

# BATH GARDENING CLUB NEWSLETTER – WINTER 2025

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Sylvia Whalen Edited By: Laurie Minorgan  
Photography: Don Taylor, Laurie Minorgan,  
Pat Chown, Kim Bonner, Mark Pearce*



Welcome to our 2025 Winter Edition! Our Club, celebrating its 35<sup>th</sup> year never stops. In this edition you will be inspired by the activities, the participation and the fun we have as we work together to create a more beautiful and welcoming Bath.



## JOANNE DONITA PEARCE

### **MARCH 30, 1954 TO NOVEMBER 16, 2025**

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Before we begin, we are taking a moment to reflect on the life of a lady, Joanne Pearce, our Co-Treasurer, who passed away suddenly in November. Joanne's passing is a huge loss to our team and to our community. We thank her husband, Mark for sharing a lovely picture of Joanne for this newsletter as well as providing us with a brief word about her life.



It is with heavy hearts and great sadness that we announce the passing of Joanne Donita Pearce at the Kingston General Hospital on November 16th, after a brief illness with non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Beloved wife and best friend for 43 years of Mark Pearce, Mother of Kyly (Natalie) and Kristy (Jay); grandmother of Ruby, Kasey, Ryan, Matthew, Abigail and Carter; great-grandmother of Braxton. Sister of Ralph, Peter (Deb) and Carla (Wayne) as well as aunt to many nieces and nephews. Predeceased by her parents Carl and Bessie Barry.

Joanne was born in Hamiota, Manitoba. Although premature, tiny and initially placed in an incubator, once Joanne got out, she became a force to be reckoned with. Full of energy, laughter and intelligence, Joanne excelled at school and in sports. She skipped

a grade in school. In her final year of high school Joanne was voted Best All- Round Athlete (Girls) and especially excelled in swimming and volleyball. With her parents being in the Canadian Armed Forces, Joanne lived in numerous communities but mostly grew up in Eganville, Ontario.

Joanne worked for the Bank of Montreal (BMO), first working at the branch level and then to more senior positions in Toronto. During this time, she met her future husband, Mark. Joanne retired in August 2019 after 44 years with BMO.

Joanne and Mark settled in Bath in 2017. They loved living here.

In retirement Joanne kept herself immersed in many clubs and activities and was always on the go. At the time of her passing she was the Treasurer of the Bath Gardening Club where she had many friends. Her joyful smile, her laugh and her intelligence will be missed.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date. For more information go to the following link: [www.wartmanfuneralhomes.com](http://www.wartmanfuneralhomes.com) in Kingston, Ontario.



## MEET OUR EXECUTIVE

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### Executive Members 2025-26

We have many people to thank who have stepped up to fill positions on our Executive at our Annual Meeting in October:

President: Sylvia Whalen

Secretary: Diane Nolting

Membership Secretary: Joanna Sperinck

Publicity Secretary: Jeri Love

Co-Treasurers: Marilyn Martin & Marjory Brunsdon

Past President: Janice Firth



The Executive welcomes Marilyn Martin to the team as Co-Treasurer. Thanks, Marilyn for stepping up to the plate.

**Executive at Large:** Val Behm, Linda Cohen, Kim Bonner, Sandra Lowman

In addition to the Executive, the Club recognizes the volunteers who took the lead in many of our activities and on-going projects.

Village Gardens: Val Behm and Elaine Nicholson

Pollinator Garden: Kim Bonner & Carol Cartier

Sunday Market in Bath: Linda Cohen

Programme and Special Events: Janice Firth

Hospitality: Dawn Ford

Website: Sandra Lowman

Newsletter/Trillium: Pat Chown

Newsletter: Laurie Minorgan

Photographer: Don Taylor

Gazebo Christmas Carol Singing: Pat Chown, Don Taylor, Paul Jepson, Elaine & Mike Nicholson

Earth Day Bath Clean-up: Pat Chown

Fertilizer Mixing and Sales: Diane Nolting

**The position of Vice-President (VP) is open.** The Club needs someone to work directly with Sylvia and the Executive in the role of Vice-President to help keep our Club vibrant. After a year of working with Sylvia and the Executive, the Vice-President would move into the position of President. We are aware that sometimes people are reluctant to step forward because they feel their experience and knowledge in gardening is perhaps lacking. Our Club is team-oriented, we learn from experts in the field but we also acquire knowledge and great ideas from each other. We have a lot of fun as a group and over the years a great many friendships have developed between members of the Club.

If you are interested in learning more about the role of the VP, please contact Sylvia at [president@bathgardeningclub.ca](mailto:president@bathgardeningclub.ca)



## GARDENING CLUB NEWSLETTER UPDATE

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The local newsletters and articles written for the Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA) Trillium publication are viewed as a significant opportunity to share and highlight locally and provincially what we do as a Club. Newsletters and The Trillium articles are written quarterly and are accessible on our website: [bathgardeningclub.ca](http://bathgardeningclub.ca). Pat Chown who has overseen the creating and writing of the newsletters and articles for the Club, has indicated that she is stepping back from this amazing job to make room for new blood and fresh ideas. Creating the newsletters and articles is a team effort. Pat thanks Laurie Minorgan (the editor), Sylvia Whalen and Don Taylor for their critical eye, all of the photographers, writers, and people who gave of their time to be interviewed. Thanks also to Laura Masterson, recently retired editor of the Trillium. If anyone is interested in being involved in creating the newsletter, contact Pat ([pat.chown@gmail.com](mailto:pat.chown@gmail.com)) or Sylvia ([president@bathgardeningclub.ca](mailto:president@bathgardeningclub.ca)) for more information.

The editor, photographer and all of us who have had the honour of working on this venture with Pat at the helm, wish to thank her for her vision, her passion, her creativity and literary expertise.



## UPDATE OF PAST AND UP-COMING EVENTS

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### Market Report by Linda Cohen



What a rewarding season it has been for the Sunday Market in Bath. Records have been broken in attendance, vendor participation and money raised on behalf of the Bath Gardening Club, in large part due to the extraordinary work by Tarra Williamson, our Market Manager.

The presence of the Bath Gardening Club table at the market once a month this past season has been very effective in promoting the Club and all we do in the community. It has been a very successful year thanks in large part to the many garden club members who have helped this season when asked, and who recognize the value in markets for communities, not only in Bath but also around our province and indeed our country. Your support is truly appreciated. Thank you to all the members who helped with this endeavour. We expect the 2026 season to be even better!

### **2025 Garden Clean-Up**

After an incredible year working in the village gardens, dealing with drought-like conditions, the planters, barrels, gardens were put to bed just before Thanksgiving. Thank you to our Coordinators, Val Behm and Elaine Nicholson plus all of the planters and weeders who did a stellar job helping to beautify Bath in less-than-ideal conditions. Mark it on your calendar... only 180 days (approximately) before Spring planting!



## Decorating the Village for the Festive Season



A huge thanks to Laurie Minorgan for organizing the village decorating team. Decorating the village spanned a few days because the activities involved are best accomplished when the weather is clear, not too windy or cold. The team made bows, sorted and cut greens, stuffed the greens into all of the planters, as well as the Post Office garden.



Dogwood, freshly painted hydrangeas and bows were added as a finishing touch. Next came the wreaths! Bows were added to dozens of wreaths before being attached to the poles in the village by Loyalist Township. Lights were then installed at the Gazebo site.

Kudos to the Village Decorating Team: Mary Lynne Alderdice, Adam Bryant, Dave Bryant, Pat Chown, Linda Cohen, Mary Cuthbert, Cyndie and Ted Eedson, Betty Elliot, Janice Firth, Dawn Ford, Jeri Love, Sheila Marie, Laurie Minorgan, Heather Morrow, Elaine Nicholson, Sue Nilsson, Diane Nolting, Wendy O'Neill, Monica Parry, Joanna Sperinck, Don Taylor, Sheri Wenzl, Diana Wilkinson and Mary Willing.



Thanks to Sun Harvest Greenhouses where we purchased the beautiful greenery. The village looks spectacular!





We are ready for our annual **Festive Sing-a-Long at the Gazebo**. The carolling is the Gardening Club's contribution to our village's Merry Little Main Street event. This special occasion held on December 4<sup>th</sup> from 5:00-8:00, brings our community together as residents wander Main Street, shop at the stores and various pop-up vendors, visit Santa, take a wagon ride and sing with us at the Gazebo. Last year we had over 100 people join us at the Gazebo singing! This year the Club thanks the organizing team: Pat Chown, Don Taylor and Paul Jepson for creating the song sheets and providing the music; Elaine & Mike Nicholson for helping with set-up; Rose Gingras for providing the lyrics of *Petit Papa Noel*, Berno Wenzl for providing the lyrics and historical background of "O Tannenbaum" (O Christmas Tree) and "Stille Nacht" (Silent Night).

We hope that the inclusion of songs sung in French and German will begin to address some of the different cultures representative of the Bath community. And kudos to our bakers: Lynne McDonald, Kathie Dick, Mary Drinkwater, Dawn Ford, Sylvia Whalen, Carol Cartier, Kim Bonner, Ann Myers, Marilyn Martin, Sheri Wenzl and Diana Wilkinson. A big "thank you" to Free Flow Petroleum and Chandra Brown of Fast Freddie's for once again providing the hot chocolate.





## MEET KEITH MCILWAINE

### DEVOTED MEMBER AND A WHOLE LOT MORE!



Keith has been a devoted member of our Club for many years. When approached to lend a hand in club activities, he jumps in willingly. We are pleased to share his story...

Realizing that he had a passion for living near the water, Keith purchased a property on Amherst Island in the 1970's. He was still working on the mainland but during weekends and holidays, his Amherst Island

property became a haven for Keith and his friends as they explored the area in their kayaks and had fun taking part in windsurfing races. Keith grew up near Sydenham. As an adult, he worked as a Shop teacher for the Metcalfe and Carleton School Boards. In the early days of his teaching career, students, both boys and girls had the opportunity to take Shop and Home Economics courses beginning in Grade 6. Keith not only taught and worked with these students but he was known as a person who had a talent for designing areas for shop classes for School Boards. This talent eventually led him to work for CUSO International (CUSO), a "Canadian-based global organization, dedicated to addressing poverty and creating opportunities for greater equity". Working with local communities in the Caribbean, specifically Antigua, CUSO and the local residents identified a need for more schools, shop teachers and shop designers that would work side by side with students to help build a more autonomous, resilient and sustainable community. These identified needs and Keith's talents were a match. Keith was involved with CUSO for two years.

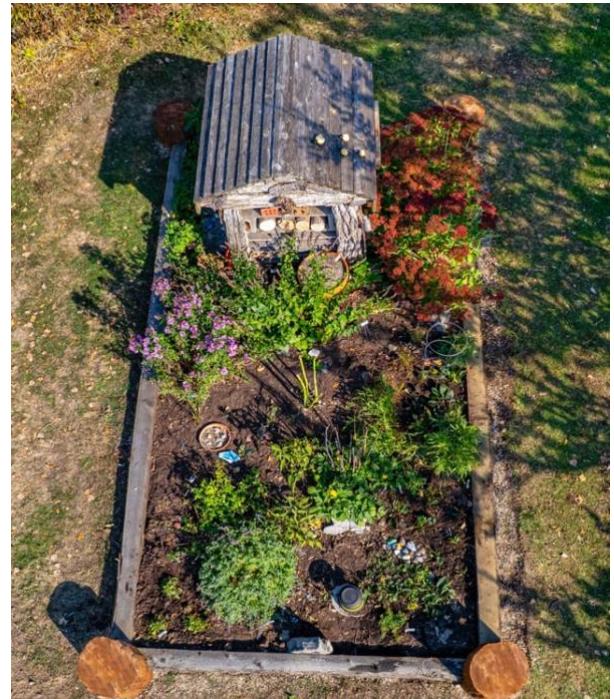


Keith was also invited to spend an additional year in the Caribbean to teach secondary students how to repair and install window air conditioners in stores and hotels... all part of Keith's work in helping young people to develop and use skills that would allow them to move forward to be responsible and independent young adults.

When Keith bought the property, the land was virtually "treeless", having been part of overworked farm fields. Now, Keith has a property of trees that he has planted over the years in segments. His "small forest" houses trees to prevent erosion by the water, a sumac hedge to the east, lilacs to the south, oak, cedar, honey locust, black locust, apple, pear, peach, plum and cherry trees throughout his three-acre property.

Keith has raised beds containing blueberries and other fruit shrubs. He likes to grow zinnias and asters and he has the ability to grow hundreds of seedlings, mostly vegetables. Currently he has two, eight feet long by 2.5 feet wide heating beds for his seeds and uses grow lights. All of his seeds come from the Kingston Area Seed System Initiative (KASSI) <https://seedsgrowfood.org/about-us/>.

What does Keith do when not he is not working on his property? Carpentry and renovation projects for people on the Island. He hopes to sell many of his seedlings at the new agricultural building on the Island, he is an environmentalist and, he volunteers. Thank you, Keith, for sharing your story, for your time, your energy and most recently your generosity in the refurbishing of the Bugtel.





## CLUB FESTIVITIES CONTINUE...

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In November we welcomed Penny Stewart to our meeting. Penny has filled many roles at the District 3 level and more recently she has coordinated the sharing of knowledge and training of flower show judges at the OHA level. She demonstrated beautiful yet easily crafted Christmas table arrangements. She even shared many tips for making these very inexpensively. Thanks for your time and enthusiasm, Penny.



Our November meeting also was the day we chose to celebrate the Club's 35<sup>th</sup> year of operation. We reflect on those who spearheaded the first formal Bath community get together to determine what was needed to help Bath grow into the welcoming community we now enjoy.

The following article was originally published in our Winter 2022 newsletter. Because Eileen and David Salter played a significant role in helping to assemble residents to plan a future direction for Bath, we felt it might be of interest to publish this article again as we celebrate our 35<sup>th</sup> birthday.



## THE FOUNDING OF THE BATH GARDENING CLUB

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Inspiration from Bath residents from the 1990's...



It was a pleasure to connect with Eileen Salter one summer day, while I was weeding the bridge and she was out for her daily walk. She confirmed that I was part of the Gardening Club and then she asked if I knew about the history, the beginning of the Club. I said that I did not and would love to know more. She rushed home and returned with documents from 1990 and a members list dated 1992-93 of the first Bath Gardening Club.

Here is her story...

In September 1990, David Salter (Eileen's husband), Bill James and Keith Oliver, members of the Bath Residents Association, wrote a letter to Bath residents inviting one and all to come together on November 2, 1990 for a social gathering where long time and new residents could mingle and get to know one another. The invitation was advertised in the "Village Voice" the local newspaper that was edited by David and mailed to each household. The social gathering was to be a community dinner, a three-course steak event, held at the Olde Anchor Tavern (which later became Suzy Q's). 80 residents attended. During the dinner neighbours asked one another about their hobbies, special interests e.g., golf, sailing, bridge, gardening etc. At the end of the evening, people were polled to see how many would like to have a repeat event in the future, and what other events might be held to encourage communication and friendship in the community. The question was also asked if there was an interest in forming an association around a special interest. The result was the formation of the Bath Gardening Club. Eileen Salter's name is on the 1992-93 membership list along with 35 other members, some of whom still reside in Bath. The initial Gardening Club met at St. John's Hall where they discussed plant problems with local "experts" and exchanged plants with one another. They also had occasional bus excursions to larger garden centres near Toronto to explore different plants that might be attractive and grow successfully in the Bath area.

The "Village Voice" also reported in 1992 that the Club had recommended to the Bath Town Council that 'vinca', also known as Madagascar periwinkle, should be chosen as the official flower of Bath. According to the article, "*Vinca is an annual that grows well in sun and shade, flowering all summer. The flowers come in a range of colours: red, deep violet, rose, and white*". In 1993, The Village of Bath officially proclaimed the pink or white annual vinca (*Catharanthus roseus*) as its official flower. Residents were encouraged to include vinca in their gardens. This newly formed Gardening Club also started the idea of using wooden barrels along Main Street. The current Gardening Club members thank the original members for all their work. A special 'thank you' to David and Eileen Salter for their time and the information they provided for this article.



## BATH GARDENING CLUB LAUNCHES NEW LOGO –

**DESIGNED BY KIM BONNER**

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Our new Logo represents both the past and the future. The historic-style lamppost has become a charming symbol of Bath, Ontario—reflecting the village's long heritage while welcoming residents and visitors alike. Its classic design recalls Bath's early streetscapes, linking today's community to generations past. Each year, volunteers decorate the lamppost for the holidays with greenery, ribbons, and lights, turning it into

a festive beacon and a small but meaningful part of the village's community-led beautification efforts.

The water represents Lake Ontario, with Amherst Island in the background.



Bath, Ontario is a cherished summer home for the iconic monarch butterfly. Nestled along the shores of Lake Ontario, the village sits directly on the monarchs' migratory pathway, making its gardens, meadows, and lakeside habitats important rest stops and breeding sites. Each year, residents witness the delicate orange-and-black butterflies fluttering through milkweed patches, fueling up on nectar, and beginning life cycles that will carry their descendants all the way to Mexico.

In Bath, the monarch isn't just a visitor, it's a symbol of resilience, beauty, and the natural heritage the community works to protect.

The flower is the pink annual vinca, the town's official flower. While it's not a native plant it provides valuable food resources to local pollinators.

**Gardening leads to a Healthy Tomorrow** - reflections from our President, Sylvia Whalen

*This is often the time of year when we step back and reflect in what we do and how our actions impact ourselves, others and our environment.*

**The impact of gardening on ourselves and others:** Physical (exercise and fresh air); spiritual/mental (enjoying & connecting with nature, the sense of wonder, reflection); cognitive (gardening involves learning constantly, perhaps teaching others); social (meetings and gathering around a common interest, working together) and, nutritional health (enjoying the fruits of our labour...or other local vegetable growers).

**Our impact on the environment:** By planting non-invasive plants and trees, irradiicating invasive species, and finding alternatives to harmful chemicals, we support sustainable biodiversity. By creating spaces/habitats and plantings we support pollinators and other creatures. By acquiring and utilizing the most up to date knowledge to ensure soil health is critical. By increasing the number and diversity of

trees, a constant canopy is assured, thereby helping to cool our earth and provide better air for us to breathe.

**Impact on community:** By planting throughout the village, hosting the Sunday Market in Bath and the space known as the Pollinator Garden and Memorial Grove, the Gardening Club provides both residents and visitors with beauty to behold, places to gather, fresh local produce to enjoy, and also a space to enjoy quiet reflection. Even sharing gardening knowledge with others and encouraging growing for others, creates a ripple effect that may help address food insecurity that is a struggle for so many.

**Gardening for a Healthy Tomorrow** is what we do. The positive impact is endless. We welcome your involvement in the Gardening Club!



## POTPOURRI AND GRANOLA – SIGN ME UP!

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### Potpourri:

1. Is it worth salvaging an amaryllis bulb after winter blooming? The answer is “yes”!

Check out the following link for more information:

[http://www.leoberbee.com/Ludwig\\_Amaryllis.html](http://www.leoberbee.com/Ludwig_Amaryllis.html)

Leo Berbee is a Canadian Company currently operating out of St George, Ontario.

2. “Granola” and other delicious recipes found at the following site:  
[publicdomainrecipes.com](http://publicdomainrecipes.com)

### Granola

- Prep time: 10 min
- Cook time: 40 min
- Servings: 5

### Ingredients

- 3 cups oats
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup maple syrup
- 1 cup chopped nuts (almonds, pumpkin seeds, etc)
- 1 tsp ground cloves
- 1 tsp ground cardamom
- 1 cup dried fruit (apricots, unsweetened cranberries, dates, etc.)

## Directions

1. Preheat oven to 315° F
2. In a large bowl, mix: oats, oil, maple syrup, chopped nuts and spices
3. Cover two large baking sheets with parchment paper
4. Spread the mixture thinly and evenly on baking sheets, put in oven
5. Bake 15 minutes, take out of oven, stir, put back in oven (swap oven locations for even cooking)
6. Bake 15 minutes, take out of oven, stir, put back in oven (swap oven locations for even cooking)
7. Bake 10 minutes, take out of oven, **do not stir** (helps form clumps), let it cool
8. Coarsely chop dried fruit and mix in
9. Serve with yogurt, milk, fresh fruit, etc.



SEE YOU AT OUR DECEMBER LUNCHEON AND IN THE NEW YEAR!

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Our next meeting will be our Christmas luncheon taking place at O'Conner House English Tea Room in Deseronto, December 11 at 12:00.

Our first meeting of 2026 will take place on January 15<sup>th</sup> at the Loyalist Golf and Country Club starting at 1:30pm.

And, on that note... The Bath Gardening Club wishes each and every one a very happy holiday a healthy and happy 2026!

We hope to see you in the New Year!

Happy 35<sup>th</sup> Birthday! Thanks for baking and decorating the cake, Sylvia!

