrop for the lovely seed heads of a tall **allium**.



Enjoying each other's company, **rhododendrons**, **Asplenium scolopendrium** (Hart's tongue fern), **brunnera** (likely 'Jack Frost'), and **maiden hair ferns** love this rocky and partly shaded planting area.



Kirengeshoma palmata (Yellow wax-bells) is a modest fall bloomer with great architectural leaves.

Finnerty Advisory Committee

The Finnerty Gardens Advisory Committee is a dedicated group of talented people who from time to time help out with the selection, placement and general stewardship of Finnerty Gardens. The committee is made up of horticulturalists, landscapers, professional and master gardeners & arborists. Several times a year, they meet with the grounds crew to walk through the gardens to critique and suggest ways in which UVic can maintain the gardens as the wonderful oasis it is. The committee this year includes Bill McMillan, Sean Rafferty, Rob Degros, Tony Bobbitt, Hector Bussiere, Michael Evers, Rhonda Rose, Karen Morrison, and the Chair, Anne Mace. On behalf of the University, thank-you to all those committee members who give so freely of their time and advice.

Contacts

Curator

Bentley Sly | (250) 721-7606 | bsly@uvic.ca

Administrator

Charles McQuade | (250) 472-4489 | mcquade@uvic.ca

Horticulture Supervisor

Peter Roberts | (250) 721-8765 | pprobert@uvic.ca



New website

Over the spring and summer, we have redone the Finnerty Gardens website and added a few new features, including a page dedicated to photo galleries, take a look at:

uvic.ca/finnerty

Membership

Membership in the Friends of Finnerty Gardens is \$20 per year (single or family). Funds raised through membership support enhancements within the Gardens which would not be possible otherwise.



FRIENDS OF FINNERTY GARDENS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL & UPDATE FORM

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Sign me up for 1 year (\$20) 2 years (\$40)

Please make cheque payable to: **University of Victoria**

If you wish to donate above the membership fee selected, we will send you a tax receipt for the difference.

Please Clip this box and send to:

**Mr. Charles McQuade, Friends of Finnerty Garden,
Office of External Relations, Michael Williams Building,
University of Victoria PO Box 1700 STN CSC
Victoria BC V8W 2Y2**

