

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 2021 REPORTS

### PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

Who would have thought when we held the North Shore Community Garden Society's (NSCGS) AGM in February 2020 that we would soon be social distancing from our family, friends and neighbours for the rest of the year and into 2021? Or maybe we should have known since we had the crazy mix-up with the schools in Blueridge. I well remember standing in the dark and cold outside Blueridge School with Board member Joel Weiss directing everyone down to Seymour Heights School for our AGM. In hindsight (which they say is 20/20), it was perhaps an omen of things to come.

With the pandemic newly arrived, the Board gave our members additional time to get their gardens started within the usual time frame. With social distancing and lots of hand washing and sanitizer, we were able to garden in earnest in June. Work parties have been fewer this year as we learned how to handle the pandemic restrictions, and we had to put our gravel replacement program on hold at Lillooet Park and Lynn Valley Lions Community Gardens.

Like many organizations this past year, the NSCGS Board has been meeting virtually each month, and we have had to plan to meet virtually for our AGM as well. This will likely be a challenge for many of our members who lack the technology and know-how to attend the meeting. It will also be a challenge for our Board members who are facing up to the challenge of maintaining our aging gardens.

In February 2019, recognizing this upcoming challenge, our members passed a motion to approve an increase in plot garden fees of 10¢ per square foot for the 2019 and 2021 gardening years. The motion was to be reviewed at the AGM in 2023. At that time, we also reported to our members that we had commissioned a report to look into the costs of maintaining the gardens over the next 5 to 7 years. After studying the report in 2020, the Board is still considering how best to address the upcoming expected large costs of maintaining our aging gardens.

Since its inception in 2009 with the building of Queen Mary Community Garden, the NSCGS has grown to three gardens each in the City and District. In 2021, through the dedication and hard work of Board member Sylvia Cromack and with support from the United Way, Wall Financial, and the Lynn Valley Lions Club, we will be welcoming a new garden (and new gardeners and garden coordinators) in the Moodyville neighbourhood of the City of North Vancouver.

Another project that the NSCGS Board took on this year was reviewing and adopting a revised Board and Garden Coordinators Handbook and Gardeners' Guidelines. Many thanks to Board member Lori Munro for her insights and editing work on improving these documents.

I want to acknowledge the City and District of North Vancouver because without their support, there would be no community gardens. Thank you for making land available for the gardens and being such good landlords. In particular, a huge round of applause goes out to our champions Chandra Lesmeister at the City, and Cristina Rucci at the District for their support for many years. Unfortunately, Cristina moved on to another job with the City of Coquitlam in September so we are awaiting a new liaison assignment in the District.

Since volunteering to serve as President in November of 2015, I have had the pleasure of working with many dedicated Board members and community Garden Coordinators. The latter do the hard work of keeping the gardens functioning in order for gardeners to enjoy the bounty of their plots and for the pleasure of the community at large. Thank you so much for your tireless service to our gardens and to your community.

A few of our Board members have decided not to return in 2021: Sharon Davis, who served as Treasurer for many years; Shannon Miller, who served as Secretary for the past two years; and Molly Horton, who was our Garden Coordinator Liaison for two years. Thank you for your service to our community gardens - we wish you well in your next projects.

I will also be stepping away from the Board this year after fulfilling the second year of the former President's term. It has been a pleasure getting to know and working with so many of you over the past five years. I know the year to come will continue to offer challenges for people personally and for the Society, but I am sure the new Board looks forward to meeting them head-on with you.

Finally, don't forget to visit our website at [nscgardens.ca](http://nscgardens.ca) and follow us on Facebook ([facebook.com/nscgardens](https://facebook.com/nscgardens)) and Instagram ([instagram.com/nscgardens](https://instagram.com/nscgardens)).

With best wishes for a great growing season ahead,



Susan Brennan  
President  
North Shore Community Garden Society

## NORTH VANCOUVER CITY HALL COMMUNITY GARDEN ANNUAL REPORT

Our eighth year of gardening at City Hall was another bountiful year, despite the pandemic. We turned over seven plots to new gardeners this year and several seasoned gardeners moved to different plots within the garden. The Annual General Meeting held February 11, 2020 was attended by nine of our gardeners.

Due to COVID-19 concerns, we did not host any formal work parties or orientations for new gardeners as we typically have done in past years. However, our gardeners were receptive to receiving instructions via email about the compost system, garden maintenance tasks, and our rotating compost schedule. Many gardeners attended virtual workshops which were held by various garden organizations throughout the year. We plan to host a virtual year-end get together to discuss successes and challenges in the garden this year, as well as share information our gardeners learned during the many workshops they attended.

As we typically do, we sent out reminders to our gardeners every two weeks regarding the rotating compost schedule. As the schedule has two garden plots which share a two-week period, we asked gardeners to choose one of the two weeks to minimize interactions and reduce risks of COVID-19 over the shared two-week period. This allowed our gardeners to stay safe while keeping our worms and compost happy and in good shape.



Our gardeners have done a good job keeping our very small shed tidy. We have a few tools which will need some maintenance and sharpening for next season but otherwise our equipment is in good shape. We also did some additional temporary repairs on some of our plots throughout the year in areas where the wood is starting to deteriorate. These spots will require further attention in 2021 as some plots are starting to show their age. We have also compiled a list of other plots in the garden which are starting to show signs of rot which will need attention in the not-too-distant future.

This year, our gardeners unfortunately experienced an increase in the amount of theft from our plots. We suspect this may be due to more people in the city staying home this summer due to COVID-19 and walking through our garden, and possibly the public free-pick garden plots on Lonsdale which look similar to our plots. Despite the signs we installed last year by the City (e.g., please look but don't pick), theft during the summer months was regular. We worked with the City to have several new signs installed around the garden on the south-facing sides of each row to discourage further theft. As the signs were installed at the end of the summer season, it is hard to say if they have/will be effective. We will continue to monitor the situation next season.



Our average logged volunteer time (including AGM and compost) remained around 7 hours per gardener this year, on par with previous years, which is satisfactory given the COVID-19 restrictions. We had several very keen gardeners who attended virtual workshops, helped with weeding and leaf collection and other tasks, while several gardeners continue to struggle to accrue hours. To help our gardeners achieve their volunteer hours, we have continued to inform folks about workshops and other opportunities which help to keep our garden in top shape, as well as sending several reminders throughout the year to inform gardeners of where they stand with their hours.

We are looking forward to another great season of community gardening in 2021 and hope we will be able to interact with our gardeners more in the new year.

Respectfully submitted,



Sheila Cano & Kay Jollymore  
Garden Coordinators  
North Vancouver City Hall Community Garden

## QUEEN MARY COMMUNITY GARDEN ANNUAL REPORT

Queen Mary Community Garden marked its 10-year anniversary this year! We may well be described as a mature community garden by Canadian standards. Our location at a busy crossroads is part of the City's Green Necklace, a fantastic example of an urban green space. As such, there is a steady flow of people of all ages and lifestyles passing by our gardens every day of the year. Our gardeners can feel a sense of pride as passers-by take note of the beauty and abundance.

Our gardeners include parents from the school, members of the surrounding community, and EGP partners. Their ongoing commitment is commendable. There was a deep feeling of relief when the announcement in spring indicated that community gardens fall under essential services, and that growing food and getting outdoor exercise in this way could continue, albeit with the expected social distancing in place.

Work party planning required more detailed advance communication, with the COVID-19 restrictions on public activity putting a limit on the numbers at a given event. While there are always some gardeners who put in more than the expected number of hours and are always keen to attend the work parties, we focused additional effort on connecting with those with lower numbers of hours to get the tasks accomplished. We held four work parties during the summer and early fall. Other tasks, such as painting handles of the new compost bins and caretaking the perimeter, were done on one's own time.

The compost captain system continued with no serious concerns reported. The aerators are being replaced as the older ones break. The newer models, while more expensive, appear to be more durable.

Here are some photos of our garden from this year. The Edible Garden Project (EGP) volunteers (masked garden caretakers) are holding one of their many prize broccoli! And their fennel bulbs! The "Happy Gardening" Chestnut Greeting was a surprise created by Anonymous. Amazing!





Respectfully submitted,



Linda, Emily and Anthony  
Your Garden Coordinators  
Queen Mary Community Garden

## LILLOOET PARK COMMUNITY GARDEN ANNUAL REPORT

COVID-19 definitely made for a different year this year, as we were not able to get together socially in the garden like we have enjoyed in the past. We did have a couple of work parties at a distance, but most of the work people did on their own.

We did have a surprise early in the year: a skunk moved into our shed in the spring. We had some hay left over from the previous fall that the skunk used to make a bed in. Fortunately, once the hay was removed, the skunk moved along and an exterminator was not required.

The District did some major pruning on the east side of our garden. This green border typically acts as a fence and barrier from the road for our garden. Sylvia Cromack was able to get some free plants to help fill in the side that was pruned, and it has grown in quite nicely. At this point, you would almost not know it was cut back so drastically at the start of the year!

The rats were not as much of an issue this year, but thanks to the Board we received a new trap that uses CO2, which could have also helped. Thankfully, there were very few reports from gardeners of destruction or loss due to rats this year.

Most of our plots flourished this year, likely due to COVID-19. Gardeners were quite active not only with their plots, but keen to help with the border, the herb garden, and with maintaining the shed and the like. The garden looked lovely this year and there were no complaints or issues.

Respectfully submitted,



Janice and Caroline  
Garden Coordinators  
Lillooet Park Community Garden

## CHARROS COMMUNITY GARDEN ANNUAL REPORT

This season was our eighth growing season at the Charros Community Garden. We welcomed 12 new gardeners, including Dela who volunteered to take one of the Coordinator positions. Our average waiting time was over three years; we still have 80 gardeners on the waiting list and, given the uncertainty of growing seasons beyond 2021, we have stopped adding people to the waiting list and have instead directed them to contact other community gardens. The new members that were added this season were a mix of people who were seasoned gardeners and people who have never gardened before, and it was exciting to hear our community sharing information and tips with each other. Experienced gardeners guided the inexperienced, creating a rich and enjoyable community for all, at a time when it was very much needed.

It was both of our first seasons as Community Garden Coordinators and we were on our own to figure out some of the challenges. It has been a bit of a learning curve, but we made it and are excited to take everything we learn and apply it to the coming season. Due to restrictions in the spring, we were unable to have a spring kick-off work bee, and we extended the deadline for gardeners to have started work in their plots until June first. Most plots were well on their way by this point and those that weren't responded quickly to our requests. We had a great early growing season where the cool weather and rain meant the leafy greens and peas flourished early and were abundant. The great weather continued throughout the summer, although I think we can all agree that our tomatoes would have liked a little more sun in the later months.

Despite the early season restrictions, we were able to commence work bees in June and managed to hold a total of eight over the season. We had these on a combination of weekday evenings and weekend dates to accommodate various schedules and to encourage smaller groups. While turnout was smaller than years past, we hope that this was as a result of the pandemic and that we will see larger groups (if allowed) in the coming season. We have a good core group that seemed to come to almost every work bee and there were some individuals we did not see at all. We will encourage everyone to get more involved in the group work bees next season and will reach out to our gardeners to see if there is more we can do to increase participation in these events.





COVID-19 certainly made this year a little different than past seasons and we took a number of measures to help everyone feel safer while still being able to enjoy their plots. These measures included having people track their volunteer hours on their own rather than the shared binder, encouraging people to bring and use their own tools rather than the shared tools in the shed, keeping safe distance from other gardeners, sanitizing hands before and after visiting the garden, and not lingering too long after work on individual plots was complete. We were concerned in the beginning of the season that we may have to schedule times for people to come to the garden but our community was respectful and responsive and this was not required.

For the third year in a row, we continued the shared veggie garden outside the fence. This was well received by both our gardeners as well as other members of the community who were thrilled to be able to share in the bounty and we received many comments and suggestions for things that people would like to see grown in this area which we'll keep in mind when planning next season. Garden theft, although still an issue, seemed to be down from the past two years. With more people staying local over the summer, we did notice an increase in the number of neighbourhood visitors walking through and enjoying and admiring the garden.

The gravel project that was completed in 2019 made a big difference to the amount of weeding that needed to be done along the common paths, although it did not eliminate the need completely. With smaller work bees and relying on our gardeners to tackle these tasks on their own meant that some areas were neglected. Thankfully, some of our dedicated community members worked hard to clean these up as part of the fall / winter clean up and we hope that next year we will be able to stay on top of these areas from the start of the season.



We receive many requests for more information about what will happen to our garden space after this growing season and we hope we will be able to provide our gardeners with some good news this year – either that we will have additional time in our current location or that a new location has been secured.

We look forward to the year ahead that will hopefully allow us to come together in person more than this past season. Thank you all for making this garden flourish. Looking forward to a new and exciting garden season for 2021.

Respectfully submitted,



Dela Kavooosi & Lori Kilback  
Garden Coordinators  
Charros Community Garden

## LYNN VALLEY LIONS COMMUNITY GARDEN ANNUAL REPORT

2020 was a good year in the garden despite a slow start due to the pandemic. We welcomed seven new gardeners this year but continue to have a long waitlist of more than 44 people. The increase in condo developments in Lynn Valley has added to garden demand, with 25 people being added to the waitlist this year. On average, individuals wait two years before they receive a plot, although we suspect the wait will be longer now.



Crocosmia in the border

We hosted three work parties during the year, conducted safely according to pandemic guidelines. We have one volunteer who continued to work hard on rehabilitating our perimeter garden. It now has a greater variety of flowering perennials which provide a colourful background to the garden and the daycares nearby.



Sheila Balzer



Gillian Sexsmith and family

We are happy to report minimal problems with vandalism and pests this year.

Thanks to all who contributed to making the community garden a wonderful place to grow food and enjoy nature!

Respectfully submitted,



Fiona Lewis & Steve Kors  
Garden Coordinators  
Lynn Valley Lions Community Garden

## GARIBALDI PARK COMMUNITY GARDEN ANNUAL REPORT

Despite the challenges faced in 2020, Garibaldi Park Community Garden seemed to flourish. Most plots were well-utilized this year, with gardeners enjoying bumper crops, even though the gardening season seemed a little shorter than last year given the early frost in the fall.

Work parties were well attended, with gardeners very good about observing distancing and sanitizing in the garden. The last work party this year showed how different this fall season was from last year. Last year we collected all the leaves we needed from the trees in the park at the final work party. This year - at the same time of the month - hardly any leaves had fallen.

Gardeners stepped in with their own tools to touch up paint on the shed, fix signs and - a big task! - fix some of the plot surrounds. One of the coordinators also fixed a compost bin. Our compost collection was so abundant this year that the bins were all almost full by the last work party.

The coordinators reduced volunteer hour requirements a bit this year since we cancelled the first work party due to COVID-19. And our gravel is still helping to keep weeds at bay so there is sometimes an embarrassing lack of tasks available at work parties.

Our community school outreach event (i.e. visit by a local school) was not possible this year due to COVID-19.





Some of our gardeners have been at the garden since its inception, and it's a joy to see the more experienced gardeners share their knowledge with those that need it. It is also wonderful to have new young gardeners with young families join the garden and have the opportunity to teach children about growing food and beautiful flowers.

Respectfully submitted,



Sue, Gary and Jana  
Garden Coordinators

**TREASURER’S REPORT: HIGHLIGHTS**

- As at December 31, 2020, the North Shore Community Garden Society has \$34,932.95 in our bank account.
- Garden fees are due on March 1, 2021. Please give your payments to your Garden Coordinators.
  - Cheques can be post dated and made out to NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY GARDEN SOCIETY.
  - Payments can now be made by online deposit/e-transfer. Please note your Garden name and plot number on the transfer.
  - Cheques will be deposited after April 1, 2021. Please make sure you have funds in your account at that time to cover your cheque amount.
- Anticipating that all garden plots will be rented, our funds should increase by approximately \$6,400.

It's been my pleasure to serve as your Treasurer this year.

Sharon Davis

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2020**

<i><b>OPENING BALANCE IN FUND:</b></i>		
	<b>QUEEN MARY GARDENS</b>	<b>6,281.84</b>
	<b>LILLOOET GARDENS</b>	<b>3,993.14</b>
	<b>CHARROS GARDENS</b>	<b>6,941.14</b>
	<b>NORTH VAN CITY GARDEN</b>	<b>243.33</b>
	<b>LYNN VALLEY</b>	<b>9,614.31</b>
	<b>GARIBALDI</b>	<b><u>3,151.60</u></b>
		<b>30,225.36</b>
<i><b>FUNDS RECEIVED:</b></i>		

**NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY GARDEN SOCIETY**

<b>PLOT RENTALS/GRANTS &amp; MISCELLANEOUS DEPOSITS</b>	
<b>QUEEN MARY GARDENS</b>	<b>4,324.08</b>
<b>LILLOOET GARDENS</b>	<b>1,535.95</b>
<b>CHARROS GARDENS</b>	<b>1,668.97</b>
<b>NORTH VAN CITY GARDEN</b>	<b>423.89</b>
<b>LYNN VALLEY</b>	<b>1,429.53</b>
<b>GARIBALDI</b>	<b>1,456.14</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS RECEIVED</b>	<b>10,838.56</b>
<b><i>EXPENDITURES:</i></b>	
<b>QUEEN MARY GARDENS</b>	<b>741.46</b>
<b>LILLOOET GARDENS</b>	<b>273.23</b>
<b>CHARROS GARDENS</b>	<b>38.01</b>
<b>NORTH VAN CITY GARDEN</b>	<b>97.69</b>
<b>LYNN VALLEY</b>	<b>4,805.67</b>
<b>GARIBALDI</b>	<b>174.91</b>
	<b>6,130.97</b>
<b><i>CLOSING FUNDS:</i></b>	
<b>QUEEN MARY GARDENS</b>	<b>9,864.46</b>
<b>LILLOOET GARDENS</b>	<b>5,255.86</b>
<b>CHARROS GARDENS</b>	<b>8,572.10</b>
<b>NORTH VAN CITY GARDEN</b>	<b>569.53</b>
<b>LYNN VALLEY</b>	<b>6,238.17</b>
<b>GARIBALDI</b>	<b>4,432.83</b>
	<b>34,932.95</b>
	<b>34,932.95</b>



**NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY GARDEN SOCIETY**

<b><i>BALANCE SHEET AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2020</i></b>	
<b><i>ASSETS</i></b>	
VANCITY BANK A/C	<b>19,989.33</b>
VANCITY MEMBERSHIP SHARES	<b>6.06</b>
VANCITY TERM DEPOSIT - ANNUAL TERM	<b>4,727.56</b>
VANCITY TERM DEPOSIT - 3 YEAR TERM	<b>10,210.00</b>
	<b>34,932.95</b>
<b><i>EQUITY</i></b>	
GARDEN MEMBERS EQUITY	<b>34,932.95</b>
	<b>34,932.95</b>

**THANK YOU TO OUR VALUED PARTNERS**

