



History of the Sechelt Garden Clubs' Community Projectsⁱ

In January of 2015 members of the Sechelt Garden Club and the Garden Club Development Committee met to develop Community development ideas. The purpose was to help beautify Sechelt: to create small (possibly large) pockets of beauty through plants and maybe hardscape to provide places of joy, peace and inspiration in the Sechelt area. The Sechelt Garden Club would not 'own' the projects, but would advise, guide and help it get off the ground, but would not do ongoing maintenance.

In June of 2015, Club members helped remove invasives at Mission Point Park. They were part of a larger group of 40 people including some Grade 4 and 5 students. Restorative planting with native plants was completed after the cleanup.

In the summer of 2015, a member noticed the neglected state of the rock wall surrounding the Sechelt Pool building. The area was littered with garbage. After determining ownership of the wall, meetings were held with the Aquatic Centre and the District of Sechelt. Club members were approached to help cleanup the area. Local nurseries were also approached for donations of plants to beautify the space.

Presented to the members of the Club, help was immediately offered. A group of members ranged from the original 14 who worked on it the first few days to get the clean up done to a steady group of 10 to 12. Planting was done in the wall (after blackberries were removed by several intrepid members with family support), and along the path which led to this becoming quite a beautiful sight.

Director of Community Development, Penny Lyle was contacted by Dianne Sanford, coordinator with the Seagrass Conservation Working Group in 2016. She was looking for help from our members to assist school children (from Kinnikinick Elementary, West Sechelt Elementary and the Davis Bay Nature School) in planting shrubs, reeds and nourishing grasses along the downtown waterfront in front of the new Watermark apartment buildings.

The construction of these two large buildings caused damage to the environment along the bank caused by machine digging and general disruption to the riparian areas fronting the buildings. Loss of this habitat to native plants which protect, feed, hide and otherwise supply tiny salmon and other riparian creatures with nutrients they need to survive was largely destroyed along this foreshore.

Sechelt Garden Club members volunteered to join us for the project which resulted in students gaining knowledge by helping us dig and plant Nootka roses and dune grasses along the foreshore while learning the benefits of these plants for the animal life along the riparian areas.



Kinnikinnik Elementary grades 2 and 3 students planted Nootka roses and dune grass along the rock wall outside the Watermark building in Sechelt on March 2, 2016. Coast Reporter.



Cowrie Lane: This spring members of the Sechelt Garden Club's development committee, led by Penny Lyle, were busy beautifying Sechelt as they planted flowers to add to the boxwood along the first section of Cowrie Lane beside the Healthcare Auxiliary Thrift Shop. From Left: Noel Sheppard, Gerri Randall, Margaret Acton, Jean Conley, Edwin Leung, Pianca Leung, Penny Lyle, Pat Kolterman, Sally Markham. Front: Christine Borg, visiting from New Zealand, and Cindy Buis, SDBA Coast Reporter May 2019



The Sechelt Garden Club's Community Development and the children of L'Ecole du Pacifique elementary school at the final painting of disposal bins to accompany the Busy Bee covered hydro box behind the Municipal Hall, Library and Aquatic Centre flower wall. From Left Edwin Leung, Sally Markham, Lyall Markham, John Lyle, Penny Lyle, Gerri Randall, Pat Kolterman and Marg Acton.

The committee name was changed to 'Flower Up Sechelt' in 2020. Other projects have included planters in Cowrie Lane and downtown planter project work with the Sechelt downtown Business Association.



Members of the 'Flower Up Sechelt' committee plant flowers on the Rotary Club's new downtown patio. From left; Edwin Leung, Gerri Randall and Penny Lyle. Coast Reporter September 2020



Certificate of Appreciation to Penny Lyle

¹ Thank you to Penny Lyle for providing this chronology.