



# George Landis Arboretum NEWSLETTER

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Editors: Margaret Law and Betty Bloom

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## President's message

1988 had been a year of superlatives, with many exciting new developments. Our greatest achievement has been hiring Pam Rowling on board as director on a full-time basis. Everyone who visits us knows instantly what an experienced horticulturist, and hard-working leader, Pam is, as well as a delightful personality. We are indeed fortunate, and with her as Director, the Arboretum assumes greater stature and we look for great advances in the botanical world under her leadership.

Everyone visiting us is struck immediately by the enormous improvements in the grounds: trails cleared, grass mowed, trees pruned, dead wood removed, everything labeled, and stonewalls miraculously revealed by the painstaking removal of clinging vegetation. Under the vigilant direction of Dr. John Abbuhl, our chairman of Horticulture, a long range grounds plan is underway and the results are immediately evident.

Volunteers are the backbone of our work corps and they are all so wonderful that it would seem impossible to single out any one person to whom to express our enormous thanks; but it so happens that one person has been so outstanding in numbers of hours and achievements that I simply must mention him: Dick Law. He has done more for the Arboretum than I could possibly enumerate, from clearing stone walls, mending equipment, repairing machinery, staining wood walls, removing stumps, laying paving stones, and helping in every capacity. It is certainly our good fortune that he has "retired"!

Friends are our real support group, and through their fund raising efforts, and energetic assistance on every front they are absolutely invaluable. Of course all our members are friends, but the Friends group is efficiently organized to help where needed and they are all greatly appreciated for the tremendous job they do for the Arboretum.

With the input of many Friends, our semi-weekly educational programs continued a full and varied menu of great interest. We are working more and more in the educational field for young people. Family Day was a heartwarming occasion as all enjoyed together entertainment and learning opportunities, from dabbling for frogs in the pond to walking the trails, and reading the plant labels.

The year's highlights started in March when we entered an exhibit at the Wildwood Gardens Show in Albany. On extremely short notice we managed to mount a nice display. Kathie Lippitt's alpine trough gave a promise of spring with tiny bulbs in bloom and forced

branches of "Arnold Promise" witch hazel. John Abbuhl and Pam brought beautiful evergreen branches and fascinating cones to show the world a sampling of the wonders to be found at the Arboretum. Next came Arbor Day when we joined in the national celebration with a ceremonial planting of an umbrella pine. Founder's Day, in August, celebrated Fred Lape's birthday with the placement of a commemorative boulder in accordance with his expressed desire, and a ceremony attended by many of his friends.

An attractive and updated brochure has recently been completed as an initial effort of our newly organized Development Committee, ably headed by Dale Morgan, who has appointed a strong committee structure to promote our public relations efforts. A successful Fund Drive, aimed initially at Trustees and Friends, gives us confidence to repeat this essential effort.

We have finally been able to put in the long awaited foundation planting at the meeting house, most generously donated by Mrs. Richard Paul, in memory of her husband, our past treasurer.

Our next excitement will be the erection of a greenhouse given by Dr. and Mrs. Raymond in memory of their son. This much need facility will be a dream come true, and we are most grateful to the generous and thoughtful donors.

Greetings to all our members, and thanks to you all for your interest and support. As president of our Arboretum it makes me immensely proud to give such a progressive report on the past year. We look forward to even more development in '89, and hope to see you often as the year enfolds.

*Elizabeth P. Corning*

### Be A Friend

The Friends of the George Landis Arboretum is an organization whose members use their collective skills to support the goals and objectives established by the Board of Trustees. We are a group of people who take great pride in our Arboretum.

During the 1988 season "The Friends" began the summer activities with our annual Rare Plant Sale. Held in May, the Rare Plant Sale represents a major fund raiser as well as an event which has proven increasingly popular with the general public. As the season unfolds, "The Friends" present a variety of week-end activities designed to entertain and to educate. The 1988 programs produced the best attendance in recent memory with the most popular program being the newly introduced Family Day. Families with their energetic children circulated through "pond science," to "insect discovery," and "tree identification." In addition to Family Day, we sponsored programs ranging from special interest events such as beekeeping and flower arranging to slide shows and trough making. During our "work days," the Friends gather to lend a hand with general cleanup, clearing, and sprucing up the property.

The information arm of the Friends is the quarterly publication of the Newsletter. Suggestions, articles, and items of general interest are always encouraged and welcome. Correspondence concerning the Newsletter should be addressed to: Friends of the Arboretum, PO Box 186, Esperance, N.Y. 12066.

The Friends meet monthly on the first Tuesday. Our meeting format continues to include a social hour from 6-7pm, a pot luck dinner from 7-8pm and a business meeting from 8-9pm. We always adjourn at 9pm. Meetings during the summer months are held in the Meeting House at the Arboretum and during the winter months we circulate among a variety of sites - usually at the home of a hospitable friend. For more information concerning the Friends, write to us at the Esperance address.

We are always happy to welcome new friends - so please plan to join us as we plan out 1989 season with the commitment that it will be the best ever.

The Developmental Committee of the Arboretum chaired by Dale Morgan have been meeting and have produced a complete organizational list. Under Financial/Resource growth area are the following "Task Forces".

Membership	Lou Moravec	377-6080
Grants	Chuck Weed	875-6063
Endowment	William Fairchild	346-4517
Plant Sale	Margaret Law	463-5256
	John Abbuhl	439-6472
Flower Show	Peter Rumora	449-5374
Benefits	Paul Blair	458-1032

Under Physical/Management Growth Areas:

Greenhouse	Robert Raymond	439-3585
	Pam Rowling	875-6935
Public Relations	Linda Blumenstock	434-3397
Education	Mary Anne Finley	
Van Loveland Gardens	Pam Rowling	875-6935
Springs, pools, ditches	Gil Harlow	374-9218
Conference Center	Dick Law	463-5256
	Don Rexford	864-5812
Historical collections	John Abbuhl	439-6472

We urge our membership to chose their area of interest and participate in the growth of our arboretum. We have included telephone numbers of the chairpeople who would be delighted to hear from you with your suggestions and/or physical help. Dale Morgan can be reached at home at 732-2506 or at his office in the V.A.Hospital 462-3311. This is your opportunity to become involved in our future. For example, Lou Moravec has set a goal to increase membership by 200, can you help her?

We've heard many comments that the Arboretum has never looked lovelier. We hope you had a chance to visit it this fall. The newly cleared areas open new vistas and enhance the old.

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Peter Rumora, one of our Arboretum Trustees and an active volunteer in the City of Albany's planting program, took a kind of busman's holiday not long ago. He was willing to give us these observations. His knowledge and experience make him an informed critic. The following are his comments:

Cave Hill Cemetery, 701 Baxter Ave, Louisville, Kentucky

To quote from their handout: "Cave Hill was dedicated ... on July 25, 1848. Today Cave Hill is the final resting place for over 116,000 men, women, and children. Cave Hill contains one of the finest arboretums in the Louisville area. Over five-hundred varieties of trees and shrubs are found throughout the cemetery with some 300 marked by small signs to add to your knowledge and enjoyment."

It seems a little strange to have such a good time while visiting a cemetery. It was one of the many splendid occasions that were had by this writer while visiting arboretums and gardens on a cross and back country motor trip.

There is something quite wonderful about seeing a large weeping limber pine (*Pinus flexilis* 'Pendula') with granite and marble gravestones for a backdrop, or two thirty foot columnar or elongated Douglas firs (*Pseudotsuga menziesii* 'Fastigiata') standing as silent

green sentinels, dressed to the right and left of a hilltop grave monument, looking down into a valley of small grave stones marking the resting place of Civil War Soliders who dies in Louisville hospitals. The right angles and space branchings of a Japanese white pine (*Pinus parviflora*) seemed to be so "right" standing next to 1870 weathered tombstone.

Small groves of mixed evergreens are planted to define areas. Five lakes provide further interest supporting various waterfowl. There are minor tourist traffic jams in Spring as the cemetery erupts with its flowering bushes and trees.

One of the interesting planting customs there is to plant the plot in front of a tombstone with English Ivy rather than grass. Some horizontal tombstones have a cross cut out of the middle and ivy is growing in the cutaway.

As always, one is thankful for plant labels and furious at the lack of them. The maintenance is at a high level, the older monuments are fascinating. It is overall so exotic, that when reading tombstones it seemed commonplace to find one from 1867 that belonged to "Ariss Thockmorton"!

Clinton, Iowa is home to the Bickelhaupt Arboretum. It brings to mind that commercial of several years ago, "How do they get all those tomatoes in the itty bitty can?" Thirteen acres have been stretched to house a well rounded collection. It is situated in a small valley bisected by a slow moving stream.

Wonderful old burr oaks (*Quercus macrocarpa*) command the far side of the valley. The spacing between plants and trees allow each plant full growth without encroachment by or of its neighbor. Small sections devoted to columnar and globular trees are particularly pleasing. Surprisingly, one section is devoted to Sumac. Fragrant sumac (*Rhus aromatica*) was glowing with fall color. This less than twenty year old arboretum offers many educational and resource facilities.

Timber evergreens are the subject of Eddy Arboretum which is part of the Institute of Forest Genetics at Placerville, Ca. The Institute is an experimental station of the Forest Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. The arboretum was established in 1925 and contains about 70 of the world's 95 species of pine. There are also plantings of spruce and fir. The Eddie Arboretum has 25 or 30 of one kind of tree planted in groves which allows the viewer a better idea of what the tree "wants" to be. They also boast the oldest verified pine hybrids made by man. The earth is well sprinkled with the cones, many unusual to an eastern eye. There they were: sugar pine cones over 2 feet long, coulteris cones 9 or 10 inches with as much breadth, and the smaller digger cones 7 and 8 inches. All had a few seeds left in them so it was possible to see the size of the seed. In addition, here were all the facilities needed to run a forestry research program.

Near the end of Mayor Daley's historic reign, he decided that Chicago needed a botanic garden and so it got one. It was located on the Cook county line in the "marshes", which turned into a wonderful advantage; the main garden is on an island with additional bridged islands serving as sites for the fruit and vegetable garden, the Japanese garden, and Evergreen island which is home to a Carillon. The Chicago Garden is one of the newer major botanic gardens and has a slight air of newness about it, a welcome sight.

A Heritage Garden displays a systematic classification of plants which is extremely informative. It shows plants of the same family next to each other and is filled with surprises. The Japanese garden is very controlled with just about all the pine branches roped at 90 angles to the trunk and a fair amount of needles removed on new growth. To some this practice makes the garden have a "stamped-out-of-a-mold look." The garden has a very active educational program and is so well visited, it is crowded on weekends.

Oklahoma City is the home of two gardens of note. Downtown (which, by the way, seems to be overflowing with huge fountains and falls all of which work) is the home of the Crystal Bridge. The Crystal Bridge is a round greenhouse that straddles a small man-made valley. The valley contains a 2 level lake. Just completed in 1988 the greenhouse has a waterfall and a tropical plant collection divided into wet and dry habitats. There is something to be said about new installations: well-labeled, with plants still in control, and systems that work! The gardens also have an elevated skywalk that

becomes a bridge within a bridge. It is fun. The big park around the conservatory is still in the process of completion but look quite well done.

Just moments away is the Will Rogers Horticultural Gardens which is a 17 acre site started in 1933. It's a very well maintained park run by the city (which is often a surprise). The stars of this vast collection are the junipers which are mostly of the native western variety (*Juniperus scopulorum*, *osteosperma* and *horizontalis*). Because of heavy fruiting and color range, many of the junipers in the collection are among the best ornamental trees one is likely to find. It is a large collection and most of the trees were probably planted in the 30's. A little discouraging was the lack of any recent planting. A collection that is as major as this one should be continued and expanded.

What about a garden built on a land fill that keeps shifting? Cracks open overnight and hot gas pours out from the 3 1/2 million tons of refuse underneath. Such is the South Coast Botanic Garden of Los Angeles County. One morning, personnel found all the waterfowl on the edge of the empty artificial lake looking down at a dry bottom where a large streaming creek gurgled. The plant collection which is mostly semi-tropical coming from Australia, the Mediterranean and South America, nevertheless, seems to thrive. Cracks abound through root systems and the most damage that appears to happen is a few lower leaves drop.

Proposition 13 cut back manpower in Los Angeles County Parks' system and volunteers have been recruited to fill in the slack. The flowering part of the garden is done mostly by volunteers. It tends to look as though the flowers from many little back yards were all put together minus the fences, but overall the effect is very pleasant.

Another of the gardens in the same system is the Los Angeles States and County Arboretum in Arcadia. Three sections of that arboretum are devoted to trees and shrubs from South America and Australia. They give the northeastern visitors a chance to inspect trees never seen before. Sunset magazine has demonstration home gardens there along with other gardens. But all is not perfect even in California. The beginning of the garden was a gift, but, in addition to plants and land, there were peacocks or as the gardeners call them, "peafowl." They wander everywhere as droppings prove and in order to keep them out of the gardens, there are nets, poles, package string, wire cages, and any device anyone can think of. They roost very high in trees at night because the coyotes have learned to jump to lower branches. Unwanted pets such as rabbits, ducks, and chickens are put over the fence almost nightly; they are not coyote-wise. Despite this, the arboretum is well worth a visit.

Descanso Gardens in LaCanada is also part of the L.A. system that has a camellia forest that unfortunately was not in bloom when I visited. Overall, that garden appeared to need a few more helping hands and new plants.

The fog-smog-haze problem continues to worsen in the L.A. area. There are fewer hours of sunlight than there were just 10 years ago. Understory groundcovers are starting to show the results by not being as dense or as healthy as they once were.

Arbor Lodge States Historical Park and Arboretum in Nebraska City, Ne. was the home of J. Sterling Morton who originated Arbor Day just after the Civil War to plant Nebraska's treeless plains (Incidentally it is generally held that the first public tree planting ceremony in this country was held in Boston in 1646 some 220 years before the first Arbor Day. An American Elm was the tree planted in Boston.).

The Morton collection is of medium size. Many of the trees planted in the 1860's are still there. Among the trees was one surprise - flowering apples that were about 90 years old.

Denver Botanic Gardens bills itself as "Tropics to Tundra" and it is. Twenty-two well layed-out acres in downtown Denver make you forget very quickly that you are in a major city although tall buildings comprise the horizon. A clever system of ponds, waterways and falls are used to both separate and accent many of the outside gardens. Walking through the non-blooming peony, lilac, iris, and daylily gardens does remind one of the solid arguments made for integrated rather than speciality gardens. After a quarter

of a century there is still a great deal of new planting being done at the gardens. Choice conifers are being added. The rock alpine and the dry plains gardens were interesting because almost all the plants were labeled.

The all American rose selection test plots were quite good. One found oneself using the old trick of counting the buds developing in addition to the open flowers in evaluating them.

Capital Park is the 40 acre park around the state capital at Sacramento. Three different tree walks are offered. There are over 300 varieties of trees, all labeled with common and scientific names and country of origin. The park is breathtakingly well done. It is one of the unheralded major botanic gardens in this country. Take roses, for example, — there are 800 of them. Flowers are everywhere among manicured lawns. There is a cactus garden and any number of native plants that were sent to Governor Johnson in 1914 by schoolchildren. Truly it is a joy to visit.

And finally one last bit of serendipity: Boerner Botanical Gardens in Hales Corners, Wi. which is part of the Milwaukee County Department of Parks and only a stone's throw north of Chicago. Alfred L. Boerner said, "Give them Beauty, and they will pack the parks." He did and they do. The arboretum is huge with 10 or so of the same tree planted in small groves. The crabapple collection has about 1000 trees and contains about 250 species. Native oaks and maples dating from 1750 are to be found along with one 1720 maple.

The flower sections of the garden are wonderful with the herb garden outshining almost all the others. The labeling is what does it. Complete information is given along with traditional use.

Wedding parties arrive constantly on weekends to have pictures taken in the garden. Although all that is not enough, there is more. The test garden for the All—America Selection Flowers Trials is so very special. Again the identification of the flowers is very good. Pass out lists on site with the name and seed supplier of each. When one looks at 15 different marigolds growing in 2X8' rows it is easy to know which variety you want. The garden shop has any number of inexpensive publications available about the collection but all you really need is the small free map and endurance.

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Friend	\$10—25
Sponsor	\$25—50
Supporting	\$50—100
Patron	\$100+

**GEORGE LANDIS ARBORETUM**

Membership Application

Please support the extensive work of the arboretum and make a tax deductible contribution.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal

THANK YOU

Amount \_\_\_\_\_  
 Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

New Member

----- Cut -----

Mail to: George Landis Arboretum  
Esperance, N.Y. 12066

Have you ever wanted to visit the wonderful tulip gardens and auctions at the height of their beauty? Travel with us to Holland, Germany, and Denmark on a two week tour in May of 1990. We will have the privilege of seeing many private gardens not usually open to the public and other delights. If you are interested in joining this tour, contact Margaret Law at 463-5256, for price and other details.

- May 4 Fri: Depart Albany – KLM evening flight to Amsterdam
- May 5 Sat: Arrive Amsterdam, city and boat tour
- May 6 Sun: Sightseeing in/around Amsterdam
- May 7 Mon: Flower auction in Aalsmeer; visit Keukenhof Garden
- May 8 Tue: Visit private gardens in Aalsmeer
- May 9 Wed: Visit special collection of plants in Boskoop and then on the Arboretum in Rotterdam
- May 10 Thur: En route to Apeldoorn, flower auction in Bleiswijk
- May 11 Fri: Apeldoorn – Palace Museum with special garden
- May 12 Sat: Travel via Emmen ("Butterfly" Zoo) to Bremen, Germany
- May 13 Sun: Travel via Hamburg to Jutland area of Denmark
- May 14 Mon: Visit gardens & museums in Jutland/Aarhus
- May 15 Tue: Sightseeing in/around Aarhus
- May 16 Wed: Travel via Odense (home Hans Christian Anderson) to Copenhagen
- May 17 Thur: Sightseeing in/around Copenhagen
- May 18 Fri: Visits in/around Copenhagen
- May 19 Sat: Visits in Copenhagen
- May 20 Sun: Return to New York and Albany

#### Notes from Pam:

Much of our time in the fall was spent in time consuming maintenance chores like screening of trees, building paths, and removing mulch. Stalwart souls, Florence Grim, Ann Jaster, Kathy Lippit, Doris Gdula, Paul Young, and Dick Law have been an enormous help in this tasks.

I have recently met with Mr. John Carvill from the Lilac Society (Vice President for Region 2). He was enthused about our garden and believes he will be able to generate involvement among the members of his group to improve and expand our collection. We project the possibilities of having a Lilac Festival here for the Capital District residents.

Our seeds, collected in the fall, have been cleaned and processed by horticulture students at SUNY Cobleskill and a list is being compiled to be sent out to horticultural institutions worldwide.

We have received written committment from the Albany Master Gardener's group to continue their work on the Van Loveland flower beds next season. This is wonderful news; these labor-intensive areas require many hands and hearts.

We have so far applied for two grants and have more in the works. Our success will be reported in future newsletters.

Once again, this year in March, we will be participating in the flower show at the New Scotland Armory, and will need people to man the booth. Our presentation will feature the Bristlecone Pine.

Educational programming is a matter which needs strong, aggressive development at the GLA. Mary Ann Finley has offered to help us develop programs especially for use by school children and would welcome member input. We welcome your suggestions, and your ideas about programs you can offer or would like to see.

We had such a good response to our Favorite Tree contest last year, we will have another this year. All school children are invited to submit their essay and prizes will be awarded for the most interesting on Arbor Day at the Arboretum. All entries must be submitted by March 15, to: Margaret Law, Simmons Road, Glenmont NY, 12077.

We are very grateful to:

Beverly Waite of Altamont who has donated two old barns which we are demolishing to obtain siding for the barn at the Arboretum.

Richard B. Robison, a master gardener from Albany who was so impressed with the recent improvements that he donated \$1000 from his family foundation (Ellis H. and Doris B. Robison Foundation) to the Arboretum. His father was a graduate of Cornell and a friend of Mr. Landis.



GEORGE LANDIS ARBORETUM  
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