



The Cross Estate Gardens

New Jersey Historical Garden Foundation

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2009

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, but not funded by, the National Park Service, U. S. Department of Interior, to preserve the Cross Estate Gardens.

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Plant Sale

Saturday, June 6, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Please join in the fun at our 5th annual Plant Sale on the first Saturday in June under the pergola in the Cross Estate Gardens. Our Plant Sale will be filled with divisions from our shady Native Plant Garden and our sunny/part shady Walled Garden, plus donated plants from our volunteers' gardens. In addition to perennials, we will have some small trees and shrubs. All funds raised at this sale will help the volunteers of the NJHGF care for the Cross Estate Gardens. Your support of our Plant Sale is greatly appreciated!

Propagation Workshop

Saturday, July 11, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Carolyn Lydon will again conduct a propagation workshop of softwood cuttings taken from some of the Cross Estate's beautiful shrubs as well as cuttings from her own unique garden. The workshop will be held outside the Cross Estate library, where participants will be instructed on various methods of propagation and will take home a flat of planted cuttings with instructions on how to care for them. Fee: Members \$12; Non-Members \$15. To register, please send your check, payable to NJHGF, to New Jersey Historical Garden Foundation, PO Box 712, Bernardsville, NJ 07924.

"The Gardens of Jockey Hollow" Garden Tour

Thursday, May 28, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Bernardsville Garden Club is presenting this notable garden tour of five private gardens plus the Cross Estate Gardens, all along Jockey Hollow Road in Bernardsville. Tickets are \$40 per person. There will also be three boutiques, light refreshments and a plant sale at the Cross Estate Gardens (in addition to our regular Plant Sale on June 6). Tickets are by reservation only and must be purchased by May 14. Mail payment to the Bernardsville Garden Club, PO Box 81, Bernardsville, NJ 07924. For information please phone (908) 221-0857 or e-mail agmancuso@aol.com.

Meet Our Two New Board Members

Marta McDowell and Ann Meehan were elected to the Board of Trustees last November. Our two new Board members are regular volunteers in the Cross Estate Gardens with special skills and knowledge that greatly enhance our Board.

Marta McDowell lives, writes and gardens in Chatham, NJ. She shares her garden with her husband, Kirke Bent, her crested cockatiel, Sydney, and approximately 10,000 honeybees. Her garden writing has appeared in popular publications such as *Woman's Day*, *Fine Gardening* and *The New York Times*. Scholars and specialists have read her essays on American authors and their horticultural interests in the journals *Hortus* and *Arnoldia*.

Following the relationship between the pen and the trowel led Marta to the poet Emily Dickinson. Marta's book, *Emily Dickinson's Gardens*, was published by McGraw-Hill in 2005. If you visit the Emily Dickinson Museum in Amherst, MA, you can stroll the grounds with a landscape audio tour that Marta scripted in 2007.



Marta teaches landscape history and preservation at the New York Botanical Garden and Drew University. She teaches gardening classes for the Chautauqua Institution. She is a popular lecturer on topics ranging from design history to plant combinations at museums, arboreta and garden clubs. She has been a featured speaker at locations ranging from Wave Hill to the Cummer Museum of Art in Jacksonville, Florida.

Marta's latest gardening adventure was a six-month working holiday in England. She interned at the Royal Horticultural Society's Rosemoor in Devon and at the Chelsea Physic Garden in London.

Ann Meehan, who was born in New York City, moved to Bernardsville with her husband Raymond 37 years ago. They have three grown daughters and one grandson.



Ann is a graduate of Seton Hall University in South Orange and a former member of the Bernardsville Junior Women's Club. She is currently a member of the Bernardsville Garden Club, where she holds the position of Secretary.

Ann began volunteering at the Cross Estate Gardens seven years ago after mentioning to a friend that she had time on her hands and he replied "come up to the garden". Thus began Ann's newfound love – Gardening 101. From raking the leaves under the pergola to weeding in the Walled Garden – "Is this a weed?", Ann progressed to planting bulbs and returning the next spring to make sure they bloomed. Ann found that after lessons by fellow volunteers in dividing plants and a class in propagating them, she developed more confidence in her gardening skills.

Most important to Ann is belonging to the group of dedicated gardening volunteers, from the experienced horticulturists to the gardening regulars, who faithfully come every Wednesday morning from late March to November to see that the gardens are at their very best for visitors.

Appreciation to Past Board Members

The Board extends its profound thanks and appreciation to three Board members who left the Board at the end of last year.

Steve Palmer, who was a very willing and dedicated volunteer and Board member for a decade, resigned from the Board last November when he relocated to Delaware to work there as a chaplain. Of course, in his spare time Steve volunteers with a green thumb group in Rehoboth. Steve, we wish you great luck and satisfaction with your new position.

Sonnie Reutelhuber, whose Board term ended last November, was an extremely active Board member for

decades. She is fondly appreciated for all she did on the Board, from being past President to past Secretary to Food Coordinator for fundraising events. We all hope she regularly comes back to visit and enjoy the gardens.

Craig Johnston, local artist and muralist, also left the Board last November when his term expired. We appreciate all Craig did for the Cross Estate Gardens, especially his obtaining an extremely attractive workshed for the gardening docents to use during Mansion in May in 2003. Again, we all hope Craig regularly comes back to visit and enjoy the gardens.

Work Day Project: NJ Arborists, I.S.A.

On a cold Saturday, last December 6th, volunteers from the New Jersey Arborists, International Society of Arboriculture spent all day at the Cross Estate cutting, pruning, chipping, and hauling away over 100 invasive Norway maples, a dozen very diseased hemlocks, a diseased huge silver maple next to the pergola, a dead black cherry in the Native Plant Garden, various dead trees adjacent to the Native Plant Garden, the European



beech that was split at its base crotch which resulted in one of its two main leaders dying, dead sassafras trees near the house, and various hollies that needed restorative pruning. In addition, several volunteers devoted all day to ornamental pruning of the small trees in the Native

Plant Garden and the small trees around the Cross Estate mansion. What an improvement! You can now see the unique stone water tower that before was hidden by scores of invasive Norway maples. It is now safer for the volunteers and visitors to walk on the grounds and in the gardens. We thank the arborists for selecting the Cross Estate as the site of their annual Work Day. Also, a big ‘thank you’ to all who donated towards NJHGF’s \$17,000 contribution to NJA-ISA.



Tree Planting Memorial Service for Ruth Dittmann

It was a sad day for all of us last December when we learned that our gardening friend and fellow volunteer, Ruth Dittmann, passed away on December 1 from complications from a stroke suffered two months earlier. For many years after retiring from her editor’s position at Silver Burdett & Ginn in Morristown, Ruth was a very loyal and dedicated volunteer in the Cross Estate Gardens and a helpful Board member in charge of volunteers. Cheerful and helpful (with a quirky little smile), Ruth truly enjoyed the time she spent in the gardens with her fellow volunteers. In her memory we will have a tree planting memorial service at the Cross Estate Gardens, led by pastor Steve Palmer, on Saturday, May 9, at 11 a.m., at which time we will honor her memory by planting a Sugar Maple outside the walled garden, within sight of the volunteers’ gate.



“Research, Management and Gardening Techniques for Your Historic Garden”

Class at Cross Estate Gardens on May 2

Marta McDowell, NJHGF Board member and Drew University instructor, will present a hands-on garden restoration class for Drew University at the Cross Estate Gardens on Saturday, May 2, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The course will cover how to maintain restored landscapes: planning and documenting, as well as hands-on gardening techniques. Students will learn how to create and implement a conservation plan. Registration is through the Historic Preservation Department at Drew University in Madison. The cost for the one-day class is \$115 and earns .6 CEU credits.



Become a Member

The NJHGF is always looking for new members to support its all-volunteer work in the Cross Estate Gardens. Every dollar donated goes into the gardens. Please become a member today, if you're not already a supporter. Membership rates are as follows:

Individual	\$25	Family	\$40
Friend	\$100	Sponsor	\$250
Patron	\$500		

Please mail your check, payable to NJHGF, to NJ Historical Garden Foundation, PO Box 712, Bernardsville, NJ 07924-0712. Thank you.

Come to the Plant Sale

June 6, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

"The early bird catches the worm!"

Join our Volunteers

From early April through the end of November, our hearty group of volunteers meets every Wednesday morning from 9 am 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 home. Tea/coffee/hot chocolate plus baked treats are provided during our 10:30 a.m. coffee break under the pergola. Please join us every Wednesday morning or whenever your schedule allows.

Tours of the Cross Estate Gardens

Tours of the gardens are available every Wednesday at 10 a.m. 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 tours other than those conducted on Wednesday mornings.

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