

## TLC Abkhazi Garden January 2025 E-News

### Celebrating 25 Years



In August 1999, a sign went up by the Abkhazi gate stating the garden would be developed into 12 townhomes. Neighbours and friends of the garden quickly rallied and campaigned to save this heritage garden.

With this community support, The Land Conservancy of BC bought Abkhazi Garden in January 2000.

25 years later, Abkhazi Garden is flourishing with help from community members who are garden volunteers, gate greeters, docents, handymen, fundraisers and donors. There is much to celebrate!

### A Great Way to Start the Year



Jacqui and I were delighted to celebrate and appreciate our volunteers at our New Year Luncheon on January 7<sup>th</sup> in the Teahouse. (Marg, Barb, Sue & Laurie –left to right)

2024 was a successful year as we have so many wonderful volunteers that contribute to the running of the garden.

We welcomed 25,000 visitors to the Abkhazi Garden last year, increased our fundraising and kept the garden looking beautiful.

Thank you Barb for providing the space, meat pies and two gift cards of An Afternoon Tea for Two for this event.

### Abkhazi Garden has the Best Volunteers



Our volunteer, Lesley, has been volunteering for over 8 years and has done many different things to help our garden flourish. Lesley volunteers as a docent on Friday mornings and shares the history of the garden and helps visitors identify plants. She is seen here in a dress with Susan Hammersley, the granddaughter of Peggy's good friend, Muriel Mackenzie.

Recently Lesley has taken her passion about the garden out on the road. She met with members of the Monterey Garden Club in the Fall and got rave reviews. One member of the Garden Club came to the garden after Lesley's presentation and shared that "Lesley did a wonderful job at presenting everything".

Lesley's wonderful presentations bring more people to the garden and perhaps some new volunteers!

## A New Garden Entrance Coming in 2025



The TLC plans to transform the uneven Abkhazi Garden driveway into a permeable walkway that is accessible, walkable, bikeable, and drivable. The new walkway will meet environmental standards and be aesthetically pleasing.

Our project will involve re-grading the driveway to lessen the slope and to smooth it out. Then a grid will be installed and filled with gravel. Jackie Spedding of Core Landscape Products is seen here showing an example of the gravel grid that will be used in our new walkway.

Either side of this permeable gravel section will have a 3-foot paver border to make walking up to the teahouse and into the garden easier and safer especially for mobility challenged guests.

We are still raising money for this project. If you'd like to donate to support the project, Canada's charitable giving deadline for 2024 has been extended to February 28, 2025.

## New Neighbourhood Development



The Manor House located behind the Summerhouse at 515 Foul Bay Road was built in 1910 by architect, Samuel Maclure. A new development, Edwin Oaks is planned for this property. In addition to 5 homes in the old manor, 13 town houses will be built this year and they will contain a diverse mix of family housing.

Richard Gill of GM Projects has incorporated a green buffer zone on their side that borders Abkhazi Garden. GMC will share the costs of a new fence between the two properties which will be like the fence we have in the garden already. The new fence will be installed in May.



## NorthWest Travel and Life



Photo Credit – Don Piper

## NORTHWEST TRAVEL & LIFE

The NorthWest Travel and Life magazine will feature Abkhazi Garden in its March/April 2025 issue.

This magazine includes Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Alaska, British Columbia and Wyoming. That could mean more American tourists for us!

[nwtravelmag.com](http://nwtravelmag.com)

## Design Victoria Festival

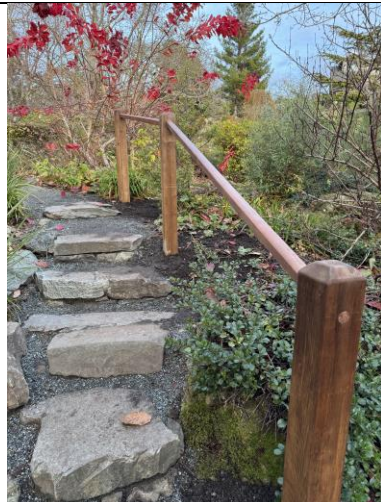


Sarah Taylor, of Design Victoria, met with our Head Gardener, Jacqui and Site Manager, Cherie in January to explore the idea of Abkhazi Garden being part of the Design Victoria Festival in May. Last year 4,500 people attended.

Design Victoria brings together the city's design and creative community. The festival which runs from May 1-4, promotes "the city's creative sector, shining a light on the ideas and products that are designed and made here."

We envision giving a walking tour of Abkhazi Garden to showcase the landscape design and to show how the garden is evolving as we integrate features for climate change.

## Designing a Railing



In the Fall, our handymen, Jim and Mark designed a wooden hand railing along some new steps that were put in to make our pathway through the Maple path to the Summerhouse safer.

Jason McCaul, of Turnstone Masonry, put the steps in. We plan to have him back this year to repair and smooth out parts of our pathways and cut out our dated piece of cement, LA 1949, so we can preserve and display it.



## Blocked Drains Around the Teahouse



The drain at the top of the stairs to the Teahouse front door was blocked and water was pooling on the sidewalk.

Gord, of Rather be Plumbing was called in and he unblocked the drain enough, so water is draining again.

Our drain tiles are made of 4 inch clay pipes and some are cracking as you can see here, so Gord could not auger the pipes. Unfortunately, a camera could not make its way through the drains to show what is causing the blockages.

## Festive Market Fundraiser



Our Festive elves did a wonderful job of creating swags, wreaths, planters and table centres.

We were delighted that TLC executive director, Dianna Stenberg, could help out. She is seen here making a culinary wreath to sell.

This year we did \$5400 in sales before taxes. Last year we did about \$4000.



The weather was often miserable at our weekend Festive Markets but that did not stop volunteers like Heather and Joan from selling birdseed gifts, hellebores and other festive decor at the front gate.

This year, our wood turner neighbour, Duncan Kemp, came to sell hand carved gifts and raised over \$950 for the Garden. Thank you Duncan.

2025 January E-News was prepared and produced by Cherie Miltimore, Site Manager & Volunteer Coordinator