

From the Photograph Collection

The beautiful home, garden and lawns of former Port Alberni residents Ralph and Gladys Greenard, would have been bursting with colour at this time of year. We can enjoy our gardens and yards right now and on walks in the days to come enjoy the changes we see as flowers and trees blossom, bloom and burst into leaf. This photograph was taken circa 1920 and is one of nearly 24,000 photographs in the Alberni Valley Museum collection. You can access this collection from home by visiting <https://portalberni.pastperfectonline.com/>

Enjoy making and using our flower pinwheel!



AVM PN12210

Pinwheels



The first inventor of the pinwheel is not known. However, indications show that wind-driven pinwheels existed in China in 400 BC and in the Sasanian Empire by 700 AD. By the 15th century pinwheels were shown in paintings, such as the Hieronymus Bosch painting, "Christ Child With a Walking Frame," circa 1480 to 1500.

Pinwheels may have arrived in North America by way of immigrants from Europe. By the 18th century wooden, wind-driven pinwheels existed as weather vanes with moving parts set in motion by the wind. During the Great Depression starting in 1929, people handmade and sold pinwheels as garden ornaments or children's toys as a means of making a living.

For the Chinese New Year it is tradition that artists construct extravagant pinwheels with multiple colors. Around the outer blades of these pinwheels the artists place handwritten messages focusing on long life, good health, wealth or luck. As the pinwheels spin these messages are caught by the wind and sent into the universe as a wish for the coming year.

Today pinwheels are commonly found in department and dollar stores in many shapes and sizes and used as inexpensive entertainment for kids. Many times pinwheels are used to celebrate a day or event. Recently pinwheels are been used at the grave of a loved one to suggest the freedom of the spirit.