



# Reader Rock Ramblings



# The Reader Rock Garden

[www.ReaderRock.com](http://www.ReaderRock.com)



## President's Message

By Diane M. Dalkin



### Hello FoRRGS members & supporters!

In our technological world, we all have to stay on top of new developments, trends and online security concerns. Consequently, we are proactively reviewing this *PDF format* for our newsletter to minimize potential harmful exposure to our members. Did you know that *cybercriminals* can use clever techniques like embedding malicious JavaScript, crafting deceptive hyperlinks, or concealing harmful attachments within PDFs? So, for now, as a first step, we've removed all hyperlinks within this PDF. Going forward, another format may be the solution for the newsletter; we'll keep you in the loop once we've pivoted to enhanced online security protections.

Besides this, 2024 was a challenging year, *to say the least*: Early on and for the entire summer, we contended with the loss of the long-time Head Gardener who moved on to follow career advancements elsewhere in the city. The good news is that his replacement has just recently been named; and we're delighted that *Ben Suehsschlaf* will become the new permanent gardener at Reader's, aka the Head Gardener. We are super thrilled with this development and look forward to working with him! We hope to provide more details about Ben, the new Head Gardener in the Spring 2025 issue.

The city-wide water restrictions really stressed-out all our gardens for most of the summer and *Reader Rock Garden* was regretfully not granted an exemption despite our request for this consideration given its *National Historic Site* designation. "Plant thefts" also plagued the Garden as well as other public gardens - Mr. Reader would surely be aghast at this selfish practice. It's totally shocking and unacceptable! If you witness any "questionable" actions/behaviour at the Garden, please let onsite City Parks staff know or call 311 to report this. Your assistance is most appreciated in protecting this special place.

Yet, despite all these tests, our wonderful, *caring volunteers and supporters continue their patronage ... Thank-you to ALL of you!* We are truly grateful for your generous presence! On Page 3, we introduce another extraordinary individual from our dedicated team, Rosemary.

Reader Rock Garden has a rich history, and its always fulfilling to share new discoveries from our research. "*From the Archives*" presents the *RMS Victorian* and its important 1908 journey, the start of an exciting adventure. Thank-you Brenda J. for this lead.

As winter approaches and we wrap up 2024, may we always remain thankful for the goodness that surrounds us; stay hopeful for a promising new year ahead. *Best Wishes for the Holidays* however you celebrate, keep an uplifting perspective and a warm heart ... a bright future is possible ... May **Peace & Joy** be with you, **Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Enjoy the Season!**  
**See you in 2025 !!!**

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### FoRRGS Team

President - Diane Dalkin  
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**From the Archives - RMS Victorian**

**By Diane M. Dalkin**

In today’s world, even with all our technological advancements and perhaps because of them, disinformation is easily spread and accepted just because it appeared online. One of the challenges of historical research is to find accurate data. On occasions errors are uncovered, perhaps due to human missteps or interpretations of the data. Consideration must also be given to the source; was it recorded with the explicit purpose of unbiased information; and, is the data confirmed by separate, more reliable sources.

Often in our situation, we defer to the Reader Family descendants as invaluable providers of historical insights. But, it’s also satisfying to come across corroborative data that supports the long-standing narrative. Such is the case as I recently uncovered this ship manifest from 1908.



The **RMS Victorian** of the Allan Line [British] was built by Workman, Clark & Co., in Belfast, Ireland. The tonnage: 10,629; dimensions: 517’ x 60’; triple-screw, 19 knots w/ steam turbines & two masts and one funnel. It was the first trans-Atlantic steamship to be fitted with steam turbines and was launched in April 1904, but commenced her premier voyage from Liverpool to Canada in April 1905. The passenger capacity was: 470 first class, 240 second, 940 third. Ownership of this world-famous liner was transferred to Canadian Pacific Line in 1917 and it was renamed Marloch in 1922 and it was scrapped in 1930. Its sister ship was the Virginian.

**RMS Victorian (1904) of the Allan Line/Canadian Pacific Line.**

The reason I’m providing these background stats is that *the Reader Family travelled on this very ship to their new Canadian home in 1908.*

The *original passenger list* is as follows:

And so, their story began on this exciting voyage 116 years ago.



7. INSTRUCTIONS TO PURSERS.—Each passenger should be given a card indicating the number of sheet and line on sheet his name is to be found on. 7.

No. of Passenger	Age of Child	To be filed in the Immigration Agent's Office at Port of Landing	NAME OF PASSENGER.	Age of Adult	Sex	Profession, Occupation or Calling of Passenger	Name or Country of Birth	Place of ultimate destination of Passenger excepting "Transit and Return Canada," when to be so specified.
			<i>Steerage/Canada</i>					
1277			Wm R. Reader	33	M	Gardener	England	Calgary, Alberta
			Rose	30	F	wife	England	
			Harry	5	M	child		
			Doris	3	F	child		
1285			Miss Roberson	135	F	W. Broadman		
			Miss Kiefer	16	F			
			Miss Rowe	12	F			
			Miss Kuegg	120	F			
			Miss Jaltz	128	F			
			Miss	28	F			

**RMS Victorian - Passenger List: 1908-05-08**

Noted on the right – Steerage for Canada

Wm R. Reader, 33 yrs old, Gardener, England - > Calgary  
 Rose Reader, 30 yrs old, wife  
 Harry Reader, 5 yrs old, child  
 Doris Reader, 3 yrs. old, child

Ship:	VICTORIAN
Shipping Line:	Allan Line Steamship Co.
Port of Departure:	Liverpool, England
Date of Departure:	1908-05-08
Port of Arrival:	Quebec, Que. Montreal, Que.
Date of Arrival:	1908-05-16
Year:	1908
Microfilm Reel Number:	T-493
Remarks:	List Number: 837531
Reference:	RG 76
Item Number:	4884

Even after volunteering with FoRRGS for over two decades, I still enjoy making new discoveries annually!

Source: [www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/immigration\\_records/passenger-lists-1865-1922](http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/immigration_records/passenger-lists-1865-1922)



## Volunteer Spotlight!

*By Diane M. Dalkin*

As I've noted before, *people make the difference*; they are the strength and force behind keeping the Garden's legacy alive. Our *fabulous volunteers* have contributed to all the successes along the way ...

*May we introduce you to another special person:*

### Rosemary Griebel – ♥ FoRRGS Volunteer ♥

*Researcher, Newsletter Contributor, Writer/Poet, Master Gardener, Tour Guide & Gardener:*



**Question:** *Your hometown?*

Castor, Alberta (a small, dusty town located in the infamous semi-arid Palliser Triangle) I grew up on a farm and was a free-range child who formed a deep bond with nature at an early age.

**Q:** *When did you arrive in Calgary?*

1987, just as the city was gearing up for the Winter Olympics.

**Q:** *Favorite Book/movie?*

There are too many favourite books and films to pick just one, but for fellow gardeners I would highly recommend "The Signature of All Things" by Elizabeth Gilbert, "The Overstory" by Richard Powers, "To Speak for the Trees" by Diana Beresford-Kroeger, and "Braiding Sweetgrass" by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

A recent film that I watched and loved is Wim Wenders' "Perfect Days." A note at the end of the movie defines the Japanese word *komorebi*, which refers to the way light and shadow filter through foliage—something that "only exists once, at that moment." It's a quiet film about paying attention and the poetry to be found in the everyday.

**Q:** *Have a favorite saying or perspective or poem?*

*Saying:* "We are all just walking each other home."  
- Ram Das

*Perspective:* Optimism

*Poem:* Impossible to select one poem. One of my rituals is reading at least one poem every morning.

**Q:** *Hobbies or non-work-related interests?*

Writing, hiking/walking, travel, gardening, cooking, Pilates/yoga, reading.

**Q:** *Where & what did you study as an adult?*

I did a master's degree in literature at King's College in London, England, and a master's in library science at the University of British Columbia.

**Q:** *Previous/current work experience?*

I was a librarian at Calgary Public Library for many years, where I held a variety of managerial positions. One of the best positions was Assistant Project Manager for the building of the New Central Library. I still enjoy going into the Central Library on a regular basis because of the play of light throughout the building. The Great Reading Room on the top floor is one of my favourite spaces in the city. I love how the room respects silence, and it is always a thrill to see such a diverse population using the space, engrossed in study, writing, or reading, heads bowed to the page/screen.

**Q:** *Professional affiliations or publications?*

My publications are varied and most recently include essays in the books *Ascenti: Humans Opening to AI* (2024) and *Reimagining Fire: the Future of Energy* (2023). In addition to my collection of poetry titled *Yes*, my poems have appeared in *The Best Canadian Poetry in English*, as well as on CBC Radio, literary magazines, chapbooks, and anthologies. In 2019 one of my poems was chosen for Alberta's first literary landmark, as part of Project Bookmark Canada's CanLit Trail. The plaque with the poem is installed in East Village (535 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE).

Current professional affiliations include the Friends of Reader Rock Garden Society, Master Gardeners Association of Alberta, Calgary Horticultural Society, Alberta Native Plant Council, Writers Guild of Alberta, and the League of Canadian Poets.

**Q:** *What do you do at Reader Rock Garden [RRG] & how long have you volunteered?*

During the warmer months I do weekly garden shifts and have started leading garden tours.

In the winter months I assist with building the RRG plant database.

I started volunteering at RRG in 2022, right after I completed my Master Gardener certificate.

**Q:** *Best thing[s] about RRG?*

I often think of RRG as an amazing secret garden located in the heart of the city. The diversity of plant life in the garden is phenomenal. Working on the plant database I've come to appreciate how rare some of the plant specimens are, and how many are not within Calgary's plant hardiness zone, yet they thrive in the microclimate created within William Reader's shelter belt. This garden is truly a botanical marvel.

**Q:** *Most challenging thing about RRG?*

The lack of security for the plants and the garden site in general.

**Continued ... from Pg. 3 - Volunteer Spotlight - Rosemary**

**Q:** *What have you discovered at RRG, learnings?*

Every day I Volunteer at RRG, I learn new things – a planting technique, the name of a weed, the Latin name of a plant, the growing conditions and companion plants of certain species, seed gathering techniques, transplanting techniques, etc. For the curious mind, RRG is a huge buffet of teachings.

**Q:** *What would you like the public to know about this special place?*

The Reader Rock Garden is a unique botanical treasure house. There is nothing like it in Canada. Every plant and every carefully laid rock have a story that reflects an era and the biodiversity of the region.

**Q:** *Must-see highlight[s] onsite?*

Lower and upper pond areas, Nana’s garden, Main Lawn area, High Rockery, south and Western Slopes, iris garden, Native Garden, and the flower bed at the entrance, including the old apple tree (Grandma tree, as I call her).

**Q:** *Other things you’d like to share with us?*

I feel conflicted about the community awareness of Reader Rock Garden. On the one hand, I think everyone in this city should know about the garden and visit it to appreciate its beauty, plant diversity, and calming environment. On the other hand, one of the aspects of the garden that is so lovely and meditative, is the fact that it’s not over-run with visitors. There is space to just be quiet and enjoy the trees and flowers.



**Final Notice:**

This is the **first time** we’ve had to do this in **21 years** and it isn’t done lightly ... At our May AGM, the Board of Directors presented a new Motion, which was unanimously approved, to increase our **Membership Fees**, effective **January 1, 2025**.

As you can appreciate, over two decades, keeping pace with technological advances and other operational expenses have risen for everyone, including Non-Profit Organizations like us. The new increase of \$5.00 will hopefully cover our costs for many more years to come.

However, if you’d like to take advantage of some savings, we will continue to offer a 3-year membership deal.

Also, you may want to *renew your membership prior Jan. 1, 2025 to benefit from the old pricing*, if this new cost increase stresses your budget.

The old category of “Family Membership” will be discontinued too, for a variety of reasons. Going forward there will only be an “Individual Membership” option.

Either way, we **thank-you** for your continued support of the Garden!

**New Membership Pricing  
Coming Jan 1, 2025:**

**Individual :**

\$15.00 / annually,

Or \$30.00 / for 2-years,

Or \$40.00 / for 3-years / savings here!

**Tis the Season For Giving** ... Buy a FoRRGS membership and *support the Garden*. Give a gift with 2x the impact - this creative & thoughtful gift introduces the lucky recipient to this *National Historic Site* and bestows the perks of membership. Plus your patronage helps the Garden. Email us if you’d like to know more.

**Thanks!**





A 1920 photo from Reader's Garden as he admired the magical hoar frost, he amusingly wrote, "We have flowers in winter, Snow & Frost flowers"



Winter 1920. We have Flowers in winter, Snow & frost flowers



"Winter reminds us that everything needs some quiet time".



*"Upon the eve of winter's tender start,  
A canvas bare, awaits an artist's heart.  
The sky, a symphony of whispers light,  
Prepares to paint the world in hues of white."*  
  
*Winter is coming*  
  
... from LiteratureVaults.com



**150 Years Ago ...**  
**On November 19, 1874 in England**  
**William Roland Reader was born.**  
  
*His legacy lives on in his growing family tree and in the places he fashioned for us to enjoy here in Calgary.*  
  
**Reader Rock Garden**  
*A National Historic Site*



**Thankful** to our corporate supporters:

**Reader's Garden Café**  
**ALCLA Native Plants**  
**Garden Retreat**



*"Now he sleeps in the lovely cemetery which he himself created on one of the hills looking down on the city, once so ugly, and now a pleasantly shaded town full of floral beauty and interest. His rest will be the softer in that it has been well-earned and he has left at least one small part of the world more beautiful than he found it".*  
  
*W. Ingwersen – Gardeners' Chronicle, England 1943*





Best of The Season  
Meilleurs Voeux!



### Thank-you Volunteers!

- ◆ For **Bruce's** hands-on gardening team
- ◆ For **Colleen's** friendly & savvy Tour Guides
- ◆ For the continuous dedication from the **Board**

AND

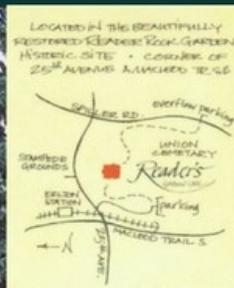
- ◆ For the **City gardeners** & **Parks staff** that always go above and beyond their regular duties!



HAPPY HOLIDAYS



ESCAPE FROM THE BUSY CITY  
RETREAT TO CALGARY'S  
HIDDEN GEM



Coffee & Tea Specialties  
Pastries, Sweets & Sundaes  
Lunch Specials  
Brunch

*Reader's Garden Café* is closed for the Winter Season  
Re-opening next **May 2nd 2025.**

See [www.readersgardencafe.ca](http://www.readersgardencafe.ca) or call 403-234-0065

### The Calgary Rock and Alpine Garden Society (CRAGS)

2nd Thursday of each month  
Hybrid Monthly Meetings  
In-Person

**Lakeview Community Association Hall**  
6110 34th Street SW

Or,

Online, via Zoom video conferencing.

**Best to check out their website for upcoming events:**

See: [www.crag.ca/events](http://www.crag.ca/events)

