

JUNE 2012

SITELINES

Landscape Architecture in British Columbia



INTERSECTIONS

Industry is not Boxed In | The Trouble with Periwinkle | Setting the Standard for Trees | Certification Programs | The “Not-Yet” Ban of Cosmetic Use of Pesticides | Grower’s Notebook | Architects of Heritage | Book Review



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The purpose of Sitelines is to provide an open forum for the exchange of ideas and information pertaining to the profession of landscape architecture. Individual opinions expressed are those of the writers and not necessarily of those of the BCSLA.

The BCSLA is very pleased to welcome the British Columbia Landscape & Nursery Association (BCLNA) as the Guest Co-Editor for this issue of SITELINES. The articles included in this issue are written by authors representing the landscaping and nursery profession whom landscape architects work so closely with. We hope that the content of this issue will generate a healthy dialogue that will provide landscape architects an opportunity to better understand how allied professionals address challenges and find solutions.



By Lesley Tannen, B.S.C. (AG), MBA, CLP, BCLNA Executive Director

INTERSECTIONS

In plants, green chlorophyll is the intersection of the organic and inorganic world. In the world of paint, green is a combination of blue and yellow. According to colour theorists green is a challenge. There are more shades and tints of green than other colours. So, perhaps we should not be surprised that the “green” industry is one of collaborations and intersections.

The articles in this issue of SITELINES provide a glimpse into the interesting and varied issues that people who work in and around landscapes deal with, from a different and collegial perspective. The writing really was a group effort. Thanks to Brian Minter, Hedy Dyck, and David Adkins for their contributions. Special thanks to BCSLA for this opportunity. Jessica Tan and Tara Culham have my heart-felt gratitude for their support and patience.

Brian Minter is well-placed to comment on the Boxwood issue as Minter Gardens uses Boxwood in its foundation plantings. Brian’s article about alternatives for Boxwood exemplifies the need to respond in a considered and timely manner when confronted by problems not of our own making. Ignoring the problem might cause a small, localized issue to explode into a province or country-wide challenge.

This leads naturally to Hedy Dyck’s notes about invasive plants in “The Trouble with Periwinkle”. Hedy has decades of experience in the horticulture industry, spanning the supply of landscape and growing products to retail, professional, wholesale businesses, as well having a small nursery operation. Perhaps her greatest contribution to the industry continues to be bringing all this experience to bear in managing issues that affect BCLNA members, especially growers. Hedy was instrumental in assisting growers in addressing the many issues and compensation resulting from the Sudden Oak Death outbreak.

David Adkins is known to some of you as the BCLNA staff lead with the joint BCSLA – BCLNA steering committee revising the BC Landscape Standard. Discussion with municipal staff pointed to some serious problems with tree selection and planting practices provided ▶



Top: After, courtesy of Landscape 2000. Bottom: Nursery, courtesy of BCLNA. Drawing: Piercy, courtesy of Rob van Zanten, Pan American Nursery Products.

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the motivation for David's piece, "Setting the Standard for Trees".

BCLNA is very supportive of increasing professional practices within the landscape industry. We often are asked to describe what we mean by "Certification", and so we offer "Certification Programs: Raising the Bar in the Ornamental Landscape Industry".

Not many issues cause more heated discussions than pesticides. There are as many points of view in the landscape industry as there is in the general public. As a scientist stated during his presentation to the Special Committee on Cosmetic Use of Pesticides, "At least acknowledge that when you [the BC government] make this decision, it will be political". After you read, "The 'Not-Yet' Ban of Cosmetic Use of Pesticides in BC", we encourage you to review the recommendations for yourself.

"From the Grower's Notebook" offers some thoughts and suggestions that will help you meet the twin goals of having happy clients and professional satisfaction.

"Architects of Heritage", is a personal note from me to you. On a daily basis I experience inspiration, respite, and joy when I walk through or pass by landscapes that have been designed, installed, and maintained with care and thoughtfulness. May our descendants look back at the heritage you create through your work with respect and pride. **sl**

INDUSTRY IS NOT BOXED IN – Alternatives to Boxwood

By Brian Minter

Today we face many business challenges, perhaps more than ever before, from failing economies, politics, fast changing trends, supply-demand cycles, and more recently a myriad of serious pest and disease problems. As if *Phytophthora ramorum* was not enough, we now face boxwood blight (*Cylindrocladium buxicola*) in BC.

The resilience of our industry should never be taken for granted. We work well together within our own associations and with relevant government agencies to identify the nature of the problem and look for the most well thought out solutions. We are also open and transparent, creating an awareness of the issues and establishing long term credibility and trust. The current challenge is something Europeans have been living with for years, and yet they still grow millions of boxwood each year. So, our situation in BC does not mean the end of boxwood; it means simply that there is a new challenge to growing and selling them. Eventually either more resistant varieties will be developed or



Images courtesy of Brian Minter. Boxwood greenspire.

an effective control will evolve. In the short term, however, we have to be transparent and protect the end consumer as they will always be our future. We cannot put them at risk.

The most immediate solution is to provide consumers with effective boxwood alternatives and there are many because of the versatility of this plant. From compact mound forms and slender columns to hedging walls and

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Boxwood moncliff.



Boxwood monler.

large ovals, boxwoods are used for many uniquely different purposes.

The plant family most closely aligned with boxwood is the large family of Japanese holly. Originating from Japan, Korea, and Russia, it looks more like boxwood than holly. Ranging in hardiness from zone 4-6, they represent a very large family. The most popular genus *Ilex crenata* is I.c. 'Convexa'. It has a wonderful sheen on its convex leaves and will vary in size from 2-3 metres tall and wide in both sunny or partial shade. It's ideal for hedging to single planting where it could be pruned into any shape.

Other *Ilex crenatas* to look at are: I.c. 'Beehive' (1.2 x 1.5 metres); 'Bennett's Compact' (1 x 1.2 metres); 'Chesapeake' (2 x 1.5 metres); and I.c. 'Compacta' (2 x 2 metres). Varying from zones 5-7, all need well drained soils and will tolerate some partial shade. All can be pruned as a specimen or used as hedges. I.c. 'Helleri' is one of the most compact that needs no pruning and eventually will reach only 1 metre tall and 1.2 metres wide, making it a great low maintenance hedge.

Columnar boxwoods have become quite popular recently, and *Ilex crenata* 'Sky Pencil' is one of the closest replacements. Reaching up to 2-3 metres tall and growing only .75-1 metres wide, it's a great low or screening evergreen that is ideal as a specimen or hedge. Hardy to zone 5, it prefers sun and is quite at home in containers.

Although hardy to only zone 6, *Euonymus japonicus* 'Green Spire' is an unsung hero for a columnar container, for a specimen or a medium to large hedge. Growing only 1-1.5 metres wide but 2-3 metres tall, it's a deep rich green and require minimal care.

Speaking of euonymus, the "box leaf" varieties, like E.j. 'Microphyllus', are ideal replacements for *Buxus* 'Suffruticosa'. Growing only 0.3-0.4 metres tall and wide, it is a very slow grower that tolerates poor soil and extreme heat. The variegated form, E.j. 'Microphyllus Variegatus' (white and green) and E.j. var. *Microphyllus* 'Moncliff' (gold and green) are more colourful alternatives. All are rated zone 6, but with some leeway to zone 5.

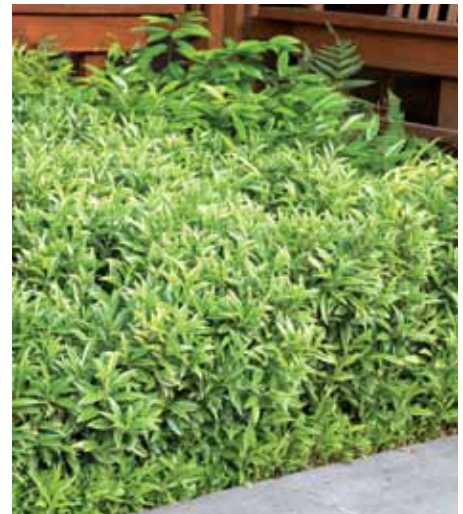
Boxwood is very shade tolerant. Perhaps one of the most underused evergreen hedging plants is *Sarcococca hookerana humilis* (Himilayan

Sarcococca) (zone 5). This little beauty has intense perfume in January and February. It grows only 0.5 metres tall and 1 metre wide and with a little pruning it can be kept very compact for a beautiful year round appearance. The introduction of *sarcococca* 'Fragrant Mountain' and 'Fragrant Valley' has added another dimension to this wonderful plant.

After 30 years of enjoying our Irish yew hedge around our rose garden, I'm really impressed with the extreme weather and pruning tolerance of *Taxus baccata* 'Fastigiata'. *Taxus x Media* 'H.M Eddie' is one of the seedless varieties that remains narrow (1 metre) and can be kept lower more easily for a rich green boxwood alternative. There are other varieties that have great potential for lower and medium hedging like the more compact spreading varieties. It's interesting that places like Long Island, New York, use taxus almost exclusively for hedging, specimen plants, and containers. Their hardiness and weather tolerance over the years make them very versatile.

Another overlooked gem for low to medium hedging is a unique compact hemlock, *Tsuga Canadensis* 'Monler'. It's an outstanding choice for a very low maintenance hedge, specimen, or screen. This zone 4 jewel grows in a very compact form (0.75-1 metres wide and 2 metres tall) and prefers sun or partial shade.

I realize we have a problem with *P. ramorum*



Boxwood *sarcococca*.

in Japanese azaleas, particularly in wet soils, but when I used to take tours to Japan, the one thing that sticks in my mind is the massive hedges of Japanese azaleas. The hardier Kurume hybrids A. 'Hino Crimson' and 'Hino White' make wonderful hedging plants that look great year round, especially during their blooming period.

Business life is always going to be fraught with challenges, but the resilience of our industry continues to amaze me. The risk management scenario of boxwood is now being evaluated. For the near future, we will need to provide different plants that can fill a similar role. These are just a few of the alternatives that we can offer to our customers. **SL**

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The Trouble with Periwinkle

By Hedy Dyck, BCLNA Grow Issues Manager



Image: Periwinkle, photos.com. Courtesy of Gravity Inc.

“A very popular evergreen groundcover... that withstands moderate foot traffic... watch it doesn’t escape from the garden as it can become an invasive pest in the wild”¹.

And that is one reason why you or your clients won’t find this plant at progressive independent retail garden centres, like GardenWorks.

Intellectually, informed professionals along the value chain in the landscape industry understand that some species of plants may have negative and expensive effects in landscapes across BC. But there are complications. What is invasive in Victoria and Surrey is not a problem in Prince George. English Ivy chokes many trees and plantings in southern BC, but does not usually survive the cold winters north of Highway 16.

The BC Landscape & Nursery Association has collaborated with the Invasive Species Council of BC (ISCBC), formerly the Invasive Plant Council of BC, to inform and educate its members about the issues around the use of invasive plants, as well as the complexities of the issue, such as when nursery growers are producing plants that are shipped across Canada.

When landscapers and retailers provide

advice to clients and customers for “garden variety” growing environments, there is more awareness of which plants are invasive and what the good alternatives are. And old European standards are not always the answer.

Also, they are recommending changes to regular planting schemes to minimize the use of invasive varieties. Not ivy – that ends up creeping high into stately cedars and Douglas firs. Not standard periwinkle used as groundcover. In addition to the issues of plant decline, invasives also cause structural and foundational problems in adjacent buildings, clogging downspouts and gutters and infiltrating the building envelope as they pull their way up the sides of buildings.

There are resources to assist with appropriate plant selection including on-line and print versions.

- *Grow Me Instead* – a full colour booklet featuring great alternative plants to “popular” invasive varieties, available online at [\[cbc/images/stories/documents/otherpublications/GMI_2011_web.pdf\]\(http://cbc/images/stories/documents/otherpublications/GMI_2011_web.pdf\).](http://www.bcinvasiveplants.com/is-</div><div data-bbox=)

A print version is also available via the ISCBC’s website at www.bcinvasiveplants.com.

- “SnapShot” version of the *Grow Me Instead* booklet, in a full-colour pamphlet to download and print to provide to clients who request invasive plants available at www.bcinvasives.ca/images/stories/documents/otherpublications/GMI%20Snapshot%20Brochure%20Ver2_Final%20Mar28_web.pdf.
- Online training session for industry explaining the invasive plant issues, with links to resources available at bclna.com/invasive-plant-training-resources.

Invasive plants are just one piece of the invasive species issue, which covers pests, diseases, weeds, as well as plants.

The Noxious Weeds Act of BC specifically covers plants that are known to reduce crop quality and yield as well as to affect the health of animals. The legislation that covers this aspect of invasive plants is clearly explained through the BC Ministry of Agriculture’s website at www.agf.gov.bc.ca/cropprot/weedguid/weedguid.htm.

On an international level, the North American Plant Protection Organization is a collaboration between Canada, the US, and Mexico to review invasive pest issues and make determinations, “to protect agricultural, forest and other plant resources against regulated pests”². Decision makers include regulatory agencies such as the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, as well as the US Department of Agriculture. Industry also has a seat at the table; in Canada, the industry is represented through the Canadian Nursery & Landscape Association. The mandate to protect North America now also includes an assessment for new plants about the invasiveness of the plant as well as potential pest problems. **SL**

1. Cullen, Mark. *The Canadian Garden Primer*. Firefly Studios, Unionville Ontario. 2008 Pg 137.
2. NAPO, Guidelines to Understanding NAPPO. www.nappo.org/en/data/files/download/PDF/Introduction%20to%20NAPPO-April%202011-e.pdf.



SETTING THE STANDARD

FOR TREES

Tree Care or Tree Crisis?

Tree pruning inspections. All images courtesy of Steve Whitton, City of Surrey.

By David Adkins, BCLNA
Landscape Issues Manager

The Now Situation

After recent discussions about tree planting and pruning with four BC municipalities (Vancouver, Surrey, North Vancouver, and Abbotsford), it is apparent that there are serious problems with trees in our streets, commercial centres, and open spaces. Surrey has experienced a deluge of poor practice on the part of operatives and owners resulting in butchered trees. Their response is a marketing campaign, “Don’t go out on a Limb”. The campaign reminds readers of the City By-Law 5835 which prohibits damage to street trees including unauthorized or substandard pruning and enforcement can carry a fine of \$500 per tree; North Vancouver levies this with regard to tree planting in new housing developments. Consistent burying of the root flare-collar has resulted in city officers requiring trees to be replanted up to four times. No one desires this to happen, the tree stock always suffers and property owners incur unnecessary costs.

So what is the answer to effective tree care: approved contractor listings; mandating certified contractors; new best management practices; public campaigns; or more robust enforcement? The new BC Landscape Standard Tree Section, (2012/13) will seek to address this, but industry practices and awareness must consider the following issues:

Right Tree Right Place

Before any contract is executed, the right tree needs to be specified for the specific growing environment. Woodland-forest climax trees like oak, beech, poplar, Douglas, and London Plane trees are not as suitable as street or yard trees for new intensive housing developments. They are great for creating a sense-of-place, but need space to do so. Property owners





will not appreciate any increased maintenance costs that may be result of lack of forethought.

Use Qualified or BCLNA Certified Contractors

Include qualified service providers and endorse industry certified contractors, including landscapers and arborists, on your approved contractor list for projects. Unqualified contractors can cost you or the owner more in the long-term.

Sourcing Plant Material

Horticultural researchers estimate that 75 percent of roots may be lost when digging field grown stock. BCLNA Nursery members practice a code of conduct and adhere to the BC Landscape Standard. Canadian Nursery Certification Institute certified nurseries can ensure disease resistant stock. Water stress due to the removal of a significant amount of water

absorbing roots is the primary cause of transplant failure. Options include:

- a) Bare root plants – An economic option and roots are easily inspected and damaged roots prune.
- b) Balled and burlapped trees – Allows for soil types to be matched and moisture retained, but roots are not visible for inspection.
- c) Trees delivered in containers – Ensures that 100 percent of the roots are retained, but trees can become root-bound and experience slow growth and girded roots.

Planting Preparation

- a) The most important consideration is correct planting depth. Do not plant too deep. Ensure open grown and burlaped trees are planted to the root flare-collar to avoid epicormic growth and failure. Unfold burlap to the base of the hole, or remove it, to avoid stem-root constrict-

tion and the top of the rootflare noted. Remove all plastic strings.

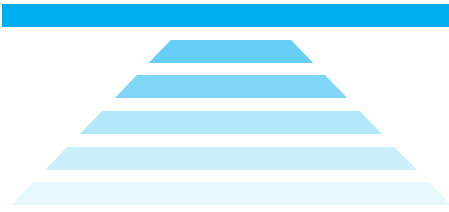
- b) A current trend in landscape design is to plant trees in continuous beds. In these cases the tree pit should not be treated in isolation. The whole bed should be prepared, and compacted soils dealt with. This helps to avoid panning and pooling and thereby creating a healthy root-zone. Good soil from excavation should be reincorporated.
- c) Newly planted trees with anchorage: Although some newly planted trees do require additional support or protection, in most cases, un-staked trees grow faster than staked ones. Prolonged staking not only reduces the taper of the trunk but can produce girding that can become an irreversible problem.

Tree Pruning

Trained contractors provide professional services. Tree consultants should be experienced. Surrey now requires contractors to adhere to the International Society of Arboriculture Best Management Practices (BMP) Tree Pruning 2008, a companion publication to ANSI A300 Part1 Standard Practices Pruning. This BMP identifies inappropriate and appropriate cleaning, thinning, canopy raising, canopy reduction, and structural pruning.

The Challenge

The municipalities are the long-term investors in maintaining green infrastructure. Setting quality standards and ongoing partnerships with the cities will enable more effective delivery of services, to required standards, and ensure healthy sustainable trees for future generations to enjoy. [SL](#)



CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS: Raising the Bar in the Ornamental Landscape Industry

By BCLNA

The BCLNA continues to work on several fronts to increase awareness of issues and assist the industry to train its employees in standards of practice developed through stakeholder input and collaboration. All of these programs are voluntary, with the cost of participation covered by the business, management, and/or staff. Costs are significant; nurseries in the Clean Plants program report additional expenses ranging from \$8,000 for small nurseries to over \$100,000 for larger nurseries. Landscape certification costs \$400 for one person for study resources and testing for a single designation, not counting the hours spent in preparation or practice.

Nursery Certification

In the nursery industry, certification is attributed to the facility, not the plants, or the people. In 2005, after the first incidents of *P. ramorum* (Sudden Oak Death) surfaced in BC, the nursery industry proactively developed its own certification program to deal with this regulated pest. The industry has persevered in implementation of this program, with the result that there are very few incidents of this pest in BC, while it continues to spread throughout the US.

In 2009, the *P. ramorum* Certification program was integrated into a larger overarching "Clean Plants" Domestic Phytosanitary Certification program. The new program is a comprehensive ISO-based systems approach to minimize the risk of importing and moving all invasive pests through nursery stock. This challenging program requires nurseries to develop an on-site program that includes Best Management Practices, monitoring, and surveillance processes as well as traceability from the source to the purchaser. While many nurseries follow the best management practices outlined in the program, "Clean Plants" certified nurseries must undergo an annual audit by an independent audit firm to ensure they meet program requirements.



Certification candidate demonstrating that it takes more than theory to get the job done. Image courtesy of BCLNA.

For the list of certified nurseries, go to www.cleanplants.ca.

Landscape Industry Certification

The Landscape Industry Certification program was developed by the industry internationally to set and maintain standards for the landscape industry. The program is internationally recognized and nationally supported across Canada. There are four designations in this program:

1. Certified Landscape Designer (CLD) is designed specifically for landscape designers.
2. Certified Landscape Manager (CLP) is tailored for landscape company owners and managers.
3. Certified Retail Horticulturist (CHT) is written for retail staff and managers.



4. Certified Landscape Technician (CLT) is designed for landscapers.

To become certified, each individual undergoes both written and practical examinations to test knowledge, technical skills, and safety practices in prescribed areas. This "professional" level of accreditation raises the standard for the landscape industry; companies with certified staff are identified by the green leaf logo. **SL**

For a list of companies with Certified staff: www.landscapebritishcolumbia.com.

THE “NOT-YET” BAN of *Cosmetic Use of Pesticides in BC* By BCLNA

As this issue of *SITELINES* goes to press, the Special Committee on Cosmetic Pesticides has just submitted its 115-page final report with 17 recommendations. While most of the work and results of the all-party committee of BC MLAs may not affect the practice of landscape architects directly, there are implications for the sustainability and maintenance of landscapes all across BC.

Since October 2011 the Special Committee heard from over 8,600 individuals and groups through emails. The 10-month review considered national regulations as well as various provincial laws. It also considered 40 different municipal bylaws already in place in BC.

The committee heard representation for scientists, regulators, industry, health, and citizen groups from across BC and Canada.

BCLNA followed the deliberations, read all the transcripts, made a presentation to the committee and answered follow-up questions. We also fielded passionate questions from our own members – on both sides of the issue: some said, “leave well-enough alone,” while others wanted us to come out publicly in favour of an outright ban. Not an enviable position for an industry association with a diverse membership.

So, beyond the 17 recommendations and their unknown future what, if anything, can we conclude? What lessons could thoughtful professional practitioners glean from the exercise?

The committee is to be commended for its thorough and diligent process. The issue is complex and numerous presentations demonstrated that, even using the same science-based evidence, two people can come to diametrically opposing conclusions.

As our knowledge increases concerning the action of chemicals on soil organisms, plants, animals, and people, public expectations evolve. The irrefutable truth of 20 years ago is not so true anymore. On the other hand, products that have gone out of favour can be re-visited when a human health issue arises.

So what does this mean for people in the industry of designing and planting landscapes?

If we begin with the premise that preventing problems is always more desirable than entering into a protracted rear-guard rescue of a client’s treasured landscape, then the process is clear. Selecting pest-resistant plants; growing them in appropriate soil, moisture, nutrient and microbial environments are the beginning, middle, and end points.

When you develop a plant list with your client, have you taken into consideration the soil profile of the site? Do you ensure that the installation crew are not using overly strong soil amendments that might promote vigorous establishment of foundation plants, but which can be toxic to the supporting micro-flora and fauna? Do you talk to your nursery grower to determine the right variety of maple for that precise circumstance? Nursery growers watch plants grow under a variety of circumstances, with in-depth background about each variety’s

shortcomings and benefits. Don’t choose a plant just by its apparent attributes.

The on-going health of plants is dependent on the health of their surrounding micro-systems. When the general contractor has prepared the site for new building foundations by stripping off all the top-soil, covering it with a tarp to keep down weeds for a year; after which the Bobcat kid pushes it around to make the hills, slopes and swales of your vision, do you have someone inspect the site before the trees are planted, to ensure the future health of your work?

Which brings us back to pesticides. Healthy soil organisms support healthy plants. Healthy plants can withstand attacks from diseases and pests and need less support from pest treatments. Careful use of pest management tools will also support healthy populations of pollinators.

Integrated pest management starts with design that responds to the needs of clients, the capacity of the site, and the choice of plants and supporting infrastructure. It is in your hands. Your client may not understand the care you undertake to ensure the underpinnings of good plant health are in place, but when their landscape flourishes, they will thank you. So will the property manager and the landscaper maintenance professional who takes on the job of sustaining the dream of you and your client. [SL](#)

From the

Grower's Notebook

By BCLNA

In 2010, a joint meeting of the BC Society of Landscape Architects and BC Landscape & Nursery Association (BCLNA) directors ushered in a new era of collaboration between the two organizations. A collaborative relationship and on-going dialogue between landscape architects and the whole landscape value-chain, including BC growers of ornamental plants is one that the BCLNA values greatly.

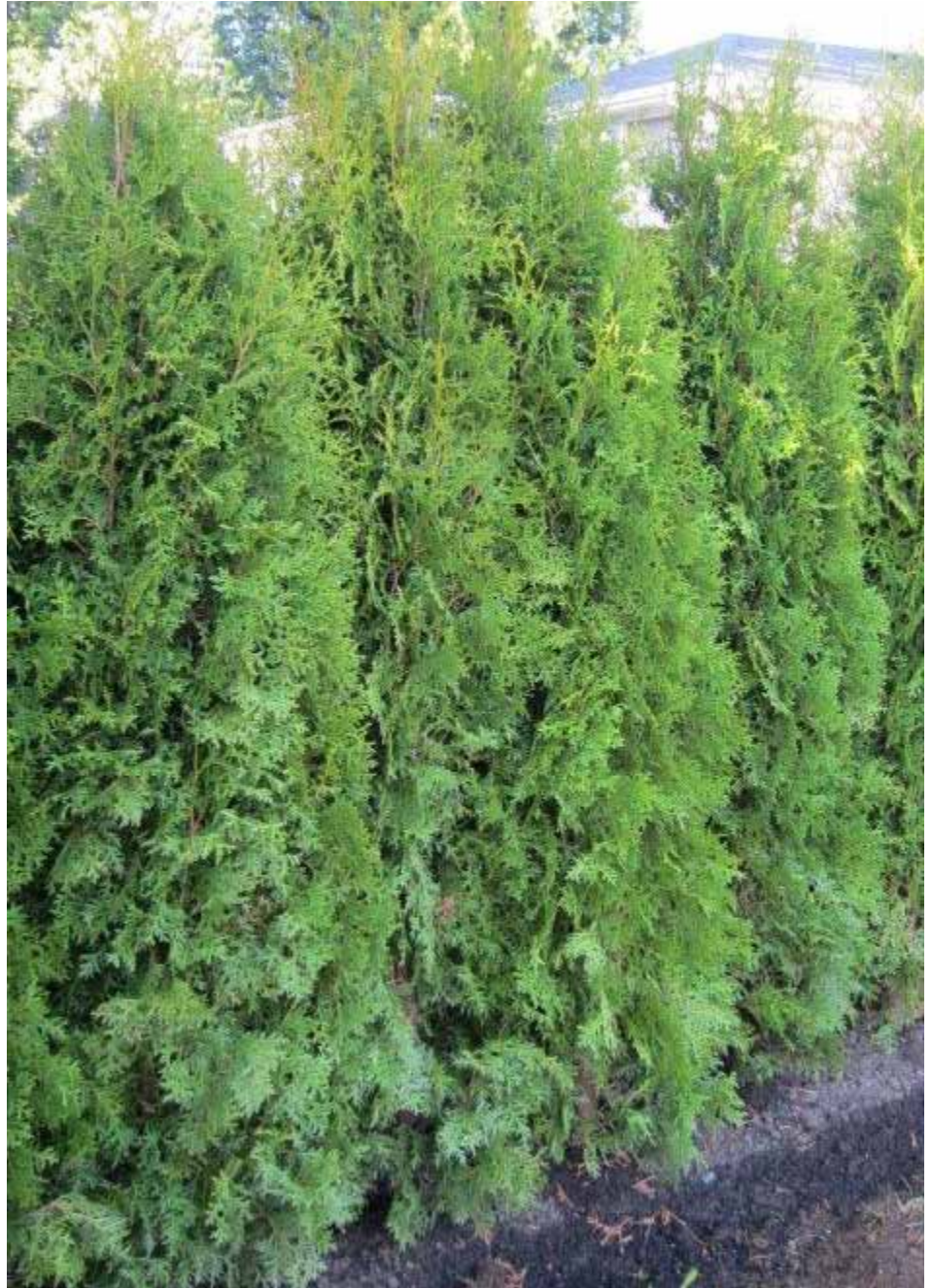
The successful installation and maintenance of landscapes can be enhanced by learning some hard-won lessons from the growers of ornamental plants. As partners in the annual half-billion dollar BC horticulture sector, we offer some thoughts from an archetypal grower of landscape plants.

Plant Availability

It is a good and common practice for landscape architects to research and source out specific plants well ahead of the eventual installation schedule. However, disappointment and frustration often ensues six months later, when finally placing an order, the LA discovers that the greatly anticipated object of a client's enthusiasm is no longer available and is happily growing in someone else's garden. Remember that plants are perishable inventory which must be turned at a regular rate. Unless you place a hold on shrubs and trees, along with a specific delivery date, a nursery may have to move stock out to a ready buyer, rather than hold out for a speculative sale.

When Plants Fail

When clients invest in professional landscape services no one should be surprised



New hedge planting on 12-inch centres. Image courtesy of BCLNA.

that a once-friendly relationship turns sour if a part of their investment does not perform or fails. There are a great number of variables in establishing and maintaining successful landscapes. Dealing with reputable and experienced ornamental nurseries

is a smart part of risk mitigation. If you source plants from more than one supplier, especially from outside of Canada, be aware that if a plant fails to thrive and is a species or variety that is prone to diseases such as Sudden Oak Death or, more recently, Box-

wood Blight, a prudent nurseryman will not allow diseased plants on their property.

Plant Selection and Suitability to Site

BC is a large, climatically diverse province. Local growers know which varieties are most suitable for specific settings; whether it is the ability to withstand wind, variable water availability, or temperature challenges associated with containers, etc. Use the knowledge that your supplier has developed based on many years of experience to help you make the best choice for the site, and whether it truly is the “perfect” plant. A discussion with a trusted grower can help you resist pressure from an insistent client for a Pantone perfect exotic flower of the month they saw while “snowbirding” at a Florida flower show. Success is measured in healthy, sustainable plantings that perform well over time. Often the same effect can be gained with substitutions that will perform better than plants originally specified.

Providing site details to the grower is essential so that a site will perform well, with high disease resistance and good plant vigour.

Too Many Plants

Initially, overplanting can create a great look for the first year or so, but many landscapes need to be rejuvenated after just a couple of years because of die-off resulting from overcrowding. Cramped quarters can force already stressed plants to compete for light, water, and space, decreasing their disease resistance and stunting their growth. The “demands” of the site should be a significant consideration in spacing in new plantings. If a client insists on close plantings, work with growers and maintenance professionals to develop an appropriate plant list and a multi-year re-location schedule.

Timing is Everything

Because your clients can buy strawberries all year long, they, and perhaps we too, get

the idea that Mother Nature can bend to our will. This is decidedly not the case with planting. There are definite times of the year where planting will be more successful than others. The key issues are moisture, moderate temperatures, and careful planting techniques. Planting when the ground is frozen, or when the summer temperature climbs to 30 degrees Celsius, limits the ability of any plant to re-establish itself, whether it comes in a container, B&B, or bare root. Excessive heat after planting, even with adequate moisture, is a recipe for failure. Plants are not hardscapes and they may not be a big piece of the over-all budget. However, they are the legacy that keeps on giving and growing. While the landscape architect and landscape contractor cannot always set planting times, they should inform the owner and construction team of these potential pitfalls and push for appropriate planting times and conditions. A healthy plantscape will also bear witness to the professionalism and knowledge of the landscape architect’s firm. **sl**

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Architects of Heritage

By Lesley Tannen, B.Sc. (Ag), MBA, CLP,
BCLNA Executive Director

Images courtesy of Lesley Tannen.
Okanagan Lake view at Penticton. >

What is it that most people remember when they take a trip “away”? What do most people put on the walls of their homes or offices? Why put windows in buildings anyway?

It’s all about the view.

Canadian artist John Hartman said, “I believe we all have a home landscape, a place from our childhood, whose light, space and scale are the benchmark for all other landscapes. We all carry our home landscapes around inside us.”¹

The meaningful landscapes of our individual lives become part of our shared memory or heritage.

For several years I lived in a high-rise condo tower in North Surrey. I had a 180-degree view looking south and west. My view-scape from the 12th floor held two principle aspects. First, the daily treat of sunsets. I have an external hard-drive with too many pictures to count. The second iconic image was the Central City Tower, designed by Bing Thom. So, you might ask, what is so wonderful about another 25-story office tower? If you saw



One reason picture windows were invented.. >

the red sunset reflected as mirrored garnet you might question.

As a member of the Surrey Heritage Advisory Commission I, and my fellow commissioners, are confronted each month with questions of heritage in the public interest. Do we support the retention of a heritage home? When a registered heritage property partly burns down, what should happen – restoration, rehabilitation, or renovation? How can we help preserve the Semiahmoo Trail? The historic Stewart Farmhouse – who knew it was a kit-house?

Buildings, and even cultural events are aspects of heritage that most people understand and so can easily support. But natural heritage and adjacent views are most often forgotten, unless they are a roadside viewpoint designed for tourists with a list of places to check off. The



creation and subsequent preservations of view-scapes, whether constructed, or the altering of natural landscapes is most often left to chance.

However, I contend that landscape designers and often do create the iconic landscapes of our memories – the garden a beloved child was married in; the view of a favourite hill made complete with trees and a bench.



< Top: Landscapes come in all scales.

Bottom Image: Carefully planned to look natural: Serpentine Fen in Surrey.

This is an awesome and inspiring responsibility. And it can, as I understand from an architect of my acquaintance, present a real dilemma.

She, Isabel, was lamenting the drama taking place in the lives of clients – a couple who were using the designing of a unique home and property above Okanagan Lake as a marriage enrichment exercise. To the ending first – they stayed together. Our discussion focused on a tug of war regarding the use of a macaque, and even before that, when to commit a design to paper. Her practice was to delay providing visuals – drawings, even messy sketches, to clients until she could resist their pleas no longer.

When a sketch was finally produced she required that all clients see the sketches and future designs and models together. Isabel assured me that if this was not done then individual clients frequently develop strong, separate and often unalterable attachments to various aspects of the design, both interior and exterior, including the siting of plants and trees. If this happened it prolonged the process and made future compromises, often due to budget constraints, harder to achieve.

So, our landscapes hook us, just as easily as we become attached to other significant aspects of our lives. Landscapes can become touchstones, some times with lightening speed, connecting our past and present – a living heritage. [sl](#)



1. Hart, Matthew. *Big North: The Paintings of John Hartman*. Key Porter Books, Toronto Canada. 1999. Page 26.

BOOK REVIEW:

OUT DOORS

by Diarmuid Gavin and Terence Conran

By David Adkins, BCLNA Landscape Issues Manager

Background

Outdoors is a unique collaboration between two distinguished design aficionados, Diarmuid Gavin and Terence Conran. A sister volume to *21st Century Planting*, it is both visually stimulating and diverse in its application. It takes the reader on a journey infused with drama, colour, and design techniques by drawing inspiration from diverse sources such as: history, media, fashion, and architecture.

Diarmuid Gavin has spent his 25 career successfully challenging the traditional conventions of landscape design. He received gold medals from the International Chelsea Flower Show and Royal Horticultural Society. His design practice is based in Dublin and London with clients in the United Kingdom and beyond. He is a regular TV personality and he lectures widely on landscape design and the devel-

opment of the modern garden and open spaces. Gavin's other books include *Design Your Garden, Planting and Outer Spaces*. Terence Conran is one of the world's best-known designers and restaurateurs. In 1964 he founded the chain of Habitat stores in the United Kingdom to bring affordable modern design to the general public. Conran established an architecture and design practice as well as design-driven restaurants, shops, and hotels in ten cities throughout the world. Conran also founded the Design Museum in London. Among his numerous books on interior design, cooking, gardening, and crafts are *Terence Conran on Restaurants, The Essential Garden Book, The Ultimate House Book, and Easy Living*.

Genres

Outdoors covers a range of garden uses from

relaxation to entertainment. Readers are encouraged to look beyond the "garden gate" to consider landscape styles worldwide. The range of style contexts span from: rural to urban, minimalist, new wave, natural, urban agriculture, and living sculptures.

The book provides practical information on how to fulfil the requirements for each garden type and as well as presenting classic solutions. The authors provide imaginative, inspirational, and up to date alternatives.

Conservation Philosophies

Outdoors stresses that today's designed landscapes and garden spaces also provide the appropriate means for putting conservation philosophies into practice, whether it be for wildlife, recycling, or water-wise gardening. The book includes 15 case studies chosen by the authors to demonstrate a variety of ways that innovative design can be translated to landscape spaces, whether on a grand scale or in the creative detailing that sets one garden apart from another. In these sections designs are explored methodically to reveal techniques behind planning, planting choices and layout, and relation to the larger landscape framework.

Redefining Design

Gavin and Conran's book redefines garden design for the 21st Century and shows the best and most stimulating examples from around the world. Whether your project is in the town or country, and regardless of the size of the landscape, *Outdoors* is an invaluable source of information and inspiration.

Outdoors: 272 pages, published in 2007 by Conran Octopus Ltd.

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