

Niagara Escarpment **ViEWS**

SPRING 2016 (MARCH, APRIL, MAY)

**AWARD-WINNING
NATURE DRAWINGS**

**THE PHOTOGRAPHY
OF JOSEPH HOLLICK:
WATERFALL IN DUNDAS**

MEETING MOUNTSBERG'S RAPTORS

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Country Gardens

**Big Bay • Campbellville
Red Bay • Warton**

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AWARD WINNER MIKE DAVIS**

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Herbed Pork

with Brie and Apples



Prep Time: 10 min.

Total Time: 25 min.

Serves: 4

ready in under 30 min.

Ingredients

- 1/2 tsp. Each salt and paprika (2 mL)
- 1/4 tsp. Pepper (1 mL)
- 1 Pork Tenderloin (approx. 1 lb/500 g), trimmed
- 1 tbsp. Honey Dijon Dressing (15 mL)
- 1 tsp. Vegetable Oil (5 mL)
- 1/4 cup Apple Juice (60 mL)
- 1 Red Apple, cored and cut into thin wedges
- 1 clove Garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp. Fresh Thyme (15 mL)
- 4 1/8-inch (3 mm) thick slices Double Cream Brie

Directions

1. Mix together salt, paprika and pepper. Slice pork into 8 equal pieces. Flatten any thicker pieces by gently pressing them with your palm. Season both sides of pork with paprika mixture.
2. Heat honey Dijon dressing and oil in a large non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add pork and cook until golden, about 2 min. per side. Add apple juice, apple wedges, garlic and thyme, then stir. Cover tightly and simmer gently, turning pork once, until pork is cooked through, about 3 min. per side.
3. Place brie ovetop pork and divide among 4 plates. For a thicker sauce, boil liquid in skillet for 30 to 60 sec. and then spoon over pork and apples. Serve with fresh asparagus and orzo, if desired.

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Niagara Escarpment **Vi**IEWS



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(March, April, May)

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Escarpment
Views**

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Engaging Our Audience

Someone once asked my co-publisher Mike why we publish negative or critical letters to the editor. The first response is to think why wouldn't we? It's the truth, what people think. I understand the argument that it's good to have positive, flattering comments, but including negative ones proves that we don't make these things up. We're delighted to get a good number of letters and notes. They show that people care about the magazine. In this issue, we have a letter about a missing apostrophe in a place name! I love that care, concern and attention to detail. It's important to get things right, because our issues are around for the long haul.

We recently had an online order for two copies of *Winter 2010*! We had to dig into our archives to get those copies, but we're in awe that someone, make that two people, are still interested in that issue.

Audience engagement is important to the success of a publication, helping to create or strengthen a sense of community among readers.

It's more proof of how engaged our readers are with the magazine. We have pages on our NEViews.ca website that show comments we've received. One, called People Respond, is from

readers. The other, Why Advertise, shares notes from or about our advertisers.

You can even see this engagement on our subscription form. When thinking about what would attract more people to consider subscribing, we finally realized that nothing would be as powerful as the words of our viewers and readers themselves. So the comments on the subscription form are ones we have actually received over the years. They tell better than we could, why people want to subscribe. Our recent reader survey is another source of validating notes. Some people referred to the subscription form, writing that they agree with everything that is written there. Mike has much more about the reader survey in his column this issue. You can see the subscription form on page 41.

Audience engagement is important to the success of a publication, helping to create or strengthen a sense of community among readers. **Ethics, excellence, engagement** — three defining words for the magazine that I've written about before, which remain our guiding principles.

Putting this magazine together four times each year, to the high quality standard that we set for ourselves, is a lot of work. But doing it and garnering the response we get, is a privilege and sometimes a sheer joy.

The Joy of Spring

Creating our Spring issue, with its annual special focus on Escarpment-area gardens, is a great joy for me. My own rural garden has become completely overgrown and out of control, so I love seeing the gorgeous gardens created by better gardeners. In this issue we poke around four



spectacular country gardens.

Taking a virtual tour of these special places while relaxing in an armchair is delightful — no sweat, no bugs, no hard work, no getting dirty. And it inspires me to try once again to bring order to my 23-year-old garden. I think it's time for a big renewal of the garden beds.

In these pages we also take you behind the scenes of Mountsberg Conservation Area's Raptor Centre, part of Conservation Halton, in Campbellville. We suggest what you might witness if you take part in a private

raptor encounter. Getting close to magnificent birds is educational and breath-taking.

If you like what you see here, or don't, or know of a great garden we should visit, or have anything to share with our community of readers and viewers, do send us a note by Canada Post, email or Facebook. Engaging with you keeps this magazine going.

Gloria

Gloria Hildebrandt

P.S. Wild animals need wild spaces.

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK!



Write us at editor@NEViews.ca or *Niagara Escarpment Views*, 50 Ann St., Georgetown ON L7G 2V2

More Online!



Keep in touch with Escarpment news between issues at our website. We have unique content not seen in the magazine, and you can leave comments in response. See www.NEViews.ca



Niagara Escarpment Views is on Facebook as: www.facebook.com/N.E.Views

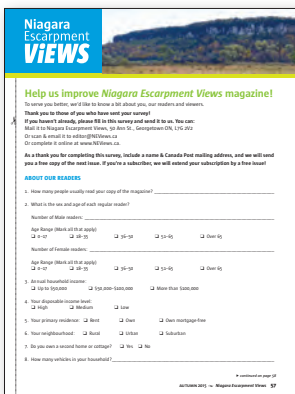
What did you say about yourselves?

Niagara Escarpment Views Readership Survey Results



By Mike Davis

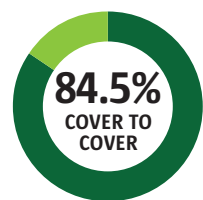
The results of the first readership survey are in. We thank respondents for your thoughtful and sometimes abundant comments. You are clearly an engaged and passionate audience. This is especially evident by the readers who made the effort to mail in their surveys, with their own envelope and their own postage stamp!



You told us what you liked about our magazine. Many mentioned that you liked our articles and photography. Someone noticed the “good quality of paper.” Many wrote that you liked “Absolutely everything” or “Local content” or “Layout; photos; all articles were of interest.”

Here are more of your exact words:
 “Gorgeous photography.
 Quality writing.”
 “Inspiring stories...”
 “All articles are enriching.”
 “It has class — good design, excellent and varied articles, great photography — What else can I say?”
 “Topical articles, good journalism along with professional photography.”
 “Keeping us informed ... Subscription price is quite reasonable.”
 “Local recognition of amazing areas and of course the pictures.”
 “My favorite part showing it to a younger generation and letting them see just how beautiful Ontario is.”
 “I like reading about things in my area of which I never heard about before!”
 “Stories about places to see. ... Makes me think.”

TIME SPENT READING EACH ISSUE



A few have the perception that we do not have many ads or that we have interesting ads. One person stated reading the issue cover to cover and added **“Including the ads! My day trips are often planned just to visit one of your advertisers.”**

About one half of you suggested improvements to our magazine, including “Publish more issues per year!” and “articles continuous not split up.” We read this last point so often that we have already made this

change in our recent issues.

The rest of you said no change or left the space blank. Here is a sampling of what you said:

“Do not change a winning game.”
 “It is great now.”
 “Excellent as is.”
 “Keep doing exactly what you are doing.”
 “Make it more readily available...”
 “Keep it from getting too big with too many advertisements.”
“NE Views is the finest magazine!... National Geographic and Canadian Geographic... should take note.”
 “Love it as it is.”

PRIMARY RESIDENCE



12.3% RENT
 42.1% OWN WITH MORTGAGE
 45.6% OWN MORTGAGE-FREE

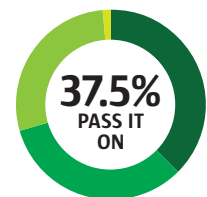
Where do you live?

We grouped about 29 towns and cities from Niagara-on-the-Lake and Binbrook to Georgian Bluffs. From Wasaga Beach and Toronto to London, St. Thomas and Chatham. Locations sending the most responses were Georgetown, Hamilton, Toronto and St. Catharines.

There are slightly more female than male readers. As you reported, on average you are about 1.29 female to every male reader. This is actually a fairly even split.

For those of you who are interested in meaty bits of statistics and our survey design, more information is on our website www.NEViews.ca.

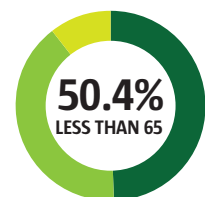
RETENTION OF EACH ISSUE



1.6% DISPOSE OF IMMEDIATELY
 28.1% KEEP INDEFINITELY
 32.8% KEEP FOR A FEW MONTHS
 37.5% PASS IT ON AFTER READING

You reported that you have more than 2.75 readers for every copy. If we extrapolate that to our print run of 25,000 copies per issue, **we get more than 68,000 readers per issue!**

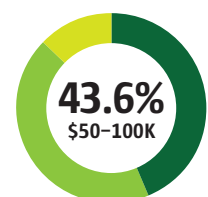
AGE



10.4% 0 TO 35
 40.0% 36-64
 49.6% 65+

We appreciate your engagement with the magazine. This communication from you is extremely valuable and will help us continue to maintain the quality you enjoy.

ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME



12.7% \$100,000+
 43.6% \$50-\$100,000
 43.6% \$0-\$50,000

Mike Davis is co-founder and co-publisher of Niagara Escarpment Views and its principal photographer.

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Your map of where to pick up a free copy of your lovely magazine shows a red dot just east of Orangeville, however I can't find a corresponding address. Where would that red dot refer to? (I live in Alton.)

Andrew Welch, Alton

We miss seeing Royal Botanical Gardens as one of the places where copies of NEV can be picked up. After all, RBG lands cover a bit of the Escarpment.

**Freek Vrugtman, via
www.NEViews.ca**

[Editor's note: the following letter has been edited for space].

On the issue of the contentious Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP), I am hearing unequivocal concerns from my constituents in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound about the timing and affordability of this mandatory pension plan.

The ORPP is the wrong approach at absolutely the wrong time for Ontarians. The ORPP is a job-killing payroll tax and this is a united message being delivered by businesses from the smallest member of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) or the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, to Magna, Canadian Tire and Ford Motor Co.

All agree, with the exception of the Liberal government, that this is an unacceptable burden on our people. Conveniently, the government is ignoring its own recently released cost-



The actions of this officer were totally unacceptable, whether the animal had been wild or domesticated; in this case an old and deaf dog. I am a resident of Toronto, but nevertheless it made news here too and it was quite disturbing to even imagine the officer's impulsive, thoughtless and horrific response.

**Debbie Cherry, Toronto,
via www.NEViews.ca**

benefit analysis that proves the provincial economy won't fully recover from the shock of the ORPP for 20 years.

Projections show that job losses will be in the tens of thousands, as Ministry of Finance documents we exposed two years ago had stated. Disposable income and private investment will decline, and household spending isn't forecast to recover until 2040.

CFIB has estimated that the ORPP would kill over 40,000 jobs in Ontario in 2020 once the ORPP moves forward on Jan. 1, 2017.

It will become difficult for any person making under \$90,000 to actually save anything on their own outside of the ORPP. This is a lot of damage for a plan that won't even kick in for at least 40 years from today.

**Bill Walker, MPP,
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound**



We want to bring to your attention a few edits/corrections to the story ["Touring Winter Falls Near Owen Sound"]. Walter's Falls apostrophe was missing throughout the story. **The Inn at Walter's Falls is called "The Falls Inn" and wrongly labeled in the editorial.** A biggy is that it does say near the end that Inglis and Indian Falls trails are closed in winter, which isn't true. There is tons of snowshoeing and cross country skiing at Inglis. In fact, we recommend a snowshoe from Inglis to Harrison Park in our pdf. Overall the magazine looks great!

Amanda Pausner, Grey County Tourism

Editor's note: Having seen Walters Falls written both with and without the apostrophe, it was decided to leave it out to be consistent with the spelling of Weavers Creek and Jones Falls. Our writer apologizes for using an incorrect name for The Falls Inn. As for the closure of trails in winter, our writer maintains that what the story says is true: "In late winter 2015, the Indian Falls trail and a section on the west side of Inglis Falls were closed to limit access to hazardous ice. Grey Sauble Conservation Authority does not encourage winter access to Indian Falls. Other trails near Inglis Falls are definitely suitable for snowshoeing."



We received an order for two copies of our Winter 2016 issue, with the buyer referring to the article "This is the End: Mildred Mahoney's Doll's House Collection" by Chris Mills:

There is an article on Mildred Mahoney. My sister and I were at that auction, and we bought some of her houses!

Mary Pillisch, via www.NEViews.ca

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Email: editor@NEViews.ca Comment through: www.NEViews.ca**

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■ EVENTS ALONG THE ROCK

Photos by Mike Davis except where noted.



▲ Giant's Rib Escarpment Education Network (GREEN) celebrated the re-opening of their Discovery Centre at Dundas Valley Trail Centre, Dundas, on Oct. 17. New interpretive signs and display cabinets are some of the improvements to the Centre. Plans are to take a travelling display to other parts of the Niagara Escarpment this year: Misery Bay, Tobermory, Owen Sound and Lincoln. From left, Gloria Hildebrandt, Chris Hamilton, Jennifer Wilson and Ken Hall.



▲ The Toronto Bruce Trail Club held its landowner appreciation dinner in Halton Hills on Nov. 14, where X-Ray Magician amazed the audience with sensational tricks.



▲ Celebrating the Nov. 15, 2015 plaque that will mark the 100th anniversary of the Eugenia Power Station, were former and current staff members of Ontario Power Generation, and other dignitaries. The event was held at Beaver Valley Cidery. PHOTO BY KATE RUSSELL.

Please see www.NEViews.ca
for more photos & listings!

EVENTS ALONG THE ROCK ■

Photos by Mike Davis except where noted.



► Nov. 17 to 19 in Alliston, about 1,000 people attended the Latonnell Conservation Symposium "Weathering Change: Navigating a New Climate."

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▲ Serving a lavish, delicious buffet, Douglas Rapien, owner of Stone Edge Estate Bed & Breakfast, hosted the Nov. 25 Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce Business After 5, which featured several businesses with tabletop displays.



▲ Enjoying the Chamber event at Stone Edge Estate on Nov. 25 was Chris Miller, a new Halton Hills ad sales rep for *Niagara Escarpment Views*.



◀ Doug and Mary Lou Brock, restorers and owners of Williams Mill in Glen Williams at the Nov. 27 Christmas preview reception. Barbara Ariss Strohwasser's paintings are on the walls, Doug Scott's glass sculpture is on the plinth.

EVENTS ALONG THE ROCK ■

Photos by Mike Davis except where noted.



▲ Santa Claus greeted everyone individually at the Dec. 23 Open House at Wastewise in Georgetown. PHOTO BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT.



▲ On Dec. 29, local and Toronto kids and families enjoyed a winter wildlife detection program at Willow Park Ecology Centre in Norval. PHOTO BY TUNDE OTTO-HARRIS.



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EVENTS ALONG THE ROCK

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▲ David Grieve attended the Jan. 21 opening reception of his exhibition of landscape paintings at Williams Mill Visual Arts Centre in Glen Williams. His work at left is titled "Breathe 22." The other piece is "Cold Front."



◀ At the Guelph Organic Conference trade show on Jan. 30 and 31, there were plenty of delicious free samples to try, including l'Ancêtre cheeses, Crofter's organic fruit spreads and carrot juice freshly blended by Pfenning's Organic.

PURCHASING PLEASURE ■

Photos by Mike Davis except where noted.



TREASURE HUNT: Some of the items available in the silent auction at **Wastewise of Georgetown**. Finds don't last long; new treasures regularly introduced. PHOTO BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT.



NATURAL HEAT: Jotul woodstoves line one wall of Caledon Fireplace's showroom.



TOP CUTS: Paradise Farms raises purebred Black Scottish Aberdeen Angus cattle without the use of growth hormones and with pasture roaming to produce superior quality beef. Available at Prime Beef Boutique in Erin and Toronto.

PLACES TO EXPLORE



FRESH AND LOCAL: The Island Jar, a small food shop and café on the main street of Little Current offers fresh, organic, local and Manitoulin produce and products in a lively space of industrial design.

BETTER IN BULK: Healthy, delicious products at Foodstuffs of Georgetown come pre-packaged or in bulk so you can reduce packaging. There is also a large selection of unusual cooking and serving utensils and dishes. Long-time, helpful and friendly staff are happy to help.



The Shoes of a Hiker

“A journey of a lifetime. A journey for a life cut short.”

When Rob Simmt's wife Beth died in 2012, so did their dream of sharing the achievement of walking the entire Bruce Trail. One year later, Rob renewed the plan, and started an end-to-end hike in Beth's memory. “Instead of Beth it was her boots that accompanied me,” he says. He carried her shoes with him as a way of finishing what they started.

Rob and Beth had only been married 10 years. Their first date was in 2001, when they celebrated her birthday at Webster's Falls. “I believe we fell in love on that icy trail next to the fast running water,” he remembers. They married in January 2002. “That summer, we decided to hike the complete trail. We became Bruce Trail hikers. Our goal became to hike the trail end to end in our own time, in our own way.”

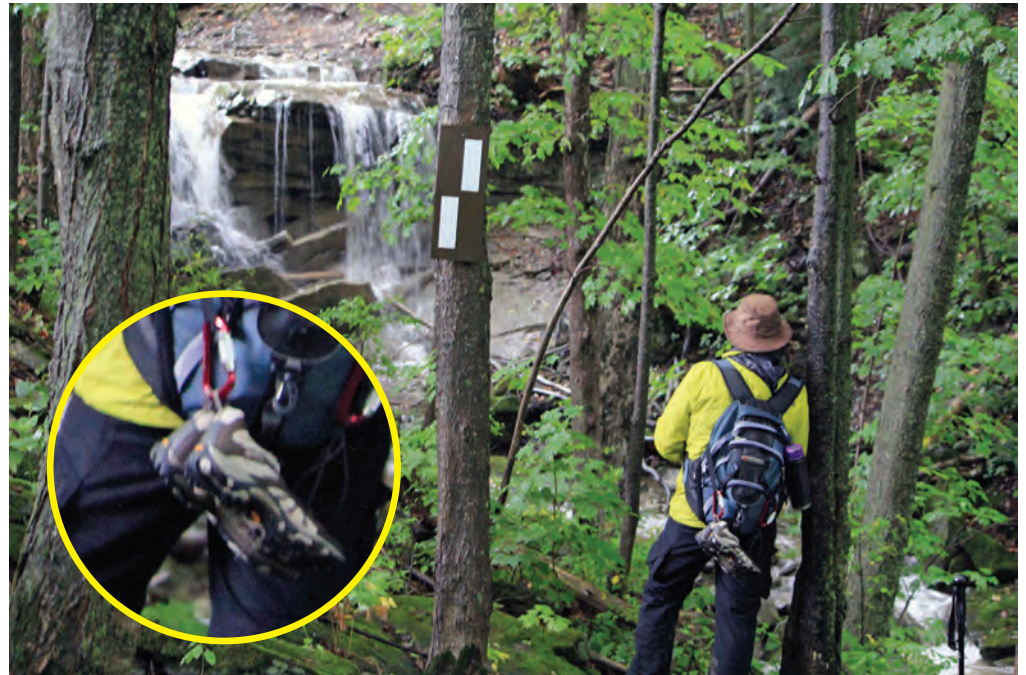
Beth's work colleague Sharon Vanoosten heard about the plan and she and husband Bill decided to join in. “We would do this together,” says Rob. “The four of us enjoying a great footpath to Tobermory. The four of us only hiked one weekend at Rattlesnake Point.”

Beth died of cancer on May 31, 2012.

Honouring Beth

“Something special needed to happen to honour Beth,” Rob continues. “With many friends and great effort we had two very successful golf tournaments. We raised over \$20,000 for the Bruce Trail. As a result of these efforts there is now a permanent plaque located at Thirty Creek near Beamsville in her honour.”

Retracing the steps he had taken with Beth, on June 1, 2013, Rob started his memorial



▲ A sight Beth didn't get to see. Rob Simmt looks at a Bruce Trail waterfall. Beth's hiking shoes (*inset*) are attached to his backpack. PHOTO BY BILL VANOOSTEN.



▲ During the Bruce Trail end-to-end adventure: Rob and Beth Simmt, Sharon and Bill Vanoosten. PHOTO SUBMITTED.

hike at the southern cairn of the Bruce Trail in Queenston. “This was a time to reflect,” he says. “I know Beth was with me.”

Bill and Sharon joined him where the four of them had left off. “We would finish what we started, we were all

in. We did day hikes on a regular basis, usually around 20 km. We hiked in all four seasons, the cool, often wet

“Instead of Beth it was her boots that accompanied me,” says Rob Simmt. “I know Beth was with me.”

and muddy spring, the hot and buggy summer, the wonderful fall colours and the snow of the winter. Weather became secondary as we just enjoyed the trail. Some thought us crazy as we never called off a day of hiking, rain, snow, ice, hot, cold or just plain perfect. It was great to be on the trail and I wouldn't have wanted any one else with me. Bill and Sharon are great hikers, after-hikers and people. The Bruce trail offered us many adventures, climbs, descents, crevices, rivers, waterfalls, too many to write about. We all knew Beth was with us as she made sure to play a few tricks on us but mostly she presented her wonderful smile in the reflections, rainbows and even the northern lights.”

Rob made a life-changing decision to retire to Costa Rica, which meant he had to finish the hike by the end of 2015. He and the Vanoostens decided to make monthly three-day hikes of 50 km, finishing with a week-long hike at the end. To celebrate their final 84 kms, they rented a cottage at Cape Hurd with a hot tub and invited people to stay.

“My step daughter Nicole, Beth's daughter, Bill and Sharon's son Brad, my daughter Nicole — yes, two Nicoles, and Bill and Sharon's daughter Kari along with her boyfriend Ryan all helped us celebrate throughout the week,” Rob recounts. “On Friday Oct 9 at 2:45 P.M. we touched the northern cairn. We finished what we started.”



▲ Bill and Sharon Vanoosten with Rob Simmt. PHOTO SUBMITTED.



▲ Four of the nine supportive co-workers who call themselves Team B.S., for Beth Simmt, toasting her memory, from left: Toni Castelli, Cheryl Dimercurio, Sharon Vanoosten and Diane Westveer. The plaque, at Thirty Mile Creek near Beamsville, reads “In memory of Beth Simmt. She loved every step she hiked. We hike for and with her.” PHOTO BY ROB SIMMT.

MORE INFO:

Rob's website www.bethsbootsahiking.com documents this journey. The song on the site was written to mark the hike. Donations to The Bruce Trail in honour of Beth would be appreciated. Cheques marked “In honour of Beth Simmt” can be mailed to The Bruce Trail Conservancy, P.O. Box 857, Hamilton ON L8N 3N9.

Natural DRAWINGS

SOUTHERN ONTARIO NATURE AND SCIENCE ILLUSTRATORS (SONSI) is a group for anyone interested in nature and science illustration. Members meet every few months for presentations, hikes, and visits to zoos and museums. One of the goals of SONSi is to educate the public about science and nature through their work. Since 2011 they have held an annual exhibition of their work in various locations in Ontario.

Last October, Giant's Rib Escarpment Education Network (GREEN) hosted an exhibition of SONSi art at the Discovery Centre at Dundas Valley Trail Centre. People were invited to vote for their favourite art works. Here are the works that won the People's Choice awards.

FIRST PLACE

Great Horned Owl on Silver Maple in Winter *Bubo virginianus/Acer saccharinum*
by Kathryn Chorney, 2011

Matted size 30" x 22"
Archival Giclee Print/original
is watercolour & graphite on
paper. Price for print: \$250
(original not for sale).

Artist Statement:

This portrait of Alex, a female Great Horned Owl, is from a series I have created of the raptors and owls at the Canadian Peregrine Foundation (CPF) north of Toronto. A member of the CPF's Education Team, Alex helps raise awareness of the challenges facing wild birds of prey, and the importance of habitat conservation. I have gotten to know Alex and her teammates via educational drawing sessions I arrange at Sheridan College (Oakville), where I teach scientific illustration.

Following a snowfall, I noticed that the pattern of fresh snow, drifted

into fine crevices in the Silver Maple bark, closely resembled Alex's plumage pattern — a vivid demonstration of the concept of camouflage. Both species share a wide geographic range in North America, including the Great Lakes area, so this seemed the ideal setting for Alex's portrait.

The original of this piece was juried into *Focus on Nature XII*, a leading international exhibit of science and nature illustration, and subsequently accepted into the permanent collection of host institution The New York State Museum.



KCHORNEY



SECOND PLACE (THREE-WAY TIE)

Bracket Fungus on Stump *Ganoderma applanatum* by Kathryn Chorney, 2011

Matted size 20" x 16" Archival Giclee Print/
original is watercolour, graphite, and ink on paper.
Price for print: \$200 (original not for sale).

Artist Statement:

I found this majestic (about 14 inches in diameter) bracket fungus growing on an old tree stump in Wellington County. The species is well known in southern Ontario and throughout North America. I completed the composition by referring to a collection of other bracket fungi as well as self-collected references of wild plants and tree textures. Tree fungi such as the *Ganoderma* are very important to nature, as they break down dead plant material and return the organic nutrients and inorganic elements to the soil to nourish new life. They are also incredibly beautiful life forms.



Red Trillium *Trillium erectum* by Emily Damstra, 2010

Watercolour and gouache painting.

Artist Statement:

When I walk through a woodland area in the spring, I enjoy looking for all types of spring wildflowers, but I take particular delight in encountering these deep red flowers. Perhaps they appeal to me because their striking colouration seems to contradict their shyly nodding habit. Another surprise is the way these demure beauties attract pollinators: not with a pleasant fragrance and sweet nectar, but with a fetid odour that makes carrion flies come calling and then turn away disappointed. My painting of a Red Trillium is based on photographs I've taken in various Ontario woodlands.



**Davisville: A First Nations settlement
along Ontario's Grand River in 1825
by Emily Damstra, 2012**

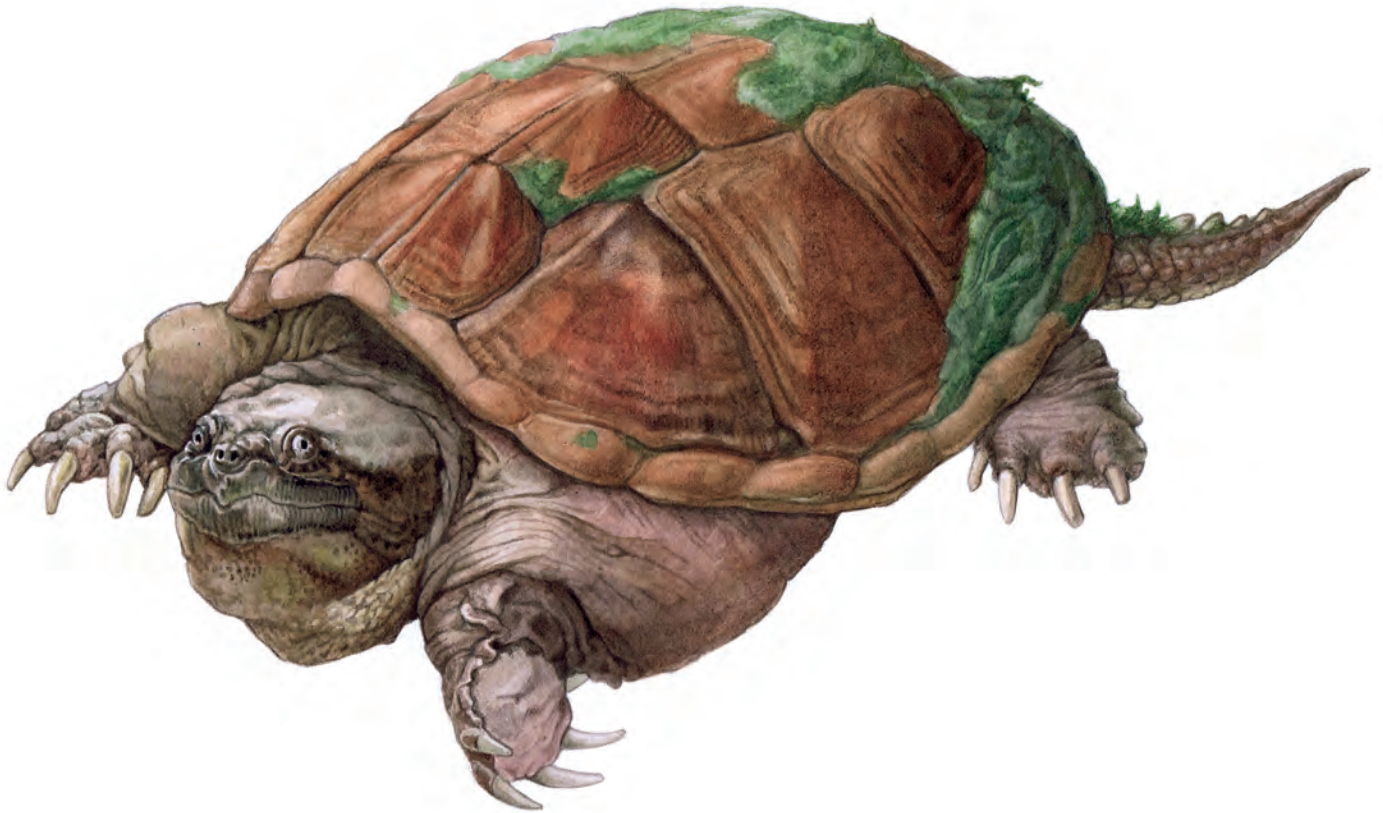
Graphite drawing with digital colour.

Artist Statement:

In this illustration I reconstruct a settlement of Mohawk and Mississauga peoples along Ontario's Grand River. Women are returning from their agricultural fields, located across the river from their homes. I based this reconstruction on the archaeological evidence found at the site, on historical accounts of the settlement and time period, and on advice from local archaeologists. The interpretive sign featuring this illustration says: "The archaeological evidence at the site tells the tale of a people who adopted only those elements of European culture that they saw as useful, while retaining many of their ancient traditions."



▲SONSI artists at GREEN Discovery Centre in Oct. From left, Tarja Barton, Kathryn Chorney, Emily Damstra, Karen Logan, Karen Reczuch, Kathryn Killackey. PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS.



THIRD PLACE (TWO-WAY TIE)

Common Snapping Turtle *Chelydra serpentina*
by Kathryn Killackey, 2015

Watercolour.

Artist Statement:

The common snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*) has a large native range covering much of central and eastern United States and southern Canada, including southern Ontario. It is a member of *Chelydridae* and is one of only two species from this family found in North America. This large freshwater turtle is commonly found near shallow bodies of water and can be aggressive when approached on land. An individual can live on average for 30 years if it makes it past the vulnerable hatchling stage. This illustration is based on a very large and old specimen I came across near Kingston, Ont. Older common snapping turtles are often covered in algae and their ridged carapaces become less pronounced. In order to portray some of the distinguishing features of the species, such as the ridged carapaces, I “rejuvenated” this elder turtle, consulting photos of younger individuals to restore some of the ridges and remove some of the algae. The resulting image is of a “middle-aged” individual.



White Pine Cone *Pinus strobus*
by Karen Logan

Coloured pencil on paper.

Artist Statement:

Pinus strobus is found in the temperate broadleaf and mixed forests biome of eastern North America. It prefers well-drained soil and cool, humid climates, but can also grow in boggy areas and rocky highlands. In mixed forests, this dominant tree towers over all others, including the large broadleaf hardwoods. It provides food and shelter for numerous forest birds, such as the Red Crossbill, and small mammals such as squirrels.

Eastern white pine forests originally covered much of northeastern North America. Only one per cent of the old-growth forests remain after the extensive logging operations that existed from the 18th century into the early 20th century.

This tree is known to the Native American Haudenosaunee (Iroquois nation) as the Tree of Peace.

For more information on SONSI see www.sonsi.ca.



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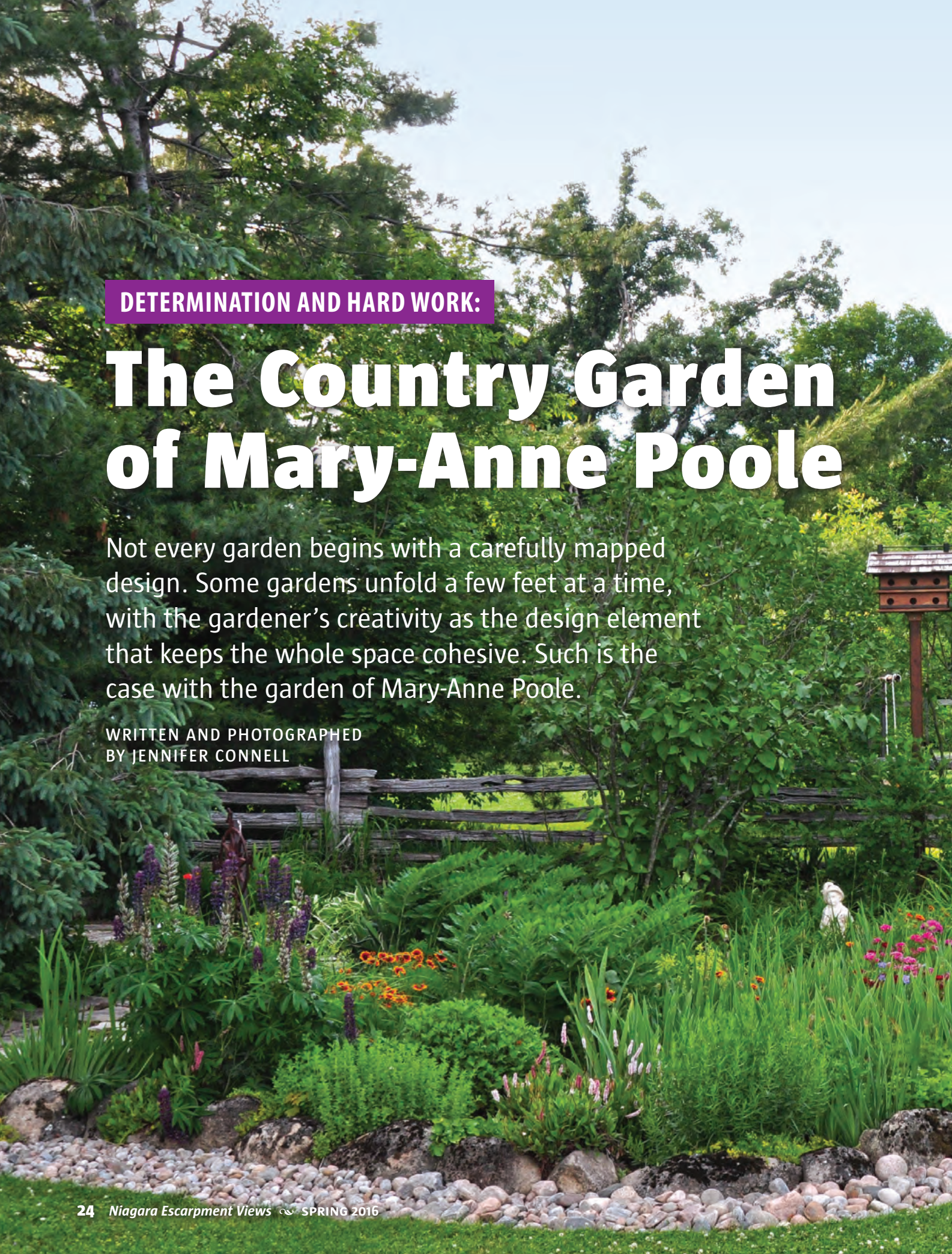
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A lush garden scene with various plants, flowers, and a wooden fence. The garden is filled with green foliage, including ferns and tall grasses. There are several purple lupine flowers and orange flowers in the foreground. A wooden fence runs across the middle ground. In the background, there are large trees and a wooden birdhouse on a post to the right.

DETERMINATION AND HARD WORK:

The Country Garden of Mary-Anne Poole

Not every garden begins with a carefully mapped design. Some gardens unfold a few feet at a time, with the gardener's creativity as the design element that keeps the whole space cohesive. Such is the case with the garden of Mary-Anne Poole.

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED
BY JENNIFER CONNELL

Mary-Anne Poole's enormous rural garden near Campbellville features long borders of colourful perennials, variations in elevation, neat pebble edging and plenty of birdhouses. Landscape cloth underneath the pebble edging helps keep it free of weeds.



LOCATED on a quiet country road near Campbellville, Mary-Anne's garden is 12 years in the making. She began the process of landscaping her property by addressing a neglected area that needed her attention. "I started at the side of the house. There were a lot of old shrubs that needed to be removed," she recalls.

Once the old shrubs had been cleared away, the next task Mary-Anne faced was replacing old plantings with ones that were more appropriate. Even though she

was an experienced gardener, deciding where to put new plants was a challenge. In the end, it became a matter of trial and error. "If I planted it and it grew, I left it. If it didn't, I dug it up and tried something else," she says.

At the front of the house, towering evergreens presented yet another hurdle: shade. Here Mary-Anne planted hostas, with a pleasing variety of leaf shapes, textures and colors. In an adjacent flowerbed that follows the long arc of the driveway, she planted Japanese ferns, succulents and Heuchera

in shades of burgundy, deep rose and peach. Where sunlight peeked through the trees, daylilies, Echinacea, tall Siberian iris and richly scented Dianthus were mixed in.

Popular Pond

One of the first things Mary-Anne did in the back garden was to have a landscape company help her with the installation of the pond. "The birds love it. And I love the sound of the water when I am out there gardening." Water emerges from a small reservoir, half-hidden by Ostrich ferns,

"The birds love it. And I love the sound of the water when I am out there gardening."

▼ At the front of the house, where towering evergreens cast shade, Mary-Anne planted a variety of hostas. Every inch is neat and tidy.



and tumbles over a mix of beach pebbles and stone, down to a pond covered with waterlilies. Standing tall like sentinels on either side of the pond are two weeping beech trees and a triangular birdhouse sitting high on a pole. Planted around the

perimeter of the pond there are iris, peonies, hosta, Lady's Mantle and ornamental grasses.

Originally the pond had koi, but a heron flew in and feasted on the lot. When Mary-Anne replaced the fish the following summer, the heron appeared again, as if

answering a dinner bell. So she gave up on the koi. These days the pond is a haven for frogs, birds and other wildlife.

Framing the view to the pond is a large arbor that Mary-Anne designed and installed herself. Wisteria twists and turns its way up



▼ In the back garden, the pond was one of the first creations. Water trickles down stones into a waterlily-covered pool appreciated by birds.





▲ Heuchera or coral bells with leaves in shades of peach, burgundy, green and rose grow in a flowerbed near the driveway.



▲ Deep purple, pink and white Lupins self-seed in the large flower bed, sometimes being transplanted to better locations.

the sides of the rustic timber and provides a leafy canopy, which is a welcome respite from the sun on a hot day. A pea gravel path guides the visitor under the arbor to the pond and through the adjacent flowerbeds.

Over the years the flowerbeds have stretched out in both directions from the centrally located pond to run the full length of one side of the backyard. An edging of grey beach pebbles accentuates the undulating curves of the flowerbeds and creates an attractive separation between the green lawn and the flowers.

In the sunny area nearest the house, there are Gaillardia, bearded iris, peonies and more daylilies. Deep purple, pink and white-coloured Lupins

have self-seeded among the other perennials. If the Lupins happen to pop up where Mary-Anne doesn't want them, she lifts and transplants them somewhere else. Toward the back of the property, deciduous trees create another spot for foxgloves, hosta, ferns and other shade-loving plants.

Cactus Flowers

Siting at the foot of a tall birdhouse in the grassy centre of the backyard is an interesting feature that always manages to astonish and surprise visitors: a hardy cactus garden. "People don't realize that some varieties of cactus can overwinter here in southern Ontario," Mary-Anne says. Her passion for cacti began with a few plants

and expanded slowly into a small collection. Apart from the novelty, it's the flowers that have stirred Mary-Anne's passion for these plants. "They have the most gorgeous blooms," she says.

When taken as a whole, Mary-Anne's garden is expansive, yet it is tidy and meticulously maintained. One might easily imagine that an entire crew of landscape professionals is responsible, but it's Mary-Anne alone who cares for the garden. If you were to ask for her tips or strategies for keeping a large garden manageable, Mary-Anne won't have any shortcuts to share. Instead she will tell you it is sheer determination and hard work that keep the garden looking good.

One might easily imagine that an entire crew of landscape professionals is responsible, but it's Mary-Anne alone who cares for the garden.



▲ Mary-Anne grouped tree roots to create a stumpery, tucking in potted plants where they can be held. Birdhouses throughout the garden result in plenty of bird song.



▲ Wisteria winds up the sides of the rustic arbor that Mary-Anne designed and installed herself. A pea gravel path beckons the visitor through the arbor and along the pond and flowerbeds.

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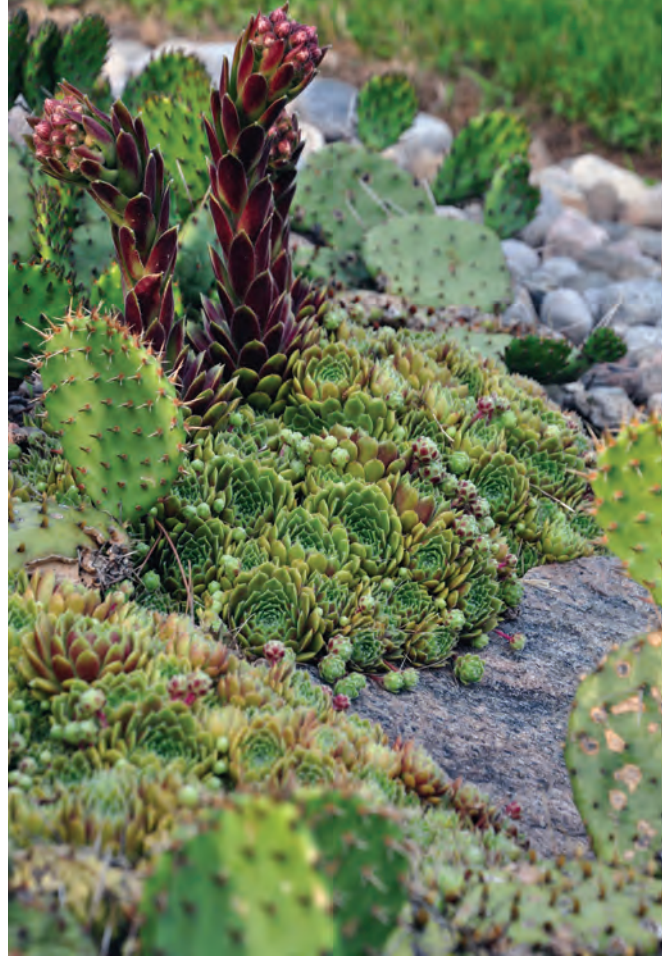
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▲ *Campanula* or bellflowers glow in the sunlight.



▲ A garden of hardy cacti surprises visitors. These can overwinter outdoors and produce beautiful flowers.



It's routine for her to begin at one end of a flowerbed and work until she reaches the other end. Then it's on to the next. Always Mary-Anne strives to keep on top of deadheading and weeding. "If I let it get away from me, I'll never catch up," she says with a laugh.

Undertaking the landscaping of such a large property can be an intimidating prospect for many homeowners, but as Mary-Anne's garden proves, you can tackle a large space bit by bit as time and money permit. A little creativity and a bit of hard work is all you really need to create a beautiful outdoor space. **NEV**

Jennifer Connell is a freelance writer and photographer who lives in Huttonville. She shares her passion for gardening through her blog threedogsinagarden.blogspot.com.

◀ Peony perfection. Mary-Anne also grows dark red varieties.



▲ Beneath some native Ostrich ferns, *Matteuccia struthiopteris*, striking new shoots of a Copper Beech trail across the ground. The tree appeared to have died, so was cut down.

Mary-Anne Poole's Core Plants

SHADE:

Hosta

Japanese Fern, *Athyrium niponicum* var. *pictum*

Heuchera

Ostrich Fern, *Matteuccia struthiopteris*

Foxglove, *Digitalis*

Solomon Seal, *Polygonatum*

SUN:

Peony, *Paeonia*

Daylily, *Hemerocallis*

Blanket Flower, *Gaillardia*

Lupin, *Lupinus polyphyllus*

Bellflower, *Campanula*

Bearded and Siberian Irises



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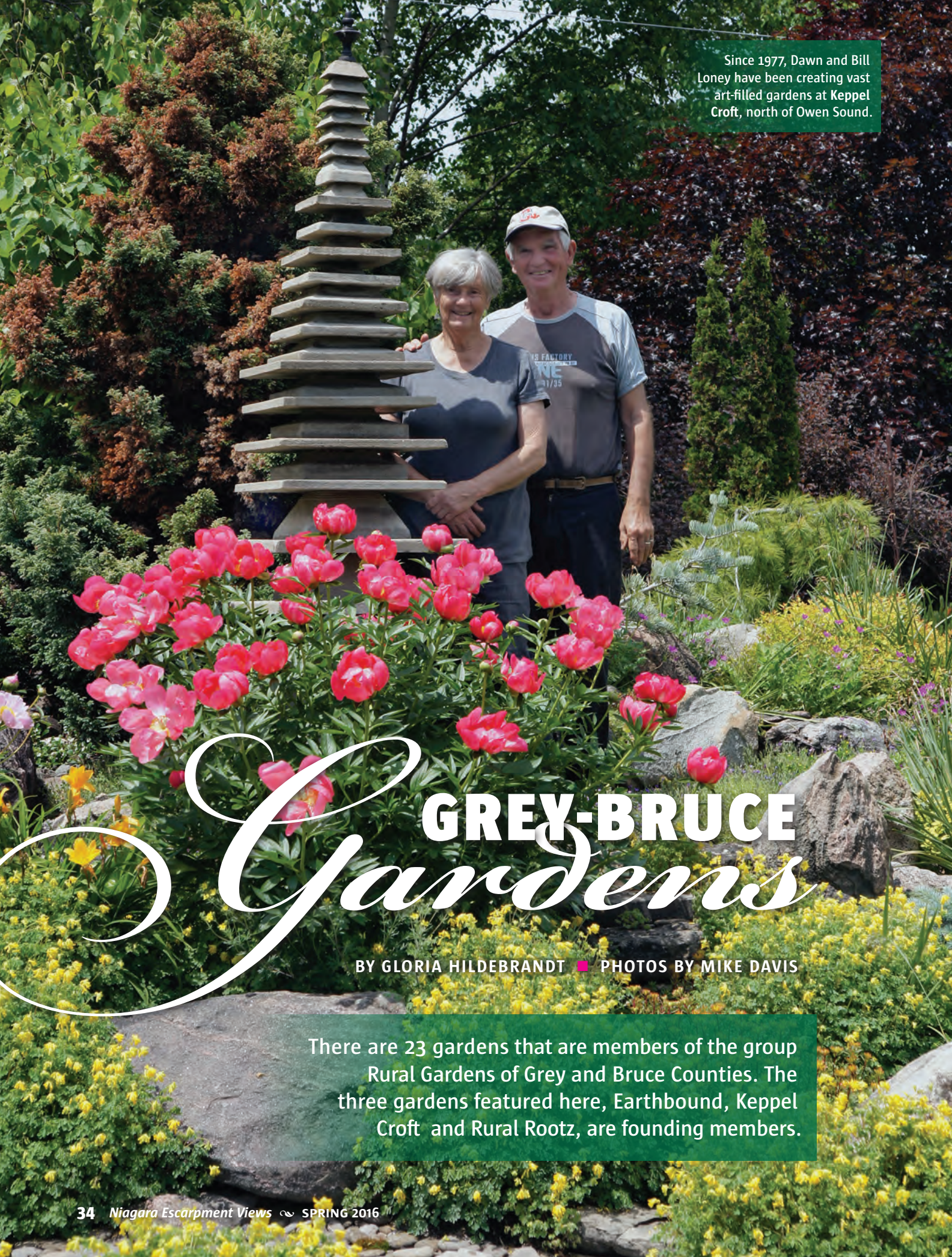






Lilacs near Borer's Falls, Dundas.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSEPH HOLLICK.



Since 1977, Dawn and Bill Loney have been creating vast art-filled gardens at Keppel Croft, north of Owen Sound.

GREY-BRUCE *Gardens*

BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT ■ PHOTOS BY MIKE DAVIS

There are 23 gardens that are members of the group Rural Gardens of Grey and Bruce Counties. The three gardens featured here, Earthbound, Keppel Croft and Rural Rootz, are founding members.



Earthbound Gardens at the Bruce Peninsula's Red Bay is a vast nursery with demonstration gardens.



Rural Rootz Nature Reserve near Wiarton shows that lavish gardens can be nurtured among Escarpment rocks and trees.

To people further south, Grey County and the Bruce Peninsula seem to be a difficult place to garden. Gorgeous gardens are indeed possible here, as proven by Patrick Lima and John Scanlan of Larkwhistle, located near Dyer's Bay in the north part of the peninsula and made famous by their many books. This garden was featured in *Niagara Escarpment Views* in Summer 2013, the last year it was open to the public. Many other people in this area are avid gardeners who have developed inspirational places despite significant challenges. Close to the Niagara Escarpment, the earth can be simply unfriendly.

Keppel Croft Gardens

In 1977 Bill and Dawn Loney bought 76 acres at Big Bay, north of Owen Sound and east of Wiarton, and dreamed of creating a garden. "The land was a farm field," says Bill. "We started with a clean slate."

On their website keppelcroft.com, Dawn notes their predicament: "Little did we know that we would be gardening on a prehistoric beach with a skim of topsoil over three metres of gravel." Despite this, they have four or five acres of front gardens: colourful perennial borders, a rockery, xeriscape garden, zen garden, woodland garden and community vegetable garden.

"We got the horticultural

bug in a bad way," says Bill. "We plant in holes dug in the ground and then use pebbles as mulch around the plants."

Dawn explains more precisely that a hole must be dug in the gravel with a pickaxe. Soil is sieved into a wheelbarrow, then the stones removed. The soil is enriched before being put back in the hole and the plant introduced. Newspaper surrounds the plants and the removed stones are placed on top.

Rural Rootz

Tom and Dee Ashman bought their 100 acres west of Wiarton in 1975. "There was nothing but trees and rocks," says Tom. "We couldn't garden

because there was no soil." Their solution is ingenious.

"We used tires as planters," Tom continues. "We filled them with soil and surrounded the tires with rocks. All the rocks have come from in sight of the house. A pickaxe and backhoe were used to take the rocks out of the ground."

There is now a full sun garden that incorporates a natural outcropping of stone, a full shade garden, and a vegetable garden of raised beds topped with hoops to hold up different kinds of covers as needed, plastic when the beds need protection from the cold, shade cloth against broiling sun, and row covers to protect from insects.

From left, Judy Larkin, Brenda Sutherland and John Close are partners at Earthbound Gardens.



"It's a difficult garden to picture," says Tom. "There is no focal point. It grew organically."

Earthbound Gardens

On the west side of the Bruce Peninsula, at Red Bay, Earthbound Gardens is far

enough from the Niagara Escarpment not to have rock-filled earth. Instead, business partners Judy Larkin, Brenda Sutherland and John Close had a different problem with the five-acre property they bought 20 years ago.

"The soil was depleted of any nutrient value and had very little organic matter in it," they say. "The soil in our main gardens required three to four years of intense additions of leaves, compost and a variety of different types of manures to

build it up." In addition, they planted potatoes and winter wheat to fix nitrogen to the soil.

They add "We now have a vibrant nutrient-rich base for growing and the soil supports a great balance of insects and earthworms."



Dee and Tom Ashman at the edge of their full-sun garden, with the spirit catcher "Spirits Rising," created by Dee.



On the rocky ground at Rural Rootz, Tom and Dee Ashman made garden beds out of large tires which they filled with soil and surrounded with stones. The sign with 10 on it corresponds to a pamphlet of notes for a self-guided tour.

What to See

Earthbound Gardens consists of a variety of demonstration gardens, from hot, dry, sandy situations to wet, dry, and shady spaces. One third of the property is test gardens. There is a large garden centre, and the owners grow everything they sell. Specialists in lilies and daylilies, they sell from a vast inventory of both. In addition to plant sales, they provide landscape and design services. There is a garden gift shop and metal art for sale.

“We also love to share our enjoyment of what has been created at Earthbound,” they say. “We hold many events in the gardens, weddings, music concerts, NIA, yoga, photography shoots, workshops on edible plants, native plants, monarch butterflies.. the list goes on.”

At Keppel Croft, in addition to the gardens near the house, there is the Keppel Henge, an astronomically correct structure that was completed as their millennium project.



The astronomically correct Keppel Croft Henge was built by a group of friends as a millennium project. The central granite stone throws shadow on the encircling stones on the solstices and equinoxes.



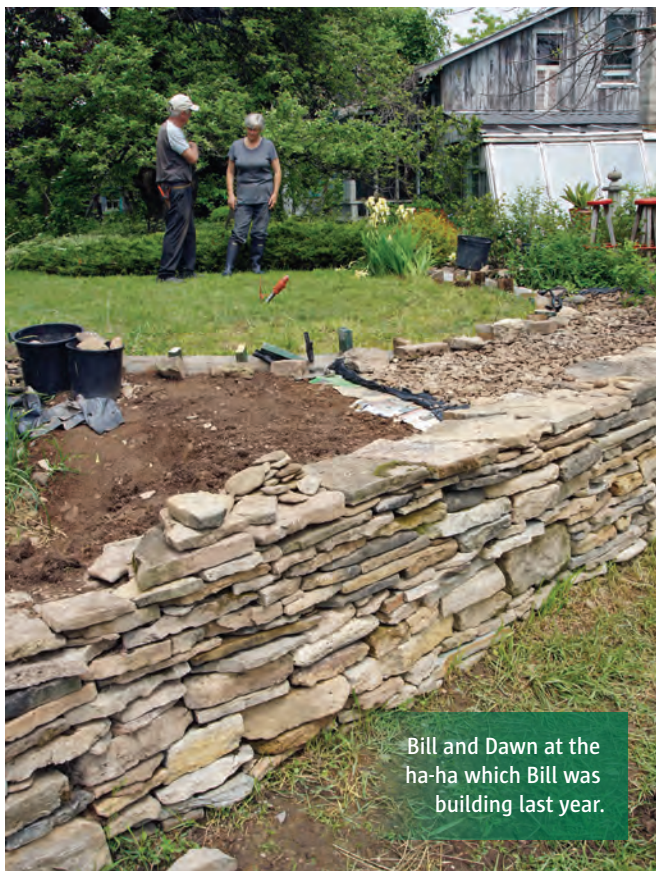
Bill built the Keppel Croft “ruin” which frames the peonies and other flowers with a view of the fields beyond.



Rural Rootz' raised vegetable garden beds have hoops attached for a variety of protective covers.



A gorgeous Tinkerbelle lilac was blooming at Earthbound Gardens in the middle of June last year.



Bill and Dawn at the ha-ha which Bill was building last year.



The teal-painted Garden Room at Keppel Croft offers seating for beverages and picnics.

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The large nursery and greenhouses at Earthbound Gardens are stocked with plants grown on site. Lilies are a specialty.



The white cobblestone Australian aboriginal Rainbow Serpent labyrinth at Rural Rootz.





A square-foot box at Earthbound Gardens is full of lettuces and herbs. No room for weeds!

There is also a Nature Trail that leads up to an impressive view of the Escarpment. Throughout the property are art installations, most of them created by Bill. Last summer he was building a drystone wall Ha-ha, although "Open-heart surgery slowed me down a bit," he says.

Rural Rootz also has more features than can be fully appreciated in one visit. Close to the house are two separate, different kinds of labyrinths,

the simple Australian aboriginal Rainbow Serpent Labyrinth, and the European-style Bishop's Labyrinth. There's a satellite Bruce Trail Side Trail through the property, and crevice caves to explore. The gift shop is stocked with art by Dee, including spirit catcher circle paintings that can hang outside year-round. There are also professional healing sessions and tea reading offered at various times through the season. **NEV**

FIND OUT MORE:

Earthbound Gardens earthboundgardens.com

Keppel Croft keppelcroft.com

Rural Rootz ruralrootz.com

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BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT

PHOTOS BY MIKE DAVIS EXCEPT WHERE NOTED

Love shines in the face of Sandra Davey, Mountsberg Raptor Centre lead, as she looks at Shadow, a Barn Owl.





SANDRA DAVEY, raptor lead at Mountsberg near Campbellville, seems to have a mutual emotional connection with the Barn Owl Shadow. Recently bought by the Centre for their program, he was born in captivity and is accepting of people, which may be why he is able to perch on strangers' gloved hands. During a raptor encounter, it may be possible to get very close to Shadow.

A private raptor encounter lets a maximum of five people have a behind-the-scenes visit at the Raptor Centre. The encounter can be tailored to the group's age and interests, with some options including examining preserved parts of deceased birds, learning about the birds' food, seeing some birds in indoor cages, watching a flying demonstration, and perhaps even handling a raptor.

Mountsberg Raptor Centre has 15 species of native birds of prey, most of whom cannot survive in the wild, either due to permanent injuries or because they have bonded closely with humans. Some of these birds now act as ambassadors, teaching people about their species and needs. Eagles, turkey vultures, falcons, hawks and owls can be seen at the Centre, and some may be shown close up in a scheduled raptor encounter.

Wings and Claws

Even when birds die, they may be used at the Centre for important teaching purposes. Their feet, claws, wings and even skulls may be preserved for people to see, compare and handle.

"Staff can prepare their wings and feet [for preservation]," says Sandra. "Kids want to poke their fingers through the feathers but we try to teach them respect because they were real animals."

Explaining that because Barn Owls hunt by sound, their wings are silent, Sandra

lets people flap one of their wings as proof. By comparison, Red-tailed Hawks hunt by sight, so their wings make more sound when flying. Indeed, flapping one of their wings produces some noise.

Live Birds

Before letting people get close to some live raptors in the staff-only area, Sandra summarizes the daily work.

"The first task in the morning is to weigh the teaching birds," she says. "Five are being actively flight trained so we need to maintain their food and weight more. Of the teaching birds, the two Turkey Vultures are the heaviest birds being weighed every day. But the Bald Eagle is our heaviest bird."

The raptors' diet is not for the faint of heart. They eat a variety of meat, from a menu of day-old chicks raised in the Centre's own barn, rats, chicken, fish and quail. Everything is dead and kept in the freezer, and served according to the birds' food preferences and schedule. Food preparation is complex, with only the most nutritious and digestible parts being used. The dead chicks are manually dissected and everything but the internal organs are discarded. Seeing this done can be unpleasant.

Mimicking life in the wild, birds may have a fast day once a week, because hunting is not always successful. Strict carnivores, raptors must eat meat and can have no grain.

Because most raptors are not social birds, most are kept alone in their large cages. The Centre does keep two Red-Tailed Hawks and two Peregrine Falcons together, because they all get along.

► Lara Butt with the Barn Owl Jazz landing on her glove during a flying demonstration in the netted flyway at the Raptor Centre.







▲ Jazz the 11-year-old female Barn Owl on the glove of Lara Butt.



▲ Spruce, the male Great Horned Owl, in a part of the outdoor weathering area.

“Sometimes wild Turkey Vultures check out our captive Vultures,” says Sandra, “and Bald Eagles can fly over. Our resident birds will alert the staff.” A captive Bald Eagle’s cry is piercing.

Sandra goes on to explain that the Centre personalizes the birds’ cages. Casey the Turkey Vulture, who can’t fly at all, has ramps set up so that he can walk everywhere.

Beyond the staff offices and preparation area is an outdoor weathering area where birds are kept temporarily to enjoy their choice of sun or shade, and to bathe to cool down. Two Great Horned Owls were seen here, Spruce the male, and Octavius, the larger female. Sandra says that all birds of prey tend to have

females that are bigger than the males, because females defend their nests more, while males will hunt and bring back food.

Mountsberg is part of an important project to help the endangered Eastern Loggerhead Shrike breed and recover its numbers in the wild. This project was reported on in the Nov. 21, 2011 blog post at www.NEViews.ca, and can still be seen there today. Sandra says that in 2014, 24 Shrikes were released from Mountsberg into their wild, natural habitats.

Inside the raptor staff area, a two-year-old Shrike called Pierce lives in a large cage and is used to educate people. He eats live superworms, mealworms and crickets, and has the unique Shrike habit of using thorns to tear

food apart for eating or as a place to store food for later.

Raptors in Flight

There is no doubt that the most dramatic part of a Raptor Encounter is the flying demonstration. The good news is that weather permitting, this is offered to the public almost every day from May to October, as part of admission to Mountsberg Conservation Area. There is a netted flyway where the birds can fly safely from post to a staff person’s glove, often right over the heads of seated visitors. During a raptor encounter, the flying demonstration may be private.

Staff member Lara Butt showed the flying skills of two birds, the American Kestrel Bean and the Barn

Owl Jazz. Since this article was researched, six-year-old Bean died from an infection that couldn’t be successfully treated. He had been kept at the Centre because he was blind in one eye. Despite this, he could fly to hand where he would receive a meaty reward.

“He vocalizes when fed,” said Lara at the time. “Kestrels are semi social.”

Jazz the Barn Owl is an 11-year-old female who in the wild, would hunt only rodents, and by hearing alone. It is an eerie experience to have this owl fly low overhead in utter silence, her wings making no sound.

After Lara’s demonstrations, Sandra entered the flyway with Shadow, the five-year-old male Barn Owl. After his



▲ Sandra Davey shows how a leather anklet and jess, or strap used in falconry, attach to a large raptor's foot. At the Centre, these items remain on the bird all the time, for safe control.



▲ A Turkey Vulture's wingspan is the length of Sandra's arm.



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▲ Pierce, the Eastern Loggerhead Shrike, with a superworm in his beak. He quickly ate all the worms given him, without demonstrating the technique of caching food on a thorn.



▲ Barn Owl Shadow on the glove of Gloria Hildebrandt, who is looking up at a male robin with a nest nearby. It had entered the flyway to scold the raptors.



▲ Not for the squeamish: dead day-old chicks are taken apart to become food for the raptors.



▲ Lara Butt with Bean, the American Kestrel.

flying exercises, Sandra gave a glove first to me and then to Mike. We each held the owl on our hand, truly a remarkable encounter with a special raptor.

The 45-minute Raptor Experience can be booked through 905.854.2276

extension 3300 or www.conservation-halton.ca/experience-the-raptors or mtsberg@hrca.on.ca. The cost is \$80 for a group of a maximum of five people. This price includes admission to the park. **NEV**



▲ Mike Davis holding Shadow. PHOTO BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT.

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MARCH 11 – 20
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CanadaBlooms.com
 416.263.3000

MARCH 12
Cirque de la Symphonie
 Hamilton Place, Hamilton
hpo.org 905 526 7756



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APRIL 16
Tchaikovsky's Fourth
 Hamilton Place, Hamilton
hpo.org 905 526 7756

APRIL 17
"Racing to Zero: In Pursuit of Zero Waste"
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APRIL 30
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greysauble.on.ca 519 376 3076

MAY 7
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Painting the Night...with Light

By Sean James

“It doesn’t take much.” “Things are getting cheaper.” “It’s a good investment.” “It’s not as difficult as it used to be.” These are phrases you don’t hear often anymore but they definitely apply to low-voltage landscape lighting. I’ll give you a minute to get over your shock. Now let’s paint a mental picture. It’s the dead of winter. It’s nighttime. There’s a blizzard going on outside. You get up and walk to your window — your favourite window that looks out onto your garden. As it happens, your next door neighbour is doing exactly the same thing, but when looking out the window, he/she sees isolation and a tough drive to work the next day. When you look out your window, however, you see beautiful puffy white flakes falling through the soft lights, shining and illuminating your favourite and most sculptural plants.

Perhaps you haven’t noticed, but we live where it’s dark when you leave for work and it’s dark when you come home! This means, after all the cash, blood, sweat and tears you’ve put into making it beautiful, for several months of the year, you can’t enjoy your landscape.

In my opinion, the best investment to be made in your yard is quality, artistic, low-voltage lighting. We’ve come a long way from the original mayonnaise jars and coffee tin fixtures (seriously, that’s how it began!) through the poorly made plastic fixtures of the ‘90s, up to today’s amazing choices. Unfortunately, many folks got the wrong idea about costs from those old crummy fixtures. Also, since they didn’t last very long, shoppers were left with bad memories.



◀ These custom-made lights were created out of cored-out limestone so the lights could be hidden while safely lighting the potentially dangerous stairs. PHOTO BY SEAN JAMES.

Take heart! Incredible fixtures are available. Fixtures from such companies as GardenLights, out of the Netherlands, are inexpensive, ingeniously designed and well made. Even lamp technology has improved, from using car headlights, through the bright but incredibly hot halogen lights and now to the low-power and long lasting LEDs.

Increased Safety

Low-voltage lighting is safe to work with. Twelve volts isn’t enough to penetrate the skin. It offers safety, lighting pathways and stairs. Security

is increased; soft light creates soft shadows that burglars can’t hide in. It adds beauty and curb appeal. Think about it. When selling your home, most folks are going to visit after dark. A warmly lit, welcoming yard is a great selling feature.

In winter, LED lighting is amazing. Watching big snowflakes drift through lights is magical. The way perennials and shrubs hold snow adds a whole new level of sculptural beauty. In summer, lights in a pond make fish appear to swim in slow motion. Even the movement of grasses is enhanced with



▲ Water is one of the most beautiful features to have in a garden and one of the most interesting to light, often casting rippling lights behind or over the water feature. PHOTO BY SEAN JAMES.

uplighting. Illumination can bring out beautiful texture and form in a garden, even hiding the bits you don’t want to see, simply by lighting other things, leaving, say, the compost pile in shadows.

Dramatic Effects

There are different lighting effects you can use: “Washing” or having a fixture close to something like a wall or rough tree bark so the texture is brought forward. “Backlighting” creates dramatic silhouettes. Conversely, having a light in front of something, a yucca for instance, creates dramatic shadows on a wall. “Uplighting” into trees makes a cozy ceiling in the garden, while “downlighting” involves lighting paths and gardens with fixtures mounted in trees to create more of a moonlight effect without creating “hotspots” or bright, blinding points of light. If lighting a sculpture or statue, use two lights, one on either side. One will make things look two-dimensional, whereas two create a three-dimensional image.

Fixtures are available in copper (handmade or machined and expensive), powder-coated steel or aluminum, or even stone. Each has its own advantages. It’s a good idea to mix and match, based on the desired effect.

I’m still wrestling with the effect lighting might have on nesting or migrating birds. It might be best to turn it off from March to May to give the birds time to settle in.

After all that, whether it’s enjoying a drink on the patio in the summer or sitting in the warmth of your home, looking out at the snow in winter, just ease back and enjoy the beauty!

Reach **Sean James** through www.fernriddelandscape.com or 905.876.4852.

Looking Forward to Gin-and-Tonic Days

By Gloria Hildebrandt

It's a cool, drizzly spring day and I've just come in from walking the dogs around the perimeter of the property. After a full day of rain yesterday, the pond overflow was running high. I saw tall grass at the overflow channel which I'd like to cut back so we can see the water better. At the old spring end of the pond,

there are some mossy rocks on the shore that I'd also like to free from tall grass.

I should explain the words "the old spring end of the pond." When my parents bought the property, there was a small, round depression where a spring brought up a steady supply of water. The farmer let his beef cattle drink here, and they churned up the earth and made it look like a — well,

like a muddy cowpond. My father had the idea to have the earth excavated here to make a big, natural swimming pond. Once that happened, and we were swimming in it, we discovered that there are a few more springs in the pond. And one is even warm. You can swim from the cold spring to the warm spring. How and why there's a warm spring in the pond remains a mystery. But these are the new springs, as opposed to the old spring.

But that's how my walk went, with me noticing all the things I should do, could do, to make me think I'm improving the place.

The rain has turned the back acres into wetland, as happens every year, and as the frost is leaving the ground, the paths form air pockets beneath, which sink suddenly when you step on them. And muddy parts are slippery, so a walking stick is helpful.

Work to Do

I noticed all the branches that are still down from the Ice Storm, and I'm convinced that I really need to borrow or rent a wood chipper to deal with the debris. Plus, I'll be able to spread the chips on the forest trails, creating a better footing. I could drive my little tractor and wagon to any part of the property and have a lot of work to do, dealing with the brush and the branches.

If I think of it as work in the negative sense, as something I have to do to get it over and done with as quickly as I can, it would be utterly impossible. For one woman, to clean up 14 acres of woodland, by hand? Instead, I think of it positively, as a privilege, as something I get to do. I'm blessed to own 14 acres of

beautiful woodland. I get to spend whole days outside in good weather, accomplishing something that will feel deeply satisfying. The fact that when an area has been cleared of downed branches, only looks the way it always has looked, and should look, I'll push to one side of my mind. I do enjoy working physically outside, feeling the sun and breeze, hearing birdsong, seeing plants that are covered by brush, being opened to the light.

I take breaks when I'm tired, drinking from a water bottle, sitting on a bench or log. It's a pleasant way to be outside. And I look forward to the end of the work day, when I take the equipment back to the house and sit on the verandah next to the herb garden, having a gin and tonic.

The Best G&T

The best way to have a gin and tonic (G&T) is to first put ice cubes into a tall glass. I like the cubes that are not frozen water, but are plastic or metal, because I don't like my G&T to get weakened by melting ice. I like fresh lemon or lime squeezed over the ice cubes, so that the juice will get mixed into what gets poured in next: a strong amount of gin followed by a slightly larger amount of freshly opened tonic water. The fruit wedge can go on top. And it's better yet when someone makes a G&T for me.

Despite how tired and dirty I may be, this is a most civilized time of day, a fitting reward to anticipate for a day of hard work. It's too damp and chilly for this today, but those days are coming soon.

Gloria Hildebrandt is the co-founder, co-publisher and editor of Niagara Escarpment Views.



▲ The tangle of plants hides the pond's overflow channel. PHOTO BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT.

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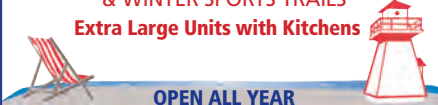
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Common Spring Ephemeral Wildflowers

Photos by Mike Davis except where noted.

Before the leaves of deciduous trees open fully in the forest, many different plants appear and bloom briefly close to the ground. Although some are rare and may be difficult to find, others are common in natural woodland.



▲ **Bloodroot, *sanguinaria*** Fond of woodlands, this early spring bloomer begins with leaves curled around the solitary stem, with one white flower per plant. Petals open in warm sunlight and will close when cold. The plant's name comes from dark red sap in the stems and roots, said to be poisonous. PHOTO BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT



▲ **Coltsfoot, *tussilago farfara*** Sometimes mistaken for dandelions, coltsfoot blooms earlier and before the leaves appear, growing in roadsides, poor soils and damp woodland. Small leaves along the stems distinguish it from dandelions. Flowers are edible.



▲ **Cut Leaf Toothwort, *dentaria laciniata*, renamed *cardamine concatenata*** The flowers are in four parts, and can be white to pinkish. Leaves are in three parts but can look like a five-part leaf, resembling a hand.



▲ **Marsh Marigold, *caltha palustris*** Grows in shallow swamps, ditches and wet woodland. Hollow stems take up a lot of water. Cut flowers in a vase may need water refilling every day.



▲ **Spring Beauty, *claytonia caroliniana?* or *claytonia virginica?*** Only the width of the leaves distinguish the Latin names. Flowers are white to pink, striped, star-shaped clusters. One of the most common wildflowers in woodlands.



▲ **Trout Lily, Dogtooth Violet, *erythronium americanum*** Can carpet large areas of forest although most will be spotted leaves, with only a few flowers in bloom. It may take seven years for one plant to flower. Spreads by its roots.

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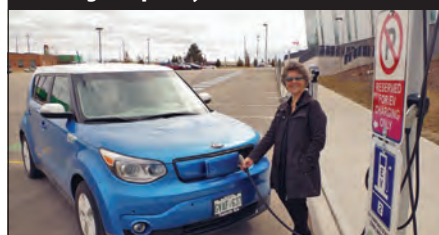
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Will We Have a Legacy?

By Bob Barnett

In Cambodia only a few weeks ago, my wife Anna and I saw a civilization that had been destroyed by invading armies and huge trees which had dismembered intricate carvings, leaving mounds of carved stones in piles like a massive three-dimensional jigsaw puzzle. Imagine thousands of craftsmen labouring for a lifetime to memorialize their emperor/god. And now it is stones, in piles with a few restored gates, walls and reproduction mountains. Ironically, the few real mountains now are being trucked away to build roads and houses, leaving treeless, bald scars.

In Hong Kong, visiting our grandchildren, we saw both 80-storey skyscrapers, massive subway and bridge projects, multi-storey pedestrian concourses and huge swaths of “country” parks. It’s the city of the future.

cent of our land base as parks by 2020. There is no way this objective will be achieved, especially in southern Ontario which has such a high percentage of our rare plants and ecosystems. Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy (EBC) asked for \$60,000 to help conserve 16 properties in 2015, but only received \$5,000. Ontario has no funding at all. Few foundations support nature conservation, preferring to support social and community services. Meanwhile, both Cambodia and Hong Kong have achieved the global 17 per cent goal. EBC spent about \$100,000 on legal fees and appraisals in 2015 to protect 16 new reserves, but can only get reimbursed for five per cent.

Last night, I heard our board discuss the option of not accepting land donations where the owner cannot also donate the cost of legal fees and appraisals. Imagine not accepting a 175-acre (2/3 sq km) donation with



▲ Tree roots smothering an ancient temple at Angkor Wat, Cambodia.
PHOTO BY BOB BARNETT.

ways to raise money, talk to new donors and persuade government and foundations that our legacy here in Ontario will be measured in protected areas. Those protected areas provide health, education and economic benefits well beyond rare species and tourism.

It all boils down to legacy. How many people will remember us and what we did in our lifetime? How many people will not remember

value, but very tangible. The importance of source water protection was featured in *The Globe and Mail* recently. Removing carbon dioxide from the air and storing it in trees and soil may even save our entire way of life. Books have been written on the health benefits, especially for children, of spending time in the woods. Economists say these ecosystem benefits are worth more annually than the one-time purchase value of the land. Conserving land for only five per cent of its worth is a much better bargain. Most land conservation charities are buying the land at market value. We protect donated land for only five per cent of its true value.

At first glance, nature may seem like a cosmetic benefit, but nature will outlast new hospital wings or diagnostic equipment. Nature, protected, will probably outlast our civilization. Just like Angkor Wat in Cambodia, we will be but bricks and stones among the trees.

Bob Barnett's operation went well and as we went to print, he was at home, recovering. Reach him through www.escarpment.ca or 888.815.9575

I write this from my hospital bed in Toronto as I await a multiple bypass after two heart attacks this week

Heart Attacks

I write this from my hospital bed in Toronto as I await a multiple bypass after two heart attacks this week, just after flying back. Spending days in bed without all the details of work flying by has put a few things into perspective.

Southern Ontario is losing 300 acres a day, or 10 sq km a year. It's being gobbled up for roads, gravel pits, suburban bungalows, cottages, shopping malls and industrial “parks.”

Our two senior levels of government have agreed, with 168 other countries, to the international biodiversity initiative to protect 17 per

waterfalls and three rare species for the lack of \$5,000 to pay the lawyer and appraiser.

Being on this ward, waiting for my operation where my heart and lungs will be stopped for hours while the clogged arteries are bypassed, has given me the big picture. Knowing there's a two per cent chance I won't leave the hospital has pushed important things like conservation to the front and small things like money to the back. How hard can it be to raise \$5,000? It reminds me to appreciate the donations coming in every day as I sit in this bed. We need a “can do” outlook that will find new

us by name, but will benefit from the new ideas and things we created during our life?

Only Five Per Cent

I suggest that one of the most cost-effective legacies is protecting our natural heritage. Animals and trees live on, generation after generation. Not only we, but our grandchildren and their grandchildren can visit, see the species and learn things which will improve their lives. Few understand the massive impact nature has on our economic well-being. Cleaner air and water and flood protection are hard to

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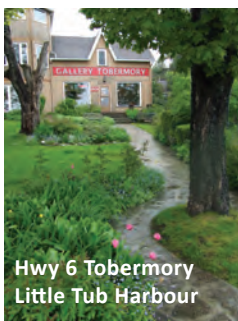
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FORESIGHT

A property on the north shore of Manitoulin Island,
with a view of the LaCloche Mountains.
PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS.

The seeds of our future are taking root right now, for better or worse. This page shares better, forward-thinking ideas and celebrates significant environmental achievements that can help us lead the way in creating the Niagara Escarpment as a healthy, sustainable example of a thriving World Biosphere Reserve. **Send us your recommendations for good achievements!**

INCREASED WASTE DIVERSION

Peel Region **cancelled an incinerator project**, preferring to increase recycling and waste composting. The new target for waste diversion is **75 per cent by 2034.**

TWO WAYS TO HELP MONARCH BUTTERFLIES

According to the 2014/2015 Annual Report of the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, there are two ways to help save the Monarch butterfly. Since 2014, when the Ontario government removed milkweed from the list of noxious weeds, it has been legal to **plant milkweed**, the sole food of the Monarch caterpillar. For people in agricultural areas, it's best to choose swamp milkweed, which is harmless to agriculture. The other way to help is to **eradicate the invasive dog-strangling vine and black dog-strangling vine.** They are similar to milkweed, but don't provide enough nutrition to let the caterpillars grow into butterflies.

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