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## JANUARY 2007

### ***Dear Friends,***

May I wish you all a very Happy and Prosperous New Year. And let us hope that the weather will be a bit kinder to our gardens than it has been recently.

As I am sure you read in the newspaper, the Finnerty Gardens took a real beating from the storm. The snow was so wet and heavy that it broke dozens of branches from the big firs and oaks. These fell on the shrubs underneath them, and a great number were broken. Many of the rhododendrons were severely damaged, but can probably be saved by judicious pruning, although it will be some time until they return to their former glory. There is an enormous amount of debris down and it will take a long time to get it all cleaned up. I suspect that many of you also suffered extensive damage in your gardens, as did I on Galiano. The woods there look very different—much more open—since I lost huge branches from most of the Douglas firs.

I was very surprised to find two large yew trees and an old oak down on the ground. All of the rain we had earlier in November made the ground very soft so the extra weight caused by the snow

was enough to topple many trees, especially those growing on an angle. Other oaks were severely damaged—a surprise because I always think of them as being very strong. On Galiano and the other Gulf Islands, the falling trees took out hydro power, and it was slow in being restored in some areas—mine was out from Sunday morning to Saturday afternoon.

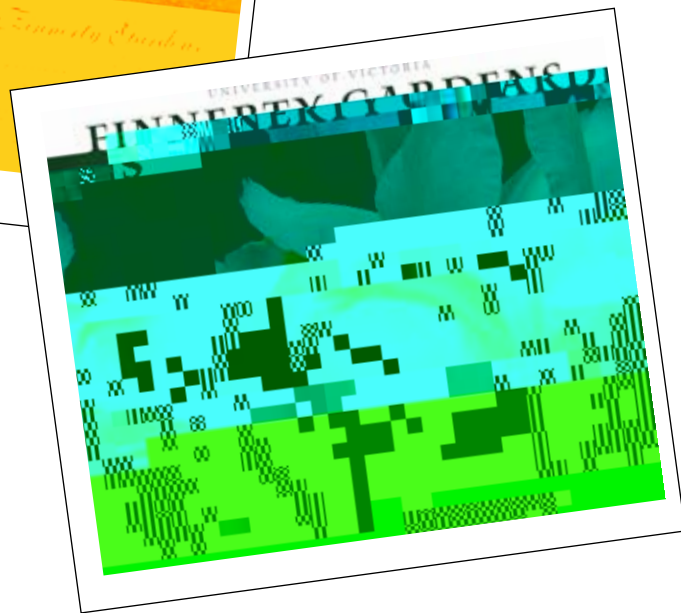
The Finnerty Calendar has been selling well, and is very love-

ly. Daphne has, as usual, caught the essence of the gardens. Her beautiful pictures will serve as a memorial to their former glory, and give us a goal to work towards in restoring them. If you do not yet have a copy, plan to pick one up. It is available in many retail outlets in town, and makes a wonderful gift for anyone who loves beauty.

***Betty Kennedy***



*UVic's Finnerty Gardens calendar is available at the UVic Bookstore as well as many other retail outlets in town.*





from above the knee, and in time, as winter turned to beautiful spring days on the lake, I really felt I was going to live. I got better and better and never looked back.

I was most interested to see your pictures of the Grand Hotel. I have an old post card picture of the front that must have been taken before the war. It must have had a very extensive face lift fairly recently. But I never saw the outside of the building. I was brought in on a stretcher at night and was taken out on the road side eight months later. One thing I do remember is the giant *Magnolia grandiflora* which nearly blocked our view even in those days. It had a large and beautiful bloom just outside our window. I am sure that it helped my recovery."

John's affectionate memory of the *Magnolia grandiflora* already marks him as a future gardener. Another Victorian, Peggy Abkhazi, has recounted a similar experience. In her case, she survived her internment in a camp in Longhua, Shanghai by tending a climbing rose outside her barracks window.

I think gardeners have friends in both the horticultural world and the friends with whom we associate in our gardens. And, I am glad my writing is not a lonely occupation.

(Readers will be sorry to hear that John Trelawny died in hospital on the first day of December. John seemed so invincible and so full of life, that it is hard to believe we will not enjoy his company again. He was pleased that the above article was to be published in this issue of University of Victoria Finnerty Gardens newsletter. John was a great supporter of Finnerty Gardens and an inspiration to all who visited

him and Ruth, his beloved wife, in their beautiful North Saanich garden.)



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**Margaret deWeese**

As I walked along the dock in January

I noticed the translucent sea anemones

Waving in the water.

And I hugged the thought of April ahead

With the white Wood Anemones

Waving in the breeze.

What is it about our minds

Which hold on to the best

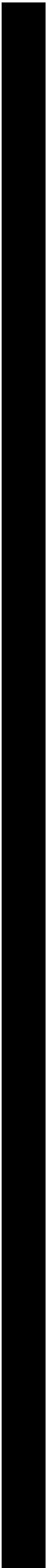
When our lives are cold?

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**Norman Todd**

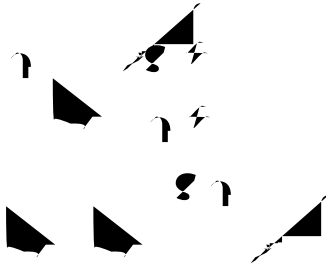
Different cultures have adopted a remarkable range of ways for acknowledging an introduction. Some rub noses, some kiss cheeks, some salaam, Thais wai; North Americans are content with a handshake. The welcoming introduction to cultivation of a newly discovered species of plant often1 -



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to the top of the hit parade. This is not a large plant; photographs of very old specimens growing in the wild show it to be about 2 meters high. With us it makes a fine container plant where its heavily rust-brown indumented leaves can be fully appreciated. The flowers are yellow, grouped in a truss of three to eight.

The last plant I want to mention is called *r. monanthum*. Very little has been written about this plant. The RSF is propagating it and the famous Scottish nursery of Glendoick owned and run by the legendary Cox family lists it on their website. This is a tiny plant with a single or at most double flower, yellow in colour. It is native to SE Xizang and NW Yunnan and is evidently found occasionally growing epiphytically. Most of its kudos derives



### ***Chris Thackray***

Three generations of the Finnerty family gathered in Finnerty Gardens to unveil a plaque in memory of their pioneering ancestors who farmed the land that is now UVic.

During the 1860s and '70s, the Finnertys were among the earliest settlers and farmers in the Mount Tolmie area. In the 1890s, Mike and Mary Ann Finnerty, along with John and Hanna Finnerty, ran a successful orchard and dairy farm on land that is now the UVic campus. Two apple trees from the family orchard still stand in the quad just south of the Cornett building.

The Finnerty name is ever-

present at UVic: Finnerty Road is the northern entrance to the campus, fronted by Finnerty's Coffee bar; Finnerty Gardens is a beautiful oasis on the south end of the campus.

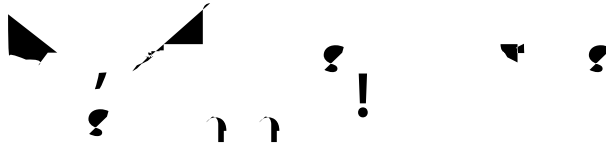
David Pollock (B.Ed, 79), great grandson of John and Hanna Finnerty, established the Annie Finnerty Bursary in the Faculty of Education and is a friend of

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The recent wet heavy snow fall, however, has not made her job any easier as the garden did sustain some damage. I expect that Rhonda will be applying her customary gardening magic to restore everything to its former condition. For my part, I am starting my third month in the Grounds Manager position and continue to work on getting a complete understanding of what is required to maintain the grounds for the entire campus. I have come to appreciate that my predecessor, Tony James, was indeed a very busy fellow. I also thank him for the insight and the history that he has provided for me during a couple of meetings since his retirement at the end of September.

As an update, I should mention that the University of Victoria is currently experiencing a peri



*Margaret deWeese*

In Japan in the month of May, there are many umbrellas in the gardens. This is not because of the monsoon rains which normally come a little later, or for pretty decoration, but to protect delicate peony petals from the sun, and to preserve their short bloom for a little longer.

As July begins, a sunny bank has umbrellas sticking through tomato frames plus the expensive canvas umbrella to shade guests, all pressed into service for those in need. The guests have legs and can move into the shade. The fresh leaves of the rhododendrons and the new planting of Magnolia wilsonii were installed on a hot sunny shale bank and therefore show their brown baked curling leaves to me before I rush to get the umbrellas.

The hot sun doesn't last too long during the summer months and as long as the roots or root-ball is kept watered the browned, crisp leaves will regenerate fresh new leaves and the unsightly sunburned ones may be snipped off. Summer after summer, poor R. hematodes, R. "Bow Bells" and R. "Half Dan Lem" look terrible and are a reproach to their neglectful owner. Sun screen for gardeners and umbrellas or tree shade for sensitive plants is the new order for global warming.

**1. MAKING MAGIC IN THE CITY**

In this public lecture, Lynden Miller—a plantsperson and public garden designer in New York City—tells the story of the restoration of many previously neglected and avoided public spaces over a twenty year period in New York City. She emphasizes how plants can be used to soften and civilize city life.

**Date TBA.**