

# *Hamilton and District*

50<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary!  
one heart

## *Chrysanthemum & Dahlia Society*



Dahlias with all their hue and glory,  
are worth all the love and worry.

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[www.hamilton-mum-dahlia.com](http://www.hamilton-mum-dahlia.com)

We had a good turnout for July 6<sup>th</sup> at Mike Parrish's garden. For those who attended, I hope you were able to see something new, acquire some knowledge about stopping dahlias and actually put some of those ideas into practice with your garden.

You are getting another chance to stop, look, ask, and listen, plus the bonus of food (usually lots of that) at our garden tour for 2014. Tour schedule is on the next couple or so pages inside this newsletter.

Calendar wise:

August 31<sup>st</sup> for the Garden Tour

September 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> for our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show.

Remember

- after the show, Saturday Night Dinner 5:30 p.m. (approx.)
- need help Sunday afternoon for sale and cleanup

Another blast from the past, couple of articles, some pictures, and remember, on rainy days surf the web for "How to" videos on cutting and staging dahlias. Just to give yourself a different view on how to prepare dahlias for a show.

Jim Hall

# President's Report

Larry and Tanis have been on holidays and with all the changes in the Garden Tour dates, the last thing he needed before leaving home was a due date for a President's report. So I didn't ask for one. Instead, you'll read some comments by ME.

If you are going to take part in the garden tour, there are a few things you should remember. A notebook – which should contain all the leftover questions from the stopping demo at Mike's. Questions like who do I blame, the plant is all green, what kind of bug, natural fertilizers, control what and why wasn't that variety at the spring sale.

Perhaps Aug 31 could be a good time to reserve a tuber (or plant) for 2015. Realizing of course that not all varieties will produce enough tubers for availability next year, definitely ask where the variety was purchased. Use the buddy system for 2015 (buddy system- see article deep in newsletter).

Bring along a camera and the ADS Classification and Handbook of Dahlias.

Members are not allowed to bring their own shovel on the garden tour to obtain good stock. And in reference to good stock, there is a chance that guests (invited by other club members) will be attending the tour. Be nice. No Facebook postings of individuals having a good time – pictures of the flowers are okay.

I have written articles about our show and the dinner that follows for so many years you'd think I'd have everything written (typed!) down so it would be just an easy task.

And yet I sense that some items will not be mentioned. Any questions, anything at all, regarding the show can be answered at the garden tour. Just ask!

We will have some kind of a demo to cut and stage blooms.

I almost forgot – for all members attending dahlia shows in our area – I wish you



all good luck (if showing) and I hope you are able to renew old friendships and acquire some new ones.

Jim Hall

## **SOMETHING FROM OUR PAST**

The following appeared in the 1975 yearbook:

### **Ramblings or Beginnings**

Well, another season has come and gone. It started out quite hot in May with some record high temperatures, and again in June, July and most of August. We were fortunate in our area to get a good amount of rain in these months as I only had to water my dahlia bed once. This year I had thirty new varieties from Holland. These were all pot roots and they grew strong vigorous plants right from the small poms; up to the giants. I had one giant that measured 15” across, but it was too late for the show.

This year, when I came home from holidays in August, the garden was beginning to show nice colour. One variety (Kochelsec) had ten blooms on at that time and bloomed profusely until frost in October.

In my garden, I plant my dahlias in rows 48” apart and 36” between plants. I find this gives me room to work between the plants, and there is enough room to work later on as they begin to bloom, to walk, and tie, and disbud.

When the giants have started growing and have developed about two sets of leaves, I pinch out the center growing point to allow the side branches to break, and I grow four up. If I grow more than one plant of each variety, I do not pinch all of the centers at the same time, I allow about four days before I do the next one, etc. In the mediums I do the same, except that I allow the plants to grow 6 – 8 branches, so I pinch at three or four sets of leaves. Smalls and poms I pinch out when they are about 10” to 12” high. When the plants are about 12” high, I make my first tie, this is made if possible, below the bottom side branches on the main stem and secured to a metal stake. My next tie is made when they are about 24” tall.

In August when the plants start to bud up, I start my disbudding program. I disbud all but about 2 or 3 laterals on each stem, but I don't reduce each stem at the same time. I try to get four blooms on giants, and 8 on mediums. Of course weather conditions play a big roll and if the plants are over four ft. tall, I put in more stakes so I can tie them and stop the plant from moving in the wind. When I have a tall plant with long stems and they are slim, I tie a cane to the stem to prevent it from breaking off in the wind.

When it comes time for the show, I spend the early part of the evening making my final selection of blooms. These are tagged, and later in the evening, preferably after dark, I go out and cut my blooms for the show, and I cut the stems as long as possible – about 30” long. These are put in 5 gallon containers with cold water immediately; then after the blooms are all cut I take them to the house so I can make a final cut under water and secure them to the container with twisties. They are then placed in the car, or left in a cool spot, for the trip to the show. When they are placed in the car they must be set so that the blooms don't rub against each other as a slight bruise will make them unfit for the show.

I am using a different method this year to store my tubers – different for me anyway. I am cutting and storing the tubers in wooden boxes and covering them with top-soil. Each tuber is marked and put in rows, then covered. In my seedling bed, I have ten roots I am keeping for next year. One is a medium yellow, incurved cactus, another a bronze medium incurved cactus and another is a medium decorative in a flame colour, with petals that roll right back to the stem. I was pleased to see Aldo Bonini's seedlings do so well at the Hamilton Show.

One suggestion – if you have a method that works well with you, then stay with it, what works well with one person may not be right for another. This year, it was a pleasure for me to enter at the Toronto Show. They have a great group, always willing to help one another.

Glen Hamilton

Fast forward to 2014 – when cutting for the show and placing in car or van – be sure not to over cut. If the measurement is 36” from floor to roof – don't cut dahlias 38” - measure before cutting. And don't stuff your dahlias in a pail to take to the show. It's the fastest way to ruin the blooms. One thing that's still the same – if it works for you, stay with it.

If you are not sure what pot roots are – ask because they can be the best method of storage for many varieties that do not keep well. Seedlings – we need to encourage more of our members to grow dahlias from seed to develop NEW dahlias. Maybe even another new form! Our members should save some seed for next year so we can get this new idea under construction. Yeah – I know – it’s not new – but let’s get going on it and try something really new for our club. Imagine forty or fifty new seedlings to look at. We could even have a prize for Ivan - the most terrible looking new dahlia. It only takes a small area to grow seedlings. Four square feet should be able to accommodate forty or fifty seedlings. For those who attended the club function at Mike Parrish’s – be sure to ask him how his seedlings are turning out this year – any good ones Mike?

Some CUT and PASTE from the June Newsletter!!!

This summer, if you have the opportunity, share your blooms in one way or another, a neighbor, a friend, a relative. And definitely invite them to the 50<sup>th</sup>

FOR SALE

This fall, look for some bargains at the local garden centers. Almost every item needed for gardening will be on sale at one time or another so the proprietor can make room for new items. Cut bags of topsoil, sand or soil-less mix as an example – they can be added to your garden in late fall when you turn the garden. It can only help improve the soil you are working with for next year. Also add leaves. Perhaps the leaves you saved to cover the cut stalks of the dahlias to prevent a really hard frost reaching the tubers. We'll cover all the different methods of digging and storage at our October 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## The Garden Tour

For some time, the garden tour was referred to as the Whine and Wine tour. I'm sure no reference was given to this title in past newsletters for 2014. I still like to call it Whine and Wine. I'm sure you'll hear lots of whine at all the garden stops this year about the weather, the rain or lack of, and now the lack of heat plus the many problems we are faced with growing our dahlias. But we'll get through the garden tour and have a good time because we know the best of 2014 is just ahead of us to have a good year!

Here are the gardens and times:

John and Sheila Mooney 905-388-5595	82 Cliffton Downs Rd. Hamilton, ON	2:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Joyce and Malachy Byrne 905-648-8860	125 Lavender Dr. Ancaster, ON	3:30 pm – 4:30 pm
Tanis and Larry Hall 905-575-3941	54 Braemar Pl. Hamilton, ON	5:00 pm – a reasonable end time !!!

And now I'll try to give simple directions to each garden. Be sure to add the above phone #s to your cell or take them with you in case you get lost!!!!

I think the Mooney garden is best reached from Mohawk Rd. Take the Lincoln Alexander Parkway from the #403 or the East side of the mountain. If you use the Q.E.W. – from Niagara area take Red Hill Valley Parkway to the Linc. and if from Burlington or Toronto area, take #403 Hamilton – Brantford. Exit at the Linc. On the Linc (either direction) exit at Garth St. From the East you'll be turning right and from the #403, you'll be turning left once you exit at Garth. Follow Garth to Mohawk Rd.

Turn left onto Mohawk. Turn left onto Ashton Rd. Turn right onto Darlington. Turn left onto Purnell Dr. Turn right onto Cliffton Downs Rd. House # 82 on you right (about 80 yards after you have made the turn onto Cliffton Downs Rd.)

John’s garden will be open from 2:00 pm till 3:00pm

Our next garden will be that of Malachy and Joyce Byrne.

From John Mooney’s garden – go back to Mohawk Rd. turn left. Follow Mohawk Rd to Scenic Dr. – turn right onto Scenic Dr. – make a left turn at the first street which will be Lavender Dr. – house # 125 on right side (it’s at the corner of the first St. on Lavender Dr.)

Malachy’s garden will be open from 3:30pm till 4:30 pm

The last garden (and supper) will at the home of our President and his wife, Larry and Tanis Hall.

Go back to Mohawk Rd. – turn left and continue until you are back at Garth – turn left onto Garth. Follow Garth until you see Hillfield Strathallan College on your right. You’ll soon cross over Fennell Ave. Take the first right which will be Braemar Pl. (be sure to turn right or you will be headed down the mountain!!!) At the end of Breamar is house #54.

Something’s missing – oh, remind everyone about the July 30<sup>th</sup> e-mail

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And the e-mail read as follows:

Just a small reminder for our members attending the garden tour August 31<sup>st</sup> and more importantly, the dinner that follows:

All members and guests are welcome to attend.

Please give Larry and Tanis Hall an e-mail [[ [tanis@tanishall.com](mailto:tanis@tanishall.com) or [larry@larryhall.ca](mailto:larry@larryhall.ca) ]] leave a phone message [[ (905) 575- 3941 ]] if you are planning on attending.

It would also be nice if you let Larry and Tanis know if you are going to bring a starter, salad, dessert, buns, etc. so they can co-ordinate the rest of the supper.

Bring your own lawn chair and choice of refreshment.

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Please call or e-mail if you haven't already done so.



## Simple Dahlia Maintenance

Tie – using a knot on a string, a knot such as a Windsor, Square or even a Bow, remember – tie your dahlias securely. The past couple of years, the Hamilton area had been hit with some left over hurricane matter from the U.S. We've been just on the edge of those storms but still got heavy rain and some high winds. Protect your dahlias if possible. You've put a lot of time and effort into the dahlias ... don't let it go to waste - it will if you forget to **“tie them up.”**

A simple umbrella secured with electrical plastic ties will hold it against a metal stake.



My neighbor, when purchasing his home a few years ago, stood on the back deck and commented to the realtor that it looks like a good crop of umbrellas this year.

Take a look at the base of your dahlia



plants. Are some of the leaves yellowish or even brown. This happens when there's not enough light getting to them plus, the plant is using leaves higher up on the stalk. It's a good idea to remove these leaves to allow better air circulation which will help prevent mold on the leaves.

From ground level, take three or even four sets of leaves off the bottom of the stalk. It won't hurt the plant.

Remember – October 6<sup>th</sup> our last general membership meeting for 2014. We'll cover getting the garden ready to lift the tubers, tuber storage, what material to store them in, etc. plus what should be done to the garden to help improve your soil for 2015.

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The club will have an Awards Night to close out the year.

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## 2015

Our members will see lots of dahlias in the next six to eight weeks. We have a garden tour, our main show, and some of our members could possibly take in the CNE or an out of town dahlia show. You will see a dahlia or two sometime in you travels that will be completely different from what you have in your garden.

How do you obtain that dahlia (or others of interest)? As I mentioned in the first part of the newsletter – ASK the grower for stock so you can grow it in 2015 or ask where the grower purchased the dahlia. The answer will most likely be “The states”!!!! If that's the case, to import can be costly.

To help prevent the spread and/or importation of virus in dahlia tubers, when the dahlias are shipped from state to state or out of the country, say to England or Canada, the tubers are inspected by that states Department of Agriculture. Now the fee for this inspection can be \$40 or \$50 US dollars. Here's the catch – it doesn't matter if it's two tubers or twenty two tubers – the fee is still \$40 or \$50 per order. So referring to pg. 2 of this newsletter, this is where the buddy system comes into effect. When four or five people get together, the cost is greatly reduced for importing. One person pays for everything but the tubers of course are chosen by each individual and the cost of inspection and postage is shared by all.

Of course, another way is to share the cuttings that are taken after arrival of the new purchase and placed under grow lights. So what is needed now is an up to date article on taking cuttings and perhaps storage, which will appear in the October newsletter if someone other than me writes it. Hint! Hint!!

### After the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show

On July 7, 2014, after finalization by your executive on the location for dinner after the show, I send an e-mail notification as follows:

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#### Hamilton Dahlia Society Members:

I hope this is the news regarding our dinner after the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show that everyone wants to read.

The Dinner Date: Saturday September 20<sup>th</sup> 2014 (around 6pm)

Place: Sotiris

Address: 3135 Harvester Road, Burlington

Sotiris is east of Guelph Line, near the Holiday Inn.

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I'm assuming that some form of direction to the reserved room will be visible at entrance of the restaurant.

Let's Eat: was informed the room would be open at 5:30 pm for members to mingle and chat before dinner. To give everyone ample time to arrive; let's aim for dinner at 6 pm or just a little past!!!

If we have major changes before this date – I'll inform everyone ASAP

## Friday September 19<sup>th</sup>

Special notice to all exhibitors: because of an all-day function at the RBG, plus clean-up, the dahlia club will not have access to start staging blooms until 7 p.m.

Arrive early and you will have to wait.

Time your arrival accordingly.



Can you see the help I have this year. I'd like to think it is help ... or is this garter snake just trying to get warm by sunning itself at the top of the hedge?

The Japanese Beetles that I get rid of and place on the driveway seem to disappear. I thought it was the birds but when I saw some move, with a closer inspection I realized they were being taken away by ants. The wonder of nature!