



# Greely Gardeners Group

## *Newsletter*

June 2008

### GREELY GARDENERS CALENDAR:

**Saturday, August 9,** ANNUAL MEMBERS GARDENS TOUR. The tour starts at 9:00 a.m. from the Community Centre parking lot and lasts about four hours. There will be refreshments and eats at the last garden on the tour. More details and a map will be provided in your July newsletter.

**Wednesday, September 3,** Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Topic: HOSTAS FOR YOUR SHADE GARDEN. Guest speaker: Maureen Mark.

**Wednesday, October 1,** Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Topic: MULCHING AND EASY CARE GARDENING. Guest speaker: the ever-popular Patti Pokorchuck from Down-to-Earth Gardens.

**Wednesday, November 5,** Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Topic: ENGLISH COUNTRY HOUSE GARDENS. "Guest" speaker: our very own Heather Clemenson with her personal slide collection from some of England's most glorious gardens to brighten up a November night.

**Wednesday, December 3:** Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. ANNUAL CHRISTMAS POT-LUCK DINNER, where our members show that they are not just great gardeners but great cooks too. Don't miss it!

### OTHER GARDENING EVENTS

**Manotick Horticultural Society** usually meets on the second Monday of the month at 7:30 in the RCMP Club House off Nichols Island Road. For more information call Margot Belanger at (613) 692-1575 or email [rbelan1575@rogers.com](mailto:rbelan1575@rogers.com).

**Osgoode Garden Club** meets on the third Wednesday of the month, 7:00 p.m. in the Fred Alexander room of the Osgoode Community Centre.

**Russell & District Horticultural Society** meets on the third Monday of the month, 7:00 at the Russell Legion. For information call Lindsey McPhail at 613-445-0754.



### GARDENS GET A NEW SIGN...

...thanks to Shelley Piercy, who created the sign that now lets the world know that the GGG plants and maintains the gardens at the Greely Community Centre. Councillor Doug Thompson was on hand at the June meeting to officially unveil the sign, and he spoke of how much the work done by the Gardeners is appreciated.

And while we're on the subject, a big thankyou to all those members who turned out in May to help Anita get the gardens ready for the season. Our members have maintained these gardens since the Group was founded 10 years ago – and we'll be looking for volunteers again in the Fall when it's clean-up time. Don't be shy!

## TIP OF THE DAY...



MOST GARDENS HAVE A FEW SHADY CORNERS that get little or no direct sunlight, and we usually fall back on the old stand-bys of hosta and fern, and the invasive but shade-tolerant lily of the valley and periwinkle for plants that will tolerate those conditions. They're nice, of course, but if you're looking for something with a little more pizzazz pay a visit to your local nursery and look for shade perennials. You'll find quite a variety of new and old offerings that will allow even the shadiest of sites to become attractive and colourful throughout the season.

Aconitum (a.k.a. monkshood or wolfbane) pictured above is a stately plant for the shade garden. Growing about two feet tall, these plants prefer a shady, moist area. The violet blue flowers and are produced in August and September. Note, however, that all parts of this plant are poisonous!

Heartleaf bergania gives a wonderful textural difference to the shaded garden. The large, glossy green foliage looks similar to wax begonia foliage only much larger. The plant likes a well-drained, moist site in light shade. Pink flowers are produced in April. Growing to 12 to 15 inches tall, these plants offer an orange/yellow background for tall spikes of white flowers in August and September.

Two types of bleeding heart can be used in the shade garden. *Dicentra spectabilis* is the old-fashioned bleeding heart, producing pink, locket-shaped flowers on long stems during May and June. It goes dormant during the summer so it's a good idea to plant something in the vicinity to help cover over the resulting bare area. The other bleeding heart, *Dicentra Formosa* 'Luxuriant', is a shorter plant with fine, blue-green fern-like foliage and Unlike its relative, it does not go dormant during the summer and continues to provide colour with small red flowers from May to August.

Dry shade like that under trees is a very difficult environment for growing plants. *Epimedium rubrum*, also called bishop's hat or barrenwort, is a slow-spreading perennial that competes well with tree roots. The plant grows to 12 inches in height, has heart-shaped leaves, and blooms with red flowers in May. An added bonus is its outstanding red fall foliage colour.

The perennial geranium *Geranium Wargrave Pink* also does well in shaded areas. Growing to 15 inches, it blooms in May and June and then sporadically through the season.

*Polemonium*, or Jacob's Ladder, produces plants that are about 18 inches tall with fine, fern-like foliage. Depending on the cultivar, the foliage can be green or variegated green and white. As an added bonus, it has stalks of lavender blue flowers in May. This makes a useful accompaniment to the broader-leaved favorites in the shade garden.

*Pulmonaria* or lungwort is an outstanding plant for the moist, well-drained shaded garden. These plants form neat mounds of strap-like leaves and are distinctive for the white markings on the leaves that look like paint splatters. It blooms in April and May with flowers ranging from pink to lavender blue. After flowering, remove the old flower stalks and take full benefit of the lovely, variegated foliage. For light shade *Tricyrtis*, or toad lily, is valued for its late season flowers, resembling tiny orchids around September and October. A prolific spreader, toad lily prefers moist soil but will grow in regular garden areas so long as it doesn't have to endure long periods of drought.

### **Greely Gardeners Group, Executive Committee:**

President - Gill Toll 821-6123; Vice-President - Anita Snelgrove 821-0447;  
Treasurer – Melissa MacDonald 821-9680; Secretary – Shelagh Heatlie 821-0816;  
Melody Tomka 821-1985; Shelley Piercey 821-1120; June MacDonell 821-1949;  
Past-President/Newsletter Bob Stanley 821-1847