

## INSPECT-A-GADGET

Margot Moser was intrigued by the theme of favourite tools and spent some time mulling on it while she gardened. Then a realization came to her which inspired her contribution below. It is an important, lovely reminder to appreciate ourselves as gardeners.

### Margot's Hands

My favourite gardening tools are my hands. As my grandmother used to say, God invented fingers before forks or spoons. In my opinion, the same goes for rakes and trowels.

I've been gardening in one way or another since I was 6 years old. It was so frustrating then not to have the strength to be able to pull nasty weeds from my little garden plot but I persevered. By age 18, I had constructed a beautiful border in my family's garden which I planted and weeded incessantly, all by hand. Of course I utilized man-made tools too but they have never been my first choice.

The best thing about never wearing gloves is that I have never had any reason to regret that choice. I knew early on that I was not likely to be a pianist or a hand model. Before moving to the rocky Island, I never wore shoes either as I toiled in my luxurious, loamy, Burnaby gardens. There's nothing more stimulating for a gardener than the feel of rich soil on your hands and feet.

My hands are disfigured now but still strong. I am proud of how gnarly they look – a testament to the years spent creating my gardens, including paths, patios, retaining walls, ponds and rockeries. Where I once fantasised about being a princess in a gorgeous garden, I now realize I was destined to be the drudge – **and** the co-creator of the loveliness that surrounds me. Who could ask for more?

With that in mind, here's a little verse I wrote many years ago about my inspirational Grammy –

#### A Lifelong Gardener

"I sometimes wonder," Grammy mused,  
"How old I'll live to be  
When I no longer pull up weeds  
Without bending a knee."

"I wonder what age I will reach  
Before I'm forced to stop  
Washing my feet in the sink  
Perched on the countertop?"

"How long can I garden  
When, where and how I choose,  
Always with impunity  
Sans hat or gloves or shoes?"  
(Answer: age 86)



Margot handing on a love of gardens to her granddaughter Isla