

Victoria Master Gardeners Report to AGM – September 2017

This past year has been an extremely busy, successful and exciting year for the Victoria Chapter.

The year began with the 4th Mixing it Up conference; there were over 280 enthusiastic participants in attendance. The next conference is already scheduled for February 2019.

VMGA membership numbers rose to 131 members this year. This includes 18 new MGIT's from the Basic Master Gardener Course held between February and May. The next course scheduled to begin in February 2018 is already full.

Sadly, during this past year two of our members passed away. It is interesting to note that they both trained at VanDusen.

Fifteen MGIT's earned their certification as Master Gardeners.

Eleven members were recognised for five years of service as well as three being recognised for ten years of service.

The Membership Committee held two Lead MG Workshops this past spring. The purpose of the workshops is to ensure that consistent mentoring of MGIT's is happening and that any confusion that may have arisen during clinics is dealt with in a timely manner. The workshop includes a series of case studies which certainly generate much discussion.

Our clinic schedule began in early February this year. I believe there are still a few clinics yet to be held, so a long season of clinics!

There are currently 12 ongoing projects. Two projects of note are: Plant Labelling at the Horticulture Centre and the project at the Herbarium at the Royal BC Museum.

The video "The Clinic Experience" was completed and is being used as a part of the introduction to being a Master Gardener in the Basic Training Course. Copies of the video have been shared with all other Chapters.

The Education Committee continues to provide excellent education opportunities for our members.

The Advanced Training Program continues to be well supported. To date 22 VMGA members have achieved their Advanced Master Gardener status.

There were four summer education events held during July and August, including a visit to Devine Vineyards. During the visit the participants had the opportunity to taste a "Botantini" which is a martini infused with 51 botanicals.

Upcoming is an all-day Master Class: "Evaluating Garden Products and Practices. What Works; What Doesn't, and Why". This will be presented by Dr. Linda Chalker-Scott.

Our Communications team have been hard at work investigating the best way to approach the task of developing and implementing an on-line system for membership

renewal, volunteer hours tracking, clinic and project sign-ups, and education opportunity sign-up. It is hoped that the workshop I have just mentioned and our next membership renewal will be completed on-line.

The Strategic Planning exercise held last fall and this spring resulted in a variety of projects and areas of interest being identified by the membership. Funds have been set aside to enable these goals to be met.

The Victoria MG recipe book "Master Flavours" has sold out. The profit from the sales has been designated to be used for a "Pollinator" project; this is still in the planning stage.

Earlier this year the Memorandum of Understanding with HCP was renewed for a three-year term.

Submitted by Mike Juleff
Victoria Chapter Representative