



# The Cross Estate Gardens

New Jersey Historical Garden Foundation

[www.crossestategardens.org](http://www.crossestategardens.org)

## NEWSLETTER

**Fall 2023**

Thursday, September 21, 2023, 1-3 p.m., Cross Estate Library

Register early: Members \$30; Non-Member \$35

Mail check to NJHGF, PO Box 712, Bernardsville, NJ 07924

*Talk & Tea with Jenny Rose Carey  
Grow More Flowers:  
for You and for Pollinators*

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.

*The New Jersey Historical Garden  
Foundation Board of Trustees*

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You've saved the date, now it's time to buy your ticket and get excited! Excited about delectable sweet and savory treats prepared by the CEG Volunteers. Excited about tea time. Excited about being at the Cross Estate Gardens. And, especially excited about our guest speaker, Jenny Rose Carey!

Jenny Rose will be back at the CEG to talk about designing personalized flower beds that are seasonal and varied. Finding the perfect plant mix to appeal to you and the pollinators. Plants, pollinators and you: Perfect together!

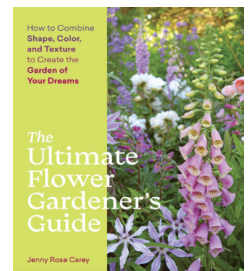


*Jenny Rose Carey is a renowned gardener, educator, historian, and author who has been lecturing nationally and internationally for many years. She is an avid hands-on gardener who has gardened in both England and the United States. Her Victorian property, Northview, contains diverse garden spaces, including a cutting garden, an herb garden, a dry garden, and various mixed flower beds.*

*Jenny Rose is the former senior director at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Meadowbrook Farm in Jenkintown and worked at Temple University for over a decade, first as an adjunct professor in the Department of Landscape Architecture and Horticulture and then as director of the Ambler Arboretum.*

*Jenny Rose and her gardens have been featured on the PBS series *The Victory Garden*, in the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *GROW* magazine, and *The Pennsylvania Gardener*. She is the co-author with Mary Anne Fry of *A Century of Cultivation*, the author and photographer for *Glorious Shade*, Timber Press, 2017, and *The Ultimate Flower Gardener's Guide*, Timber Press, 2022.*

<https://jennyrosecarey.com>



**PLEASE NOTE:** The Cross Estate Gardens is part of the Morristown National Historical Park (MNHP) of the National Park Service (NPS).

Before visiting, please check the NPS website for current park status and alerts:

<https://www.nps.gov/morr/index.htm>

# News from the Morristown National Historical Park (MNHP) and Cross Estate Gardens

## Many thanks: Plant Sale, Volunteers, Grants and Donations

- Best Plant Sale Ever, netting over \$7,600! Thanks go out to our fabulous volunteers, plant donors, and shoppers!
- With our 20-year-old brochure in need of a revamp, we're very appreciative of the generous \$1,560 grant from the newly formed Friends of Jockey Hollow (Leslie Bensley, Executive Director) to design and print a new, vibrant Cross Estate Gardens brochure. Grab a copy at the information kiosk.
- Our friends at the Garden Club of Somerset Hills responded to our request for a \$600 grant for a new bench with the donation of a beautiful, two-seater teak bench that is on the upper level of the courtyard, outside the sunroom.
- Now that the bluestone walkway project is complete (see related article on page 3), we'd like to send out another thank you to the Garden Club of Somerset Hills for their support of that project.
- We are so grateful to have a bumper crop of new volunteers this year. The NJHGF Cross Estate Gardens extends a warm, appreciative welcome to : Donna, Lulu, Maureen, Chris, and Chetan.
- And check out this article by Gary Stoller in ForbesLife, "New Jersey Gardens Offer Solitude, Beauty, History" [https://www.forbes.com/sites/garystoller/2023/07/10/new-jersey-gardens-offer-solitude-beauty-history/amp/?fbclid=IwAR0al12VU-Xivmrn7AM9OqKnnLJIVjxbL06M86oQzDdI4s\\_bo6pKGD3DZs](https://www.forbes.com/sites/garystoller/2023/07/10/new-jersey-gardens-offer-solitude-beauty-history/amp/?fbclid=IwAR0al12VU-Xivmrn7AM9OqKnnLJIVjxbL06M86oQzDdI4s_bo6pKGD3DZs)

## Those Lazy Hazy Crazy Days of... May 1780 & May 2023

One privilege of being the editor of this newsletter is receiving regular emails from Pam Dobben of the National Park Service (NPS). Often, Pam passes along interesting articles written by Park Rangers and NPS Educators. One, in particular, caught my eye recently, as the volunteers had canceled work (a rarity) in early May due to dangerous air quality. It was written by Park Ranger Eric Olsen.

Eric's write-up, entitled "History Repeats Itself: May 1780 & May 2023", started with the present day, "poor air quality and hazy sky due to smoke from forest fires" in Canada. He observed that this was nothing new, that "the same thing happened here and in New England in May 1780. In fact, at that time, it got so hazy, people referred to it as the 'Dark Day.' Though like our current situation, the effect wasn't confined to a single day." The essay continues with quotes from George Washington's diaries and those of some of the soldiers (below) and concludes by saying, "Just like our current hazy skies, the dark day of 1780 was most likely caused by smoke from forest fires in Canada."

May 17, 1780, George Washington's diary: "*Clear (except being smoky) & morning rather cool—wind being Northerly—but shifting afterwards to East it grew raw & disagreeably cool.*"

May 18, 1780, George Washington's Diary: "*“Heavy & uncommon kind of Clouds – dark & at the same time a bright and reddish kind of light intermixed with them – brightening & darkning alternately. This continued till afternoon when the sun began to appear.”*"

May 19, 1780, Lt. Colonel Josiah Harmar: "*Cloudy and very dark.*"

Unlike our present day situation, people of the time "could not explain why it was happening. People checked their almanacs and there was no eclipse predicted for May 19<sup>th</sup>. Some people thought it was a precursor to the end of the world. In a letter to Nathaniel Greene, Major William Blodget reported from Providence Rhode Island that, "*many of our big [i.e., important] folks began to look very serious on the occasion; and divines have been peculiarly attentive to imbrace this favourable occasion to awaken their hearers. Some have asserted it to be the dark day spoken of by our savoir, as a warning to us to prepare for the desolation of this world. Some good effects perhaps it has had, as many who refused the currency [paper money] for some articles, now think to avert the judgment of heaven by taking it instead of Specie [coins of silver].*" Other opinions are mentioned in the essay as well.

George Washington Weather Diary < National Archives, Founders Online, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/01-03-02-0006-0006-0017>

Lt. Colonel Josiah Harmar: Lieut. Colonel Josiah Harmar's Journal No. 1 Commencing November 11<sup>th</sup> 1778; Josiah Harmar Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan

Major William Blodget to Nathaniel Greene: The Papers of General Nathanael Greene, Volume V, 1 November 1779-31 May 1780, Richard K. Showman, editor, Robert E. McCarthy, Senior Associate Editor, Dennis M. Conrad and E. Wayne Carp, Associate Editors, c. 1989 The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, Published for the Rhode Island Historical Society, pg. 569-570.

# We weren't just leading you down a garden path...

...when we said that the new bluestone walkway in the Upper Garden is complete. It is, and it's beautiful, 46-feet long, bluestone and gravel.

Partially funded by a 2022 grant from the Garden Club of Somerset Hills, the remaining funds came from the NJHGF capital improvement budget.

The project was led by David DePodwin, who also planned the path and shopped for the bluestones. The rest of the core walkway team were Ron Herold, Ethan Hogan, and Mike Kurek. Others, like Steve Fogle (seen at the far right in the second picture below), were involved as well.

Physical work on the project began in September 2022 with the delivery of 3.6 tons of irregularly shaped, 1½ - 2" thick bluestone slabs and 3/8" decorative pea gravel. The slabs were heavy, requiring the use of dollies and two to four volunteers to move each one into place. Dave said, "Each volunteer, mostly Mike, Ron, Ethan and myself, provided help whether excavating, leveling, selecting and positioning, the best stone for a given area while complementing the shape of adjoining stones in concert with the overall layout pattern. Yes, there is a pattern, come check it out and see if you can assess our stone puzzle. Ethan H. showed he has an especially adept eye at selecting and marrying adjoining stones. (Ethan, you rock. as do all our walkway volunteers!)"

Most of the 100+ hours of work was completed before the CEG volunteer winter hiatus, and the walkway team completed the project with two weeks to spare before the plant sale. Dave concluded, "Our goal was 'to make it as though it was part of the original garden design as to materials, placement and method of construction. All in all, it was a fun team project, never easy going, and helped build a few muscles along the way. The rewarding outcome produced a beautiful and functional walkway, one which we believe will survive the test of time, making gardeners and visitors to the Cross Estate Gardens proud, as are we."

Before...



During...



After!



Come and visit the CEG and have a stroll along the beautiful new walkway leading to the formal garden.



**Save the Date!**

*2024 NJHGF  
Cross Estate Gardens Plant Sale*

Saturday, May 4, 2024



# Call for Volunteers

The NJHGF Cross Estate Gardens Volunteers will always welcome more helpers.

Besides weeding, planting, and pruning in the various gardens, there's a current project to paint the large shed behind Grace's Garden.

Join our fabulous group of Volunteers today!

Contact [info@crossestategardens.org](mailto:info@crossestategardens.org).



## The Cross Estate Gardens

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Post Office Box 712, Bernardsville, NJ 07924  
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Search for Cross Estate Gardens

### Become a Member

The Cross Estate Gardens, one of this area's treasures, receives volunteer help but no funding from the National Park Service (who manages the property). We rely upon membership support to pay for the plants and materials for the gardens. Please consider supporting the NJHGF's efforts by joining. Every dollar donated goes into the gardens.

To become a member:

1. Cut this form and send it in with your tax-deductible check, payable to NJHGF (New Jersey Historical Garden Foundation), PO Box 712, Bernardsville, New Jersey 07924. Or
2. Go to the Membership page on our website (<https://www.crossestategardens.org/join/>) and pay via PayPal.

Choose your Membership Category:

- Individual \$25
- Family \$50
- Friend \$100
- Sponsor \$250
- Patron \$500

Tell us about your preferences:

- I prefer to read this Newsletter online
- I like receiving a print copy of the Newsletter in the mail

Would you like to volunteer:

- I'd like to help with the gardening on a regular basis
- I'd like to help with a specific project in the gardens

Tell us who you are:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

email: \_\_\_\_\_

*The NJHGF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.*