

WEEKLY UPDATE – APRIL 1 – APRIL 8

“Is the spring coming?” he said. “What is it like?”

“It is the sun shining on the rain and the rain falling on the sunshine...”

Frances Hodgson Burnett, *The Secret Garden*, 1911

Welcome to a new season of guiding at our beautiful Garden. As of last Sunday, Spring is officially with us even though it seems to have arrived much earlier. Daffodils and forsythia are almost finished, magnolias and camellias are in magnificent bloom and Vancouver streets are lined with flowering plum and cherry blossom although, as I write this, winds are scattering the delicate petals. To help us launch the season, here are some timely reminders.

At the beginning of your shift:

Ensure that the weekly calendars(in the plastic folder in the radio cupboard) are kept up to date.

Check that the guide at the trolley has the radio turned on to Channel 21. In case of an emergency on a tour, he/she will go to the Cashier’s desk and have her call 911. The guide must know the nearest gate to which to direct Emergency Services. Emergency procedures, radio information and Gate Information are in the Guide Binder.

During the guiding shift:

Please greet visitors as they enter the garden via the plaza.

Please try to avoid clustering around the trolley. If there is an abundance of guides, perhaps they can rove in the garden or do research.

Be on the alert to start more tours as needed throughout the afternoon rather than turn visitors away or make them wait.

Please take a radio with you into the garden and turn it to high volume.

Please communicate using the radios to ensure that tours are within the agreed upon duration so as not to hold up a group who may be waiting.

Report all accidents involving visitors and/or volunteers whether or not a name is provided. Accident report forms and a First Aid Kit are available at the cashier’s desk.

Ensure that the radio cupboard is locked every time you leave the Volunteer Lounge. If there are guides in the Lounge, agree on who will check/lock the cupboard.

At the end of the shift:

If driving a cart, please TURN OFF THE DEAD SWITCHES.

Please CLOSE THE UMBRELLA before returning the trolley to the Volunteer Lounge.

Please ensure that the radios have been turned OFF and are securely placed in the correct charging stands in the radio cupboard.

Please ensure that you fill out the appropriate statistics, walking or driving, for your shift.

Please return the Guide Cupboard Key to the Guide Drawer at the Information Services desk.

Please remember to fill out the yellow Record of Volunteer Hours sheets (available in the wire basket on the shelf) for the VBGA statistical compilation.

Cart Drivers: PLEASE REVIEW cart use procedures, new information and new proposals.

Guide Goings On

Our official season has just started but already we have had two excellent Education meetings with outstanding presentations. In February, Eve H. provided a delightful, detailed and informative tour of some of the gardens, forests and parks of southwest Australia.

In March, we learned about trichomes from a very enthusiastic and passionate Linda J. of the Beaty Biodiversity Museum at UBC.

We enjoyed a Gardeners' Walk with our new Garden Director, Bill M.

The first session of the Advanced Guide Training with Alan R. took place on a gorgeous sunny day in February.

In addition, two issues of the *Gazette* have been published, the March issue with a reprint of the speech given by Cynthia S. at the R. Roy Forster Cypress Pond Dedication as well as the answers to 1974 Guides Spring Test. The *Gazette* now has a link on the Erica's Notebook website <http://www.ericanotebook.com>

1. **Thursday, April 7 – the monthly Gardener’s Walk will be led by Tomas; he is responsible for the Rose, Alpine and Bentall Gardens.**
2. **Thursday, April 14 – Guide Education: Gwen O. will speak on “Gardening in Small Gardens”.**
3. **Thursday, May 12 – Douglas J. from UBC Botanical Garden will be presenting, topic TBA.**

Congratulations to Brian C. who succeeds Audrey D. as Saturday Walking Captain and the captain responsible for the Information Co-ordination. Grateful thanks to Audrey for her many years of service in these positions.

And thank you also to Sheila V. for her ten years as the Thursday Driving Captain and the captain responsible for Finance. Patti B. assumes these positions.

The guiding season couldn’t get underway without a great deal of preparation and hard work on the part of many. Thank you to John S. for getting the radios ready for use and to those responsible for carts - Midge O., Derek Gl. and Bruno B. - for ensuring that the carts are up and running and maintained. Many, many thanks to Brian C. for undertaking the trolley repair and renewal project.

Garden Goings

1. **Alpine Garden Club of BC Show and Sale
Saturday, April 2 – 12:00pm – 4:00pm
Floral Hall and Cedar Room
FREE**
2. **Saturday and Sunday, April 9 and 10 – Sakura Days Fair,
presented by the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival.
To honour the event, please enjoy this lovely haiku.**

**“What a strange thing!
to be alive
beneath cherry blossoms”
Kobayashi Issa (1763-1827)**

3. **Vancouver Dahlia Society Tuber Sale
Saturday, April 9 – 10:00am – 4:30pm
Floral Hall
By donation**

Daffodil Sunday – Sunday, April 3

**“...Daffodils
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty...”
William Shakespeare, *The Winter’s Tale*, IV, iii, 118-120**

The Victorians are responsible for the Language of Flowers and for assigning flowers to both special and ordinary occasions. On the first Sunday in April, families would pick daffodils and take them to hospitals to provide a ray of daffodil sunshine to the sick. April is the Canadian Cancer Society’s Daffodil Month, but field daffodils might be in short supply this year!

Daffodils go by many names including jonquil, narcissus, daffadowndilly and the Lent Lily.

These cheerful flowering plants belong in the genus *Narcissus* in the family Amaryllidaceae. Although there is no evidence to support the naming of the narcissus, the most common version comes from Greek and Roman legend, in which Narcissus falls in love with his reflection in the water and is turned into a daffodil. This is apt as daffodils are likely to be found nodding alongside streams. It is the March flower and the national symbol of Wales (along with the leek). While daffodils are generally associated with springtime and rebirth, they have many other uplifting meanings across cultures including creativity, inspiration, vitality, awareness and inner reflection, memory and forgiveness.

Please make use of the “Guide Questions, Comments or Suggestions sheet in the Binder. Your feedback and contributions are most welcome and much appreciated for the “Weekly Update”. Of particular value are comments made by visitors or things that you notice in the garden that would be of interest to guides and/or visitors. We will try to answer, acknowledge, summarize and get back to you within the week via the next Weekly Update. You may send comments, etc. to pkbuchanan@shaw.ca. Please note that the “WU” now has a link on the Erica’s Notebook Website at <http://www.ericanotebook.com>. Many thanks to Marilyn G., the webmistress extraordinaire, for her work on this undertaking.

**“I had always planned to make a large painting of the
early spring when the first leaves are at the bottom of
the trees and they seem to float in space in a wonderful
way. But the arrival of spring can’t be done in one painting.”
David Hockney, British painter**

HAVE A GREAT DAY!!