

South Surrey Garden Club  
Minutes of the General Meeting  
November 28, 2018 – St. Mark's Anglican Church

### **Welcome**

President Karen Ewing called the meeting to order at 7:00 and welcomed everyone.

### **Announcements**

Before reviewing the evening's agenda, Karen made a few announcements:

- Due to tonight's social, we won't have the door prizes or master gardeners' table, but the library is open and the membership table is open.
- For those who may not want to take their membership cards with them to garden centres, we have created some discount cards you can carry in your wallet. They are available at the membership table. Thank you to Linda Stanley Wilson for making them.
- Gillian Davis and Gwen Odermatt were called up to the front to receive the Outstanding Service Awards they missed receiving at the July AGM, as they were away. Big round of applause.
- Another big round of applause for the Programs Committee for organizing tonight's social.

### **Speaker: Gwen Odermatt, On the Trail of the Great Plant Picks**

Gwen, a long-time club member, master gardener and member of the Great Plant Picks organization, started by showing club members slides of a number of GPP plants, many of which look great through the fall. Selections included *Molinia* grasses, *Yuccas* (stripy and bright), *Cotinus* 'Grace' (purple leaves) and *Parrotia* 'Vanessa' (brilliant fall leaves). *Nerine bowdenii*, which is not a GPP but had been nominated, is great too, and still blooming at the end of November.

Gwen then told club members about the Great Plant Picks organization and its territory, which is the unique growing area that is the Pacific Coast from B.C. to Oregon. Headquartered at the Miller Botanical Garden in Seattle, GPP has more than 1,000 plants of all kinds identified on their list, and being chosen as a GPP is a lot like receiving the Award of Garden Merit (AGM) in Britain. Plants must meet specific criteria to be included – many don't make the list because they aren't available throughout the GPP territory (e.g. *Crococsmia* 'Hellfire'), or due to climate differences between specific regions (e.g. *Asclepias tuberosa*).

The GPP group is always looking for plants and go on trips every year on the hunt for new finds. Gwen took club members on photographic journeys on a number of these trips into the field. Key stops included visiting head gardener Riz Reyes at the Anderson School, who is finding creative ways change how people think about plants and landscape; Skagit Growers, commercial growers north of Seattle with lots of evaluation beds to review; a commercial tree-growing operation north of that with 180 different species and cultivars; and Amazon headquarters in the heart of Seattle, which covers 21 blocks, includes 3 biospheres and features really interesting and creative plantings that point to the future of urban landscaping. Then Gwen took us along on a trip to Oregon's Willamette Valley, a farming community for generations. Stops included Gosler's

Nursery, with its 40-year-plus garden; the world-famous hellebore breeders Northwest Garden Nursery, whose owners, Marietta and Ernie O'Byrne, have written the beautiful book *A Tapestry Garden: The Art of Weaving Plants and Place*; and Dancing Oaks plantsman's garden, which specializes in unique and unusual plants from all over the world.

Gwen noted that the GPP organization also has its own test plots spread around the Pacific Coast territory they cover, and suggested members visit [greatplantpicks.org](http://greatplantpicks.org), which is a great resource and has a searchable database.

Karen Ewing thanked Gwen on behalf of the club.

### **Break**

During the break, members moved to the front so the room could be set up for the Pre-Christmas Social, and Lorna Fraser (piano) and Linda Stanley Wilson (flute) treated us all to some Christmas carols during the break and as the social began. During this second half of the meeting, members socialized and enjoyed beverages supplied by the Programs Committee and the many many potluck treats and appies brought by everyone.