



Vertical Crevice Garden

Speaker: Kelvin Browne, Executive Director and CEO

[Audio Tour Transcript](#)

Welcome to the Gardiner Museum's Plaza. I'm Kelvin Browne, the Director and CEO of the Museum, and I'd like to tell you about our beautiful garden. The hardscape of the garden—the basic layout of the planting beds, terraces, and steps—was designed by KPMB Architects as part of the extensive renovation the Museum completed in 2006. The initial planting then was by NAK Design. The serviceberry trees for instance, in the northern section of the garden, remain from this installation.

In 2015, I consulted with Neil Turnbull, a well-known landscape designer, particularly admired for his innovation and remarkable knowledge of plants. I wanted to enhance the garden. Neil offered to redesign the garden and fund the renovation. We're also grateful that longtime Gardiner supporter Brian Wilks provided additional funding for the project.

The result is called the *Vertical Crevice Garden*. Its design refers to the tilted layers of limestone that form many of the world's mountain ranges. Over time, these layers were cracked apart by the elements. Hardy alpine perennials were quick to move into this extreme growing environment. The prominent limestone shards traversing the garden are evocative of these layers of limestone. Many plants are in gravel, another reference to the extreme growing environment that inspired Neil's design.

Prominent in the northern portion of the garden are serviceberries, a variety of viburnum. They have lovely white blossoms in the spring and berries in the fall that birds love. In the southern section, there's two redbud trees that have brilliant pink blossoms and can be recognized for their heart-shaped leaves. Additional structure is added by large groupings of boxwood, the bushes with the tiny green leaves, and euonymus, the plants with the variegated lighter green

leaves. And then there's a myriad of perennials, many of them alpine that keep the garden fascinating all growing season. You likely can identify some of these, for instance the thyme and periwinkle. They're both used as ground cover. And then there's geraniums, sedum, snowflake candytuft, potentilla, dwarf lady's mantle, and euphorbia, just to name some of them. Euphorbia is the plant that wants to take the garden over every summer. I hope you enjoy the garden. Thank you for visiting.

Credits:

The garden is a gift to the Gardiner Museum from Neil Turnbull, Landscape Architect and President of Neil Turnbull Limited and Hedgerow Farm