



The Cross Estate Gardens

New Jersey Historical Garden Foundation

NEWSLETTER

Spring 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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Fall Symposium Planned



Many of you might have wondered why you didn't receive this newsletter in March as we have always done in the past. It is because the Cross Mansion was under repair, and we did not have access to the building.

As you know, Mansion in May took place in the spring of 2003. Shortly after our Spring Symposium in 2004, the Morrisown National Historical Park started renovations on the mansion to provide office space for their staff on the second and third floors. We were recently advised that the roof and stucco work will be completed this summer, so we decided to hold our symposium in the fall. We have a great program planned so please save the date!



Fall Symposium

September 23 at 10:00 a.m.



Marge Hulstrunk, one of our board members, will give a flower arranging demonstration. She has a flower business of her own, *Flowers by Marjorie*, and works at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum as the volunteer coordinator. She has an exceptional talent, and you're sure to enjoy watching her bring her flowers to life in spectacular arrangements. Following her lecture, we will have an auction for the arrangements.

Ken Selody from Atlock Farm also will be on hand to talk about fall planting. He will bring fall blooming plants, as well as some houseplants, which will be offered for sale.

Watch for more details about this exciting event in our fall newsletter, which will be published in August.

New Tree in the Native Garden

On April 13, the volunteers at the Cross Estate gathered in the Native Plant Area to plant a tree in honor of Mary Sambrook.

It was the best location for it because Mary worked so hard to develop that area. As Steve Palmer dug the hole, we all enjoyed the beautiful weather and remembered the good times we had when Mary was with us.

The tree had to be special, so Joan Ryder chose a Twisted Weeping Redbud *Cercis canadensis* "Covey" (*Mary Sambrookii*, as far as we are concerned).

Volunteer Outing

The Cross volunteers went to Greenwood Gardens for a tour that proved to be a very nice event. It is a green garden, but the bones are potentially beautiful and we can only imagine how lovely the original garden must have been. The restoration was a challenge to the staff who researched the plans from two different owners and crafted a new garden that blends the two.

The group began on the terrace and moved down the front lawn. Participants were able to see the greenhouse, the ground crew office building and the horse stable that oozes wealth with fine narrow paneling on the inside.

Following lunch, the group went on to the Reeves Reed Arboretum for a guided tour with Joan Ryder.

— Steve Palmer

After the planting, Steve blessed the event as follows: "We plant this tree in honor of Mary Sambrook for her years

of dedicated service and care for the Cross Estate Gardens. Also for her passion for gardening. We plant this tree with our love for Mary and her love for us."

Using Deer Park bottled water and a break-time paper coffee cup, Steve blessed the tree: "In the name of God our Creator; In the name of all that is great and wonderful; In the name of the Holy Spirit, we bless this tree."

Somehow it seemed appropriate to all of us that a weeping tree was planted because we will always miss Mary.

The event was a nice tribute to her but also a sincere expression of the spirit among the volunteers—something that was started from the very beginning with Jean Pope.



Plant Sale

Helen Mageau and Ann Bragg decided it was time to divide some plants in the Cross gardens, so the volunteers will be potting up over-abundant plants from the formal and native gardens. We'd like to offer them to our members for a small donation on Saturday, June 4 from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. (rain date June 5 from 1:00-4:00 p.m.).

In addition to some unusual plants donated by our volunteers from their own gardens, we will be offering the following:

From the native area: *Senecio aureus*, Golden Ragwort, *Anemone Canadensis*, Canadian Anemone, *Coreopsis verticillata* Threadleaf *Coreopsis*, *Caltha palustris*, Marsh Marigold

From the formal garden: *Echinops ritro*, Globe Thistle, *Hemerocallis* hybrids, Daylily, *Rudbeckia fulgida*, Black-eyed-Susan

We'd also like plants from any members who wish to donate them. Bring your friends and help us raise extra funds for the garden.

For more information, call Ann Bragg at 973/402-6457. We would appreciate your participation!

Spring Clean-Up Has Begun

The first project for the volunteers this spring was to clean out the shed. It started its life as Mr. Cross' studio. Apparently, fancy ironwork was one of his hobbies. There was junk everywhere—old dried-out hoses, cans of paint, old sprays, rusted wire, squirrel nests and a reproduction of an old-fashioned rope bed, among other things. We can see the floor now.

The weather this spring has been perfect for getting the gardens in shape—raking, mulching, deadheading, etc. April and May are lovely months to visit the walled garden and well worth the visit.

— Ruth Dittmann

New Superintendent Selected

Randy Turner, a 31-year National Park Service veteran park manager, is the new superintendent of the Morristown National Historical Park. He comes to us from Fairfield County, CT, where he has been superintendent of the Weir Farm National Historic Site since 2001.

“I look forward to working in a park I have visited many times over the past 20 years and am excited that I will be involved with activities commemorating the 225th Anniversary of the American

Revolution,” he said.

He joined the NPS in 1973 and has developed successful skills working with community groups, as well as NPS staff.

The NJHGF looks forward to working with him as we continue our volunteer contribution at the Cross Estate Gardens.

For more information on the events that will take place at the Morristown National Historical Park during the summer months, contact the National Park Service at 973/234-2016.

Volunteers Step Into Spring

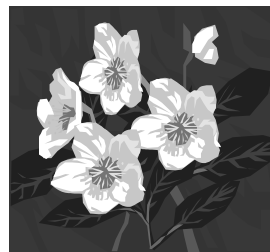
Spring has sprung! Come to the Cross Estate Gardens to see the beginning of spring. The magnolia tree is in magnificent bloom in the native garden, and many tiny blue scilla have blossomed next to the stone steps by the formal lawn garden. Daffodils can be found inside the formal garden, along with white flowers of myrtle (vinca minor). Many shrubs and trees are tinged with green leaves. The *Viburnum carlesesii* are budded and will soon set forth their heavenly scent.

The volunteers have gathered several times to begin the clean-up and maintenance of the many garden areas. On March 30, a group gathered with me to organize the large garden shed.

Maintenance of the grounds

continues each week on Wednesday mornings (weather permitting) at 9

a.m. We gladly welcome new volunteers who would like to join us for a few hours. We break at 10:30 and then work until noon. Please bring gloves and pruners. Other tools are provided. Come and see how satisfying it can be to work in these beautiful gardens!



— Ann Bragg

Cross Estate Garden Manager

Spring Botanical Notes

Yellow, white and blue are the most predominant flower colors of early spring. These are the colors pollinators can see the best.

The flowers of *Pulmonaria* (lungwort) and *Mertensia* (Virginia bluebells) have pink buds, which turn blue as they are pollinated. Pollinators will not go to the blue flowers knowing there is nothing there for them.

Pay attention in the month of May to the weeds getting started in the garden. They need to be dug out before they go to seed and multiply.

Plant Profile: *Aquilegia canadensis*/Canadian Columbine

With more and more emphasis being placed on the benefit of growing native plants, the Canadian Columbine stands out as an easy-to-grow May blooming beauty. Its profuse red and yellow blossoms add a note of color to the pastel pallet of April and May.

Like all Columbines, the life span is only 3-4 years. They like evenly moist, rich soil but will tolerate poorer soils. Sun with afternoon shade is the ideal location, but they are quite happy in light shade. Deadheading will lengthen the bloom period but to continue the production of new plants, let some flowers go to seed. Canadian Columbine, being a species, comes true from seed.

All columbines are susceptible to leaf miner. Cut the plant to the ground and a new mound of fresh leaves will emerge in about a month. It is worth a visit to see how our native plants can enhance the spring garden or stand on their own.

— Helen Mageau

Friends Like You Make It Possible!



In February, our Membership Chairman Rosalind Dujardin mailed reminders for membership renewal. Without your generous support, we can't maintain the gardens. Our volunteers devote many hours of their time to keep the gardens in good condition. Their spirit is amazing and without their work, we would be unable to continue. The same holds true for our membership. Friends like you make it possible for us to update the gardens, to maintain them and to pay for a part-time manager who has taken Mary Sambrook's place.

We feel fortunate that we have been able to accomplish all that we have. Jean Pope's dream when she discovered the garden in 1977 was to bring it back to life, and she left it in good hands and in good condition. Mary Sambrook volunteered to take over as the Horticulture Director and not only kept the gardens in good shape, but also encouraged the volunteers to keep coming and increase in number. She also developed the Native Plant Area and did an excellent job in all of the garden areas for Mansion in May.

Now we need to keep the gardens going. We feature a formal walled garden, shade gardens planted with ferns, shrubs and perennials, a vine-covered pergola, Mountain Laurel allee, Native Plant Area including sun and shade-living plants, ornamental grasses, shrubs, hollies and trees.

As you know, no garden is ever finished. The Cross 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.

We have several membership categories to suit every individual situation. To join us or learn more, visit our Web site at www.crossestategardens.org or call the National Park Service at 73/539-2016. You also may send your membership donation to the New Jersey Historical Garden Foundation, P.O. Box 712, Bernardsville, NJ 07924-0712.

We encourage and appreciate your support!



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