



# The Cury Bulletin

THE FRIENDS OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE GARDENS SOCIETY

<http://fghgs.ca>

Since 1993 Volume 30 Issue 1 Spring 2024



## Introducing The Honourable Wendy Cocchia, C.M., O.B.C., LL.D. (Hon) 31st Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia

The Honourable Wendy Cocchia is an entrepreneur, philanthropist, and dedicated community leader in British Columbia and Canada.

A champion for disability rights and services, Her Honour is the co-founder of the Pacific Autism Family Network in British Columbia. The Pacific Autism Family Network (PAFN) is a first-of-its-kind knowledge and resource network in North America that provides essential information and services to people who are neurodivergent (including autism spectrum disorder) and their families across the lifespan.

Her Honour has been an active member of her community throughout her life. She has served as Governor of the Business Council of British Columbia, as the first female Trustee of the Vancouver Police Foundation, and as the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade's fifth and youngest female Chair. She is a Fellow of Royal Roads University in Victoria, British Columbia, and was a founding Director for Destination British Columbia.

In recognition of her leadership and community involvement, Her Honour is a member of the Order of Canada, the Order of British Columbia and has received two honorary doctorates from the Justice Institute of British Columbia and Vancouver Island University.

She was inducted into the Hall of Fame for Canada's Most Powerful Women: WXN Top 100 award, she has received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal,



the King Charles III Coronation Medal, the British Columbia Community Achievement Award and received Variety's International Corporate Fundraiser of the Year.

Her Honour has built a successful career in the hospitality industry. She is the co-founder of the Absolute Spa Group and grew the company from one location to Canada's largest independent spa chain, which sold in 2020. Most recently, she was the Chief Executive Officer of Crew Management Ltd. and the Century Plaza Hotel in Vancouver.

Her Honour holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of British Columbia.

[www.facebook.com/BCLieutenantGovernor](http://www.facebook.com/BCLieutenantGovernor)

### To Contact the Board of Directors

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### Website:

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Dogwood Azalea Walk	Carol Dancer
English Country	Raynette North
Floral Designers	Liz Thompson
Friendship	Carol Dancer
Herb	Nancy Murray
Iris (Thursday)	Carol Dancer
Nursery	Caroline Dabrus
Pearkes Peake	Sharon Vermaning
Pool	Heather Macleod Clark
Rock and Alpine	Laraine Fowler
Rockland Border 1	Kate Cino
Rockland Border 11	Alex Muir
Rotary International Garden of Friendship	Susan Penner-Davis
Sunken Rose	Nancy Chu
The Terraces	Laura West (Tuesday) Caelin Rose (Thursday)
Vegetable	Mary Cake
Victoria Rose	Vaughn Edwards
Winter	Carol Dancer
Woodlands (Tuesday)	Dave Clark/Janet Renouf
Woodlands (Thursday)	Rosemary Balfour

*To contact the Non-Gardening Coordinator,  
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Costume Museum	Mary Anne Skill
Friends Archives	Janet Wetter
Greeters	Patti Shaughnessy
House Archives	Caroline Duncan
In-House Floral Designers	Audrey Van Osterhout
Tea Room	Sheila Connelly
Website	Eleanor Wallace

## Members Only Garden Tours

The **Garden Tour** guides are willing to offer **two free tours** this season. The first one will be offered in April and the second in September.

April Tours will be offered only to members (You can't bring a guest). September Tours will be offered to members plus a guest.

The dates and time choices for the April tours are as follows:

- 1) Monday April 14 1:00 p.m.
- 2) Tuesday April 15 11: 00 a.m.
- 3) Tuesday April 15 12:00 p.m.

The tours will last 45 - 60 minutes.

If you would like to register for a tour, please email Leslie Simpson at [Flowerspinkandblue@gmail.com](mailto:Flowerspinkandblue@gmail.com).

Please advise of your first and second choice of tour date and time.

**One should go invited to a friend in good fortune, and uninvited in misfortune.**

*- Swedish Proverb*



## Two truly Canadian "hosers" eh?

*Bryan (on left) and Brian keep volunteer safety in mind as they take care of a potential slipping hazard. Here they power wash the moss from the sidewalk and stairs at the Cottage.*



## Message from Government House

To all members of the Friends of Government House Gardens Society:

As we step into a new season at Government House, I want to take a moment to extend our heartfelt gratitude for your dedication, passion, and service. The beauty of this estate—its gardens, its woodlands, and the many visitor experiences you provide—are a direct reflection of your hard work and generosity. Whether tending to the grounds, welcoming guests, or supporting special programs, each of you plays an essential role in making Government House a place of warmth, history, and community.

This year, we also have the pleasure of welcoming our new Lieutenant Governor, The Honourable Wendy Cocchia, and her husband, His Honour, Sergio Cocchia. They are deeply honoured to be joining this community and look forward to meeting you. Her Honour has asked me to share her appreciation for all that you do, and she is eager to spend time with you in the gardens and at upcoming receptions and gatherings.

I would also like to extend my congratulations to those of you who have recently received the King Charles III Coronation Medal from our office. Though the program has not yet been concluded, it has been a privilege to recognize so many deserving individuals, including members of the Friends of Government House Gardens Society. Your dedication is truly commendable, and we celebrate this well-earned recognition.

We are also super excited to be getting so much work done on the estate as well – from the gorgeous new pathways in the Rotary Garden, new fencing along east perimeter, repairs to the potholes, tree assessments and much more! Huge thanks to the Government House Foundation for the support. I am also personally thankful to Tania, Ryan, Bryce, and all the Friends members who have tirelessly planned, advocated and managed for this work.

**As we embark on this new season, I encourage you to mark your calendars for these important upcoming events: Volunteer Orientation Session – 4th April 9 am, the Annual General Meeting – 9th May 9 am AND the Tools Up Reception (woo hoo!) – Date to be announced soon!**

With gardening season beginning and the tearoom and other seasonal activities resuming in May, your efforts will once again bring joy to countless visitors. Thank you for your continued commitment—I look forward to seeing all that we will accomplish together in the year ahead.

With appreciation,

Jeremy Brownridge  
Private Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor



## Message from President Patty Grant

A new spring blooms with possibilities.



Welcome to Her Honour Wendy Cocchia, our new Lieutenant Governor.

This is my last Cary Bulletin message. Our vice president, Elspeth Westby, will be president following the May AGM.

I first became president in the fall of 2018 (with a few years off for good behaviour).

It has been an interesting six-and-a-half years in which we accomplished a great deal. We survived COVID and a major renovation of the House, enjoyed Princess Anne's visit, added the Friendship and Royal Jubilee gardens, welcomed improved walkways in the Woodlands and Rotary garden, hosted countless deer and the occasional cougar, mourned the death of Queen Elizabeth II, and celebrated the coronation of King Charles III.

Our organization is thriving thanks to the hard work of the Board and our many dedicated volunteers.

A heartfelt thank you to the many volunteers – past and present - for your steadfast support, hard work, and contributions to the Friends gardening and non-gardening activities.

Being president of such a multifaceted group may not have always been a pleasure, but it has been a great honour.

I'll be in the Terraces. Always.

Patty Grant

## We Are a Mighty Group!

At the recent new volunteer orientation, we learned that the Friends now number 540. What a great and impressive group of dedicated, hard-working, and wonderful volunteers we are!

We have 20 gardens and 14 non-gardening groups that you can join. Many volunteers join more than one group. If you have any specialized skills that you think a group can use, please let us know.

We are currently on the lookout for anyone with filmmaking experience. We would like to update our garden promo video.

Do not protect yourself by a fence, but rather by your friends.

- Czech proverb

## Old Book Reuse at Hartland Dump

Many books, like expired text books or damaged books, are no longer reusable and can be shredded and used as cover much like gravel and woodchips are used at the landfill.

They help trap odours, keep birds out of the waste, and are degradable. Since paperback and hardcover books are not included in the provincial recycling program (such as the curbside blue box), this provides a beneficial use rather than them being simply garbage.

We encourage residents to take these books, which are unwanted at thrift stores, to Hartland instead.



Friends are lost by calling often and calling seldom.

- French proverb

The road to a friend's house is never long.

- Danish Proverb

*It's that time of year when the trees are in bloom and looking spectacular. Thanks to photographer Susie Bannerman for this great photo of one of the garden's beautiful specimens.*

## King Charles III Coronation Medal Winners

The Board wishes to congratulate the following Friends volunteers who have demonstrated 'exceptional community volunteerism' and thus were the recipients of the **King Charles III Coronation Medals** presented by the out-going and new Lieutenant Governors of British Columbia at special ceremonies held at Government House, along with other notable recipients.



Members of the Friends Board who received the King Charles medal in the recent round: Nairn Hollott, Sandra Fraser, with Her Honour Wendy Cocchia, Barb Petersen, Valerie Murray, and Elspeth Westby.



Caroline Duncan, House Archivist, received her medal for services to the House and history of Government House.



Nelles Shackleton, Costume Museum, Greeter, House server, and anywhere else where help is needed received her medal from former Lieutenant Governor Janet Austin.



Nancy Kostyrka, Archives and Costume Museum, who was responsible for the Chatelaines exhibit last year, with Lieutenant Governor Wendy Cocchia.



Sharon Yeo, House Docent, with former Lieutenant Governor Janet Austin.

Friends members who also received their medal, but no pictures, were: Patti Shaughnessy, Patricia Kidd, Janet Renouf, Renée Bauert, and Bryce Fleck.

More information and full descriptions about the recipients achievements is at her Honour's website:

<https://ltgov.bc.ca/king-charles-iii-coronation-medal/>

## Garden Tours Coordinator Needed

The FGHGS have an active Garden Tour Program. The garden tours cover a brief history of the house, the role of the Lieutenant Governor, details about the garden's history, trees, unique plants and how the gardens are cared for by volunteers. In 2024, 464 guests participated in tours raising \$ 4,345 for the FGHGS. There are currently 5 tour guides who are experienced and passionate about leading guests around the property, who will participate in the 2025 season.

The coordinator does not have to lead any tours. The tour season is busiest in May- September. The main planning for the season is done in March as tour operators look to confirm booking dates. During the season, the administrative duties might take 2-5 hours per week depending on the volume of booked tours and new tour requests.

The following are the responsibilities of the Program Coordinator:

1. Booking tours – see itemized procedures below.
2. Monthly reporting to program coordinator.
3. Liaising with treasurer as to how payments will be made.
4. Responding to questions or concerns from the board or the house.
5. Recruitment of new guides when needed.
6. Maintaining tour master spreadsheet.
7. Annual reporting on program activities at year end
8. Arrange mentoring for new guides.

As the main responsibility of the co-ordinator is organizing the actual tours, here are the main steps involved that process.

### Program Coordinator's Tour Booking Procedures

1. Email acknowledgement of requests for tours requesting any clarification if needed (sample wording below):
2. Email tour guides to see who is available.
3. Assign tour guides to specific tour.
4. Email guest with details on the confirmed tour including where to meet guide, parking, how to make payment etc.
5. Enter tour booking data on tour master spreadsheet.
6. One to two weeks before tour, send a reminder to the tour guide and a confirmation to the guests.
7. Arrange speakers for guides.
8. Email guide after tour to get information on number of guest and payment details.
9. For Road Scholar tours, prepare an invoice and email it to them for payment.
10. Each time a tour is over email treasurer Sandra Fraser to advise her as to payment method.
11. Update tour master spreadsheet to enter final guest number and payment method and amount.

The prior tour coordinator will be continuing as a guide so will be available to mentor the new coordinator.



## Landfill Facts by Mary Anne Skill

Hartland Landfill hosts tours to showcase what goes into waste management. Gulls are a major problem at the site and resident hawks are one solution. You can meet Jake the falcon and his falconer and hear how they work to control those pesky birds.

Many things on the tour that will influence how we manage our recycling and waste management in the future. In the interests of furthering their agenda, here are a couple of them:

- Those so-called compostable bags we use for organics take a long time to decompose and must be sifted out of organic material.

We are strongly advised to use paper bags or liners or, if you really need to use them, ensure they are rated ASTM D6400.

- Hartland accepts reusable items in partnership with local non-profit organizations for recycling. These are currently accepted:

Clothing (clean, dry and bagged or boxed),

Bicycles – these are serviced, then donated to the Compassionate Warehouse,

Paint (fuller cans of new HH paint can be dropped off, customers can take paint),

Books.

## Sue Baptie, Friends Archivist, Retires

by Nigel Godfrey

On the transfer of the role of the Presidency of the Friends Society from Alison Leamy, she observed that the Archives was an area of the Society needing some role clarification. She further observed that it had operated for some time independently of both the Society and the House as the sole repository of all documents and historical matter relating to the property. On consulting with Herb Leroy, the LG's Private Secretary, he confirmed that an opportunity might be found to separate House records from the Society's.

Shortly thereafter, the Supervisor of the Archives resigned. Thus the opportunity arrived to meet with the Provincial Archivist which concluded with the decision to officially separate all records attributed to the House from the Society. From the House side, an independent Archivist was duly appointed.



On the Friend's side we were enormously fortunate to find a professional archivist in our midst, namely, **Sue Baptie**. Sue inherited a 'can of worms'! First task was to assemble a volunteer group with an entirely different remit from the recent past.

Just as important, Sue focused on the highly detailed and time consuming task of separating the contents of the archives as it then existed and to establish a reliable filing system for the Society's collection.

Under Sue Baptie's effective leadership, the Friend's Archives is now a well-established part of the Friends of Government House Gardens Society.

Sue has decided to retire and to turn over the duties of Friend's Archivist to a successor. Thus, it is with gratitude and sincere appreciation that we thank her for her professionalism and dedication.

by Thomas C. Esakin, Board Member

*'On behalf of TFGHGS and our multitude of Friends, please accept my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for your leadership of TFGHGS Archives and Archivists over the past many years.*

*Since former TFGHGS President, Nigel, asked you to assume the Co-ordinator role for TFGHGS Archivists at a time of need for the Society, you have with certainty risen to the role and exceeded expectations in it. Learning today, as I did, that you and a team of volunteers reviewed every single document in the GH and TFGHGS archives to lead the process of creating two separate archives from what was once a combined archive, as requested by former Principal Secretary, Herb LeRoy, was a Herculean task for anyone, especially for a volunteer like you.*

*Thank-you for all you have offered of yourself in support of TFGHGS. You will always be a friend of The Friends.'*

### A Message from Sue Baptie

*I would like to pay tribute to all the fellow volunteers in the Garden that I have had the privilege of working with for over 25 years.*

*I started in the Propagation Garden under the direction of Carol Dancer and her group. Such a wonderful beginning to my GH journey learning about the mystery of gardens and plants.*

*Later our President Nigel Godfrey approached me to re-organize the Archives for the Society and I agreed. Over the years I worked with such interesting people of all backgrounds. This is one of the strengths of the volunteers as lifetime friendships are formed.*

*I hope my modest contributions have added to the jewel that is GH Gardens. It has been a joy and a privilege.*

*Sincerely Sue Baptie.*

**A friend is one whom one may pour out all the contents of one's heart, chaff and grain together, knowing that the gentlest of hands will take and sift it, keep what is worth keeping and with a breath of kindness, blow the rest away.**

*- Arabian Proverb*

## Oh Canada - Our Swinging Sixties

The sixties were famous for a lot of things, but did you know that it was an important decade in Canadian history?

- 1965 - The Maple Leaf became the **official flag**
- 1966 - O Canada became the **official anthem**.
- 1966 - 100th anniversary of the Colony of Vancouver Island joining the Colony of British Columbia.
- 1966 - 100th anniversary of the province of British Columbia becoming the 6th province.
- 1967 - **Canada's Centennial**



How many of you remember the Centennial song? Every school kid had to learn it, and it seems to be burned into our memory. This year, the Costume Museum is celebrating important occasions for Canada during the "Swinging sixties".

Come and celebrate Canada, learn more about these events, and immerse yourself in our great country's history..

**The Museum opens Tuesday, May 20th and is open Tuesday to Friday, 10am - 3pm, until Labour Day.**

**Friends are like fiddle strings: they must not be screwed too tight.**

*- English Proverb*

**The world is a rose: smell it and pass it on to your friends.**

*- Persian Proverb*

## Old Square Toes and His Lady



Sir James Douglas, who's statue stands in front of Government House, was the first Governor of the Colony of Vancouver Island, First Governor of the Colony of British Columbia and First Governor of the Province of British Columbia. He was instrumental in the growth and development of our province.

His wife Amelia was an incredible lady in her own right - an accomplished and skilled helpmate who was more than just his wife - she was his right hand in governance and a leading light of her day.

Come and learn more about this wonderful couple when the Costume Museum tells their story, and more, this summer.



*Spring is here with the flowers start blooming. These gorgeous beauties were photographed by Susie Bannerman, a new volunteer to the Friends.*



## Message from His Majesty The King to the people of Canada, celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the National Flag of Canada



Today my wife and I join with Canadians across Canada and around the world to commemorate an important milestone—the 60th anniversary of the Canadian flag.

On this day in 1965, Canada's red and white maple leaf flag was raised for the very first time on Parliament Hill.

Since that time, it has become internationally recognized as a symbol of a proud, resilient and compassionate country.

For my own part, it is a symbol that never fails to elicit a sense of pride and admiration, as I recall with the deepest affection my many Canadian visits and friendships.

Charles R.

### 60th Anniversary of the Canadian Flag

Canada's national flag is instantly recognizable as a proud symbol of our country. But it may surprise you to learn that it is relatively young, and a few different flags were flown before it was adopted.

This timeline lists a history of the flags used and shows some of the major moments in the creation of our national flag



**1871** - The Canadian Red Ensign, which includes the Union Jack and Canada's coat of arms, is used unofficially as a national flag. It is recognized as one of the main flags of Canada (along with the Union Jack) until 1965.

**1982** - The Canadian Red Ensign is made official for use on Canadian ships, but also continues to be used on land as an unofficial national flag.

**1921** - King George V grants Canada a new official coat of arms, which takes its place on the Canadian Red Ensign.

**1925** - Parliament establishes a committee to design a new national flag for the Dominion of Canada, but the project is quickly shelved.



**1946** - A second parliamentary committee is formed to consider a design for a new national flag, without result. Prime Minister Mackenzie King cancels the project. The Union Jack remains the national flag, and the Canadian Red Ensign is flown on government buildings.

**1957** - The leaves on the shield of Canada's coat of arms are changed from green to red, and the Canadian Red Ensign is modified.

**1964** - The Great Flag Debate. After much debate in the House of Commons, Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson creates a new parliamentary committee to select a national flag before the 1967 Centennial year. In 1964, after reviewing many proposals, the committee selects the concept that would inspire the graphic design of Canada's current national flag.

**1965** - Canada adopts its new National Flag, with its iconic and singular graphic design. A royal proclamation is signed by Queen Elizabeth II on January 28, and the new flag is raised on Parliament Hill on February 15.



*To learn more about the Canadian flag, be sure to visit the display in the Costume Museum this summer.*

# Notices & Events

## In Memorium - Frances Bardon

After Frances Bardon retired, one of her greatest joys was working hard as a gardening volunteer in the Woodlands. She would recount her stories of the great camaraderie she felt with the Thursday group and the laughs they had as they yanked out invading plants and learned about encouraging native plants and maintaining the natural beauty of the area.

Frances was also very proud and honoured to meet the Lieutenant Governors at the Volunteer Tea held every year.

Frances died on Friday December 13, 2024

**Sharp and Sharper Sharpening Services** will be on the grounds at the lower parking level from 9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. on the following dates.

May 6, May 8, June 3, June 5, July 8, July 10, Aug 5 Aug 7, Sept 2, and Sept 4.

As a reminder, the Friends will cover the cost for Communal Garden tools but not individual volunteer tools.

### Services Price List

- Knife \$0.75 per inch
- Straight Razor \$15.00 each
- Serrated Knife \$1.00 per inch
- Hoof Knife \$8.00 each
- Convex Hair Scissors \$38.00 each
- Bevel Edge Grooming Scissors \$2.50 per inch
- Bevel Edge Barber Scissors \$2.50 per inch
- Fabric Shears \$2.25 per inch
- Clipper Heads \$10.50 each
- Clipper Head 5 in 1 \$18.00 each
- Large Body Clipper Head \$12.50 each
- Hatchet \$8.00 each
- Axe \$10.00 each
- Medical Scissors \$8.00 each
- Medical Scraper Tool \$6.00 each
- Secateurs (Hand Pruners) \$8.00 each
- Loppers \$10.00 each
- Hand Hedge & Grass Trimmer \$12.00 each
- Dematt Comb \$12.00 each
- Tin Snips \$10.00 each
- Pet Nail Clipper \$6.00 each
- Chisel & Serger Blade \$3.00 each
- Rotary Blade \$5.00 each
- Round Pizza Cutter \$3.00 each

## 2024/25 Membership Renewal

Current memberships have been extended from December 31, 2023 to March 31, 2024. Annual FGHGS memberships will now run from April 1 - March 31.

**Membership renewals of \$20 per person are due March 31.** Members have three payment choices:

1. Online at: Become a Member – Payment options: e-transfer to fghgstreasurer@gmail.com. Please note your name in the comments.

3. By (snail) mail: Make your cheque payable to FGHGS (do not send cash). Send to:  
FGHGS Membership Co-ordinator,  
1401 Rockland Avenue,  
Victoria BC V8S 1V9.

Note: Membership cards can be mailed, upon request, by including a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your payment to the above address.

**Only your real friends will tell you when your face is dirty.**

*- Sicilian Proverb*

## Volunteer Passes for Members

In gratitude for all you do please accept this Volunteer Exchange pass as a token of appreciation for your volunteer work.

Please present the pass at participating organizations for free admission during the month of APRIL.

You can access the pass digitally through this link:

<https://aggv.ca/volunteer-exchange-pass-2025/>

The Password is: VEP2025

### In the event of a medical emergency:

- 1) Call 911
- 2) Call Security (mobile 250-387-2079; office 250-889-2697)
- 3) Send someone to the main gate to direct the ambulance.
- 4) Remain with person to provide care.