



The Cross Estate Gardens

New Jersey Historical Garden Foundation

NEWSLETTER

Fall 2005

The New Jersey Historical Garden Foundation was established under the auspices of Mr. James Spiniello. Its board is composed of volunteers interested in the preservation, maintenance, and development of public, historical gardens. The Foundation is working with the National Park Service, U. S. Department of Interior, to preserve the Cross Estate Gardens.

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The Cross Estate Gardens presents its

Fall Symposium

Friday, September 23, 2005

Autumn Designs

by Marge Hulstrunk, owner of Flowers by Marjorie

&

Sale of Plants for Fall

by Ken Selody, owner of Atlock Farm

at the Cross Estate Mansion

Registration: 9:15 a.m.

Flower Arranging Demonstration: 10 a.m.

Auction of Floral Arrangements: 11 a.m.

Atlock Plant Sale: 11:30 a.m.

Tea and Dessert: 12:30 p.m. (Please bring your own sandwich)

Limited seating, so please mail reservations to:

New Jersey Historical Garden Foundation

P.O. Box 712

Bernardsville, NJ 07924

\$25 Registration for all participants

Checks payable to NJHGF

For more information, please call 973-376-0348

Join Us at the Symposium

This year's Fall Symposium promises to be educational and interesting for all who attend.

Our speaker, Marge Hulstrunk, is not new to the friends who support the NJHGF. She is currently a board member and is donating her services for the symposium. She is volunteer coordinator at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum and also has her own business, Flowers by Marjorie. We're looking forward to seeing her make some unusual flower arrangements and get some new ideas for our own. All arrangements will be auctioned off after her lecture.

Ken Selody, owner of Atlock Farms, is not new to most of you, either. Ken has excellent plant material, and you can be sure he will bring some unusual fall plants that will be offered for sale. He also will be available to answer questions. Mark your calendar to attend!

Volunteer Appreciation

As volunteer chairman, I would like to recognize the following individuals for their generous contribution to the maintenance of the gardens: Ray Andrews, Fred Aufschlager, Elliot Bowen, Marion Bracken, Ruth Dittman, Lilian and Steve Fogle, Sue Katzenberger, Dick Leongard, Helen Mageau, Ann Meehan, Janet DiMauro, George Nixon, Steve Palmer, Phil Pitney and Ginny Walton.

Without them there would be no garden. Thank you for all the hours you spent during this hot and dry summer. The NJHGF board and all of our visitors are lucky to have you.

— Ruth Dittman

Grants Make It Possible

This spring, the Cross Estate Gardens was the recipient of two grants from the Garden Club of Somerset Hills and the Garden Club of Morristown. Their generous gifts enabled us to hire a student intern for the summer season.

Elliot Bowen, a willing and energetic worker, has been a great asset to Ann Bragg and a big help to the volunteers.

Gifts such as these make it possible for the NJHGF to have the extra money needed to maintain the gardens. Many thanks to both of these clubs for their interest and faith in the mission of the Cross Estate Gardens.

— Steve Palmer

Garden Notes

The lucky people who came to the plant sale on June 3 had a generous selection of plants to choose from. Their donations added up to a nice profit. Many thanks to the volunteers who did the work and to all who donated plants.

Steve Palmer has been transferred from United Methodist Church of Flanders to a new parish in Kearny, NJ. We would like to express a word of appreciation to his former parishioners for their donation of \$250 to the NJHGF as a farewell gift to Steve. The money will be used to buy special plants in his honor, including the Japanese andromeda, *Pieris 'Valley Valentine.'*

The Youth Conservation Corps was a big help in the garden this summer.

While the young people did many of the jobs that had to be done, the volunteers were especially grateful to them for raking under the pergola. It's an unrewarding job, one that needed to be done and it really looked nice all summer. Thank you for a great job!



We always welcome more hands in the gardens!

If you can volunteer on Wednesday mornings between 9 a.m. and noon, please join us. You do not have to be there every week. Come and see how satisfying it can be!

Beauty Beats the Heat

Beauty prevails at the Cross Estate Gardens, through the deep heat of summer. In the formal garden, shades of white, yellow and blue dominate the flower beds as phlox, daylilies, rudbeckia and echinops bloom.

In the native garden, butterflies flutter from hyssop to phlox and intermingle with many fascinating insects. The gardens are still lush and green.

This summer, many of our volunteers have worked hard to prune, weed and mow. Jim Spiniello, NJHGF founder and board member, gave many hours to removing piles of brush that had accumulated along the perimeter of the gardens. Now that the outside walls have been cleaned up, the landscape reveals even more beauty. The copper beech on the edge of the gar-

dens stands as a magnificent testimony to the early days of the property long before it was established as the Cross Estate Gardens.

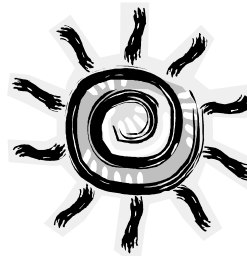
Pieris 'Valley Valentine' (Japanese andromeda) will be added to the area by the old buxus sempervirens (boxwood) at the top of the stairs by the mansion. A generous contribution has made this possible. The plantings are deer resistant and will add beauty and magnificence to this spot.

As the work on the mansion finishes (new roof and stucco), the dignity of the original Cross Estate begins. A visit to our gardens should be a part of everyone's summer itinerary. We hope you will come and see it for yourself.

— Ann Bragg
Cross Estate Garden Manager

Work in Progress

The gardens would not look as nice as they do with just volunteer help. Ann Bragg, garden manager, has worked diligently to keep our abundant plants and weeds under control. She is responsible for pruning and planting, as well as purchasing plant replacements and general horticultural tasks. She also sets the work schedule for the volunteers.



Ann's enthusiasm for the garden is evident in her dedication to working through rainy spring and hot summer days. She can be found on Wednesday mornings working alongside the volunteers and at least one additional day each week.

Assisting Ann is our summer intern, Elliot Bowen, who attends Potsdam University in upstate New York where he is majoring in music and history. Elliot joined Ann with little gardening experience but with her special instruction he has become a valuable addition to the garden's team. He helped the regulars with weeding, pruning, watering and fetching tools from the shed.

Congratulations to Ann, Elliot and all of the volunteers on a job well done. Their work is appreciated by the NJHGF board, the garden volunteers and all of the visitors who come to the garden.

— Helen Mageau

Plant Profile: Chinese Tree Lilac

Before the native plant area was established, a few non-native trees were planted and have since flourished. One of these is the Chinese Tree Lilac, *Syringa pekinensis*. The large cream white flowers have no trace of violet or lilac in coloring. One of its most interesting features is its bark, which is like that of oriental cherries providing year-round interest.

There was great excitement when tree lilacs were first discovered on the mountain slopes of China and Tibet, for here was a lovely tree very different from the shrub lilacs of the western world. Lilacs are closely related to privet. The scent of the Chinese Tree Lilac is that of privet, as are its four petaled flowers. Privet was often used as understock for early European hybrid shrub lilacs because their root system was hardier than the hybrids. Lilacs and privets, surprisingly, belong to the Olive Family.

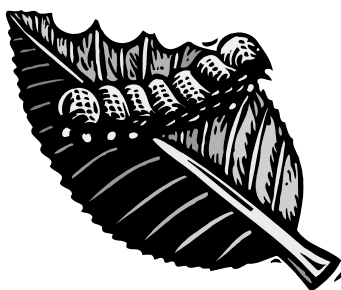
— Helen Mageau

Questions & Answers

The following was copied from the *New York Times*, August 4, 2005, and might be of interest.

Q. I have been told rhubarb leaves are poisonous, which suggests they are immune to insects. That seems to be true in spring, but not in summer. Does the heat destroy the plant's insect resistance?

A. Rhubarb leaves are vulnerable by the time summer is hot, but the only thing they have lost is their youth. The poison, oxalic acid, is still there. It is simply that the insects do not care. Oxalic acid can kill mammals if they eat enough of it, and although it would take a mighty big dose, rhubarb leaves do contain quite a bit. In short, insects can eat a lot of things you can't.



Become a Member

As you know, no garden is ever finished. The Cross Estate Gardens need constant attention. Even though the NJHGF works in cooperation with the Morristown National Historical Park, we cannot receive financial help from them. Your contribution is our only monetary support. And we thank you for that.

Membership Categories

Senior Citizen	\$15.00
Individual	\$20.00
Family	\$40.00
Supporter	\$75.00
Sponsor	\$100.00
Life Member	\$500.00
Other Donations	\$____.00

Please send your check to:

New Jersey Historical Garden Foundation
P.O. Box 712
Bernardsville, NJ 07924-0712



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