

COME INTO MY PARLOUR... by Dorothy Robison

Have you ever wondered about the origins of garden clubs' in-house flower shows?

Margaret Nakahara, past president of the BC Council of Garden Clubs, and the lady who is teaching our judging course, has some information on this subject. Margaret says that in the early days there were no recreation centers or a separate place for activities-- except for City Hall. Hence the parlour—a large open room— was where friends and acquaintances met and entertained, or were entertained.

As garden clubs developed, "Parlour Show" was adopted for the display of flowers by club members and is a term that means " in-house or club show". When the public is invited to attend, then it is an "open" show.

However, if I've only one bloom I'm proud of, I don't want to pick it to take to a meeting. Selfishly, I leave it in my garden for my own enjoyment! I'm not the only one who feels this way. Gary White of the Victoria Horticultural Society suggests a Virtual Parlour Show. Members would submit digital photos before the meeting, and a looped slide show would be shown on a laptop on the Parlour Show tables.

No-one has a parlour these days, but present day or yesteryear, everyone in gardening circles knows the expression.