Cross Estate Gardens Fall Event

A Fall Flurry in a Country Garden

Thursday, September 25
1 to 4 p.m.

Our fall event will feature a lecture by Marta McDowell on “Then and Now: Historic Gardens of Northern New Jersey”, a look at the past and present of this area’s former grand gardens dating from 1890 to 1940. Ms. McDowell, who resides in Chatham, is a landscape design specialist and a historic landscape teacher at Drew University and New York Botanical Garden. For the lecture from 1-2 pm, Ms. McDowell will use both vintage and current photographs to illustrate her subject. She will explore the golden age of gardens as it occurred in this region and recount the lives of the estate owners who socialized with each other and knew some of the notable landscape designers of the day including Frederick Law Olmsted, Martha Brookes Hutcheson, Ellen Biddle Shipman, Beatrix Farrand and others. Among the owners, including William Redmond Cross and his wife, Julia Appleton Newbold Cross, were the Fosterfield and Twombly families. She will also note how the quintessential period designs and plantings can be applied to today’s home gardens or serve as inspiration.

The Flurry will continue from 2-4 pm with a traditional cream tea and tours of the Cross Estate Gardens. Available for purchase to benefit the non-profit NJHGF will be planted “crazy containers” and “Go Green! Buy your own tea cup!” featuring bone china tea cups and saucers in floral patterns donated from private collections.

Registration is requested. Admission is $25 for members, $30 for non-members. All proceeds assist in the preservation of the Cross Estate Gardens. Please use the enclosed Registration Form to register and send your check, payable to NJHGF, to New Jersey Historical Garden Foundation, PO Box 712, Bernardsville, NJ 07924.
Volunteer Spotlight: Lillian and Stephen Fogle

Not all of our Wednesday morning volunteers toil in the Cross Estate Gardens – planting, pruning and weeding. A noteworthy exception is the husband and wife team of Lillian and Steve Fogle. The Fogles enhance the effectiveness of the other volunteers’ gardening by performing “non-gardening” functions.

For the past 10 years, since Steve retired as professor at County College of Morris, he and Lillian have been faithful volunteers in our gardens. Lillian performs the vital service of supplying and preparing the food and drink for our 10:30 a.m. break under the stone pergola. During the hot summer months Lillian provides us with chilled wedges of freshly cut watermelon and iced tea. During the cooler months it’s pastry and coffee or hot chocolate. It’s what keeps the volunteers going and provides a good setting for the camaraderie that quickly develops among our volunteers.

Steve acts as our “facility manager”, a man of many talents with a good electrical, plumbing, masonry and building background. No job is too difficult for Steve. For example, when lightning hit our irrigation system, Steve repaired it and got the water flowing again. When the volunteer-installed deer fencing needed bracing at the corners, Steve quickly did that job. As he did with building two compost bins and repairing the stone steps in the gardens. We truly appreciate all Steve and Lillian do so willingly and so well for the Cross Estate Gardens.

Join our Volunteers

From early April through the end of November, our hearty group of volunteers meets every Wednesday morning from 9 a.m. to noon to work in the historic Walled Garden, the Native Plant Garden, the kiwi vine and wisteria covered pergola, the Mountain Laurel allee and the other garden areas near the Cross Estate mansion. Tea/coffee/hot chocolate plus baked treats are provided during our 10:30 a.m. coffee break under the pergola. Please join us on Wednesday mornings in the garden.

Plant Sale a Huge Success!

Our Plant Sale, held on Saturday morning, June 7, surpassed last year’s successful sale by 40%! A big ‘thank you’ to all who purchased our plants and also to our volunteers who worked many long hours preparing for and running this sale. Thanks also to all of our donors, especially to our volunteer donors, and to Four Seasons Nursery in Englishtown which donated 13 trees and shrubs to our sale. We eagerly look forward to next year’s Plant Sale on Saturday, June 6, 2009.
We are thrilled to announce that the New Jersey Arborists International Society of Arboriculture (NJAISA) has selected the Cross Estate Gardens as the site of their 2008 NJAISA Work Day Project. On Saturday, December 6, approximately 150 professional arborists, from Bartlett Tree Experts, Tamke Tree Experts, SavATree, Aspen Tree Experts Co. and many other companies, will volunteer their expert services at the Cross Estate. They will arrive early in the morning on that Saturday and spend the entire day pruning trees and shrubs and clearing hazard trees from the Cross Estate grounds. Badly in need of professional pruning are the overgrown kiwi vines and the wisteria that have been growing on the 130-foot long stone pergola for the past 75 years. Also, in the past year large limbs from a silver maple, a hemlock and a copper beech have fallen perilously close to where our volunteers work. By pruning dead branches from our large trees and removing the hazard trees, the NJAISA volunteers will make the Cross Estate a safer and more enjoyable place to visit.

While, the NJAISA are volunteering their professional services (valued at approximately $125,000), we at NJHGF will in return make a $17,000 contribution to NJAISA to cover their administrative costs. We now appeal to our members and supporters to make a special donation to NJHGF to cover this $17,000 cost. In addition to our donation, the volunteers of NJHGF will feed 125 hungry arborists breakfast and lunch that day. We appreciate any help you can give us.

Carolyn Lydon will once again teach her popular wreath-making workshop in the Cross Estate library on Sunday, December 7, from 1-3 p.m. Using natural branches, dried seedpods, flowers, fruits and pinecones, each participant will create and take home a unique and fabulous wreath.

Fee: Members $60; Non-Members $70.

To register please use the enclosed Registration Form and send your check, payable to NJHGF, to NJ Historical Garden Foundation, PO Box 712, Bernardsville, NJ 07924.
Visit Us Online

Be sure to check out the Cross Estate Gardens website at www.crossestategardens.org. It was redesigned in 2006 by our webmaster Ann Campbell and funded by a grant from the NJ Committee of the Garden Club of America. Our sponsor for the grant was the Garden Club of Somerset Hills. We thank all for their generosity.

Ann continues to periodically expand and update the site. If you have any suggestions for more improvements, please use the “contact us” tab on the site.

Tours of the Cross Estate Gardens

Tours of the gardens are available every Wednesday at 10 am. Tours take approximately one-half hour. If your group would like to schedule a tour of the gardens on another day or time, please contact Joan Ryder at 973-376-0348. There is a suggested contribution of $50 requested for group tours other than those conducted on Wednesday mornings.

Membership Appeal

Support the Cross Estate Gardens by becoming a member of the New Jersey Historical Garden Foundation, a non-profit 501(c)(3) foundation. Membership categories are as follows:

- Individual $25
- Family $40
- Friend $100
- Garden Club $100
- Sponsor $250
- Patron $500
- Special Donation $___

Please make your check payable to NJHGF and mail it to New Jersey Historical Garden Foundation, PO Box 712, Bernardsville, NJ 07924. Thank you.