

# TLC Abkhazi Garden October 2023 E-News

## International Day of Peace at Abkhazi Garden



The Charge D'affaire of the Georgian Embassy to Canada, Mr. George Meskheli, came to Abkhazi Garden to recognize the UN International Day of Peace on September 21, 2023.

Students from Glen Lyon Norfolk School presented a poem of peace and laid peace rocks in the Georgian Garden.

Many thanks to Barb of the Teahouse for providing Royal Abkhazi High Tea to 20 special guests including our Georgian guests, Dr. Geoff Bird, Pamela Ball and TLC staff.

## Outdoor Art Show



We had great weather once again for our Outdoor Art Show on Labour Day Monday, September 4<sup>th</sup> with over 200 visitors attending.

In addition to our paintings, this year we showcased wooden bowls designed by local artist, Duncan Kemp. Some bowls were made from a Garry Oak Tree that fell in the garden.

Many thanks to our art ambassadors, Julie (shown here) and Shari and our gate greeters, Sylvia and Theresa for helping out with this fundraiser.

## Open House and Plant Sales



On Grandparents Day on Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, we had an Open House and our third annual Fall Plant Sale. We raised over \$3000 from plant and wooden bowl sales.

Thanks to Penny, Joti, Janet, Joan and Laurie for helping set up the plant sale. Thank you Laurie for answering questions about plants during the sale. Thanks to Ronnie, Lesley, Irena, Marg and Shari for handling sales transactions. And thank you Judy and Kaitlyn for welcoming over 465 people to the garden.

## Thanksgiving Day at Abkhazi Garden



chek  
NEWS

**CHERIE MILTIMORE**

SITE MANAGER & VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR, ABKHAZI GARDEN

This year, we promoted Thanksgiving Day at Abkhazi Garden. CHEK TV came to check out the garden, our art show fundraiser and interviewed site manager, Cherie.

Even though it was an on and off rainy day, about 100 local visitors, some with umbrellas, came to the Garden for an autumn stroll through the fall foliage and took in our art show and plant sale.

We sold two paintings and several plants. Many thanks to our gate greeter Judy and art ambassadors Julie and Jane who helped on Thanksgiving Day and to Barb of the Teahouse who hosted our art show in the Teahouse from Sep 5-Oct 9.

## Grumble - Visitor Parking Tickets



This summer the City of Victoria removed all parking on the north side of Fairfield Road. A lack of adequate signage resulted in many visitors and volunteers getting parking tickets.

Thankfully, the City has since doubled the no parking signs and the parking tickets have stopped.

Traffic is moving faster on Fairfield now and we hope the City will install a crosswalk to the Garden at Shotbolt to ensure pedestrian safety.

## Acorn Collectors at Abkhazi Garden



Elizabeth, with the red bucket, shows some of the 50 viable acorns collected for the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society. (GOMPS)

Visitors from Peru, California, and Ottawa, among others, collected these acorns in the garden. As they left the garden, they placed them in the red bucket of water to see if they had found "sinkers" to qualify them as samples for GOMPS.

Joti with the bucket and wheelbarrow is an acorn enthusiast. She volunteers extra hours to remove the acorns from the paths and garden beds. Thankfully, other volunteers help with this enormous task.

## Special Guests - Relatives of Peggy



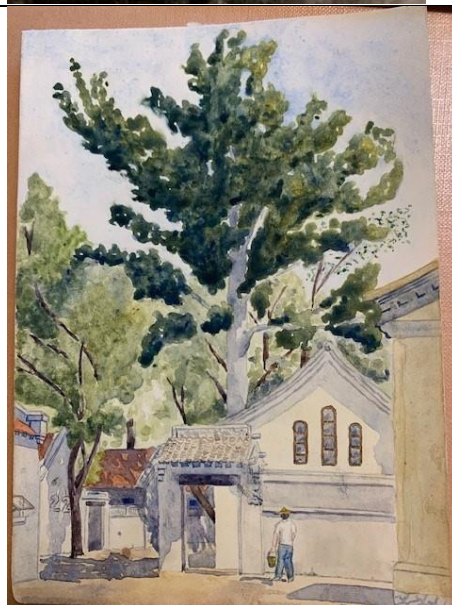
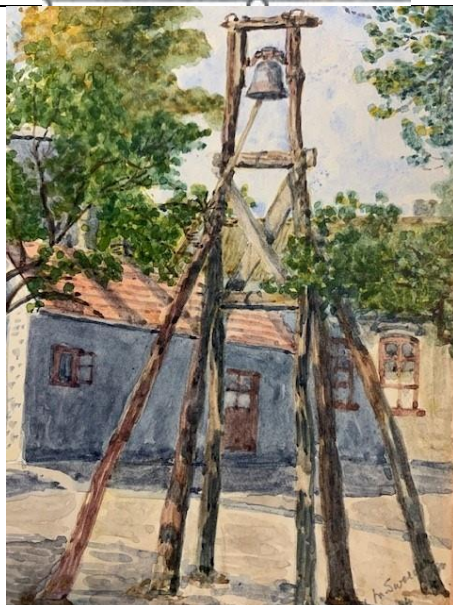
Lynn Milthorpe and her brother Dave Miller are relatives of Peggy Abkhazi. They are first cousins three times removed. Their great grandmother was Daisy who was the daughter of Aunt Pollie, the sister of Peggy's biological father.

After her parents died, Peggy was sent to live with Aunt Pollie and Cousin Daisy who was a few years older than Peggy. She was later adopted by Thomas and Florence Pemberton and lost contact with Aunt Pollie and Daisy.

In her manuscript, 'Dragon Aunt Remembers' (p.15), Peggy mentions that Aunt Pollie got married and emigrated to Canada with Daisy, but she did not know where they landed in Canada.

Lynn and Dave lived with their parents on Oscar Street in Victoria in the sixties. Peggy did not know that the offspring of Daisy's family lived so close to her home and Lynn's family did not know that a famous relative was blocks away.

## Special Guest - Jancis O'Mara was Born in the Weih sien Civilian Assembly Centre in China



Jancis O'Mara visited Abkhazi Garden this summer and mentioned that her parents, Dennis and Sybil Fulton were married in the Weih sien internment camp in China. The Japanese Commandant gave them 2 bottles of beer to celebrate the occasion.

Jancis was later born in the camp and left with her parents when she was about 20 months. She can be seen with her grandfather who later lived in Oak Bay on McNeill St and with her mother in the next picture. Jancis has also shared paintings of the buildings in her camp for us to see.

## Peggy was Interned at the Lunghau Civilian Assembly Centre in China



P.F.C. arrives at Lunghau /



Artwork Courtesy of UVic Archives



Peggy Pemberton-Carter arrived by bus at the Lunghau Civilian Assembly Centre on April 5, 1943. She was 40 years of age.

She spent the next 2 years, 5 months and 5 days there. We know a lot about that time as she kept a secret diary. Her diary, 'A Curious Cage' was published when she was 79 years of age to raise money for Abkhazi Garden.

The garden outside Peggy's window and her cat Timmy seen on the windowsill gave Peggy great comfort while she lived in the camp.

## Birding at Abkhazi Garden



Our docent volunteer, Gail is a bird watcher and with the help of other birders she has confirmed that we have all the common birds (19) listed on our Welcome Guide. One of the common birds is the Barred Owl which was spotted this summer.

Another 19 birds have been spotted in the garden, such as the Pileated Woodpecker pictured here.

Gail highly recommends binoculars in the early morning, the eBird app and the Merlin app to enhance your birding experience in the Garden.

## Volunteers Locked Out



Every Monday and Tuesday, Jacqui unlocks the gate before 9am so volunteers can make their way to the tool shed to find out what work needs to be done for the morning.

But one morning the volunteer gardeners were locked out and had to wait out on the street with nothing to do.

It turns out that Jacqui was busy mowing the lawn and completely lost track of time. When she finally came to the gate, she had a crew of gardeners ready to go.

Jacqui reports that the volunteer gardeners are doing a fantastic job at maintaining and preserving the garden that love built.

## We are Really Going to Miss Darren



One of many wheelbarrows full of hornbeam cuttings Darren took to the service area.

After two seasons of volunteering, Darren has retired from volunteering in the garden.

Darren never missed a Tuesday and Jacqui could count on him to work hard, take on heavy lifting and do any task that she asked of him.

In the past month, Darren worked on pruning the hornbeam hedge along the boulevard garden.

Darren felt it was a privilege and an honour to volunteer at the garden.

## Sylvia's Last Day in the Garden



After seven plus years of volunteering at Abkhazi Garden, Sylvia has retired. On her last day she could not have been happier surrounded by her dog Xola and docent Ron's dog Magnus and seeing the garden view from the Summerhouse on a beautiful Autumn Day.

Sylvia started as a collector of entrance fees and sold items in the gift shop while bringing her Cavalier King Charles with her. She often worked double shifts when there was no volunteer to take the other shift.

Last year, Sylvia became a docent and she will be forever thankful to the individuals who created the plant photograph albums and history albums. She enjoyed learning about plants and the history of the garden to share with visitors from around the world.

We will miss her immensely and hope she will come back for visits.

## Cathy's Last Official Visit at Abkhazi Garden



TLC Executive Director, Cathy Armstrong attended our UN International Day of Peace in September shortly before she retired. We took the opportunity to thank her for her contributions in saving and preserving Abkhazi Garden.

Cathy was presented with a gift from the garden – an Abkhazi Garden Garry Oak wooden bowl crafted by local artist Duncan Kemp.