

# George Landis Arboretum

## Newsletter

Lape Road  
Spring 1996

Esperance, New York  
Vol. 15, No. 2



### Spring Benefit 1996 - Mary D'Alessandro

The Spring Benefit, the arboretum's first fundraiser of the year, was established by Betty Corning in 1986. Initially it was held at the Glen Sanders Mansion, then at The Desmond.

#### **How this year's benefit is different**

The Fort Orange Club on Washington Avenue, Albany will be the site of the George Landis Arboretum's 1996 Spring Benefit. It will be held on Saturday, April 27 from 4 - 7 p.m.

Waiters will serve hors d'oeuvres as you peruse the displayed silent auction items which include trips, theatre tickets, jewelry, and the traditional garden items. A live auction will follow.

Assemblyman Paul Tonko, Master of Ceremonies, will introduce celebrity guest Robert J. Lurtsema whose deep, resonant voice is well known to listeners of Morning Pro Musica on WAMC. Mr. Lurtsema will present an illustrated dramatic reading of Jean Giono's "The Man Who Planted Trees." After the auction and performance you will have the opportunity to remain and have dinner with Mr. Lurtsema at the Fort Orange Club; reservations must be made in advance.

#### **What has stayed the same**

A successful Spring Benefit depends on obtaining auction items...and we need your help. If you know an individual or business that would donate an item or a service, let us know. Items may include art work, theatre tickets, a weekend at an inn, a stay at a vacation home, plants, bulbs, garden tools and furniture, etc. If you would like to have us send an invitation to a friend or acquaintance of yours, if you would like more information, or if you can offer assistance, contact our office at 875-6935.

### Volunteer News - Gloria Van Duijn

Even though the spring bulbs and woody plants have just begun to bloom, volunteers have been active all winter. Many thanks to Phoebe Downs, Jerry Faylo, Florence Grimm, Sonja Javarone, Arlene Kien, Veronica Stratton, Lucinda Willemain and Carol Wock for their help with mailings. Thanks to Florence Grimm who phoned local businesses requesting items for our auction. (We have lots of interesting and varied items - including a soccer ball autographed by Pele (!) - so don't miss our spring benefit.) We could not have had a booth at the Capital District Flower Show without volunteers to provide information and answer questions. Thank you to Florence Grimm, Veronica Stratton, Bob Kanarkiewicz, Carol Loucks, Rick and Mary Wallace, John Keeffe, Mary D'Alessandro, Sonja Javarone and Claudia McLaughlin for trudging through the snow and poor weather that weekend to help with our booth, and special thanks to Sonja for the photographic displays featuring flowers

at the arboretum. Special ongoing thanks to Fran Finkbeiner who took over as editor of the newsletter in the Autumn of 1995.

With the onset of spring, volunteers are needed more than ever. For anyone unfamiliar with the activities available to a volunteer worker, here's a brief rundown. Outdoor projects include weeding, clearing brush and vines, mulching, clearing trails, mowing, picking up sticks and branches fallen during the winter, repairing stone walls, etc. If you like to talk about plants, or just like to talk, you would be perfect to guide groups around the grounds or to help out with our booths at fairs and shows. Volunteers are needed to help in the gift shop, with mailings, answering phones and with other office jobs. Greeters are needed to introduce speakers and educators at classes and workshops. Specific events which depend on volunteer help are as follows.

**April 20, Saturday - Volunteer Work Day.** Bring your gloves and tools. After the ravages of winter, including wind and rain storms, the grounds need picking up and special care. The effects of the past winter will be with us longer than we would like. Heavy winds blew down the arboretum's Bristlecone pine (*Pinus aristata*). The horticulture committee is determining whether it can be saved. Deer caused extensive damage this year, in part due to last summer's drought which resulted in a decrease in natural foods. This was compounded by deep snow which covered existing food and allowed the deer to get into fenced areas.

#### **May 18 & 19, Rare Plant Sale.**

Set up on the 17th and morning of the 18th. Salespeople are also needed.

*Continued on the following page >*

## *From the Board of Trustees - Carol Wock*

Winter brings few visitors to the arboretum. Scheduled activities are kept at a minimum, and are usually held off-site. Despite the lack of outside activity, the winter months have found trustees and staff planning for the next three seasons. We include a complete 1996 calendar in this newsletter along with descriptions and registration information for second quarter activities.

Adult education programs at the arboretum have traditionally been the responsibility of the Education Committee, and this has continued. Lucinda Willemain and her committee have done an outstanding job of planning the Saturday adult classes. Claudia McLaughlin, assisted by George Steele, has expanded our programming for children as you will note in the insert in this newsletter.

In January, Mary D'Alessandro joined us as part-time consultant for fundraising and special events. We became aware of her special talents when, as a volunteer, she decorated a tree for the arboretum at the Festival of Trees held at the Albany Institute of History and Art.

The board has been particularly interested in developing a relationship with the Plant Science Department at SUNY Cobleskill and we are pleased to welcome R. Christian Cash as a trustee. Chris is Associate Professor of Plant Science and has been on the Cobleskill faculty since 1987. Previously he was on the faculty of Temple University and had extensive experience in nursery management before beginning his teaching career.

During the past year, research and discussion has convinced the trustees that creation of a master plan for our long term development is essential. It is tempting, of course, to postpone such planning while we concentrate on solving the present financial crisis. However, all of our study indicates that having a master plan facilitates all aspects of arboretum growth, including financial growth, and we have begun the planning process. On Saturday, March 2, board, staff, and invited guests with a particular interest in the arboretum met for an all day planning session, facilitated by Leila Salmon. We have made a good beginning; much remains to be done - and we'll keep you informed.

## NATURE'S CALENDAR

*What's blooming and what's doing at the arboretum.....Sonja Javarone*

### APRIL

Get out your waterproof shoes or boots. The arboretum is awakening from the sleep of a long winter. The catkins are on the willows; the Chinese witch-hazel is blooming; snowdrops, winter aconite, leucojum and other spring bulbs are lending a symphony of color to an otherwise drab landscape; daphne, Cornelian cherry, early rhododendrons, azaleas, and magnolias are signalling the beginning of the blooming seasons; and the spectacular pasqueflower in the rock garden is a special reward for the April visitor. This is a special time. Don't miss it.

### MAY

It seems everything is blooming - trees, shrubs, bulbs, and early perennials. Color abounds throughout the arboretum. Gaywings, blood root, and trilliums emerge from the forest litter along the woodland trail; shad, viburnums, crabapples, cherries, lilacs, quince, azaleas, and rhododendrons are among the most pleasing attractions; bulbs and perennials provide a succession of bloom throughout the month. Visit the arboretum once a week during May. This is the month to treasure and renew your passion for natural beauty.

### JUNE

Spring blends into summer with late lilacs, rhododendrons, mountain laurels, mountain ashes, and spireas; the conifers are producing male and female cones, some with lovely structure and color; and the traditional June perennials - irises, clematis, and delphiniums dominate the gardens. June retains the fresh green and soft colors of spring, while hinting of the dramatic displays of summer to come.

### THE GEORGE LANDIS ARBORETUM NEWSLETTER

is published quarterly for its members. The arboretum's mission is to provide natural history and horticultural education through its programs and through its plant collection.

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Fran Finkbeiner

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*(Continued from page 1)*

## *Volunteer News*

### **May 18 & 19 - Rare Plant Sale.**

Set up on the 17th and morning of the 18th.  
Salespeople are also needed.

### **June 1, Saturday - Volunteer Work Day**

### **June 8, Saturday - Barn Sale**

If you are interested in helping with any of the above events and activities, or if you want to volunteer on a regular weekly or monthly basis, call our office. Volunteers are vital to the day-to-day operations at the arboretum. We welcome all of you.

# Bus Trips and Outings - Carol Wock

## Calendar

May 1, 2, 3	Gardens of the Brandywine Valley
May 11	Waterfalls and Wildflowers in Schoharie County
May 23	Connecticut Gardens: Cricket Hill and Hillside Gardens
June 27	Caprilands Herb Garden
September 18 & 19	The Fingerlakes: Cornell Plant Genetics Resources Unit at Geneva; vineyard tours and wine tasting
October 20	Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Massachusetts

### **May 1, 2, 3 - Gardens of the Brandywine Valley**

This special trip will visit five gardens, two of which are not usually open to the public. The first stop will be in Philadelphia to tour the pre-Revolutionary house and garden of John Bartram. Bartram was a naturalist, botanist, and explorer who with his son introduced more than 200 native plants into cultivation.

Thursday morning we will tour the Mt. Cuba Center for the Study of Piedmont Flora near Greenville, DE. Still a private garden, Mt. Cuba is open for only a few weeks each spring. Director Dr. Richard Lighty, who visited GLA in November, will guide our tour. Afterward we will go to nearby Longwood Gardens where we will have lunch and a guided tour. In the late afternoon we have a special invitation to visit the private garden of Dick and Sally Lighty.

After checking out of our motel on Friday morning, we will go to the Tyler Arboretum for a tour. Like ours, this arboretum is in the country on the site of a former farm.

The Brandywine Valley tour package includes:

- round trip transportation
- two nights at the Longwood Inn, with continental breakfast
- the tour at Bartram's Garden and afternoon tea
- box lunch on the trip down

*Registration deadline: April 12. Trip limited to 10 people.*

### **May 11, 9:30 a.m. to mid-afternoon - Waterfalls and Wildflowers**

The Landis Arboretum boasts wonderful views and beautiful plantings, but no waterfalls. However, the nearby Schoharie Creek and its tributaries have a variety of waterfalls within an hour's drive of the arboretum. Members Laura Lehtonen and Steve Young will lead this visit to five or six falls in Schoharie County, and examine the history, geology, and flora associated with each one.

Dress for short hikes, bring a lunch, and be prepared to carpool. The meeting location will be given to those who register.

*Note: Maximum of 18 participants. Not recommended for young children. Registration deadline: April 29; no refunds after that date.*

### **May 23 - Connecticut Gardens**

This day trip to northwestern Connecticut features two beautiful gardens, and also provides opportunity for shopping. First stop is Cricket Hill Garden near Litchfield to see a four acre garden of tree peonies. We will tour the garden, and orders may be placed for fall delivery.

Next stop is the Mountain View Inn in Norfolk where we will enjoy a buffet lunch. After lunch we go to nearby Hillside Gardens, the beautiful, naturalistic garden of Mary Ann and Fred McGourty for a relaxed visit and to shop in their sales area.

*Note: Maximum of 25 participants. Dress for walking on uneven ground. Registration deadline: May 3; no refunds after that date.*

### **June 27 - Caprilands**

Join us for a trip to the popular Caprilands Herb Garden near Coventry, Connecticut. Included in the day's events: an informative lecture about herbs, an herb luncheon, time for touring the gardens and for shopping. Those who have visited Caprilands are always eager to return - we expect this trip to fill quickly.

*Registration deadline: June 3; no refunds after that date.*

**THE REGISTRATION FORM FOR TRIPS AND OUTINGS FOLLOWS ON PAGE 7. Descriptions and registration form for the remaining trips will be published in the Summer issue of this newsletter.**

### Wish List

- .....Brand new picnic tables
- .....Clean wood chips for mulch

(And, we thank the anonymous donors of a brand new Craftsman shop vacuum cleaner with accessories!)

## Rare Plant Sale

Carol Wock

### Mark your calendars!

The annual spring plant sale is scheduled for May 18 and 19 starting at 10 a.m. on Saturday and 11 a.m. on Sunday. The sale will include both perennials and woody plants.

A large assortment of perennials will be available in several sizes and prices. In the past, a popular item has been delphiniums propagated by seed from England by member Janet Vinyard. These will be available in several colors; some of Janet's potted lilies will be for sale also.

An assortment of clematis will be offered, including the ever popular 'Betty Corning', along with 'Duchess of Albany' with bright pink, bell-shaped flowers. Large-flowered clematis varieties in deep red, purple, lavender, pink, and white have also been ordered.

A collection of hardy dwarf conifers propagated in the area but not readily available at area nurseries will be for sale.

A collection of small-size fragrant shrubs will be available: *Buddleia* (Butterfly Bush), *Viburnum Burkwoodii* 'Mohawk', and *Chionanthus virginicus* (large shrub or small tree), and others. Too, a quantity of completely hardy *Stewartia pseudocamillia*, propagated in Cobleskill, has been ordered.

Other special trees include Katsura, Pagoda dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*) and the Black Pussy Willow (*Salix melanostachys*).

This list is not complete - we are saving a few surprises. Members who have seedlings, rooted cuttings, or perennial divisions to share should give us a call.

Remember, members receive a 10% discount, so bring your membership card. The Acorn Shop will be open both days, and members may present their cards for a 10% discount on all but consignment items.

## Interested in Birding?

Gloria Van Duynes

### Join the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club!

The Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club is an active local organization with an ambitious schedule of trips, programs and special projects. The club offers local and out-of-state field trips, monthly bird-related programs, a bimonthly publication and a recorded information line, Birdline of Eastern New York.

The HMBC is preparing a bird-finding guide to New York's Capital Region. The guide will feature many of the fine birding sites including the Landis Arboretum, Five Rivers, Vischer Ferry, Thacher Park, and the Albany Pine Bush.

Of Spring birding at the arboretum, the draft of HMBC's site guide by authors Philip Johnson and Debbie Ellinger says, "From our experience, spring has been the best season at the Arboretum; a thorough exploration of the site is worthwhile. The plantings offer shelter and food, and you should see a number of migrating songbirds including Blackburnian Warbler, Magnolia Warbler and American Redstart. Watch also for Indigo Bunting. After parking in the lower lot, enter the planting at that point, or continue up the road a bit until bird song draws you into the trees. Winding through the plantings and then following along the edge of the woods often yields a good variety of species including warblers (Yellow, Common Yellowthroat, Blue-winged), Veery and American Goldfinch.


"After meandering through the planted area, you might cross to check out the upper pond and nearby woodpile before entering the woodland trail. The trail offers more woodland birds including Ovenbird and Pileated Woodpecker. At the end of the trail, continue down to the Willow Pond. The nearby shrub growth can produce such species as Rufous-sided Towhee, Cedar Waxwing and Prairie Warbler."

And, call 800-364-PLATES for the new bluebird license plate. The initial cost of the plate is \$39.50 which includes the \$25 annual fee dedicated to open space conservation and the one-time processing fees. If you wish a personalized plate of up to six characters, the initial cost is \$68 which includes a \$50 annual renewal fee, \$25 of which is dedicated to open space conservation.

## Bloom of the Century

OXFORD, England, June 12 (Reuters) - A rare South American Century Plant bloomed in Britain for the first time in 99 years after air conditioning broke down in a greenhouse at Oxford University's botanical gardens and the temperature soared, botanists said on Friday.

The plant last blossomed in 1896, shortly after it was acquired by Oxford. As the temperature rose, the 3-foot high plant grew a 12-foot high spike that flowered into hundreds of tiny blossoms.

	
George Landis Arboretum MEMBERSHIP FORM	
Yes, I would like to become a member!	
Name _____	
Address _____	
New Member	<input type="checkbox"/>
Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15 - \$1,000
Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15
Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25
Family	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
Contributor	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50
Supporter	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75
Patron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$125
Betty Corning Benefactor	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500
Fred Lape Founders Circle	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000
Garden Clubs and Businesses:	
Group	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
Contributor	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50
Supporter	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75
Patron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$125+
Make your check payable to Landis Arboretum and mail to: George Landis Arboretum PO Box 186 Esperance, NY 12066	
The arboretum is a non-profit organization. Membership fees above \$15 and donations are tax deductible.	

## Coming Attractions: Classes and Special Events

### Saturday Workshops and Classes for Adults

Unless otherwise noted, classes begin at the Meeting House at 10 am, and end at noon, with fees of \$5 for Arboretum members and \$8 for non-members; please refer to individual class descriptions for exceptions. Most Saturday workshops and classes do not require pre-registration, but those marked with a single asterisk (\*) require registration in advance, and those marked with a double asterisk (\*\*) require both registration and payment in advance. Checks should be made payable to George Landis Arboretum; please include the name of the class(es) and class date(s) with your payment. In general, classes are held rain or shine, but if in doubt, call the Arboretum at 875-6935.

**Bird Habitats at the Arboretum.** Saturday, May 25. We will tour the grounds and look for birds in various habitats. This walk will be lead by Gloria Van Duyne, our new director of development who is a member of the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club. Meet at 7:30 am in the lower parking lot. This class is free.

**Wildflowers of the Arboretum.** Saturday, June 1. Join wildlife botanist Laurie Swift on a walk through the native plant sections of the Arboretum grounds to discover flowering plants and learn about their interactions with their environment.

**Propagation from Cuttings.** Saturday, June 8. A hands-on workshop for those who wish to broaden their horticultural skills; participants will learn to take cuttings of plants (supplied by the Arboretum) and grow them into new plants. Please bring clippers if you have them. The class will be taught by Deborah Coyle, former horticultural intern at the Arboretum, now with the Schoharie Office of Cooperative Extension.

**Photographing Flowers and Plants,\*** Saturday, June 15. Arboretum photographer Sonja Javarone will cover basics of camera use and composition, as well as details about close-up photography for those who wish to improve their photography of plants. Instruction will be adapted to the needs of individual students.

**The Victorian Garden.** Saturday, June 22. Gardens in the Victorian style, still to be seen in some historic area gardens, will be the topic of this illustrated talk by Dr. John Heimke. Weather permitting, participants are invited to bring a picnic and take part in a croquet match on the lawn after lunch.

**Shrubs at the Arboretum.** Saturday, June 29. Here is an opportunity for those interested to learn about the smaller woody plants which can be grown in our area. Instructor Richard Southwick has been responsible for propagation and planting of many of the Arboretum's plants. He will be assisted by Ann Jaster, who will lead a walk around the grounds following the class.

**Culinary Herbs with Luncheon.\*\*** Saturday, July 13. Herbalist Shawn Schultz, owner of Apothecary Rose Shed in Pattersonville will present a program on growing and enjoying herbs, focusing on their use in cooking. An herbal luncheon cooked and served by Arboretum volunteers will be served following the talk. Herb plants will be available for sale. Cost for this program is \$8 for members and \$10 for non-members.

### Watercolor Weekend with Guy Corriero

Master watercolorist Guy Corriero will offer a very special three-day workshop of exciting demonstrations and individual instruction. Corriero's extraordinary technique offers a unique opportunity to share a special vision of the world, interpreted through the medium of watercolor. Sessions will be held Friday, May 31, Saturday, June 1, and Sunday, June 2, from 9 am to 4 pm each day. Workshop size is very limited, and early registration is recommended, since Corriero's workshops elsewhere fill very rapidly. Cost for this three-day program is \$150. Call the Arboretum office at 875-6935 for registration information.

### Arboretum Adventures for Kids

New this year, a nature program just for kids ages 5 to 10! Nature educator George Steele and The Scotia-Glenville Children's Museum will provide hands-on learning in the morning, then after lunch brought from home, kids will try nature games, crafts, and activities. Topics will range from backyard bugs to wildflowers, with individual dates and topics listed in the calendar of events. Registration and payment in advance are required; for an informational flyer, or registration information, call the Arboretum office at 875-6935.



**Barn  
Sale!**

**June 8**

**11 am - 4 pm**

Find bargains amid the potpourri of "treasures," including used books, housewares, flower pots, pot belly stoves and many other items at this sale!

# George Landis Arboretum

Events marked with \* require pre-registration; events marked with \*\* require pre-registration and pre-payment.

## April

- 19 •Star Party, 8 pm, Meeting House  
 20 •Volunteer Work Day, Spring Clean up, 9 am, Farmhouse  
 •Star Party, 8 pm, Meeting House  
 27 •Arbor Day Benefit with Robert J. Lurtsema, 4 pm, Fort Orange Club\*\*



For details on events from April through early July, see this newsletter. Details on later events will be described in upcoming newsletters.

## May

- 1,2,3 •Bus Tour: Gardens of the Brandywine Valley\*\*  
 9 •Drawing in the Greenhouse\*\* (part 1 of 6), 6 - 8:30 pm, Library  
 11 •Bus Tour: Waterfalls & Wildflowers in Schoharie County\*\*  
 12 •Free Family Workshop: Mother's Day Hawk Watch, all day, special workshop at 2 pm, Meeting House  
 16 •Drawing in the Greenhouse\*\* (part 2 of 6), 6 - 8:30 pm, Library  
 •Outdoor Watercolor Workshop\*\* 9am - 5 pm, Lower Parking Lot  
 18 •Rare Plant Sale, 11 am - 4 pm, Farmhouse  
 •Free Family Workshop: Sounds of the Spring Night, 7:30 - 9 pm, Meeting House  
 19 •Rare Plant Sale, 11 am - 4 pm, Farmhouse  
 22 Annual Meeting, 6 pm, Meeting House; all members welcome  
 23 •Bus Tour: Connecticut Gardens: Cricket Hill and Hillside Gardens\*\*  
 •Drawing in the Greenhouse\*\* (part 3 of 6), 6 - 8:30 pm, Library  
 25 •Saturday Class: Bird Habitats at the Arboretum, 7:30 am, Lower Parking Lot  
 30 •Drawing in the Greenhouse\*\* (part 4 of 6), 6 - 8:30 pm, Library  
 31 •Watercolor Workshop (Day 1 of 3 days, through June 2) with master watercolorist Guy Correiro\*\*



## June

- 1 •Saturday Class: Wildflowers of the Arboretum, 10 am, Meeting House  
 •Watercolor Workshop (day 2 of 3) with Guy Correiro\*\*  
 •Volunteer Work Day: Brush & Weed Clean up, 9 am, Farmhouse  
 2 •Watercolor Workshop (day 3 of 3) with Guy Correiro\*\*  
 6 •Drawing in the Greenhouse\*\* (part 5 of 6), 6 - 8:30 pm, Library  
 8 •Barn Sale, 11 am - 4 pm, Barn  
 •Saturday Class: Propagation from Cuttings, 10 am, Meeting House  
 •Free Family Workshop: Herpetology Hike, 10 - 11:30 am, Meeting House  
 13 •Drawing in the Greenhouse\*\* (part 6 of 6), 6 - 8:30 pm, Library  
 14 •Star Party, 10 pm, Meeting House  
 15 •Saturday Class: Photographing Flowers and Plants,\* 10 am, Meeting House  
 •Star Party, 10 pm, Meeting House  
 16 •Outdoor Watercolor Workshop\*\* 9 am to 5 pm, Lower Parking Lot  
 20 •Pen & Ink Botanical Art\*\* (Part 1 of 6), 6 - 8:30 pm, Library  
 22 •Saturday Class: The Victorian Garden, 10 am, Meeting House  
 23 •Free Family Workshop: Bird Watching for the Family, 2 - 3:30 pm, Meeting House  
 •Star Party: Sun/Moon Party, 4:30 pm, Meeting House  
 27 •Bus Trip: Caprilands Herb Garden, Coventry CT.\*\*  
 •Pen & Ink Botanical Art\*\* (Part 2 of 6), 6 - 8:30 pm, Library  
 29 •Saturday Class: Shrubs at the Arboretum, 10 am, Meeting House

# Calendar of Events 1996

Events marked with \* require pre registration; events marked with\*\* require pre-registration and pre-payment.

## July

- 10 •Arboretum Adventures for Kids: Mammals,\*\* 10 am - 1:30 pm, Meeting House
- 11 •Pen & Ink Botanical Art,\*\* (Part 3 of 6), 6 - 8:30 pm, Library
- 13 •Saturday Class: Culinary Herbs Program and Luncheon,\*\* 11 am, Meeting House  
•Free Family Workshop: Wiggly Water Wonders, 10 - 11:30 am, Meeting House
- 17 •Arboretum Adventures for Kids: Wildflowers,\*\* 10 am - 1:30 pm, Meeting House
- 18 •Pen & Ink Botanical Art,\*\* (Part 4 of 6), 6 - 8:30 pm, Library
- 20 •Saturday Class: Naming the Plants, 10 am, Library
- 24 •Arboretum Adventures for Kids: Backyard Bugs,\*\* 10 am - 1:30 pm, Meeting House
- 25 •Pen & Ink Botanical Art,\*\* (Part 5 of 6), 6 - 8:30 pm, Library
- 27 •Saturday Class: Preserving the American Chestnut, 10 am, Meeting House
- 30 •Free Family Workshop: Full Moon Campfire Sing Along, 8- 9:30 pm, Meeting House
- 31 •Arboretum Adventures for Kids: Pond & Field Habitats,\*\* 10 am-1:30 pm, Meeting House

July Date to be announced:  
Michael Polychrones, internationally famous flower arranger with a master floral arrangement demonstration and workshop



## August

- 1 •Pen & Ink Botanical Art,\*\* (Part 6 of 6), 6 - 8:30 pm, Library
- 3 •Saturday Class: Designing with Nature,\* 10 am, Meeting House
- 7 •Arboretum Adventures for Kids: Look Up to the Trees,\*\* 10 am - 1:30 pm, Meeting House
- 10 •Saturday Class: Bonsai, 10 am, Meeting House  
•Free Family Workshop: A Puzzle of Tree Parts, 2 - 3:30 pm, Meeting House
- 11 •Star Party: Perseid Meteors, 9:30 pm, Meeting House
- 14 •Arboretum Adventures for Kids: Animal Homes,\*\* 10 am - 1:30 pm, Meeting House
- 16 •Star Party, 9 pm, Meeting House
- 17 •Star Party, 9 pm, Meeting House
- 24 •Saturday Class: Seed Collecting Walk, 10 am, Lower Parking Lot.  
•Free Family Workshop: The Arthropod Squad, 10 - 11:30 am, Meeting House  
•Concert: Sun Mountain Fiddler, 7:30 pm, Meeting House

## September

- 7 •Saturday Class: Trees of the Arboretum, 10 am, Meeting House  
•Free Family Workshop: Owl Ecology, 7 - 8:30 pm, Meeting House
- 14 •Fall Plant Sale, 11 am - 4 pm, Farmhouse
- 15 •Fall Plant Sale, 11 am - 4 pm, Farmhouse
- 18-19 •Bus Tour: The Fingerlakes Wine Country\*\*

- 21 •Saturday Class: Mushroom Walk, 10 am Meeting House  
•Free Family Workshop: Fall Foliage Tree Identification Walk, 2 - 3:30 pm, Meeting House
- 28 •Saturday Class: Using the Herbarium, 10 am, Library  
•Saturday Class: Nature Writing for Children,\*\* time, location to be announced

September date to be announced:  
Concert by L'Ensemble

## October

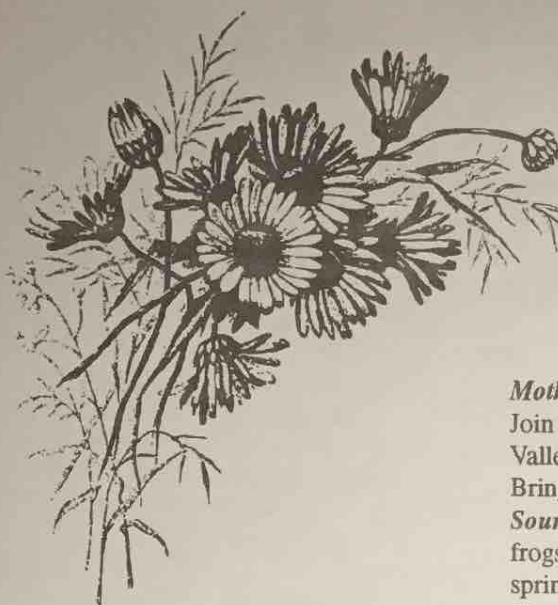
- 4 •Star Party, 7:30 pm, Meeting House
- 5 •Saturday Class: Autumn Landscape Photography,\*\* 8 am - noon, Meeting House  
•Free Family Workshop: Animal Homes, 2 - 3:30 pm, Meeting House  
•Star Party, 7:30 pm, Meeting House
- 18 •Free Family Workshop: Autumn Night Walk, 6:30 - 8pm, Meeting House
- 19 •Star Party, 7:30 pm, Meeting House
- 20 •Bus Tour: Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, MA\*\*

Questions or suggestions about our programs?  
Call the Arboretum at 875-6935.

## December

- 6 •Star Party, 7:30 pm, Meeting House
- 7 •Star Party, 7:30 pm, Meeting House

Early December dates to be announced: Holiday Workshops



This very popular series developed and taught by nature educator George Steele will begin on Mother's Day and continue through the fall. Classes begin at the Meeting House, days and times vary; please check class descriptions for specifics. Classes are held rain or shine, please dress accordingly. These programs are free to everyone; non-members are encouraged to make a donation to the Arboretum to help defray the cost of the series.

### Star Parties

The Albany Area Amateur Astronomers meet regularly at the George Landis Arboretum for its dark skies and good horizons for star-gazing. These free programs feature telescopic viewing (telescopes provided by the club), an introductory program, and sky tour. Star parties meet at the meeting house, but are cancelled when skies are mostly cloudy. Participants should bring a blanket to sit or lie on. See calendar listing for dates and times.



**Mother's Day Hawk Watch.** Sunday, May 12, 8 am to 5 pm; special program at 2 pm. Join us for a day on the lookout for hawks as they migrate north along the Schoharie Valley. At 2 pm, come to a session on hawk identification and the ecology of local hawks. Bring binoculars if you have them.

**Sounds of the Spring Night.** Saturday, May 18, 7:30 to 9 pm. Listen in on the chorus of frogs and birds announcing the arrival of spring. Discover some of the secrets of the spring noisemakers while trekking the Arboretum's fields and forests.

**Herpetology Hike.** Saturday, June 8, 10 to 11:30 am. Search for amphibians and reptiles (the animals studied in herpetology) on a walk through the Arboretum's woodlands to the farm pond. Creatures which might be found include frogs, toads, newts, salamanders, water snakes, and turtles.

**Bird Watching for the Family.** Sunday, June 23, 2 to 3:30 pm. Introduce the whole family to the fun of bird watching during an easy walk through the fields and forests at the Arboretum. Learn how to use bird field guides. A limited supply of binoculars will be available; bring your own if you have them.

**Wiggly Water Wonders.** Saturday, July 13, 10 to 11:30 am. The ponds at the Arboretum are exciting places to look for living things. From the larger amphibians to the smaller insects, there'll be plenty to get your hands on while learning about freshwater ecosystems.



### Adult Art Workshops

The classes described below all require pre-registration and payment of the class fee in advance. Please send a check payable to George Landis Arboretum, indicating the name of the class(es) and the class dates for which you wish to register, by at least 10 days before the first class in the series. Earlier registration is encouraged, since classes sometimes fill quickly.

**Drawing in the Greenhouse** Thursdays, May 9 - June 13, 6:00 to 8:30 pm, instructor: Anne Jaster. Discover what an excellent garden tool a drawing pencil can be! Sketching helps the student to see clearly and appreciate the structure of plants. Artists of all skill levels are welcome. Please bring supper in a bag. Non-members \$45, members \$40. Library.

**Outdoor Watercolor Workshop.** Thursday, May 16, 9:00 am. to 5:00 p.m, instructor: Sherry Holmes. In the morning, paint the beauty of lilacs in bloom. In the afternoon, paint a simple figure in a floral garden setting. Emphasis will be placed on composition, design, values, color, light, and shadow. Instruction will be adapted to the needs of individual students. A materials list will be sent upon registration. Please bring a bag lunch. Non-members \$45, members \$40. Meet at the lower parking lot at 9:00 am. Class will meet in Meeting House in case of rain.

**Pen and Ink Botanical Art.** Thursdays, June 20 to August 1, (no class July 4) 6:00 to 8:30 p.m, instructor: Heather Thompson. Learn to convert your garden sketches to a permanent and publishable form. Beginners and advanced students are both welcome. Please bring a bag supper. Non-members \$45, members \$40. Library.





## Gardens to Visit - Lucinda Willemain

The second in a continuing series - an early-in-the-year visit to the garden of Landis Arboretum Trustee John Abbuhl.

Some day, when this arboretum offers a garden tour of its members' gardens, Dr. John Abbuhl's garden will be at the top of the list. The Abbuhls have lived in Slingerlands for 30 years on 22 acres of very wet land. Over the course of time, six ponds were created not by damming the flow of the creek but by moving some soil out of low areas and piling it onto higher land. The surrounding woodland consists mostly of second-growth forest with many large white pines. The property has the feel of a summer camp, but with a more substantial year-round house. A closer inspection of the plantings around the edge of the lawn and along a path that rambles through the woods reveals the gardener's secret. Each year, Dr. Abbuhl buys over 100 woody plants, both exotic and native, from mail-order catalogs, planting them wherever they seem likely to do well. By now, some of the trees are 30 years old and have developed from small, mail-order plants into large specimens. One *metasequoia* is already over 50 feet tall.

Dr. Abbuhl does all the forestry work himself: pruning, planting and caging vulnerable specimens to protect from deer damage. It is a good hobby for someone who is frequently "on call" and has had little opportunity to spend a day off far from his home telephone.

When the Abbuhls purchased this property, privacy was a top priority. In fact, the Abbuhls brought as much acreage as was available surrounding the house. They have kept it looking natural. There is no putting green, no tennis court, no swimming pool - things that there would be room for. The garden design includes a backyard patio for outdoor summer pursuits. The front entrance has a collection of rhododendrons and azaleas along the approach drive and beds for planting out annuals right at the front doorstep. The rest of the property contains trees and informal lawn. No grass was ever seeded here; rather, the weeds were mowed short. Slowly, the garden evolved. Lately, Dr. Abbuhl has been organizing his plantings by geographical area of origin. There is a Japanese area, a Chinese area, a Western U.S. area, a Southern U.S. area, and a Russian area.

Fallen pines tend to get windthrown, growing in this wet environment near ponds. They are left in place to enrich the soil and shelter wildlife. Dr. Abbuhl maintains that he likes the way they look, lying half in and half out of the pond, covered with moss and ferns. Wildlife abounds. There are deer, raccoons, wild turkeys, ducks during the migratory season, pileated woodpecker and other birds too numerous to mention, and frogs and fish in the ponds. Note that for a

plant deer won't eat, Dr. Abbuhl recommends *Ilex opaca*, an American holly with red berries.

A low-lying wooded area with small ponds offers numerous protected microclimates for plants of doubtful hardiness. Dr. Abbuhl has started plantings of numerous trees not thought to be hardy here. Many have survived, proving their hardiness. *Franklinea*, *cryptomeria*, Golden-chain Tree, Sitka Spruce, Bald-Cypress and Pond-Cypress are some of his experiments. Dr. Abbuhl concentrates on woody plants almost exclusively. Evergreen trees are his favorites, but he also has a magnolia collection. As yet, a group of hybridized chestnuts shows no sign of chestnut blight. Squirrels get most of the nuts, but some young trees have sprouted. Tree peonies form a large collection tucked here and there around and about the other plantings as space permits. In fact, so many things have been planted over the years that sunny spots with good drainage are becoming scarce in this remarkable garden.



### How Does Our Garden Grow?

**New Members, 2nd Quarter** - Please note that the names listed here are new members only. A complete list of members and contributors will be included with the Annual Report once each year.

Don Avery	Robert Lynk
Elayne Cross	Blanche Mandel
Matt Curley	Jean Purcell Mastriani
Christine Dascher	Shane & Sarah Nickle
Ellen Engels	Stacie Starr
Judith Frederick	Arthur Young
Barbara Kuban	

# The Case of Peonies at the Arboretum - N.L. Boericke

A tale of intrigue for the horticulturally bent. Inspector Boericke will be heard from again.....

On a darkening, late November afternoon I visited the arboretum to investigate the peony plantings. The ground was freshly dusted with new snow but still soggy underfoot. Slogging up behind the barn towards the low stone wall, I observed the unmistakable, slightly puffed-up appearance of a large cultivated bed running off to the shoulder of the hill on my right. Although the snow was undisturbed, someone had been here recently. Cautiously, I looked behind me. The eastern view from the garden was expansive out over the pond, but the site was beautifully protected from high winds by the barn set below it and the hill rising behind.

"Good grounds for *Paeonia* (pee-oh'nea), I thought to myself, "Their stems have a lot to bear and break easily in windy places. But who put them here?"

Poking about gently beneath the snow, looking for plant markers or any other trace evidence, I found fresh small-chipped bark mulch. "A good cover-up," I decided, "Keeps moisture in during the summer and keeps the ground frozen during a January thaw. But what is it hiding?"

I almost missed the first clue. A single wooden stake bearing a narrow metal plate glowed in the fading light and leaned sharply towards the snow. "'Black Panther' Saunders," the label announced. I'd heard of the Pink Panther, but who was the Black Panther?



I had been sent to uncover what lay in the peony planting and this small sign sent me hot on the trail down to the offices where I convinced Carol Wock and Gloria Van Duyn to open the files.

I learned that there had been two peony deliveries. The first was sent by a Mrs. Beal from Castleton-on-Hudson who visited the arboretum in October of 1972 and missed the fall colors of peony foliage. The following autumn, a large planting arrived from the Klehm Nursery in Champaign, Illinois which was donated by the nursery. Mrs. Beal sent further stock from the Brand Peony Farms in Minnesota. Of the twenty cultivars from Klehm in 1973, 19 were still represented in the garden in 1987. Two cultivars from the Brand nurseries' five (or more) remained. Fifteen of the Klehm cultivars are still offered in their 1995 catalog.

From my research I had learned that the names listed beneath the cultivars were those of the hybridizer, the person credited with developing that particular cultivar of *Paeonia*. I now knew that Professor A.P. Saunders of Clinton, New York was a well-known peony hybridizer.

But none of these plants were the 'Black Panther' I was looking for and none had been developed by Saunders. Was I looking for the wrong man?



So I examined records of the second delivery. That delivery arrived in late summer 1989 and consisted of *Paeonia suffruticosa* in memory of John MacArthur, devoted friend of the arboretum. These tree peonies also came from the Klehm nurseries and are also part of the family Ranunculaceae (Buttercups). Big family. Was there one called 'Black Panther'?

It turns out that these plants aren't really trees. They are woody shrubs growing up to six feet tall, maybe. The species originated in China and Japan, was exported to England in the late 18th century and then brought to the United States. I'd been looking in the wrong place, actually at the wrong height.

Now I remembered the small shrub next to the fallen stake bearing the name 'Black Panther'. The branches fanned out from the ground and had, appropriately, been neatly pruned now that I thought of it - no crossing branches, nice shape, no dead wood.



I raced back to the garden. There it was, the 'Black Panther', huddled about 18 inches from the ground and safely bedded in clean soil for the winter. Undoubtedly the Panther's roots were even now wriggling through the cold, slightly alkaline ground anticipating the lovely freezing nights that would make it bloom next spring.

I wondered if there were any 'little' 'Black Panther's' hiding in the greenhouse. Could the staff have grafted the scion of the Panther onto a surrogate mother from the lactifloras? Had the seed been plucked, just as it turned brown, even before the capsule split open? They'd be easy to spot since they should be stuck in pots for three years before planting out and surely they'd have some name tags on. But what if the plant had been divided in the fall? I'd never be able to find their eyes under two inches of soil out there in the snowy garden.

Although these plants don't like to be disturbed, there'll be some further digging in the spring to check on the friability of that soil and the amount of sunlight. And we'll need to watch for fungal diseases. But, in all, I'm convinced no crime has been committed.

Now I'm looking for 'Companion of Serenity' and 'Themis' (Goddess of Law, Order, Justice), to say nothing of 'Nick Shaylor' who supposedly sleeps next to the 'Barrington Belle'. I can use all the help I can get. *Continued on the next page >*

A list of the arboretum's *Paeonia* varieties that Inspector Boericke uncovered in her investigation follows.

From Brand Peony Farms (1973)

- 'Hansina Brand' - pink-salmon; late double
- 'Festiva Maxima' - early double; white/crimson

From Klehm Nursery (1973)

- 'Nick Shaylor' - late double light pink
- 'Elsa Sass' - camellia type; mid-late double white
- 'Aa-na-sode' - no longer listed in catalog; mid-season, Japanese rose pink with yellow center
- 'Red Charm' - early double bomb type, red
- 'President Lincoln' - mid-late single dark red
- 'Kansas' - early double red
- 'Sea Shell' - midseason single pink center, yellow stamens
- 'Moonstone' - midseason double blush pink, darker at base
- 'Mrs. F.D. Roosevelt' - early double pink classic; fragrant
- 'Bowl O' Cream' - large mid-season white
- 'Dinner Plate' - very broad light pink, mild fragrance; mid-season


- 'Vivid Rose' - double dark pink late; fragrant
- 'Top Brass' - pink bomb type midseason; rounded ivory guard petals out side; not available in '95 catalog
- 'Arlington Federal' - not listed in '95 catalog
- 'Moon River' - large pink double midseason
- 'Doreen' - fuchsia Japanese with yellow fringed center tuft; light green foliage; midseason
- 'Barrington Belle' - red anemone form midseason
- 'Pink Jazz' - dark pink, not listed in '95 catalog
- 'Burma Ruby' - tulip-type early, shocking red single; fragrant; not listed in '95 catalog
- 'Scarlet O'Hara' - single fiery red early

Tree Peonies from Klehm Nursery (1989)

- 'Banquet' - strawberry red semi-double
- 'Black Panther' - huge semi-double flower of deep bing cherry red; cutleaf foliage
- 'Canary' - yellow single
- 'Savage Splendor' - single ivory, edged in rose and lavender

- 'Thunderbolt' - single red with bright yellow stamen
- 'Kronos' (God of Time) - dark red semi-double
- 'Themis' (Goddess of Law, Order, Justice) - pink semi-double
- 'Zephyrus' (God of the West Wind) - peach pink semi-double
- 'Companion of Serenity' - pink single
- 'Joseph Rock' - white semi-double

*Nancy Boericke is a Cornell graduate with a degree in English. She is a freelance writer and a Master Gardener with Schenectady County Cooperative Extension.*

 **Congratulations!**

Esperance will be celebrating its 150th anniversary on Memorial Day Weekend. Sesquicentennial festivities include a big, big parade!

For more information call: Ken Jones 875-6854

**Registration for Bus Trips, Outings, & Special Events**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Trip/Outing/Special Event	Number in Party	Cost per Individual	Total Cost for Tour
<i>Gardens of the Brandywine Valley</i> Single: \$290 member, \$325 non-member Double*: \$225 member, \$260 non-member			
<i>Waterfalls and Wildflowers</i> \$10 member, \$15 non-member			
<i>Cricket Hill and Hillside Gardens</i> \$45 member, \$50 non-member			
<i>Caprilands</i> \$50 member, \$55 non-member			
<i>Watercolor Workshop/Guy Corrieri</i> \$150			
<b>TOTAL:</b>			

\* 2 people, 2 beds



### *Peepers at Night*

*The shadbush was hanging its white arms  
over the pasture fence, the redwings flocking  
along the marshes, the cattail stalks  
piercing the dark water. There at night  
the peepers called. Close to the cattail bases  
they raised their small black bubbles of eyes,  
they blew out their round yellow throats  
and the whistles sweet as bell notes came.*

*The night rang with the music of their bells.  
The small boy walking the lonely road heard them.  
The woman turned and opened the kitchen door.  
She stood in the April dusk silent and listened.  
The man came from the barn, his lantern swinging.  
"Spring of our life," he said, "and the bells ringing."*

*- Fred Lape*



George Landis Arboretum  
Lape Road, PO Box 186  
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