

## **An Introduction to the Plants at Innisfail's Historical Village**

As you stroll through the grounds of Innisfail's Historical Village you will notice several beds of flowers and a small vegetable garden. The plants in these beds are associated with the history of the area and are representative of the kinds of plants that were grown in the flower gardens of the Innisfail area in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Boardwalk Heritage Garden**

As you enter the main gate of the Historical Village the Heritage Garden is on the left, beside the Boardwalk Building. This garden contains plants, which have been part of the gardens of area residents for generations.

Heritage plants are the old varieties of standard plants, ones that have been around for generations. Plants that would have graced the gardens of your grand parents and great grand parents.

The plants presently in the garden were gathered together by Grace and Stu Little. The history of each plant is described in a separate brochure.

There are several plants (lilac, Virginia creeper, caragana, and horse radish) that were common in early gardens but are not included in the present garden because of their tendency to spread. Caragana and horse radish are the most persistent of the domestic plants brought in by the pioneers. Often they are the only domestic plants left to mark early homestead long after the buildings and other evidence of human habitation are gone.

### **Heritage Vegetable Garden**

As you leave the Boardwalk building and turn right (west) you will pass a small vegetable garden to the right (north) of the sidewalk. This garden is planted by two classes of grade one students each year and harvested by the same children in the fall. The plants in this garden are typical of some of the plants grown in early vegetable gardens in the area.

The vegetables we have planted in this garden include potatoes, carrots, peas, onions, spinach, lettuce, beans, beets, cucumbers, and corn. There are seven types of herbs as well as rhubarb.

The common perennials in early vegetable gardens were rhubarb, asparagus, horse radish, currants, gooseberries, crab apples, raspberries, strawberries.

### **Annuals grown in early gardens**

Early settlers raised annuals as well as perennials. These annuals were hardy and produced abundant seeds which could be saved from year to year or would naturally self-seed and required only thinning to maintain them in the garden. Some examples of early annuals found on Alberta homesteads include Clarkia, nasturtiums, marigolds, and poppies. The poppies included the familiar Icelandic poppy, *Papaver nudicaule*, that produces bright yellow and orange flowers early in the summer. Also common was the opium poppy, *Papaver somniferum*, with its tall red flowers and later in the season large seed pods. The seed pods contain the poppy seeds commonly used in cooking. Pansies, particularly the Johnny jump up, *Viola tricolour*, cultivars were also common. These small-flowered, hardy, competitive plants survive in the grass and shrubs around long neglected gardens.

### **Tea House Flower Beds**

There are flower beds on the east and south sides of the Tea House. Near the front door you will see Icelandic poppies (*Papaver nudicaule*) just as they might have appeared at an early homestead. Also Johnny-jump-up, *Viola tricolour*, ...

On the south side of the Tea House there are tulips, peonys, and a hansa rose.

### **Ina Scarlett Bed**

This bed of flowers is located to the east of the Parker Cabin and contains a selection of flowers from the garden of Ina Scarlett. Ina died in 2001 at almost 98 years old. She had looked after her own garden through the summer of 2000. The plants in her memorial garden were taken from her garden in 2002. Most of the plants she had were passed on to her from friends and neighbors and represent the sorts of flowers that were common in Innisfail gardens in the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Near the front of the Parker Cabin are a row of raspberries. Raspberries were common in early gardens in this area. They were a welcome treat when they were fresh in the summer and were also used to make raspberry jam to be used during the rest of the year.

### **Betty Dittrick Bed**

In front of the Presbyterian Church, to the west of the Parker Cabin, is a row of roses that were planted in memory of Betty Dittrick.

### **Other Plants at the Village that we want to talk about?**

Perhaps you have plants, which have been passed down from generation to generation in your own family. If you do and would like to donate a piece of the plant to the historical village garden, together with its history, contact.....