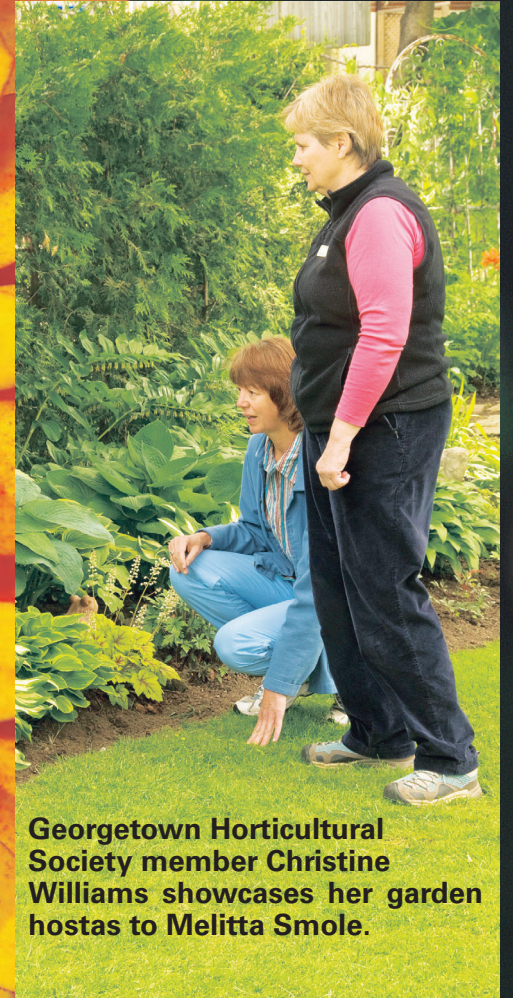


Georgetown Horticultural Society celebrates

90

years of blooming good stuff



Georgetown Horticultural Society member Christine Williams showcases her garden hostas to Melitta Smole.

Story and photos by Kerry Jarvis

How does one celebrate a 90th anniversary? If you're the Georgetown Horticultural Society (GHS) you celebrate it by doing what you enjoy the most: planting flowers, shrubs and trees.

The society members love to garden and their hands, shovels, trowels and sweat have graced many parts of Georgetown, including: the Civic Centre Garden, the Continuing Care Complex at the Georgetown Hospital, Greenwood Cemetery, Allotment Gardens at Dominion Gardens and the Mary Street Parkette. All of these gardens are the Society's way of giving back to the community and making Georgetown a beautiful place to live and visit.

Beautifying the town is exactly why the Georgetown Horticultural Society started in the spring of 1920. With a town population of more than 2,000, the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce recruited some 128 members who anteed up the \$1 membership fee. For their fee, members received seeds, shrubs and bulbs valued from 75 cents to \$1.

Fast forward 90 years and we see Georgetown's population has grown to more than 35,000. The 130 Society members pay an annual fee of \$10, which interestingly, has kept pace with inflation. For this low fee, members can attend monthly meetings with expert and knowledgeable speakers, participate in floral competitions and the annual photography competition.

In addition, the Society puts on an annual garden tour in the spring where the community can visit various local gardens— both rural and suburban—

receive discounts to various floral workshops, attend socials and dinners, and use the Society's corporate membership for tickets to the Royal Botanical Gardens.

The early years of the Society reads like a who's who in Georgetown. Society historian, Sandra Williamson was surprised how well connected the executive of the Georgetown Horticultural Society was.

"The executive were the shakers and movers in town. They were businessmen, mayors, reeves, bank managers, and pulp and paper magnates. Keeping Georgetown beautiful would attract new businesses and this would attract new people to make Georgetown home," says Williamson.

Contrary to popular perceptions, the GHS was run by men, and not by a group of teatotaling women. In fact, the first woman to become presi-



Halton Hills Councillor Jane Fogal (left) and GHS member Lil Taggart unveil the new Mary Street Parkette sign after members refurbished the park earlier this year.



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